

This statement should be read alongside the statement for Main Panel M and the generic statement.

Absences of chair and declaration of interests from members

1. The sub-panel has appointed a deputy chair to act in the event of planned or unforeseen short-term absences of the sub-panel chair. When the chair is absent because they have declared an interest in the institution being discussed, the deputy chair will not only conduct the meeting but will also liaise with the sub-panel secretary in drafting any relevant minutes or notes, and take such follow-up action as may be required. In other circumstances, decisions and recommendations made during the chair's absence will be discussed with them before being ratified.
2. The sub-panel will refer to the RAE team's register of members' declarations of major interests. Sub-panel members will withdraw from the discussion of any submission in which they have declared a current or recent major interest. The formal note of the discussion provided by the sub-panel secretary and agreed with the members present will be the only part of the discussion to which they are party.
3. The sub-panel will also keep a register of minor interests (to be compiled at the start of the assessment phase in line with Annex 4). In some instances, the sub-panel may decide that a member should not take the lead in assessing certain outputs or submissions; and if the member has several minor interests relating to one submission, these may be treated as amounting to a major interest.

UOA descriptor and boundaries

4. The UOA includes: medieval literature, including Dante; Renaissance literature; early modern literature; modern and contemporary literature; theatre studies; linguistics, philology and history of the language; cultural studies and cultural history; film studies; media studies; gender studies; history of Italy; social and economic history; modern social and political studies; history of ideas; translation studies; teaching methodologies and teaching materials embodying research.
5. Where work submitted spans the boundary between this UOA and one or more others, or

falls outside the range of expertise of sub-panel members, other sub-panels and/or specialist advisers will be consulted, as appropriate.

6. The sub-panel welcomes the submission of interdisciplinary research and expects to contain sufficient expertise to assess a significant proportion of such work. The sub-panel will decide whether to cross-refer outputs to (an)other sub-panel(s) in consultation with the RAE team. This will apply both when the submitting HEI has requested cross-referral and when the sub-panel itself judges that it needs additional expertise. The responsibility for recommending a quality level for each output will rest with the sub-panel to which the HEI has directed its submission.

Research staff and staffing policy

7. The outputs of staff in Categories A and C and their contribution to research environment and esteem will be assessed according to the same criteria. In order for individuals to be accepted as Category C, and for their research activity to be included in a department's quality profile, the department must be able to provide strong evidence that they have a close and continuing relationship with the research of the department. Examples of such commitment might include co-directorship of externally funded research grants, co-supervision of research students, participation in graduate training programmes, or co-organisation of research seminars, colloquia or conferences. The research activity of individuals who cannot demonstrate such an enduring and substantial connection will not be counted towards the department's quality profile.
8. The contribution made by staff in Categories B and D to the research environment should be described, and indicators of esteem that relate to them should be listed. The sub-panel will use this information in reaching its judgement on these components of the quality profile. Departments should comment on how the departure of staff in Categories B and D has affected the strength, coherence and research culture of the department at the census date.
9. In describing their research environment, departments should explain any arrangements

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they have put in place for developing the research of early career researchers and for integrating them into a wider supportive research culture. Early career researchers are defined as individuals of any age who entered the academic profession on employment terms that qualified them for submission to RAE2008 as Category A staff on or after 1 August 2003. The sub-panel will give due credit to departments that have sought to encourage less experienced researchers.

10. The contribution of early career researchers, and those who have been absent from research at any time during the assessment period for reasons covered in paragraph 39 of the generic statement, will be considered consistently as described in paragraphs 43-46 below. The output of these staff and their contribution to the research environment should be described, and the indicators of esteem that relate to them should be listed. The periods when they have been research active should be clearly defined. The sub-panel recognises that early career researchers, and those for whom individual circumstances are identified, might not have four outputs. The sub-panel appreciates that there will often be a reduced number of esteem indicators which can be cited in the case of early career researchers, part-time staff, and staff for whom individual circumstances have been identified.

11. Researchers who have held academic posts outside the UK prior to 1 August 2003 will not be considered as early career researchers.

Research outputs

12. Four outputs are normally expected from each member of staff submitted. No individual may submit more than four outputs. In all cases the sub-panel expects the number of outputs listed by staff to be commensurate with the time they have had available for research and the nature of posts they have held. Departments should describe in RA5b any individual staff circumstances (such as those listed in paragraph 39 of the generic statement) which have led to the submission of fewer than four outputs for any member of staff. Any reduction in the quantity of outputs expected will be made in relation to these circumstances (see paragraphs 43-46).

13. The sub-panel will expect early career researchers appointed between 1 August 2003 and **31 July 2005** to submit a minimum of two outputs, and those appointed on or after **1 August 2005** to submit a minimum of one output. Within these norms no penalty will be incurred for submission of fewer than four outputs. All submitted staff are entitled to submit up to four outputs should they wish to do so. All submitted outputs will be judged against the quality criteria, regardless of the employment status of the individual who submits them.

14. The sub-panel will assess all forms of output equally according to the published criteria, and give full recognition to achievements irrespective of form or mode of delivery. However, the sub-panel appreciates that the nature of the discipline is such that from time to time there may be projects of significant scale and scope requiring an investment of time and personal effort considerably greater than the expected norm. It will therefore use its discretion to recognise special achievement in such works and credit their contribution to the discipline appropriately through additional weighting in the quality profile. It anticipates that such judgements will be exceptional. It will not require HEIs to nominate such outputs in submissions, and will disregard any such claims.

15. The principal forms of output that the sub-panel expects to assess are listed below:

- a. Academic journal articles.
- b. Bibliographies* (see paragraph 17 below).
- c. Books including:
 - co-authored works
 - dictionaries*
 - edited special issues of journals, or collections of essays, with substantial research input on the part of the editor*
 - scholarly editions
 - single-authored works.
- d. Chapters in books including:
 - papers published in edited conference proceedings

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- contributions to festschriften
 - essays in other collections.
- e. Creative writing (see paragraph 21).
- f. Databases and other electronic resources*.
- g. Short works* including:
- contributions to encyclopaedias and dictionaries
 - pamphlets
 - critical surveys (*états-présents*, *Forschungsberichte*, etc)
 - published lectures
 - review articles
 - working papers.
- h. Teaching materials* including:
- computer assisted language-learning (CALL) materials
 - other language-learning materials
 - readers
 - source books
 - student guides
 - textbooks
 - higher education pedagogic research materials.
- i. Translations*.
- j. Other forms of output* including:
- catalogues and contributions to major research databases
 - recorded performances
 - exhibitions (including virtual museums, etc).

16. All categories include printed and electronically published items and those produced in other media. No ranking or weighting should be inferred from the order in which the categories are listed. While acknowledging the value of the refereeing process, the sub-panel recognises that some research is published in journals or other outlets which do not use refereeing procedures.

Each item will be assessed on its individual merits, according to the sub-panel's stated criteria, described in paragraphs 47-59 below, and place of publication will not influence the sub-panel's independent assessment of the quality of an output.

17. If an item submitted is in one of the categories that are asterisked, the department should use the 'Other relevant details' field of RA2 to provide a succinct account of how the item meets the RAE definition of research. The information provided in the 'Other relevant details' field in RA2 should total no more than 300 words.

18. Where co-authored, co-edited or otherwise co-produced outputs have been cited, the distinct contribution by each named researcher should be described in the 'Other relevant details' field in RA2. If the same co-authored work is cited more than once within the same submission or in two or more different submissions, it will count as a full output on each occasion. Departments are advised to consult RAE 03/2005 'Guidance on submissions' (paragraph 102).

19. Where an individual has contributed more than one item to the same output, these items may be submitted separately or together. Dictionary entries or encyclopaedia articles may, likewise, be entered separately or as related groups. Collections of articles by the same author will only be given credit in so far as they embody research first published within the assessment period; though the reworking of previous pieces put together with new ones to make a book will be treated as a valid research output for assessment. The sub-panel will not be able to award a separate quality level to research which is substantially duplicated in two or more submitted outputs. Similarly, re-issues or translations into other languages of books or articles first published before the assessment period will only be considered eligible if they contain substantial revisions involving new research. Where an individual has submitted both a book or books and articles, the book(s) will be assessed to the extent that the content does not overlap with that of the independently published articles.

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Departments may wish to provide information on the relationship between outputs in the 'Other relevant details' field in RA2.

20. The sub-panel will weight the research outputs as 75% of the overall quality profile.

Creative writing and performance arts

21. Creative writing will be assessed in so far as it embodies 'the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances [...] where these lead to new or substantially improved insights' ('Definition of research for the RAE', Annex 3) and according to paragraphs 47-59 below. It must be in a finished, publicly accessible form. Work in performance arts is eligible for consideration, but must be accessible, for instance in audio or video form. Outputs in the form of creative writing or the performance arts should be accompanied by a factual statement of no more than 300 words in the 'Other relevant details' field of RA2, outlining their research contribution in terms of the key criteria of originality, significance and rigour. The sub-panel will disregard unsubstantiated assertions or opinions on the quality of research. Where a researcher has published separate short items (eg, short poems or stories) independently of each other, they may group up to five of these as a single output for the purposes of assessment.

Applied research

22. Applied research, as defined by Main Panel M and all of its sub-panels, involves a process of systematic investigation within a specific context in order to solve an identified problem or meet a specific challenge in that context. It aims to create new or improved systems (of thought or production), artefacts, products, processes, materials, devices or services for long-term economic, social and/or cultural benefit. It is informed by the intellectual infrastructure of scholarly research in the field; it applies and/or transfers enhanced knowledge, methods, tools and resources from basic and strategic research; it also contributes to scholarship in the field through systematic dissemination of the results. The outcomes of applied research cannot usually be directly applied to other contexts because of the

specificity of the situation in which the research has been applied, although the methods/tools evolved are often transferable.

23. The main type of applied research output expected for the UOAs in Main Panel M is teaching materials. These will be assessed on their research content, rather than on the work *per se*. The sub-panel will assess such work according to the extent to which it meets the quality level criteria of originality, significance and rigour.

Research environment

24. The description of the research environment should be divided into three sections: structure, staff and students, and strategy, prefaced by a brief introduction containing any necessary contextual information. Mention may be made, where relevant, of the factors listed under these three headings below. However, these are not checklists and it is not necessary to respond under every heading. No ranking or weighting should be inferred from the order in which items are listed. The sub-panel recognises that not all factors may be appropriate for all sizes of department. In particular, it will not penalise small departments by imposing on them a model of research organisation and activity that can only be met, or can be met much more easily, by larger departments. Any inter-institutional arrangements in relation to the indicators below should be clearly explained.

25. The sub-panel recognises that the discipline also requires a wider infrastructure involving professional activity beyond the level of individual HEIs. It will therefore give credit to the department's contribution to the discipline in its broadest sense – in terms of the conditions that support the development and sustainability of the discipline and promote research in Italian across institutional and national boundaries.

26. Certain activities such as journal editing or conference organisation may contribute to both environment and esteem. Departments should report these activities under whichever heading is most appropriate to the nature and level of their own involvement.

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27. Departments should provide an introduction with any relevant contextual information. This might include details of other UOAs to which related work has been submitted, and any perceived difficulties of fit between departmental structure and the RAE framework. Where a joint submission is made with one or more other institutions, a clear statement should be provided on the nature and extent of the collaboration.

Structure

28. Relevant factors could include:

- a. Institutional structures, and arrangements for allocating resources, that contribute to maintaining the research infrastructure of the discipline (eg, library and IT provision).
- b. Practices and activities which foster a thriving research culture (eg, organisation of conferences and seminar series, editing of a major journal, or acting as a base for a major survey or reference work).
- c. The overall research profile of the department, including the membership and scope of activity or achievements of any research groups or centres.
- d. Any interdisciplinary research activity, including details, where appropriate, of any institutional arrangements for promoting and supporting interdisciplinary or collaborative research, and evidence of how this activity has enhanced the research culture.
- e. Information on any relationships with industry and commerce or other research users, and on responses to public policy initiatives and objectives.
- f. Research income: the award of any competitive external and/or internal funding for research, including a commentary describing any practices which foster a culture of bidding for external funding for research.

29. The sub-panel's assessment will be informed by the standard data analyses of research income provided by the RAE team. In addition, departments should mention in RA5a any grants or research income not administered through an

institution's own accounts, and hence not eligible for inclusion under RA4. Departments should also explain the nature and extent of any internal sources of funding which are targeted at enhancing research and the research environment and the use to which any such funding has been put.

30. Acquisition of external research income will be regarded as a positive indicator. In particular, awards from such bodies as the AHRC, the British Academy, and the ESRC will be acknowledged as demonstrating a recognised level of achievement. The sub-panel will take into account evidence of the successful use of both internally and externally generated funds in terms of outputs, specific enhancement of the department's or school's research environment, or benefit to the wider research community in the field or sub-field. However, the sub-panel recognises that external funding is more easily obtained in some fields than in others, and it will not use the mere volume of activity in this area as an indicator of quality. The attraction of external research income will not be regarded as the primary criterion in assessing the quality of the research environment.

Staff and students

31. Relevant factors could include:

- a. Staff development, and in particular arrangements for developing the research of early career researchers, and integrating them into a wider supportive research culture (eg, via a mentoring system). The sub-panel will take a positive view of departments which, within the census period, have recruited individuals at the beginning of their research careers and of those which have sought to encourage less experienced researchers.
- b. Support for individual staff members' research, eg, travel grants, or IT support.
- c. Arrangements for research leave.
- d. The contribution of staff in Category C to the overall research enterprise, and the integration of such staff into the department (see also paragraph 7 above).

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- e. The contribution of post-doctoral researchers and doctoral students to the research culture of the department. Reference may be made under this heading to outputs by individuals (including PhD students) who do not figure in RA2.
- f. The effects of the departure of staff in Categories B and D on departmental strength, coherence and research culture at the census date. Institutions may also wish to comment on how staff not listed in RA2 support the research environment.
- g. Research students and research studentships. A brief commentary should be provided detailing:
 - the department's or school's strategy with regard to competitive external and/or internal funding for doctoral studentships
 - the existence and content of any facilities and training programmes for postgraduate research students.

32. The sub-panel's assessment will be informed by the standard data analyses of research students and studentships provided by the RAE team. In addition, institutions are advised to list any studentships awarded from competitive overseas sources, which may not have been recorded at institutional level and therefore might not appear in the standard data provided by the RAE team.

33. Due recognition will be given to research student recruitment and degrees awarded, as evidence of an active research culture and the fostering of future development. The award of externally funded research studentships will be taken as a positive indicator. Evidence that an institution is funding studentships to promote future research growth in a particular area will also be looked upon favourably. The circumstances of any such awards should be clearly explained. Departments should also explain the nature and extent of the competition for internal sources of funding for studentships.

34. The sub-panel recognises that different institutions have different opportunities for

developing postgraduate research, and it will not use the mere volume of activity in this area as an indicator of quality.

Strategy

35. This should cover:

- a. The main research objectives of the department and the research activity that is planned over the next five calendar years (2008-12 inclusive). The sub-panel's attention should be drawn to current research work that is not yet producing visible results.
- b. An evaluation of the department's current position with reference to research plans described in RAE2001, including reasons for any significant change of direction/strategy or profile.
- c. Evidence of a research culture and of the potential to develop future research. Clearly formulated plans and descriptions of current research programmes will be viewed more favourably than vague statements of intent.

36. In addition to the outputs reported in RA2, departments may, but do not need to, supply brief summary details of the overall volume (relative to size) and variety of other research outputs they have produced in the assessment period.

37. The sub-panel will weight the research environment as 20% of the overall quality profile. In allocating a quality profile to the research environment, the sub-panel will have discretion whether to assign a single overall score, as might be appropriate in assessing a very small department, or whether to allocate separate scores for the three sub-headings of structure, staff and students, and strategy.

Esteem indicators

38. Departments should list indicators of peer esteem and national and international recognition relating to all categories of staff. Submissions should concentrate on the most significant indicators rather than seek to provide an exhaustive list. Esteem indicators should be linked

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to the names of the individuals to whom they apply. They will normally require an individual to be active outside their home institution. However, see also paragraph 26.

39. Researchers cannot reasonably be expected to cite as many indicators early in their careers as they might be able to cite at a later stage. Even with respect to experienced researchers, the following list of indicators is intended only as a guide to the sort of evidence that the sub-panel is seeking, not as a list of qualifications that each researcher should possess. No ranking or weighting should be inferred from the order in which items are listed. In making its assessment the sub-panel will also take into account any individual circumstances cited in RA5b.

40. Any inter-institutional arrangements in relation to the indicators below should be clearly explained.

41. Indicators which the sub-panel will regard highly include *inter alia*:

- a. Evidence of significant recognition of the work (eg, substantial review articles or inclusion in anthologies).
- b. Translation of work into foreign languages.
- c. Academic honours, fellowships, and prizes (including election to learned societies).
- d. Visiting professorships or lectureships.
- e. Invited participation in major national and international conferences, including participation in conferences on the basis of a peer reviewed proposal.
- f. Keynote lectures or addresses at plenary sessions of major conferences.
- g. Prominent public dissemination of research findings.
- h. Editorship for refereed journals or book series.
- i. Membership of editorial boards for refereed journals or book series.
- j. Refereeing work for publishers and journals.

- k. Membership of research sponsor evaluation panels (eg, AHRC, the British Academy, or ESRC) or refereeing research grant applications.
 - l. Regular reviewing for named journal(s).
 - m. Professional service to the subject community, eg, serving as chair, officer, or committee member of a learned society or association.
 - n. External assessor for chair appointments and departmental reviews in other HEIs.
 - o. Participation in overseas research assessment activities.
 - p. External examining for research degrees.
42. Esteem indicators will be weighted as 5% of the overall quality profile of a submission.

Individual staff circumstances

43. Departments should use RA5b to indicate any individual staff circumstances which have significantly affected an individual's contribution to the submission, not only in terms of the number of outputs submitted, but also, where appropriate, in relation to the research environment and esteem indicators.

44. In assessing submissions, the sub-panel will take account of all individual staff circumstances cited in relation to the categories covered in paragraph 39 of the generic statement.

45. Having considered information provided on individual staff circumstances, the sub-panel may decide to reduce the expected number of research outputs to a number consistent with the circumstances described. The number of outputs used in calculating the quality profile for the department will be adjusted accordingly. However, the sub-panel will not make any adjustments to the assessment of the quality of a given output or outputs.

46. No consideration will be given to any circumstances affecting an individual which may be known to sub-panel members but which are not described in RA5b.

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Working methods

Quality descriptors

47. When assessing the quality of outputs, the sub-panel will apply the same criteria to all outputs, regardless of the form. The following criteria will be used as appropriate:

- a. **Originality:** an intellectual advance or an important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge. This may include substantive empirical findings, new interpretations or insights, development of new theoretical frameworks and conceptual models, and innovative methodologies.
- b. **Significance:** imaginative scope; importance of the issues addressed; impact or implications for other researchers and users.
- c. **Rigour:** intellectual coherence, methodological precision and analytical power; accuracy and depth of scholarship; evidence of awareness of and appropriate engagement with other work in the field or sub-field.

48. The sub-panel will work with the definitions of the quality levels set out in Annex 1. The following paragraphs describe how the sub-panel will interpret these with regard to the particular areas of research for which it is responsible.

49. The sub-panel considers **4* quality research** to be work which is world-leading because it is, or ought to be, an essential point of reference in its field or sub-field and makes a contribution of which every serious researcher in the field or sub-field ought to be aware. It will display the highest attainable standards of originality, significance and rigour. Outputs that are to be graded 4* will be exceptional in quality. However, the sub-panel considers 4* to be a realistic and attainable quality level. In assessing research environment and esteem, the sub-panel will seek to ensure that it does not set unrealistically high standards for 4* or treat this quality level in such a way that it is only attainable by certain types or sizes of department.

50. The sub-panel considers **3* quality research** to be work which is or ought to be a major point of reference in its field or sub-field, and which

makes a contribution of which most serious researchers in the field or sub-field ought to be aware. It will be excellent with respect to the criteria of originality, significance and rigour.

51. The sub-panel considers **2* quality research** to be work which makes a substantial contribution to its field or sub-field, and which is likely to inform subsequent work. It will display high standards of achievement with respect to the criteria of originality, significance and rigour.

52. The sub-panel considers **1* quality research** to be work which makes a contribution to its field or sub-field. It will display satisfactory standards of achievement with respect to the criteria of originality, significance and rigour.

53. The sub-panel will assess the quality of the research environment in terms of the extent to which it supports or is capable of supporting research activity as defined in the quality levels. The sub-panel will assess the quality of esteem in terms of the extent to which it reflects research activity as defined in the quality levels.

54. The sub-panel's understanding of the terms 'world-leading', 'international' and 'national' in the generic definitions of the quality levels (see Annex 1) relates to the actual, likely or deserved impact of the work on the community of researchers operating in the field or sub-field. It does not assume any necessary international exposure in terms of publication or reception, or any necessary research content in terms of topic or approach.

55. The assessment will take the form of peer review based on professional judgement.

56. All sub-panel members will read each submission.

57. The sub-panel collectively will examine in detail virtually all research outputs submitted. The sub-panel will seek to ensure that all cited research output is assessed by at least one member, according to the individual's expertise. In difficult or problematic cases, individual items of cited research will be assessed by a second member of the sub-panel, and there will also be sampling of items by a second reader. The two readers will make a joint recommendation regarding the quality of the outputs to the sub-

panel. Normally, one sub-panel member will not read more than two outputs submitted by one individual.

58. Individual sub-panel members will make their own initial assessment of all the submissions and arrive at preliminary judgements before the first sub-panel meeting in the assessment phase. Submissions will then be discussed by the whole sub-panel in order to identify problematic cases. During the reading or examination of the cited research output, particular attention will be given to these cases. At its later meetings, the sub-panel will seek to achieve consensus on the individual elements which contribute to the recommended final quality profile. If this is not possible, these elements will be determined by voting.

Joint submissions and collaborative research

59. Joint submissions will be considered in the same way as all other submissions to the UOA. Departments are asked to clarify in RA5 the nature and extent of the collaboration leading to the joint submission.

Additional information requested

60. Departments may provide in RA5a brief summary information about research outputs in excess of those cited in RA2. The sub-panel will take account of this information in assessing the research environment (see paragraph 36).

