

Town Hall of REF 2021

REF 2021

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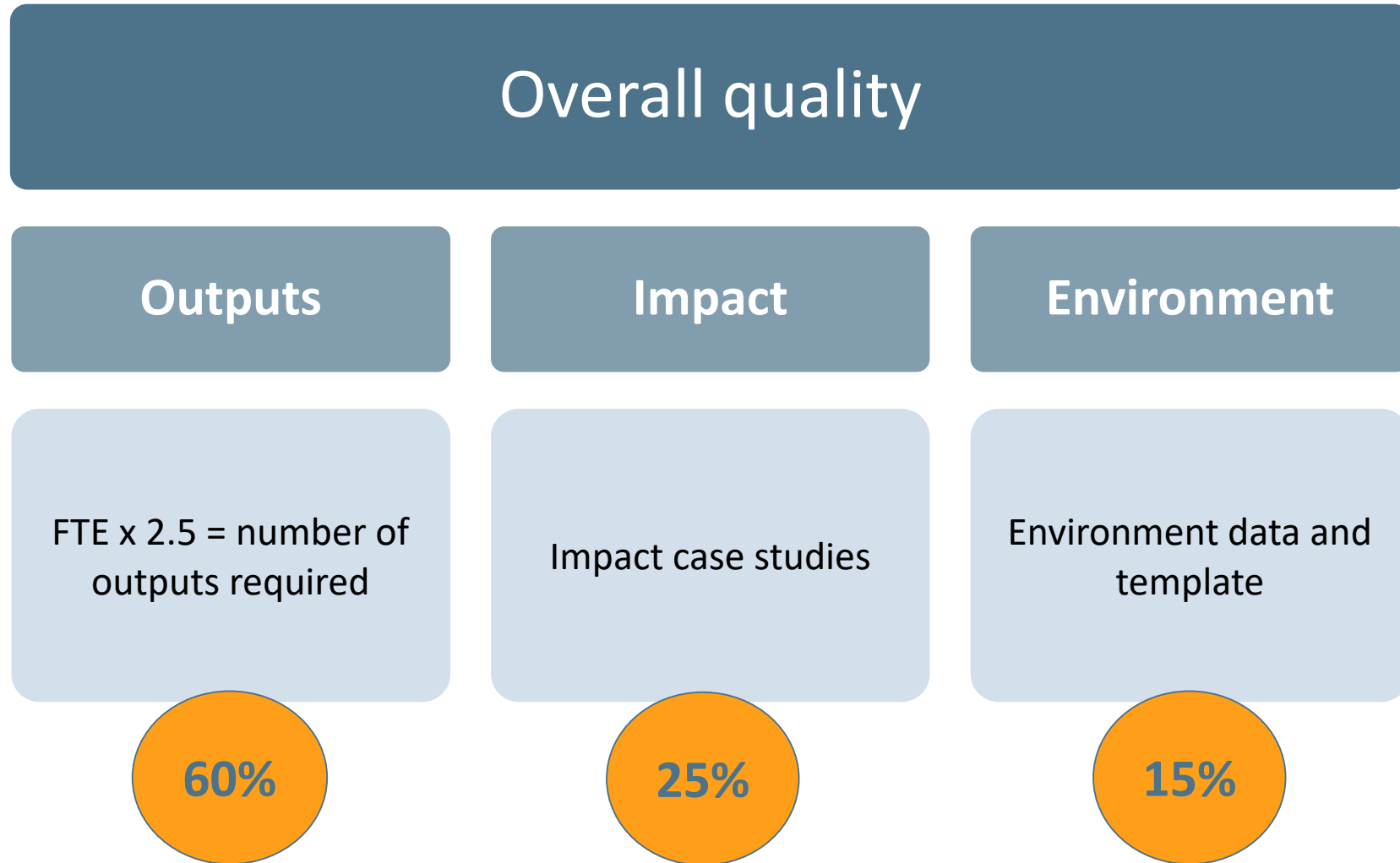
Cyngor Cyllido Addysg
Uwch Cymru
Higher Education Funding
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hefcw



2021 framework

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Key changes since REF 2014

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- Submission of all staff with significant responsibility for research
- Transitional approach to non-portability of outputs
- Decoupling of staff from outputs
- Additional measures to support interdisciplinary research
- Broadening and deepening definitions of impact
- Open access requirements
- More structured environment statement with additional sections
- Weightings

Expert panels

- 34 sub-panels working under the guidance of four main panels

Main panel responsibilities

- Developing the panel criteria and working methods
- Ensuring adherence to the criteria/procedures and consistent application of the overall assessment standards
- Signing off the outcomes

Sub-panel responsibilities

- Contributing to the main panel criteria and working methods
- Assessing submissions and recommending the outcomes

- Consultation feedback – maintain consistency with UOA structure in 2014, except in couple of key areas

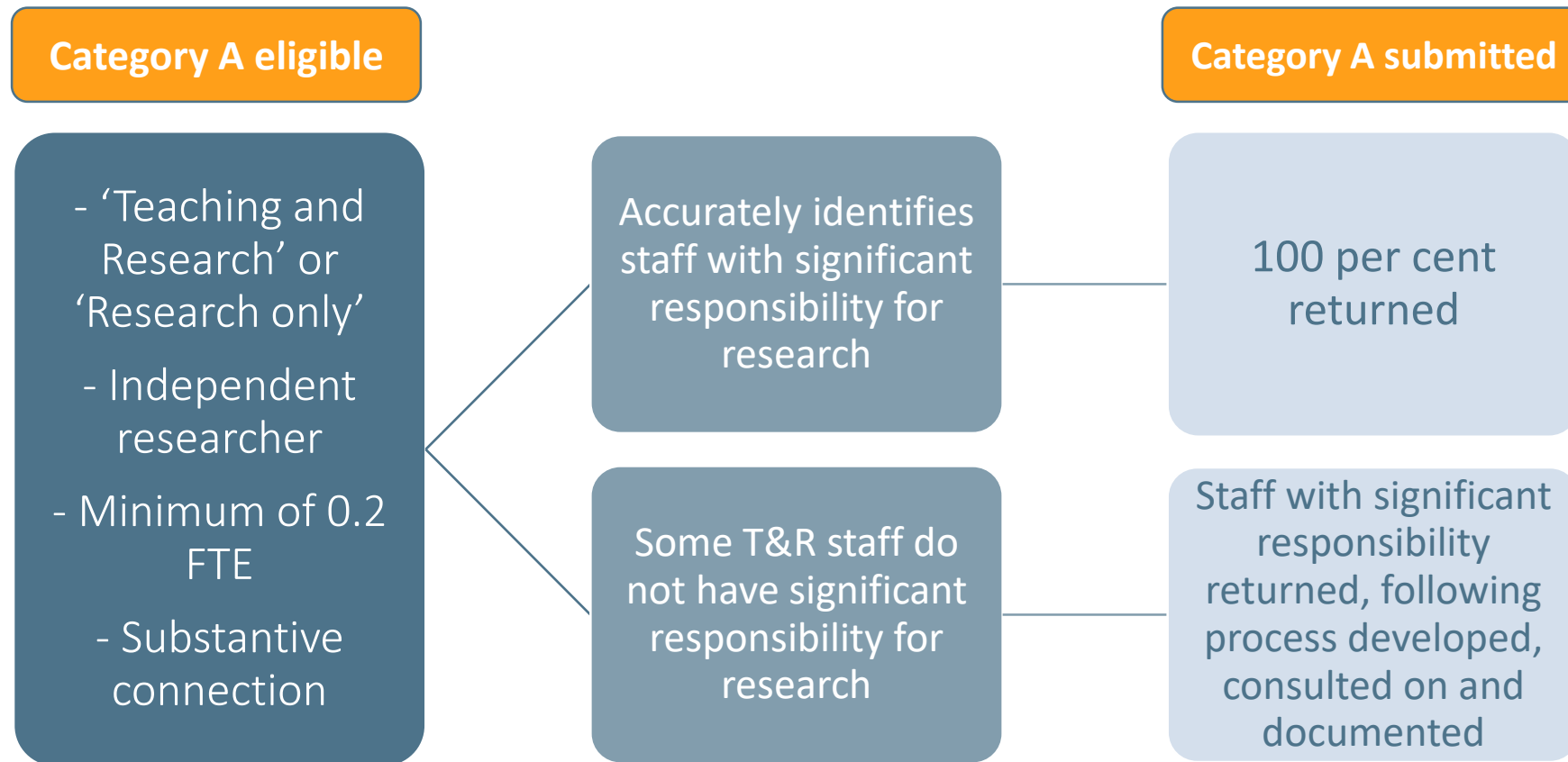
Submissions – summary

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- Each submission in a UOA provides evidence about the activity and achievements of a ‘submitted unit’
- Responsibility for mapping staff into UOAs with institutions – guided by UOA descriptors
- Institutions will normally make one submission in each UOA they elect to submit in
- Joint submissions are encouraged where this is an appropriate way of describing collaborative research
- Consistency with 2014 process for multiple submissions – **only** by exception and with permission from the REF manager

Submissions – staff

- All staff with significant responsibility for research should be returned to the REF



- Approach may vary by UOA where employment practices vary at this level

Submissions – staff

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Significant responsibility for research

- ‘those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role.’
- No clear consensus in consultation on generic criteria – variations across disciplines and institutions
- Guidance will set out a ‘menu’ of what we consider may be appropriate indicators of significant responsibility.

Independent research

- Variation in key attributes also identified in the consultation
- Guidance will build on generic definition used in REF 2014 (undertaking ‘independent research, leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work’.)

Submissions – staff

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Category C

- Contribution of ‘Category C’ staff should be captured in environment element
- Definition will follow 2014

Individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit on the census date.

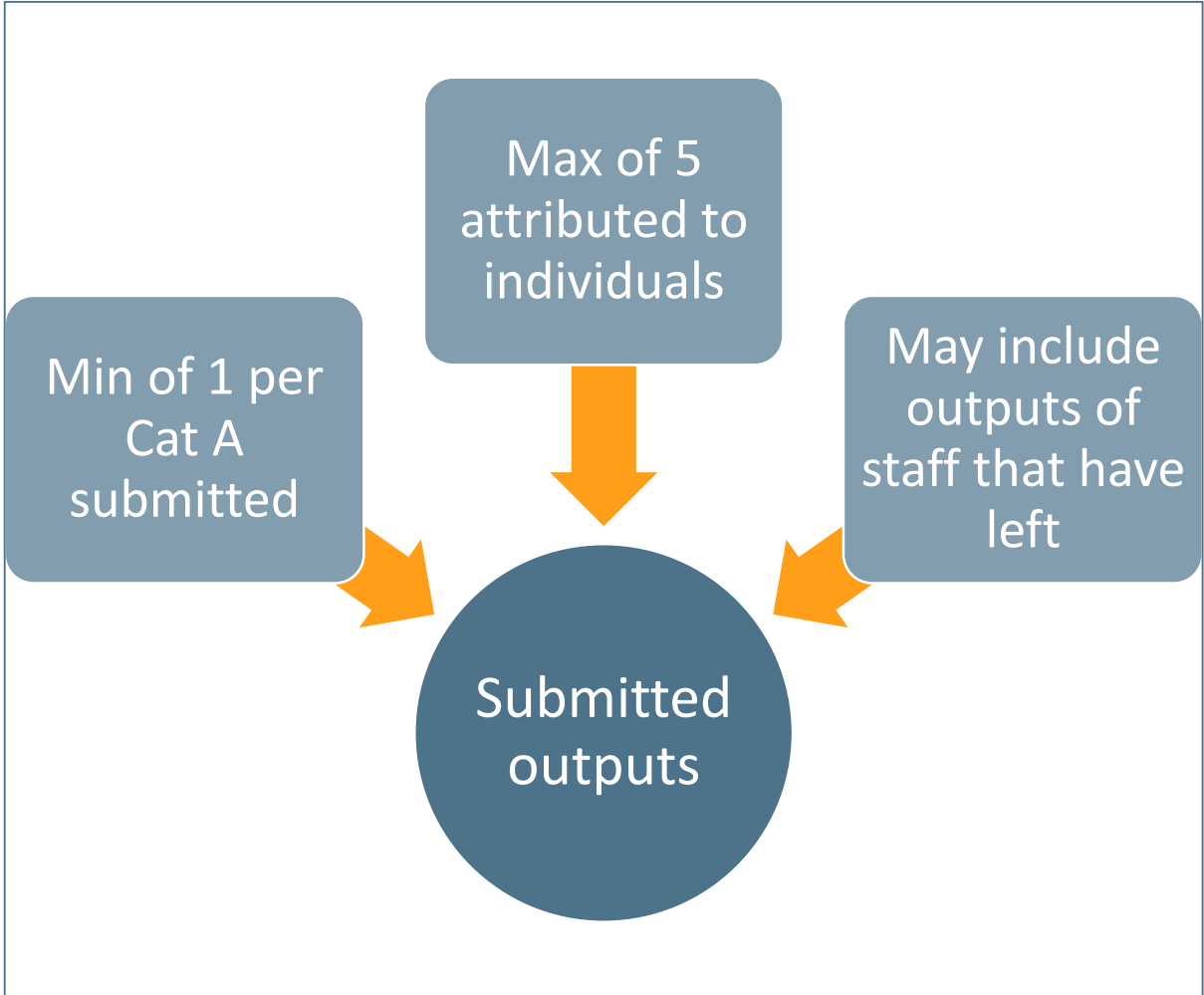
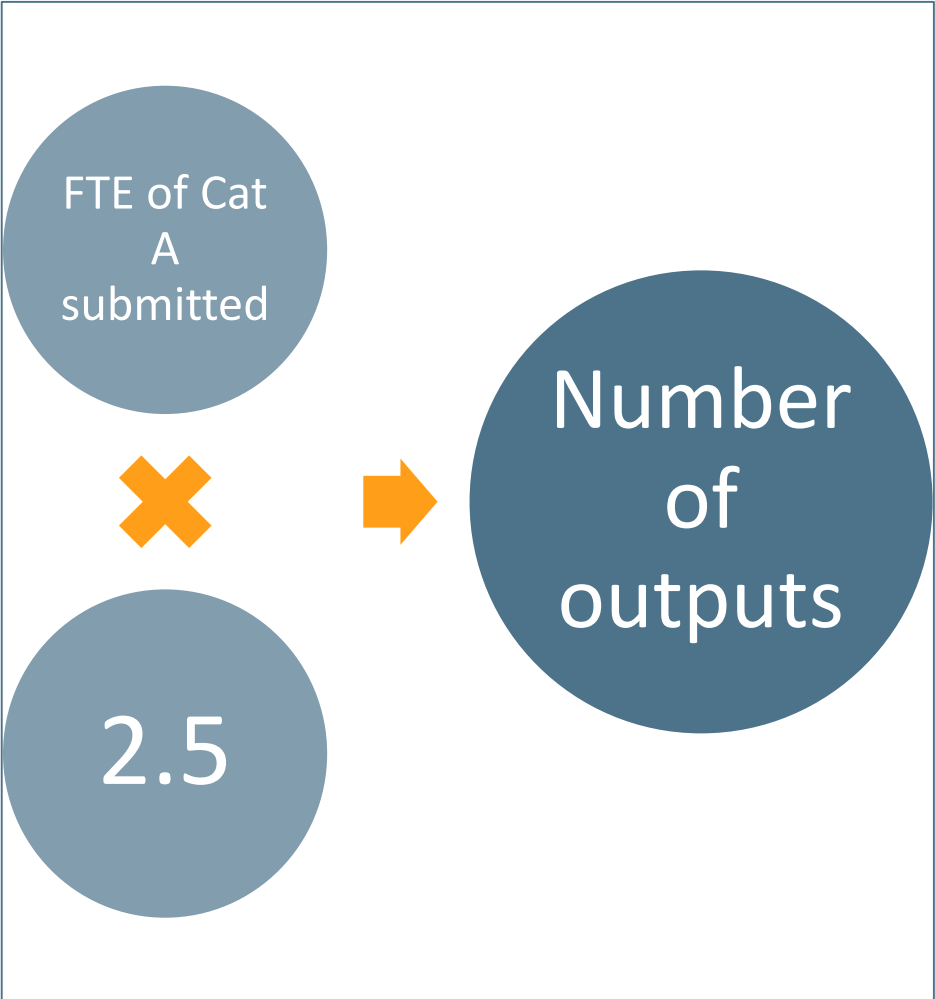
Submissions – small units

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- Fewer than 5 FTE
- Concerns about burden of meeting submission requirements
- Request an exclusion in exceptional circumstances:
 - One or a very small number of staff
 - Usually in UOA in which institution has not previously submitted

Submissions – decoupling

- Number of outputs per submission
- Output pool to include



Submissions - outputs

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- Transitional approach to non-portability
- Outputs may be submitted by:
 - the institution employing eligible staff member when the output was demonstrably generated; and
 - the institution employing the staff member on the census date
- ‘Demonstrably generated’ – date when the output was first made publicly available
- Full eligibility criteria to be defined by panels

Submissions – circumstances

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- Funding bodies' aim to promote measures to support equality and diversity
- Informed by consultation feedback

Individual circumstances

- Exceptional individual circumstances
- Staff may be returned without min of one output
- Unit's output requirement reduced by one

Unit circumstances

- Measures to account for units with higher proportions of staff not able to research productively due to individual circumstances
- Optional reduction in unit's output requirement, in relation to proportion of staff meeting set criteria

Submissions – codes of practice

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Code of practice to cover:

Process for ensuring a fair approach to selecting outputs

Process(es) for identifying Category A submitted staff in any UOAs where not submitting 100 per cent

- Guidance and template will be developed with EDAP and provided to institutions mid-2018.
- Provisional timetable for submission is spring 2019.
- Publication intended by end of 2019.

Submissions – interdisciplinary research

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- Developed with advice from the Interdisciplinary Research Advisory Panel

Interdisciplinary advisers

- Oversee and participate in the assessment of IDR

Interdisciplinary identifier

- Identify IDR outputs, clearer guidance on use

Section in environment

- Unit's structures in support of IDR

Outputs – open access

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Policy update

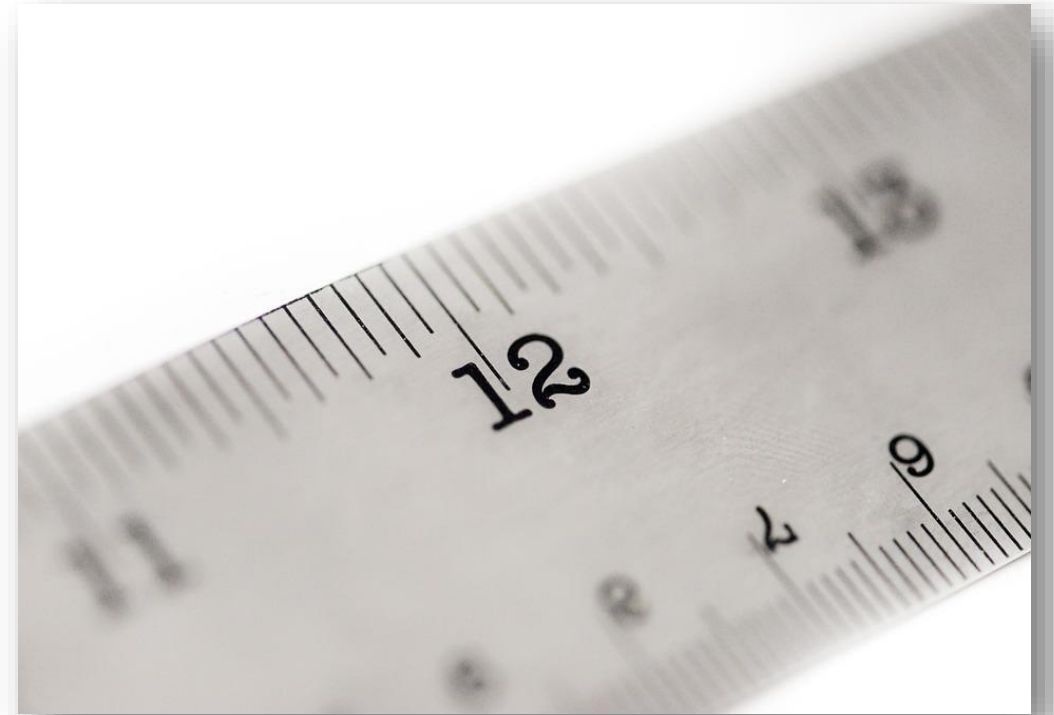
- Outputs deposited as soon after the point of acceptance as possible, and **no later than three months** after this date from 1 April 2018.
- Deposit exception from 1 April 2018 – outputs remain compliant if they are deposited up to three months after the date of publication.
- Full survey report published early in 2018.



Outputs – assessment metrics

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Quantitative data may be used to inform the assessment of outputs, where panels consider this appropriate for the discipline



Impact – definitions and guidance

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- UK funding bodies will work with Research Councils to align definitions of ‘academic’ and ‘wider’ impact
- Additional guidance on:
 - Criteria of ‘reach and significance’
 - Impact arising from public engagement
- Impact on teaching will be widened to include impact within, as well as beyond, the submitting institution
- Number of case studies
 - one case study + one further case study per up to 15 FTE returned, for the first 105 FTE. After 105 FTE, one further case study per up to 50 FTE returned.

Impact – consistency with REF 2014

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- Impact remains eligible for submission by institution(s) where research was generated
- Impact must be underpinned by excellent research of minimum 2* quality
- Timeframe:
 - 1 January 2000 - 31 December 2020 for underpinning research
 - 1 August 2013 - 31 July 2020 for impacts

Impact – refinements to the assessment process

- Impact template (REF3a in 2014) to be included as explicit section in environment element
- Case study template (REF3b in 2014) will contain mandatory fields
- Will require routine provision of audit evidence:
 - Will not be routinely provided to sub-panels

Environment template

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- More structured template
- Sections will include:
 - equality and diversity
 - approach to enabling impact
 - approach to supporting collaboration
 - structures to support interdisciplinary research
 - section on open research

Environment data

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- Research income, degrees awarded and income-in-kind
- Use of more quantitative data – advice from working group of Forum for Responsible Research Metrics



Institutional level assessment of environment

- Institutional-level information **will be included** in the UOA-level environment template and **will be assessed** by the relevant sub-panel in REF 2021.
- Pilot of the standalone assessment of the institutional-level environment will draw on this submitted information.
- Outcomes from the separate pilot exercise **will not be included** in REF 2021.

Next steps (Jan-March 2018)

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- Exploratory workshops on impact to discuss issues around:
 - submission of case studies continued from 2014
 - broadening of underpinning research to include research activities and bodies of work
 - developing further guidelines on impact through public engagement
- Working group of Forum for Responsible Research Metrics looking into use of quantitative indicators in environment template
- Commissioned report on standardisation of quantitative data in impact case studies
- Work on coverage of bibliographic data to inform panels' decisions on whether to request citation data

Expert panels

- February: appoint sufficient members to ensure each sub-panel has appropriate expertise for this task, including interdisciplinary research and the wider use of research.
- March-June 2018: panels meet to discuss panel criteria and working methods
- Summer 2018: draft panel criteria published for consultation
- Autumn-Winter 2018: develop and publish final panel criteria
- REF team draft Guidance on Submissions in parallel with panels' development of criteria

Further engagement

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- Establish Data Collection Steering Group to advise on and oversee development of submissions system
- Establish institutional contacts:
 - A REF contact: main conduit between the REF team and the institution for detailed information relating to REF policies, procedures and guidance about submissions.
 - A REF technical contact: main contact with the REF team concerning the technical aspects of data collection. We would usually expect this to be the person in the institution with responsibility for processing data relating to REF submissions.
- HEIs requested to complete the online form at <http://survey.hefce.ac.uk/s/DX2SU/> by Friday 12th January 2018.

Timetable

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Winter 2017-18	Appoint panels
Spring 2018	Panels meet to develop criteria
Summer to Autumn 2018	Publish draft guidance, and consultation on panel criteria Publish guidance on Codes of Practice
Winter 2018-19	Publish final guidance and criteria
2019	Complete preparation of submission systems Submission of Codes of Practice (tbc)
2020	Submission phase
2021	Assessment phase

Further information

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- www.ref.ac.uk (includes all relevant documents and FAQs)
- Enquiries from staff at HEIs should be directed to their nominated institutional contact (will make available on www.ref.ac.uk)
- Other enquiries to info@ref.ac.uk