REF consultation: Impact, Environment & Institutional level assessment

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Webinar, 13 February 2017
Features of the REF consultation

We are seeking views on the following features of the next REF

- Overall approach
- Unit of Assessment structure
- Expert panels
- Staff
- Collaboration
- Outputs
- Impact
- Environment
- Institutional level assessment
- Outcomes and weighting
- Timetable
Webinar series

7 February

• Overall approach, UOA structure and panels

9 February

• Staff & Outputs

13 February

• Impact
• Environment
• Institutional level assessment
• Outcomes and Weightings
Impact

Proposals

• Broadening and deepening the definition of impact and guidance on certain types of impact

• Impact arising from research, research activity or a ‘body of work’

• Quality threshold for underpinning research & standards of rigour

Feedback

• Support for alignment with RCs (some confusion over eligibility of impact on teaching)

• Not just further guidance but early panel discussions needed too

• Support for broader basis of underpinning research but challenges in drawing boundaries/assessing eligibility/particular difficulties relating to non-portability

• Difficult to separate out rigour from originality and significance – no less burdensome
Impact

Proposals

• Impact evidence and Audit evidence
• Move the impact template to the assessment of environment
• Maintain total number of case studies, minimum of one per submission
• Consideration of guidelines around 2014 case studies

Feedback

• Some support for collecting all audit evidence in advance but trepidation about set standards for impact evidence data
• Broad support for moving impact template – template needs to explicitly recognise collaboration with industry
• Some concern about sub-profile based on 1 ICS – individual visibility/high risk-reward
• No appetite for limits around impacts returned in 2014, no desire for 2014 case studies to require additionality or explanatory statement
Questions

Definition of impact
Underpinning research
Impact template
Number of case studies
REF2014
Environment

Proposals

• More structured environment template
• More quantitative data
• Forum for Responsible Metrics

Feedback

• Recognition of difficulties in assessment
• General support for more structured approach – narrative still important
• Limited discussion of potential common indicators
• Questions and concern about additional credit for OA
• Emphasis required on:
  • E&D
  • Sustainability
Questions

Structure
Type of data/content
Institutional-level assessment - Impact

Proposals

• Impact case studies arising from multi/interdisciplinary and collaborative work
  • 10-20 per cent of total impact case studies; minimum of one
• Pilot required

Feedback

• Unsure of problem to be solved, therefore unclear if right mechanism
• Potential conflict between UOA and institution
• How would they be defined/different from UOA case studies?
• Concern about game-playing related to weighting
• Potential to ‘play it safe’
• Suggestions
  • Institutional impact strategy
  • Flagging ‘duplicate’ case studies or IDR case studies
Questions
Institutional-level assessment - Environment

Proposals

- Environment statement for institution:
  - to avoid duplication of content across UOAs
  - give recognition for and encourage institutional support

Feedback

- Broad support for principle
- Concern about small & specialist HEIs; needs to enable sector diversity
- Querying impact on joint submissions
- Questions about best way to assess and criteria for each
- Should recognise relationship between centre and departments

Suggestions

- Environment section within UOA template
- No separate quality profile / lower weighting (5%) for inst-level environment
Questions
Outcomes and weightings

Overall quality profile

Outputs 65%

- Impact 15%
- Environment 7.5%
- Institutional environment 7.5%
- Institutional impact 5%

Impact total

Environment total
Outcomes and weightings

Feedback

• Very little comment overall
• Questions relating to volume measure and funding consequences
• Support for Impact at 20% (with impact template now in environment)
• Mixed views of institutional level assessment captured within UOA profile – particularly for joint submissions
Questions

Overall weightings
Weighting for institutional level
Next steps

- 14 week consultation
  - Deadline: midday on **Friday 17 March 2017**
- Analysis of responses in spring/summer 2017
- Initial decisions on next REF to be published in Summer 2017
- Advisory panels:
  - Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP)
  - Interdisciplinary Advisory Panel (IDAP)
  - Forum for Responsible Metrics
- Pilot activity through 2017
# REF2021 Timetable

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<th>Criteria phase</th>
<th>Submissions phase</th>
<th>Assessment phase</th>
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<td><strong>2011-2012</strong></td>
<td><strong>2012-13</strong></td>
<td><strong>2014</strong></td>
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<td>Impact pilot</td>
<td>Guidance on submissions (July 2011)</td>
<td>REF submissions system launched</td>
<td>Panel assessment</td>
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<td>Recruit main panels</td>
<td>Panel criteria (Jan 2012)</td>
<td>Submissions deadline: 29 November 2013</td>
<td>Outcomes published: December 2014</td>
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<td>Institutional level pilot</td>
<td>Develop and publish guidance on submissions and panel criteria</td>
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Thank you for listening

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