

Annex A

Assessment criteria and level definitions

1. This annex sets out the generic criteria used for assessing submissions and the definitions of the starred levels in the overall quality profiles and each of the sub-profiles (for outputs, impact and environment).
2. Sub-panels used their professional judgement to form the overall quality profile to be awarded to each submission, taking into account all the evidence presented. The primary outcome of the assessment was to award an overall quality profile to each submission, showing the proportion of the submission that met each starred level in the profile.
3. The definitions of the starred levels in the overall quality profile are below.

Table A1: Overall quality profile: Definitions of starred levels

Four star (4*)	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Three star (3*)	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
Two star (2*)	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
One star (1*)	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified (U/C)	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

4. For each of the three elements of the assessment – outputs, impact and environment – sub-panels developed a sub-profile, showing the proportion of the submission that met each of four starred quality levels. The assessment criteria and the definitions of the starred levels for the sub-profiles are set out below.

Table A2: Outputs sub-profile: Criteria and definitions of starred levels

The criteria for assessing the quality of outputs are 'originality, significance and rigour'.	
Four star (4*)	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Three star (3*)	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
Two star (2*)	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
One star (1*)	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified (U/C)	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

Table A3: Impact sub-profile: Criteria and definitions of starred levels

The criteria for assessing impacts were ‘reach and significance’:

- In assessing the impact described within a case study, the panel formed an overall view about its ‘reach and significance’ taken as a whole, rather than assessing ‘reach and significance’ separately.
- In assessing the impact template (REF3a) the panel considered the extent to which the unit’s approach described in the template was conducive to achieving impacts of ‘reach and significance’.

Four star (4*)	Outstanding impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
Three star (3*)	Very considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
Two star (2*)	Considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
One star (1*)	Recognised but modest impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
Unclassified (U/C)	The impact is of little or no reach and significance; or the impact was not eligible; or the impact was not underpinned by excellent research produced by the submitted unit.

Table A4: Environment sub-profile: Criteria and definitions of starred levels

The research environment was assessed in terms of its ‘vitality and sustainability’. Panels considered both the ‘vitality and sustainability’ of the submitted unit, and its contribution to the ‘vitality and sustainability’ of the wider research base.

Four star (4*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
Three star (3*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
Two star (2*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
One star (1*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of nationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
Unclassified (U/C)	An environment that is not conducive to producing research of nationally recognised quality.

5. The four main panels explained in more detail, within their statements on the panel criteria and working methods, how their group of sub-panels would apply the assessment criteria and interpret the level definitions in developing the sub-profiles.

Notes on the criteria and definitions of the starred levels

6. ‘World-leading’ quality denotes an absolute standard of quality in each unit of assessment.

7. ‘World leading’, ‘internationally’ and ‘nationally’ in this context refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the nature or geographical scope of particular subjects, nor to the locus of research nor its place of dissemination. For example, research which is focused within one part of the UK might be of ‘world leading’ standard. Equally, work with an international focus might not be of ‘world leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised’ standard.

8. The criterion of ‘reach’ for impacts does not refer specifically to a geographic scale. Sub-panels considered a number of dimensions to the ‘reach’ of impacts as appropriate to the nature of the research and its impacts. For example, an impact located within one region of the UK might be judged as ‘outstanding’ (graded as four star). Equally, an impact with international reach might not be judged as ‘outstanding’, ‘very considerable’ or ‘considerable’.

Annex B

UOA average quality profiles

Main panel	UOA	UOA name	Number of submissions	FTE Category A staff submitted	Average percentage of all submissions in the UOA meeting the standard for:				
					4*	3*	2*	1*	U/C
A	1	Clinical Medicine	31	3,570.94	39	44	15	1	1
A	2	Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care	32	1,354.32	39	41	17	3	0
A	3	Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy	94	2,747.69	31	50	17	1	1
A	4	Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	82	2,519.83	38	40	19	2	1
A	5	Biological Sciences	44	2,373.33	37	46	15	1	1
A	6	Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	29	1,042.16	35	41	20	3	1
B	7	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences	45	1,380.05	24	59	15	2	0
B	8	Chemistry	37	1,229.06	28	63	9	0	0
B	9	Physics	41	1,703.63	28	60	11	1	0
B	10	Mathematical Sciences	53	1,930.27	29	55	15	1	0
B	11	Computer Science and Informatics	89	2,044.21	26	44	24	5	1
B	12	Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering	25	1,152.01	25	57	17	1	0
B	13	Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials	37	1,070.82	25	62	11	2	0
B	14	Civil and Construction Engineering	14	390.45	24	56	16	3	1
B	15	General Engineering	62	2,446.87	26	56	16	2	0
C	16	Architecture, Built Environment and Planning	45	1,024.81	29	40	25	6	0
C	17	Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology	74	1,685.63	27	42	26	5	0
C	18	Economics and Econometrics	28	755.65	30	48	19	2	1
C	19	Business and Management Studies	101	3,320.06	26	43	26	4	1
C	20	Law	67	1,553.41	27	46	23	4	0
C	21	Politics and International Studies	56	1,274.67	28	40	26	6	0
C	22	Social Work and Social Policy	62	1,301.89	27	42	25	5	1
C	23	Sociology	29	703.59	27	45	26	2	0
C	24	Anthropology and Development Studies	25	561.60	27	42	26	4	1
C	25	Education	76	1,441.76	30	36	26	7	1
C	26	Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism	51	789.67	25	41	27	6	1
D	27	Area Studies	23	483.10	28	42	25	5	0
D	28	Modern Languages and Linguistics	57	1,385.55	30	42	23	4	1
D	29	English Language and Literature	89	1,971.28	33	41	22	4	0
D	30	History	83	1,785.88	31	44	23	2	0
D	31	Classics	22	382.58	34	42	22	2	0
D	32	Philosophy	40	590.55	31	42	24	3	0
D	33	Theology and Religious Studies	33	412.68	28	40	27	5	0
D	34	Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	84	1,603.76	26	42	25	6	1
D	35	Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts	84	1,142.29	29	39	24	6	2
D	36	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management	67	934.71	29	38	24	8	1

The FTE Category A staff submitted has been used as a weighting factor for calculating the average profiles. The rounding methodology described in Annex B of REF 02.2011, 'Assessment framework and guidance on submissions', has been used to produce the outcomes shown in this table.