



Tertiary Education Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

Performance-Based Research Fund Quality Evaluation

**Māori Knowledge and
Development Panel –
The 2006 Quality Evaluation**

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Purpose of this Report.....	3
Recommendations to the TEC Board	3
Key Issues raised by the Panel.....	5
Distinction with the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel	5
Inclusion of Pagination Details in EPs	5
Provision of Nominated Research Outputs (NROs)	5
The Preparation of EPs	5
Kaumātua Attestations	6
New and Emerging Researchers.....	6
Cross-Referrals.....	6
Teaching Resources	7
Panel Process.....	7
Membership and Process	7
Panel Transactions	8
Referral of EPs	9
Conflicts of Interest	10
Calibration of Panel Judgements.....	11
Holistic Assessment.....	11
Final Quality Category	11
Sub-group Reconvened	12
Panel Commentary	12
Relative Strength of New Zealand Research.....	12
Pacific Research.....	13
TEO Subject Area Strengths	13
Other.....	13

Executive Summary

- This report summarises the results of the Māori Knowledge and Development 2006 Quality Evaluation assessment that took place on the 28th-30^h November 2006.
- A sub-group of the panel was reconvened on 21st February 2007 to include one of the two panel members who were absent from the initial meeting due to ill health. One panel member remained in ill health at the time of this meeting and was unable to attend. No changes were made to the Final Quality Categories assigned at the initial meeting.
- 89 Evidence Portfolios (EPs) were assessed by the panel of nine.
- Of those EPs submitted to the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel, 1.1% were assigned an “A” Quality Category, 18.0% were assigned a “B” quality category, 24.7% were assigned a “C” Quality Category, 15.7% were assigned a “C(NE)” Quality Category, 22.5% were assigned an “R” Quality Category, and 18.0% were assigned an “R(NE)” Quality Category.
- A further 46 (24.1% of all PBRF-eligible staff in Māori Knowledge and Development) EPs were assessed by their Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) as “R” or “R(NE)” and did not have an EP submitted for assessment, and 56 had their Quality Categories carried over from the 2003 Quality Evaluation.
- The panel adequately and appropriately managed possible conflicts of interest.
- The panel effectively achieved calibration of preliminary scores and incorporated holistic judgements into the assignment of Final Quality Categories.

Purpose of this Report

This report provides information on the deliberations of Māori Knowledge and Development Panel in its meeting on 28th – 30th November 2006 as well as its additional meeting on 21st February 2007. It also sets out the panel’s recommendations to the TEC board.

Recommendations to the TEC Board

A total of 89 Evidence Portfolios (EPs) were assessed by the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel with Final Quality Categories assigned to each. A further 46 EPs (24.1% of all PBRF-eligible staff in Māori Knowledge and Development Panel) were assessed by their TEOs as “R” or “R(NE)” and

did not have an EP submitted. In addition, the ‘partial’ round provisions of the 2006 Quality Evaluation meant that the Final Quality Categories assigned to 56 EPs as part of the 2003 Quality Evaluation were reconfirmed.

Of those EPs submitted to the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel in 2006, a total of 1 (1.1%) were assigned an “A”, 16 (18.0%) a “B”, 22 (24.7%) a “C”, 14 (15.7%) a “C(NE)”, 20 (22.5%) an “R” and 16 (18.0%) an “R(NE)” Quality Category.

The Quality Categories assigned by the panel are displayed in the following table:

Table 1. Final Quality Categories (EPs submitted for Assessment)

Subject Area Name	Final Quality Category Count						Total
	A	B	C	C(NE)	R	R(NE)	
Māori Knowledge and Development	1	16	22	14	20	16	89

The panel also recommended that the TEC consider:

- Giving a stronger message to TEOs about the need to provide assistance to staff members in preparation of their EPs. The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel noted the absence of basic and essential information in a number of EPs received for assessment.
- Revisiting the process by which panel members access Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) through the TEC.
- Encouraging the use of Kaumātua attestations as evidence of quality assurance of research outputs.
- Providing further guidance to TEOs about the importance of declaring new and emerging status.
- Require the exchange of contextual information, preferably via teleconference by panel members of cross-referral panels.
- Refining the Guidelines to clarify the blurred line between research that has been disseminated in the form of teaching resources and research that has been carried out in the preparation of teaching.
- Refining the Guidelines in regards to the extent of possible conflicts of interest that need to be declared, and provide specific advice as to how the more tenuous conflicts should be dealt with.

Key Issues raised by the Panel

Distinction with the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel recognise that the panel has the following distinct roles:

- Including in its definition of research an emphasis on Māori ways of 'knowing, being and doing';
- Having a large number of EPs from newer TEOs, including a large portion of new researchers, submitted for assessment;
- Receiving EPs with a relatively high portion of more applied and practice-based research; and
- Operating as a knowledge partner to other panels with the ability to provide advice to those panels on kaupapa Māori research methodologies. This approach to viewing the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel in its role as a knowledge partner and not just as another subject area is one that the panel suggests should be addressed before the next Quality Evaluation.

Inclusion of Pagination Details in EPs

In the context of the available information, the panel considered that pagination could be a useful proxy for the scale of the research outputs being submitted for assessment. However, this information was not consistently included in EPs submitted for assessment. It is therefore strongly recommended that pagination details be required when submitting EPs as it would aid panel members in carrying out various aspects of their assessment.

Provision of Nominated Research Outputs (NROs)

Panel members expressed frustration in regards to accessing NROs via the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). In many cases there were lengthy delays between requesting NROs and receiving them from the TEC, which caused significant inconvenience to panel members. Better processes need to be adopted to make NROs available for panel members to review quickly and with minimal delay.

The Preparation of EPs

TEOs and their staff members need to take more care in the preparation of EPs so that no information is omitted that might assist panel members in carrying out their assessment of EPs. Panel members are required to assess EPs based on the content of the EP that appears before them. In many cases, the NRO commentaries were poorly written and omitted information

specifically requested in the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel specific guidelines, such as:

- (i) why the NRO was chosen as one of the best (up to) four ROs;
- (ii) how it meets the definition of research; and
- (iii) what form of quality assurance was undertaken in producing the RO.

Furthermore, the use of the 'Other Comments' section at the conclusion of each EP was extremely variable. In many cases, there was little useful information, whereas in better-prepared EPs this section set the research in the larger context of the overall assessment period, which proved relevant to the assessment of the research laid out within the EP.

Kaumātua Attestations

While it was expected by the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel that kaumātua attestations would be utilised in evidencing quality assurance and verification of research, there was limited use of such attestations for this purpose. This casts doubt on the proposed use of kaumātua oral attestations in future rounds (Smith & Bruce-Ferguson, 2006¹, pp. 390-391). It should be noted that, in the absence of such attestations, the panel did adopt the position of using information about the acceptance and utilisation of research outcomes by iwi and other Māori groups as evidence of the quality of the research, where this information was included in the EP.

New and Emerging Researchers

In a number of cases, the EPs of staff members that appeared to be new and emerging were not reported as such by the submitting TEO. As a result, in some cases the panel was unable to award the "R(NE)" or "C(NE)" Quality Categories. The panel was concerned that TEOs and staff may not have fully appreciated the implications of not being reported as new and emerging. As TEOs are responsible for the submission of the relevant census data, the panel considers that more care needs to be taken in this area and that the TEC should provide additional support to TEOs. The panel considers that in some cases EPs were disadvantaged by this failure to report new and emerging status.

Cross-Referrals

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel recognise that different panels assess EPs with differing foci, dependent on the kind of research that is being done. Where cross-referrals are made to other panels for further advice, the

¹ Evaluating the Performance-Based Research Fund: Framing the Debate. Edited by Bakker, L., Boston, J., Campbell, L., & Smyth, R. Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies: VUW.

panel advises the importance of understanding the focus and context in regards to scores that a cross-referral panel may give. In some cases, it was felt that such contextual information could have been given had panel members been able to carry out a telephone conversation, in preference to receiving advice in written form. The panel would therefore prefer to see the exchange of such contextual information via teleconferencing with the primary panel pair where possible.

Teaching Resources

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel noted the difficulty in assessing research outputs that are teaching resources. Where an NRO was not selected for review, it was difficult for panel members to ascertain the extent to which such outputs were “preparation for teaching” which the Guidelines deem to be ineligible research outputs (except where they are used primarily for the support, or as part, of research and experimental development activities). The panel suggested that the Guidelines lack clarity concerning the extent to which research presented in teaching resources, such as Māori language texts, can be considered and assessed where such research leads to or is the result of preparation for teaching.

Panel Process

Membership and Process

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel were:

Dr Ailsa Smith (Chair)

Professor Christopher Cunningham (Deputy Chair)

Mr Shane Edwards

Mr Ross Hemera

Professor Tania Ka'ai

Professor Roger Maaka

Mr Te Kahautu Maxwell

Professor Margaret Mutu

Dr Khyla Russell

Each EP was assigned to two panel members who provided agreed preliminary component scoring prior to the meeting, involving cross-referral panel members where appropriate.

The panel met for the three days from 28th - 30^h of November 2006. While two members of the Panel were absent from the initial Panel meeting due to ill health, a subgroup of the panel was reconvened to provide an opportunity for these panel members to participate.

In all cases, judgments by the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel were based entirely on the evidence presented in the EPs, any cross-referral advice received from the other panels, and any specialist advice.

Panel Transactions

A total of 89 EPs were assessed by the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel. On average each panel member was involved in the preliminary assessment of 26 EPs before meeting to discuss each as a panel.

No EPs nominated by TEOs for assessment by the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel were transferred to other panels for assessment however 3 EPs were transferred into the panel. Such transfers were the result of ensuring the content of EPs were appropriately aligned with the assessing panel.

Of the 89 EPs, 60 were cross-referred to other panels for additional assessment advice from those panels, as set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – The number of cross referrals to other panels².

Primary Panel	Number of EPs
Business and Economics	5
Biological Sciences	2
Creative and Performing Arts	10
Education	9
Engineering, Technology and Architecture	2
Humanities and Law	8
Health	3
Medicine and Public Health	6
Mathematical and Information Sciences and Technology	1
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Studies	14
TOTAL	60

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel also received 57 cross-referrals from other panels, where those panels were able to utilise additional input from Māori Knowledge and Development panel members. The number of cross-referral assessments that the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel provided to other panels can be seen in Table 3, broken down by subject area.

² NB. The number of cross-referrals reported in this table include only the cross-referrals that were assessed by a panel member of the cross-referral panel. Where cross-referral advice was provided by the cross-referral panel in the form of advice from a specialist advisor, it is not included in this figure.

Table 3. Number of requests for cross-referral advice by panel and subject area

Primary Panel	Subject Area Name	Cross-Referrals
Business and Economics	Management, human resources, industrial relations and other businesses	2
Creative and Performing Arts	Design	1
Creative and Performing Arts	Music, literary arts and other arts	5
Creative and Performing Arts	Theatre and dance, film, television and multimedia	1
Creative and Performing Arts	Visual arts and crafts	11
Education	Education	8
Engineering Technology and Architecture	Engineering and technology	1
Health	Nursing	1
Humanities and Law	English language and literature	1
Humanities and Law	History, history of art, classics and curatorial studies	3
Medicine and Public Health	Biomedical	1
Medicine and Public Health	Clinical medicine	2
Medicine and Public Health	Public health	9
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Sciences	Anthropology and Archaeology	3
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Sciences	Human Geography	1
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Sciences	Political science, international relations and public policy	2
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Sciences	Psychology	3
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Sciences	Sociology, social policy, social work, criminology & gender Studies	2

A total of 12 EPs were sent to Specialist Advisors for further advice and assistance in the assessment of EPs.

Referral of EPs

The primary reasons for referral of EPs to other panels were:

- When a TEO submitting the EP requested a cross-referral to another panel.
- When a significant proportion (but not a majority) of the RO component of an EP fell within the subject area that was covered by another panel.
- When there was not the required expertise in the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel to fairly assess an EP.

Note that the panel chair also declined requests for cross-referrals where it was deemed no Māori Knowledge and Development panel member could add an assessment of value to a particular EP.

The primary reasons for referral of EPs to specialist advisors were because there was limited panel expertise in the subject area or because the panel member(s) with the subject area expertise had a conflict of interest and it might be perceived therefore that the EP could not be fairly assessed.

Conflicts of Interest

The panel, through a combination of approaches, managed conflicts of interest effectively.

Panel members were able, at any point in the assessment process, to declare potential conflicts of interest against any EP that was assigned to the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel. Such conflicts guided the TEC secretariat and panel chair in ensuring that, for pre-meeting assessment, no Panel Member was assigned an EP against which they had declared a conflict of interest, no matter how small the conflict was. Where an EP was inadvertently assigned to a conflicted Panel Member, the EP was reassigned to someone else and the panel member concerned was asked to destroy the EP and not contribute to the assessment of that EP.

During the meeting, panel members were asked to use due discretion along with the guidelines provided by the Moderation Panel as to the action that should be taken in regards to conflicts of interest of varying degrees. For most conflicts, panel members were permitted to remain in the room but to refrain from participation in the discussion of such EPs. Other panel members were permitted to ask questions that required factual answers from the conflicted panel member. In no instance did panel members take the opportunity to ask such questions to aid their assessment of any EP.

Where the panel chair had a conflict of interest and left the room or refrained from participating in the discussion, the deputy chair took over the role of the chair.

The EP of one panel member was considered by the panel. This panel member was excused from the panel meeting while their EP was considered and played no role in the assessment of the EP.

The panel would like to advise of the necessity to re-examine the Guidelines provided to panel members as to the extent to which conflicts of interest need to be declared and acted upon. In some instances the declaration of a large number of, perhaps tenuous, conflicts of interest had the potential to render panel members ineffective in their role at panel meetings if there were few other panel members available to provide expert comment on a particular subject area.

Calibration of Panel Judgements

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel achieved effective calibration through a variety of means.

Preliminary scoring involved panel members being paired to assess EPs. This involved reaching a preparatory score individually, before discussing each EP with the second panel member to come to a preliminary (or agreed) score for each of the three components of Research Output (RO), Peer Esteem (PE) and Contribution to the Research Environment (CRE). Panel members commented on how preliminary scores were generally reached with ease.

At its initial meeting, panel members were presented with themes from the Moderation Panel meeting which was attended by Ailsa Smith, Māori Knowledge and Development Panel Chair. There were no specific requests to the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel from the Moderation Panel.

Following this presentation, the panel viewed and briefly discussed EPs that had been given preliminary scores in “B” and “C” Quality Category ranges. This discussion set the benchmarks for the Quality Categories against which later discussions reverted back to.

After having established benchmarks against which the substantive scoring calibration could be based, the panel proceeded to visit individually each EP, discussing each of the three component scores (RO, CRE and PE), and making changes where the panel collectively saw it appropriate. The panel began with the EPs that were preliminarily scored the lowest and worked their way through to the highest scored EPs.

Holistic Assessment

During the process of visiting the component scores of each EP collectively, the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel made holistic judgements about the Quality Category that would be assigned as a result of the weighted summation of the component scores. Where holistic judgements saw the panel in agreement that an EP, when considered in its totality, should have a different Quality Category than that allowed by the weighted formula, the panel opted to revisit the component scores and make changes where appropriate to reflect the Final Quality Category that the panel considered most appropriate. In this sense, no changes to Quality Categories were made as the result of holistic consideration to the categories that were assigned as the result of weighted component summation.

Final Quality Category

In accordance with the process set out in the PBRF Guidelines 2006, information relating to the Final Quality Categories assigned as part of the

2003 Quality Evaluation (if any) was provided to the panel. The panel looked for any anomalies or concerning trends and identified none. No Final Quality Categories were changed as a result of this review.

Sub-group Reconvened

The sub-group, consisting of the Panel Chair, the Deputy Chair, and one other panel member took place on 21st February 2007, in the absence of one panel member who remained in ill health at the time of this meeting.³ Also present at the meeting was a Moderator, an Internal Auditor as well as the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel Secretariat and the Moderation Panel Secretariat.

The sub-group carried out an identical process to the initial panel meeting, viewing and calibrating a selection of 23 EPs independent of the Final Quality Categories assigned at the initial meeting. The Final Quality Categories assigned by the subgroup were consistent with those assigned at the initial meeting. There were no changes to the Final Quality Categories assigned at the initial meeting as a result of this reconvened sub-group panel meeting.

Panel Commentary

Relative Strength of New Zealand Research

The relatively high number of cross-referrals to and from other panels shows the extent to which Māori researchers are working in cross-cultural (including indigenous) and cross-disciplinary contexts, whether in advisory, partnership or leadership roles. Again, the number of sub-doctoral or terminal theses being put forward as NROs to the Maori Knowledge and Development Panel marks the developing nature of research based on kāupapa Māori principles, and bodes well for the future of such research in New Zealand. At the same time the uneven nature of research in the field of Māori Knowledge and Development, as noted in the 2003 Māori Knowledge and Development Panel report, still pertains, as does the proviso in that report about the need for caution in assessing the status of Māori research or researchers based on results from the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel. As in 2003, any conclusions relating to the 2006 round do not take into account those EPs that Māori staff may have chosen to submit to other panels.

³ This panel member was unable to provide any further input into the assessment process due to these circumstances. The Panel Chair was satisfied that the absence of this one panel member did not impact on the panel's recommendations.

Pacific Research

While there were a number of EPs that were identified by TEO staff members as being “Pacific research” by ticking the appropriate box on their EP submission, it was obvious that the opportunity to tick this box had been misunderstood or completed in error in a large number of cases across all twelve panels. As a result, panel members were given the opportunity to request advice themselves where they deemed it appropriate and beneficial as they carried out their preliminary assessment of individual EPs. In only one instance was advice sought from Pacific advisor.

TEO Subject Area Strengths

With 89 EPs spread over a wide range of discipline areas and across 18 TEOs, it was difficult for the panel to undertake any in-depth analysis of relative TEO strengths.

Other

The Māori Knowledge and Development Panel acknowledge the possibility that what may be perceived as high rates of unfunded Quality Categories may be a reflection of a less well-developed understanding of the expectations of the assessment criteria on the part of participating TEOs. At the same time they note that greater numbers of staff, at the beginning of their research careers are entering the PBRF round – a factor which would result in low scores initially, but which would lead to more promising results in future rounds.

In determining the effectiveness of the 2006 PBRF round it should be kept in mind that this was a partial round which necessarily followed the process undertaken in 2003, with certain refinements such as the inclusion of two “new and emerging” researcher categories, and with greater emphasis upon applied and practice-based types of research. The improvements recommended in respect of Māori research and researchers (Māori Knowledge and Development Panel Report, 2004; Smith & Bruce-Ferguson, 2006; Sector Reference Group, 2005) therefore, remain largely unaddressed at the date of the present report.

Nevertheless, the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel was heartened to see the number of doctorates or terminal degrees being completed. If asked to identify the trend they would most like to see within their discipline, it would be possible to point to this as one of the more overt indicators of research success.