

133. Where sub-panels make use of citation data, it will be made available to them as follows:
- The REF team will procure a single source of citation data that provides a good level of coverage across all UOAs in which the sub-panels will make use of such data.
 - Outputs entered onto the REF submission system by HEIs will be matched by the REF team and/or our contractors against this database, using DOIs and other bibliographic data entered onto the submissions system by HEIs. Institutions will be able to verify these matches through the submissions system, and to view the citation counts in the same form that they will be provided to panels (although we will continue to count citations made after the submission deadline, to provide panels with up-to-date information).
 - For all matched outputs submitted by HEIs in the relevant UOAs, the REF team and/or our contractor will provide REF panels with a count of the number of times the output has been cited up to a fixed point in time, at the start of the assessment phase.
134. All sub-panels that make use of citation data in the assessment will have access to the data provided on a consistent and transparent basis; submissions may not include details of citations within any statements of additional information for outputs.
135. We will provide further details about the source of the citation data in autumn 2011, following the completion of a procurement exercise.
136. Those panels that use citation information will continue to rely on expert review as the primary means of assessment. The funding bodies do not sanction or recommend that HEIs rely on citation information to inform the selection of staff or outputs for inclusion in their submissions. Institutions should select and submit outputs that in their judgement reflect their highest quality research in relation to the full range of assessment criteria (originality, significance and rigour), and in accordance with their codes of practice for the selection of staff (see Part 4), having due regard to the potential equality implications of using citation data (see footnote 5).

Access to submitted outputs

137. The REF team will attempt to source all submitted journal articles and conference proceedings in electronic format directly from the publishers. We will therefore require the submission of a DOI number wherever possible for these types of output.
138. For all other output types, and where we are unable to source journal articles and conference proceedings from the publishers, we will require institutions to make available either:
- The output in electronic format, wherever available.
 - If not available in electronic format, a physical copy of the output or appropriate evidence of the output.
139. Further details of the method of submission will accompany the pilot version of the submission system software in autumn 2012.

Part 3 Section 3: Impact template and case studies (REF3a/b)

Definition of impact for the REF

140. For the purposes of the REF, impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia (as set out in paragraph 143).

141. Impact **includes**, but is not limited to, an effect on, 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.

142. Impact **includes** the reduction or prevention of harm, risk, cost or other negative effects.

143. For the purposes of the impact element of the REF:

- Impacts on research or the advancement of academic knowledge within the higher education sector (whether in the UK or internationally) are **excluded**. (The submitted

unit's contribution to academic research and knowledge is assessed within the 'outputs' and 'environment' elements of REF.)

- b. Impacts on students, teaching or other activities within the submitting HEI are **excluded**.
- c. Other impacts within the higher education sector, including on teaching or students, are **included** where they extend significantly beyond the submitting HEI.

144. Impacts will be assessed in terms of their 'reach and significance' regardless of the geographic location in which they occurred, whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. The UK funding bodies expect that many impacts will contribute to the economy, society and culture within the UK, but equally value the international contribution of UK research.

145. The REF panels will provide further guidance in relation to the kinds of impact that they would anticipate from research in their UOAs; this guidance will not be restrictive, and any impact that meets the general definition at Annex C will be eligible.

Submission requirements for impact

146. The REF aims to assess the impact of excellent research undertaken within each submitted unit. This will be evidenced by specific examples of impacts that have been underpinned by research undertaken within the unit over a period of time, and by the submitted unit's general approach to enabling impact from its research. The focus of the assessment is the impact of the submitted unit's research, not the impact of individuals or individual research outputs, although they may contribute to the evidence of the submitted unit's impact.

147. Each submission must include:

- a. **A completed impact template (REF3a):** describing the submitted unit's approach, during the assessment period (1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013), to enabling impact from its research.
- b. **Impact case studies (REF3b):** describing specific impacts that have occurred during

the assessment period (1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013) that were underpinned by excellent research undertaken in the submitted unit. The underpinning research must have been produced by the submitting HEI during the period 1 January 1993 to 31 December 2013⁶.

148. Panels will assess all the evidence provided in the completed impact template (REF3a) and the submitted case studies (REF3b), and will initially form an impact sub-profile for each submission by attributing a weighting of 20 per cent to the impact template (REF3a) and 80 per cent to the case studies (REF3b). Panels will apply their expert judgment based on all the information provided in the impact template and case studies, before confirming the impact sub-profiles.

Impact template (form REF3a)

149. Submissions must include a completed impact template, describing the submitted unit's approach during the assessment period (1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013) to supporting and enabling impact from research conducted within the unit. This information is intended to enable a more holistic and contextualised assessment of impact than would be possible from case studies alone, through the provision of:

- context for the individual case studies (though panels will recognise that case studies are underpinned by research over a timeframe that is longer than the assessment period, and that individual case studies may therefore not relate directly to the approach set out in the impact template)
- additional information about a wider range of activity within the submitted unit and its capacity for impact, than may be captured in the case studies.

150. The inclusion of the impact template also provides a mechanism for the assessment to take account of particular circumstances of a unit that may have constrained its selection of case studies (for example where it is a new department, or where the focus of its research may have limited opportunities for application).

⁶ The end of the period for the underpinning research (31 December 2013) extends beyond the end of the period for the impact (31 July 2013). This is to align with the end of the publication period for outputs, and recognises that research may have had impact prior to the publication of the outputs. Also, the start of the period for underpinning research may be extended, exceptionally, to 1 January 1988 for some UOAs. Any such exceptions will be published in the panel criteria and working methods documents.

151. The impact template will seek information on each of the following:

- context
- the unit's approach to impact during the period 2008-2013
- strategy and plans for supporting impact
- the relationship between the unit's approach to impact and the submitted case studies (recognising that individual case studies may not relate directly to the approach).

152. The impact template recognises that the submitted unit may not have had a specific strategy for impact in place during the REF assessment period, and therefore enables submissions to describe their approach to impact during the assessment period as well as their development of a strategy and plans for the future.

153. Panel criteria statements will provide further guidance on the kinds of information and evidence expected within each section of the impact template. Panels will assess the impact template in terms of the extent to which the unit's approach is conducive to achieving impacts of reach and significance.

154. The completed impact template should:

- a. Focus primarily on the approach taken by the submitted unit to achieving impact from its research – not the approach of the HEI as a whole. However, part of the submitted unit's approach could include a statement of how it has made use of institutional resources and infrastructure, and aligned with a wider HEI strategy.
- b. Not repeat detailed evidence that is included in case studies, though the completed impact template could refer to submitted case studies.
- c. Include evidence and specific details or examples of the submitted unit's approach, rather than broad general statements.

155. Completed impact templates must be submitted according to the guidance on formatting and page limits, set out in Annex F.

Impact case studies (form REF3b)

Number of case studies in a submission

156. The number of case studies required in each submission will be determined by the number (FTE) of Category A staff returned in the submission, as set out in Table 1. If a submission includes fewer than the required number of case studies, a grade of unclassified will be awarded to each required case study that is not submitted. Submissions may not include more than the required number of case studies.

Table 1: Number of case studies required in submissions

Number of Category A staff submitted (FTE)	Required number of case studies
Up to 14.99	2
15 – 24.99	3
25 – 34.99	4
35 – 44.99	5
45 or more	6, plus 1 further case study per additional 10 FTE

157. Submissions will **not** be expected to provide impact case studies that are representative of the spread of research activity across the whole submitted unit. Institutions should select the strongest examples of impact that are underpinned by the submitted unit's excellent research, and should explain within the impact template how the selected case studies relate to the submitted unit's approach to enabling impact from its research.

Eligibility definitions for case studies

158. Each case study must provide details of a specific impact that:

- a. Meets the definition of impact for the REF in Annex C.
- b. Occurred during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013 (see paragraph 159).
- c. Was underpinned by excellent research produced by the submitting unit in the period 1 January 1993 to 31 December 2013 (see paragraphs 160-161 and footnote 6).

159. Case studies must describe impacts that occurred specifically within the period 1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013. The impacts may have been at any stage of development or maturity during this period, so long as some effect, change or benefit meeting the definition of impact at Annex C took place during that period. This may include, for example, impacts at an early stage, or impacts that may have started prior to 1 January 2008 but continued into the period 1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013. Case studies will be assessed in terms of the reach and significance of the impact that occurred only during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013, and not in terms of any impact prior to this period or potential future or anticipated impact after this period.

160. To be eligible for assessment as an impact, the impact described in a case study must have been underpinned by excellent research produced by the submitting unit, during the period 1 January 1993 to 31 December 2013 (see footnote 6). Each case study must describe the underpinning research, include references to one or more key research outputs, provide evidence of the quality of that research, and explain how that research underpinned or contributed to the impact. Further guidance on the information required in case studies is at Annex G. The following definitions apply:

- a. 'Research produced by the submitting unit in the period 1 January 1993 to 31 December 2013' means that staff carried out research within the scope of the relevant UOA descriptor, while working in the submitting HEI (even if those staff have since left). This research must be evidenced by outputs referenced in the case study, published between 1 January 1993 and 31 December 2013. The staff may, but need not, have been selected for a previous RAE or the 2014 REF. The research outputs may, but need not, have been submitted to a previous RAE or the 2014 REF. If staff employed by the submitting HEI on the census date conducted all of the research underpinning an impact before joining the institution, the submitting HEI may not submit the impact of this research. (In this case, the institution where the staff conducted the research may submit the impact.)
- b. 'Excellent research' means that the quality of the research is at least equivalent to two star:

'quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour'. Each case study must include references to one or more key research outputs that underpinned the impact and were produced by the submitting HEI, and evidence of the quality of the research as requested in the relevant panel criteria documents. Panels will consider the evidence of research quality, and may review outputs referenced in a case study. A panel will grade as unclassified a case study if it judges that the underpinning research outputs are not predominantly of at least two star quality.

- c. 'Underpinned by' means that the research made a distinct and material contribution to the impact taking place, such that the impact would not have occurred or would have been significantly reduced without the contribution of that research. Each case study must explain how (through what means) the research led to or contributed to the impact, and include appropriate sources of information external to the HEI to corroborate these claims (see Annex G). Where the panel judges that the submitted unit's research did not make a distinct and material contribution to the impact, the case study will be graded as unclassified.

161. There are many ways in which research may have underpinned impact, including but not limited to:

- a. Research that contributed directly or indirectly to an impact. For example, a submitted unit's research may have informed research in another submitted unit (whether in the same or another HEI), which in turn led to an impact. In this case, both submitted units may show that their research made a distinct and material contribution to the impact.
- b. Research embodied in one or more outputs, conducted by one or more individuals, teams or groups, within one or more submitted units, that led to or underpinned an impact. More than one submitted unit (within the same HEI or in different HEIs) may include the same impact within their respective case studies, so long as each submitted unit produced excellent research that made a distinct and material contribution to the impact.

- c. Impacts on, for example, public awareness, attitudes, understanding or behaviour that arose from engaging the public with research. In these cases, the submitting unit must show that the engagement activity was, at least in part, based on the submitted unit's research and drew materially and distinctly upon it.
- d. Researchers that impacted on others through the provision of professional advice or expert testimony. In such a case, the submitting unit must show that the researcher's appointment to their advisory role, or the specific advice given, was at least in part based on the submitted unit's research and drew materially and distinctly upon it.
- e. Research that led to impact through its deliberate exploitation by the HEI or through its exploitation by others. The submitting HEI need not have been involved in exploiting the research, but must show that its research made a distinct and material contribution to the impact.

162. Institutions must submit impact case studies in the appropriate UOAs. Impacts from research undertaken at the submitting HEI may be submitted either in the REF UOA that relates to the underpinning research, or, if this differs, to the REF UOA that relates to the staff who conducted the research.

Case study submission requirements (form REF3a)

163. Submitting units are required to submit case studies using a generic template. The template, annotated with guidance, is at Annex G. The template has been developed, through the impact pilot exercise, to enable submitting units in all UOAs to clearly explain and demonstrate the impact of their research through a narrative that includes indicators and evidence as appropriate to the case being made, and in a format that is suitable for panels to assess them.

164. The onus is on submitting units to provide appropriate evidence within each case study of the particular impact claimed. The REF panels will provide guidance, in the panel criteria documents, about the

kinds of evidence and indicators of impact they would consider appropriate to research in their respective UOAs, but this guidance will not be exhaustive.

Part 3 Section 4: Environment data (REF4a/b/c)

165. The REF panels will form an environment sub-profile by assessing the information submitted in REF5 (the environment template), informed by the data submitted in REF4a/b/c, as described in this section. When we provide submissions to sub-panels, we will supply a standard analysis of the quantitative data submitted in REF4a/b/c, in respect of each submission in that UOA, and aggregated for all submissions in that UOA, as listed in Annex H. Panels will consider these data within the context of the information provided in REF5, and within the context of the disciplines concerned. Panels' criteria statements will indicate how the data analyses will be used in informing the assessment of the research environment.

Research doctoral degrees awarded (REF4a)

166. Each submission must include the number of research doctoral degrees awarded⁷ in each academic year (1 August – 31 July) 2008-09 to 2012-13 to students supervised within the submitted unit.

167. The REF team will provide to institutions data collected by HESA on the numbers of research doctoral degrees awarded, to help in preparing submissions. We will provide data collected by HESA for academic years (1 August – 31 July) 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12, at both the level of academic cost centre, and by 2008 RAE UOA (based on the supervisors' 2008 RAE UOA). The REF team will not provide data for 2012-13, and institutions will be required to complete the data for that year based on their own data sources or through their returns to HESA for that year.

168. In preparing their submissions, institutions should allocate these data to the relevant REF UOAs they are submitting in; or they may prepare their data from internal systems using HESA definitions. In

⁷ These are students returned in the HESA Student Record whose qualification awarded is recorded as 'Doctorate degree obtained primarily through advanced supervised research written up as a thesis/dissertation' or as a 'New Route PhD' (currently identified as codes 'D00' and 'D01' respectively in the QUAL field).