

REPORT OF THE RESEARCH QUALITY REVIEW

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK 2015

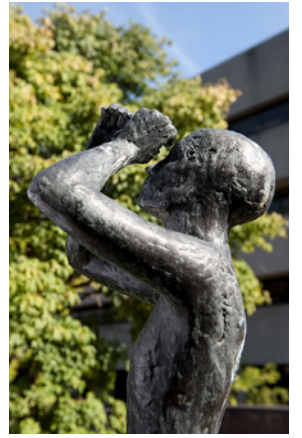
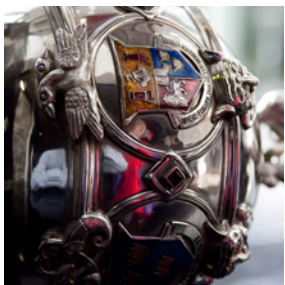
PANEL L REPORT

**BÉALOIDEAS /
FOLKLORE & ETHNOLOGY**



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



Panel L Report

Béaloideas / Folklore & Ethnology

Units in Panel L

Modern Irish

Early and Medieval Irish

Béaloideas / Folklore and Ethnology

Panel L Members

Chair: **Dr Regina Uí Chollatáin**,

University College Dublin

DVC for Modern Irish:

Professor Micheál Ó Mainnín,

Queen's University Belfast

DVC for Early and Medieval Irish:

Dr Jacqueline Borsje,

University of Amsterdam

DVC for Béaloideas:

Dr Lillis Ó Laoire,

National University of Ireland, Galway

Scope and context of the review

The Panel understands that this is the second review of this nature that has been carried out in University College Cork. The formal review process began with meetings of the Steering Committee and Panel Chairs which the Chair of Panel L attended on 3 November 2014. The context, purpose and objectives of the Research Quality Review were outlined and discussed at this meeting. While it was understood that one of the key objectives was to provide a picture of the quality of research at UCC, the approach was to be developmental with recommendations from the Panels. Research impact was considered to be of significance but in the context of this review and the diversity of disciplines it is important that this is considered in relation to what is appropriate to the relevant discipline. In accordance with decisions taken at the first briefing session for Panel Chairs, the Panel Chair and the Disciplinary Vice-Chairs for Panel L agreed to provide some further operational guidelines on reviewing according to disciplinary norms.

Through a collaborative process which involved submissions of published work and summaries of research activity including postgraduate research, and research income, the Chair, Discipline Vice-Chairs and Remote Reviewers provided ratings based on the Research Activity Indicators 1-6 presenting an overall evaluation of research activity in Modern Irish, Early and Medieval Irish, and Béaloideas / Folklore & Ethnology. During a three-day site visit to UCC from June 30 to July 2, 2015, Panel L members met with members of the UCC RQR Steering Committee, the Interim Head of the UCC College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, the College Research Officer, and senior officers including the Bursar, Librarian, Director of Buildings and Estates, and Director of Research Support Services. This provided a forum for clarification of matters arising from the review. Panel L also met with Heads of Departments, staff members and students in all three units. This provided the Panel with an overview of the context and physical working environment. Moreover, it presented an opportunity to discuss the Research Quality Review in light of the development and requirements of each unit to maximise

its potential. The site visit was central to the process in the insights it provided to the work being done.

A draft report was put together over the period of this site visit. Published outputs which had been submitted by individual units were considered by the Panel as a whole before and during the site visit in the context of the assessment provided also by Remote Reviewers. It should be emphasised that the Panel worked as one unit at all times assessing the Research Activity Indicators in the context of the research quality and not in the context of individual researchers.

The Panel summarised its initial findings for the unit representatives in an exit presentation on the final day of the site visit (2 July 2015), and an initial draft of this report was put together and discussed. This final report is the result of the findings which were put together at that point alongside further deliberation and reflection subsequent to the visit. The Panel wishes to thank all parties involved for their contribution to this Research Quality Review process and for their input in providing the overall picture of the research context within each individual unit.

Introduction

This second review exercise by University College Cork shows a welcome commitment to supporting and maintaining a research-led culture. A similar exercise has now been undertaken at NUI Galway.

RAI 1 – Selected published output & RAI 2 – Total published output & RAI 3 – Peer esteem

This small unit clearly has a steady research output in different media. The published outputs were presented in both English and Irish (RAI 1). The standard of published outputs was equally impressive in both languages, satisfactorily addressing the concern raised about publishing in Irish only in the last review. Research follows a number of pathways, from urban field research, with the Cork Folklore project, to theoretical and historical approaches to popular culture and folklore. The public folklore initiative, an approach not well known in the Irish paradigm, although common in the US and Canada, is a unique ground breaking project with major research potential yet to be fully realised.

The Panel viewed the scope and ambition of the work submitted as an indicator that a strong research culture pervades the unit. The journal *Béascna*, is produced in the Department to rigorous academic and presentational standards. Staff also publish in this journal, undergoing the same rigorous peer-review as external contributors. The *Léann Dúchais Leictreonach* initiative and other digital outputs show strong development in the online area. The impression is of a hard working team struggling to keep abreast of its teaching and research commitments.

Conference attendance is high with research groups presenting Panels at international meetings e.g. SIEF (The International Society for Ethnology and Folklore). Invitations to speak and teaching appointments at other institutions also clearly signal the unit's high esteem among international peers. *Béascna* is now regarded as a leading forum for publishing in Folklore. Staff

publications are standard items on postgraduate reading lists in other institutions for students studying through Irish. Recent publications, encompassing a great deal of current scholarship, provide sterling models of writing and research for young scholars to emulate.

Both the selected published output and the total published output of the Department have been demonstrated to be of a very good standard.

The peer esteem activity of the Department has been demonstrated to be of an excellent standard.

RAI 4 – Research-related activity

Unique to Ireland, the Cork Folklore Project (CFP), represents a burgeoning and highly commendable aspect of the Department's research activities exhibiting a high level of social responsibility. As reported in the last review, CFP is on the leading edge of development. One staff member bears the majority of the responsibility for managing and directing the CFP with restricted administrative support. Léann Dúchais Leictreonach is a similarly exemplary initiative encompassing ethnographic fieldwork, textual production and an online dimension. The website Sean-nós Beo shows research-related initiatives combining successfully with community outreach. The fact that MA students are not counted for research is detrimental to the Department's profile. Masters' level study remains a significant indicator of activity in Humanities oriented research.

The research-related activity of the Department has been demonstrated to be of an excellent standard.

RAI 5 – Postgraduate research education

There are four Doctoral students and four Masters students. About seventy students take the programme in 1BA with numbers falling to approximately ten in 2BA and 3BA. Approximately thirty students take the Irish language stream in 1BA. The Panel was surprised to learn that modules in the Irish language stream are not currently available to students in 2BA and 3BA Nua-Ghaeilge. A new MA programme in Folklore is in place but currently has no registered students. Postgraduate student profiles lean towards older adults returning to education. Students' erudite and polished presentations of their projects impressed the Panel. Access to undergraduate populations in Nua-Ghaeilge has real potential to further develop the postgraduate profile in the Department. Such access is essential to the Department's future.

The postgraduate research education of the Department has been demonstrated to be of a good standard.

RAI 6 – Research income

Like all Humanities oriented programmes, the unit has suffered because of the ongoing financial recession, which is a real cause for concern. Targeted Initiative funds from HEA and the University have been significantly reduced as have supports from the Heritage Council and local authority bodies. The Department has begun to explore alternative sources. Department projects have successfully attracted regular funding through open peer-reviewed competition from IRC and a recent HERA application was unsuccessful. The Panel

learned that other applications are currently active.

The research income activity of the Department has been demonstrated to be of a good standard.

Areas of good practice

High levels of engagement by unit members indicate that the teaching, research and archival responsibilities are well integrated.

The Léann Dúchais Leictreonach initiative to provide an online web page to support a publication on women's experiences from the Gaeltacht areas of Ireland will significantly address the gender bias toward male experience found in many folklore records.

Collaboration with Raidió na Gaeltachta to publish the Joe Daly radio series indicates a keen awareness of achievable small projects with potential for considerable impact.

The Kevin Danaher Lecture commemorates the Department's founding scholar and represents welcome public outreach.

The first year essay Draddy prize is a commendable way to recognise excellent undergraduate work and the sponsorship of Corn Bhab Feiritéar at an tOireachtas for the performance of storytelling promotes the connection between Folklore as a research discipline and the artists that continue to practice storytelling, however, attenuated their modern contexts.

A student's success in open competition across the University at the annual doctoral showcase presentations testifies to the unit's high research standards. Béascna provides another strong indicator of excellence in this category.

Recommendations for future development

The removal of internal structural obstacles currently preventing students in BA Nua-Ghaeilge from taking modules through Irish in Béaloideas would expose greater numbers of UCC students to the considerable archival and other resources of the unit.

The provision of a secure study/storage space for postgraduate students is an urgent need.

Assisting the Department's attempts to have Béascna included in an online database such as JStor, would raise the journal's profile and impact considerably.

The Panel noted that the Department has been without a Chair since 2004 and recommends that this vacancy be addressed with a strategic appointment to provide the necessary research leadership. This might be linked to the centenary of the birth of the poet Seán Ó Riordáin in 1916 which would also create a possible avenue for further collaboration with Modern Irish.

Currently in the Irish University sector, there is considerable focus on external and especially EU funding. The unit has competed successfully in IRC applications and could potentially gain a greater share of this fund. The Marie Curie, COST, HERA and Horizon 2020 schemes present possibilities. The unit's HERA bid, although unsuccessful, shows that it has begun to engage with these bodies.

It would be beneficial for the unit to leverage support from UCC research office with regard to designing a project, built around the CFP, for example, to attract major funding and additional staff for this highly functioning unit.

Central provision at University level of more officers to support Humanities projects would be welcome. This would enable the unit to recruit larger numbers of postgraduates and postdoctoral fellows, with which to realise more fully the superb research potential of the Department's archival and human resources.

Concluding statement

Research activity by a small, dedicated team is of a high standard. A worrying impression of inadequate resourcing seems to reflect some attenuation in the overall high levels of performance. The provision of a Chair to lead research as PI would help the unit enhance an impressive but currently somewhat hampered research profile.

The research activity of the Department has been demonstrated to be of a very good standard in terms of originality, significance and rigour comparable with such work internationally.

Overall comment

Overall the quality of the research and related activity is of a very good standard with pockets of excellence in all three units. The units are placed firmly within scores of 'very good' and 'excellent'.

Individual research and graduate culture is strong in the Department of Modern Irish with the potential to attract more students in collaboration with the other units and with support from within the university. This is particularly evident in the context of housing for graduates. Clearly, the funding climate has been difficult here as it has been for research income more generally. There is a need to consider the latter more strategically, in collaboration with others in the university to impact positively on research agendas and the health of the discipline both within UCC and beyond.

The excellent research output, the outstanding organisation of research activities, the fine structure of training, supervising and inspiring postgraduate students; and the consistent and successful efforts to gain funding for research activities all lead to an overall assessment of 'excellent' for the Department of Early and Medieval Irish.

Research activity by a small but capable and dedicated team is of a high standard in the Department of Béaloideas / Folklore & Ethnology. Clearly the impact of this Department's research on the academic and wider community is to be applauded. A worrying impression of inadequate resourcing seems to reflect some attenuation in the overall high levels of performance which impacts on Béaloideas / Folklore & Ethnology. The provision of a Chair to lead research as PI would help the unit enhance an already impressive research profile.

Commendations & Recommendations

Commendations: The Research Quality Review Steering Group is to be commended on the innovative approach taken to the Research Quality Review and the three units reviewed by Panel L are to be commended highly on their engagement with the process. While some discrepancies arose in the submission of the information required as outlined in the unit reports from this Panel this was rectified where possible when further information or clarification was requested on the site visit. The three-day site visit which was particularly productive highlights the importance of this level of engagement in a review of this scale. The Panel would like to thank all Heads of units, Staff members and Postgraduate students for the very professional and warm manner in which the unit visits were conducted. This provided a valuable contextual and environmental overview of the workings of the unit and also provided insights on the practical aspects of such a review where human resources are key to collaborative research projects.

Recommendations: Individual research is highly regarded and globally across the three units the research was demonstrably of a very good standard with some pockets of excellence across all units, especially in the case of the Department of Early and Medieval Irish. The Panel recommends that collaborative possibilities arising from related research activities be explored. This is being done to some extent with inter-departmental conferences for example, and if this were to be examined further in light of funding schemes it could produce significant results for these areas in a collective sense.

In order to enhance best practice and maximise opportunities, the Panel recommends that the benefits of the formation of a cross-School Research Committee (which would include representatives of all three units) be considered. This Research Committee would link the School more directly to the College Research Committee and would ensure that all units, staff, and students are aware of funding opportunities as they arise. This would provide further avenues for coordination of research activity to extend the external profile of the units within the university and beyond, and increasing visibility for all.

There is a very robust postgraduate community in all units with clear evidence of collaboration and supports of the highest standards between supervisors, students and staff. However, the Panel recommends that mechanisms and pathways for progression are made explicit, especially in the context of the structured PhD.

The Panel recommends that the research space provision for postgraduate students is reviewed with UCC Buildings. Clearly the space is inadequate which is also problematic in that it does not provide a secure location for students to leave research materials if they need to leave the room.

The Graduate Seminars within the School have laid a solid foundation for academic exchange and interaction among students. This could be utilised further if adequate space were provided and it could also be built upon in an interdisciplinary context across the three units. The Panel also recommends that a structured method of conference attendance funding be explored by the Heads of the three units.

The Panel notes that the Chair in Béaloideas / Folklore & Ethnology has been vacant since 2004. In order to provide adequate research leadership in a burgeoning discipline the Panel suggests that consideration be given to the filling of this Chair.

Due to the workload involved in language teaching the Panel recommends that the provision of tutors in Modern Irish be aligned with the provision of University Teachers for other languages. This would free up the teaching load of the lecturers to enable them to engage and to spend more time on their individual research while also exploring new research avenues in a collaborative and perhaps international context.

Structural constraints currently prevent students in Nua-Ghaeilge from accessing undersubscribed modules taught through Irish in Béaloideas. The Panel suggests that removal of these constraints could strongly support Béaloideas/Folklore & Ethnology and relieve the teaching burden/workload of lecturers in Modern Irish while contributing to additional benefits in terms of the facilitation of sabbatical leave.

The Panel recommends that a structured rota system which will ensure teaching provision in a realistic way be explored in collaboration with the University Research Office to facilitate sabbatical leave in keeping with international standards and best practice.

Recommendations to the University

The Panel would firstly like to commend UCC for undertaking this Research Quality Review and for the pioneering leadership that has been demonstrated by doing so. Panel L welcomes the professional and courteous manner in which the Research Quality Review was conducted throughout. The supportive framework in which the site visits took place added significantly to the review process and to its findings.

The Panel have been mindful throughout that this is not a standard requirement within the Higher Education System and that this sometimes resulted in guidelines which could not always be adhered to. Each review process creates a learning curve from which new and interesting insights can be gained both in the context of the results of the review and of the process employed.

Below are a few recommendations to the University to be taken in the context of the above:

- Institutional engagement with provision of data for the review was not always consistent. Allowing for

the diversity of disciplines and the scale of the review, this is perfectly understandable; however, inadequate information/data sometimes led to confusion and unnecessary doubling of work which could have been avoided. In this light it would be helpful therefore if the amount of work, the exact tasks and the format of the document to be produced were to be transparently communicated to Panel members when they are invited to participate.

- The Remote Reviewing system lacked consistency in the context of the research quality standard and the review material. Also, although Remote Reviewers' scores were ready in April, they were only forwarded in June which was a source of some unnecessary frustration in trying to meet deadlines. When the Remote Reviewers are asked to offer verbal explanation of their scores it would be helpful if they were given a minimum amount of words to write, and asked to explain all their scores. In this way, the DVCs could indeed summarise the Remote Reviewers' reports instead of elaborating on them as was sometimes the case for this review.
- A visit to the Library to view the resources and especially the Special Collections would create a better overall picture of the resource material available to students. This is particularly relevant for this Panel where inter-library loans and conference funding were presented as a significant block to quality international research.
- The lack of uniformity in the provision of statistical evidence with regard to research students and research income was very problematic in assessing these areas. It would be helpful if this information was provided in detail before the site visit with clear demarcation of the types of funding (internal/external/postgraduate/awards/national funding bodies/international funding bodies/publications), and postgraduate student profiles. Perhaps a template for these two areas could be devised for ease of reference.
- While the site visit was serviced and accommodated to the highest standards lack of certainty regarding internet connections/wifi was somewhat challenging at times, especially when drafting the final report.
- Acknowledging that it is difficult to maintain absolute consistency, a broader issue with regard to consistency across Panels for future Research Quality Reviews exists. In the context of the utilisation of the current Review for future strategic university planning and decision-making, the Panel would have reservations with regard to the relevance of cross-comparison between units and Schools within the University as review criteria and discipline norms require further in-depth analysis to ensure fair comparison.



Section B: Outline of RQR 2015 Process

The following information outlining the structure of the review process is abridged from the RQR Guidelines 2014.

Review Structure

1. Fifteen Peer Review Panels will be appointed, based on disciplinary clusters. Peer review teams may vary in size according to the size and complexity of the cluster of academic units and disciplines within the cluster.
2. Peer Review Panels will receive material in advance. The majority of reviewers will work remotely. Chairs will visit the University twice: before the exercise for briefing and to ensure consistency of approach and, together with the disciplinary vice chairs, after the remote review of submissions has taken place.
3. Site visits to include:
 - First site visit (by Chairs)
 - Information and briefing meetings between Panel Chairs and members of the Steering Committee.
 - Briefings with Colleges and RICUs on prevailing research and graduate education conditions.
 - Second site visit (by Chairs and Disciplinary Vice Chairs)
 - Presentation from academic units on research activity.
 - Meetings with staff, researchers and postgraduate research students.
 - Meetings with relevant Officers of the University.
 - Visit to facilities of units.
 - Consideration of the reports of the remote reviewers.
 - Agreement on results.
 - Drafting of report according to guidelines and criteria for assessment.

Criteria for Assessment

Research performance will be evaluated, relative to international disciplinary norms, under the following headings:

- a. Selected published output
- b. Total published output
- c. Peer esteem
- d. Research-related activities
- e. Postgraduate research environment
- f. Research income

Definitions

For the purposes of the review the following definitions apply:

1. **Assessment Period:** the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2014. The research described in submissions from academic units and research centres/institutes, including data about research funding and the textual commentary, must relate to this period.
2. **Census Date:** the date determining the affiliation of academic and research staff to a particular academic unit/research centre/institute. All staff should be submitted by the academic unit/research centre/institute that employs them on this date, regardless of previous

or forthcoming changes in their employment status. Note that staff can be associated with an academic unit and a RICU, but will only submit and be reviewed once and the outputs incorporated into the academic unit and the RICU. A staff census will be undertaken during the present academic year on 31 May 2014 to enable planning. An update to the census will be undertaken on 31 October 2014, to account for all staff hired after May 2014 and who will be in post at the time of the review, to provide the final list for the review.

3. **Publication Period:** the period during which research outputs must be placed in the public domain (or in the case of confidential outputs, lodged with the sponsor) if they are to qualify for inclusion in the assessment. The publication period runs from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2014.

4. **Research:** this definition was approved at the Academic Council meeting of 7 March 2008 and remains unchanged:

'Research' for the purpose of the review is to be understood as original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship*; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.

*Scholarship is defined as the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines, in forms such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues and contributions to major research databases.

5. **Consultancy:** income and research outputs arising from consultancy contracts should normally be excluded, since consultancy is usually concerned with applying existing knowledge. However, they may be included if the work undertaken or published as a result meets the definition of research, irrespective of the nature of the contract or invoicing arrangement.

6. **Pedagogical Research:** is included in the scope of the RQR and includes research which enhances the theoretical and/or conceptual understanding of:

- teaching and learning processes in higher education
- teacher and learner experiences in higher education
- the environment or contexts in which teaching and learning in higher education take place
- teaching and learning outcomes in higher education
- the relationships between these processes, outcomes and contexts

7. **Applied and Practice-Based Research:** is included in the scope of the RQR and involves a process of systematic investigation within a specific context in order to solve an identified problem in that context. It aims to create

new or improved systems (of thought or production), products, processes, materials, devices, or services which have an impact on society through enhanced wealth-creation and quality of life.

Some characteristics of applied research and practice-based research are that:

- a) They are informed by an intellectual infrastructure of scholarly research in the field.
- b) They apply and/or transfer enhanced knowledge, methods, tools and resources from pure research and developmental research.
- c) They contribute to scholarship in the field through systematic dissemination of the results.
- d) The outcomes may be specific to the situation in which the research has been applied, although the methods/tools evolved are often transferable.

8. Creative Research: encompasses creative work and its outcomes in a range of subject areas, including creative writing, music, drama, dance, theatre, performance, live art, and film. This research may lead to published materials in a variety of forms in any of these subject areas. Such research is also diverse in the range of artistic practices on which it may draw and may extend to any cultural, geographical and historical context. It may include production or performance of creative material which itself results from a process of original creative enquiry. This work may also be collaborative in nature.

9. Research Submission: this is the totality of what will be submitted to review Panels and incorporates contextual information (the research description for each unit which sets out the extent and boundaries of the research carried out in that area), the research statement (see below) and the information required by the six Research Activity Indicators (see below).

10. Research Statement: the research statement will provide contextual information and an overview of the research activity in each unit of assessment during the review period in addition to a critical assessment of progress made since the last RQR, including a response to any recommendations made. A template and further information on submission will be provided. It will be a maximum of 5,000 words (see below for further detail).

11. Research Activity Indicators (RAIs): there are six research activity indicators. The information provided under each of the six headings, together with the research statement and the research description, constitutes the research submission.

12. Unit of Assessment: these are the units reviewed by each Panel as defined in Appendix A. It includes each of the academic units and each of the associated Research Institutes, Centres or units. NB: Not all of the associated Research Institutes, Centres or units will be reviewed separately.

Assessment Process

1. This is an expert peer review exercise. Panel members will exercise their knowledge, judgement and expertise to reach a collective view on the quality profile of research described in each submission, that is, the proportion of work in each submission that is judged to reach each of five quality levels (see below). The definition of each level relies on a conception of quality (of leading international standard) which is the absolute standard of

quality in each unit of assessment. Each submission will be assessed against absolute standards and will not be ranked against other submissions.

2. External experts nominated by the academic units will be asked to suggest who, from among their list of Panel nominations, might be suitable for the role of Chair. The final decision and approval of chairs will be made by the Steering Committee.

3. Up to five Disciplinary Vice-Chairs will be appointed, with the assistance of the Chair, for each Panel. They will be responsible for the co-ordination of the electronic evaluation of each disciplinary unit by the remote reviewers. They will attend the site visit post-evaluation.

4. Chairs and Disciplinary Vice-Chairs will be responsible for ensuring consistency across and within Panels and the application of international standards in the exercise.

5. Panel reviewers will initially evaluate RAIs 1-3 and elements of RAI 4 at an individual level. They will subsequently review overall performance of the academic unit or RICU drawing on the input of each researcher, recognising that researchers may appear in more than one.

6. First Site Visit. Panel Chairs will visit UCC for one day for briefing purposes and to ensure that the Panels work consistently as far as possible.

7. Second Site Visit. Following the remote review of the submissions, the Chairs and Disciplinary Vice-Chairs of the Panels will visit UCC to conduct site visits. They will meet with staff and officers of the unit and University and will visit the research and other facilities of each unit under review in order to form an assessment of the research environment. At the second site visit, the Chairs and Disciplinary Vice-Chairs will consider the reports from the remote reviewers in order to initiate discussion on each individual submission. A preliminary profile of the quality of outputs will be considered. A profile of the quality of research outputs and peer esteem will be compiled, along with decisions made as to scores for the research-related activities, postgraduate training, the research funding and research environment, taking on board the deliberations of the Panel at large.

8. An overall research evaluation (ORE) will be awarded by the Panel to each unit. This will be achieved through a process of consideration of all scores in the six RAIs along with consideration by the Panel of the Research Statement and other contextual information. The results for the six RAIs will also be produced for each unit, providing anonymous percentiles for RAIs 1, 2 and 3, along with results for the unit in RAIs 4, 5 and 6. The Panel will finally confirm that, in its expert judgement, the overall recommended score is an accurate and appropriate reflection of the research activity in each submission, and that its assessment has taken account of all components of the submission. Further guidance will be provided to Chairs of Panels at the first site visit.

9. Descriptive and evaluative statements. Panels will provide a descriptive statement of their view of the overall quality of research activity for each academic unit. Panels are also asked, within this statement, to comment on the totality of research activity and performance in the context of the research environment in which the unit is working and to make recommendations for improvement.

Research Excellence

Panels recognise the diverse range of disciplines represented by the units of assessment assigned to them. Set out below are the broad parameters for the assessment of the quality of research for each of the six Research Activity Indicators within which individual Panels may exercise a degree of variation. The quality levels refer to quality standards of scholarship that are the norm within the international academic community.

- Level 5** Quality that is of leading international standard.
The research work or activity will be excellent, displaying a very high level of originality, significance to the discipline and rigour; it will be innovative and potentially agenda-setting in research and/or policy fields
- Level 4** Quality that is of very good standard in terms of originality, significance and rigour comparable with such work internationally.
The research work or activity has had or is likely to have a significant impact on research and/or policy agendas
- Level 3** Quality that demonstrates significance to the discipline and rigour to a good standard.
The research work has had or is likely to have a recognised impact on research and/or policy agendas
- Level 2** Quality that demonstrates significance to the discipline and rigour to a fair standard.
The research work or activity has only had or is likely to have a marginal impact upon existing paradigms and agendas within the discipline.
- Level 1** Quality that falls below the adequate standard of recognised work within the discipline.
The research work or activity is poor and has had no impact nor is it likely to have an impact upon existing paradigms and agendas within the discipline.

Because of the differences which exist between the six RAIs, appropriate criteria will be employed in each one:

- RAI 1 will be evaluated against the criteria of originality, significance and rigour.
RAI 2 and 3 will be evaluated against the criteria of extent, diversity and quality.
RAI 4 and 5 will be evaluated against the criteria of international disciplinary norms.
RAI 6 will be evaluated against the criteria of funding levels for the specific unit and cognate disciplines available to researchers in Ireland.

Definitions of Research Activity Indicators (RAI)

Research Activity Indicator 1 (RAI 1): Selected Published Output

Panels will be required to rate each of the five selected research outputs for each Category A and B researcher. Each publication will be rated by two Reviewers. The overall quality profile will be finalised by the Panel.

Research Activity Indicator 2 (RAI 2): Total Published Output

Two Panel members will be required to allocate an individual Category A or Category B researcher's total research output in the period, identified on IRIS/CORA to one of five quality categories.

Research Activity Indicator 3 (RAI 3): Peer Esteem

The purpose of this metric is to capture the overall scholarly standing of Category A and Category B researchers within the unit, based on information presented in their IRIS profile. Evidence of peer esteem, across the career as a whole, includes publication output, Fellowships, Honours, Invited Plenary Presentations at significant disciplinary conferences, service on appointment Panels at other institutions, external examining, translation of works, refereeing/editing of journals etc., as well as significant research activity which occurred before the review period began (e.g. widely cited publications, international prizes awarded, etc.). The rating given to an individual should reflect the level of the individual's achievements across his or her research career as a whole. The Panel will determine the quality profile for each individual researcher. The overall quality profile will be finalised by the Panel.

Research Activity Indicator 4 (RAI 4): Research-related Activities

For the purposes of the RQR 'research-related activity' is intended to capture activity within and beyond the unit by individual or groups of researchers in the unit. This includes seminar series, research-focused public engagement exercises, specialist training provision, collaboration, research mentoring, outreach activities, support for scholarly institutions, evidence of research-led teaching at all levels, etc. The evidence for this will be collated from individual's IRIS profiles, and the contextual information supplied by the unit.

Each member of the Panel is asked to give a single quality level for the collective research-related activities of the unit based on their professional judgement.

The modal (most frequently occurring) rating across reviewers will be taken as the research-related activity score. [The higher rating will be preferred where the distribution of ratings is multimodal.]

Research Activity Indicator 5 (RAI 5): Postgraduate Research Education

Panel members are asked to each give a single quality level for the collective activities related to postgraduate training. This rating should reflect the professional judgement of the peer reviewers concerning the quality level descriptors provided, taking into account the number of students studying for research degrees, culture of support (i.e. arrangements for supervision), and research training environment and opportunities available for research students within the unit under review. The evidence considered will include a statement on postgraduate research submitted by the unit, information from published unit web-pages, numerical data from university offices regarding completion rates, completion times, etc. and process used by the unit to ensure that these are satisfactory.

Each member of the Panel is asked to give a single quality level for the collective research-related activities of the unit based on their professional judgement. The modal (most frequently occurring) rating across reviewers will be taken as the research-related activity score. [The higher rating will be preferred where the distribution of ratings is multimodal.]

Research Activity Indicator 6 (RAI 6): Research Income

Each member of the Panel is asked to give a single quality level for the collective research-related income of the unit based on their professional judgement of the research area, taking into account the Research Landscape

relevant to researchers in Ireland as described in the briefing documents provided. The modal (most frequently occurring) rating across reviewers will be taken as the research-related activity score. [The higher rating will be preferred where the distribution of ratings is multimodal.]

List of Panels & Units

Panel A

School of Medicine, incorporating:

- Department of Medicine (inc Radiology)
- Department of Surgery (inc Anaesthesia)
- Department of Pathology (inc Med Microbiology)
- Department of Psychiatry
- Medical Education Unit

Panel B

School of Medicine, incorporating:

- Centre for Gerontology & Rehabilitation
 - Department of Epidemiology & Public Health
 - Department of General Practice
 - Department of Paediatrics & Child Health
 - Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
- Irish Centre for Foetal and Neonatal Translational Research (INFANT)

Panel C

School of Clinical Therapies, incorporating:

- Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy
 - Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences
- University Dental School & Hospital
School of Nursing & Midwifery
School of Pharmacy
Oral Health Services Research Centre (OHSRC)

Panel D

School of Medicine, incorporating:

- Department of Anatomy & Neuroscience
 - Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics
 - Department of Physiology
- School of Food & Nutritional Sciences
Department of Microbiology
Department of Biochemistry

Panel E

Department of Chemistry

School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences (BEES), incorporating:

- Geology
- Plant Science
- Zoology & Ecology

Environmental Research Institute (ERI)

Analytical & Biological Chemistry Research Facility (ABCRF)

Panel F

School of Computer Science & Information Technology

School of Mathematical Sciences, incorporating:

- Mathematics
- Applied Mathematics
- Statistics

Panel G

School of Engineering, incorporating:

- Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering
 - Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering
 - Department of Process & Chemical Engineering
- Department of Physics
Tyndall National Institute

Panel H

School of Geography & Archaeology: the Human Environment, incorporating:

- Department of Geography
 - Department of Archaeology
- Cork Centre for Architectural Education

Panel I

Department of Accounting Finance & Information Systems (BIS)

Department of Accounting Finance & Information Systems (AF)

Department of Food Business & Development

Department of Management & Marketing

School of Economics

Centre for Policy Studies

Panel J

Department of Government

School of Law

School of Sociology & Philosophy, incorporating:

- Department of Sociology
- Department of Philosophy

Study of Religions

School of Applied Social Studies

Institute for Social Science in the 21st Century (ISS21)

Panel K

School of Applied Psychology

School of Education

Panel L

School of Irish Learning, incorporating:

- Department of Modern Irish
- Department of Early & Medieval Irish
- Béaloideas/Folklore & Ethnology

Panel M

School of Languages, Literatures and Culture, incorporating:

- Department of French
 - Department of German
 - Department of Spanish, Portuguese & Latin American Studies
 - Department of Italian
- Asian Studies

Panel N

School of History, incorporating:

- Department of History
- History of Art

Department of Classics

School of English

Panel O

School of Music & Theatre, incorporating:

- Department of Music
- Drama & Theatre Studies



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