**UCC**

**Research Quality Review**

**Evaluation Procedures**

**Purpose of Document**

This document is aimed at guiding reviewers and Panel members through the evaluation proce*dures of UCC’s Research Quality* Review.

It is meant to provide information about the evaluation procedures and guidance on the principles we expect to operate across the various Panels of assessment.

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## 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. This document also recognises the role of peer judgement in the final score allocated to each unit. The quality levels refer to quality standards of scholarship that are the norm within the international academic community and that reflect the relevant disciplinary norm.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 significant 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 4 will be evaluated against the criteria of extent, diversity and quality.

RAI 3 and 5 will be evaluated against the criteria of international disciplinary norms.

RAI 6 will be evaluated against the criteria of funding levels based on disciplinary norms for the specific unit and cognate disciplines and cognisant of the funding available to researchers in Ireland.

## Research Activity Indicators (RAI) 1-3

**RAI 1 Selected Published Output**

Reviewers will be asked to grade each of the 5 research outputs of each researcher reviewed:

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **Staff # 1** | **3** | **1** | **1** | **0** | **0** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **Staff #2** | **1** | **3** | **1** | **0** | **0** |

And so on.....

This will produce the overall profile for 5 staff (= 25 outputs):

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **5 staff reviewed/****25 outputs reviewed** | **10** | **10** | **5** | **0** | **0** |

This result will then be converted to percentages:

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **% of outputs reviewed** | **40** | **40** | **20** | **0** | **0** |

 **RAI 2 Total Published Output**

Reviewers will be asked to provide a grade for each researcher reviewed:

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **5 staff** | **2** | **0** | **2** | **1** | **0** |

This will then be converted into percentages:

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **% of 5 staff** | **40** | **0** | **40** | **20** | **0** |

**RAI 3 Peer Esteem**

Reviewers will be asked to provide a grade for each researcher reviewed:

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **5 staff** | **2** | **2** | **1** | **0** | **0** |

This will then be converted into percentages:

For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **% of 5 staff** | **40** | **40** | **20** | **0** | **0** |

**RAI 4 Research-Related Activities.** Panels will provide a single grade for each unit between 5 and 1.

**RAI 5 Post-Graduate Research Education.** Panels will provide a single grade for each unit between 5 and 1.

**RAI 6 Research Income.** Panels will provide a single grade for each unit between 5 and 1.

## How the Panel Produces 6 RAI Grades

Once reviewers have sent in their data to the Panel, the Chair of the Panel assembles the grades and marks, in order to produce a set of results for each unit on RAIs 1 to 6.

This process involves averaging the results for each of RAIs 1, 2 and 3.

For example RAI 1:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **Reviewer 1 results** | **10** | **30** | **30** | **30** | **0** |
| **Reviewer 2 results** | **30** | **30** | **20** | **20** | **0** |
| **Reviewer 3 results** | **20** | **30** | **30** | **20** | **0** |
| **Reviewer 4 results** | **20** | **30** | **20** | **30** | **0** |

Result for RAI 1 for unit, example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **Unit % result** | **20** | **30** | **25** | **25** | **0** |

The Panel will then have, for each unit under review, a result for each RAI, some of which will be single scores (RAIs 4-6) and some percentages (RAIs 1-3) with RAI 1 worth 25% and every other RAI 2-6 worth 15%.

Example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RAI 1** | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **Unit A** | **30** | **20** | **30** | **10** | **10** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RAI 2** | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **% staff** | **40** | **30** | **10** | **10** | **0** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RAI 3** | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
| **% staff** | **30** | **40** | **20** | **10** |  |

**RAI 4 4**

**RAI 5 4**

**RAI 6 4**

Having produced the single scores for RAIs 4-6, the Panel’s work, importantly, is to produce single grades for RAIs 1, 2 and 3.

## Producing Grades from RAIs 1, 2 and 3

It should be noted that the Panels are ultimately being asked to make a judgement on a combination of percentages and grades, with higher weighting for RAI1.

It should also be noted that the results involved concern a unit and not individual staff members.

It should be remembered that RAI 1 is worth 25% and RAIs 2-6 are worth 15%.

Grades should be allocated within the upper range which possesses 50% or more of the marks; the spread of the remaining marks will determine the ultimate grade awarded.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
|  | **50** | **30** | **20** | **0** | **0** |

**This above example would be classed as a grade 5.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
|  | **40** | **20** | **10** | **30** |  |

**This above example would be classed as a grade 4.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
|  | **20** | **40** | **20** | **10** | **10** |

**This above example would be classed as a grade 4.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
|  | **20** | **40** | **10** | **20** | **10** |

**This above example would be classed as a grade 4.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Level**  |
|  | **5**  | **4**  | **3**  | **2**  | **1**  |
|  | **30** | **10** | **40** | **20** |  |

**This above example would be classed as a grade 3.**

## Achieving an ORE of 5

Once the six RAI results have been finalised Panels produce a final Overall Review Evaluation grade.

Because this entire process involves a significant amount of averaging, there have been worries that an ORE grade of 5 would not be achievable. This is an issue which should clearly be kept in mind by Panels when allocating grades for RAIs 4, 5 and 6 and when judging borderline cases for RAIs 1, 2 and 3.

Remember our guiding principle is: Grades should be allocated within the **upper** range which possesses 50% or more of the marks; the spread of the remaining marks will determine the ultimate grade awarded.

It might also be useful, here, to indicate ways in which an ORE of 5 can be achieved:

Remembering that RAI1 is of a higher weighting than the rest of the RAIs and that RAIs 1-3 are based on the assessment of individual staff and RAIs 4-6 are evaluations of the unit’s performance, we can express three distinct groupings:

RAI 1 = 25%

RAIs 2 and 3 = 30%

RAIs 4-6 = 45%

If, for example, a unit scores the following:

RAI 1 4

RAI2 5

RAI 3 4

RAI 4 5

RAI 5 5

RAI 6 5

Then in terms of those three groupings it will have scored:

4 x 5 @ 15% = 60%

1 x 4 @ 15 % = 15%

1 x 4 @ 25% = 25%

This unit, then, has 60% @ 5 and 40% @ 4 and is therefore a 5.

In other words, if you score 5s at RAIs 4-6, you need one 5 in RAIs 1-3.

Additionally if a unit scores 2 x 5 @ 15% in RAIs 4-6 = 30% then it would need either 2 x 5 @ 15% in RAIs 1-3 OR to score a 5 in RAI 1 @ 25%.

Of course it would also be possible for a unit to score 3 in one or more RAI so long as it scored a preponderance within the grade of 5.