

Annex 1

Quality profiles and definitions of quality levels

Table 1 **Sample quality profile***

Unit of assessment A	FTE Category A staff submitted for assessment	Percentage of research activity in the submission judged to meet the standard for:				
		4*	3*	2*	1*	Unclassified
University X	50	15	25	40	15	5
University Y	20	0	5	40	45	10

* The figures are for fictional universities. They do not indicate expected proportions.

Table 2 **Definitions of quality levels**

4*	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
3*	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which nonetheless falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
2*	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
1*	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

1. Sub-panels will use their professional judgement to form a view about the quality profile of the research activity described in each submission, taking into account all the evidence presented. Their recommendations will be endorsed by the main panel in consultation with the sub-panel.

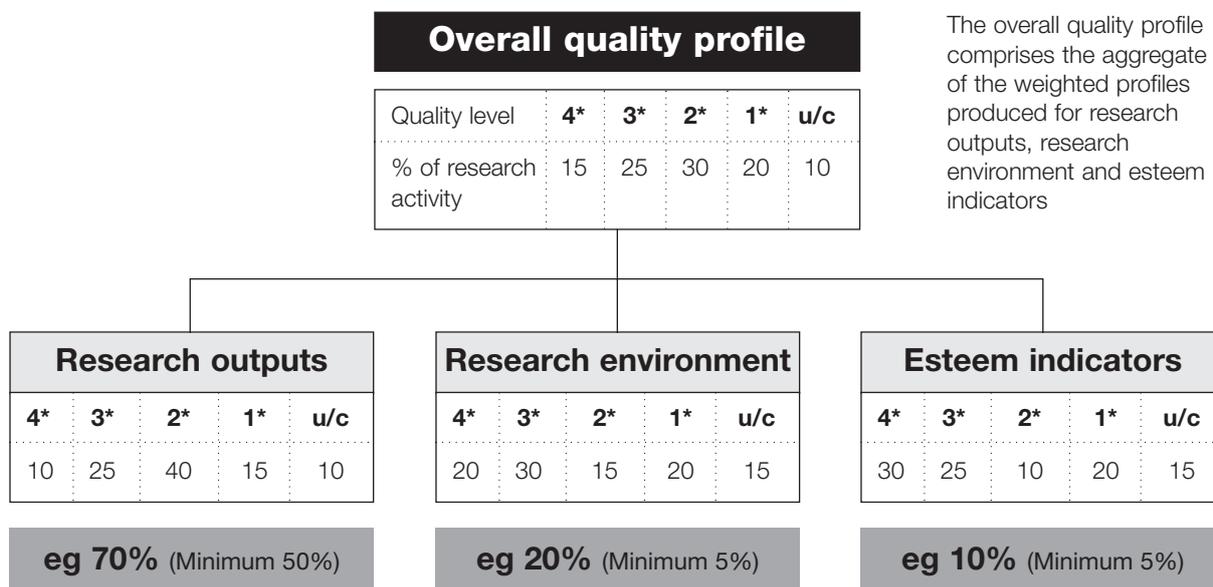
2. ‘World-leading’ quality denotes an absolute standard of quality in each unit of assessment.

3. ‘World leading’, ‘internationally’ and ‘nationally’ in this context refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the nature or

geographical scope of particular subjects, nor to the locus of research nor its place of dissemination, for example, in the case of ‘nationally’, to work that is disseminated in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

4. The profile for a submission that contains no research which meets the 1* threshold will be 100% Unclassified. A submission that contains no research (that is, no work that meets the definition of research for the RAE) will not be awarded a quality profile.

Figure 1 **Building a quality profile**



The percentage weightings for the three elements are illustrative. Panels should allocate these weightings. The minimum weighting for the research outputs profile is 50%. In this example the overall quality profile shows 15% of research activity is at 4* level. This is made up of 70% x 10 (research outputs), 20% x 20 (research environment) and 10% x 30 (esteem indicators), rounded as described in paragraphs 12-15 below.

Building a quality profile

5. Panels are required to consider all the components of the submission when reaching an overall quality profile (see Figure 1). The components equate to the different data collected in the RAE, namely submitted staff information (RA1), research outputs (RA2), research student data (RA3), research income (RA4), and the supporting statement on research environment and esteem indicators (RA5a).

6. These different components will be assessed under three over-arching elements: research outputs, research environment, and esteem indicators. Research outputs (RA2) will always be assessed as one of these three elements.

7. Main panels have decided whether the components of submissions other than research outputs (RA3, 4 and 5) will be assessed under the 'Research environment' or 'Esteem indicators' element. For example, a panel may consider that research income contributes to the research environment, or that it is a measure of esteem in its subject area. Similarly research student numbers, research student completions and

research studentships may either be part of the research environment or an indicator of esteem. Main panels explain in their statements of criteria and working methods their reasoning for assigning components of the submission to a particular element.

8. Main panels have allocated a percentage weighting to each of three elements – research outputs, research environment and esteem indicators – which indicates the extent to which the different elements will contribute to the overall quality profile of a submission. Given the primacy of expert review in the process, the weighting allocated to research outputs must be at least 50% of the overall quality profile: some main panels have decided that research outputs should be weighted more highly. Main panels had to allocate a significant weighting to each of the other aspects (environment and esteem) as they saw fit, but since the quality profile will be defined in multiples of 5%, the minimum weighting in either case will be 5%. Main panels have defined their reasoning in their criteria statements.

9. Sub-panels will assess research outputs and develop a quality profile for this element. Sub-panels will also assess the evidence within the components of the submission assigned to the research environment and esteem indicators elements, and draw up a quality profile for each.

10. Sub-panels will sum the three weighted quality profiles to develop an overall quality profile for the submission. They will use the rounding methodology described in paragraphs 12-15 of this annex to round the overall quality profile. Overall quality profiles will be published in steps of 5%.

11. Sub-panels will finally confirm that, in their expert judgement, the overall profile is a fair reflection of the research activity in that submission, and that their assessment has taken account of all the different components of the submission.

Rounding

12. All sub-panels will adopt a cumulative rounding methodology to ensure that the overall quality profile for any submission will always round to 100%, and to avoid the unfair consequences that simple rounding can produce. They will first sum the weighted quality profiles for outputs, environment, and esteem and then adopt a cumulative rounding methodology.

Worked example

13. Using the example in Figure 1, first calculate the initial overall profile, that is, the sum of the weighted profiles for outputs, environment and esteem.

	4*	3*	2*	1*	u/c
Outputs	10	25	40	15	10
Environment	20	30	15	20	15
Esteem	30	25	10	20	15
Weighted					
70%	7	17.5	28	10.5	7
20%	4	6	3	4	3
10%	3	2.5	1	2	1.5
Initial profile	14	26	32	16.5	11.5

14. Cumulative rounding works in three stages:

a. The initial profile is:

4*	3*	2*	1*	u/c
14	26	32	16.5	11.5

b. Stage 1: Calculate the cumulative totals (for example the cumulative total at 3* or better is 26+14=40).

4*	3* or better	2* or better	1* or better	u/c or better
14	40	72	88.5	100

c. Stage 2: Round these to the nearest 5 %, (rounding up if the percentage ends in exactly 2.5 or 7.5).

4*	3* or better	2* or better	1* or better	u/c or better
15	40	70	90	100

d. Stage 3: Find the differences between successive cells to give the rounded profile. So, for example, the percentage allocated to 2* is the difference between the cumulative total at 2* or better, minus the cumulative total at 3* or better (70-40 =30).

4*	3*	2*	1*	u/c
15	25	30	20	10

15. Cumulating totals the other way (rounding down if the percentage ends in exactly 2.5 or 7.5) gives exactly the same answer.

Annex 2

Units of assessment and main panels

Main panel	UOA	UOA name
A	1	Cardiovascular Medicine
	2	Cancer Studies
	3	Infection and Immunology
	4	Other Hospital Based Clinical Subjects
	5	Other Laboratory Based Clinical Subjects
B	6	Epidemiology and Public Health
	7	Health Services Research
	8	Primary Care and Other Community Based Clinical Subjects
	9	Psychiatry, Neuroscience and Clinical Psychology
C	10	Dentistry
	11	Nursing and Midwifery
	12	Allied Health Professions and Studies
	13	Pharmacy
D	14	Biological Sciences
	15	Pre-clinical and Human Biological Sciences
	16	Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science
E	17	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
	18	Chemistry
	19	Physics
F	20	Pure Mathematics
	21	Applied Mathematics
	22	Statistics and Operational Research
	23	Computer Science and Informatics
G	24	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
	25	General Engineering and Mineral & Mining Engineering
	26	Chemical Engineering
	27	Civil Engineering
	28	Mechanical, Aeronautical and Manufacturing Engineering
	29	Metallurgy and Materials
H	30	Architecture and the Built Environment
	31	Town and Country Planning
	32	Geography and Environmental Studies
	33	Archaeology

Main panel	UOA	UOA name
I	34	Economics and Econometrics
	35	Accounting and Finance
	36	Business and Management Studies
	37	Library and Information Management
J	38	Law
	39	Politics and International Studies
	40	Social Work and Social Policy & Administration
	41	Sociology
	42	Anthropology
	43	Development Studies
K	44	Psychology
	45	Education
	46	Sports-Related Studies
L	47	American Studies and Anglophone Area Studies
	48	Middle Eastern and African Studies
	49	Asian Studies
	50	European Studies
M	51	Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages
	52	French
	53	German, Dutch and Scandinavian Languages
	54	Italian
	55	Iberian and Latin American Languages
	56	Celtic Studies
	57	English Language and Literature
	58	Linguistics
N	59	Classics, Ancient History, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
	60	Philosophy
	61	Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies
	62	History
O	63	Art and Design
	64	History of Art, Architecture and Design
	65	Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
	66	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies
	67	Music

Annex 3

Definition of research for the RAE

(Changes in phrasing from the definition used for the 2001 RAE are in **bold**.)

‘Research’ for the purpose of the RAE is to be understood as original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, **and** to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship*; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and **routine** analysis of materials, components and processes **such as** for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.

* Scholarship for the RAE is defined as the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines, in forms such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues and contributions to major research databases.

Annex 4

Declarations of interest

Major interests

All panel chairs, members, secretaries, observers and specialist advisers are bound by the following arrangements for avoiding conflicts of interest.

1. All main panel chairs and members, sub-panel chairs and members, panel secretaries and assistant secretaries, observers and specialist advisers (hereafter collectively called panel members) are asked to make a declaration of their interests. For the purpose of the RAE, interests are defined as:
 - a. The institution(s) at which the individual is employed.
 - b. Any institution at which the individual has been employed since January 2001.
 - c. Any institution(s) at which the individual has been engaged in substantial teaching or research since the start of the assessment period (1 January 2001); this might include institutions at which the individual has the status of visiting lecturer/fellow/professor or similar.
 - d. Any institution(s) at which the individual's partner and/or immediate family member is employed.

Panel procedures

2. A complete list of the declared interests of panel members and others involved in the assessment will be prepared by the RAE team and made available, in confidence, to panels when they start their work.
3. Individuals will be asked to update the RAE team regularly on any additional interests. Complete lists of declared interests will be updated and circulated accordingly on an *ad hoc* basis.
4. As a matter of principle, individuals will withdraw from panel meetings when submissions are discussed from the HEIs in which they declare to have an interest. Each main and sub-panel will publish in its criteria statement its protocol for dealing with declared interests, in line with this principle.

Requests for information

5. Panel members are likely to receive numerous invitations to discuss issues concerned with RAE 2008. Although the RAE team seeks improved clarity and transparency during this exercise through the dissemination of information, we do not wish panel members to compromise their position by entering into discussions which could be perceived to give a particular individual or institution an unfair advantage.
 6. It is therefore strongly recommended that panel members should not discuss issues concerning individual departmental or institutional submissions. However, they may accept invitations to talk at meetings where a number of different institutions are represented, for example those arranged by a professional body or subject association.
 7. If any member has concerns over a potential conflict of interests or the propriety of a proposed action s/he should discuss it with the RAE manager.
 8. Panel members are not expected to suspend normal relations with their colleagues and peers during the exercise. They should not feel in any way obliged, for example, to withdraw from external examining, or participation in appointment committees. They are, however, asked to exercise caution in dealings with individual departments, or with subject associations or similar bodies, where there is an actual or clearly inferrable connection with their panel membership.
- #### Minor interests
9. The RAE team has also invited main and sub-panels to consider operating a policy whereby panel members declare minor interests on an *ad hoc* basis, so that they can be minuted in panel meetings and handled on a case by case basis. The following were offered as examples of minor interests and possible methods of dealing with them. They are illustrative and do not constitute an exhaustive or prescriptive list:
 - a. Panel member supervises or co-supervises one or more doctoral students from a submitting

institution. Panel member declares this for the panel to note.

- b. Panel member supervised a doctoral student who went on to become a research active staff member within a submission made to the panel. Panel member declares this and does not take lead/sole responsibility for assessing the published output linked to that individual.
- c. Panel member was supervised as a doctoral student by a research active staff member within a submission made to the panel. Panel member declares this and does not take lead/sole responsibility for assessing the published output linked to that individual.
- d. Panel member is co-investigator or co-holder of a grant with the submitting institution. Panel member declares this and does not take lead/sole responsibility for assessing the published output linked to that individual.
- e. Panel member is on the editorial board of a journal series published by a submitting department or unit, or has co-organised a conference or conference series with a submitting department. Panel member declares this and does not take lead responsibility for assessing the research environment and esteem indicators element of that submission.
- f. Panel member has acted during the assessment period as a member of an appointment or promotions committee for a submitting department or unit, or has provided references for staff members returned in the submission. Panel member declares this for the panel to note.
- g. Panel member acts as an external examiner for research degrees for a submitting department or unit. Panel member declares this and does not take lead/sole responsibility for assessing the research environment and esteem indicators element of that submission
- h. Panel member studied at a submitting department or unit before the assessment period. Panel member declares this and does not take lead/sole responsibility for assessing

the research environment and esteem indicators element of that submission.

- i. A member of the panel member's wider family studies or works at a submitting department or unit. Panel member declares this for the panel to note.
10. Panels might wish to invite a panel member who declares a number of minor interests in one institution to treat that institution as a major interest.

Annex 5

Confidentiality arrangements

All panel chairs, members, secretaries, observers and specialist advisers are bound by the confidentiality arrangements described in the following letter.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear

Research Assessment Exercise 2008: Confidentiality arrangements

Purpose

1. This letter sets out arrangements for ensuring that all information contained in RAE submissions made by institutions for the 2008 RAE is maintained and treated confidentially by panels¹. As for the 2001 RAE, apart from personal data and details of confidential outputs, information from submissions will be published on the internet following completion of the assessment: we expect to publish this early in 2009. The arrangements described below provide for maintaining the confidentiality of all submission information unless or until such time as it becomes freely available in the public domain.
2. The letter also deals specifically with the treatment by panels of any confidential research outputs that may be cited in submissions. Research outputs in the 2008 RAE are defined as publicly available, assessable outputs of research in whatever form. However, institutions may submit for assessment confidential outputs provided they mark them as 'confidential' in submissions and make them available to panels.
3. The letter also describes arrangements for ensuring the confidentiality of panels' discussions about submissions, or other information deduced from or generated as a result of submissions.
4. We have two objectives in placing confidentiality obligations on panel members. Firstly, subject only to any legal obligations on HEFCE to disclose further, we wish to ensure that the starred quality profile awarded to each submission and the brief feedback given in confidence to heads of institutions by the panel via the RAE team stand as the only public

comment from panels and their constituent members on any individual submission. Secondly, we aim to discourage parties who are not involved in the assessment process from approaching or placing pressure on panel members to disclose information about the panel's discussion of particular submissions. In other words, maintenance of confidentiality is essential if panel members are not to be inhibited from expressing their opinions freely in panel discussions, and therefore essential to the effective operation of the RAE as a peer review. In legal terms, a breach of confidentiality by a panel member may, in certain circumstances, constitute a breach of data protection legislation and/or a breach of a common law duty of confidentiality, may give rise to financial losses, or may infringe or impact upon intellectual property rights in research outputs.

5. The obligations set out below will subsist indefinitely.

Obligations on panel members

Information contained in RAE submissions

6. The higher education funding bodies, through the RAE team, collect a range of information from institutions in RAE submissions for the purpose of assessing the quality of research. In recognition of this purpose, you shall use any information which you receive in RAE submissions from institutions only for the purposes of carrying out your functions as a panel member.
7. You shall not make copies of such information except as is necessary to carry out your function as a panel member. You shall destroy, or return to the RAE manager, originals and any copies you may make of such information, as soon as they are no longer needed for that function or on the request of the RAE manager, whichever may be sooner. This provision applies equally to paper copies or those stored in electronic or other non-paper formats.
8. You shall not disclose the information received to any other person except your fellow panel members and panel observers and secretaries. You

¹ In this context, 'panels' refers both to main and sub-panels. The same arrangements for ensuring confidentiality will apply, so far as they are relevant, to chairs, members, observers and secretaries of main and sub-panels and to specialist advisers.

shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that other people cannot have access to the information, whether held in paper or electronic copy. In particular, it is important to remember that computer systems and specifically e-mail are not necessarily secure, and you agree to exercise appropriate caution when using them. Full guidance on the storage and transmission of RAE information will be included in the guidance to panels which will be provided to panel members and made publicly available in January 2005.

Confidential research outputs

9. Confidential research outputs will be indicated as such in submissions and will clearly be marked 'confidential'. You shall treat as confidential all such information, including the research outputs themselves and details of their sponsors or commissioning organisations. Even if you personally consider that the designation 'confidential' may be wrong, you agree to accept any designation of confidentiality which an institution has placed upon part or all of its submission. If you feel in a particular case that this inhibits you from carrying out your function as a panel member, you should raise the issue with the RAE manager who will be able to provide or seek advice.

10. An institution's submission may contain material which is patented or patentable, which is subject to other intellectual property rights, which is commercially sensitive, or which the interests of the institution and/or its researchers require to be kept confidential or given a restricted circulation. Institutions make submissions to the RAE on the understanding that their position in these regards will not be prejudiced by the fact of submission. You shall respect and honour that understanding and act accordingly. You are in particular reminded of the danger of 'prior disclosure' in the case of potentially patentable material, and the paramount need therefore to respect the confidentiality of such material.

Discussion about submissions and information deduced from submissions

11. You agree that you shall restrict your discussion of submissions and of research groups

described within submissions to panel meetings and to related dialogue between yourself, the RAE team, panel secretary and assistant secretary and members of the main and sub-panels with which you work. You shall not discuss with anyone who is not involved in the assessment process, as described above, either the submission or the assessment of an identifiable institution or group of institutions whose individual members could be identified, still less the work of individual researchers named in submissions, even if ostensibly anonymised. You may, of course, comment on the process and conduct of the 2008 RAE in general terms. If you are at all unsure as to what is covered by 'in general terms' you should seek advice from the RAE manager.

12. Nothing in this agreement prevents you from disclosing information after it becomes freely available in the public domain (without the breach of any obligation of confidentiality), or which you are required by law to disclose, or which was already known to you and not subject to confidentiality obligations before being disclosed to you in the context of the RAE. It would be prudent, however, to contact the RAE manager in advance to discuss any possible disclosure. Some information provided to or generated by RAE panels may be disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, if you receive any request for information which falls or may fall under that Act you must pass it to the RAE manager for consideration and action, and you should not respond to such requests yourself. If you are in any doubt with regard to any issue of confidentiality, either in general terms or in relation to a particular piece of information, you should seek advice from the RAE manager or, following completion of the RAE, the Director (Research and Knowledge Transfer) at HEFCE.

13. Acceptance of these confidentiality obligations is a condition of your appointment as a panel member. The four higher education funding bodies reserve the right to amend the membership of RAE panels in the event of any breach of the confidentiality obligations on panel chairs and members.

Annex 6

Word limits for RA5a, RA5b and RA5c and RA2 'Other relevant details' field

RA5a

The maximum word count for the textual commentary section (RA5a) will vary based on the number of Category A FTE staff in the submission as follows:

FTE Category A staff	Word limit
1-5	3,600
6-10	4,200
11-15	4,800
16-20	5,400
21-30	6,600
31-40	7,800
41-50	9,000
51-60	9,800
61-75	11,000
76-90	12,000
Over 90	12,750

Note that these word counts equate to at least the page limits per FTE used in the 2001 RAE for RA5 and RA6 combined.

RA5b and RA5c

For all UOAs, RA5b (individual staff circumstances) and RA5c (information concerning Category C staff) will be a maximum of 300 words per researcher.

Institutions should refer to the generic statement and to each sub-panel's statement of criteria and working methods for further advice about the information to be returned in each case.

RA2 ‘Other relevant details’ field

Each sub-panel has set a maximum word limit for the ‘Other relevant details’ field in RA2.

Please refer to the appropriate sub-panel statement for details of the information required in this field.

Sub-panel	UOA	Word limit
1	Cardiovascular Medicine	50
2	Cancer Studies	50
3	Infection and Immunology	50
4	Other Hospital Based Clinical Subjects	50
5	Other Laboratory Based Clinical Subjects	50
6	Epidemiology and Public Health	50
7	Health Services Research	50
8	Primary Care and Other Community Based Clinical Subjects	50
9	Psychiatry, Neuroscience and Clinical Psychology	50
10	Dentistry	50
11	Nursing and Midwifery	50
12	Allied Health Professions and Studies	50
13	Pharmacy	50
14	Biological Sciences	50
15	Pre-clinical and Human Biological Sciences	50
16	Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	50
17	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences	50
18	Chemistry	50
19	Physics	50
20	Pure Mathematics	300
21	Applied Mathematics	300
22	Statistics and Operational Research	300
23	Computer Science and Informatics	300
24	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	100
25	General Engineering and Mineral & Mining Engineering	100
26	Chemical Engineering	100
27	Civil Engineering	100
28	Mechanical, Aeronautical and Manufacturing Engineering	100
29	Metallurgy and Materials	100
30	Architecture and the Built Environment	300
31	Town and Country Planning	50

Sub-panel	UOA	Word limit
32	Geography and Environmental Studies	50
33	Archaeology	50
34	Economics and Econometrics	50
35	Accounting and Finance	50
36	Business and Management Studies	50
37	Library and Information Management	50
38	Law	50
39	Politics and International Studies	100
40	Social Work and Social Policy & Administration	100
41	Sociology	100
42	Anthropology	100
43	Development Studies	200
44	Psychology	100
45	Education	150
46	Sports-Related Studies	100
47	American Studies and Anglophone Area Studies	300
48	Middle Eastern and African Studies	300
49	Asian Studies	300
50	European Studies	300
51	Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages	300
52	French	300
53	German, Dutch and Scandinavian Languages	300
54	Italian	300
55	Iberian and Latin American Languages	300
56	Celtic Studies	300
57	English Language and Literature	200
58	Linguistics	300
59	Classics, Ancient History, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies	300
60	Philosophy	300
61	Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies	300
62	History	300
63	Art and Design	300
64	History of Art, Architecture and Design	300
65	Drama, Dance and Performing Arts	300
66	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies	300
67	Music	300

Annex 7

Standard data analyses for all sub-panels

The following data analyses will be available to sub-panels for each submission (and a total for each UOA).

1. Headcount number of research-active staff, by category.
2. Full-time equivalent (FTE) number of research-active staff in Category A.
3. Headcount number of research-active staff in Categories A and C together.
4. Headcount number of research-active staff in Categories A, B, C and D together.
5. Headcount number of research-active staff in Categories A and C together, with each of 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 outputs submitted for assessment (five separate totals).
6. Headcount number of research fellows.
7. FTE number of research fellows.
8. Total number of outputs submitted for assessment.
9. FTE research assistants (from RA1).
10. FTE research assistants (from RA1) per FTE research-active staff.
11. FTE research students (from RA1).
12. FTE research students (from RA1) per FTE research-active staff.
13. FTE research students (from RA3a).
14. FTE research students (from RA3a) per FTE research-active staff.
15. Median FTE number of research students (from RA3a) per FTE research-active staff.
16. Number of doctoral degrees awarded, by year.
17. Number of doctoral degrees awarded, by year, per FTE research-active staff.
18. Number of doctoral degrees awarded, by year, per FTE research student (student numbers taken from RA3a).
19. Number of masters degrees awarded, by year.
20. Number of masters degrees awarded, by year, per FTE research-active staff.
21. Number of new studentships (total across all years), by sponsor.
22. Number of new studentships (total across all years) per FTE research-active staff, by sponsor.
23. Number of new studentships (total across all years) per FTE research student (student numbers taken from RA3a), by sponsor.
24. Median number of new studentships (total across all years) per FTE research-active staff (total across all sponsors).
25. Research income (total across all years), by source.
26. Research income (total across all years) per FTE research-active staff, by source.
27. Median value of research income (total across all years) per FTE research-active staff (total across all sources).

There will be two separate sheets of figures: one in which figures per research-active staff will use FTE Category A staff numbers; and another in which figures per research-active staff will use headcount Category A plus Category C staff numbers.

These analyses are in addition to the standard listing of data and information presented to panels in RA1 to RA5.

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