Life after Stern: are you ready?

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“The challenge for the Review is to suggest ways forward for the REF that reduce distortions and burdens whilst maintaining and improving incentives for research excellence wherever it may be found.”

Lord Nicholas Stern, B*uilding on Success and Learning from Experience: An Independent Review of the Research Excellence Framework*

Culture change

- No staff selection: identifying all the right people
- Output decoupling: have you done the maths? Have your researchers?
- Diversity…and impact
- Emphasis on evidence and using metrics responsibly
- Creating support for staff with circumstances
- No, they really won't be using Journal Impact Factors
- Open Access, open data, open research
- Institutional research environment: one to rule them all?
- Brisk timetable. Work shrinks to fit the time….
- Sharing responsibility for advancing equality, diversity and inclusivity

“As institutions begin their preparations in earnest, I urge them to bear in mind the guiding principles of equity, equality and transparency and to seek to adhere to the spirit, as well as the letter, of the guidance.”

Steven Hill, Director of Research, Research England, 31 January 2019

Practical tips on how to manage post-Stern REF

- 13 months, 25 days to go: we planned, we tested, we re-wrote our plans
- Make sure your staff processes are properly understood, especially by the decision-makers: and the implications of getting it wrong
- Use tech to help with outputs – distribution, open access, equality checks
- Check your impact cases are covering all the bases they could cover
- Get a team together to look at institutional environment: and the link with UOAs
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- When the going gets tough, remember how divisive REF and RAE used to be

Finally – don't forget the magic beans from which the Guidance grew….

Kirsty Allen @KirstyAllenOxf · 1 Jul

Might as well face it, I'm addicted to Stern.....#REF2021 #sendsomeonenormalplease

7. Table of Recommendations

A: Outputs

Recommendation 1: All research active staff should be returned in the REF.

Recommendation 2: Outputs should be submitted at Unit of Assessment level with a set average number per FTE but with flexibility for some faculty members to submit more and others less than the average.

Recommendation 3: Outputs should not be portable.

Recommendation 4: Panels should continue to assess on the basis of peer review. However, metrics should be provided to support panel members in their assessment, and panels should be transparent about their use.

B: Impact

Recommendation 5: Institutions should be given more flexibility to showcase their interdisciplinary and collaborative impacts by submitting 'institutional' level impact case studies, part of a new institutional level assessment.

Recommendation 6: Impact must be based on research of demonstrable quality. However, case studies could be linked to a research activity and a body of work as well as to a broad range of research outputs.

Recommendation 7: Guidance on the REF should make it clear that impact case studies should not be narrowly interpreted, need not solely focus on socio-economic impacts but should also include impact on government policy, on public engagement and understanding, on cultural life, on academic impacts outside the field, and impacts on

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