

11 December 2013

De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London

Minutes

Present:

- Alan Barrett Katherine Branch (Adviser) Anne-Marie Coriat (Observer) Christopher Day Jack Gauldie Trisha Greenhalgh (Deputy chair) Brian Harris (Observer) Stephen Holgate (Main panel chair) Glyn Humphreys Vicky Jones (REF team) Mi Ja Kim
- Hugh McKenna Bruce Murphy Jon Nicholl Ole Petersen Helen Reddy (Adviser) Gillian Rendle (Adviser) Malcolm Skingle Frans Van Der Ouderaa Peter Weissberg Christine Williams

Apologies:

Russell Hamilton Erika Von Mutius

1. Introductions and competence to do business

- 1.1. The chair welcomed the members of Main Panel A (MPA) and Vicky Jones, representing the REF team, to the meeting. The chair encouraged members to raise any issues they have concerns about at any point during the REF assessment process.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

2. Conflicts of interest

2.1. A paper was tabled indicating currently registered major conflicts of interest. The chair encouraged members to update conflicts on the Panel members' website.

3. Output Calibration

- 3.1. The chair outlined the aims of the calibration exercise, highlighting that the aim is to develop a common understanding of the star levels and approaches to assessment through discussion, rather than to agree specific scores for the outputs in the calibration sample. The panel reaffirmed that only the quality of the output was to be assessed, not the individual, nor the nature of the publication.
- 3.2. The chair then invited each sub-panel chair to feedback to the main panel on their experience of the calibration exercise with respect to their sub-panel. The discussion focussed on many aspects of the assessment of outputs, in particular on: determining significance, originality and rigour; assessing outputs at the boundaries between quality levels; assessing review articles; assessing diverse outputs within sub-panels; use of citation data. There was general agreement across all sub-panels that the calibration exercise had been helpful.
- 3.3. A paper was circulated with the resultant scores from the main panel level calibration exercise. This exercise involved main panel members, including international members and users, scoring samples of 4 or 5 non REF outputs provided by each MPA sub-panel chair. The chair invited panel members to consider the assessment of each of the calibration outputs in turn. Panel members discussed any differences in scores and worked towards a common understanding of the quality levels. The discussion covered the key elements in the assessment of the outputs and provided a basis for sub-panel chairs to feedback their understanding to panellists.

4. Output allocation arrangements

- 4.1. The chair noted that sub-panel chairs would need to allocate outputs for deputies and vice versa. The chair encouraged sub-panels to consider how outputs submitted multiple times to the same UOA should be assessed.
- 4.2. Sub-panel chairs discussed the approaches that they intend to take to the allocation of outputs to sub-panel members and output assessors for assessment, with an understanding that it is preferable to make a full allocation as soon as possible to support sub-panel members preferred working arrangements.

5. Future meetings

5.1. Panel members considered the future meeting schedule. The chair advised that it would be beneficial to have at least one international member at sub-panel meetings where possible. An action was given to the secretariat to ensure that this was followed up and that MPA international members, users and observers were given the opportunity to attend additional sub-panel meetings if availability allowed.

6. Any other business

There was no further business.



26 March 2014

De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London

Minutes

Present:

- Katherine Branch (Adviser) Anne-Marie Coriat (Observer) Hazel Crabb-Wyke (REF Team) Christopher Day Jack Gauldie Trisha Greenhalgh (Deputy chair) Russell Hamilton Brian Harris (Observer) Stephen Holgate (Main Panel chair) Glyn Humphreys Vicky Jones (REF Team) Mi Ja Kim
- Hugh McKenna Bruce Murphy Jon Nicholl Ole Petersen Helen Reddy (Adviser) Gillian Rendle (Adviser) Malcolm Skingle Frans Van Der Ouderaa Erika Von Mutius Peter Weissberg Christine Williams

Apologies:

Alan Barrett

1. Introductions and competence to do business

- 1.1. The chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and also Vicky Jones and Hazel Crabb-Wyke, representing the REF team.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.
- 1.3. The chair gave an update from the meeting of all main panel chairs that was held on the 17 April 2014. It was noted that Main Panels C and D had found the impact calibration exercises very useful and that the inclusion of impact templates in the exercise was particularly valuable. Main Panel A will now also include these as part of their calibration exercise. Consideration would soon be given to how to prepare panel overview reports and higher education institution (HEI) feedback and these had been discussed.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1. The panel confirmed the accuracy of the previous minutes.

3. Conflicts of interest

3.1. A paper was tabled indicating currently registered major conflicts of interest. The chair encouraged members to update conflicts on the Panel Members Website.

4. Output assessment progress

- 4.1. The panel reviewed progress with assessment of outputs to date, noting that all sub-panels were on track in terms of workload. Sub-panel chairs were invited to discuss their emerging quality profiles at sub-panel level. It was noted that some differences between sub-panels was to be expected, and that the shape of submissions to some sub-panels had changed since RAE2008.
- 4.2. Issues that had arisen during assessment were discussed. A number of outputs have been submitted that do not contain new insights and therefore do not meet the REF definition of research. Common guidance has been developed across sub-panels 1-6 so that queries on substantial contribution to co-authored outputs are being treated in a consistent manner. It was agreed that if any submissions had particularly high rates of co-authored outputs (where the submitting author was not lead or corresponding author, and the author was one of many), then a number of audits should be raised by the secretariat to check contribution. Higher education institutes were told to expect audits where there were 15 or more authors. It was agreed to bring an analysis of co-authored outputs to the next meeting.

5. Impact assessment

- 5.1. The panel reviewed the threshold criteria for impact case studies and the guidance for assessment of impact.
- 5.2. The panel reaffirmed that once it was established that the underpinning research made a distinct and material contribution to the impact, no further consideration would be given to the scale of that contribution, nor whether the HEI had been involved in the translation from research to impact.
- 5.3. It was noted that whilst the assessment would only be based on impacts occurring between 1 January 2008 and 31 July 2013, this did not preclude examples where the impact had first arisen prior to that period but had been sustained.
- 5.4. The chair outlined the aims of the calibration exercise, and the panel endorsed the sample of case studies and templates drawn from each sub-panel. The sample reflects a range of types of cases from different HEIs.

6. Audit

6.1. The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel have reviewed the majority of complex cases submitted to the REF, and the MPA secretariat have reviewed around one third of clearly defined circumstances submitted to the six sub-panels. The secretariat provided a brief oral update.

7. Future meetings and MPA attendance at sub-panel meetings

7.1. The panel reviewed MPA attendance at upcoming sub-panel meetings and discussed the role of members in conveying MPA messages to sub-panels and observing the ways of working to inform MPA discussions and ensure consistency of approach.

8. Any other business

8.1. It was noted that the examples of impact provided in the published guidance should, in future exercises, reflect further the international landscape in which impact occurs.



9 May 2014

Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London

Minutes

Present:

Alan Barrett Katherine Branch (Adviser) Anne-Marie Coriat (Observer) Christopher Day Jack Gauldie Trisha Greenhalgh (Deputy chair) Russell Hamilton Brian Harris (Observer) Stephen Holgate (Main Panel chair) Glyn Humphreys Mi Ja Kim Hugh McKenna

Bruce Murphy Jon Nicholl Ole Petersen Helen Reddy (Adviser) Gillian Rendle (Adviser) Graeme Rosenberg (REF Team) Malcolm Skingle Frans Van Der Ouderaa Erika Von Mutius Peter Weissberg Christine Williams

Apologies:

None.

1. Introductions and competence to do business

- 1.1. The chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and also Graeme Rosenberg, representing the REF team.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.
- 1.3. The panel congratulated Professor Greenhalgh on her election to the Academy of Medical Sciences.
- 1.4. The chair advised a discussion on assessment of environment would be added to the agenda (under item 7).

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1. The panel confirmed the accuracy of the previous minutes.

3. Conflicts of interest

3.1. A paper was tabled indicating currently registered major conflicts of interest. The chair encouraged members to update conflicts on the Panel Members Website.

4. Output assessment progress

- 4.1. The panel reviewed progress with assessment of outputs to date, noting that all sub-panels were on track with output assessment with most having exceeded the 75 per cent target.
- 4.2. The panel noted the analysis provided on co-authorship, audit, outputs submitted per staff member and staff circumstances. Sub-panel chairs were asked to look carefully at co-authorship data for their sub- panels.
- 4.3. Sub-panel chairs were invited to discuss their emerging quality profiles at subpanel level and to raise any issues. It was noted that there is no expectation that all sub-panel profiles will look the same.
- 4.4 The panel confirmed that output assessment for all sub-panels will be completed by the end of June, with sub- profiles to be agreed in the July sub-panel meetings. The secretariat confirmed that all outstanding scores for cross referred outputs will be chased in time for the July meetings.
- 4.5 The chair encouraged the international members of Main Panel A to assist with output calibration where required.

5. Audit

5.1 For staff circumstances, the secretariat are checking all 'clearly defined circumstances' and the advisers provided an oral update. The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel are progressing with all 'complex circumstances'.

6. Impact assessment

6.1. The panel members assessed a selection of impact case studies and impact templates from all sub-panels and from a range of submitting institutions in a calibration exercise. They submitted their scores in advance of the meeting. The case studies and templates were discussed in turn to agree key principles for the assessment of impact. Panel members were invited to re-score each item and these scores were collected by the secretariat at the end of the exercise.

[One member of the panel left the room due to a conflict of interest during the discussion]

6.2. A number of general principles were reached, which included the need to disentangle the impact achieved within the REF period and previous / potential impact; the use only of the information presented in the case study to judge the

impact; the target audience of the described impact; the potential bias of the media; the clarity of the link between the underpinning research and the impact; the individual contribution of the submitting HEI to the impact; and the influence of presentation in both impact case studies and templates.

- 6.3 The chair invited the chair of Sub-panel 2 to feed back on the impact calibration exercise carried out in April and to provide an update on impact assessment so far.
- 6.4 The chair invited the REF manager to share his experience of how other main panels are progressing with impact assessment.
- 6.5 The chair summarised the discussions, reminding the panel that impact contributes 20 per cent to the overall REF profile (of which 80 per cent is for the impact case studies and 20 per cent for the impact template). It was noted that 0.5 scores are available, and the sub-panels will use these in borderline cases. The international and user members of the panel have a role in encouraging sub-panels with assessment of impact.

7. Environment

7.1 The chair noted that no formal calibration exercise is planned for Main Panel A on the environment section of submissions. Sub-panel chairs were encouraged to spend time on a validation process, using a small number of environment templates from other sub-panels. These are to be shared with Main Panel A for discussion at the next meeting.

8. Feedback statements and overview reports

- 8.1 The REF manager outlined the two types of feedback that will be produced at the end of REF 2014. Each main panel and its sub-panels will provide an overview report of general reflections and each sub-panel will provide feedback statements with more specific feedback to institutions, with the opportunity to highlight particular aspects of the submissions.
- 8.2 It was agreed that Main Panel A should provide meaningful and helpful comments in their feedback, highlighting in particular the strongest elements of submissions. It was noted that institutions who have submitted within a joint submission will each receive the same feedback statement.

9. Future meetings and MPA attendance at sub-panel meetings

9.1. The panel reviewed MPA attendance at upcoming sub-panel meetings and discussed the role of members in conveying MPA messages to sub-panels. Changes to sub-panel meeting dates were noted.

10. Any other business

10.1. The chair requested that both the international and user members should write reports summarising their views on the conduct of REF 2014. The secretariat will liaise with the REF team to add an extra day to the September MPA meeting for this purpose.



4 July 2014

Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London

Minutes

Present:

- Alan Barrett Katherine Branch (Adviser) Ian Viney (Observer) Christopher Day Jack Gauldie Trisha Greenhalgh (Deputy chair) Brian Harris (Observer) Stephen Holgate (Main panel chair) Glyn Humphreys Mi Ja Kim Hugh McKenna
- Bruce Murphy Jon Nicholl Ole Petersen Helen Reddy (Adviser) Gillian Rendle (Adviser) Graeme Rosenberg (REF team) Malcolm Skingle Erika Von Mutius Peter Weissberg Christine Williams

Apologies:

Russell Hamilton Frans Van Der Ouderaa Anne-Marie Coriat

1. Introductions and competence to do business

- 1.1. The chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting including Ian Viney (MRC Director of Strategic Evaluation and Impact) standing in for Anne-Marie Coriat and also Graeme Rosenberg, representing the REF team.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1. The panel confirmed the accuracy of the previous minutes.

3. Conflicts of interest

3.1. A paper was circulated to members indicating currently registered major conflicts of interest. The chair encouraged members to update conflicts on the Panel Members Website.

3.2. Additional Agenda Item

The chair invited Graeme Rosenberg to provide an update to members on progress of the assessment exercise across all main panels and to explain how consistency across main panels is being monitored.

4. Output assessment progress

- 4.1. The chair invited each sub-panel chair to provide an update on output assessment and to raise any specific issues for discussion at main panel.
- 4.2. The panel reviewed progress on assessment of outputs to date, noting that all sub-panels were on track with output assessment. The panel agreed that decisions on requests for double-weighting of outputs would be made on an output-by-output basis while ensuring the published criteria are applied to each decision.
- 4.3. Sub-panel chairs were invited to discuss their emerging quality profiles at subpanel level and to raise any issues.
- 4.4 Output sub-profiles are to be considered at sub-panel level in July and subsequently recommended to main panel in September. The chair asked sub-panel chairs to thank sub-panel members and assessors for all the effort they have put into output assessment.

5. Audit – individual staff circumstances

- 5.1. The secretariat provided the panel information on the processes being applied to making decisions on clearly defined and complex circumstances. In addition, an update was given on progress to date on decisions made. The deputy chair gave an oral update on the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) and confirmed that the panel has completed all recommendations.
- 5.2. The chair observed that the approved reductions, which take into account individual staff circumstances, are a positive message to institutions from the exercise. EDAP will write a report on completion of the exercise with their findings. In addition, each institution will be given a report on equality aspects of their submission.

6. Impact assessment

- 6.1. The chair invited each sub-panel chair to provide an update and to raise any specific issues for discussion at main panel.
- 6.2. The panel reviewed progress with assessment of impact to date, noting that all sub-panels were on track with impact assessment.

- 6.3. Sub-panel chairs were invited to discuss their emerging quality profiles at subpanel level and to raise any issues.
- 6.4 Impact sub-profiles are to be considered at sub-panel level in July and subsequently recommended to main panel in September. The chair asked sub-panel chairs to thank sub-panel members and assessors for all the effort they have put into impact assessment.

7. Environment assessment

- 7.1 The secretariat gave the members a briefing on the assessment of the environment element of REF and applying the criteria with respect to 'vitality' and 'sustainability'.
- 7.2. The secretariat also briefed the panel on the use of environment data to inform the assessment by sub-panels. The panel was reminded that institutions included data in REF4 relating to the whole submitted unit and that the data is not linked only to those staff who were submitted. The members agreed that comparisons of data at 'per research-active' or 'per FTE' would not be done at sub-panel level.
- 7.3. The main panel discussed two environment templates and associated environment data and worked towards a common understanding of the assessment of the templates. The chair reiterated that the templates should be assessed using the published guidance and criteria.
- 7.4 The chair encouraged sub-panel chairs to use the experience of the main panellevel exercise and discussions to inform the environment briefings at sub-panel meetings in July.

8. Developing and recommending quality profiles

- 8.1 The secretariat briefed the main panel on the process sub-panels will follow when developing and reviewing sub-profiles prior to recommending sub-profiles to main panel.
- 8.2 Main Panel A approved the methodology sub-panels will use in their meetings to discuss sub-profiles. The chair reminded members that international members, user members and sub-panel chairs play important roles in sub-panel meetings in ensuring that key messages from Main Panel A are communicated clearly to sub-panel members, particularly in the next stages of the assessment process.

9. Feedback statements and overview reports

9.1. The secretariat presented a draft institutional feedback template.

- 9.2. The main panel discussed modifications to the template and the chair requested that sub-panel chairs consider any further alterations. Sub-panel chairs were requested to submit any suggestions for modification to the chair. The main panel agreed that sub-panels may wish to use slightly different versions of the template where appropriate.
- 9.3. International members will meet on 1 October to bring together feedback which will be incorporated into the Main Panel A overview report.

10. Future meetings

- 10.1. The future meeting schedule and aims of future meetings were reviewed. The next meeting of Main Panel A will be held on the 30 September 2014.
- 10.2. The chair encouraged international and user members to attend sub-panel meetings in September where their schedules allow. Secretariat to circulate dates to members.



30 September 2014

De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London

Minutes

Present:

Alan Barrett Katherine Branch (Adviser) Christopher Day Jack Gauldie Trisha Greenhalgh (Deputy chair) Brian Harris (Observer) Stephen Holgate (Main Panel chair) Glyn Humphreys Mi Ja Kim Hugh McKenna Anne-Marie Coriat Russell Hamilton

Bruce Murphy Jon Nicholl Ole Petersen Helen Reddy (Adviser) Gillian Rendle (Adviser) Graeme Rosenberg (REF Team) Malcolm Skingle Erika Von Mutius Peter Weissberg Christine Williams Frans Van Der Ouderaa

1. Introductions and competence to do business

- 1.1. The chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting including Graeme Rosenberg, representing the REF team, and thanked the panel for their work to date.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1. The panel confirmed the accuracy of the previous minutes.

3. Conflicts of interest

3.1. A paper was circulated to members indicating currently registered major conflicts of interest. The chair encouraged members to update conflicts on the Panel Members Website.

4. Update from sub-panel chairs

- 4.1. The chair invited each sub-panel chair to provide an update on the July meetings at which output and impact assessment was completed, and the September meetings where environment assessment was completed, describing the processes involved and any issues that arose.
- 4.2. All sub-panel chairs were confident in the process and noted the value of ongoing calibration discussions. The Main Panel A members who attended sub-panel meetings endorsed this and commended the rich discussions and excellent chairmanship that contributed to what they believed were fair and robust outcomes.
- 4.3. A number of points were noted to be included in the Main Panel A report as recommendations for any future evaluation of impact within a research assessment exercise.
- 4.4. Graeme Rosenberg informed the panel that the results of the impact case study calibration exercise carried out to consider the comparability of impact assessment across the four main panels. It had found that the on average higher scores found for impact case studies in Main Panel A were justified, as the standards of assessment across the four main panels were comparable.

5. Recommending quality profiles

- 5.1. The chair invited each sub-panel chair to introduce the overall quality profiles for their unit of assessment (UOA), and differences in the profiles were discussed so that the reasons for these could be understood. The panel also reviewed institutional level results within each UOA.
- 5.2. The high scores in Sub-Panel 6 for environment were discussed. It was agreed that due process had been undertaken, and that commitments by HEIs themselves to support this field at a time when funding for these research areas had been cut had strengthened the research and staffing strategies, however the sub-panel chair also agreed to raise the initial concerns of MPA with the sub-panel, and review the sub-profiles.
- 5.3. The main panel approved the quality profiles for Sub-panels 1-5, and the outputs and impact sub-profiles for Sub-panel 6.

6. Feedback statements - draft

6.1. The panel reviewed examples of draft feedback from each sub-panel, and made a number of recommendations to ensure consistency. Sub-panels will remain responsible for completing the feedback for each of their submissions.

7. Overview report - draft

- 7.1 The panel reviewed the six draft sub-panel overview reports, and discussed content for the main panel section, including the changing funding landscape over the REF period and the differential effect on UOAs, the inclusion of impact and the confidence in the process and outcomes, and the valuable role of the international and user members in providing external perspectives to the assessment.
- 7.2. The international members will meet on 1 October to bring together feedback which will be incorporated into the overview report, and a final draft of the full report will be brought for discussion to the Main Panel A meeting on the 4 November.

8. Future meetings

8.1 The meeting schedule and aims of last sub-panel meetings were reviewed. The next and last meeting of Main Panel A will be held on the 4 November 2014.



4 November 2014

Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London

Minutes

Present:

- Alan Barrett Katherine Branch (Adviser) Anne-Marie Coriat (Observer) Christopher Day Jack Gauldie Trisha Greenhalgh (Deputy chair) Russell Hamilton Brian Harris (Observer) Stephen Holgate (Main Panel chair) Glyn Humphreys Hugh McKenna
- Bruce Murphy Jon Nicholl Ole Petersen Helen Reddy (Adviser) Gillian Rendle (Adviser) Graeme Rosenberg (REF Team) Duncan Shermer (REF Team) Malcolm Skingle Frans Van Der Ouderaa Peter Weissberg Christine Williams

Apologies:

Mi Ja Kim Erika Von Mutius

1. Introductions and competence to do business

- 1.1. The chair welcomed all attendees to the last main panel meeting and also Graeme Rosenberg and Duncan Shermer, representing the REF team.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1. The panel confirmed the accuracy of the previous minutes.

3. Conflicts of interest

3.1. A paper was tabled indicating currently registered major conflicts of interest. The chair encouraged members to update conflicts on the Panel Members Website.

4. Recommending quality profiles

- 4.1. Sub-panel chairs were invited to raise any issues that had arisen since the last meeting.
- 4.2. An issue was raised concerning two impact case studies submitted to UOA 1. The main panel noted the prior decision that had been made by HEFCE to permit both institutions to submit the same impact.

[Four members of the panel left the room due to conflicts of interest during this discussion]

4.3. In light of discussions at the previous meeting, the chair of Sub-panel 6 outlined that the sub-panel had revisited a proportion of environment templates in their last meeting. As a result, a small number of changes were made. The sub-panel assured themselves that the environment sub-profile for UOA 6 is an accurate reflection of the submitted material. The main panel approved the environment sub-profiles and overall quality profiles for UOA 6.

5. Overview report

- 5.1 The REF manager presented summary statistics of Main Panel A results. The panel noted the presence of excellence in the outputs, impact and environment material submitted from HEIs in all parts of the UK, and commented on the usefulness of these data in preparing the overview reports.
- 5.2 The panel reviewed the draft overview report.
- 5.3 The chair outlined the process to finalise the report by the end of November 2014. Panel members agreed to provide specific wording for the secretariat to incorporate.
- 5.4 The chair thanked the international members of the panel for their very valuable and insightful draft report. The panel agreed that the report will be appended to the Main Panel A overview report. The international members of the panel agreed to work with the chair to finalise the report.

6. Panel members' survey

6.1. The REF manager presented a summary of the results of the panel members' survey and invited the panel to raise any issues or recommendations for the next exercise.

7. Publication of REF results

7.1 The REF manager presented general information on the publication of REF results.

8. Any other business

- 8.1 The chair thanked all panel members for their contribution to the work of Main Panel A. Special thanks were extended to the international members for their commitment to the exercise and their valuable and constructive comments throughout, and to the observers for the insight they provided from the RCUK perspective.
- 8.2 The chair thanked the REF team for their support and the secretariat for their hard work.