The UK's European university

The Impact of Impact

OPEN FORUM EVENTS

University of Kent

Research Impact: Ready for REF 2021

Oct 2nd, London

Simon Kerridge

Director of Research Services

University of Kent

orcid.org/0000-0003-4094-3719

@SimonRKerridge

#REFOFE

https://inorms.net/activities/raaap-taskforce/

Steering Committee

Board Alternate, EARMA

Immediate Past Chair, ARMA

CASRAI INFORMATION HARMONY

EARMA EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

uk arma

Overview

- Kent
- REF2021
- Impact
- Impact of Impact
- Future Impact of Impact

University of Kent

- 20,000 students
- 4,000 staff
  - ~750 REF2021 eligible staff
- £250m turnover
- £20m research income
- Canterbury, Medway, Tonbridge, Brussels
  - Paris, Athens, Rome
- 17th for Research Intensity, 16th for Teaching Quality [gold]
- Honoured with Queen's Anniversary Prizes twice in the past ten years
- THE World Ranking 351-400; and 93rd under 50 (hmmm)

REF2021

University of Kent

- Impact… up 5%
- Case Studies
  - Up from 16% → 25% … an increase of 56¼%
- Impact Template (was 5%) …
  - now in Environment Template
- Outputs… down 5%
  - 65% → 60% is a drop of $8^1/_3$%
- Relative differential ICS:Outputs = + 69.3%

Outputs

- Just a quick plug!
- Who made a significant contribution to an output…?

Term	Definition
Conceptualization	*Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims.*
Methodology	*Development or design of methodology; creation of models.*
Software	*Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components.*
Validation	*Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs.*
Formal Analysis	*Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyse or synthesize study data.*
Investigation	*Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection.*
Resources	*Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools.*
Data Curation	*Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later re-use.*
Writing – Original Draft	*Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation).*
Writing – Review & Editing	*Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre- or post-publication stages.*
Visualization	*Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/data presentation.*
Supervision	*Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team.*
Project Administration	*Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution.*
Funding Acquisition	*Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication.*

Outputs

- #REF2014
  - 4 outputs per person
  - Reductions (without penalty) for
    - ISCs eg PT, ECR, “babies”
    - CSCs eg protracted illness affecting work
  - Total 191,150 outputs

- #REF2021
  - ~190k outputs wanted/planned for

  - 2.5 per FTE (less reductions)

Outputs - possibilities

- #REF2014
  - 52,061 staff selected
  - 190,150/52,061 → ~3.67 per FTE

- #REF2021
  - “All” staff…
- Kent
  - #2014 ~590 FTE, 2,060 outputs → ~ 3.5 per FTE
  - #2021 ~750 FTE → ~2.8 per FTE (for same total)
    - So fewer (max 1,875) needed @ 2.5 FTE
    - Less (with ISCs etc) maybe 1,640

Outputs – grade "inflation"

University of Kent

- For units that submitted all staff last time…
  - Using Kent 2014 figures
- 590 FTE, 2060 outputs [343 per annum]
- 590 FTE @2.5 → 1,475
- 590 FTE @2.18 → 1,290 [same ISCs as last time]
- 7 years instead of 6 [184 per annum]
- So (per year) 53% #Outputs needed…
- So (choosing well) a >=53% 4* submission → 100% 4*
  - There were 15 of these last time
  - And 1,418 with >=53% (4*+3*) [3 with 100%]

  - And better use of double weighting helps too!

Outputs - selection

University of Kent

- #REF2014
  - Up to 4 per person
  - ➔ select best 4 per person

- #REF2021
  - 0…? If not → need for ISC, or change of contract?
  - 1..5 per person
    - Why a maximum?
    - How many last time had 4x4*?
    - How many will have > 5x4*?
  - ➔ select best 5 per person
    - … and try to cross rank

over half supported setting a minimum requirement of one output per person. Over one-third were in favour of no minimum at all. REF2017_02

Overall, just under 50 per cent of respondents supported a maximum of six outputs per person. Fewer than 5 per cent expressed explicit disagreement with a maximum of six; however, a large number of respondents were in favour of an alternative maximum of four or five, or implied they would be flexible on this issue. REF2017_02

Outputs – REF2014 example

University of Kent

A	1	4	3	2	2	3	1	4		
B	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-		
C	2	1	4	1	4	-	-	-		
D	1	2	3	3	2	1	3	1		
E	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-		
F	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-		
G	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-		
H	3	1	3	-	-	-	-	-		

										GPA
A	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1		3.50
B	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-		2.50
C	4	4	2	1	1	-	-	-		2.75
D	3	3	3	2	2	1	1	1		2.75
E	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-		1.25
F	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-		1.5
G	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-		2
H	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-		1.75
										2.88

8 staff with between 2 and 8 outputs

Rank & grade each person's outputs

Use a GPA threshold to select staff

Office for Scholarly Communication

Outputs – REF2021 scenario

University of Kent

A	1	4	3	2	2	3	1	4
B	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-
C	2	1	4	1	4	-	-	-
D	1	2	3	3	2	1	3	1
E	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
F	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
G	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-
H	3	1	3	-	-	-	-	-

A	*4	*4	*3	*3	2	2	1	1		
B	*4	*3	2	1	-	-	-	-		
C	*4	*4	2	1	1	-	-	-		
D	*3	*3	*3	2	2	1	1	1		
E	*3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-		
F	*3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-		
G	*2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-		
H	*3	*3	1	-	-	-	-	-		
									2.5 => 20	3.00
		*	*	*	*					

8 staff with between 2 and 8 outputs

Simpler?

Rank & grade each person's outputs

But now ***rank against the whole Dept***

Select the best n outputs

Which 2* output(s) do you select?

Outputs – Issues

University of Kent

"In particular, it was felt that the changes around staff submission, along with the decoupling and portability of outputs, would require actions that were incompatible with Lord Stern's aims to reduce burden and maintain continuity." REF2017_02

- Added Burden!
- Being selective…?
  - Selection best from across a department
  - Complications of co-authorship, re 1..5 selection
- Being inclusive…?
  - ~same # for all staff?
  - Better for environment?

Where there is no formal account of the rationale for the number of outputs by each staff member selected for submission, there may be additional stigma for staff associated with fewer outputs and potential perceptions relating to the quality of research they produce. REF2017_02

Outputs – REF2017_02

University of Kent

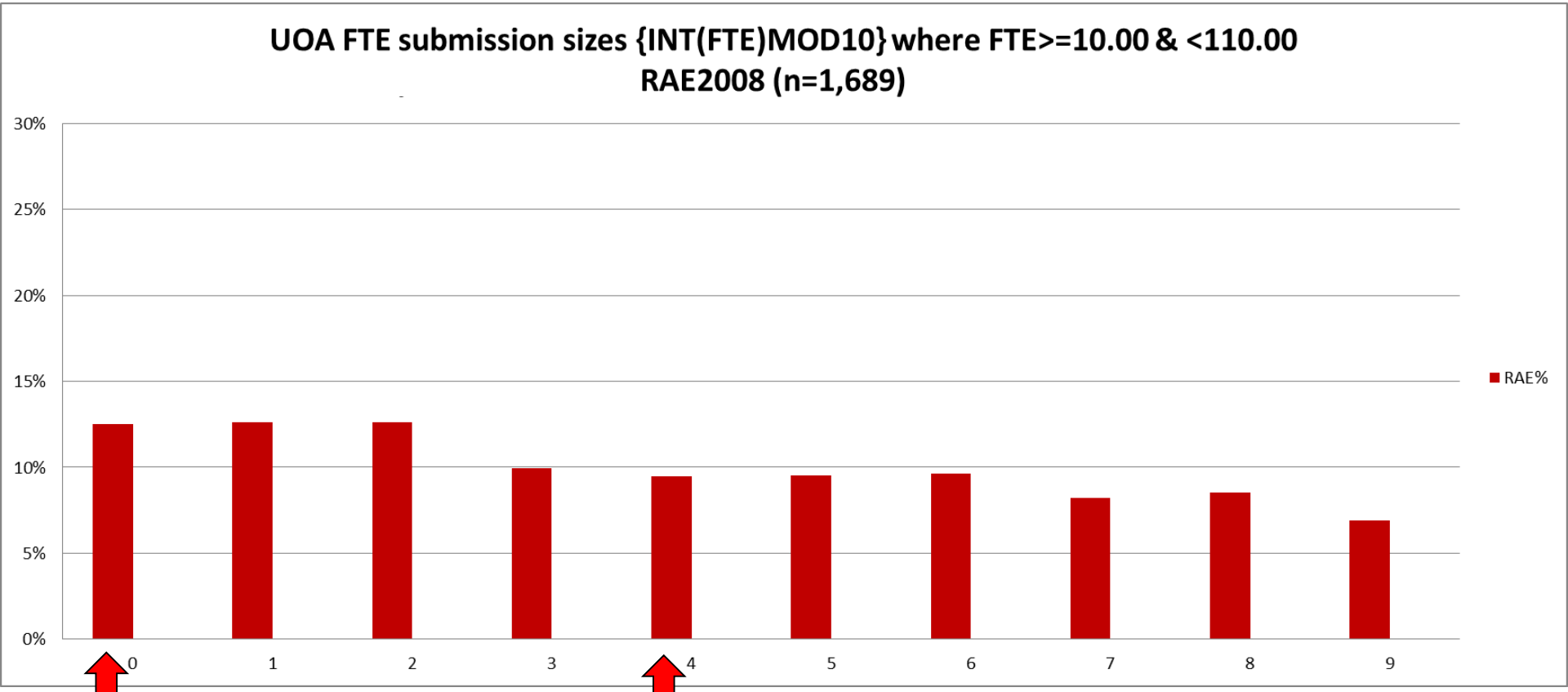
- Respondents commented on the burden associated with the proposal to decouple staff from outputs, as it was perceived to be **more difficult to select outputs than select staff**. **The majority of responses indicated that the proposals would increase or at least maintain the administrative burden on HEIs.** This was thought to be a result of the transfer of work from selecting staff to what was felt the **more difficult task of selecting outputs,** and would be **further increased** by the introduction of a minimum and maximum number of outputs **as opposed to 'true decoupling'** of staff from outputs.

The Impact of Impact

University of Kent

- Remembering
- ICSs are now worth 69% more compared to outputs than in REF2014
- So what…?
- Lots of variables… but
  - #REF2014 ICS=4.37 outputs (av. English funded)
  - #REF2021 ICS~7.4 outputs (~same #s of each)
- So what…?

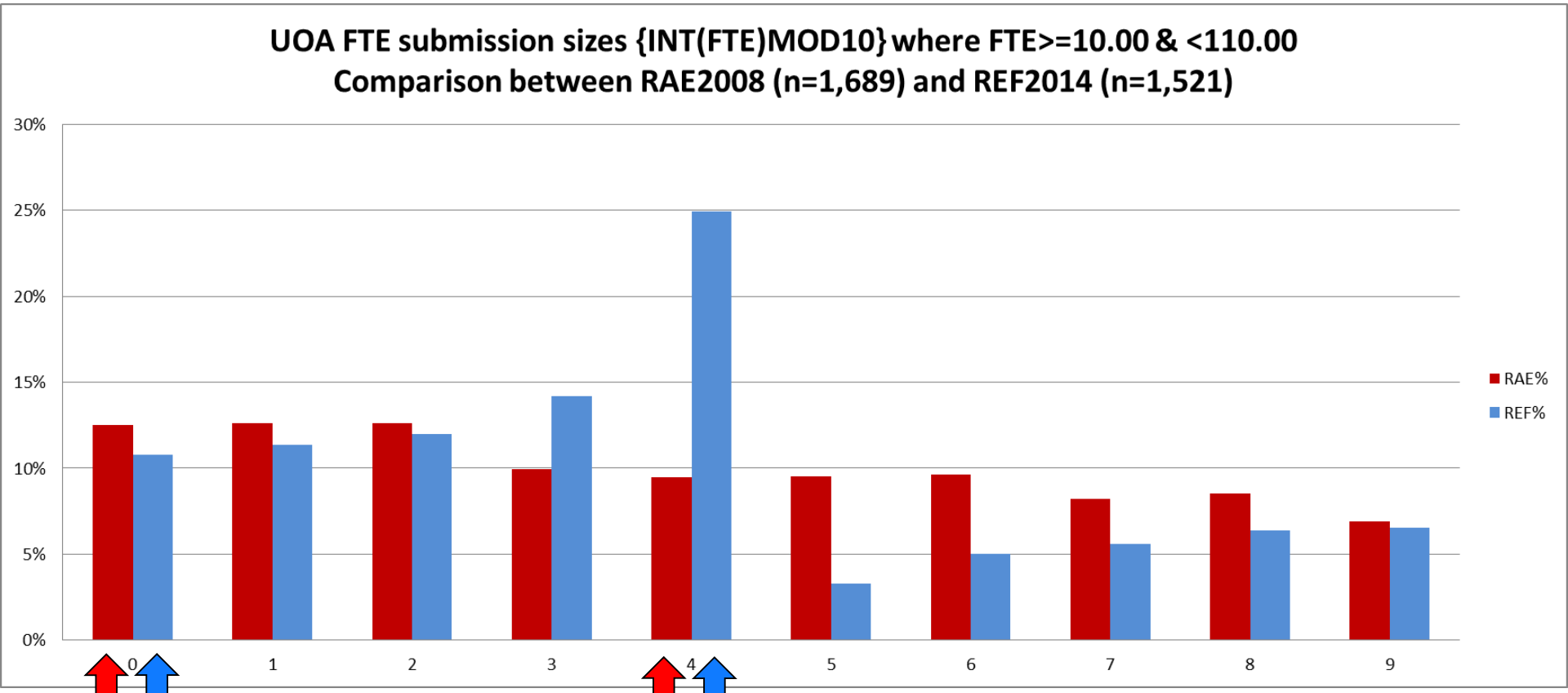
Impact Case Study Threshold



10.00-10.99,
20.00-20.99,
30.00-30.99,
40.00-40.99,
…

14.00-14.99,
24.00-24.99,
34.00-34.99,
44.00-44.99,
…

Impact Case Study Threshold



10.00-10.99,
20.00-20.99,
30.00-30.99,
40.00-40.99,
…

14.00-14.99,
24.00-24.99,
34.00-34.99,
44.00-44.99,
…

Future Impact…?

University of Kent

- The driver for this behaviour is now 69% bigger
- #REF2021 staff eligibility (selection) rules … in CoP
  - but...
- #REF2014 non-selection – a stigma
- #REF2021 non-selection – a contract change?

  T&R → T only

  somewhat more than a stigma!?

Some respondents specifically mentioned equalities implications, suggesting that contract changes might differentially apply to staff with protected characteristics. REF2017_02

Over a third of respondents suggested that the proposal might result in changes to contractual status, with some staff being moved to Teaching-only contracts. REF2017_02

Summary

University of Kent

- Outputs are still – by far – the biggest element
- O,S,R remains the same
- More flexibility to choose → [much] more work
- More 4* and 3* in profiles → comparability is gone

- Will there be sufficient discrimination at the top?

- *And don't get me started on #ICSs…*

University of Kent

THE UK'S EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

www.kent.ac.uk