

## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 2**

**3 December 2013 at 10am**

**at HEFCE, Finlaison House**

**15 – 17 Furnival Street, LONDON, EC4A 1AB**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Richard Catlow (Chair SP8)	Karen Ness (Adviser)
John Clarkson (Chair SP12)	David Price (Chair SP7)
Peter Costigan (User member)	Robert Sorrell (User member)
Lesley Dinsdale (Adviser)	Jürgen Sprekels (International member)
Ann Dowling (Main Panel Chair)	Sarah Sweeney (Adviser)
Roger Falconer (Chair SP14)	John Toland (Chair SP10)
Brian Foster (Chair SP9)	Alison Wall (Observer)
Steve Furber (Chair SP11)	Michelle Wickenden (Observer)
Vicky Jones (REF Team)	Stephen Williamson (Chair SP13)
Philip Nelson (Chair SP15)	Ms Victoria Wright (Observer)

#### **Apologies:**

Ronnie Belmans (International member)  
Jack Boyer (User member)  
Carlo Ghezzi (International member)  
Walter F. Henning (International member)  
Raymond Jeanloz (International member)  
Wolfgang Rodi (International member)

#### **1. Introductions and competence to do business**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, noting specifically Jürgen Sprekels (international member) and Sarah Sweeney (adviser), who were attending their first Main Panel B meeting, and Vicky Jones, who was representing the REF Team. The Chair noted that she had not expected all international members to attend this planning meeting, that they have access to meeting papers and will attend sub-panel meetings relevant to their expertise.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

#### **2. Plans for output calibration**

- 2.1. Paper MP1.2013 “Plans for output calibration”, circulated prior to the meeting was discussed in detail.

- 2.2. The chair outlined the aims of the calibration exercise, highlighting that the aim is to develop a common understanding of the star levels and approach to assessment through discussion, rather than to agree specific scores for the outputs in the calibration sample. It is expected that particular discussion will focus on assessment at the boundaries between quality levels; to support that discussion, panel members considered the characteristics of the quality levels provided in the criteria document and how these might be applied to provide differentiation for outputs that are borderline between quality levels.
- 2.3. The chair invited panel members to consider as large a proportion of the calibration sample as possible recognising that, in some areas, this will take them outside their immediate areas of expertise. Information on confidence of scoring will be captured along with scores. Calibration scores will be discarded following the exercise and the calibration outputs allocated for assessment in the same way as all other outputs. The chair noted that main panel user members and international members will participate fully in the main panel calibration exercise, and that output assessors will participate fully in sub-panel exercises.
- 2.4. Panel members discussed the practical arrangements for the use of the IT systems provided to support the assessment processes, including arrangements for access to outputs, the use of spreadsheets, and mechanisms for recording and reviewing assessment scores. It was noted that sub-panel chairs and panel secretariat would be attending training the following week.
- 2.5. The panel confirmed the arrangements for output calibration as set out in the paper, including:
- Each sub-panel chair will select a sample of 10 submitted outputs, to be used for the main panel initial calibration exercise. These outputs will be selected so as to avoid major conflicts of interest for all main panel members. In addition, each sub-panel chair will select a further sample of around 10 submitted outputs, avoiding conflicts of interest for sub-panel members, to provide a sample of around 20 outputs for each sub-panel initial calibration exercise.
  - Panel advisers will circulate paperwork, including pdfs of the outputs, to main panel members; panel secretaries will circulate paperwork, including pdfs of outputs to sub-panel members.
  - The timings for the exercise set out in the paper were agreed.

### **3. Output allocation arrangements**

- 3.1. 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, noting that it is preferable to make a full allocation as soon as possible to support sub-panel members preferred working arrangements.

- 3.2. Sub-panel chairs also discussed the arrangements that they will use to ensure that members assess the same sub-set of outputs ahead of the panel meetings in late January/early February and in late March/early April. At the late March/early April meetings, sub-panels will consider provisional scores for 50% of outputs.

#### **4. Impact**

- 4.1. Panel members reflected on the recent impact assessor briefing session and noted that the REF Team will be providing further briefing materials on impact assessment which will be available for discussion at future sub-panel meetings.

#### **5. Future meetings**

- 5.1. Panel members considered the meeting schedule previously circulated.

#### **6. Any other business**

- 6.1. There was no further business.



## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 3 (Part A)**

**07 January 2014**

**at HEFCE, Finlaison House**

**15 – 17 Furnival Street, LONDON**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Catherine Annabel (Panel B Secretary)	Dave Jones (Cover Secretary)
Ronnie Belmans (International member)	Vicky Jones (REF Team)
Kate Bishop (Cover Secretary)	Madeline McKercher (Panel B Secretary)
Jack Boyer (User member)	Philip Nelson (Chair SP15)
Katherine Branch (Cover Secretary)	Karen Ness (Main Panel B Adviser)
Richard Catlow (Chair SP8)	David Price (Chair SP7)
John Clarkson (Chair SP12)	Wolfgang Rodi (International member)
Peter Costigan (User member)	Robert Sorrell (User member)
Lesley Dinsdale (Panel B Adviser)	Jürgen Sprekels (International member)
Ann Dowling (Main Panel Chair)	Sarah Sweeney (Main Panel B Adviser)
Roger Falconer (Chair SP14)	John Toland (Chair SP10)
Brian Foster (Chair SP9)	Alison Wall (Observer)
Steve Furber (Chair SP11)	Michelle Wickenden (Observer)
Carlo Ghezzi (International Member)	Lewis Williams (Panel B Secretary)
Walter Henning (International member)	Stephen Williamson (Chair SP13)
Raymond Jeanloz (International member)	Victoria Wright (Observer)

There were no apologies.

#### **1. Introductions and competence to do business**

1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, particularly:

- Five international members attending their first meeting of the assessment phase, Ronnie Belmans, Carlo Ghezzi, Walter Henning and Raymond Jeanloz and Wolfgang Rodi;
- As observers, the three Panel B secretaries and three cover secretaries/advisers from Panel A. Together with the three Main Panel B advisors, each would act as the secretary in one of the nine sub-panel meetings that were to be held simultaneously on the following day, 8<sup>th</sup> January.

- 1.2. In the light of the full attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

## **2. Conflicts of interest**

- 2.1. The panel reviewed the register of their declared major conflicts of interest and confirmed that they were correct. The Chair reminded the panel that minor conflicts of interest should be notified to the Chair if they arose during any part of the assessment process.
- 2.2. It was noted that the chair and deputy chair of sub-panel 13 had a shared major conflict of interest, and it would therefore be necessary to appoint a further deputy to preside over the assessment of the institution concerned.

## **3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 3.1. The minutes of the meeting 1, held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 were confirmed as a true record. All actions arising relating to item 2, the planning of the calibration exercise, had been completed.

## **4. Output calibration**

- 4.1. The chair outlined the aims of the calibration exercise, which were to:
  - Develop a common understanding of the star levels and agree an approach to assessment through discussion of the calibration sample. Particular discussion would focus on assessment at the boundaries between quality levels; to support that discussion, panel members had been asked to consider the characteristics of the quality levels provided in Main Panel B's criteria document and how these might be applied to apply differentiation for outputs that are borderline between quality levels;
  - Agree specific scores for the outputs in the calibration sample, that would then be made available to the sub-panels to inform their calibration exercise and help to achieve a common understanding of the interpretation of the quality levels across all sub-panels. The Chair emphasised however that all the calibration scores from the main and sub-panel exercises will subsequently be discarded and the calibration outputs would be allocated within sub-panels for assessment in the same way as all other outputs.

**Action: Secretariat to feedback agreed calibration scores to the sub-panels for their calibration exercises**
- 4.2. It was noted that the calibration sample consisted of 90 outputs, 10 from each of the nine sub-panels, selected so as to avoid major conflicts of interest for all main panel members. All panellists, including the international and user members had been asked to score as many outputs in the sample as was reasonable, bearing in mind the spread of subject areas that were represented, and it was noted that

panellists had not assessed those outputs where they had identified minor conflicts of interest.

- 4.3. The Panel reviewed the calibration scores for each output in turn, discussing the range of scores given and the spread around the average score. Panellists discussed the reasons for any differences in the scores that had been given for each output, and through discussion, reached agreement on an overall score, noting the rationale for this.
- 4.4. The average scores of each panellist were also reviewed, in order to identify where panellists might need to adjust their calibration.
- 4.5. As a result of the discussion on individual outputs, a number of overarching recommendations were agreed that, in addition to the calibration scores, would be fed back to the sub-panels for their calibration exercises:
  - Interdisciplinary outputs should be assessed on their wider contribution and outputs may be cross-referred if the panel wishes to gain advice;
  - To remind sub-panels that establishing that the author made a significant contribution to the output is a threshold condition only. Once established, the output is assessed solely on its originality, significance and rigour;
  - That sub-panels should make use of the full range of scores open to them;
  - That if institutions have given any information in the additional information field that is not admissible within the REF published guidance (e.g. citation data, journal impact factors etc.) this should be ignored;
  - That sub-panels should discuss the Main Panel score for each of their 10 outputs and identify the reasons why this might differ from their own calibration score.
- 4.5. The allocation of the five international members to specific sub-panels was discussed and agreed, with most participating in a range of sub-panels according to their expertise. Four of the international members would attend the sub-panel calibration meetings on 8<sup>th</sup> January.
- 4.6. It was noted that the Main Panel would meet again briefly immediately following the sub-panel meetings on 8<sup>th</sup> January to receive and consider feedback from the sub-panel chairs and the international members on their calibration exercises, and identify and issues arising.

## **5. Progress on allocation of outputs by sub-panels**

- 5.1. Sub-panel chairs reported on their progress in allocating outputs to sub-panel members and output assessors for assessment. It was noted that each output would be assessed by a minimum of two members/assessors, with some sub-panels allocating up to three readers.

- 5.2. The Panel discussed and clarified the role of the full 'user' sub-panel members (not to be confused with the impact assessors) in assessing outputs. It was agreed that user members would be asked to assess some outputs where they had the appropriate expertise, but the number would vary according to the degree of expertise. User members would therefore take part in the output calibration exercise. The Chair reminded the panel that, in addition to taking a significant part in the assessment of impact, user members would contribute to the assessment of the environment.
- 5.3. It was agreed that sub-panels should aim to have assessed the first 20% of outputs by the second round of meetings at the end January/early February, and 50% by the third meetings in late March/early April. Sub-Panel chairs would be asked to report on their progress and scoring of the first 20% to the Main Panel Chair after the second meeting, and the Panel discussed how to identify the sub-set to be scored.

## **6. Planning for Main Panel Meeting 4 (23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014)**

- 6.1. The Chair noted that there would be two main items of business at the next meeting:
- Review of the sub-panel assessment of outputs to date, expected to be 50% complete
  - A calibration exercise for the assessment of impact case studies
- 6.2. The Panel discussed how to select a sample of impact case studies for calibration. It was agreed that each sub-panel would put forward four case studies, of which the main panel would choose the two that gave a broad range of types of impact. The sample would therefore consist of 18 outputs. A briefing document on assessing impact would be provided to main and sub-panel members and impact assessors in advance of the exercise.
- 6.3. Following the Main Panel exercise, sub-panels would carry out an impact calibration. Sub-panels would select a sample of 10, to include the two selected by the Main Panel. Case study scores and observations from the main panel exercise would inform the sub-panels' calibrations.
- 6.4. Main Panel user members would be invited to attend their allocated sub-panel calibration meetings.

## **7. Any other business**

- 7.1. There was no further business and the meeting was closed.

## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 3 (Part B)**

**08 January 2014**

**at CCT Venues, Barbican, LONDON**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Catherine Annabel (Panel B Secretary)  
Kate Bishop (Cover Secretary)  
Jack Boyer (User member)  
Katherine Branch (Cover Secretary)  
Richard Catlow (Chair SP8)  
John Clarkson (Chair SP12)  
Lesley Dinsdale (Panel B Adviser)  
Ann Dowling (Main Panel Chair)  
Roger Falconer (Chair SP14)  
Brian Foster (Chair SP9)  
Steve Furber (Chair SP11)  
Carlo Ghezzi (International Member)  
Walter Henning (International member)

Raymond Jeanloz (International member)  
Dave Jones (Cover Secretary)  
Madeline McKercher (Panel B Secretary)  
Philip Nelson (Chair SP15)  
Karen Ness (Main Panel B Adviser)  
David Price (Chair SP7)  
Wolfgang Rodi (International member)  
Jürgen Sprekels (International member)  
Sarah Sweeney (Main Panel B Adviser)  
John Toland (Chair SP10)  
Lewis Williams (Panel B Secretary)  
Stephen Williamson (Chair SP13)

Apologies were received from:

Ronnie Belmans (International member)  
Peter Costigan (User member)  
Robert Sorrell (User member)  
Michelle Wickenden (Observer)  
Victoria Wright (Observer)  
Alison Wall (Observer).

#### **1. Introduction and competence to do business**

1.1. The Chair welcomed members to this short meeting, held following the conclusion of the nine sub-panel meetings on 8<sup>th</sup> January. She outlined the main purpose of the meeting, which was to:

- receive feedback from each of the sub-panels on their calibration exercises and, following discussion,
- identify and agree any further feedback and/or recommendations from the Main Panel to its sub-panels.



## **2. Review of sub-panels' output calibration exercises**

- 2.1. Each sub-panel chair summarised the outcomes of their calibration exercises. All reported that they had been very useful indeed, and particularly helpful for the recently appointed output assessors on each sub-panel. Sub-panels had followed the same process as the Main Panel, discussing how the calibration scores related to the characteristics of the quality levels provided in Main Panel B's criteria document and arriving at an agreed score for each output.
- 2.2. The sub-panels had also received and discussed the Main Panel's calibration scores for their 10 outputs in the Main Panel calibration sample. Generally there had been good agreement between the sub-panel and main panel agreed scores for these outputs.
- 2.3. Four of the international members had attended a range of sub-panel meetings and all reported that they had found the calibration process robust and very helpful. They considered that the overall consistency between the main and sub-panels was encouraging and the discussion of potential issues arising in the assessment process using specific examples had been very helpful.
- 2.4. The Chair closed discussion by reminding sub-panel chairs that they should aim to have assessed the first 20% of outputs by their second round of meetings at the end of January. Sub-panel chairs reported that had all discussed with their panels how they would choose the sub-set of output to be assessed. Sub-panel chairs noted the importance of ongoing calibration following the initial exercise and the need to monitor panellists scoring patterns.

## **3. Role of the Main Panel international members**

- 3.1. International Main Panel members are appointed to provide an oversight of the processes used by the main and sub-panels *and to provide assurance during the assessment phase that sub-panel adhere to internationally referenced standards. The International members take part in calibration exercises, attend some sub-panel meetings, and will be engaged in the formation of quality profiles to ensure consistency of standards.* (HEFCE's words from the guidance on panels' roles and membership in italics).
- 3.2. The panel discussed ways in which the expertise of its international members could best be used to achieve these aims and how they could be deployed to maximum effect across the sub-panels to which they had been allocated.
- 3.3. It was agreed that a plan for the attendance and function of each member at future meetings would be drawn up by the Main Panel Executive.
- 3.4. There was no further business and the meeting was therefore closed.



## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 4**

**23 April 2014**

**Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Jack Boyer  
Richard Catlow  
John Clarkson  
Peter Costigan  
Lesley Dinsdale (adviser)  
Ann Dowling (chair)  
Roger Falconer  
Brian Foster  
Steve Furber  
Carlo Ghezzi  
Walter Henning  
Phil Nelson

Karen Ness (adviser)  
David Price  
Wolfgang Rodi  
Graeme Rosenberg (REF team)  
Duncan Shermer (REF team)  
Robert Sorrell  
Jürgen Sprekels  
Sarah Sweeney (adviser)  
John Toland  
Alison Wall (observer)  
Michelle Wickenden (observer)  
Steve Williamson (deputy chair)

#### **Apologies:**

Ronnie Belmans  
Raymond Jeanloz

#### **1. Introduction and competence to do business**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and introduced Graeme Rosenberg and Duncan Shermer who were in attendance from the REF team.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1. One change was requested to the minutes from Main Panel B Meeting 3a: Wolfgang Rodi needs to be added to the list of those present and also to the list of international members introduced. One change was also requested to the minutes from Main Panel B Meeting 3b: Walter Henning was not present at this meeting.

**Action: minutes to be revised.**

- 2.2. Subject to these changes, the minutes were approved as a true record.

### **3. Conflicts of interest**

- 3.1. The panel reviewed the register of their declared major conflicts of interest and confirmed they were correct. The Chair reminded the panel that minor conflicts of interest should be notified to the Chair if they arose during any part of the assessment process.

### **4. Progress update from sub-panel chairs**

- 4.1. Each sub-panel chair gave an oral update on their panel's progress with the assessment process.
- 4.2. Most sub-panels reported that good progress was being made with output assessment and panels were generally on target to have completed 100% of output scores ahead of the next set of sub-panel meetings in May/June 2014. Sub-panel executive groups were monitoring panellists' progress and would re-allocate outputs if necessary.
- 4.3. Most sub-panels reported good agreement on scores between panellists. Sub-panel chairs reported the various methods used to reach panel agreed scores in their sub-panels. Sub-panel chairs discussed how they were dealing with duplicate submissions of the same output by different institutions.

### **5. Review of output scores to date (50%)**

- 5.1. An analysis of agreed panel scores for outputs so far was presented to the panel. Most sub-panels now have panel agreed scores for approximately 50% of outputs; Sub-panel 14 has agreed scores for 92% of outputs.
- 5.2. The panel reviewed the percentage of 4\*, 3\*, 2\*, 1\* and unclassified outputs in each sub-panel. All sub-panels were asked to review their boundaries for 4\*/3\* and 3\*/2\* and review output scores which fell on the boundary to ensure that these boundaries were correct.
- 5.3. International panel members were asked to review a sample of those outputs whose scores fell on the 4\*/3\* boundary and report back to the relevant sub-panel meetings in May/June 2014.

**Action: Sub-panels to provide international panel members with lists of outputs on the 4\*/3\* boundary; international members to review a sample of these outputs and report back to sub-panel meetings in May/June.**

## **6. Impact calibration exercise**

- 6.1. The chair outlined the aims of the calibration exercise, which were to:
- develop a common understanding of the star levels and agree an approach to assessment through discussion of the calibration sample. Particular discussion would focus on assessment at the boundaries between quality levels; to support that discussion, panel members had been asked to consider the characteristics of reach and significance provided in Main Panel B's criteria document and how these might be applied to apply differentiation for impact case studies and templates that are borderline between quality levels;
  - agree specific scores for the impact case studies in the calibration sample, that would then be made available to the sub-panels to inform their calibration exercise and help to achieve a common understanding of the interpretation of the quality levels across all sub-panels. The Chair emphasised however that all the calibration scores from the main and sub-panel exercises will subsequently be discarded and the calibration samples would be allocated within sub-panels for assessment in the same way as all other impact case studies and templates.
- 6.2. It was noted that the calibration sample consisted of 18 case studies (two from each of the nine sub-panels) and four impact templates, selected as far as possible to avoid major conflicts of interest for all main panel members. All panellists, including the international and user members had been asked to score all case studies and templates in the sample, bearing in mind the spread of subject areas that were represented.
- 6.3. The panel reviewed the calibration scores for each impact case study and template in turn, discussing the range of scores given and the spread around the average score. Panellists discussed the reasons for any differences in the scores that had been given for each item, and through discussion, reached agreement on an overall score, noting the rationale for this. One panellist left the room during the discussion due to a major conflict with one of the items discussed.
- 6.4. The average scores of each panellist were also reviewed, in order to identify where panellists might need to adjust their calibration.
- 6.5. As a result of the discussion on individual impact case studies and impact templates, a number of overarching recommendations were agreed that, in addition to the calibration scores, would be fed back to the sub-panels for their calibration exercises:
- to remind sub-panels that establishing that the research made a material and distinct contribution to the impact is a threshold condition only. Once established, the impact case study should be assessed solely on the reach and significance of the impact described;

- similarly, to remind sub-panels that the quality of the research is a threshold condition only and once this has been met the impact case study should be assessed solely on the reach and significance of the impact described;
- that sub-panels should make use of the full range of scores open to them;
- that sub-panels should discuss the main panel score for each of their impact case studies and templates (where relevant) and identify the reasons if this differs from their own calibration score.

**Action: Secretariat to feedback agreed calibration scores and comments to the sub-panels for their calibration exercises.**

- 6.6. Sub-panel chairs would be asked to report back on any issues raised during their sub-panel impact calibration exercises at the next main panel meeting.

## **7. Overview and feedback templates**

- 7.1. The panel discussed the draft templates for the overview and feedback statements which would be produced by the main panels and sub-panels at the end of the REF assessment exercise.
- 7.2. The panel agreed that sub-panels should compile the feedback statements for institutions on each component of the assessment at the same time as the draft profiles for that component are finalised and approved, rather than wait until all component profiles are finalised.

## **8. Planning for Main Panel B Meeting 5**

- 8.1. At Meeting 5 the panel confirmed that they would discuss the approved output scores and profiles from the sub-panel meetings held in May and June. Sub-panel chairs would be asked to give an oral update on progress with the impact calibration exercise.
- 8.2. A Main Panel B dinner will be arranged for the evening of 10 June 2014, ahead of the next panel meeting on 11 June 2014. The secretariat will contact panel members with more details.

## **9. Main Panel B future meetings**

- 9.1. The panel confirmed that there would not be a calibration exercise for the environment element of the submissions; however, at Main Panel B Meeting 5 the panel would discuss how sub-panels should be advised to use the normalised environment data that had been provided by the REF team for each submission.

- 9.2. International panel members were asked to consider attending Main Panel B Meeting 6 on 22 July 2014, if possible, as impact profiles would be reviewed at this meeting and their input would be appreciated.
- 9.3. International panel members and user members were asked to discuss which of the next cluster of sub-panel meetings they should attend with the panel advisers.

## **10. Audit**

- 10.1. The panel reviewed a report on audit queries submitted by sub-panels to date. The majority of queries concern staff or outputs at this stage in the process, and the REF team are progressing well towards completing all queries.
- 10.2. It was noted that the REF team are carrying out eligibility audits on staff and outputs independently of those requested by sub-panels, and were informing sub-panels of the outcome.

## **11. Cross-referrals**

- 11.1. The panel reviewed a report summarising cross-referral requests which had been received and requested by sub-panels to date. It was noted that the deadline for requesting cross-referrals for all sub-panels was the 30 April 2014.

## **12. Any other business**

- 12.1. The REF team confirmed that panel members' USB sticks will need to be returned after the assessment exercise is complete.

## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 5**

**11 June 2014 at 10am**

**at HEFCE, Finlaison House**

**15 – 17 Furnival Street, LONDON, EC4A 1AB**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Richard Catlow (Chair SP8)	Philip Nelson (Chair SP15) (am only)
John Clarkson (Chair SP12)	Karen Ness (Adviser)
Peter Costigan (User member)	David Price (Chair SP7)
Lesley Dinsdale (Adviser)	Wolfgang Rodi (International member)
Ann Dowling (Main Panel Chair)	Robert Sorrell (User member)
Brian Foster (Chair SP9)	Jürgen Sprekels (International member)
Steve Furber (Chair SP11)	Sarah Sweeney (Adviser)
Carlo Ghezzi (International member)	John Toland (Chair SP10)
Richard Jardine (Deputy Chair SP14) (part-time from agenda 6)	Alison Wall (Observer)
Raymond Jeanloz (International member)	Robin Wallace (Deputy Chair SP15)
	Stephen Williamson (Chair SP13)

#### **Attending:**

Graeme Rosenberg (REF Team)

#### **Apologies:**

Ronnie Belmans (International member)	Walter F. Henning (International member)
Jack Boyer (User member)	Michelle Wickenden (Observer)
Roger Falconer (Chair SP14)	Victoria Wright (Observer)

### **1. Introductions and competence to do business**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, noting that Robin Wallace was attending as Deputy Chair of SP15 as Phil Nelson was attending for the morning only, and that Richard Jardine, Deputy Chair of SP14 would be joining the meeting in the afternoon, attending in place of Roger Falconer who was unable to attend due to illness.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 23 April 2014, were approved as a true record of the meeting.

### **3. Declarations of interest**

- 3.1. The panel reviewed the register of their declared major conflicts of interest and confirmed that these were correct. Major conflicts of interest for Robin Wallace and Richard Jardine, not shown on the register, were also noted. One minor conflict was noted. The Chair reminded the panel that minor conflicts of interest should be notified to the Chair if they arose during any part of the assessment process.

### **4. Outputs assessment**

- 4.1. Sub-panel chairs gave oral updates on the progress made by their sub-panels during the recent sub-panel meetings in May/June. All sub-panel chairs commended their panellists on completing the assessment of all outputs on schedule in time for these meetings. Sub-panel chairs reported the methods used to reach agreed panel scores in their sub-panels, noting that these were applied before the review of institutional outputs profiles, and the arrangements employed for the approval of the institutional outputs profiles.
- 4.2. The international members present gave oral updates on their participation at the recent sub-panel meetings and a written report from Walter Henning was tabled. They reported that they had been impressed by the work undertaken by the sub-panels, and by the open and transparent processes employed. International members had contributed to the work of sub-panels by assessing sample sets of papers and the results of this had been helpful in ensuring that the star boundaries were appropriately and consistently applied.
- 4.3. Analysis of agreed panel scores by sub-panel was presented. The panel had a very full discussion of this information, giving careful consideration to sub-panel outputs profiles, including disciplinary differences.
- 4.4. The panel then reviewed the institutional outputs profiles for all sub-panels, noting that these are subject to some very minor adjustments which are still pending, for example as a result of REF Team audits and the small number of still outstanding cross-referrals and panel-instigated audits.
- 4.5. Papers on individual staff circumstances, cross-referrals and audit were noted.

### **5. Overview and feedback reports**

- 5.1. Sub-panel chairs gave oral updates on the status of preparation of content for the outputs sections of the HEI feedback reports.
- 5.2. The panel noted the timings for the preparation of sub-panel inputs to the panel overview report and the arrangements and timing for the preparation of the consolidated main panel overview report.



## **6. Impact assessment**

- 6.1. Sub-panel chairs gave oral updates on the arrangements for the assessment of both impact case studies and impact templates within their sub-panels, including the allocation of impact items to panellists for assessment and the arrangements that will be used to reach agreed panel scores. It was noted that both user panel members and impact assessors will be fully involved in the assessment of both components of impact submissions.
- 6.2. The impact calibration exercises conducted at the last round of sub-panel meetings in May/June were discussed. Sub-panels had found these to be very useful exercises, enabling panellists to explore in detail the issues associated with the assessment of impact including the threshold conditions, the range of types of impact, and the application of the assessment criteria. Through these discussions, individual panellists had been able to calibrate their own scoring behaviours.
- 6.3. Main panel user members had attended part or all of all but one sub-panel impact calibration discussion. They reported that they had observed detailed and valuable discussions and felt that the calibration exercise gave robustness to the assessment. They will also attend the next round of sub-panel meetings in July which will focus on impact assessment.

## **7. Environment assessment**

- 7.1. The panel considered a paper outlining the use of the environment data (REF 4a, 4b and 4c), consolidated into standard analyses, in the assessment of environment. In particular, the limitations on the interpretation of the data that sub-panels should be aware of in their assessment were noted. The panel found the paper helpful and it was noted that it will be included as a paper for sub-panels at the next round of meetings in July.
- 7.2. The panel discussed the arrangements for the assessment of the environment templates, and sub-panel chairs' approaches to the allocation of panellists to assess the templates.

## **8. Future meetings**

- 8.1. Panel members considered the meeting schedule previously circulated.

## **9. Any other business**

- 9.1. There was no further business and the meeting was closed.

## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 6**

**Tuesday 22 July 2014**

**At Hefce, Finlaison House**

**15 – 17 Furnival Street, LONDON EC4A 1AB**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Jack Boyer (User member)	Karen Ness (Adviser)
Richard Catlow (Chair SP8)	David Price (Chair SP7)
John Clarkson (Chair SP12)	Wolfgang Rodi (International member)
Peter Costigan (User member)	Jürgen Srekels (International member)
Lesley Dinsdale (Adviser)	Sarah Sweeney (Adviser)
Ann Dowling (Main Panel Chair)	John Toland (Chair SP10)
Roger Falconer (Chair SP14)	Alison Wall (Observer)
Brian Foster (Chair SP9)	Michelle Wickenden (Observer)
Steve Furber (Chair SP11)	Stephen Williamson (Chair SP13)
Philip Nelson (Chair SP15)	Victoria Wright (Observer)

Apologies were received from Carlo Ghezzi and Walter Henning (International members) and Robert Sorrell (User member)

#### **1. Introduction and competence to do business**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting. She thanked all members for their impressive work during the last round of sub-panel meetings and particularly the contributions of the main panel user members to the assessment of impact.
- 1.2. The Chair introduced the agenda and the noted that the main items of business were to:
  - Sign-off the outputs assessment, noting any significant changes to draft profiles since the last meeting;
  - Review the outcomes of the impact assessment and consider draft impact profiles across the main Panel, and for individual submissions.
- 1.3. In the light of the attendance the panel confirmed its competence to do business.

## **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1. The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 June 2014 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

## **3. Conflicts of interest**

- 3.1. The panel received and noted the register of its declared major conflicts of interest (Paper MPB/6/2). No new major conflicts were reported.
- 3.2. The Chair reminded panellists of the protocol for handling major and minor conflicts of interest during meetings where individual submissions were to be discussed.

## **4. Outputs assessment**

- 4.1. It was noted that minor adjustments had been made to a small number of draft HEI output profiles since these were reviewed at MPB meeting 5. The reasons for these were:
- Outputs removed from submissions as a result of the REF audit team's data comparison exercise;
  - Late receipt of scores from outputs requiring cross-referral and following panel instigated audits.
- 4.2. Following discussion at Meeting 5, one sub-panel had been asked to discuss and review its average profile at its next sub-panel meeting. The Sub-Panel chair described the process that had been used for the review and reported on the outcome that had resulted in changes to a number of the individual profiles. The Panel discussed and approved both the process used and the outcomes reported.
- 4.3. The Panel then reviewed and approved the resulting changes to the overall average output profiles for each sub-panel.
- 4.4. The Panel then reviewed and approved the individual institutional profiles for all submissions where there had been a substantive change.
- 4.5. This completed the Panel's review of outputs and the draft output submission profiles approved at meetings 5 and 6 would be recommended to the REF team as now being finally agreed.

## **5. Impact assessment**

- 5.1. Sub-panel chairs gave oral updates on the progress made by their sub-panels during the recent round of impact assessment meetings in July. All sub-panel chairs commended their panel members and impact assessors on completing the assessment of all impact case studies and templates on schedule in time for

these meetings. Sub-panel chairs reported on the methods used to reach an agreed score for each case study and template, and the processes used to review and approve the resulting institutional impact profiles for recommendation to the main panel. All sub-panel chairs confirmed that case studies that were proposed as unclassified, through failure to meet one or more threshold condition, were discussed carefully by the whole panel in plenary session before a decision was made on their score.

- 5.2. All of the three Main Panel user members had attended one or more of the sub-panel meetings and those present gave their observations on the processes and outcomes of the impact assessment; written comments by Dr Bob Sorrell were also received and noted. They reported that they had been impressed by the rigour and thoroughness of discussions at the meetings and by the consistency of approach that had been achieved through open and detailed discussions of issues arising during the assessment process. The attendance of the user members across different sub-panels had been very helpful in further ensuring consistency and all sub-panel chairs had found their contributions to the meetings extremely useful.
- 5.3. An analysis of the emergent case study, template and overall impact profiles by sub-panel was then presented and reviewed by the Panel. The Panel had a very full discussion of the information, giving careful consideration to each of the sub-panel profiles. It was agreed that further checks for consistency should be made between a few sub-panels where there was a significant difference in the profiles. Various Panel members were tasked with further checks and reviews to be reported to the next meeting of the Panel.
- 5.4. A paper (MPB/6/5) detailing the number of impact case study audit queries raised by each sub-panel was also received. These related both to verification that threshold conditions had been met and to corroboration of claims of impact. In some cases the outcomes of the audit had been a sub-panel recommendation that a case study should be unclassified. The Panel reviewed the number and percentage of unclassified case studies in each sub-panel, and was satisfied that due process had been carried out in all sub-panels.
- 5.5. The Panel noted that no requests for either incoming or outgoing cross-referral of impact case studies had been received.

## **6. Environment assessment**

- 6.1. Sub-panel chairs reported that at their last round of meetings all sub-panels had been briefed on the assessment of the environment and on the use and interpretation of the REF4a/b/c environment data. The outcomes of the assessment would be considered at the sub-panels' next round of meetings in September 2014.

## **7. Overview and feedback reports**

### **Feedback reports to HEIs**

- 7.1. Sub-panel chairs reported their progress on generating confidential feedback to HEIs on the outputs and impact sections of the assessment. It was agreed that the Main Panel B secretariat would review a sample of draft feedback statements across sub-panels for consistency of approach.
- 7.2. Sub-panel chairs who had not already done so were asked to ensure that arrangements were made for the generation of confidential feedback to HEIs on the environment section.

### **Main Panel B Overview Report**

- 7.3. The Panel discussed its approach to the generation of its overview report, guidelines for which had been provided by the REF team in Paper MPB/6/6. It was noted that that the report would comprise:
  - a section produced by the Main Panel, collating information from across its sub-panels and covering issues that are common across the sub-panels;
  - a section for each sub-panel providing any additional details specific to individual UOAs.
- 7.4. It was agreed that sub-panels should include as an agenda item for their September meeting round 6 a discussion of issues, observations and comments that they wished to make for both the generic Main Panel section and the UOA specific sections, and provide a 'bullet-point' summary of the discussions for consideration by the Main Panel at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Summaries to be provided to the Main Panel exec by **22<sup>nd</sup> September** if possible.
- 7.5. Following discussion of the structure and content of the main and sub-panel sections at the main panel September meeting, sub-panel execs and the Main Panel exec will each work up drafts of their relevant sections, for discussion and approval as follows:
  - Sub-panel sections at their final meeting round 7 in October (before Main Panel meets on 29th October);
  - Main Panel section at its final meeting 8 on 29th October, when sub-panel sections will also be reviewed.

## **8. Future meetings**

- 8.1. The timetable and business for the remaining two meetings 7 and 8, as set out in Paper MPB/6/7. The Main items of business would be:

### **Meeting 7**

- Review and of the emergent environment sub-profiles and review and approval of the overall profiles at sub-panel level and for individual submissions;
- Discussion of the content of the Main Panel overview report.

### **Meeting 8**

- Wrap-up of business and review of the draft overview report

### **9. Any other business**

- 9.1. The Panel was reminded that a dinner would be held on 28<sup>th</sup> October, the eve of the final meeting. Venue to be confirmed.
- 9.2. There was no other business and the meeting closed.



## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 7**

**30 September 2014**

**Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Richard Catlow  
John Clarkson  
Peter Costigan  
Lesley Dinsdale (adviser)  
Ann Dowling (chair)  
Roger Falconer  
Brian Foster  
Steve Furber  
Carlo Ghezzi  
Walter Henning  
Vicky Jones (REF team)

Phil Nelson  
Karen Ness (adviser)  
David Price  
Wolfgang Rodi  
Robert Sorrell  
Jürgen Sprekels  
Sarah Sweeney (adviser)  
John Toland  
Alison Wall (observer)  
Stephen Williamson (deputy chair)  
Victoria Wright (observer)

#### **Apologies:**

Ronnie Belmans  
Jack Boyer  
Raymond Jeanloz  
Michelle Wickenden (observer)

#### **1. Introduction and competence to do business**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and introduced Vicky Jones who was in attendance from the REF team.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1. The panel confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 July 2014 were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### **3. Conflicts of interest**

- 3.1. The panel reviewed the register of their declared major conflicts of interest and, with one addition, confirmed they were correct. The Chair reminded the panel that minor conflicts of interest should be notified to the Chair if they arose during any part of the assessment process.

### **4. Impact assessment**

- 4.1. It was noted that some adjustments had been made to some sub-panels' draft impact profiles since these were reviewed at MPB meeting 6, as a result of checks for consistency which had been agreed at that meeting. The panel discussed and approved the changes which had been made.
- 4.2. The Panel then reviewed and approved the resulting changes to the overall average impact profiles for each sub-panel.

### **5. Environment assessment**

- 5.1. The sub-panel chairs gave updates on the progress made by their sub-panels during the recent round of environment assessment meetings in September. Sub-panel chairs reported on the methods used to reach an agreed score for each section of the environment templates and the processes used to review and approve the resulting institutional environment profiles for recommendation to the main panel.
- 5.2. An analysis of the environment profiles by sub-panel was then presented and reviewed by the panel. The panel had a very full discussion of the information, giving careful consideration to each of the sub-panel profiles.
- 5.3. The panel then reviewed and approved individual HEI environment profiles by sub-panel.

### **6. Overall profiles.**

- 6.1. The panel were presented with an analysis of the output, impact, environment and overall profiles for each sub-panel. The panel had a full discussion of the information.
- 6.2. The panel then reviewed and approved the output, impact, environment and overall profiles for individual HEIs within each sub-panel.

### **7. Overview report and HEI feedback statements**

- 7.1. The panel discussed the draft sub-panel overview reports which had been provided by each sub-panel. The panel made recommendations for amendments



and additions to the content of the sub-panel sections, which would be actioned by the sub-panel chairs. Sub-panel overview reports need to be approved by sub-panels at their final meetings in October, with sub-panels also being asked to agree that any further amendments to the overview reports after these meetings can be made by the sub-panel chair.

- 7.2. The panel then discussed the content of the Main Panel B overview report, including common themes emerging from the draft sub-panel sections discussed above. The panel advisers agreed to produce a draft of the Main Panel B overview report for discussion at the next set of sub-panel meetings in October.
- 7.3. The panel also discussed feedback on the assessment process for the REF team from sub-panels and the main panel.
- 7.4. The panel agreed that the Main Panel B overview statement, and its sub-panel sections would, as far as possible, be approved at the final Main Panel B meeting on 29 October 2014.
- 7.5. The panel then reviewed a sample of HEI feedback statements provided by each sub-panel. The panel advisers were coordinating the collation of these statements and the panel were content with the level of consistency and content of the individual HEI feedback statements. The panel agreed that sub-panels should formally approve the final HEI feedback statements at their meetings in October.

## **8. Final meeting**

- 8.1. At Meeting 8 the panel confirmed that they would discuss the final drafts of the panel overview report.
- 8.2. A Main Panel B dinner will be arranged for the evening of 28 October 2014, ahead of the next panel meeting on 29 October 2014. The secretariat will contact panel members with more details.

## **9. Any other business**

- 9.1. The REF team confirmed that panel members' USB sticks will need to be returned after the assessment exercise is complete. Panel members will each receive an addressed envelope for the return of their USB sticks.
- 9.2. Panel members made a request for a set of generic slides on the REF assessment process which could be used when addressing the academic community. The REF team agreed to develop an appropriate set of slides.

## **REF Main Panel B: Meeting 8**

**29 October 2014**

**HEFCE, Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London**

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Jack Boyer	Phil Nelson
Richard Catlow	Karen Ness (adviser)
John Clarkson	David Price
Peter Costigan	Wolfgang Rodi
Lesley Dinsdale (adviser)	Graeme Rosenberg (REF manager)
Ann Dowling (chair)	Jürgen Sprekels
Roger Falconer	Sarah Sweeney (adviser)
Brian Foster	John Toland
Steve Furber	Alison Wall (observer)
Carlo Ghezzi	Stephen Williamson (deputy chair)
Walter Henning	Victoria Wright (observer) (pm only)
Raymond Jeanloz	

#### **Apologies:**

Ronnie Belmans  
Robert Sorrell  
Michelle Wickenden (observer)

#### **1. Introduction and competence to do business**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.
- 1.2. In the light of the attendance, the panel confirmed its competency to do business.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1. The panel confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 September 2014 were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### **3. Conflicts of interest**

- 1.1. The panel received and noted the register of its declared major conflicts of interest (Paper MPB/8/2). No new major conflicts were reported.
- 1.2. The Chair reminded panellists of the protocol for handling major and minor conflicts of interest during meetings should individual submissions be discussed in detail.

### **4. Completing assessment**

- 4.1. The panel received and noted Paper MPB/8/3 which provided a summary of the volumes of cross-referred outputs into and out of Main Panel B sub-panels.
- 4.2. The panel received and noted paper MPB/8/4 which provided a summary of the volume of audit queries by sub-panel and by type. The REF manager confirmed that overall audit numbers across the REF will be included in the procedural report which will be published in 2015, but remain confidential until then.

### **5. Overview report**

- 5.1. The REF manager gave a short presentation covering the format of the published results and comparative data, the timetable for the publication of results and the associated communication plans.
- 5.2. The panel considered and discussed in detail the draft of the main panel section of the overview report (Paper MPB/8/5) which had been developed from the summary of topics for inclusion prepared following discussion at the previous main panel meeting. It was noted that the data tables included had been provided by the REF Team and that the REF Team will check all data tables included for accuracy prior to publication.
- 5.3. The panel was content with the development of the main panel section of the overview report. A number of amendments to both structure and content were agreed. A further draft will be prepared by the panel advisers in discussion with the Chair.
- 5.4. The panel reviewed the drafts of the sub-panel sections of the overview report (Paper MPB/8/6) with feedback to sub-panel chairs focussing on consistency of approach and identification of topics to be addressed in the main panel section as opposed to separately in each sub-panel section. It was agreed that each report should include summary data about submissions in tabular form.
- 5.5. In terms of sign-off of final versions of the report, the panel agreed that the main panel section should be finalised by the Chair and each sub-panel section by the relevant sub-panel chair.

## **6. HEI feedback statements**

- 6.1. Sub-panel chairs reported that the preparation of HEI feedback statements is close to completion for all sub-panels. To address consistency of approach across sub-panels, there has been some co-ordination across sub-panels via the advisers, and the REF Team have provided feedback on a sample of statements. It was noted that the REF Team will do some further sampling once all statements are complete.

## **7. Feedback on REF process**

- 7.1. The REF manager introduced paper MPB/8/7 which reported on the outcomes of the panel members' survey, an on-line survey of panel members and assessors covering the administrative and operational aspects of the REF. The panel noted the generally very positive feedback reported.
- 7.2. The REF manager invited additional input on operational aspects from chairs, who had not been included in the survey and were expected to have a different perspective of the exercise due to their role.
- 7.3. The panel noted that the HEFCE research policy group are undertaking an evaluation of the REF process. This includes focus groups which sub-panel chairs have nominated sub-panel members to attend, and an evaluation of the assessment of impact.

## **8. Any other business**

- 8.1. The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the panel advisers and the REF Team for their excellent support of the exercise and all panel members – sub-panel chairs, international members and user members – for their commitment, hard work and collegiality throughout the exercise.