



REF Sub Panel 12

Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering

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ABCD

- Each sub-panel member had to read and rate 700 papers in under 6 months.
- You will learn something of my personal observations of being involved in the REF process and how you may better be prepared for 2020
- My name is Robert Parkin, I am Pro Vice Chancellor for Research & Knowledge Transfer at the University of Bradford. I served on sub-panel 12 as Deputy Chair.
- For the next 20 minutes I will talk about my reflections on my experience and how my actions will change. –
Caveat – my own personal views!

Our Team

- Selected from a pool of leading researchers. Well balanced in terms of subject, gender, ethnicity and institution.
- Around 20 people for outputs (with international input) and swelled by user representation for impact.
- Developed robust processes and led by an excellent chairman.
- Assessed 25 submissions from 22 institutions – significantly smaller than REA2008.
- Worked together for 3 years during the REF process.
- Substantial Training & Calibration in all areas.

Outputs 65%

- Predominantly journal papers (a very small number of conference papers and book chapters).
- Criteria of Originality, Significance and Rigour.
- Some sub-panels used citation data to contextualise outputs. We did not.
- Multiple peer reviewers – discussion of discrepancies
- Each panel member needed to read and score circa 700 papers over 6 months. Fewer for Chair & Deputy
- Proportion of star ratings – anecdotally no one submitted 2*???

Outputs - revisit

- 4* Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
- 3* Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence
- 2* Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
- We saw extremely few 1* or unclassified outputs (U all technicalities)

Outputs – (some features)

- 4*
 - A primary or essential point of reference; of profound influence; outstandingly novel innovative and/or creative
- 3*
 - An important point of reference; a catalyst for, or important contribution to, new thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- 2*
 - Of some influence; an incremental and cumulative advance on thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences

Impact 20%

- New in REF2014 (Template + Case Studies)
- Included Research Users on the panel.
- Challenging
- Multiple assessors (criteria reach and significance)
- Calibration of the team....
- Observations
 - A lot of CS used current output submissions as the underpinning R
 - Some had great potential, but little real impact over REF14 period
 - Some users felt that 20 yr horizon is far too short

Environment 15%

- Covers strategy, resources and infrastructure
- A template plus statistical data
- Assessed in terms of vitality and sustainability
- Multiple assessors
- I found this aspect the easiest to deal with (although, I suspect they may have been the last thing written)
- Observations
 - It is difficult to write an effective strategy when there is a diffuse community
 - A clear top level strategy with alignment of groups stands out.
 - People are the key factor and good support shows.

Conclusion

- I found the whole process very stimulating and worthwhile. The whole panel enjoyed taking part; we had bonded into a very effective team over the 3 years.
- I found the panel to be extremely rigorous and scrupulously fair.
- Reading outputs is gruelling. You can do much to help by explaining the significance of the paper.
- Impact was a challenging new aspect. Institutional memory is a key factor
- Environment – strategy is key and shows strongly