



March 2007

PBRF Sector Update

This note provides an update on the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF). It includes information on:

- The release of the public report of the 2006 Quality Evaluation
- The release of the results of the assessment of individual Evidence Portfolios (EPs) to participating TEOs
- The complaints process for the 2006 Quality Evaluation
- Interpreting the results of the 2006 PBRF Quality Evaluation
- Research degree reporting
- PBRF funding pool

The release of the public report of the 2006 PBRF Quality Evaluation

The results of the 2006 Performance Based Research Fund Quality Evaluation phase will be released publicly on **Tuesday 1 May 2007** in Wellington.

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) is committed to ensuring that these results are released in a fair and transparent manner. The process for releasing the results is designed to ensure that each participating tertiary education organisation (TEO) has more than a full working day to consider the Quality Categories assigned to their PBRF-eligible staff. An opportunity will also be provided to enable representatives from each participating TEO to consider the overall report in context at a sector briefing before the results become public at 1.00pm on Tuesday 1 May 2007.

The timeline for release is:

Monday 2 April

The TEC will write to the Vice-Chancellor or Chief Executive Officer of each participating TEO outlining the process for the release of the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation. At this time, each TEO will be asked to nominate a person who will receive the results for the PBRF-eligible staff reported by the relevant TEO. Each TEO will also be asked to nominate (up to) two people to attend the sector briefing to be held on 1 May 2007.

Tuesday 24 April

The person nominated by each TEO will receive a password protected CD by courier which includes the results for their institution.

Monday 30 April

The person nominated by each TEO will receive instructions on how to access the information on the CD by email at **9.00am**. Any queries regarding this process may be referred to the PBRF helpline on (04) 462 5338. See below for further information about the process for the distribution of the CD.

Tuesday 1 May

9.30am: Invitation only, sector briefing in Wellington. This briefing will provide an overview of the processes followed to ensure the integrity of the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation, outline the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation and identify any key trends in relation to the changes in results compared to the 2003 Quality Evaluation.

The TEC will invite two representative of each participating TEO to attend the briefing. National representatives of the relevant peak bodies and staff unions will also be invited to attend. Information in the sector briefing will be embargoed until 1.00pm. More details about this briefing will be made available in the next few weeks.

11.00am: Media briefing in Wellington (under embargo).

1.00pm: Public release of the results including on the TEC website.

Note: The preparation of the report of the 2006 Quality Evaluation is a complex task. The TEC's focus is on ensuring the accuracy and quality of this report. This may mean that on the day of release, the report is available in an electronic form only, with hard copies to be delivered at a later date.

The release of the results of the assessment of individual Evidence Portfolios (EPs) to participating TEOs

As noted above, the TEC will be releasing the results of the assessment of individual EPs to participating TEOs on **Monday 30 April 2007**.

TEOs will be supplied with a CD containing the results of all PBRF-eligible staff reported by each individual TEO in mid-April 2007. The CD will include the results for:

- all researchers for whom EPs were submitted for assessment in the 2006 Quality Evaluation,
- those for whom Quality Categories assigned in the 2003 Quality Evaluation have been 'carried over', and

- those eligible for assessment for the first time in 2006 and for whom no EP was submitted.

Each CD will be password protected and supplied to a single individual in each TEO. The TEC will be in touch with TEOs directly to confirm these arrangements.

Each CD will include the following information:

UNID
 TEO Code
 Provider Staff ID (where available)
 E-FTE
 Nominated Academic Unit
 Subject Area
 Primary Panel
 Cross-Referral Panel(s)
 Reason for transfer (if TEO-nominated primary panel was changed through panel alignment)
 Final Quality Category

If you have any questions or require any additional information regarding the release of this information, please contact the PBRF helpline on (04) 462 5338 or by email to pbrfinfo@tec.govt.nz.

The complaints process for the 2006 Quality Evaluation

The TEC would like to draw the attention of participating TEOs to the processes for handling complaints arising out of the 2006 Quality Evaluation.

It should be noted that the TEC will accept and investigate complaints only in relation to administrative or procedural errors. Complaints will not be considered in relation to substantive decision-making by a peer review panel. Only TEOs may make a complaint and each complaint must be lodged by Friday 18 May 2007 along with the required fee.

The relevant guidelines on the complaints process may be found on pages 213-214 of the *2006 PBRF Guidelines*.

Interpreting the results of the 2006 PBRF Quality Evaluation

As noted above, at the conclusion of the 2006 Quality Evaluation, TEOs that have submitted EPs will be notified of the Quality Categories that the peer review panels have assigned to individual EPs from that TEO. There will be no public release by the TEC of the Quality Categories assigned to individual staff members' EPs.

It is assumed that each TEO will inform individual staff members about the Quality Category assigned to their EP.

The TEC notes that the release of the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation may have an immediate impact on individual academics. The TEC would like to encourage TEOs to work with staff on understanding and interpreting the Quality Categories. Researchers may be anxious about the Quality Category that has been assigned to the EPs submitted for assessment on their behalf. It may be desirable to remind staff that the focus of the PBRF assessment was on their *research*, and only on the information contained in their EP. The Quality Evaluation does not measure all of the other contributions they make.

Generalised descriptors of the Quality Categories may be found on page 149 and 150 of the 2006 PBRF Guidelines. It is particularly important to note that the Quality Categories of "R" and "R(NE)" should not be interpreted to necessarily mean that staff are not engaged in research activity, rather that on the basis of the evidence presented to them in the EP, the peer review panels were not able to award a funded Quality Category.

Research Degree Reporting

Some TEOs will be aware that there has been an issue with the processing of Single Data Returns (SDR) in relation to research degree completions.

The difficulty arises because the Course End Date in the course completion file can be listed as the date when funding ends, which may not be the same as the date when a student completes all the course requirements (such as passing a thesis examination).

At a sector meeting held in December 2006 a solution was identified to resolve the problem. The change requires adding one extra field to the course completion file of the SDR to indicate whether a course is actually completed in the sense that the student has met all the requirements for the paper. The new field will apply only to courses that are listed as being eligible for PBRF funding. Full details of the change (file formats, validation rules etc) will be released as soon as possible through the usual SDR system.

The change is planned for the August return. This will give everyone time to adjust their systems to suit the revised format.

PBRF funding pool

The TEC is pleased to announce that the PBRF pool projections for the 2007 and subsequent years have been revised.

The current figures and projections by calendar year are set out below.

| By Calendar Year | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| (\$ 000, GST Inclusive) | 231,661 | 249,660 | 256,348 | 259,688 | 264,150 |

The total PBRF pool for the 2006 calendar year has been revised from \$126.1M to \$137.1M. This means that \$11M will be allocated to TEOs through the wash-up payment for the 2006 calendar year (scheduled to be paid in May 2007).

Contact Us

If you are not familiar with it, or already signed up, please visit the TEC website at www.tec.govt.nz and sign up to **TEC Now** for all PBRF related information - this will ensure you are automatically notified of any changes or additions related to PBRF.

If you have any questions on this note or other implementation matters please contact the team at pbrfinfo@tec.govt.nz or phone the PBRF Help line on (04) 462 5338. Faxes can be sent to the main TEC fax on (04) 462 5400.