



Tertiary Education Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

Performance-Based Research Fund

2012 Quality Evaluation
Consultation Paper 1

Name	Reference and Status	Distribution
2012 Quality Evaluation	PBRF-Consultation 2008-03-01 CONSULTATION PAPER	Tertiary Education Sector Direct feedback to: PBRF.2012Redesign@tec.govt.nz

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1. Introduction

Purpose

1. This paper:
 - gives background information about the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF), the establishment of a Sector Reference Group (SRG), and the Phase 2 Evaluation of the PBRF;
 - proposes an indicative timeline for any redesign of the PBRF before the implementation of the 2012 Quality Evaluation (see Appendix A);
 - identifies issues regarding the 2006 PBRF Quality Evaluation that have come to the attention of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) (see Appendices B and C);
 - invites feedback from the tertiary education sector on the proposed timeline and the issues identified; and
 - invites feedback from the sector on any other matters that should be considered as part of the redesign process.

Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF)

2. The PBRF is a key government initiative under the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES). It involves funding tertiary education organisations (TEOs) based on their research performance as determined by three measures:
 - Research Quality;
 - Research Degree Completions (RDC); and
 - External Research Income (ERI).
3. Research quality is measured through periodic Quality Evaluations, in which Evidence Portfolios (EPs) of PBRF-eligible staff are independently assessed by peer review panels. This results in the assignment of individual quality categories (A, B, C, C(NE), R(NE) and R). The aggregated results, including quality scores (out of 10) and the distribution of quality categories for TEOs, subject areas, and nominated academic units, are publicly reported.
4. The results of the periodic Quality Evaluation, together with the results of the RDC and ERI measures, provide the basis for funding allocations to participating TEOs.

Aims of the PBRF

5. 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 outputs;
- 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.

Principles of the PBRF

6. The PBRF is governed by the following set of principles:¹
- **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;
 - **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; and
 - **Cultural inclusiveness:** the PBRF should reflect the bicultural nature of New Zealand and the special role and status of the Treaty

¹ These principles were first enunciated by the Working Group on the PBRF. See *Investing in Excellence*, pp.8-9.

of Waitangi, and should appropriately reflect and include the full diversity of New Zealand's population.

2003 Quality Evaluation

7. The first Quality Evaluation was completed during 2003 and the results were published in April 2004. Subsequently, an independent evaluation was commissioned by the TEC and the Ministry of Education to assess the effectiveness of the process and to make recommendations for improvements to subsequent Quality Evaluation rounds. The WEB Research Evaluation Report is publicly available at www.tec.govt.nz.

2006 Quality Evaluation

8. The second Quality Evaluation was completed during 2006-2007, with the results published in May 2007. The Centre for Research on Work, Education and Business (WEB Research) Evaluation Report, feedback received from TEOs, and the TEC's own experience of the PBRF process identified a number of issues to be addressed for the 2006 Quality Evaluation.
9. The TEC established a Sector Reference Group (SRG) in 2004 to lead this redesign process. The SRG spent just over a year looking at all the issues, then made recommendations to the TEC. These were incorporated into the design of the 2006 Quality Evaluation.
10. Now that the 2006 Quality Evaluation has been completed, the TEC has established a new SRG to consider the feedback received and lead any redesign of the PBRF before the 2012 Quality Evaluation. Between March 2008 and June 2010, the SRG will look at all the issues and then make recommendations to the TEC. Any agreed changes will be incorporated into the design of the PBRF before the 2012 Quality Evaluation.

Sector Reference Group

11. The SRG will facilitate the PBRF redesign process, overseeing and prioritising the work programme by:
 - meeting regularly (via teleconference where necessary);
 - reviewing any papers prepared as part of the TEC's PBRF redesign work, undertaking further analysis as required;
 - identifying options for resolving issues, and communicate these options in the form of discussion papers for sector feedback; and
 - reviewing sector feedback and agree upon recommendations for TEC consideration.
12. Membership of the SRG is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: SRG Membership

Name	Position	Nominating TEO
Susan Cauchi	Director Academic	Whitireia Community Polytechnic
Dr Cathy Coleborne	Senior Lecturer in History	University of Waikato
Professor Marston Conder (Vice Chair)	Co-Director of NZ Institute of Mathematics and its Applications	University of Auckland
Professor Olaf Diegel	Director of the Creative Industries Research Institute	AUT University
Dr Grant Duncan	Senior Lecturer, Social and Public Policy Programmes at Massey University	Association of University Staff
Robin Falconer	General Manager – Research at GNS Science - Te Pu Ao	Invited by Chair and TEC
Professor Jane Harding	Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	University of Auckland
Professor John Hattie (Chair)	Director of Visible Learning Laboratories and asTTle at the University of Auckland	Invited by TEC
Jonathan Hughes	Senior Policy Advisor NZVCC	New Zealand Vice- Chancellors' Committee
Professor Pare Keiha	Pro Vice-Chancellor for Māori Advancement and Tumuaki of Te Ara Poutama, the Dean of the Faculty of Māori Development	AUT University
Professor Gael McDonald	Vice President Research	Unitec New Zealand
Professor Kay Morris Matthews	Research Professor	Eastern Institute of Technology
Professor John Raine	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Auckland & International)	Massey University
Dr John Smart	Director Research Management	University of Auckland
Professor Ian Town	Deputy Vice Chancellor	University of Canterbury
Professor Geoff White	Professor of Psychology Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	University of Otago

13. SRG members have been selected according to their ability to:

- contribute to discussions on the basis of their expertise and experience;
 - contribute to the development of advice through peer review and, by agreement, produce working papers within their field of expertise;
 - maintain confidentiality where required;
 - canvas proposals widely within their network of contacts in the sector; and
 - work with other SRG members to make recommendations regarding redesign issues to the PBRF Steering Group.
14. Members have been selected to ensure that the SRG:
- represents an appropriate range of participating TEOs;²
 - has an appropriate balance in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity;
 - has the knowledge and expertise necessary to provide informed, dispassionate, and reliable advice;
 - represents an appropriate range of academic disciplines and academic research managers;
 - includes academic staff at different points in their careers; and
 - includes some members with a non-academic research background.
15. The SRG will be supported by TEC staff from the Operations Development team, and across the organisation.

Phase 2 Review

16. As a separate process to the SRG, an independent strategic review of the positive and negative effects of the PBRF on the sector is currently being implemented. This Review, carried out by Dr Jonathan Adams, has two main elements:
- analysing secondary data held by the TEC and MoE such as Evidence Portfolios, the PBRF censuses, and the single data return (SDR); and
 - collecting the views of informed stakeholders in the sector to reflect the different contexts of TEOs.
17. The Review is Phase 2 of a three-phase evaluation of the PBRF:
- the short-term phase (Phase 1): This phase was designed to focus upon an evaluation of the implementation process (especially in relation to the 2003 Quality Evaluation) and the short-term impacts

² An important principle guiding the work of the SRG is that, while its members are drawn from a wide range of participating TEOs, their role is not to act as representatives for their respective organisations.

of the PBRF on the tertiary education sector, including modelling the likely financial implications of the PBRF for TEOs during 2004-2007. This was completed by WEB Research and is available at www.tec.govt.nz.

- the medium-term phase (Phase 2): This phase is intended to provide a detailed review and evaluation of the wider impacts of the PBRF on the tertiary education sector. Phase 2 is currently underway and will be completed in time for advice to be provided to Cabinet by 30 June 2008;
- the longer-term phase (Phase 3): This phase is intended to focus upon whether the PBRF has fulfilled its stated objectives and whether the overall benefits exceeded the costs. It is envisaged that this part of the evaluation will be completed by 2014.

18. The scope for the Review is:

- to identify the overall effects of the PBRF on the tertiary education sector at the mid term, including positive and negative effects in relation to the management of research and human resources in TEOs; and
- to identify whether the current PBRF system could be improved, and in particular examine:
 - weightings for the three components of the PBRF: the Quality Evaluation, research degree completions, and external research income, including the subject-area cost weightings that apply to the Quality Evaluation and research degree completions;
 - the individual as the unit of assessment;
 - the design and implementation of the processes and procedures for the 2006 Quality Evaluation, and whether and how these processes and procedures might be improved for the 2012 Quality Evaluation.

19. Specific issues to be examined as required by the ministerial instructions are:

- undesirable consequences of the PBRF particularly for new and emerging researchers, humanities/ social sciences disciplines and professional schools (especially health);
- impacts on 'risky and innovative research' in line with the Tertiary Education Strategy priority 4 "Improving research connections and linkages to create economic opportunities";
- impacts on provider engagement with the community, or on the contribution of academics to administration within their institution;
- impacts on Māori and Pacific People researchers.

Phase 2 Review and the SRG

20. The Phase 2 Review Report will be a significant input into the SRG's process of considering design of the PBRF and any implementation issues affecting the 2012 Quality Evaluation. The SRG will consider all Phase 2 findings in detail. However, it is important to note that the SRG's recommendations may not in all cases align with the findings of the Phase 2 report.

2. Redesign

Redesign Issues

21. Appendix B contains a list of possible PBRF redesign issues, grouped into a number of broad areas. These issues reflect:
- the PBRF 'Letter of Determination' issued under section 159ZA of the Education Act (1989);
 - 2006 Moderation Panel recommendations;
 - 2006 Subject Panel recommendations (see Appendix C);
 - the 2006 complaints process;
 - feedback to the TEC (direct, indirect, formal, and informal);
 - the TEC's own experiences;
 - the discussion of the meeting of 28 March 2008 of the Sector Reference Group.
22. Appendix C contains a list of the recommendations made by the 2006 Subject Panels organised by area. This adds a new level of detail to the recommendations in Appendix B.

Redesign Principles

23. PBRF redesign work ahead of the next 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.

Process for Redesign

24. The process the SRG follows in considering the design of the PBRF before the implementation of the 2012 Quality Evaluation will be as follows:
- SRG decides on topics for Issues Papers;
 - preparation of Issues Papers for the SRG that give background information, specify the issues, and outline potential options for resolution;
 - consideration of Issues Papers by the SRG (in terms of the quality of the analysis, accuracy, clarity, coverage of the relevant issues and options, and recommended approach);
 - preparation of Consultation Papers for the sector providing background information, clarification of issues, analysis, and recommended approach;
 - consultation with the sector and feedback;
 - SRG recommendations made to the TEC;
 - SRG receives feedback from TEC on recommendations; and
 - if agreed by TEC, SRG recommendations are integrated into paper and the PBRF guidelines (i.e. PBRF: A Guide for 2012).
25. At the conclusion of the PBRF redesign phase in June 2010, an updated guide for the 2012 Quality Evaluation will be issued, containing the redesigned PBRF process.

Proposed Consultation Papers

26. Based on the above considerations, the SRG proposes to produce sector consultation papers on the following topics (see Appendix B for a more detailed list):
- Unit of Assessment;
 - Eligibility;
 - New and Emerging Researchers;
 - Weightings;
 - Professional and Applied Research;
 - Māori and Pacific Research;
 - Document Repository;
 - Process of Evaluating EPs;
 - Special Circumstance; and
 - Reporting of Results.

27. The order given here is indicative. As the work of the SRG progresses, papers on other topics may also be deemed necessary.

3. PBRF 2006 Timeline and Approach

Proposed 2012 Timetable

28. The 2006 Quality Evaluation took from June 2006 to September 2007 to complete – including the Christmas/New Year down time, the release of results in May 2007, and the complaints process. The indicative timetable proposed for the 2012 Quality Evaluation (see Table 2) closely follows the timeline proposed for 2006. However, the TEC is aware that at certain points in the 2006 Quality Evaluation this timeline created some tight deadlines and would welcome any suggestions for improvement.
29. A more detailed timetable with key dates is outlined in Appendix A.

Table 2 – Proposed Timeline

Stage	Time	Activity
Stage I Sector Reference Group, Redesign, and Guidelines	Mar 2008 to Jun 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise framework and priorities for redesign in consultation with the sector Undertake and complete redesign work Provide sector with revised EP Format and Integrated Guidelines
Stage II TEOs internal processes	Jul 2010 to Jul 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build information systems and operational processes PBRF-eligible staff prepare EPs Census date: 14 June 2012
Stage III Quality Categories assigned to EPs and Audit processes	Jul 2012 to Jan 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPs submitted to TEC, assessed by peer review panels, audited and moderated
Stage IV Reporting, Complaints and Funding	Feb 2013 to May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results approved by the TEC Board and published Reallocated funding is delivered to TEOs Complaints lodged and resolved
Stage V	May 2013 to Jun 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project completion and review

Assessment Period for Research Outputs

30. Under the current policy framework, the assessment period for research outputs is six years. As the next Quality Evaluation will be

held in 2012, the proposed assessment period will be 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2011.

Guidelines

31. It is envisaged that any redesign work will be completed by June 2010. The redesign phase will culminate with the release of:
 - PBRF: A Guide for Annual ERI and RDC returns
 - PBRF: A Guide for 2012
 - PBRF: EP Format and Systems Specification.
32. Consideration will also be given to providing a 'Guide for Staff'. This will focus on how to complete an EP, the nature of the assessment process, and issues surrounding the reporting of results.

4. Consultation Feedback

33. The TEC welcomes any comments on this paper's:
 - indicative timeline and approach for the 2012 Quality Evaluation (Appendix A);
 - list of the key areas and issues in which the SRG will consider possible changes (Appendix B);
 - more detailed list of 2006 Subject Panel recommendations (Appendix C); and
 - any other matters relating to the PBRF that stakeholders believe need attention during the forthcoming redesign phase.
34. During the redesign process a number of detailed papers will be prepared examining specific design issues and outlining possible options. Feedback from the sector will be invited on each of these papers as and when they become available.

Timeframe for Feedback

35. All feedback relating to this and future SRG papers on the PBRF should be emailed to: PBRF.2012Redesign@tec.govt.nz or can be posted to: Damien Cole, Tertiary Education Commission, PO Box 27 048, Wellington.
36. Feedback on this paper would be appreciated as soon as possible, but no later than 30 May 2008.

Appendix A: Proposed Timetable

Stage	Time	Activity
Stage I Sector Reference Group, Redesign, and Guidelines	Sep 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector Reference Group Chair appointed
	7 Feb 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call for nominations for Sector Reference Group members
	1 Mar 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominations for Sector Reference Group close
	14 Mar 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector Reference Group announced
	28 Mar 2008 to Jun 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign work begins, including consultation with sector and overseen by a Sector Reference Group
	Jul 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final EP Form and Guidelines available to TEOs
Stage II TEOs internal process	Jul 2010 to Jul 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build information systems and operational processes Staff prepare EPs
	14 Jun 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census Date
Stage III Quality Categories assigned to EPs and Audit processes	21 Jul 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPs submitted to TEC
	28 Aug 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panels receive EPs for assessment
	27 Nov – 8 Dec 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panels meet to assign QCs
	Dec 2012/ Jan 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel Results moderated
Stage IV Reporting, Complaints and Funding	Feb 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TEC Board approves results
	Apr 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2006 Public Report published
	Apr 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding delivered to TEOs
	Apr/May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints process
Stage V	May 2013 to Jun 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion and review

Appendix B: Redesign Issues

Based on the 159ZA, the 2006 Quality Evaluation report, the recommendations of the 2006 Moderation panel, the recommendations of the 2006 Subject Panels, and the discussion of the meeting of 28 March 2008 of the Sector Reference Group, the following topics have been identified for review:

Main Topic	Sub-topics
1. Unit of assessment	
2. Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules governing staff eligibility • Eligibility and assessment criteria for new and emerging researcher
3. New and Emerging Researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility and assessment criteria for new and emerging researchers • Ensuring TEOs understand the importance of assigning 'new and emerging' researcher status to eligible staff
4. Weightings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60:25:15 split of the three PBRF components • Weightings and impacts, e.g. on humanities and social sciences; professional training such as health; and risky or innovative research • Equity weighting for RDC for Māori and Pacific students • Engagement with the community / contribution of academics to administration within their provider
5. Professional and Applied Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with the community / contribution of academics to administration within their provider
6. Māori and Pacific Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring TEOs accurately apply the criteria for Pacific research • Most effective and appropriate ways of addressing issues associated with Māori and Pacific research and researchers
7. Document Repository (including preparation and submission of EPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring TEOs accurately apply the criteria for Pacific research • Ensuring TEOs understand the importance of assigning 'new and emerging' researcher status to eligible staff • Capture and reporting of information in relevant databases • Checking and verification of information in EPs • Logistics of providing NROs to panel members
8. Process of Evaluating EPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of EPs • Nature of the evaluation criteria, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the scoring system to guide decisions of

	<p>panels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generic descriptors and tie-in points • Consideration of self assessment on a limited basis • Checking and verification of information in EPs • Assessment timetable • Panel workload and TEC support • Selection of panel chairs and members • Training of peer review panels • Distribution of information to support the assessment Process • Application of the evaluation criteria • Cross-referral of EPs • Inter-panel moderation / moderation process • Management of conflicts of interest • Assessment of panel members EPs
9. Special Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment of Special Circumstances
10. Reporting of Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting Results • Complaints process

The order given here is indicative. As the work of the SRG progresses, papers on other topics may also be deemed necessary.

Appendix C: Summary of 2006 Subject Panel Recommendations

The Subject Panels in the 2006 Quality Evaluation made a number of recommendations that are relevant to the redesign process. These issues align with, and add a level of detail to, those listed in Appendix B.

The full 2006 Panel Reports can be downloaded at www.tec.govt.nz.

Key to Panel Abbreviations

Biological Sciences	BIO
Business and Economics	BEC
Creative and Performing Arts	CPA
Education	EDU
Engineering, Technology and Architecture	ETA
Health	HEAL
Humanities and Law	HUM
Māori Knowledge and Development	MKD
Mathematics and Information Sciences and Technology	MATH
Medicine and Public Health	MED
Physical Sciences	PHYS
Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Studies	SOC

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4. Contribution to Research Environment (CRE)

Panel Scoring of EPs

1. Panel Scoring Process (general)
2. New and Emerging Researchers
3. Cross-Referral Panels
4. Special Circumstances
5. Conflicts of Interest
6. Panel Resources

Role of TEOs

Evaluation Portfolios (EPs)

1. Format and Contents

1. Taking further steps to clarify the requirements for the submission of NROs (such as patents) to ensure that these are accessible and reviewable by the peer review panels for the next Quality Evaluation. **[BIO]**
2. That 'bookmarks' be added to all PDF copies of EPs to allow for efficient scanning of the document. **[BEC]**
3. That researchers citing a conference paper as an NRO be required to submit the full text of the conference paper rather than just the abstract. **[CPA]**
4. That researchers be asked to not include a Masters thesis as an NRO unless it has generally been accepted as the terminal degree for that discipline. **[CPA]**
5. That researchers be asked to make it clear when exhibition ROs include new works, as opposed to recycled existing works. **[CPA]**
6. That researchers be required to ensure that all URL addresses to ROs are specific and functioning throughout the review period. **[CPA]**
7. That EPs and related forms are consistently ordered according to the unique ID numerical sequence in order to facilitate cross-referencing. **[CPA]**
8. That all forms are single-sided so that information is easily accessible. This applies especially to Form 3.5 (the individual panel member worksheets). **[CPA]**
9. That all forms, EPs and other supporting documentation are sent to panel members earlier in the process. **[CPA]**
10. That the TEC provide more detailed guidelines around what needs to be included in an EP to avoid repetition and needless commentary. **[CPA]**
11. That the TEC develop additional drop-down categories in the NRO type section of the EP template to accommodate poems and short-stories. **[CPA]**
12. That the TEC require TEOs to provide descriptions of what form the NROs will be supplied if called upon by a panel. The CPA panel would like to recommend the method used by the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in the United Kingdom. **[CPA]**
13. Staff preparing EPs need to take additional care with the 'my contribution' field and provide the precise detail about the contribution made by each author in joint and collaborative work. **[EDU]**
14. Staff preparing EPs need to provide more specific information on impact factors. **[EDU]**
15. That in regard to the Other Research Output section of the EP, the TEC provide for TEOs to list quality assured journal articles first. **[ETA]**
16. That for each NRO abstracts are included in EPs **[MEDI]**

17. That researchers be required to indicate their highest degree, year earned, and awarding institution in their EP. **[SOC]**
18. That the definition of research be reviewed to clarify the circumstance under which textbooks can be considered as meeting the definition of research. **[SOC]**
19. That the TEC work to ensure that grant and funding information feature in only one component of the EP to ensure double-counting does not occur. **[SOC]**

2. Nominated Research Outputs (NROs)

2.1 Reviewing NROs

1. Reviewing the process for obtaining Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) for panel members to review. **[BIO]**
2. Taking further steps to clarify the requirements for the submission of NROs (such as patents) to ensure that these are accessible and reviewable by the peer review panels for the next Quality Evaluation. **[BIO]**
3. Obtaining electronic copies of as many NROs as possible, with these being posted on a secure server accessible by panel members and hosted by the TEC. **[BEC]**
4. That 'bookmarks' be added to all PDF copies of EPs to allow for efficient scanning of the document. **[BEC]**
5. That the TEC develop a central on-line database (which is secured by panel PINs) where panel members can access NROs where formats are appropriate; and that TEOs be required to post the NROs directly onto the database. **[CPA]**
6. That the TEC develop a better system for recording which NROs have been sighted by panel members. **[CPA]**
7. That NROs are sent to panel members earlier/faster. **[CPA]**
8. That the TEC make all photographic images submitted as NROs available online. **[CPA]**
9. That digital images of NROs have a minimum quality standard that allows them to be clearly legible at screen-size resolution. **[CPA]**
10. That researchers citing a conference paper as an NRO be required to submit the full text of the conference paper rather than just the abstract. **[CPA]**
11. All journal articles submitted as NROs should be made available online. **[EDU]**
12. That the TEC require all TEOs to make an electronic version of the each NRO available to all panel members. In particular, for large books it would be desirable to require TEOs to scan the contents pages and a selection of no more than 20 of the key pages. **[ETA]**

13. Ensuring that the four NROs are attached with the EP for allocation to panel members for the pre-assessment and scoring. Alternatively, all NROs should be available for the panel meetings on a secure website. **[HEAL]**
14. Requiring TEOs to submit all NROs with the EP, in electronic format where possible. **[HUM]**
15. Revisiting the process by which panel members access NROs through the TEC. **[MKD]**
16. That all aspects of the Quality Evaluation be web-based. This includes the preliminary scoring process, the calibration scoring during the panel meetings, the EPs and the NROs to be sighted. **[MEDI]**
17. That the TEC obtain electronic copies of as many NROs as possible, with these being posted on a secure server, accessible by panel members, hosted by either the TEC or TEOs. **[SOC]**

2.2 Co-Authored NROs

1. Researchers note where co-authors of NROs have agreed on their respective contributions stated in the 'My Contribution' component of the EP. **[BEC]**
2. Staff preparing EPs need to take additional care with the 'my contribution' field and provide the precise detail about the contribution made by each author in joint and collaborative work. **[EDU]**
3. That for each NRO the contribution of the researcher and a full list of authors included in EPs. **[MEDI]**
4. That the researcher be required to provide confirmation that authors of other NRO concur with the comments made in the 'My Contribution' component of the EP. **[SOC]**

2.3 Quality Assurance of Research Outputs

1. That researchers be required to explain the basis upon which they are claiming quality assurance for ROs. **[CPA]**
2. Greater emphasis needs to be placed in the PBRF Guidelines on the context in which impact is felt, particularly in relation to Pacific research which is more likely to be published nationally. **[EDU]**
3. TEOs need to raise awareness with staff with regards to impact of NROs and the importance of moving, where appropriate, to publication in higher impact journals. They need to advise staff to move beyond in house publication and conference presentations. **[EDU]**
4. Staff preparing EPs need to provide more specific information on impact factors. **[EDU]**
5. That, in regard to the Other Research Output section of the EP, the TEC provide for TEOs to list quality assured journal articles first. **[ETA]**
6. Seeking to clarify the requirements for what constitutes an output as being "quality assured", especially in the case of conference papers. **[HUM]**

7. Encouraging the use of Kaumātua attestations as evidence of quality assurance of research outputs. **[MKD]**
8. That for each NRO it is stated whether the NRO has been peer reviewed or not AND the impact factor and citation is listed; **[MED]**
9. That journal impact factors, and research output citation counts for the assessment period and since publishing be provided to panel members prior to the commencement of pre-meeting assessment. **[SOC]**

2.4 Definition of research

1. That researchers be asked to not include a Masters thesis as an NRO unless it has generally been accepted as the terminal degree for that discipline **[CPA]**
2. That researchers be asked to make it clear when exhibition ROs include new works, as opposed to recycled existing works. **[CPA]**
3. That the TEC develop additional drop-down categories in the NRO type section of the EP template to accommodate poems and short-stories. **[CPA]**
4. That the TEC consider developing a new category (or new categories) with a modified weighting between the three components of an EP. The ETA Panel noted that there were a number of researchers who were in transition either into or out of industry. The ETA Panel believes that these researchers would benefit from additional recognition of a major research output that is creative, or that results in independently quality assured uptake by the industry. **[ETA]**
5. That where there is an emphasis on the major impact of a research output or resulting technology on industry, the TEC should consider the need to obtain an independent, unsolicited review of the research output. **[ETA]**
6. That the TEC provide additional exemplars of the type of evidence that should be submitted in EPs relating to outputs arising from creative and professional endeavours. This arises out of the challenges presented by the assessment of outputs arising out of creative and professional endeavours and the inconsistent practices used to prepare EPs. **[ETA]**
7. That the TEC create a pro-forma to be the basis for collecting evidence of the impact of a piece of research on industrial practice¹, further that the TEC does this in conjunction with the panel chair and that the information is provided on a confidential and blind basis to ensure independence. **[ETA]**
8. Eliminating conference abstract as a research output type **[HEAL]**
9. Recommending that the panel in 2012 consider, when establishing the panel-specific guidelines, clarifying the guidelines for works of translation and the independent scholarship that is involved in such works. **[HUM]**
10. 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. **[MKD]**

3. Peer Esteem

1. That the TEC permit the award of a “C” Quality Category to any EP that demonstrates adequate evidence of peer esteem and contribution to the research environment irrespective of whether the EP relates to a new and emerging researcher. **[ETA]**
2. That the TEC provide more detailed guidance on the information to be provided as part of the peer esteem section. **[ETA]**
3. That invited publications and reviews should be in the peer esteem section rather than the RO component of EPs. **[MEDI]**

4. Contribution to Research Environment (CRE)

1. That the CPA Panel guidelines be refined to provide guidance around how to assess CRE that is more community-based than pedagogically-based. **[CTA]**
2. The PBRF Guidelines need to be revised to distinguish more clearly the difference between PE and CRE. **[EDU]**
3. That the TEC provide more detailed guidance on the information to be provided as part of the CRE section. **[ETA]**
4. That where research funding has been provided as evidence of contribution to the research environment, the TEC require the researcher to explain the role he/she had in securing that research funding. **[ETA]**
5. That the TEC clarify how research funding amounts should be taken into account when assessing an EP. **[ETA]**
6. That the TEC review statement in the PBRF Guidelines that the amount of research income will not be taken into account when assessing contribution to the research environment and provide advice on the impact the amount of research funding should have on the assessment of the CRE section. **[ETA]**
7. Standardising the format of the Contribution to the Research Environment section of the EP so it includes granting body, amount, source, principal investigator, and contribution of the individual to the research proposal being funded. **[HEAL]**

Panel Scoring of EPs

1. Criteria, Guidance, and Process

1. Revising the Guidelines to include more specific guidance on assessing EPs covering disparate disciplines. **[BIO]**

2. The requirement for lead panel members, rather than any member of the panel member pairing, to provide preliminary scores, be made clearer in the documentation. **[BEC]**
3. Each panel member be issued a computer during the peer review panel meeting allowing them to review scoring information and individual EPs themselves on a closed system. **[BEC]**
4. additional time be provided for assessment by panel pairs, to allow all requested NROs and all cross-referral advice to be incorporated in preliminary scoring; **[EDU]**
5. That the TEC make all forms electronic as some panel members felt overwhelmed by the volume of paper they had to deal with and it was difficult to keep track of. **[ETA]**
6. That the TEC make the reporting of scores by panel members web-based. **[ETA]**
7. That the TEC simplify the scoring process by requiring panel members to determine only one set of preparatory scores. **[ETA]**
8. That the TEC make it clearer which panel member is to submit what preliminary scores. **[ETA]**
9. That the TEC emphasise the possibility of holistic scoring to panels. **[ETA]**
10. That the TEC re-label “preparatory scores” as “individual scores” and “preliminary scores” as “agreed scores” to avoid confusion. **[ETA]**
11. Revisiting the descriptors on the scoring scale for assessing the Research Output (RO) component, specifically between the scores of “1” and “2”. **[HUM]**
12. That the criteria for a research output component score of ‘2’ be reviewed to ensure that the standard required to be achieved is not higher than for a ‘2’ for a non-new and emerging researcher. **[SOC]**
13. That all EPs be published on the TEC website once the Final Quality Categories are confirmed, thereby ensuring transparency in the information presented by each researcher. **[SOC]**
14. That the requirement for lead panel members to provide preliminary scores be made clearer in the PBRF Guidelines and training for panel members, and that the TEC ensure all scores are correct and submitted in time for the peer review panel meeting. **[SOC]**
15. That the range of research quality measured by the ‘B’ Quality Category is too wide. **[SOC]**
16. That the Final Quality Categories assigned to panel members not be revealed to panel members during panel meetings, but rather at the same time as all other researchers. **[SOC]**
17. That the TEC might reconsider the unit of assessment. **[SOC]**

2. New and Emerging Researchers

1. Reviewing the eligibility criteria for 'new and emerging' researchers and the process to be followed to collect that information **[BIO]**
2. The PBRF Guidelines provide increased emphasis on Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) accurately declaring whether a staff member meets the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers. **[BEC]**
3. That the TEC consider providing a clearer distinction between the "New and Emerging" status and the special circumstance: "research active for the first time". **[CPA]**
4. That the TEC provide TEOs with thorough training on the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers to ensure accurate identification of those eligible for a C(NE) or R(NE) quality category. **[CPA]**
5. Further detail should be provided in relation to the assessment criteria for new and emerging researchers **[EDU]**
6. Clearer assessment criteria be developed for new and emerging researchers, especially for the "C(NE)" category. **[EDU]**
7. That the TEC permit the award of a "C" Quality Category to any EP that demonstrates adequate evidence of peer esteem and contribution to the research environment irrespective of whether the EP relates to a new and emerging researcher. **[CTA]**
8. That the TEC clarify the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers. **[CTA]**
9. Providing more detailed clarification to TEOs on how to consistently apply the eligibility criteria for "New and Emerging" researchers. **[HUM]**
10. Providing further guidance to TEOs about the importance of declaring new and emerging status. **[MKD]**
11. That TEOs be strongly encouraged to carefully apply the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers and appropriately identify those staff through the PBRF Census (Staffing Return). **[PHYS]**
12. That the TEC carefully review the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers to ensure that it appropriately captures all staff at the beginning of their academic careers. **[PHYS]**
13. That the criteria for a research output component score of '2' be reviewed to ensure that the standard required to be achieved is not higher than for a '2' for a non-new and emerging researcher. **[SOC]**
14. That the PBRF Guidelines provide increased emphasis on TEOs accurately declaring whether a staff member meets the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers. **[SOC]**

3. Cross-Referral Panels

1. Revisiting the requirements for cross-referral panels to provide contextual information around recommendations for preliminary scoring. **[BIO]**

2. Panel members assigned to assess an EP determine whether cross referral or specialist advice is required rather than having this done beforehand by the Chair. **[BEC]**
3. More specific commentary be obtained from cross-referral advisors to ensure the rationale for scores is clear and the advice actionable. **[BEC]**
4. The TEC be more active at following up on un-submitted cross-referral advice. **[BEC]**
5. The mandatory cross-referral of transferred EPs be removed. **[BEC]**
6. That the TEC make it clearer to all panel members (including the cross-referral panel member) assigned to a cross-referred EP which other panel members have also been assigned to that EP. **[CPA]**
7. Panels should be encouraged to seek additional cross-referral advice in highly specialised areas, for example, performing and visual arts. **[EDU]**
8. Cross-referral scoring should be provided as early as possible in the pre-meeting assessment phase. **[EDU]**
9. That the TEC require cross-referral advice to be comprehensive and detailed with annotations as opposed to providing only scores for each component. **[ETA]**
10. That the TEC ensure all cross-referral advice is passed on to the lead panel members. **[ETA]**
11. That the TEC consider the merits of retaining cross-referral advice as in some cases, cross-referral advice was differed significantly from the assessment of the panel pairs. **[ETA]**
12. That the TEC consider replacing cross-referral advice with specialist advice. **[ETA]**
13. Allowing panel members to recommend that cross-referrals are unnecessary and should be withdrawn. **[HUM]**
14. Require the exchange of contextual information, preferably via teleconference by panel members of cross-referral panels. **[MKD]**
15. That more specific commentary be obtained from cross-referral advisers to ensure the rationale for scores is clear and the advice actionable. **[SOC]**
16. That the TEC be more active at following up on un-submitted cross-referral advice. **[SOC]**
17. That the mandatory cross-referral of transferred EPs be removed. **[SOC]**

4. Special Circumstances

2. Special circumstances be considered during the peer review panel meeting and applied to a holistic assessment of the EP, and not before. **[BEC]**
3. The PBRF Guidelines need to be revised to more tightly define valid special circumstances. **[EDU]**

4. Clearer specifications be developed for special circumstances **[EDU]**
5. That special circumstances be considered only during the panel meeting to eliminate the need to distinguish between “no special” and “special” preparatory scores. **[ETA]**
6. That the TEC provide guidance on how different types of special circumstances are expected to affect a score. **[ETA]**
7. That the TEC provide clear definitions on what special circumstances should be accepted or definitely considered. **[ETA]**
8. That codified guidelines are provided for the types of special circumstances that can be claimed by a staff member. **[MED]**
9. That special circumstance be considered during the peer review panel meeting and applied to a holistic assessment of the EP, and not before. **[SOC]**

5. Conflicts of Interest

1. 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. **[MKD]**
2. Revisiting the procedure for declaring conflicts of interest to ensure that all panel members apply the Guidelines for managing conflicts of interest similarly. **[MATH]**
3. Providing panel members, at the time of training, with more specific guidelines in regards to the kinds of conflicts of interest that should be declared. **[MATH]**
4. That the conflict of interest procedures for the peer review panel meetings be amended to require panel members who have co-authored outputs in an EP to leave the room during the panel discussion of the EP. **[SOC]**

6. Panel Resources

1. Each panel member be issued a computer during the peer review panel meeting allowing them to review scoring information and individual EPs themselves on a closed system. **[BEC]**
2. That panel members be informed of the working order several days in advance to the commencement to the panel meetings. **[CPA]**
3. That the TEC ensure panel meeting rooms are sufficiently sized to allow panel members and support staff to work comfortably and efficiently. **[ETA]**
4. That the TEC review remuneration to more accurately reflect and better acknowledge the time panel members dedicate to the process, especially for those panel members who are consultants or industry-based people, working outside of the tertiary education sector. **[ETA]**

5. That the materials collated for the peer review panel meetings be reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate and functional. **[SOC]**

Role of TEOs

1. The PBRF Guidelines provide increased emphasis on Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) accurately declaring whether a staff member meets the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers. **[BEC]**
2. That TEOs be required to give an indication of how many EPs they will be submitting per subject eight to ten months in advance of the preliminary assessment phase. **[CPA]**
3. TEOs need to take additional care with the quality of information included in EPs. **[EDU]**
4. TEOs need to raise awareness with staff with regards to impact of NROs and the importance of moving, where appropriate, to publication in higher impact journals. They need to advise staff to move beyond in house publication and conference presentations. **[EDU]**
5. TEOs need to give careful consideration to the need to encourage Māori researchers. The panel noted that the level of research activity within Pacific and Maori research did not appear to have increased since the 2003 Quality Evaluation. **[EDU]**
6. Better guidance be provided to TEOs on how to balance NROs and ROs **[EDU]**
7. EPs be scrutinised carefully by TEOs before they are submitted, and TEC undertake an audit before EPs are finalised, to ensure consistent presentation and preparation. **[EDU]**
8. Recommending that some TEOs invest more in providing guidance to their staff on the content of EPs. **[HUM]**
9. 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. **[MKD]**
10. That TEOs be strongly encouraged to carefully apply the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers and appropriately identify those staff through the PBRF Census (Staffing Return). **[PHYS]**
11. That the PBRF Guidelines provide increased emphasis on TEOs accurately declaring whether a staff member meets the eligibility criteria for new and emerging researchers. **[SOC]**

Appendix D: Summary of sector responses to Consultation paper #1

Purpose

This provides a summary of the key points arising from sector responses to the first consultation paper produced by the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) Sector Reference Group.

Introduction

Consultation paper #1 identifies issues and provides an indicative timeline for the PBRF redesign 2012. It was approved by the PBRF Sector Reference Group at their meeting on 28 March 2008. Sector response to this consultation paper was invited through the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) web site from 15th April 2008 to 30th May 2008.

A total of 7 responses were received. These were from:

- I. Geoff Bertram, School of Economics and Finance, Victoria University of Wellington
- II. Stuart Brock, Associate Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Victoria University of Wellington
- III. Department of Geological Sciences, Canterbury University
- IV. Research Office, University of Waikato
- V. Research Office, University of Otago
- VI. Research Office, Unitec New Zealand
- VII. Research Office, Victoria University of Wellington

Organisation of summary

Each of the seven responses has been analysed into summary points and each summary point has been placed into one of the following three categories:

- A. direct responses to material in the consultation paper
- B. general recommendations for redesigning the PBRF for 2012
- C. perceived problems with or general criticisms of the PBRF as a whole

Each point has been numbered and the identity of the respondent who provided it has been removed.

Summary of responses

Category A: Direct responses to material in Consultation paper #1

Principles of the PBRF

1. Three principles, the principle of comprehensiveness, the principle of respect for academic traditions and the principle of consistency, may not apply appropriately to education and teacher training. Furthermore, these three principles may conflict with each other when applied to education and teacher training.
2. It is doubtful that the principles of the PBRF incorporate the types of research-based activities that are engaged in by some sectors of the humanities, notably performing arts and Colleges of Education, because the criteria for scoring these disciplines are unclear and vague, there are no examples provided to assist staff, and performing arts may not be properly represented on subject panels.

Composition of the Sector Reference Group (SRG)

3. Auckland is over-represented, the South Island is under-represented; SRG should add “a South Island –based PBRF manager with experience of the 2006 assessment.”
4. Polytechnics are over-represented, wananga are under-represented.

Redesign principles

5. Consider attempting to simplify the PBRF process and consider how the cost of a redesigned element compares with the value expected to be achieved from it.
6. Support for redesign principles particularly final principle (“avoiding costly or time-consuming changes unless there are good reasons for believing they will bring significant improvements”).
7. Support for final principle.

Proposed timetable

8. The 2012 PBRF Guidelines and the final EP format should be made available to TEOs by the end of 2009 to avoid the costs of having to re-format EPs later than this.
9. The period 2010-2012 should have a more detailed timeline to allow the design and implementation of the EP entry system to be more accurately planned for.

Proposed consultation papers

10. The sub-topic 'Audit of Eligibility' should be added to the 'Eligibility' paper, focusing on developing an audit to counter game-playing around eligibility.

11. Amend the wording of the second sub-topic of 'Weightings' to read: "Cost, weightings and impacts e.g. on Humanities, social sciences, business and economics; professional training such as health; and risky innovative research."

12. The 'Process of Evaluating EPs' paper should have the sub-topic "Training of peer review panels" amended to read: "Training of peer review panels including international panel members and specialist advisors".

13. The issue of panel membership is significant enough that it warrants a separate consultation paper. It should not merely be a part of the 'Process of Evaluating EPs' paper.

14. The sub-topic 'Reassignment of EPs to panels' should be added to the 'Process of Evaluating EPs' paper.

15. 'Professional and Applied Research' paper needs to define and distinguish what is professional research and what is applied research and also detail how it should be assessed.

16. 'Process of Evaluating EPs' paper needs to include:

- I. specification of EPs
- II. whether the TEC will be providing software as in 2003 and 2006
- III. what provision there will be for small TEOs to submit EPs.

17. Add a consultation paper on enforcement of the PBRF guidelines that will develop some meaningful consequences for TEOs of non-compliance with the guidelines.

Appendix C

18. "Comments from specific panels should not automatically apply to other panels."

Category B: Recommendations for redesign of PBRF 2012

Unit of assessment

19. Keep the individual as the unit of assessment, but only if a procedure is established that allows an individual to appeal their Quality Evaluation grade.
20. Keep the individual as the unit of assessment, as change would prevent longitudinal comparison, undermine morale, and bring additional compliance costs.
21. Keep the individual as the unit of assessment.

Eligibility

22. TEOs with merged schools of education and colleges of education should be equally treated in 2012.
23. Clarify what constitutes a 'major role' when applied to substantiveness testing for PBRF eligibility.

New and emerging researchers

24. Identifying new and emerging researchers as those who are five or less years into their career is arbitrary and also does not recognise the disparity between those who are six years into their career and those who are twenty years into their career, so instead it would be fairer to normalise individual's scores to years in the profession.
25. Award a 'C' quality category to any EP demonstrating adequate evidence of meeting the criteria for a 'C', irrespective of the researcher's status as new and emerging. Retain the 'C(NE)' quality category to award to new and emerging researchers that do not attain the standard of a 'C' but exceed the standard of a 'R(NE)'.
26. Clarify the assessment criteria for new and emerging researchers.
27. Record new and emerging researcher status details in the EP.

Weightings

28. The Peer Esteem component should be removed from the Quality Evaluation, as it reflects in part nothing more than the length of a researcher's career, and may represent nothing more than recognition of a researcher's name, making this component unfair.
29. Consider applying a normalisation process to the External Research Income component instead of relying on funding levels as an evaluation of the quality of science.

30. Consider revising the existing subject weightings of 2.5, 2 and 1, as these weightings are inequitable and based on limited financial analysis.

31. Consider increasing the weighting of the Quality Evaluation component of the PBRF and reducing the weighting of the Research Degree Completion and External Research Income correspondingly.

32. Review and clarify the existing definition of External Research Income.

33. Retain the differential weighting for Māori and Pacific researchers.

Professional and applied research

34. Revise wording on pages 230-235 of PBRF Guidelines relating to 'Form of Evidence Required' and 'Verification Required', specifying that: "all items offered as research are to have a set of separable, demonstrable research findings that are abstractable and not simply locked within the research (e.g. as in the case with paintings/ compositions/ creative writing/ designs/ cartoons etc.)".

Māori and Pacific research

35. Give priority to understanding the impacts of PBRF on Māori and Pacific researchers.

Document repository

36. Develop a central, secure, on-line database for the deposit of suitable NROs, in order to improve the efficiency of the PBRF process and overcome copyright issues.

Process of evaluating EPs

37. As a solution to the criticism made below in point (60), under the heading 'Lack of transparency prevents PBRF improving research quality', quality categories could be awarded by a mechanical calculation based on a set of transparent performance indicators. This set could vary from subject area to subject area, weighting some publishers of research more highly than others and providing clear sufficient conditions for achieving a quality category. The quality category awarded to an EP could be appealed to a committee of experts if a researcher believed that the EP deserved a better category than the performance indicators alone would grant.

38. Put in place a mechanism for comparing grade distributions across panels and across disciplines within panels, to alleviate problems such as domination of panels by individuals and bias that arise due to the small size of the pool of experts that panels are drawn from.

39. The impact ratings of journals should be reconsidered, particularly the effect of low impact ratings for local journals.

40. Do not require EPs to include the details of highest degree, the year it was earned or the awarding institution.
41. Provide component score information to TEOs as well as to the individual, to allow TEOs to target assistance to staff based on those scores.
42. Ensure that if panel members do not have the expertise to assess an EP they call in specialist advisors.
43. Ensure that international panel members and specialist advisors receive additional training to compensate for the smaller number of EPs they view.
44. Investigate the possibility of providing a decision support system to help ensure consistency of grading across panels and put more emphasis on the need for such consistency.
45. Be cautious about moving towards self-assessment of PBRF quality evaluations, as there is considerable discrepancy between self-assessed quality evaluations and panel-assessed quality evaluations.
46. Do not implement a metric system to assess NROs in all subject areas, and if there will be an increased reliance on a metric system for making quality evaluations in the 2012 round then clearly indicate this in advance.

Composition of panels

47. Establish a separate law panel.
48. Panels need to include more representation from non-academic groups.

Special circumstances

49. Normalisation of scores against years in the profession would provide a simple way to deal with breaks in a career, as these breaks could be subtracted from the total number of years in the profession.
50. Define the guidelines on special circumstances more tightly.

Reporting of results

51. A procedure must be established allowing individuals to appeal their Quality Evaluation grade, particularly if the unit of assessment remains at the level of the individual.
52. Consider electronic reporting of individual results to academics via a secure TEC site.

53. Impose TEO-ranking reporting limits based on PBRF-eligible FTE-weighted staff numbers, to reduce the potential for TEOs with less than 10 PBRF-eligible FTE-weighted staff to skew results of TEO ranking.

Post-doctoral fellows

54. Post-doctoral fellows should be excluded from the PBRF.

'Guide for staff'

55. Provide all TEOs and their staff with a 'Guide for staff' that includes all of the detailed PBRF information provided to panel members, so that panel members are not able to use this information to obtain an unfair advantage.

Research activity

56. Retain the principle that all PBRF-eligible staff be research active.

Category C: General criticisms of the PBRF

Scholarship is ignored

57. The academic virtue of scholarship (possessing specialist knowledge of a particular subject matter) is not always reflected in production of Research Outputs and so it is not effectively measured or sufficiently recognised by PBRF.

Peer Esteem component of no value

58. The Peer Esteem component “is more a self-promotion exercise than a serious attempt to establish the scholarly credentials of academics”.

Undervalues national publication

59. Because PBRF rates international publication more highly than national publication, there is a lack of incentive for academics to pursue work that may only lead to national publication, and a corresponding difficulty in attracting quality contributions to national academic journals.

Lack of transparency prevents PBRF improving research quality

60. It is one of the goals of the PBRF Quality Evaluation to “reward and encourage the quality of researchers”, but it fails to do this because the awarding of grades is not transparent. No reasoning or justification is ever provided as to why a researcher has received the grade they do, even when the grade is far lower or higher than they and their colleagues expected. It remains a mystery to researchers how quality categories are determined. The effect of this lack of openness is either that researchers ignore the PBRF when conducting their research as they have no idea what type of research behaviour is being sought, or researchers alter their research practise based on nothing more than guesses about how quality categories might be awarded. In neither case does PBRF have the effect that is sought.

PBRF Sector Reference Group response

As this first Consultation paper provided an overview of the work programme that the Sector Reference Group intends to pursue throughout 2008 and into 2009, there were openings for many different issues to be brought up. The Sector Reference Group has taken careful note of each of the points put forward above and observe that many of the issues raised by these points will be added to the papers already planned and then addressed in detail during the programme of upcoming Consultation papers. All interested parties are invited to participate in this programme. Anyone who wishes to receive email updates whenever a new Consultation paper is published on the TEC website can email hannah.cook@tec.govt.nz to take advantage of this service.

PBRF Sector Reference Group, 8 August 2008.