

Webinar on the draft panel criteria and working methods

Main Panel A
6 September 2018



Research
England



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Introduction and overview

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- Professor John Iredale, Chair of Main Panel A
 - Kim Hackett, REF Director
 - Catriona Firth, Head of REF Policy
 - Myles Furr, REF team
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- Walk through criteria and working methods
 - Perspectives from the Chair
 - Respond to your questions
 - Further information

Consultation

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- Detailed REF guidance and criteria published for consultation in July 2018
- Views on criteria invited on:
 - whether the criteria are appropriate and clear, where refinements could be made
 - where more consistency could be achieved or where further differentiation is justified
 - as well views on some specific points
- Deadline for responses: noon, 15 October 2018

Webinar aims

- Provide overview of the detailed criteria for Main Panel A
- Reflect on key changes
- Offer opportunity for clarification
- Inform responses to the consultation

Panel criteria

Aims

- Build on REF 2014 criteria to maintain continuity
- Achieve consistency across the main panels, where possible, while taking into account disciplinary differences

Main panel	Unit of assessment
A	1 Clinical Medicine
	2 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
	3 Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
	4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
	5 Biological Sciences
	6 Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Sciences

Key changes since REF 2014

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Overall framework

- Staff: submit all with significant responsibility for research; decoupled from outputs
- Outputs: transitional approach to non-portability; open access; additional measures to support interdisciplinary research
- Broadening and deepening definitions of impact

Main panel A

- Combined criteria, including panel interpretations, impact examples and environment narrative
- Quantitative indicators for environment
- Category C staff contribution
- Reproducibility

Submissions – interdisciplinary research

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For the purposes of the REF, interdisciplinary research is understood to achieve outcomes (including new approaches) that could not be achieved within the framework of a single discipline. Interdisciplinary research features significant interaction between two or more disciplines and / or moves beyond established disciplinary foundations in applying or integrating research approaches from other disciplines.

- HEIs are invited to identify outputs that meet this definition. This process is distinct from a request for cross-referral.
- There will be no advantage or disadvantage in the assessment in identifying outputs as interdisciplinary.

Submissions

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- Pedagogic research
 - Expected that research on pedagogy or medical or veterinary education submitted in UOA 23 (Education)
 - Medical ethics in UOA 30 (Philosophy)
 - Applied research conforming to UOA descriptor may be submitted in UOA 2 (Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care)
 - Research on philosophical and ethical aspects of healthcare and on education relevant to its disciplines may be submitted in UOA 3 (Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy)
- Multiple submissions
 - Sub-panels in Main Panel A do not consider that there is a case for multiple submissions, and do not expect to receive requests (other than for reasons set out in the 'Guidance on submissions').

Outputs – criteria

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Originality	Significance	Rigour
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the extent to which the output makes an important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge in the field	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the extent to which the work has influenced, or has the capacity to influence, knowledge and scholarly thought, or the development and understanding of policy and/or practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the extent to which the work demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, theories and methodologies

Scored one to four star (or unclassified)

- Each main panel sets out its own understanding of the starred quality levels
- All outputs meeting REF definition of research are eligible, with all forms of output considered equitably
- Panels will not use journal impact factors or hierarchies of journals in assessment

Outputs – co-authored

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- REF team consulting in GOS on whether an output should only be returned once within the same submission (made by an HEI in one UOA).
- Institutions may only attribute co-authored outputs to individual members of staff who made **a substantial research contribution** to the output

Main Panel A

- Institutions required to affirm the substantial contribution to the research by the submitted member of staff for each submitted co-authored output where:
 - there are **ten or more** authors **and**
 - where the submitted member of staff is not identified as the lead or corresponding author.
- Include in REF2 at least one element from each of the following:
 - A. The author made a substantial contribution either to the conception and design of the study; or to the organisation of the conduct of the study; or to carrying out the study; or to analysis and interpretation of study data.
 - B. The author helped draft the output; or critique the output for important intellectual content.

Outputs – double-weighting

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- Double-weighting may be requested where the scale of academic investment in the research activity and/or the intellectual scope of the research output is considerably greater than the disciplinary norm.
- HEIs may submit a reserve output, should the request not be accepted. This **does not** have to be attributed to the same member of staff but must be in accordance with min. 1 and max. 5 outputs attributed to staff.
- Main Panel A expectations:
 - Substantial academic endeavour by member of staff to whom output is attributed
 - Expect requests will occur only exceptionally
 - Journal articles and conference papers would not normally embody work of this nature.

Outputs – other

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- The sub-panels welcome research practice that supports reproducible science and the application of best practice in relation to use of animals in research.
- All sub-panels in Main Panel A will use citation data (where available), as potential indicator of academic significance
- Will use in accordance with the following criteria:
 - Citation data will be **one** element to inform peer-review judgement, as indicator of academic significance
 - Absence of data will not be taken to mean absence of significance
 - Sub-panels recognise citation count is sometimes, not always, reliable indicator
 - Will only use data provided by REF team; will not use any other sources, including any journal rankings.

Questions



Impact case studies - eligibility

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Submission:

- Impact remains eligible for submission by institution(s) where research was generated (i.e. non-portable)
- Impact must be underpinned by research of minimum 2* quality
- Timeframe:
 - 1 January 2000 - 31 December 2020 for underpinning research
 - 1 August 2013 - 31 July 2020 for impacts
- Impact on teaching within (and beyond) own HEI eligible
- Case studies continued from examples submitted in 2014 will be eligible for submission in REF 2021, **provided they meet the same eligibility criteria**

Impact – criteria

Reach

- the extent and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, as relevant to the nature of the impact. (It will not be assessed in geographic terms, nor in terms of absolute numbers of beneficiaries.)

Significance

- the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed or changed the performance, policies, practices, products, services, understanding, awareness or well-being of the beneficiaries.

- Case studies describing **any type(s)** of impact welcomed (extensive – but not exhaustive – list of examples of impact and indicators at Annex A)
- Case studies describing impacts through public engagement welcomed
- Case studies must provide a clear and coherent narrative supported by verifiable evidence and indicators

Impact – underpinning research

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- Panels recognise that the relationship between research and impact can be indirect and non-linear
- Underpinning research as a whole must be min. 2* quality
- Case studies must include up to six key references (not every output referenced has to be 2*) – HEIs can consult the outputs glossary in the ‘Guidance on submissions’
- Can also include indicators of quality e.g. evidence of peer-reviewed funding, prizes or awards for individual outputs etc.
- May be a body of work produced over a number of years or may be the output(s) of a particular project

Environment – criteria

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Vitality

- the extent to which a unit supports a thriving and inclusive research culture for all staff and research students, that is based on a clearly articulated strategy for research and enabling its impact, is engaged with the national and international research and user communities and is able to attract excellent postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers.

Sustainability

- the extent to which the research environment ensures the future health, diversity, well-being and wider contribution of the unit and the discipline(s), including investment in people and in infrastructure.

Structure and weighting

Main Panel A will attach equal weighting to each of the four sections:

- Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy
- People
- Income, infrastructure and facilities
- Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

Environment template

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Indicators

- All sub-panels will receive doctoral degrees awarded and research income data
- Further quantitative indicators may be included to support claims – advice and **examples** from Forum for Responsible Research Metrics

Additional information for Main Panel A

- Identify number of Cat C staff in unit on census date and describe their contribution to environment and, where relevant, the submission
- Provide evidence of approach to encouraging and developing best practice in undertaking research that is reproducible
- Provide evidence of extent of collaboration or integration with external bodies, such as NHS Research and Development, and/or with industry, government agencies, where appropriate

Institutional level assessment of environment

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- Institutional-level information will be appended to the UOA-level environment template and will be taken into account by the sub-panel when assessing the unit-level statement.
- Pilot of the standalone assessment of the discrete institutional-level environment will draw on this submitted information.
- Outcomes from the separate pilot exercise will **not** be included in REF 2021 but will inform future research assessment.

Questions



Working methods

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- The criteria document sets out how the common approach that the main and sub-panels will take in assessing submissions and recommending quality profiles. In particular:
 - Further nominations round to appoint the full assessment-phase panels – to ensure each sub-panel collectively has the breadth and depth of expertise to assess the work submitted
 - Main and sub-panel calibration to ensure consistency of assessment standards
 - Fair and equal assessment of interdisciplinary-flagged outputs (working with IDR advisers)
 - Cross-referral for advice of parts of submissions, where SP judges it does not have required expertise
 - Reviewing submissions – collective judgements about submissions in the round (not about individuals' contributions)

Interdisciplinary Research Advisory Panel

- oversee application of agreed principles and processes

Main panel interdisciplinary leads

- facilitate cross-panel liaison
- oversee calibration exercise for IDR outputs

Sub-panel interdisciplinary advisers

- Offer guidance to sub-panels on assessment of IDR outputs
- Liaise with advisers on other panels

Questions



Further information

- Consultation survey: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DTZ10/>
- Registration for consultation events: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/research-excellence-framework-hei-consultation-events-tickets-47811987943>
- www.ref.ac.uk (includes all relevant documents and FAQs)
- Enquiries from staff at HEIs should be directed to their nominated institutional contact (available at www.ref.ac.uk/contact)
- Other enquiries to info@ref.ac.uk