

Supplementary notes on guidance on submissions**Introduction**

1. This document provides supplementary guidance for **HEIs making submissions to the REF impact pilot exercise (2009-10)**. The document includes the following:

- Revised timetable
- Information on making submissions
- Use and publication of information.

2. This document should be read in conjunction with the REF impact pilot exercise: Guidance on submissions, 19 November 2009:

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/impact/>

Revised Timetable

Feb	Finalise panel membership
1 March	Pilot HEIs to submit list of case studies (including any supplementary case studies) and at least one document (case study or impact statement)
15 March End	Deadline for completed submissions
15 March	Panel chairs' meeting
April	First round of panel meetings
May	Second round of panel meetings
June	Third round of panel meetings
Late June	REF pilot dissemination conference (organised by KCL)
July	Panel chairs' meeting Sub profiles provided to pilot HEIs
Sept	Final round of panel meetings
Sept / Oct	Further feedback and reporting to pilot HEIs
October	Panel reports

3. From June to September HEFCE will also run three workshops to explore the nature of impact and how it can be assessed, in a wider range of disciplines than those covered by the impact pilot exercise. The workshops will cover:

- the practice-based creative and performing arts
- the humanities
- a range of social sciences.

Making submissions

4. The deadline for completed submissions has been put back to **Monday 15 March 2010**.

5. However, we intend to provide panel chairs with some information about submissions, in advance of their meeting on 15 March, so that they can begin to plan and allocate work. Therefore, pilot HEIs are required to submit the following information by **Monday 1 March 2010**:

a. A list of all the case studies to be submitted, including any supplementary case studies (referred to in the Guidance on submissions, paragraph 24e.)

Institutions are asked to complete a spreadsheet listing the titles of the case studies, indicating:

- the type of impact and relevant research expertise. (The latter should state what field, within the UOA, the underpinning research was in, for example, 'cardiovascular medicine', 'condensed matter physics', 'criminology', 'medieval literature')
- whether the case study is considered as confidential
- whether it is a 'supplementary' case study, in which case a clear statement must be included about why the case study may not satisfy the current requirements, or which aspect of the guidance it presents a challenge to. The spreadsheet will be amended to incorporate this information.

b. At least one document

Each institution should submit either a case study or an impact statement that they intend to include in their submission. We only need one document per HEI, although more can be submitted if desired. These documents are to provide the panel chairs with a clear early indication of the kinds of material they can expect to receive in the submissions; they will not be assessed and therefore can be re-submitted in final form by the deadline of 15 March.

6. Information for both the 1 and 15 March should be submitted electronically through the HEFCE extranet. All documents should be submitted in MS Office 2003 or PDF format. Please refer to the Guidance on submissions for further information about the submissions process.

Case studies

7. Within the case studies, contact details of 'users' who could corroborate the information should be provided where appropriate. When providing contact details:

- data protection legislation must be adhered to. If providing personal details not already publicly available, the institution must first gain the individual's consent.

- please indicate if the individual has agreed to be named as a contact; this will assist HEFCE when following up a sample of contacts.

Use and publication of information

8. The information submitted by the pilot institutions and generated by the pilot panels will be used in accordance with the aims of the pilot exercise. We aim to publish evidence arising from the pilot at a suitable level of detail to enable a range of stakeholders to scrutinise the process and lessons learned. At the same time sensitive information will be managed with due caution. This note sets out in more detail how we intend to use, manage and publish the information.

Submissions

9. All submitted information is subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

a. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a public right of access to any information held by a public authority. In the event of a request for information generated through the REF pilot exercise, we have a duty to decide whether the information should be disclosed. Requests must be considered on a case-by-case basis, and we can refuse to disclose information only in specific circumstances.

b. We will ask institutions in their submissions to identify any material they regard as confidential or sensitive. Should we receive a FOI request, we will give careful consideration to whether the release of this information would, or would be likely to harm the commercial interests of the institution or any other organisation. If information has been identified as confidential by the HEI, for example due to commercial reasons, we would consider whether any exemptions apply, and could argue that it should not be disclosable. However, we cannot guarantee this as it depends on the particular case.

c. Personal information will be redacted from material that we disclose.

10. We do not intend to publish the full submissions, but will publish selective extracts from them, with the consent of the institutions. This will include a sample of case studies and some extracts or examples of 'impact statements' in order to illustrate, within each UOA:

- the diversity of impacts submitted, the ways in which research has contributed to these impacts and the types of evidence provided
- the panels' reactions to the material, issues involved in assessing them, and examples of 'good practice' in presenting evidence of impact.

11. We will identify appropriate samples for publication in consultation with the panels and will seek the consent of the institutions concerned prior to publication. The extracts of the submissions will be published as part of the 'overview' reports by the panels, described below.

12. Submissions will be retained by HEFCE for the duration of the pilot exercise and any associated analysis, and will be destroyed when we have no further use for them for the specific purpose of the pilot exercise.

Assessments

13. The pilot panels will:

- Refine the criteria for assessment in each pilot UOA
- Produce an impact sub-profile for each submission, by assessing each case study and taking the impact statement into account
- Consider and comment on the issues raised by supplementary case studies
- Identify general lessons learned from the process.

14. As with the RAE, the assessment process is intended to produce judgements about overall submissions, not about individual researchers. We anticipate that a number of case studies may reflect the work of individuals, and therefore we do not intend that scores will be recorded or published in a way that can be associated with individual case studies. To this end:

- We advise that all submissions should include a minimum of two case studies
- Scores for individual case studies will be recorded in a way that anonymises the case studies within each submission
- Panel members will be instructed to destroy their own records of scores relating to individual case studies within a specified time limit.

15. Each panel will produce a report including:

- selected extracts of the submissions (described above)
- discussion and commentary about the criteria, process of assessment and lessons learned for the future, including issues raised by the supplementary case studies
- the results of the assessment, including the sub-profiles awarded to each submission, and general analysis of their relationship with 2008 RAE outcomes. Subject to advice from the panels, we intend that the sub-profiles will include the names of the submitting institutions and 'size' of the submissions, in order to enable scrutiny of the results and because this information would in any case be disclosable under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

16. Pilot institutions will be provided with early access to the results and the panels' general findings. Once panels have agreed the sub-profiles to be awarded to the submissions, in July we will provide each sub-profile to the institution concerned, alongside some aggregate statistics for the UOA as a whole. The pilot institutions will be provided with previews of the panels' reports and the opportunity to correct factual errors or raise other issues, before the reports are finalised and published in late 2010.

17. We do not anticipate that panels will provide the pilot HEIs with further written feedback on their individual submissions, but we intend to arrange events at which panel members can discuss the findings with representatives from the pilot institutions.

Feedback from pilot institutions

18. We also intend to gather structured feedback from the pilot institutions, and to publish the findings alongside the panels' reports.