

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Consultation on the second Research Excellence Framework

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To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales
Response by: 17 March 2017
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This circular announces the publication of a UK-wide consultation on arrangements for the second Research Excellence Framework (REF).

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email info@hefcw.ac.uk.



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Introduction

1. This circular announces the publication of a UK-wide consultation on arrangements for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Background

2. The consultation document on arrangements for the next REF has been developed jointly by the four UK higher education funding bodies. It sets out proposals to build on the first REF, conducted in 2014, and incorporates the principles identified in Lord Nicholas Stern's Independent Review of the REF.

Consultation Proposals

3. Lord Stern's review acknowledged that the processes used to assess research excellence are well understood by the academic community and have, broadly speaking, delivered well in their objective to improve quality. The consultation proposes an exercise which is broadly similar in approach to the 2014 REF.
4. The recommendations made in Lord Stern's review are intended to reduce the burden and any distortions associated with the REF process while maintaining and improving incentives for research excellence. These include recommendations relating to:
 - the inclusion of all research-active staff
 - non-portability of research outputs
 - the approach to research impact
 - information required to assess the research environment
 - the introduction of an element of institutional-level assessment of impact and environment.
5. Alongside implementation of Lord Stern's recommendations, the consultation also makes proposals on the basis of evidence gathered in other REF2014 evaluation activity.
6. The consultation document can be accessed on the HEFCE website at www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/refconsultation/
A link to the consultation document has also been published alongside this circular (under Secondary Documents).

Responses

7. Responses to the consultation should be made using the [online form](#) which is available on the HEFCE website alongside the consultation document. The deadline for responses is **noon on Friday, 17 March 2017**.
8. All responses made using the online form will be submitted directly to HEFCE, in order to allow for a single, UK-wide analysis. Following the submission deadline, HEFCE will copy responses from Wales to HEFCW, and we will also undertake our own analysis of those responses.

Further information

9. For further information, contact Linda Tiller (tel 029 2085 9715; email linda.tiller@hefcw.ac.uk) or Anna Lang (tel 0117 931 7302; email researchpolicy@hefce.ac.uk).