



MACQUARIE
University
SYDNEY • AUSTRALIA

World-leading research – World-changing impact

The Macquarie HDR model: MRes as a preferred pathway into a PhD

Professor Sakkie Pretorius –Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)



Prepare world-ready HDR candidates

World-leading research with world-changing impact



Masters by Research



Reasons and motivation for the introduction of MRes

In 2013, Macquarie introduced the 2-year MRes to:

-  Align the structure of our degrees to international best practice
-  Attract high-potential HDR candidates
-  Address long completion times and attrition in the PhD
-  Better prepare candidates for PhD candidature
-  Develop additional graduate capabilities





Masters by Research

Domestic and international MRes candidates



The *Master of Research* is offered in two identical forms

-  For domestic candidates as Bachelor of Philosophy (BPhil) or Master of Research (MRes)
-  For international candidates as the Master of Research (MRes)






Masters by Research



MRes admission requirements



Admission requirements for Year 1

-  Undergraduate degree from a recognised institution with minimum overall GPA of 4.38 on a 7-point scale and GPA of 5.25 at 300 level
-  A short research proposal
-  Some disciplines may have additional admission requirements such as a portfolio of work or a higher level of performance in previous study

Admission requirements for Year 2

-  Completion of Year 1 units of study or
-  Direct entry for candidates who have done relevant postgraduate studies or Honours at Macquarie University or another university are assessed for RPL and may be admitted directly to Year 2

Masters by Research

MRes content and activities



Year 1: content and activities

Eight units of study

- Research Communications
- Research Frontiers
- 6 Faculty or Department-based units of advanced disciplinary content
- Optional WIL unit MRes 7010
- Inbound and outbound MRes exchange (partners in Germany, Sweden, Norway and Denmark)



Year 2: content and activities

Five core activities

- Research Frontiers 2 (10%)
- Literature Review
- Research Methods
- Research Planning
- Thesis (20,000 words) assessed by two external Examiners (90%)



Masters by Research

Macquarie's MRes journey



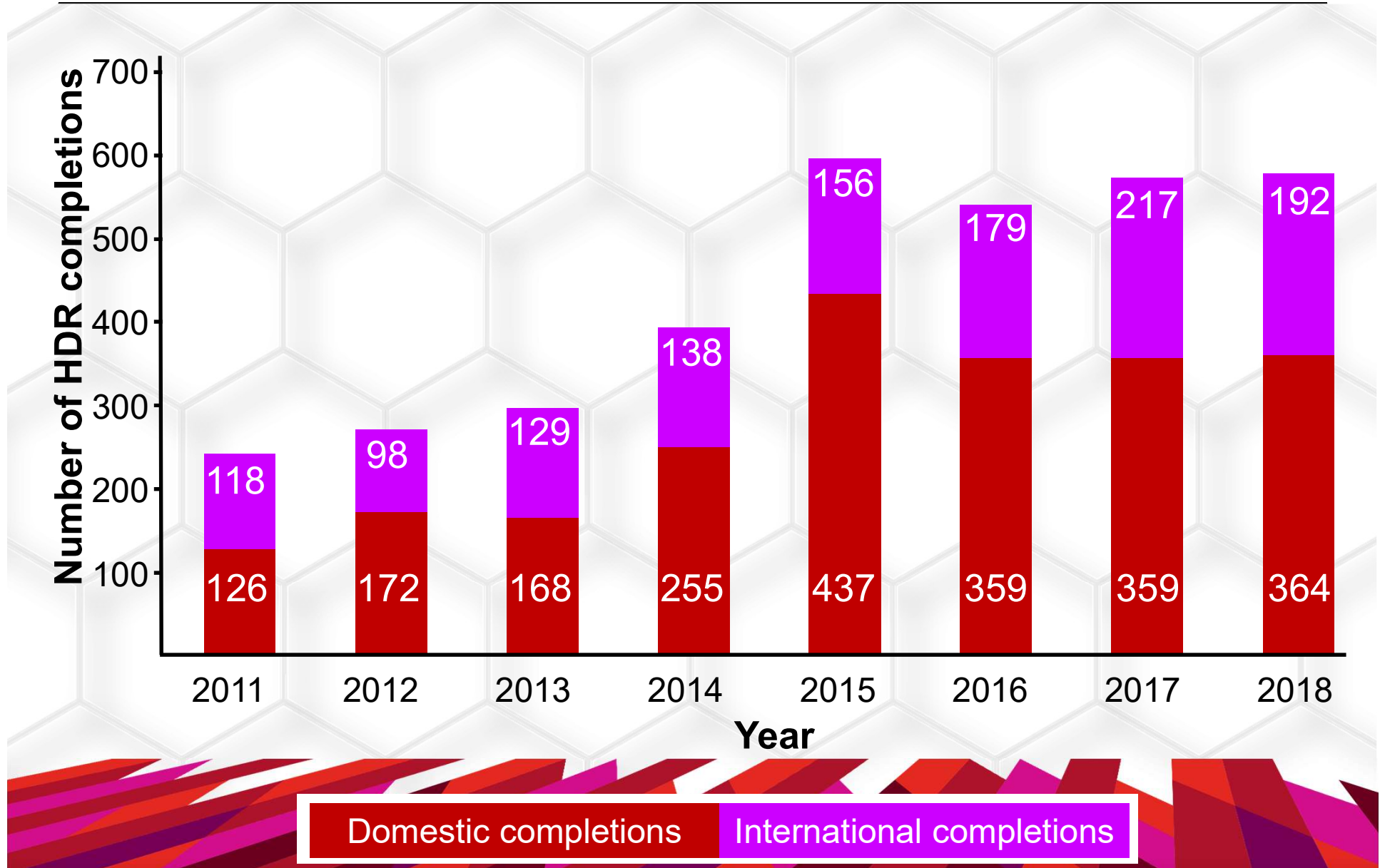
Two changes were announced in conjunction with the introduction of the first year of MRes in 2013

- From 01/01/2014 the maximum enrolment for the PhD was shortened from 4 to 3 years EFTSL
- A new PhD admission criteria:
a minimum 2-year research Masters qualification (AQF 9)
with a substantial research component and
with a minimum thesis grade of 75% (Distinction)



Mix of HDR completions

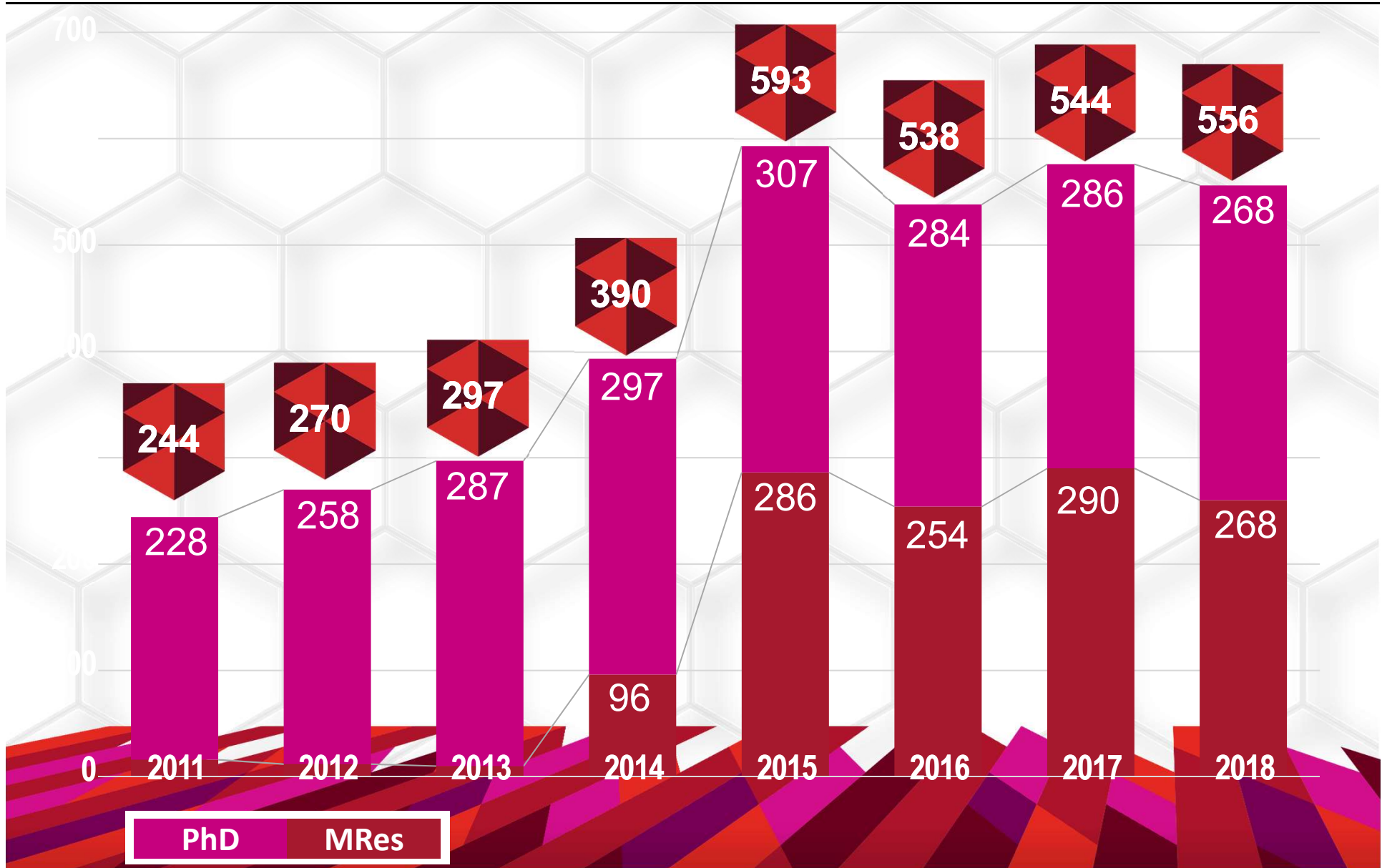
Domestic versus International completions



Macquarie's HDR completions

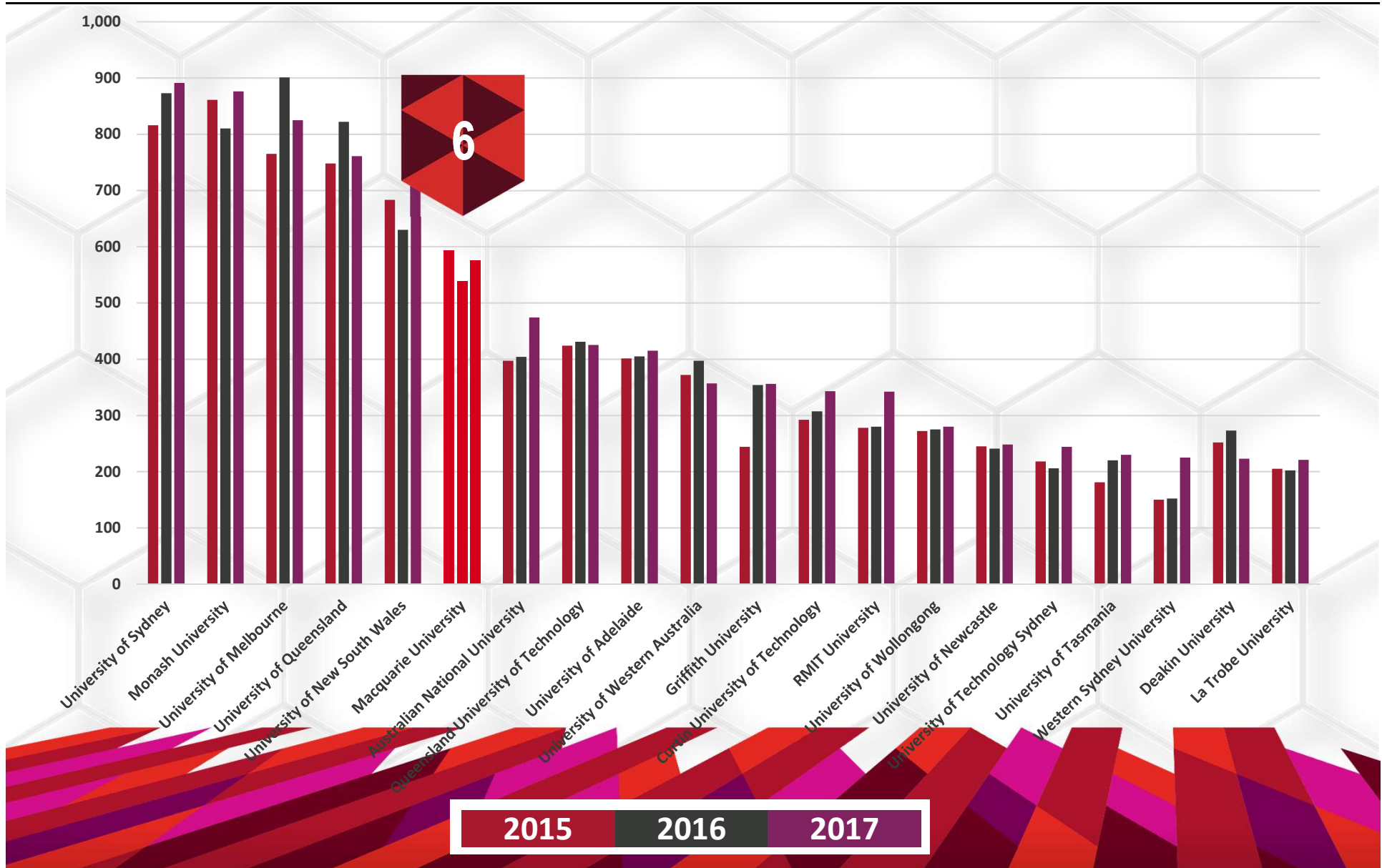


PhD versus MRes completions



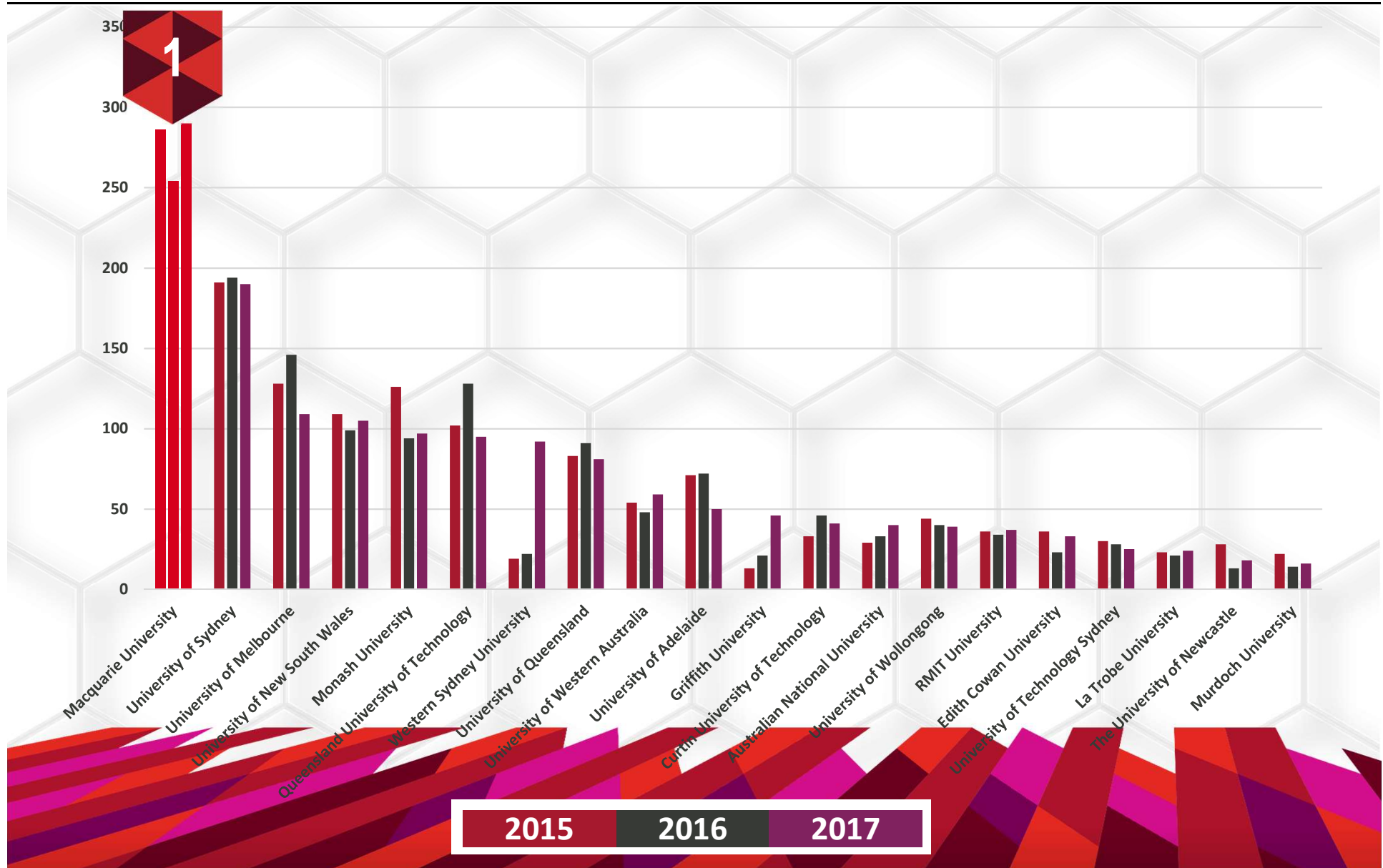
Sector HDR completions

Top 20 by total HDR completions



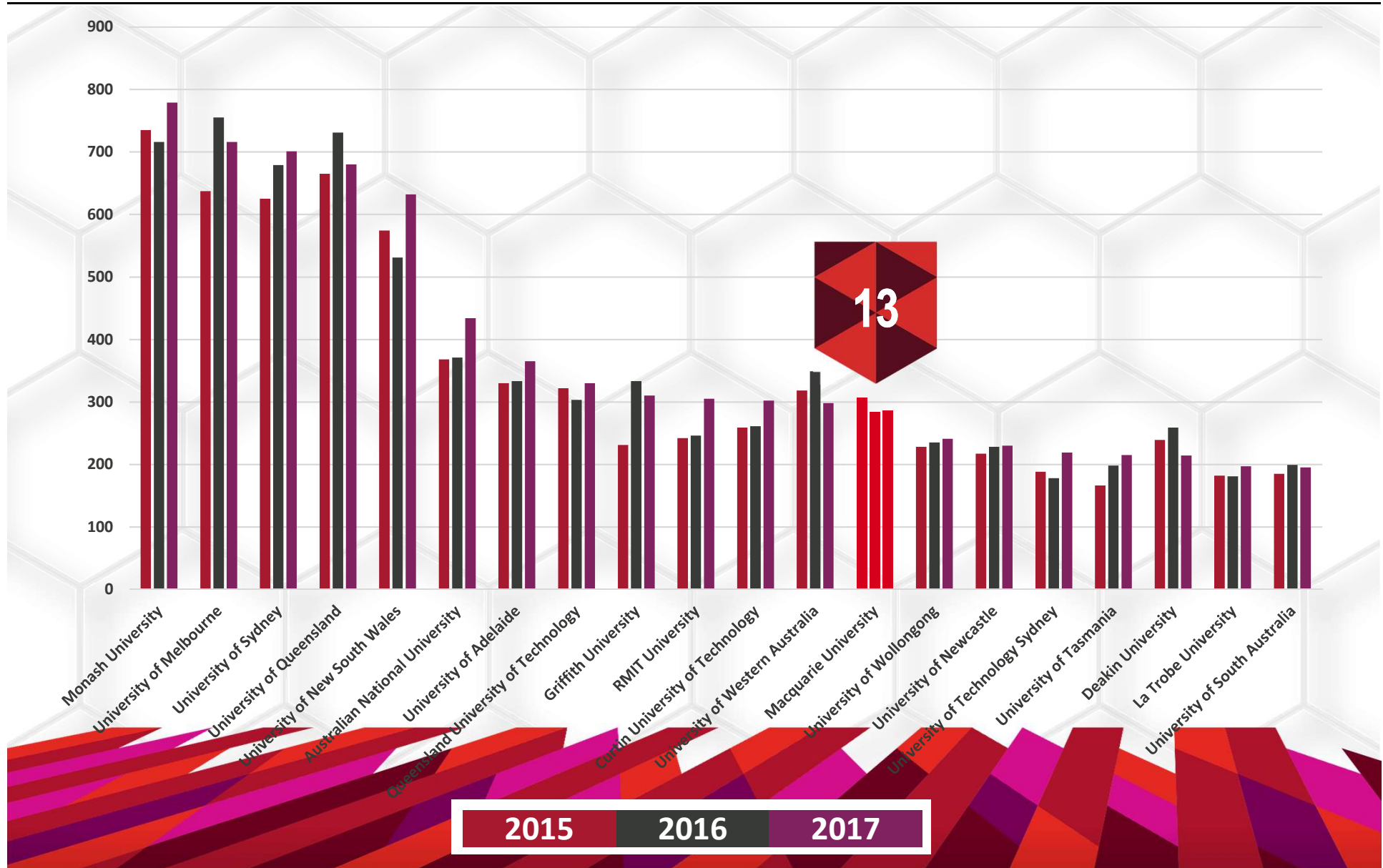
Sector HDR completions

Top 20 by MRes completions



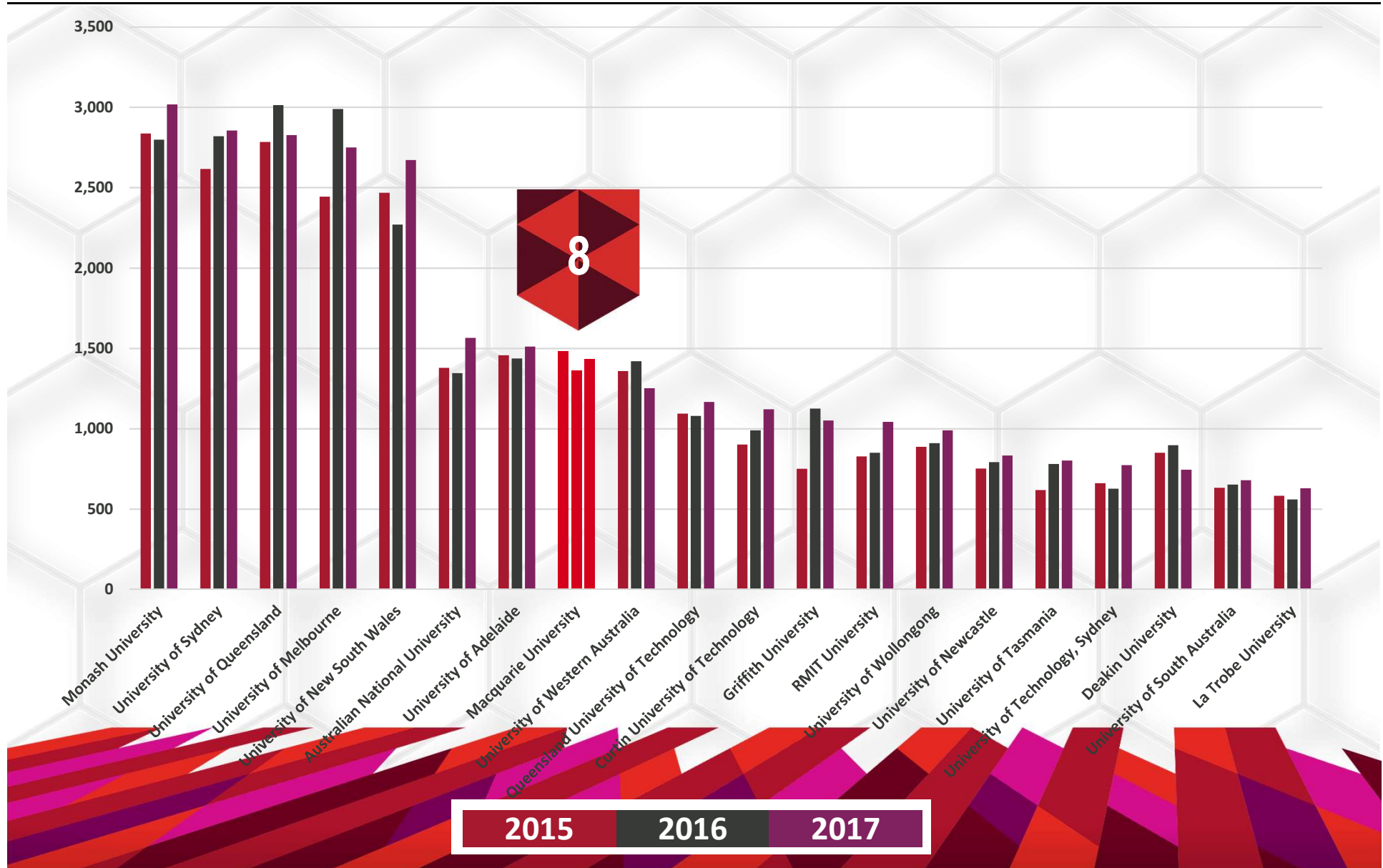
Sector HDR completions

Top 20 by PhD completions



Sector HDR completions

Top 20 by weighted HDR completions

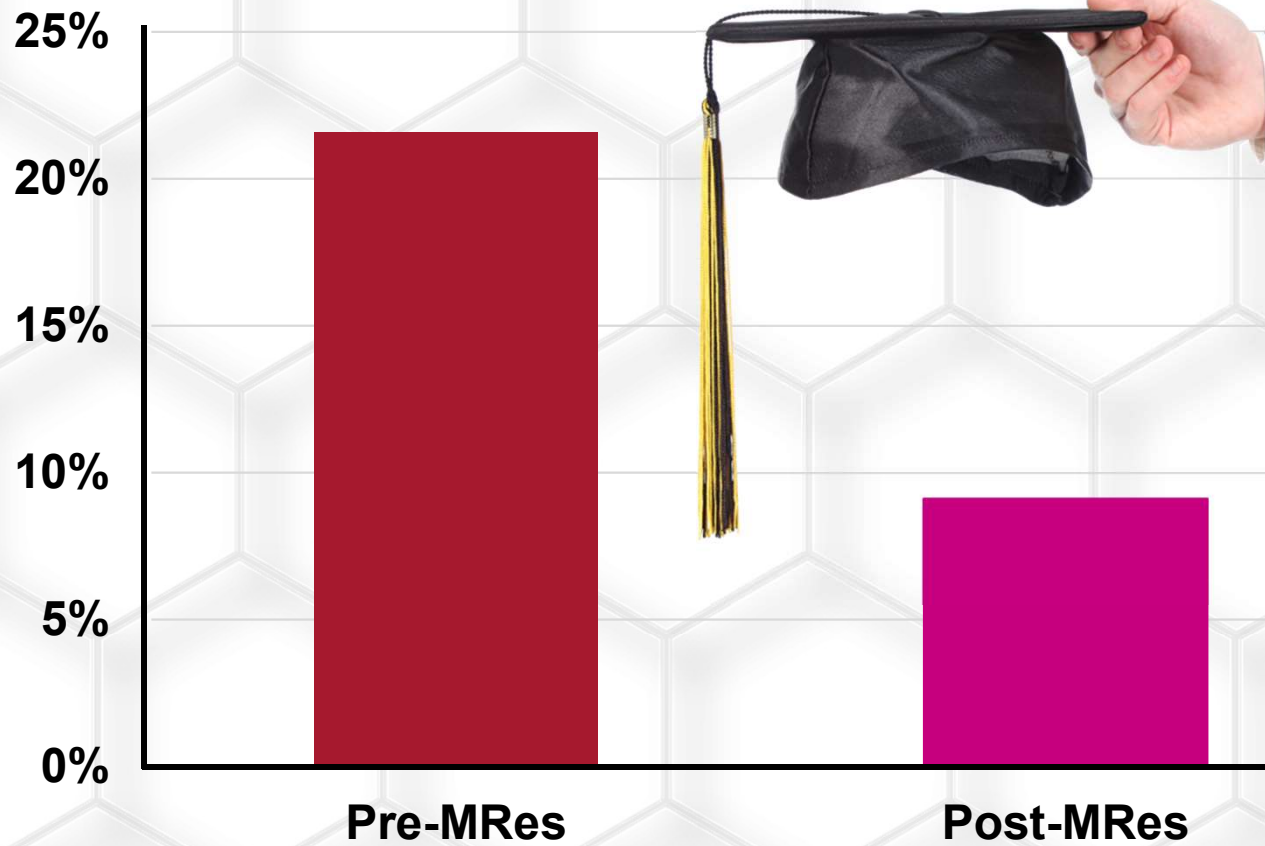


Masters by Research

Reducing Attrition



Attrition from PhD: Pre and Post-MRes

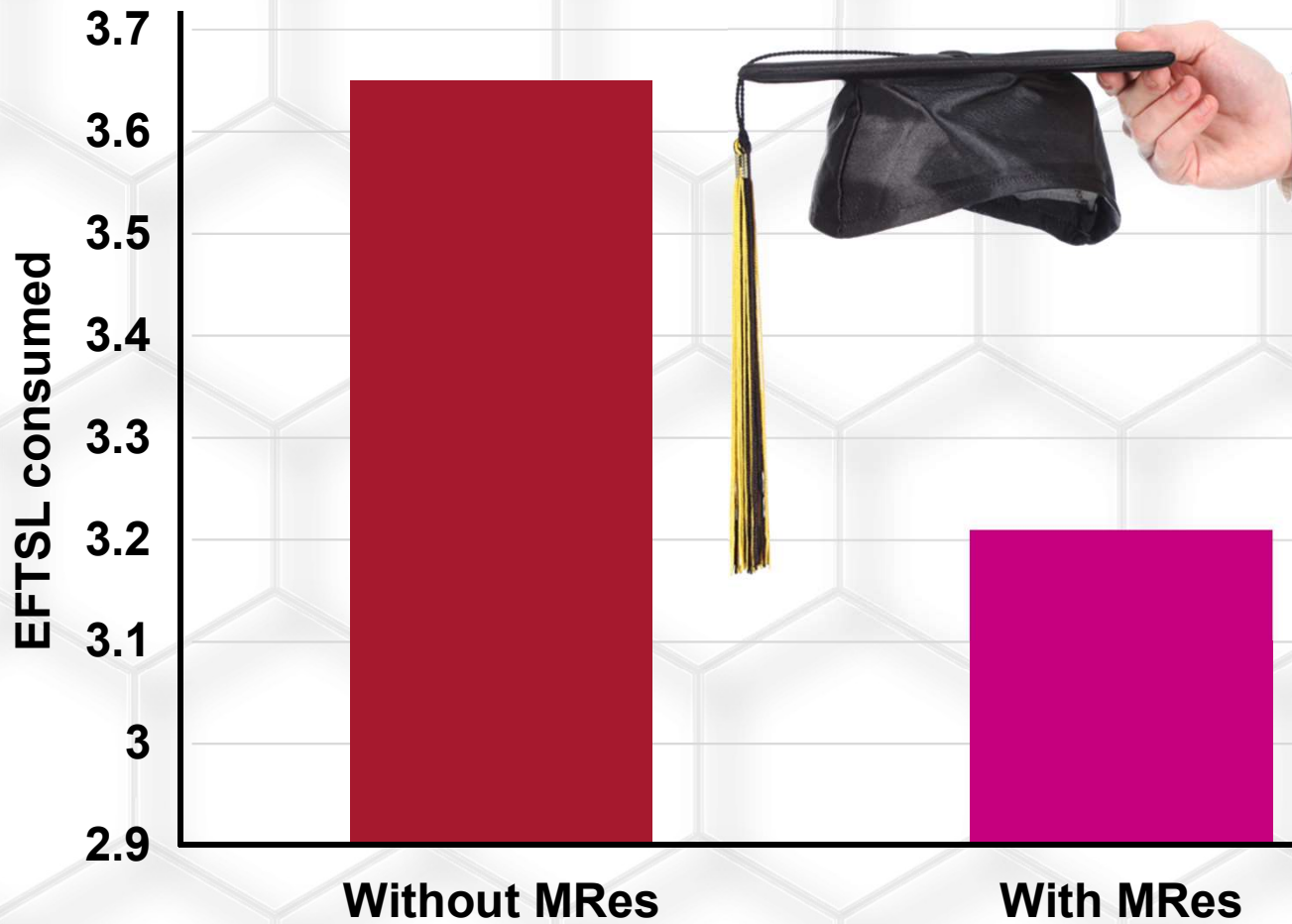


Masters by Research

Reducing time

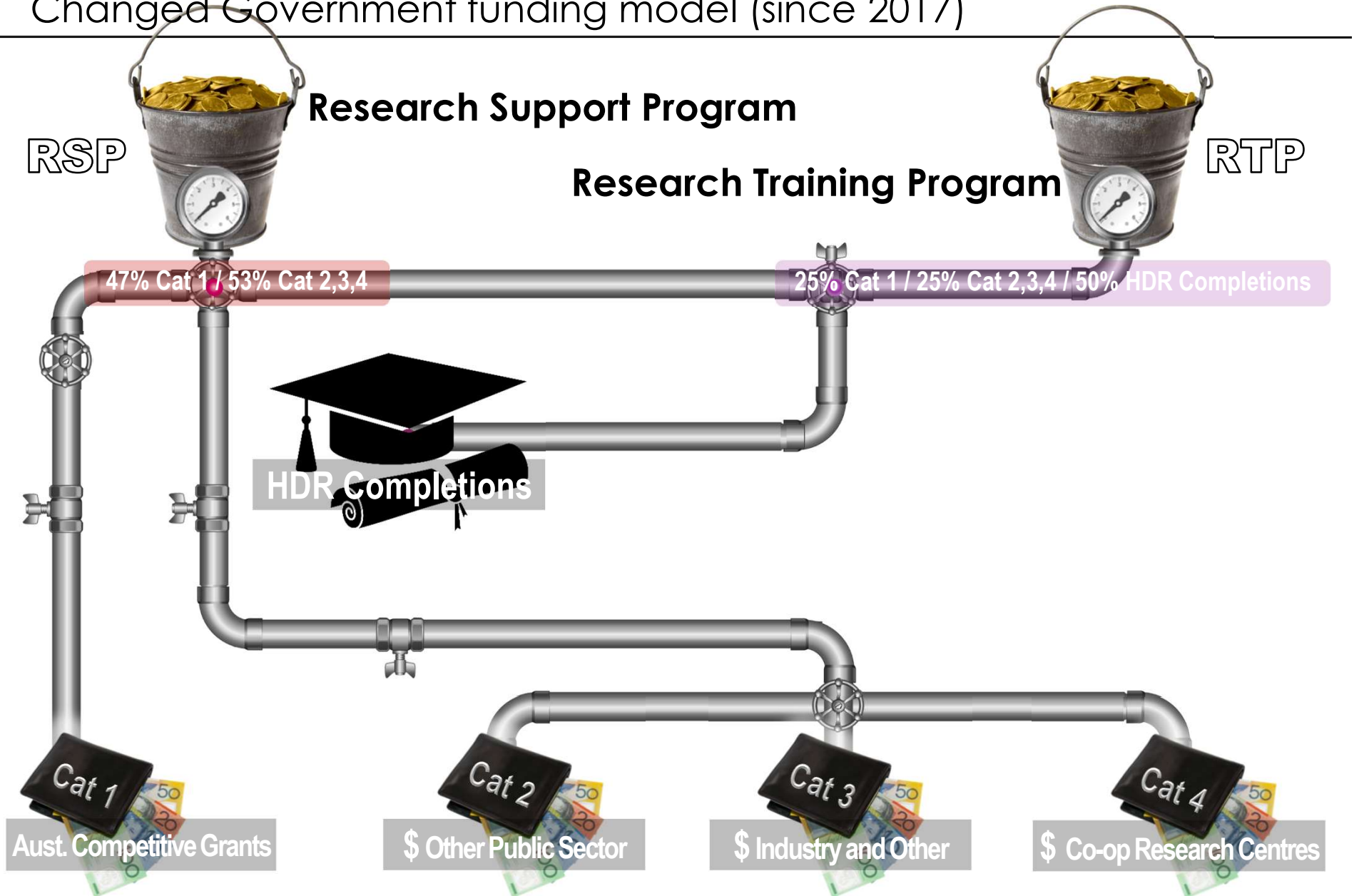


EFTSL consumed during PhD



Research block grants

Changed Government funding model (since 2017)



Is MRes a better pathway into a PhD?

What do the students say...?



MRes
(2 years)

PhD
(3 years)



Is MRes a better pathway into a PhD?



Feedback from candidates who completed MRes Year 2

“MRes Yr2 was a requirement for PhD progression, and at first, I was disappointed at not gaining direct entry to PhD. In hindsight, it was a good year of solid research preparation and practice. It has helped to refine the focus of my further study, too.”

“This year has taught me valuable writing and lab skills. Arguably more importantly, it has taught me what it means to be a researcher in a department, the sort of interactions you have with other researchers, and how the research process (grants, proposals etc) works ”

“I have become more fully acquainted with the academic conventions of writing a thesis. I have become a better writer. As a researcher, I am more conscious of my philosophical and ethical position ”



Is MRes a better pathway into a PhD?



Feedback from candidates who completed MRes Year 2

“I enjoyed the [local] conference and really enjoyed my weekly supervision meetings. Mostly I just listened admiringly to this group of clever, clever people chatting about my research, but I found it a great learning environment.”

“It was a fabulous experience and I really found great intellectual development. Undertaking the MRes program was very beneficial in understanding research requirements, therefore, it helped me a great deal to develop researching skills”

“The June Presentation activity, although badly timed, had a profound effect on my work. Presenting my work made it real. It also put you in touch with people, which was a pleasant experience”






MACQUARIE
University

BUSINESS

Human
Sciences

MBA

Medicine