



Impact Assessment & the REF

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The government's Plan for Growth

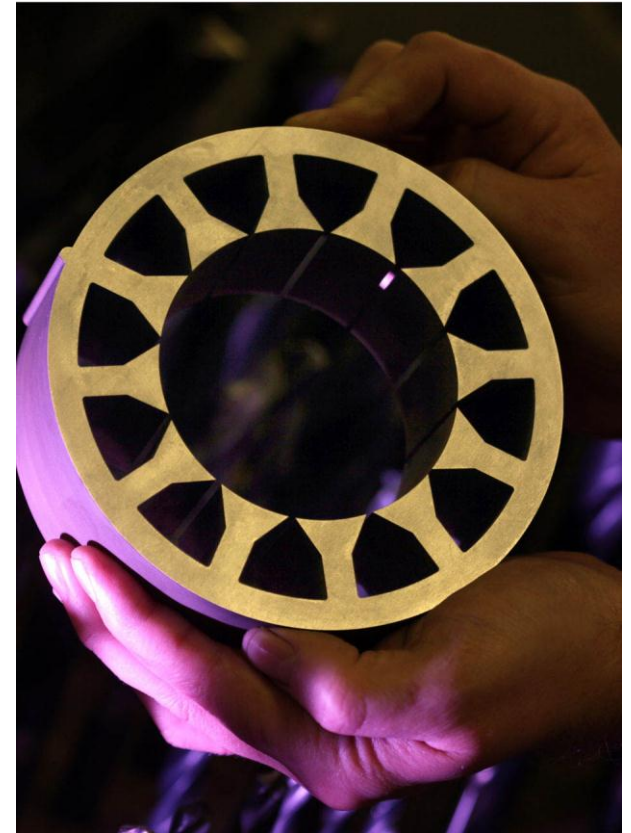


‘The overriding priority of this government is to return the UK economy to balanced, sustainable growth...that is more evenly shared across the country and between industries.’

‘Higher education is central to growth and the UK has one of the most successful higher education systems in the world.’

National policy for Research

- Our strategic aim is to develop and sustain a dynamic and internationally competitive research sector that makes a major contribution to economic prosperity, national wellbeing and the expansion and dissemination of knowledge.
- A strong and innovative national research base is essential to support national prosperity in a globalised knowledge based economy
- Need to strengthen links between undertaking research and developing new products and services



Economic impact of universities and colleges

- HE is the UK's 7th biggest export industry
- Generates gross export earnings of over £5.3bn
- HE generates £59bn output for UK economy, and generates directly or indirectly 668,500 jobs – helping resilience of local communities and economies

A successful UK research base

- 11 UK universities in the World Universities Ranking Top 100 (second only to US)
- UK attracts 15% of all international doctoral students (second only to US)
- 3rd in G8 (behind US and Germany) for production of PhD qualifiers
- UK produces more publications and citations per pound spent on research than other G8 nations
- With 1% world population we produce 6.9% of world publications, receive 10.9% of citations and 13.8% of citations with highest impact.

Economic impact of research

- WEF Global Competitiveness rankings put UK 2nd this year for university-business collaboration in R&D
- And put UK 3rd globally for the quality of scientific research institutions
- 268 new businesses were established in 2011 on the basis of research undertaken in UK universities – outperforming US universities

Funding Strategy

Intended to reward excellence and stimulate the research contribution to the economy and society

- Highly selective block grant based almost entirely on performance assessment – RAE, now REF, based on peer/expert review and developed over 25 years - £1.6bn per annum
- Dual Support – alongside c£1.6bn of project-based funding to universities from the Research Councils
- Now refined by the addition of impact assessment which will be used in funding the block grant
- A separate substantial Innovation funding stream - £150m pa, also performance-based although moderated

Assessing quality – ‘Impact Agenda’

To identify and reward the contribution that high quality research has made to the economy and society:

- Making these explicit to the Government and wider society
- Creating a level playing field between applied and theoretical work but recognising only impact based on excellent research
- Encouraging institutions to achieve the full potential contribution of their research in future
- Intellectually coherent with the historical purposes of universities

Impact: Definition for the REF

- An effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia
- Impact **includes** an effect, change or benefit to:
 - The activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
 - Of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals
 - In any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally
- It **excludes** impacts on research or the advancement of academic knowledge within HE; and impacts on teaching or other activities within the submitting HEI

Societal contribution (1)

- **Economic & commercial** – creating wealth, for public good and private gain
- **Public policy and services** – stimulating public sector innovation as a contribution to growth and quality of life
- **Society, culture and creativity** – enriching and expanding lives, imaginations and sensibilities while challenging cultural values and social assumptions
- **Health and welfare** – saving lives and enhancing the quality of life.

Societal contribution (2)

- **Production** – increasing production, yields or quality; reducing waste
- **Practitioners and services** – changes to professional standards, guidelines or training; influence on workforce planning
- **Environment** – influencing the policy debate on climate change or other environmental policy issues
- **International development** – influencing international policy development or international agencies or institutions; quality of life improved in a developing country
- **Education** – influencing the form or the content of the education of any age group in any part of the world.

Culture and society

A Impacts on society, culture and creativity:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours or practices have been influenced

B Impacts on society, culture and creativity

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours, creative practices and other activity have been influenced

C Impacts on creativity, culture and society:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours, practices, rights or duties have been influenced

D Civil society

Influencing the form and content of associations between people or groups to illuminate and challenge cultural values and social assumptions.

D Public discourse

Extending the range and improving the quality of evidence, argument and expression to enhance public understanding of the major issues and challenges faced by individuals and society.

D Cultural life Creating and interpreting cultural capital in all of its forms to enrich and expand the lives, imaginations and sensibilities of individuals and groups.

Economic and commercial

A Commercial impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually companies, either new or established, or other types of organisation which undertake activity that creates wealth

A Economic impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually the NHS or private health care or agricultural activity

C Economic, commercial, organisational impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include new or established businesses, or other types of organisation undertaking activities which create wealth

B Economic impacts

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include businesses, either new or established, or other types of organisation which undertake activity that may create wealth

D Economic prosperity Applying and transferring the insights and knowledge gained from research to create wealth in the manufacturing, service, creative and cultural sectors.

Health and welfare

A Health and welfare impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals and groups (both human and animals) whose quality of life has been enhanced (or potential harm mitigated)

B Health impacts

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include individuals (including groups of individuals) whose health outcomes have been improved or whose quality of life has been enhanced (or potential harm mitigated) through the application of enhanced healthcare for individuals or public health activities

C Health and welfare impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals and groups (human or animal) whose quality of life has been enhanced (or harm mitigated) or whose rights or interests have been protected or advocated

Public policy and services

C Impacts on public policy, law and services: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually government, public sector and charity organisations and societies, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society through the implementation or non-implementation of policies, systems or reforms

D Education Influencing the form or the content of the education of any age group in any part of the world where they extend significantly beyond the submitting HEI.

D Public services Contributing to the development and delivery of public services or legislation to support the welfare, education, understanding or empowerment of diverse individuals and groups in society, including the disadvantaged or marginalised.

A Impacts on public policy and services: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually government, public sector, and charity organisations and societies, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society, through the implementation of policies

B Impacts on public policy and services Impacts where the beneficiaries may include government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charities and public sector organisations and society, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society

D Policy making Influencing policy debate and practice through informed interventions relating to any aspect of human or animal well-being

Environment

A Impacts on the environment:

Impacts where the key beneficiary is the natural or built environment

B Impacts on the environment

Impacts where the key beneficiaries are the natural environment and/or the built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result

C Impacts on the environment:

Impacts where the key beneficiaries are the natural, historic and/or built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result

Practitioners and services

A Impacts on practitioners and services:

Impacts where beneficiaries are organisations or individuals, including service users involved in the development of and delivery of professional services

B Impacts on practitioners and professional services

Impacts where beneficiaries may include organisations or individuals involved in the development of and delivery of professional services

A Production impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals (including groups of individuals) whose production has been enhanced

C Impacts on practitioners and professional services:

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include organisations or individuals involved in the development and/or delivery of professional services and ethics

Impact: Submissions

Impact template (REF3a)

- Sets out the submitted unit's general approach to enabling impact from its research
- One template per submission – with a page limit depending on the number of staff submitted
- Covers the period 1 Jan 2008 to 31 Jul 2013
- Contributes 20% to the impact sub-profile

Case studies (REF3b)

- Specific examples of impacts that were underpinned by the submitted unit's research
- The number of case studies required depends on the number of staff submitted
- Impacts during 1 Jan 2008 to 31 Jul 2013; underpinned by research since 1 Jan 1993
- Contributes 80% to the impact sub-profile

Impact: Template (REF3a)

- The unit's approach to enabling impact from its research:
 - Context for the approach
 - The unit's approach during 2008-2013
 - Strategy and plans for supporting impact
 - Relationship to the submitted case studies
- Provides additional information and context for the case studies, and can take account of particular circumstances that may have constrained a unit's selection of case studies
- To be assessed in terms of the extent to which the unit's approach is conducive to achieving impact of 'reach and significance'

Impact: Case studies (REF3b)

- In each case study, the impact described must:
 - Meet the REF definition of impact
 - Have occurred between 1 Jan 2008 and 31 July 2013 (can be at any stage of maturity)
 - **Be underpinned by excellent research (at least 2* quality) produced by the submitting unit between 1 Jan 1993 to 31 Dec 2013**
- Submitted case studies need **not** be representative of activity across the unit: pick the strongest examples

Impact: Case studies (REF3b)

- Each case study is limited to 4 pages and must:
 - Describe the underpinning research produced by the submitting unit
 - Reference one or more key outputs and provide evidence of the quality of the research
 - Explain how the research made a ‘material and distinct’ contribution to the impact (there are many ways in which this may have taken place)
 - Explain and provide appropriate evidence of the nature and extent of the impact: Who / what was affected? How were they affected? When?
 - Provide independent sources that could be used to verify claims about the impact (on a sample audit basis)



REF 2014

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