

# **PBRF Policy Settings**

A brief reminder of some of the  
original thinking

# TEAC Original Proposal

*The weighting of the three performance measures:*

quality assessment of academic staff	50%	(5 year stability)
research degree completions	25%	(Rolling over 2 years)
external research income	25%	(Rolling over 2 years)

*Conditions for participation in the PBRF:*

TEOs be required to submit to the TEC annual Research and Research Training Management Plans

TEOs must have a minimum of 50 research-active staff in order to secure PBRF funding

*Assessment:*

Self-assessment with random audit

# “Advantages of the mixed model” (TEAC)

- lower transaction costs as a result of the use of self-assessment, the reliance upon random audits rather than the external peer review of every research-active academic, and the use of a relatively small number of panels;
- greater incentives for providers to secure external research income (but, admittedly, no greater incentives for businesses to seek linkages with tertiary providers or supply funds for research);
- greater incentives to improve the supervision and learning environment of research students;
- greater incentives for ongoing improvements in performance as a result of the annual measurement of external research income and research student completions (albeit moderated through the use of a two-year rolling average); and
- a reduced risk of measurement bias by the use of three separate performance measures.

# PBRF Working Group

The Working Group:

“ ...the primary focus of the PBRF should be to reward and encourage excellence. This involves measuring and making judgements about quality. The Working Group believes that research and researcher excellence should be the focus of the PBRF ... ”

The Higher Education Review in Hong Kong:

“ ...there are more demands for research funding than can be met from the public purse. Tackling this question is likely to be a complex matter, but the fact that the pie has to be cut in one way rather than another cannot be avoided. The evidence from international comparators points unreservedly towards strategic and concentrated investment ... The international evidence is that competitiveness implies selectivity.”

# PBRF Guiding Principles (Working Group)

- **Comprehensiveness:** the PBRF should appropriately measure the quality of the full range of original investigative activity that occurs within the sector, regardless of its type, form, or place of output;
- **Respect for academic traditions:** the PBRF should operate in a manner that is consistent with academic freedom and institutional autonomy;
- **Consistency:** evaluations of quality made through the PBRF should be consistent, across the different subject areas and in the calibration of quality ratings against international standards of excellence;
- **Continuity:** changes to the PBRF process should only be made where they can bring demonstrable improvements that outweigh the cost of implementing them;
- **Differentiation:** the PBRF should allow stakeholders and the government to differentiate between providers and their units on the basis of their relative quality;

# Guiding Principles (Cont.) (Working Group)

- **Credibility:** the methodology, format and processes employed in the PBRF must be credible to those being assessed;
- **Efficiency:** administrative and compliance costs should be kept to the minimum consistent with a robust and credible process;
- **Transparency:** decisions and decision-making processes must be explained openly, except where there is a need to preserve confidentiality and privacy;
- **Complementarity:** the PBRF should be integrated with new and existing policies, such as charters and profiles, and quality assurance systems for degrees and degree providers; and
- **Cultural inclusiveness:** the PBRF should reflect the bicultural nature of New Zealand and the special role and status of the Treaty of Waitangi, and should appropriately reflect and include the full diversity of New Zealand's population.

# Unit of Assessment, and Eligibility (Working Group)

**Unit of Assessment** was taken to be the individual – to avoid gaming??

All academic staff will be included in the PBRF if they:

- i) EITHER are employed on the census date by a degree-granting tertiary education provider or eligible subsidiary under a contract of salaried employment with a duration of at least one year;
- ii) OR have been employed on the census date by a degree-granting tertiary education provider or eligible subsidiary for more than a year under one or more contract(s) of salaried employment on a continuous basis; and
  - b they are employed for a minimum of one day a week on average or 0.2 FTE over the period of the entire year; and
  - c their employment functions include research and/or teaching degree-level programmes.

# Examples of Eligible and Ineligible (Working Group)

“ ... Under these criteria, the following categories of staff are likely to be eligible:

- those employed full-time or part-time as Junior Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, etc;
- research fellows; post-doctoral fellows;
- semi-retired academic staff who continue in salaried employment and are contracted to carry out academic duties.

Ineligible staff include:

- those paid on a casual or hourly basis (e.g. certain teaching assistants);
- those employed under consultancy contracts or on the basis of payment of fees for services, without a contract of employment;
- short-term academic staff (such as visiting professors, fellows and lecturers);
- those who have fully retired or who die before the census date;
- those employed after the census date.

... “

# Applied Research/Practice Based Research (Working Group)

Reliant on the peer assessment system:

“ ... The TEC would then select members, with the aim of ensuring:

- an appropriate ethnic and gender balance;
- that the panel has the knowledge and expertise necessary to make expert, dispassionate and reliable judgements about quality against international standards, across the range of disciplines within its coverage;
- significant membership by international experts (ideally at least 25% across the panel system as a whole).

... “

# Other issues

**New and Emerging:**

No special provision

**Gender and Ethnicity:**

- “ The Māori Knowledge and Development panel would evaluate research into distinctly Māori matters, such as research into tikanga Māori. Where research has a Māori focus, but is conducted within the frameworks of another discipline, it be evaluated by the appropriate multidisciplinary panel, with advice (where necessary) from the Māori Knowledge and Development panel. ...”
- “ The Working Group considered that, where appropriate, there should be Māori members on the other peer review panels. Where this is not appropriate or possible, panels should draw on special advisers for additional knowledge and support. ...”
- “ The Working Group also recommended that the TEC convene an “esteemed body” of Pacific researchers to help define excellence in Pacific research and develop guidance for the peer review panels and expert advisers on Pacific research. ...”

And now ...

**Jonathan**