

**Performance-Based Research Fund
Sector Reference Group review:
Pacific research**

The original version of the Pacific Research paper has been replaced with this updated version.

As this has meant the paper was temporarily unavailable, the deadline for providing submissions has been extended to 5pm on Friday 28 August 2009.

The Sector Reference Group extends its apologies to anyone who has been affected.

Contents

1. Purpose	3
2. Aims and principles of the PBRF	3
3. Principles of redesign	4
4. Background: Pacific research and Pasifika researchers	4
4.1 PBRF Pacific Advisory Group and Pacific specialist advisers	4
4.2 Pacific reserach	5
4.3 Pasifika researchers	6
5. Weightings	8
5.1 Equity weightings	8
5.2 Subject weightings	9
6. Research output	10
6.1 Types	10
6.2 Dissemination	11
7. Summary of points raised	11
7.1 Preliminary sector response	11
8. Invitation to submit feedback	12
Appendix A: Extracts from the 2006 Guidelines for Pacific research	13
Appendix B: Ethnicity of participants who indicated that their EP contained Pacific research in 2006	16
Bibliography	17

Disclaimer:

This consultation paper has been prepared independently for the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) by the Sector Reference Group, an external group, as part of the review of the Performance-Based Research Fund. Although the TEC is facilitating this process, the consultation paper represents the independent views and suggestions of the Sector Reference Group, and does not necessarily represent the views of the TEC.

Performance-Based Research Fund Sector Reference Group Consultation Paper: Pacific Research

1. Purpose

This paper has been prepared as part of the consultation process for the 2012 PBRF assessment, and builds on a summary of Pacific research issues identified by the PBRF Sector Reference Group (SRG) in late 2008.

This paper informs a targeted policy framework to support and advance Pasifika¹ communities in tertiary education, as set out in the government-endorsed Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) 2002-2007 and 2007-2012.

The SRG invites feedback from the tertiary education sector on the issues outlined in this paper and on any other matters relevant to Pacific research. Questions for consideration are provided to focus responses.

2. Aims and principles of the PBRF

In carrying out its role, the SRG for the 2012 PBRF will be guided by the aims and principles of the PBRF. The PBRF is designed to:

- increase the average quality of research
- ensure that research continues to support degree and postgraduate teaching
- ensure that funding is available for postgraduate students and new researchers
- improve the quality of information on research output
- prevent undue concentration of funding that would undermine research support for all degrees or prevent access to the system by new researchers, and
- underpin the existing sector strengths in tertiary education research.

The PBRF is governed by the following principles:

- **Comprehensiveness:** the PBRF should appropriately measure the quality of the full range of original investigative activity that occurs within the sector, regardless of its type, form, or place of output.
- **Respect for academic traditions:** the PBRF should operate in a manner that is consistent with academic freedom and institutional autonomy.
- **Consistency:** evaluations of quality made through the PBRF should be consistent, across the different subject areas and in the calibration of quality ratings against international standards of excellence.
- **Continuity:** changes to the PBRF process should only be made where they can bring demonstrable improvements that outweigh the cost of implementing them.

¹ A number of terms are used to designate ethnicity in this paper. When citing or paraphrasing wording from a publication or other written document, the descriptor used in the original source has been respected (most commonly 'Pacific' or 'Pacific peoples'). In all other cases, preference has been given to the term 'Pasifika'.

- *Differentiation*: the PBRF should allow stakeholders and the government to differentiate between providers and their units on the basis of their relative quality.
- *Credibility*: the methodology, format and processes employed in the PBRF must be credible to those being assessed.
- *Efficiency*: administrative and compliance costs should be kept to the minimum consistent with a robust and credible process.
- *Transparency*: decisions and decision-making processes must be explained openly, except where there is a need to preserve confidentiality and privacy.
- *Complementarity*: the PBRF should be integrated with new and existing policies, such as Charters and Profiles, and quality assurance systems for degrees and degree providers.
- *Cultural inclusiveness*: the PBRF should reflect the bicultural nature of New Zealand and the special role and status of the Treaty of Waitangi, and should appropriately reflect and include the full diversity of New Zealand's population.

3. Principles of redesign

PBRF redesign work ahead of the 2012 Quality Evaluation will be based on a number of principles and considerations:

- upholding the aims and principles of the PBRF (outlined above)
- learning from the first two Quality Evaluations in order to make improvements to the design of the PBRF and the implementation of the 2012 Quality Evaluation
- drawing on relevant experience and expertise across the tertiary education sector
- exposing proposed changes to rigorous sector and expert scrutiny
- achieving as much sector agreement as possible about how the next Quality Evaluation should be conducted, and
- avoiding costly or time-consuming changes unless there are good reasons for believing they will bring significant improvements.

4.0 Background: Pacific research and Pasifika researchers

4.1 PBRF Pacific Advisory Group and Pacific specialist advisers

The report produced by the 2002 Working Group on the design and implementation of PBRF raised matters of specific relevance to Pacific research.

In line with the PBRF principles of cultural inclusiveness and comprehensiveness, this Working Group recommended that the TEC convene:

“an ‘esteemed body’ of Pacific researchers to help define excellence in Pacific research and develop guidance for the peer review panels and expert advisers on Pacific research².”

² Ministry of Education and Transition TEC, *Investing in Excellence*, 2002, p.13.

A twenty-strong PBRF Pacific Advisory Group subsequently developed guidelines on Pacific research³ that were incorporated into the general guidelines for the 2003 Quality Evaluation. These same Pacific research guidelines were then reproduced in the 2006 Guidelines, streamlined in form but essentially unchanged in content⁴.

For the 2003 assessment, five of the Pacific Advisory Group's members were appointed as specialist advisers, along with a sixth subject-matter expert. Only one Evidence Portfolio (EP), however, was referred to a specialist adviser; again, in the 2006 Quality Evaluation only one EP was sent to a specialist adviser⁵.

This minimal recourse to Pacific specialist advisers in both rounds has been explained in part by the general confidence expressed by peer review panels in assessing EPs containing Pacific research. Panel members felt competent in evaluating these EPs in a fair and consistent fashion, irrespective of whether their panel was one of the three that included a Pacific panel member⁶.

4.2 Pacific research

The low rate of referral to specialist advisers noted above was consistent with the low volume of Pacific research in 2003, but appeared to be inconsistent with the high number of EPs submitted (562) as 'Pacific research' in 2006. On closer inspection, the 2006 Moderation Panel found that more than 80 percent of these EPs did not meet the criteria for Pacific research set out in the Guidelines.

While the Moderation Panel was satisfied that the majority of the EPs containing correctly classified Pacific research were appropriately assessed within peer review panels, it remained concerned about the "apparent lack of understanding" of the criteria for Pacific research⁷. It recommended that "for future Quality Evaluations, the TEC take steps to ensure TEOs accurately apply the criteria for declaring that EPs contain Pacific research"⁸.

Confusion may have in fact arisen from the wording of a field in the EP schema. First introduced in 2006, this question asked "Does research include 'Pacific' research?" without referring to the criteria set out in the Guidelines. In addition, some staff may have construed the question to be asking if the researcher was of Pasifika ethnicity.

That the question was optional and set to default to 'no' may have further reduced the accuracy of responses.

The wide coverage of the term 'Pacific research' has been acknowledged previously. Both the 2003 and 2006 Guidelines recognise 'Pacific research' as a "broad descriptor" and as being "broadly characterised" by the parameters they set out (see Appendix A).

³ TEC, *PBRF: Draft Guidelines for Assessing Evidence Portfolios that Include Pacific Research*, 2003.

⁴ TEC, *PBRF: A Guide for 2003*, 2003; TEC, *PBRF: Guidelines 2006*, 2005.

⁵ TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2003 Assessment*, 2004, p.64; TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2006 Assessment*, 2007, p.61.

⁶ TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2003 Assessment*, 2004, p.64; TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2006 Assessment*, 2007, p.61, pp.283-284.

⁷ TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2006 Assessment*, 2007, p.284.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.283.

In their paper on participation and performance of Pacific peoples researchers in PBRF, Paula White and Janet Grice caution that data collected under the 'Pacific research' heading is only as good as the sector's understanding of the term⁹. They further note that profiling 'Pacific research' would require development of valid proxies and that this is beyond the scope of their paper¹⁰. Any future profiling work would also need to consider the issue of internationally benchmarking Pacific research, as raised in Jonathan Adams' independent review of PBRF in 2008¹¹.

Questions for consideration:

- i. Should all Evidence Portfolios designated 'Pacific research' in the EP schema be cross-referenced to a Pacific specialist adviser?
- ii. Should the criteria for Pacific research (essentially unchanged since their elaboration in 2003, see Appendix A) be revised before the 2012 Quality Evaluation?
If so, please provide recommendations for revision.
- iii. How might the Guidelines on Pacific research be better understood by TEOs and staff members?

4.3 Pasifika researchers

Some uncertainty exists surrounding the profile of researchers who carry out Pacific research. The 2003 and 2006 Guidelines state that research falling "within the broad ambit of Pacific research [...] may be undertaken by Pacific or non-Pacific peoples"¹².

However, researchers who conduct Pacific research may be incorrectly conflated with researchers of Pasifika ethnicity who may or may not choose to conduct Pacific research, that is, research that shows "a clear relationship with Pacific values and knowledge bases, and with a Pacific group or community"¹³. Providing the tick box for Pacific research in the EP schema is not intended to measure researchers' Pasifika ethnicity (see Appendix B).

All PBRF participants are asked to state their ethnicity in the PBRF Census (Staff Return). The data collected from this source does not, however, reflect the true number of researchers of Pasifika ethnicity. A relatively high proportion of all participating staff members did not report their ethnicity in either round (rates of abstention were 14.7 percent in 2003; 13.3 percent in 2006).

Researchers who did report their ethnicity were counted in each of the ethnic groups with which they identified, up to a maximum of three. Researchers who identified with one or more Pacific group, including other non-Pacific ethnic groups, were thus classified as 'Pacific peoples'. In a small number of cases, Pacific peoples researchers changed their self-reported ethnicity between rounds¹⁴.

⁹ White and Grice, *Participation and Performance by Māori and Pacific Peoples Researchers in the Performance-Based Research Fund, 2003-2006*, 2008, p.90.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.xvi.

¹¹ Adams, *Strategic Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund: The Assessment Process*, 2008, p.51.

¹² TEC, *PBRF: A Guide for 2003*, 2003, p.153; TEC, *PBRF: Guidelines 2006*, 2005, p.135.

¹³ TEC, *PBRF: Guidelines 2006*, 2005, p.134.

¹⁴ White and Grice, *Participation and Performance by Māori and Pacific Peoples Researchers in the Performance-Based Research Fund, 2003-2006*, 2008, pp.11, 56.

Dissatisfaction has been expressed about the use of the catch-all title 'Pacific' that covers the seven ethnic fields currently recognised by the PBRF: Samoan, Cook Islands Māori, Tongan, Niuean, Tokelauan, Fijian, and Other Pacific Island. The latter category is in itself a secondary catch-all title. White and Grice agree that:

“this aggregation of multiple Pacific peoples’ ethnic groups into one pan-grouping obscures the distinct characteristics of, and trends among, different Pacific peoples¹⁵.”

In the view of White and Grice, this approach is nevertheless justified by the “very small numbers of researchers in these distinct groups”¹⁶. In effect, the composite group of Pasifika researchers accounted for 1.2 percent and 1.1 percent of all PBRF researchers in the 2003 and 2006 rounds respectively (97 out of 8,172 total ethnic counts in 2003; 97 out of 8,840 total ethnic counts in 2006)¹⁷.

It should be noted that any negative effects of homogenising diverse groups of peoples would also apply to the Asian grouping of Chinese, Indian, and Other Asians. Representing 5.3 percent (426) and 6.0 percent (524) of all PBRF participants in 2003 and 2006 respectively, Asian groupings accounted for a significantly larger proportion of researchers than Pacific groupings.

In some instances, such as the reporting of Research Degree Completions by ethnicity, composite groups are disaggregated to provide greater granularity. Elsewhere, the umbrella continental-based groupings (Pacific, Asian, European) are used as a practical shorthand way of designating these populations.

Questions for consideration:

iv. Should data on ethnicity be collected via the PBRF EPs at all?

Please provide reasoning in support of your answer.

v. Should catch-all ethnic categories be retained?

Please provide reasoning in support of your answer.

You may also wish to list ethnic categories you consider appropriate for use, specifically in relation to Pasifika researchers, or to suggest alternative solutions.

vi. How, in your view, could ethnic data be better recorded and reported?

Between the two Quality Evaluations, the profile of Pasifika researchers shifted: in the 2006 round, participating staff members were more likely to be older, males, and in senior career positions. Quality Category scores increased slightly in the “A” category (from 1.1 percent to 3.2 percent) and remained steady in the “B” category (numerically the same, with eight Pasifika researchers achieving this category).

Early career Pasifika researchers appear to have benefited from the introduction of the NE category in 2006, with the proportion of Rs decreasing (from 68 percent to 50 percent), and the number of funded “Cs” increasing (from 22 percent to 38 percent).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.18.

Table 1: Final Quality Categories of Pacific Peoples Researchers versus all PBRF Researchers, 2003 and 2006 (White and Grice, p.74)

	2003				2006			
	Pacific peoples		All researchers		Pacific peoples		All researchers	
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion
A	1	1.1%	443	5.5%	3	3.2%	629	7.3%
B	8	8.9%	1,802	22.5%	8	8.5%	2,166	25.0%
C	20	22.2%	2,494	31.1%	24	25.5%	2,138	24.7%
C(NE)¹⁸	-	-	-	-	12	12.8%	825	9.5%
R	61	67.8%	3,273	40.9%	33	35.1%	1,964	22.7%
R(NE)	-	-	-	-	14	14.9%	943	10.9%
Total	90	100%	8,012	100%	94	100%	8,665	100%

On balance, the final funded Quality Category scores for Pasifika researchers remained below the average for all PBRF participants in both rounds, as did Pasifika scores for the other two elements of an EP, Peer Esteem and Contribution to Research Environment. Conversely, Pasifika researchers accounted for higher proportions of unfunded Quality Categories than the average for all PBRF participants. White and Grice note that a number of factors may have contributed to this lower level of performance, and emphasise the need for discretion in interpreting data to avoid spurious comparisons.

Similarly, Adams believes that while “the available data do not give rise to concern about equity of treatment of different groups of researchers”¹⁹, information on Pasifika researchers remains “too sparse” to be able to draw any sound conclusions²⁰. He further notes the “worrying limitation” stemming from the small amount of evidence on performance, as well as participation, of Pacific peoples²¹.

5.0 Weightings

5.1 Equity weightings

To encourage growth in enrolments of Pasifika peoples and to further support their development, the 2002 Working Group recommended that an equity weighting of 2, rather than the standard weighting of 1, be applied to research degrees completed by Pasifika students. Following the trialling of this double weighting in the 2003 and 2006 QE rounds, the “effectiveness and the ongoing need for such a measure” beyond 2012 is now up for review²². The intention of the SRG is to recommend that the equity weighting be retained. This issue is discussed further in a separate SRG consultation paper on weightings, but is raised for consideration here also.

Between 2003 and 2006, the number of Research Degree Completions (RDCs) by Pasifika postgraduates increased from 37 to 49 but the proportion of these RDCs in the total pool remained low (2.0 percent in 2006, up from 1.6 percent in 2003).

¹⁸ Having been introduced in 2006, there are no values for these categories in 2003.

¹⁹ Adams, *Strategic Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund: The Assessment Process*, 2008, p.54.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.8, 13.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.13.

²² Ministry of Education and Transition TEC, *Investing in Excellence*, 2002, p.29.

Table 2: Research Degree Completions of Pacific peoples by ethnicity, 2003 and 2006

Ethnicity	2003 Number	2006 Number
Cook Islands Māori	1	5
Fijian	1	7
Niuean	3	2
Samoaan	18	22
Tongan	8	6
Other Pacific Island groups	6	7
Total	37	49
Proportion of all RDCs	1.6%	2.0%

Again, discretion needs to be applied in interpreting these results. The equity loading for RDCs by Pacific peoples cannot be viewed as the singular direct cause of the improved outcomes in 2006.

5.2 Subject weightings

Although the proportion of eligible Pasifika researchers participating in the 2006 Quality Evaluation increased to levels on par with all PBRF-eligible staff members (84 percent and 86.8 percent respectively), a significantly higher proportion of EPs from Pasifika researchers were in areas with low subject weightings.

In 2006, for example, 70.2 percent of Pasifika researchers submitted EPs with a subject weighting of 1, tracking well above the 46.7 percent average across all researchers in this domain. As White and Grice note, this high concentration of Pasifika EPs in areas with lower subject weightings has implications for the levels of funding that these researchers can attract²³. For Adams, the “imbalance of [ethnic] groups across different subject areas” may be one of a series of “unresolved cultural issues” affecting Pacific research in PBRF²⁴.

Questions for consideration:

- vii. Should the equity weighting for Research Degree Completions by Pasifika students be retained?

SRG recommendation:

The current SRG supports the retention of the equity weighting of 2 for Research Degree Completions by Pasifika students.

- viii. Are there other measures that might incentivise TEOs to support Pacific research / Pasifika students at postgraduate level and in a wider range of subject areas?

²³ White and Grice, *Participation and Performance by Māori and Pacific Peoples Researchers in the Performance-Based Research Fund, 2003-2006*, 2008, p.87.

²⁴ Adams, *Strategic Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund: The Assessment Process*, 2008, p.54.

6.0 Research output

6.1 Types

By nature, much Pacific research is conducted via oral-based methodologies and leads to oral-based outputs, in contrast with the written forms more commonly adopted by PBRF-eligible researchers in most other subject areas. To this effect, the Guidelines for Pacific Research in both the 2003 and 2006 rounds noted that:

“the presentation of research through oral forms such as an address is often very important, since the person and the delivery are considered a crucial part of the research engagement with the community²⁵.”

The Guidelines further stated that “Pacific research may be more likely than other kinds of research to be applied in nature, although all forms of research will be accepted”²⁶. Pacific research based on oral methodologies can also translate well into print-based academic journals²⁷.

Concerns about a perceived bias against use of non-written media were reiterated following the 2006 assessment. It should be noted, however, that in both the 2003 and 2006 QEs the top three types of Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) that Pasifika researchers selected for assessment *were the same* as those put forward for evaluation by all other PBRF researchers, namely journal articles, conference contributions and book chapters.

In 2006, journal articles comprised approximately one third (30.1 percent) of Pasifika researchers’ NROs compared with half (50.1 percent) of all PBRF researchers’ NROs. Conference contributions and book chapters had higher proportions for Pasifika researchers than for all PBRF researchers. This was also the case for the fourth most popular type of NRO for Pasifika researchers, report for external body.

Table 3: Most popular types of Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) for Pacific Peoples Researchers versus all PBRF Researchers, 2006

Pacific peoples		All PBRF researchers	
Top four NRO types	Proportion of NROs	Top four NRO types	Proportion of NROs
1) Journal article	30.1%	1) Journal article	50.1%
2) Conference contribution	15.6%	2) Conference contribution	11.4%
3) Chapter in book	15.2%	3) Chapter in book	6.8%
4) Report for external body	6.4%	4) Authored book	3.6%

Despite the acknowledged predisposition of Pasifika researchers towards oral forms, the top ten NRO types of this group included only one (possibly) oral type (conference contribution), compared with two (possibly) oral types (conference contribution, performance) in the top ten NROs for all PBRF researchers.

²⁵ TEC, *PBRF: A Guide for 2003*, 2003, p. 154; TEC, *PBRF: Guidelines 2006*, 2005, p.136.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.149 (2003); p.133 (2006).

²⁷ Cf. Tamasese et al. (2005), “Ole Taeao Afua, the new morning: a qualitative investigation into Samoan perspectives on mental health and culturally appropriate services”, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 39(4), 300-309.

Questions for consideration:

- ix. Are there concerns that Pasifika researchers are producing and nominating outputs to fit with the system's perceived bias towards written material, rather than producing and nominating outputs in their preferred (oral) media?
If so, how might these concerns be addressed?
- x. Are there any "unresolved cultural issues" concerning Pasifika research and/or researchers that need to be addressed by the PBRF?
Identify any key issues and your recommendations that the SRG may need to consider.

6.2 Dissemination

The 2003 and 2006 Guidelines emphasised to panels that "opportunities for publication of Pacific research in mainstream journals, or through other mainstream dissemination channels, may be limited"²⁸. Where dissemination channels were not subject to conventional quality assurance processes, staff members were asked to furnish evidence of feedback, endorsement and/or uptake of their research by Pacific communities.

The Guidelines (Special Input Requirements) reminded panel members that Pacific specialist advisers could be called on to provide further advice but, as previously noted, these experts were very rarely asked for input.

7.0 Summary of points raised

- Pacific specialist advisers were rarely consulted in both the 2003 and 2006 Quality Evaluations.
- Confusion arose from the question in the 2006 Evidence Portfolio schema on whether the participant's EP contained Pacific research.
- The double equity weighting applied during the 2003 and 2006 QEs to research degrees completed by Pasifika students is up for review.
- The use of the catch-all title 'Pacific' may homogenise diverse ethnic groups.
- Concerns remain about a bias towards written rather than oral forms in PBRF.
- Opportunities for publication through mainstream channels are limited.
- Rates of participation of Pasifika researchers in the PBRF are low.

7.1 Preliminary sector response

The points expressed in the above summary were circulated in January and February 2009 to a sample of the sector that included staff from Pacific Studies programmes at a number of TEIs.

²⁸ TEC, *PBRF: A Guide for 2003*, 2003, p. 151; TEC, *PBRF: Guidelines 2006*, 2005, p.158.

Feedback indicated that the points raised here in section 7.0 covered the main concerns on Pacific research in the context of PBRF.

One respondent advocated the development of a high-level strategic plan that would set out the research needs of Pacific peoples, supported by a common vision and goals, to help bring into focus the various efforts being made currently by both Pacific and non-Pacific research groups.

Such a strategy might build on the TEC's Pacific Peoples' Strategy (refer to http://www.tec.govt.nz/upload/downloads/pp_inspiring_excellence.pdf).

Inspiring Excellence for Pacific Peoples throughout Tertiary Education, 2004 to 2006 and beyond identifies the following research-related goals and associated action plans:

- Leadership - celebrating excellence by "contributing to the development of a culture of excellence in academic achievement, research and career development based on tertiary education"²⁹.
- Inspiring excellence for Pacific leadership, scholarship, research and economic advancement.
- Supporting research into, and scholarships for, Pacific pedagogies and indigenous education.
- Supporting awards for research excellence in Pacific education.

The *Pasifika Education Plan 2008-2012* on the Ministry of Education web site sets out actions to address Pasifika needs and aspirations in general, but makes no specific mention of research needs as such.

While a strategic plan such as the one proposed above would undoubtedly have merit, it is outside the scope of the SRG's work.

8.0 Invitation to submit feedback

The SRG invites comment on the questions put forward for consideration in this paper. A feedback template is provided on page 18.

²⁹ TEC, *Inspiring Excellence for Pacific Peoples throughout Tertiary Education: The Tertiary Education Commission's Pacific Peoples Strategy 2004 to 2006 and beyond*, 2004, p.17.

Appendix A: Extracts from the 2006 Guidelines for Pacific research

Source: TEC, *PBRF Guidelines 2006*, Wellington, 2005, pp.134-135.

Introduction to Pacific Research

Pacific	The term 'Pacific' refers to Pacific peoples living in a Pacific nation, as well as Pacific peoples living in New Zealand while connected through their heritage and ancestry to a Pacific nation (the term 'Pasifika' is often used to denote this group of Pacific peoples).
Broad coverage	Pacific research encompasses research that reflects specific ethnic groups within the Pacific, as well as research that spans Pacific communities.
Particular principles of Pacific research	<p>The following principles inform the Pacific research guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The impact of Pacific research on Pacific communities and its relevance to those communities is particularly important, reflecting a commitment of Pacific researchers to benefit their communities through their research. For this reason, Pacific research may be more likely than other kinds of research to be applied in nature - although all forms of research will be accepted.• Contemporary Pacific research and discourse on Pacific research are emerging. As a result, there are a limited number of leaders in Pacific research; and those with significant research experience often commit significant resources to developing new and emerging Pacific researchers.• Pacific research is reflective of the traditions of the past, as well as the present and future. It often embodies paradigms, perspectives and critical stances that are not always captured in mainstream research. <p>Pacific research is an inclusive concept, incorporating research approaches that are both ethnic-specific and pan-Pacific in scope.</p>

Guidelines for Pacific research

General expectations for standard of evidence to be supplied	<p>Pacific research covers a wide range of subject areas and results in many types of research output. In cases where the quality-assurance process or the channel for dissemination of an NRO may be unfamiliar to panel members, staff members are advised to provide information on both the quality-assurance processes and the dissemination channel.</p> <p>While conventional methods of quality assurance (such as peer review of journals and curating of exhibitions) will apply to Pacific research, other quality-assurance processes may also apply. One measure of quality assurance for Pacific research is the extent to which it has been disseminated to the community (which involves evidence of feedback from the community) prior to wider dissemination. Sometimes there is a delay in receiving feedback, and acknowledgement of the research occurs sometime in the future. The effort required in the targeting and dissemination of Pacific research, and the quality of dissemination channels themselves, may vary. Staff members should, therefore, indicate the type of approach used to disseminate research (including targeted dissemination). They should also indicate, where possible, any evidence of feedback or acknowledgement that may indicate quality assurance.</p> <p>In addition to generally used forms of quality assurance, indicators of research quality for Pacific research may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endorsement by community leadership, prior to wider dissemination• Endorsement through fono or Pacific media (recognising that these may be community, national, regional, or pan-Pacific), prior to wider dissemination• Evidence of dissemination or uptake of research findings by Pacific regional media, and Pacific research communities• Endorsement and uptake across Pacific communities. <p>See also Guidelines for Special Input Requirements: Pacific Research</p>
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Elaboration of the Definition of Research

Pacific research is a broad descriptor that covers a wide range of subject areas and includes various Pacific approaches to research. It is expected that much of the research will be multidisciplinary and may include a range of methodological approaches.

An EP or a specific research output does not need to demonstrate all the following characteristics. But it should show a clear relationship with Pacific values and knowledge bases, and with a Pacific group or community.

Paradigm

Pacific research:

- Is informed by and embedded within the continuum of Pacific world-views, knowledge, practices, and values
- Is conducted in accordance with Pacific ethical standards, values and aspirations (such as responsiveness and reciprocity)
- Involves research processes and practices that are consistent with Pacific values, standards and expectations
- Includes methods, analysis and measurements that recognise Pacific philosophy and spirituality and experience
- Includes data derived from the broad range of Pacific knowledge and experience.

Participation

Pacific research:

- Involves the active participation of Pacific peoples (as researchers, advisers, stakeholders)
- Demonstrates that Pacific peoples are more than just subjects of research
- Demonstrates communal contact - that is, it recognises and validates the relationships between the researcher and the 'researched'
- Engages the Pacific community in the initial stages of the research.

Contribution

Pacific research:

- Contributes to and enhances the Pacific knowledge base in all subject areas
- Contributes to a greater understanding of Pacific cultures, experiences and world-views
- Is relevant and responsive to the needs of Pacific peoples
- May lead to action by Pacific communities
- Protects Pacific knowledge
- Contributes to Pacific knowledge, spirituality, development and advancement
- Is responsive to changing Pacific contexts.

Capacity and capability

Pacific research:

- Builds the capacity and capability of Pacific researchers
- Enhances the capacity of relevant Pacific communities to access and use the research.

Research that falls within the broad ambit of Pacific research (as outlined above) may be undertaken by Pacific or non-Pacific peoples

Appendix B: Ethnicity of participants who indicated that their EP contained Pacific research in 2006

Generic Ethnicity	Ethnicity 1	Ethnicity 2	Ethnicity 3	Researcher Count
Other	Chinese			13
Other	Chinese	Other Asian	Other	1
Other	European/Pākehā			320
Other	European/Pākehā	European/Pākehā		2
Other	European/Pākehā	NZ Maori		2
Other	European/Pākehā	Other	European/Pākehā	1
Other	Indian			8
Other	NZ Maori			49
Other	NZ Maori	European/Pākehā		9
Other	NZ Maori	NZ Maori		4
Other	Not Known			87
Other	Other			25
Other	Other	European/Pākehā		1
Other	Other Asian			9
Total non-Pacific ethnicity				531
Pacific Islands	Fijian			1
Pacific Islands	NZ Maori	Fijian		1
Pacific Islands	Other Pacific Island			15
Pacific Islands	Other Pacific Island	European/Pākehā		1
Pacific Islands	Other Pacific Island	Other Pacific Island		1
Pacific Islands	Other Pacific Island	Samoan		1
Pacific Islands	Samoan			2
Pacific Islands	Samoan	Tongan		1
Pacific Islands	Tongan			5
Pacific Islands	Tongan	European/Pākehā		1
Pacific Islands	Tongan	Tongan		1
Pacific Islands	European/Pākehā	Samoan		1
Total Pacific ethnicity				31
Grand total				562

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Performance-Based Research Fund

Feedback template for Pacific Research consultation paper

Feedback from:	
Contact details:	

1 Purpose

This template is designed for collecting feedback on the matters raised in the PBRF Sector Reference Group consultation paper on Pacific research.

The objective is to gain comment from the sector in a way that will speed the collation and review of such feedback.

Respondents are encouraged to answer all or some of the questions in this template, and may also provide additional comments on issues relevant to Pacific research.

Timeframe for feedback

Completed templates and any other comments should be emailed to PBRF.2012Redesign@tec.govt.nz or can be posted to Dr. Sarah Powell, Tertiary Education Commission, P.O. Box 27048, Wellington 6141.

Feedback would be appreciated as soon as possible, but no later than 5pm, Friday 28 August 2009.

2 Questions for consideration

i. Should all Evidence Portfolios (EPs) designated 'Pacific research' in the EP schema be cross-referenced to a Pacific specialist adviser?

ii. Should the criteria for Pacific research (essentially unchanged since their elaboration in 2003, see Appendix A) be revised before the 2012 Quality Evaluation?

If so, please provide recommendations for revision.

iii. How might the Guidelines on Pacific research be better understood by TEOs and staff members?

iv. Should data on ethnicity be collected via the PBRF EPs at all?

Please provide reasoning in support of your answer.

v. Should catch-all ethnic categories be retained?

Please provide reasoning in support of your answer.

You may also wish to list ethnic categories you consider appropriate for use, specifically in relation to Pasifika researchers, or to suggest alternative solutions.

vi. How, in your view, could ethnic data be better recorded and reported?

vii. Should the equity weighting for Research Degree Completions by Pasifika students be retained?

SRG recommendation:

The current SRG supports the retention of the equity weighting of 2 for Pasifika Research Degree Completions.

viii. Are there other measures that might incentivise TEOs to support Pacific research / Pasifika students at postgraduate level and in a wider range of subject areas?

- ix. Are there concerns that Pasifika researchers are producing and nominating outputs to fit with the system's perceived bias towards written material, rather than producing and nominating outputs in their preferred (oral) media?

If so, how might these concerns be addressed?

- x. Are there any "unresolved cultural issues" concerning Pasifika research and/or researchers that need to be addressed by the PBRF?

Identify any key issues and recommendations that the SRG may need to consider.