PBRF Review – Written Submission Template

We welcome written submissions on the proposed changes and options for strengthening the PBRF, as part of the PBRF Review consultation. Feel free to use this submission template and the suggested discussion prompts to guide your feedback. Please refer to the PBRF Review Discussion Document directly for information on the proposed changes and options that we are consulting on.

Please email your submission to: [pbrf.consultation@education.govt.nz](mailto:pbrf.consultation@education.govt.nz), before 5pm on Friday 6 November.

Key objective one: Broadening the PBRF concept of research excellence

Modifying the current objectives of the PBRF

1. Adding a new objective, that “*the PBRF* *ensure a flourishing and inclusive system for developing and sustaining research excellence in New Zealand*”

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the addition of this proposed objective?
* Are there any changes you would make to this proposed objective?

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**Refreshing the PBRF’s definition of research excellence**

1. Rewording the PBRF definition of research to: emphasise excellence; encompass the production of research, engagement and impact relating to that research; and support for vibrant, diverse research cultures.
2. Replacing the Nominated Research Outputs (NRO) component with *Examples of Research Excellence (ERE);*
3. Replacing the Other Nominated Research Outputs (ONRO) component with *Other Examples of Research Excellence (OERE)* and reducing the maximum number from twelve to six;
4. Refocusing the Research Contributions section on the best examples of activities that contribute to the sustainability and viability of the research system (see Annex Three).

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support these proposed changes and options?
* What benefits and extra costs could the proposed ERE and OERE components have for TEOs in engaging with the Quality Evaluation?
* Aside from the proposed ERE components, are there other components of the Evidence Portfolios where research impact should be assessed?
* Are there additional considerations that should be made for these proposals, including in the context of COVID-19?

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Reviewing subject areas

1. Reviewing subject area weightings to ensure they accurately reflect the costs to TEOs in undertaking a full range of research.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you believe the current subject area weightings accurately reflect the costs of research?
* Do you support the proposed review of the current subject area weightings?

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Key objective two: Enabling a more sustainable and diverse research workforce   
  
Improving support for mātauranga Māori and Pacific research, and Māori and Pacific researchers

1. Increasing the subject area weighting for EPs assessed by the Māori Knowledge and Development (MKD) and Pacific Research (PR) panels from 1 to 2.5;
2. Assigning an additional funding weighting of 2 for EPs submitted by staff who identify as Māori or Pacific;
3. Adopting both of the above options.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the proposed increase of subject area weightings for EPs assessed by the MKD and PR panels?
* Do you support the proposed additional funding weighting for EPs submitted by Māori and Pacific staff?
* Do you support adopting both of the above options?
* What benefits and impacts will these proposed changes to funding weightings have?
* For tertiary education leadership and research managers - how would your department/organisation likely respond to these changes?
* Are there alternative measures to better recognise and reward mātauranga Māori and Pacific research and to support Māori and Pacific researchers?

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Reviewing qualifying criteria

1. Reviewing the extraordinary circumstances qualifying criteria[[1]](#footnote-1), to introduce a ‘merit relative to opportunity’ concept[[2]](#footnote-2) to be exercised by peer-review panels;
2. Reviewing the new and emerging qualifying criteria[[3]](#footnote-3), with a view to simplification.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the proposed refresh of extraordinary circumstances criteria?
* Do you support the proposed review of new and emerging criteria?
* Are there aspects of the qualifying criteria that should be modified, added or removed?
* How could ‘merit relative to opportunity’ concepts being applied by peer-review panels?
* Are there specific considerations that should be made for the proposed review of the extraordinary circumstances qualifying criteria, including in the context of COVID-19?

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Key objective three: Improving how Government supports tertiary sector research  
  
Progressing work that builds tertiary sector research capability and capacity

1. Supporting the NZIST to focus on researcher support and research capability and development, during its transition period;
2. Co-designing with wānanga an appropriate and sustainable funding solution to meet their research aspirations, including through the WRA project;
3. Working across Government to support a sustainable Māori and Pacific research workforce and a diverse research system, including linking in with MBIE’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work programme.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Are there additional considerations for improving how Government supports tertiary research, including in the context of COVID-19?

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Funding backstop for the NZIST in the next Quality Evaluation;

1. Fixing the minimum proportion of funding to be allocated to the NZIST in the next QE as the proportion allocated through the 2018 QE to ITPs, contingent on the NZIST participating in the QE.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support this proposal?
* Are there additional considerations, including in the context of COVID-19?

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Reflecting the strengthened PBRF

1. Renaming the PBRF in English and/or te reo Māori;
2. Modifying the guiding principles to better reflect *partnership, inclusiveness, and equity* (see below).

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the proposal to rename the PBRF?
* Do you have recommendations for a new name?
* Do you support modifying the guiding principles as proposed?

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Rebalancing the components of the PBRF

1. Discontinuing the ERI component via:

* a full discontinuation starting after the next QE, or
* a phased discontinuation starting after the next QE over four years.

1. Subject to the above, redistribution of ERI funding into:

* the QE component, or
* a new component to replace the ERI, or
* a mixture of the QE component and a new component.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the proposed discontinuation of the ERI?
* If ERI is discontinued, do you support a full or phased discontinuation after the next QE?
* If ERI is discontinued, how do you think redistribution of ERI funding should be implemented?
* Do you have recommendations for a new component to replace ERI?
* What benefits and disadvantages could this proposal have for researchers, and for TEOs?
* How would your department/organisation likely respond to this proposed change?
* Are there additional considerations for this proposal, including in the context of COVID-19?

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Seeking new PBRF metrics

1. Replacing the AQS metrics with a more appropriate measure of quality.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you believe the current AQS metrics effective measures of quality?
* Do you support the proposal to replace AQS metrics?
* Do you have recommendations for how to represent the intensity and quality of research at different TEOs?

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**Researching and assessing the PBRF**

1. Establishing an ongoing programme of research into, and evaluation of, PBRF processes and impact on the sector and research workforce.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the proposed establishment of an ongoing programme of research into the PBRF and its impact on the tertiary sector and workforce?
* What considerations need to be made in establishing this proposed programme of research?

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Operational changes to the PBRF

Building on the successes of the PBRF

1. Ensuring the peer-review panels reflect the epistemological and demographic diversity of the research workforce, including ensuring gender parity, significant representation of Māori and Pacific researchers and a broad representation of researchers and other experts across career stages, TEOs and other research institutions.
2. Ensuring the peer-review panels are well supported with a programme of training to strengthen their capacity to take into account the diversity of research excellence and apply ‘merit relative to opportunity’ approaches.
3. Improving understanding of the PBRF and addressing myths about the QE in its communications.
4. Adopting the Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) as the unique identifier for PBRF-eligible staff.
5. Consulting the Sector Reference Group for the next QE on the implementation of all proposals for changes that are approved.

*Suggested discussion prompts:*

* Do you support the proposal to build on the success of the QE peer-review panels by ensuring diversity of researchers is well represented?
* Do you support the proposed programme of training for the QE peer-review panels?
* Are there other considerations that should be included in these proposals?
* Do you have recommendations for aspects of the PBRF or myths about the PBRF that should be addressed in communications?
* Do you support examining the potential in adopting the ORCID in the PBRF?
* What benefits and disadvantages could the proposal to adopt the ORCID in the PBRF have?

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1. [Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation](https://www.tec.govt.nz/assets/Forms-templates-and-guides/PBRF/a7c29b5b70/PBRF-TEO-guidelines-April-2018.pdf) – page 94 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. How this would work in practice would need to be determined following this consultation and in collaboration with the sector. It would likely include ensuring a researcher’s work is assessed relative to their experience, career stage and opportunities available to them. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation](https://www.tec.govt.nz/assets/Forms-templates-and-guides/PBRF/a7c29b5b70/PBRF-TEO-guidelines-April-2018.pdf) – page 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)