

Annex A

Consultation questions and response information

1. We invite responses to the draft REF panel criteria and working methods set out in Part 1 and Part 2 of this document. Responses to this consultation will help the REF panels and the REF team to refine the criteria and working methods for the final version to be published in January 2012.
2. This annex sets out the consultation questions, for information only. Responses should be made by completing an **online form** available alongside this document at www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/03_11/ by **midday on Wednesday 5 October 2011**.
3. All responses may be disclosed on request, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act gives a public right of access to any information held by a public authority, in this case HEFCE on behalf of the four funding bodies. This includes information provided in response to a consultation. We have a responsibility to decide whether any responses, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. We can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. This means responses to this consultation are unlikely to be treated as confidential except in very particular circumstances. Further information about the Act is available at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk. Equivalent legislation exists in Scotland.

Consultation questions

1. Overall draft panel criteria and working methods

- a. The generic and four main panel statements achieve an appropriate balance between consistency across the exercise and allowing for justifiable differences between the four main panels.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- b. Are there particular aspects of the criteria and working methods that should be more consistent across all the main panels? Are there differences between the disciplines that justify further differentiation between the main panel criteria? Where referring to particular main panels, please state which one(s).

2. Individual staff circumstances

- a. The proposals for determining the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty, for staff with a range of individual circumstances, are appropriate (Part 1, Tables 2

and 3).

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Please comment on these proposals. Respondents are also invited to comment specifically on:

- whether Tables 2 and 3 are set at appropriate levels
- the proposed options for taking account of pregnancy and maternity (Part 1, paragraph 62)
- whether a consistent approach across the exercise is appropriate, or whether there are any specific differences in the nature of research that justify differences in the approach between UOAs or main panels.

If commenting in respect of particular panels or disciplines, please state which.

For the remaining questions, please provide a separate response for each main panel criteria statement (Parts 2A, 2B, 2C and 2D of this consultation)

3. Main panel criteria and working methods

a. The main panel statement achieves an appropriate balance between consistency and allowing for discipline-based differences between the sub-panels.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Please comment on the balance between consistency and allowing for discipline-based differences between the sub-panels within this main panel. Please state the UOA(s) on which you are commenting.

We are concerned about the significant differences between the rules of some sub-panels, eg computer science uniquely allowing inclusion of conference papers. There would be difficulties where computer science and electrical / electronic engineering form part of the same university department.

4. Submissions and units of assessment (Section 1)

a. Do the **UOA descriptor and boundary** statements provide a clear and appropriate description of the disciplines covered by the UOAs? Please include any suggestions for refining the descriptors and state which UOA(s) you are commenting on.

b. Please comment on the main panel's criteria in relation to **multiple submissions** in its UOAs.

A good case would need to be made for multiple submissions.

5. Assessment criteria: outputs (Section 2)

a. Overall, the main panel criteria relating to outputs are clear and appropriate.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Please comment on the criteria in Section 2, in particular on where further clarification is required or where refinements could be made.

6. Assessment criteria: impact (Section 3)

a. Overall, the main panel's criteria relating to impact are appropriate and helpful to institutions in preparing submissions.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Please comment on the criteria in Section 3, in particular on where further clarification is required or where refinements could be made.

7. Assessment criteria: environment (Section 4)

a. Overall, the main panel criteria relating to environment are clear and appropriate.

Draft for consultation: generic statement

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Please comment on the criteria in Section 4, in particular on where further clarification is required or where refinements could be made.

8. Working methods (Section 5)

a. Overall, the working methods of the main panel and its sub-panels are clear and appropriate.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Please comment on the working methods, in particular on where further clarification is required or where refinements could be made.

It is important to ensure transparency, particularly over the use made of citation data, given the relative low level of citation of engineering research where the work has been done for or in collaboration with industrial partners.

Clarity over “ownership” of submissions needs to be assured where transfer is an issue.