

Responding to the RQF:

**Measuring Excellence and Impact in Nursing and
Midwifery Research and Developing a Strategic
Response – Discussion and Recommendations by
the Australian and New Zealand Council of Deans
of Nursing and Midwiferyⁱ**

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“Methods of evaluation must be chosen to match the character of the research and its objectives” US Committee of Science, Engineering and Public Policy, 1998ⁱⁱ

The forthcoming RQF challenges all disciplines to develop a coordinated and strategic response. The introduction of quality assessment frameworks in higher education sectors in the United Kingdom, New Zealand and other countries has led to a complete re-engineering of the higher education sector, dramatic shifts in the fortunes of individual schools and research units within every university, and major challenges overall for the standing of disciplines that do not typically score highly on traditional indices of excellence and impact. The aim of this position paper by the CDNMM is to provide disciplinary leadership in the development of a strategic response to this challenging opportunity from the nursing and midwifery academy.

In what follows a two-pronged strategic response will be outlined. First, a consensus document on excellence and impact in nursing and midwifery research is presented. This brief document aims to develop a consensus-based framework to guide nursing and midwifery submissions to the RQF, and to guide the assessments of the expert panel who will be undertaking the evaluation. The second strand in the response proposes the inauguration of a national group to assume the leadership of nursing and midwifery research in Australia and a draft constitution, modelled on the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) is provided.

Part 1: Defining Excellence and Impact in the Discipline

Nursing and midwifery research and scholarship bridges the interface between knowledge development in the fields of health care and professional practice and the development of models of application, practices and services.

Excellent nursing and midwifery research generates new knowledge significant to the professional preparation of nurses and midwives, clinical practice, health service delivery and policy development. It is informed by a range of intellectual and academic approaches and may involve a wide stakeholder base of health consumers, health professionals and public and private service providers. It serves the national benefit by addressing key issues in health care and developing cost effective and optimal models of practice and service delivery.

An essential element of nursing and midwifery research concerns the improvement of health care practice and patient or client outcomes. High quality research in an applied discipline leads to outputs that directly or indirectly contribute to this endeavour.

Gibbons et al's (1994)ⁱⁱⁱ notion of Mode 1 and Mode 2 research provides a framework to delineate the knowledge generation and the application elements of research.

Mode 1

New Knowledge – tends to be individual curiosity driven
High relevance to researchers and colleagues
Innovation, creativity and a strong research community are essential for high quality Mode 1 research.

Mode 2

Application focused and typically involves research uptake by industry or focuses on solving problems in the field
Tends to be team focused and multi-disciplinary, high relevance to clinical, service sector or policy.
Industry and consumer relevance, close working relationships and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches are essential for high quality Mode 2 research.

Mode 1 and Mode 2 are complementary activities and at a disciplinary level should be in balanced relationship to each other. However individuals, units or research teams may focus more in one domain than the other.^{iv}

By combining Mode 1 and Mode 2 elements of nursing and midwifery the following table of indicators and categories of evidence of impact of research is proposed.

Mode 2 research is also captured under so-called 'third stream' delineation of research. Third stream refers to commercialisation and application and is currently under discussion by policy makers with support from universities and institutes. It may become the source of a separate funding stream.

Mode 1 **Knowledge generation**

Publications

Peer esteem

Professional engagement and consultation

Research funding (competitive grants)

Research training

Interdisciplinary involvement

Prizes and awards

Community/media engagement

At a unit level –

 Research infrastructure

 Support for staff and students

 International links

 Integrated and well articulated research strategy

Mode 2 **Knowledge transfer**

Service sector relevance

Industry funded research

Consumer engagement

Policy impact

Multi disciplinary and inter professional dimension

Economic impact

Industry relevant publications

At a unit level

 Formal industry engagement

 Consumer engagement

 Integrated and well articulated research strategy

Part 2

Guiding the RQF Submission: Best Outputs and Evidence Portfolio

The RQF is likely to require the submission of 4 'outputs' over a 6 year period. What are the quality indicators by which these outputs may be judged?

2.1 Best Outputs and Bibliometrics

A good many prominent nursing and midwifery researchers publish in a wide range of medical, health services, social sciences and interdisciplinary journals. Many of these journals tend to have established reputations and present few problems for a multidisciplinary panel to make an assessment of the quality of the journal and rank the relative impact of the publication as a research output. On the other hand, not only are Nursing and Midwifery journals unlikely to be familiar to a multidisciplinary panel, but they are poorly served by ISI-based measures of impact and citations. The number of nursing and midwifery journals indexed by ISI is low, the impact factors unimpressive and, most importantly, the top 20 ISI indexed nursing and midwifery journals do not correlate with the best journals from the perspective of Australian nursing and midwifery. This was also the case in the UK and NZ RAEs and the ISI ranking was not included in their respective research assessment exercises. The absence of a journal ranking list however poses potential problems for the Australian assessment. In the likely event that nursing and midwifery research will be evaluated by a broad panel, as opposed to a discipline panel, the relative quality of journal publications will be difficult for this panel to judge. **It is proposed**, therefore, that CDNMC commission a national consensus survey (perhaps a Delphi) to rank the top journals for Australian nursing and midwifery. It would be helpful for there to be two rankings, Overall and Subspeciality.

The limitations of such a list need to be made explicit, but like all ratings it should be simply a guide of peer esteem and valid only for the period of this RQF; it would require updating every 5-6 years in time for each round of the RQF. Should ISI broaden its list of indexed nursing and midwifery journals this may not be necessary in the future.

2.2 Evidence Portfolio

The ‘best outputs’ submission is likely to require an evidence portfolio to put the case for impact and significance. Taking into account the nature of nursing and midwifery research and scholarship and Mode 1 and Mode 2 characterisations of research; **the following categorisation of evidence indicators is proposed** to frame these portfolios.

2.3 Possible Components of the Measures of Research Excellence^v

Measure	Components
Publications	Academic Publications, Conference publications, Practice Guidelines
Research Funding	International Competitive Grants, National Competitive Grants, State-based funding, philanthropic funding
Peer Recognition	Professional recognition, e.g. International prizes, awards, Honours
Consultation	Advisory committee membership, Advisory services to Government/large business/small business/charities/pressure groups, Standard Setting panel membership
Evidence of Partnerships, Industrial Support and Partnering Activities	Large Collaborative programme (number of, funding) Consultancy reports, activities and processes, Smaller collaborative programmes number and funding, Conference chairs, Conference participation, Personnel exchanges, Workshop hostings, External-open seminars
Research Training	Team of researchers, postdoc, PhD and honours students, scholarships, industry supported bursaries
International standing	International collaborations, cross appointments, scholarly and research residencies.
Involvement with Society Indicators	Number of media articles/broadcasts related to research, Consumer involvement in development and translation of research
Commercialisation	Patents, licences, novel processes, products and instrumentation, Spin offs/start-ups

2.4 Summary of Council's Response

The Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (ANZ) commends many aspects of the Preferred Model for the Research Quality Framework, in particular:

- The level of consultation that has informed the development of the model, and the request for feedback from stakeholders such as the CDNMM
- The recognition of impact as an important measure of quality; for practice-based disciplines as nursing and midwifery are, this is essential
- The recognition that “the nature and type of research outputs will typically differ according to discipline areas... There will need to be further consultation... on what constitutes research outputs for each Panel” (Preferred Model # 2.4)
- The support for possible “Third Stream” funding
- The statement: “Institutions should decide which researchers would be assessed ...”
- The principle of assessment by research groupings rather than of every individual researcher

The Council has concerns about a number of issues which are detailed in its Response:

- The ranking of journals in which nurses and midwives publish research (Response #2.1). It is crucial that these be relevant to Australian nurses and midwives
- The importance of discipline-sensitive metrics and evidence portfolio (Response #2.2)
- The importance of including on the RQF assessment panel experts (preferably more than one) sensitive to the disciplines and practices of nursing and midwifery. The Council would hope to be consulted on membership of the panel and on the criteria it is to use

Part 3: National Research Leadership

Following discussions at the previous meeting of CDNLM concerning the possibility of reviving the Academy of Nursing, the Working Party agreed to consider the strategic direction of Australian nursing and midwifery research.

There are two common models for disciplinary research leadership, the Academy and the Society (in some disciplines there is both a Society and an Academy).

An Academy is by its nature a selective and elite organisation. In addition to providing leadership and a representative voice for the discipline in policy debates concerning research, it publicly acknowledges outstanding scholars through its investiture of fellows. There is an active Academy of Nurses in the US.

In recent years there have been two failed attempts to develop a nursing academy. Key lessons from this failure are:

Membership of the Academy was based on university appointment at a professional level, rather than achievement in the field of research, or even interest in the field of research. This meant active researchers, new scholars and postgraduate students, the critical constituency of such a group, was not only unengaged, but was excluded.

Furthermore, the connection between the Academy and CDNLM did not allow a sufficient level of separation from institutional profiles and the Academy. In other words the fact that Deans were running the academy emphasised institutional positioning rather than research recognition.

The 'Society' model is common in the social sciences and humanities (psychology, sociology, history, literature, philosophy and education). Here the organisation follows an open, interest-led structure. Postgraduate students are highly engaged, research excellence is acknowledged through prizes and awards and an annual conference, and the focus is on research and scholarship rather than institutional affiliation or academic appointment level. Most societies auspice a scholarly journal, hard copy or electronic.

In the light of this background it is proposed that a national society should be established initially auspiced by CDNLM and thereafter supported solely by annual membership dues. It is further proposed that this should happen in advance of the implementation of the RQF in order to help prepare the discipline for optimal performance. Critically, this should be a working, functional (as opposed to elite or status-based) organisation with low overheads and a practical mandate to develop a national focus for nursing and midwifery research.

It is proposed that CDNLM support the establishment of a Society in order to:

- Provide a vehicle for nursing and midwifery researchers to assume a direct national leadership role
- Develop a voice to engage DEST and form a group that will be responsible for the oversight of the RQF with respect to nursing and midwifery
- Develop a profile for nursing research independent of professional and educational issues
- Reward excellence in nursing research and research training
- Build momentum and separate research leadership from institutional issues that may politicise it
- Allow CDNM to focus on educational issues in the highly dynamic context of the Nelson reforms

An Australian Society for Research in Nursing and Midwifery (ASRNM) would bring together leading nursing and midwifery researchers to promote excellence in scholarship, research and practice of nursing. Its strategic priorities would be to enhance patient care and health outcomes through research; to celebrate excellence and foster the future generation of nursing and midwifery researchers; and to lead debate by guiding informed thinking and influencing public policy in health.

The ASRNM would be committed to a strong consumer focus, encourage an interdisciplinary and inter-professional ethos, facilitate international exchange and the dissemination of best practice.

See Appendix I for a draft constitution based upon the Australian Society for Research in Education.

Appendix I

The Australian Society for Research in Nursing and Midwifery (ASRNM)

DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

CONSTITUTION

Article 1: Name

The name of the Society is the Australian Society for Research in Nursing and Midwifery Incorporated.

Article 11: Purpose

The objectives of the Society are to promote, support and improve research and its application in the development of nursing and midwifery.

Article 111: Membership

Section 1: Membership Classes

There shall be four classes of member of the Society:

- I. Ordinary member
- II. Honorary member
- III. Retired member
- IV. International affiliate

Section 2: Ordinary Members

Ordinary members have full rights and privileges of membership, including the right to attend all meetings of the Society, to participate in its affairs, to vote, and to hold office.

Section 3: Honorary Members

From time to time the Executive Committee may invite a member who has retired from full-time employment and who has made an outstanding contribution to research in nursing and midwifery to become an honorary member. Honorary members shall have full rights and privileges of membership.

Section 4: Retired Members

A member who has retired from full time employment may apply to become a retired member. Retired members have full rights and privileges of membership.

Section 5: International Affiliates

A resident of a country other than Australia who qualifies for ordinary or retired membership may choose status as an international affiliate if he or she does not wish to become a voting member.

Article IV: The General Meeting and Executive Committee

Section 1: General Meeting

- (a) The General Meeting shall consist of the members in attendance at the annual or special general meetings, as defined in Article VIII. The General Meeting shall be the legislative and policy-making body for the Society.
- (b) The General Meeting shall have power:
 - (i) to approve and alter the Constitution;
 - (ii) to make and amend by-laws;
 - (iii) to elect the Executive Committee of the Society, the Membership Committee and such other Committees, that it may deem desirable;
 - (iv) to approve the budget;
 - (v) to direct and review the general affairs of the Society, and
 - (vi) to endorse legislative actions taken by the Executive Committee between General Meetings.
- (c) Twenty-five ordinary members shall constitute a quorum for meetings of a General Meeting.
- (d) Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or By-laws, decisions of a General Meeting shall be by a majority of those present and voting.

Section 2: The Executive Committee

- (a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the President Elect, the Immediate Past President, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer, the Editor of the *Australian Nursing and Midwifery Researcher*, the Editor of the Newsletter, the Research Training Co-ordinator and four ordinary members. The President shall act

Comment: These roles come from the AARE and may not be appropriate, at least in the first instance. Please comment.

as Chairperson of the Executive Committee. In the absence of the President the President Elect shall act as Chairperson.

- (b) The Executive Committee shall hold a regular meeting each year at the time of the annual meeting of the Society. The President may call meeting at other times, giving due notice as to date and agenda.
- (c) Five members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum, and, unless otherwise specified in the By-laws, decisions shall be by majority of those present and voting.
- (d) The Executive Committee shall ensure that the policies and the legislation of the Conference are put into effect and assist the President in carrying on the affairs of the Society between General meetings. The Executive Committee may at any time conduct a mail vote regarding any legislative action proposed.
- (e) The Executive Committee shall make a report to the Annual General Meeting. Such report shall be circulated in writing to all members within a reasonable period of time.
- (f) The Executive Committee shall appoint a Membership Committee to advise it on all matters relating to membership.
- (g) The Executive Committee may appoint such committees as it deems desirable.

Article V: Officers, Nominations, Elections

Section 1: Officers

The Officers of the Society shall be the President, the President Elect, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer, the Editor of the *Australian Nursing and Midwifery Researcher*, the Editor of the Newsletter, and the Research Training Co-ordinator.

Section 2: Term

- (a) The terms of office of the President and the President Elect shall be two years each. At the end of a term of office the President retires from the Executive and the President Elect becomes the President.
- (b) The term of office shall begin at the close of the Annual General Meeting, and shall continue until a successor takes office. If an elected officer is not available to take office within one month of the time the term is supposed to begin, the Executive Committee may declare the office vacant or appoint a temporary substitute.

Section 3: Nominations and Elections

- (a) The President, the President Elect, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer, the Editor of the *Australian Nursing and Midwifery Researcher*, the Editor of the Newsletter, the Research Training Co-ordinator and the other ordinary members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen by written ballot from the ordinary members of the Society.
- (b) Nominations for the offices referred to in sub-section (a) shall be made in accordance with procedures laid down in By-laws established under this Constitution.

Section 4: Vacancies

- (a) When a vacancy in the office of the President occurs, the President Elect shall succeed. The incoming President Elect will serve out the remainder of the vacated term as well as the subsequent term.
- (b) When a vacancy occurs in the office of the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer, the Editor or the Research Training Officer, the Executive Committee may appoint a temporary officer to act until the position is filled by the usual procedure.
- (c) If an officer is unable or fails to perform assigned duties satisfactorily over a period of time, the Executive Committee is authorised to declare the office vacant. The Executive Committee also has the authority to take other reasonable steps to maintain the continuity of the Society's operations.

Section 5: Duties of Officers

- (a) The duties of the President and President Elect shall be the same as those usually performed by such officers in organisations similar to this Society.
- (b) The President shall be the Chairperson of General Meetings and of the Executive Committee (Article IV).
- (c) The Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer, the Editor and the Research Training Officer shall perform the duties assigned to them by the General Meeting and the Executive Committee.

Article VI: Finances and Public Officer

Section 1 Dues

Annual dues for all classes of membership shall be set by the Society's Annual General Meeting or by the Society's Annual Conference in accordance with the Society's financial needs. Ordinary members who provide evidence that they are post graduate

research students or final year honours students and who are not in full-time employment, shall pay membership dues at 50% of the dues of ordinary members.

Section 2: Financial Accounting

- (a) The financial accounts of the Society shall be audited annually by a member of a professional accounting body and reviewed by the Executive Committee.
- (b) The Honorary Treasurer shall receive dues and other payments and keep accounts. Cheques drawn upon the Society shall bear two signatures. The Executive Committee shall determine from time to time those persons whose signatures shall be recognised for that purpose. The Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall render reports as required.

Section 3: Special Assessments

In case of special need a General Meeting or the Executive Committee may propose a levy not to exceed \$10 in any one year on ordinary members. Such proposal must be voted on by mail ballot of ordinary members of the Society. The proposal must receive a two-thirds favourable vote of the members who return their ballots within 30 days from the date of the initial mailing.

Section 4: Use

- (a) All revenue derived from dues, assessments, sale of publications, gifts, grants, or from other sources shall be used entirely for the work of this Society. Such funds shall be expended in accordance with the Society purposes in keeping with its budget, or with the special terms of a grant or bequest.
- (b) No member or group of members shall commit the funds or other assets and resources of the Society in any way except as stipulated in the By-laws.
- (c) No part of the income of the Society shall be paid to any member as a share or as a monetary benefit but officers, committee members, and employees may be reimbursed for necessary expenses related to their duties. Employees shall also be reasonably compensated for services in carrying out Society purposes and programs.

Section 5: Budget

- (a) The Executive Committee shall recommend to the Annual General Meeting a budget for the current calendar year. When approved this budget shall govern financial commitment of the Society for the fiscal year.
- (b) Should circumstances prevent distributing a budget at the Annual General Meeting, the budget adopted by the Executive Committee shall be submitted by mail as promptly as possible to the ordinary members.

- (c) If a budget for the new fiscal year has not been adopted by the Annual General Meeting by the time the preceding budget expires, the Executive Committee is authorised to continue spending or committing the Society's funds as far as seems reasonable, at a rate in keeping with the provisions of the preceding budget pending adoption of a new one.

Section 6: Grants to the Society

In keeping with its objectives, the Society may receive grants for special purposes and may deposit and expend these funds according to terms laid down by the grantor and accepted by the Executive Committee.

Section 7: Public Officer

There shall be a Public Officer of the Society who shall be a member of the Society resident in Victoria. The Public Officer will be appointed by the Executive Committee and will perform duties specified in the Society's Incorporation Act 1981 of Victoria.

Article VII: Meetings and Business

Section 1: Calling of Meetings

- (a) The Executive Committee shall have authority to set the time and place of meetings of the Society.
- (b) On the petition of 20 ordinary members or five per cent of the ordinary membership, whichever is greater, the Executive Committee must call a general meeting to be held within three months of the date of the petition.
- (c) Except for sufficient reason, there shall be an Annual General Meeting for the conduct of official business by members of the Society.
- (d) Announcement of the time and place of any meeting of the Society shall be made as far ahead as is reasonably possible. In any case, notice shall be sent at least three weeks in advance.

Article VIII: Amendments and Revisions

Section 1: Amendments to Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may be initiated in any of the following three ways:

- (a) The Executive Committee may formulate proposals for amendment of the Constitution and submit them, in writing, with any arguments it chooses, to the ordinary membership.
- (b) The President may appoint a committee to consider revising the Constitution in general, or amending some particular point or points. The President must then submit, in writing, to the membership of the Society the committee report together with recommendations of the Executive Committee for or against.
- (c) Any 10 members of the Society may submit to the Executive Committee a proposed amendment or amendments to the Constitution in writing and signed by the sponsors. The Executive Committee shall then submit, in writing, the proposed amendment with any arguments advanced by its sponsors, and with the Executive Committee recommendation for or against the proposed changes, to the members of the Society for action. An amendment to the Constitution formulated in this manner may not be submitted to the Executive Committee within a period of two months preceding the date of the Annual General Meeting.

Section 2: Amendments to By-laws

- (a) Amendments to the By-laws may be initiated similarly to amendments to the Constitution (Section 1 (a), (b), (c)), or,
- (b) Amendments to the By-laws may be proposed by an ordinary member with a seconder at a General Meeting.

Section 3: Adoption

Amendments or revisions may be acted on by the ordinary members of the Society as follows:

The Honorary Secretary shall forward the proposed changes to the Constitution and changes to the By-laws to be determined by the General Meeting, with explanations and arguments, to the ordinary members at least 30 days before the Annual General Meeting or any special general meeting called for the purpose of amendment to the Constitution. The proposed amendments shall be submitted in the form distributed for acceptance or rejection. Ordinary members unable to attend may record postal votes. A proposed amendment to a motion to amend the Constitution may be accepted at the discretion of the Annual General Meeting only if the Chairperson rules it to be a clarification of the original motion (i.e. containing no new substantive issues) and if the proposer accepts the proposed amendment. Where a postal vote has been exercised, such a vote shall remain valid if the original motion is amended by the procedure described above. An affirmative vote of at least two thirds of the combined total of those present and entitled to vote and those who submit signed postal votes shall be required for acceptance of the Constitution

amendments and a majority for By-laws changes. The results of the vote shall be reported at the Annual General Meeting and in writing to the membership within a reasonable length of time.

Section 4: Effective Date

The effective date for each amendment should be specified. If no effective date is indicated, following approval by ordinary members as described, an amendment becomes effective on the date selected by official action of the Executive Committee.

Article IX: Winding-up of the Society

Section 1: Decision to dissolve the Society

- (a) A proposal to dissolve the Society may be initiated in any of the ways prescribed for amendments to the Constitution (Article VIII, Section 1).
- (b) Such a proposal shall be submitted by mail ballot to all ordinary members of the Society. At least 30 days must elapse between the date on which the proposal is mailed to the members and the date on which the ballot closes.
- (c) To become effective the proposal must be supported by at least two thirds of the ballots returned.

Section 2: Dissolution of the Society

- (a) Should a proposal to dissolve the Society be sustained the Executive Committee shall prepare a written report giving:
 - (i) an audited financial statement
 - (ii) proposals for meeting the commitments of the Society, and the disposal of any assets.
- (b) This report shall be submitted to all ordinary members of the Society and a mail ballot conducted on the acceptability of the proposals to become effective. The proposals shall require a simple majority of ballots returned within 30 days of mailing.
- (c) The Executive Committee shall remain in existence until the affairs of the Society are terminated.

BY-LAWS

1. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Currency of Membership

Membership fees shall cover membership for a period of twelve months from the date of admission to membership or from the date on which such fees shall fall due.

Section 2: Applications

Applications for membership shall be sent to the Membership Committee which shall receive and process them according to the provision stated in Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 or Article III of the Constitution. The Executive Committee must ratify the decisions of the Membership Committee.

Section 3: Failure to Pay Dues

The membership of any member whose dues fall in arrears by twelve months shall terminate automatically.

Section 4: Reinstatement

On request and on payment of one year's outstanding dues, anyone whose membership has been automatically terminated for non-payment of dues may be reinstated by the Executive Committee of the Society.

Section 5: Termination

If a full investigation by the Membership Committee determines that continued membership of any person is contrary to the interests, purposes, or ethical standards of the Society, membership may be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee, provided that before final action is taken to terminate membership, a member shall be given reasonable opportunity to present a defence.

Section 6

Honorary members are exempt from paying annual dues or special assessments.

2. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1:

The Executive Committee shall call for nominations in writing for all offices to be filled at the Annual General Meeting at least two calendar months before that General Meeting.

All nominations must be signed by a proposer, a seconder, and the nominee. If there is only one nominated for a position at the close of nominations that person shall be declared elected. Election shall be by postal vote with the result determined by simple majority of the votes received by 5 p.m. on the day which is seven (7) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Section 2: Tellers' Committee

The President shall appoint a Tellers' Committee of two or more persons to make a count, and certify the results to the President. In case of a tie, an election to settle the tie shall be held immediately. The President shall announce the results of the elections at the Annual General Meeting.

3. MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER COMMITTEES

Section 1: Functions of the Membership Committee

The functions of the Membership Committee shall be:

- (a) studying conditions, trends, and needs of the Society with regard to members;
- (b) analysing the supply of potential new members;
- (c) scrutinising membership;
- (d) conducting sustained and special recruiting efforts among eligible persons; and
- (e) performing such other duties as may be assigned to it by a General Meeting or the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Special Task Committee

Special Committees may be established by a General Meeting or the Executive Committee to carry out particular tasks designed to make a substantive contribution to nursing and midwifery research. Members of these committees may be appointed by the Executive Committee. The size of the committees shall be in proportion to the duties to be performed, and the committees shall be discharged earlier if, in the judgement of the General Meeting or the Executive Committee, they are not making substantial progress towards their purpose. The Conference may designate the term of special task committees when they are approved.

4. FINANCES

Section 1: Receipt and Deposit

All Society funds which are received shall be paid to the Executive Committee unless received with contrary stipulation.

Section 2: Investment

By affirmative vote of at least five of its members, the Executive Committee shall invest stated amounts of the funds of the Society.

Section 3: Budget

A copy of the budget as recommended by the Executive Committee shall be distributed at the Annual General Meeting for discussion and approval.

5. VOTING

Section 1: Mail Voting

Items of business requiring the vote of the ordinary members may be transacted by mail when the Executive Committee considers such action desirable. Mail vote procedure shall safeguard as fully as possible the rights and interests of all members. It shall also be in order for any member to introduce these items for discussion and reconsideration at the next succeeding Annual General Meeting of the Society.

Section 2: Request for Mail Vote

At any Annual General Meeting the members present may refer any business to the ordinary membership for a vote by mail. It is presumed that a resume of the discussion on the floor will be included in the material sent to the members. A motion requesting a mail vote is subsidiary and may be made and voted on while a principal motion is pending.

i Prepared by the Working Party on the RQF for the Australian and New Zealand Deans of Nursing and Midwifery, June 2005 (Chair, Professor Sioban Nelson, University of Melbourne). This position paper is heavily influenced by two documents: The Royal Academy of Engineers, The Assessment of Research Quality in Engineering Disciplines: A recommendation to the Higher Education Funding Council for England for adoption in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008, Lyn Yates What does Good Education Research Look Like? Open University Press 2004.

ii International Benchmarking of US Mathematics Research, Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy. 1998

iii Gibbons M, Lomoges C, Nowotny H, Schwartzmann S, Scott P and Trow M The new production of knowledge, Sage, London, 1994.

iv It is possible that what is being referred to as 'Third Stream' funding may be introduced by DEST to pick up knowledge transfer, industry uptake and commercialisation. This is a further reason to distinguish between these modes of research while acknowledging that rarely does either mode exist in isolation.

v Adapted from The Royal Academy of Engineers, Measuring Excellence in Engineering Research, 2000, p.28