

Slides 1

Overview of the REF process & focus on impact

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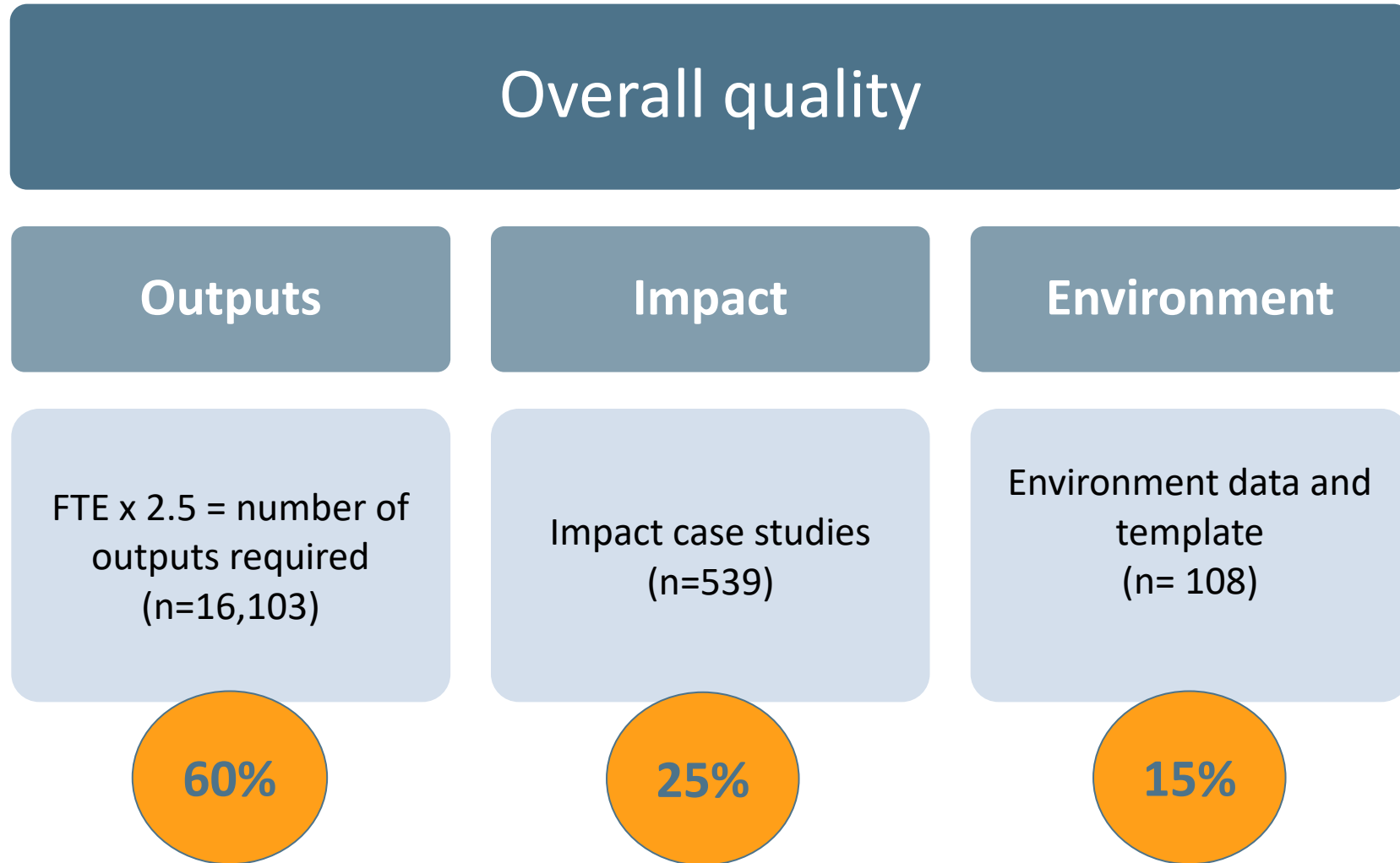
What is impact and how to achieve it in B&M?

University of Leeds

1 December 2022

2021 framework

REF2021



Expert panels

REF2021

- **34 sub-panels** working under the guidance of four main panels with advice from Equality and Diversity and Interdisciplinary Research advisory panels (EDAP and IDAP)
- Two-stage appointment process (via nominations):
 1. **Criteria-setting phase** – sufficient members appointed to ensure each sub-panel has appropriate expertise.
 2. **Assessment phase** – recruitment in 2020 of additional panel members and assessors to ensure appropriate breadth of expertise and number of panel members necessary for the assessment phase, informed by the survey of institutions' submission intentions in 2019 & actual data. **(SP 17 = 38 full SP members; 12 IC assessors & 2 output assessors & advisers)**

Responsibilities of expert panels

REF2021

Main panel responsibilities

- Developing the panel criteria and working methods
- Ensuring adherence to the criteria/procedures and consistent application of the overall assessment standards
- Signing off the outcomes

Sub-panel responsibilities

- Contributing to the main panel criteria and working methods
- Assessing submissions and recommending the outcomes

Consistency with REF 2014

- Impact remains non-portable
- 2* quality threshold
- Timeframe:
 - 1 January 2000 - 31 December 2020 for underpinning research
 - 1 August 2013 - 31 July 2020 for impacts

Refinements

- Impact template integrated into Environment statement (provides context)
- Impact on teaching *within* (and beyond) own HEI is eligible
- Enhanced clarity on scope of underpinning research – bodies of work
- Guidance on submitting continued impact case studies
- Enhanced guidance on public engagement

Impact – criteria

REF2021

Assessed against two criteria:

- **Reach (updated definition):** will be understood as the extent and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, as relevant to the nature of the impact. Reach will be assessed in terms of the extent to which the potential constituencies, number or groups of beneficiaries have been reached; it will not be assessed in purely geographic terms, nor in terms of absolute numbers of beneficiaries. The criteria will be applied wherever the impact occurred, regardless of geography or location, and whether in the UK or abroad
- **Significance:** the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed or changed the performance, policies, practices, products, services, understanding, awareness or wellbeing of the beneficiaries.
- **SP17 scored on a 9 pt scale independently before discussion as a group.**

Impact – types and indicators

REF2021

- Panels welcomed case studies that describe **any type(s)** of impact
- Panel welcomed, and assessed equitably, case studies describing impacts achieved through public engagement, either as the main impact described or as one facet of a wider range of impacts.
- Impact on teaching within (and beyond) own HEI is eligible
- Case studies must provide a clear and coherent narrative supported by verifiable evidence and indicators
- Should provide evidence of reach and significance of the **impacts**, as distinct from evidence of dissemination or uptake
- Annex A in submission guidance included an extensive – but not exhaustive – list of examples of impact and indicators, including evaluation frameworks from non-HE organisations

Preparation, training and confidentiality

REF2021

- Appointments to SP went on into 2020 based on combination of data submitted and workload within each subject area
 - Decision to appoint two deputies
 - Some fine-tuning of membership once looked at data in detail
- All SP members underwent E&D and unconscious bias training.
 - Webinars and exercises
 - Individual and group exercises
- Training in IT and data security practices. Web based systems. Support for all SP members
- Impact of COVID-19 affected working methods & capacity

Working methods, familiarisation & calibration REF2021

- **SP17 worked in three clusters** (36 institutions each), led by Chair & Deputy Chairs: efficiency and confidentiality reasons
 - Assessment of submission data started in 2020 early 2021 with allocation of outputs
 - Then Impact Cases
 - Finally, Environment
- Calibration exercises to ensure consistency of application of criteria.
 - Review live papers, impact cases and environment statements
 - Training workshops and on-going quantitative and qualitative checks.
 - Role of REF 'vets' in making assessment calls on the three elements of submissions
- Outputs normally assessed by one person; checks by others & calibrations
- *Impact cases normally by three people: IC assessor & Primary & secondary assessor*
- Institutions had a Primary and secondary assessor
- Full calibration throughout the process; checks and plenary discussions

Standard data analysis for B&M

REF2021

- Staff 6,639 FTE & 7,009 headcount; 1,025 ECRs;
- Research outputs = 16,103
- In TOTAL 9,206 doctoral degrees awarded 2013-2020; = 1.39 per FTE
- In TOTAL average annual research income 2013-2020 =£73,690,870; = £11,353 per FTE; = £682,382 per HEI

Large no. of staff with 1 output; but still concentrated no. 'superstars'

Research outputs

Number of outputs attributed	Category A submitted staff				Former staff	
	All		ECRs			
	Headcount	Percentage	Headcount	Percentage	Headcount	Percentage
1	3,372	49	696	70	485	56
2	1,422	20	169	17	197	23
3	926	13	66	7	92	11
4	594	9	35	4	59	7
5	638	9	22	2	31	4

Number of research outputs 16,103

Research income Source	Percentage
UK Research councils	28.6%
UK Government bodies, local authorities, health authorities	18.6%
UK industry	10.3%
EU government bodies	22.5%
Other (charities, overseas industry, R&D tax credits, etc)	19.9%
Total	£11,353=100%

Summary of Results SP 17

	% 4*	% 3*	% 2*	% 1*	% Unclassified
Output	30.3 (20.5)	45.8 (42.8)	21.4 (30.1)	2.2 (5.8)	0.3 (0.8)
Impact	41.4 (37.7)	42.8 (42.5)	13.6 (17.0)	2.2 (2.2)	0 (0.8)
Environment	42.5 (36.8)	40.4 (39.7)	15.3 (21.0)	1.8 (2.4)	0 (0.1)
Overall	35 (26)	44 (43)	19 (26)	2 (4)	0 (1)

Similar
distributions
across panel
members

Note: 2014 in parenthesis: caution must be exercised in making simple comparisons because of differences in submission requirements from 2021

Acknowledgements

SP17 membership & Secretariat

Deputy Chairs

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Forthcoming paper 'Business and Management Studies in the UK's REF: implications for research quality assessment' *BJM*, Blackburn, R. Dibb, S. and Tonks, I.

<https://www.ukri.org/about-us/research-england/research-excellence/future-research-assessment-programme-frap/>