



May 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
- Interpreting the results of the 2006 PBRF Quality Evaluation
- The complaints process for the 2006 Quality Evaluation

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

The TEC released the results of the assessment of individual Evidence Portfolios (EPs) to participating TEOs on **Monday 30 April 2007** as planned. A summary of the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation was released publicly on **Friday 4 May 2007** in Wellington. As the sector was informed, the TEC discovered an oversight in the data for the public report on 30 April and made the very difficult decision to delay the release for three days.

The TEC made the necessary changes to the data and the release on the 4 May was a summary of the results. During the days prior to public release the co-operation from the sector in maintaining the embargo on their own results was appreciated and the TEC Chief Executive, Janice Shiner, has publicly thanked the sector for their understanding.

Thirty-eight representatives from participating TEOs and relevant peak bodies and staff unions attended the sector briefing in Wellington to consider the summary report in context before the results become public at 1.00pm on Friday 4 May 2007. This briefing provided an overview of the processes followed to ensure the integrity of the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation, outlined the results of the 2006 Quality Evaluation and the key trends in relation to the changes in results compared to the 2003 Quality Evaluation.

A briefing was also held for media representatives. This opportunity to have an in depth discussion on the results was taken up by five media representatives.

The summary report and the media releases and speeches are available on the TEC website.

The preparation of the public report of the 2006 Quality Evaluation is nearing completion. The full report, *Performance- Based Research Fund – Evaluating Research Excellence – The 2006 assessment* we expect will be published in the week commencing 14 May 2007. It will be published in an electronic form.

The printed copies will be delivered to each participating TEO over the following weeks.

Interpreting the results of the 2006 PBRF Quality Evaluation

TEOs that submitted EPs have been notified of the Quality Categories that the peer review panels have assigned to individual EPs from that TEO. They will have informed individual staff members about the Quality Category assigned to their EP. The TEC would again like to remind TEOs and their staff that there will be no public release by the TEC of the Quality Categories assigned to individual staff members' EPs.

As mentioned in previous PBRF Sector Updates, 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 again like to encourage TEOs to work with staff on understanding and interpreting the Quality Categories. Researchers may be anxious about the Quality Category they are assigned. It may be desirable to remind staff of the focus of the 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)" do not necessarily mean that staff are not engaged in research activity, rather that on the basis of the evidence presented to them, the peer review panels were not able to award a funded Quality Category. The TEC is aware that a number of media articles have incorrectly described the "R" Quality Category and note that we have attempted to contact those publications to correct this.

The complaints process for the 2006 Quality Evaluation – date change

In the March PBRF Sector Update the TEC drew to the attention of participating TEOs the processes for handling complaints arising out of the 2006 Quality Evaluation. The deadline for submission of complaints will now change. It will be fifteen working days after the on-line publication of the full report of the 2006 Quality Evaluation, *Performance- Based Research Fund – Evaluating Research Excellence – The 2006 assessment*.

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 the due date, along with the required fee.

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

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.