



Updates from the RQI team

Welcome to this newsletter edition from the Research Quality and Impact team. Please see important news items and reminders below. You can view all previous newsletters on our [Updates from the RQI team page](#).

News

Relaunch of Impact Support Network

RQI are re-launching the University's Impact Support Network. The purpose of the Network is to provide a University-wide network for all Professional Services and academics who directly lead and/or support impact development for the REF. We aim to:

- Improve collaboration and networking opportunities between academic colleagues for the purposes of developing research impact
- Strengthen and explore best practice for Professional Services support related to research impact
- Provide timely updates and news on developments with REF, impact case studies and other sector-wide issues in relation to impact
- Facilitate collective and collaborative work on the REF submission
- Offer a forum for discussion and opportunities to present research or other work that members may benefit from or otherwise have an interest in
- Provide a forum for developing and delivering impact training

Over the coming weeks and months, RQI will be hosting a re-launch event for the Impact Support Network, devising topics for discussion and publishing an itinerary for regular monthly meetings designed for mutual support, networking and the sharing of ideas and collaborative, impact-focused research. If you have a significant responsibility for impact in your role and would like to join the network, please contact rqi@sussex.ac.uk. Further details to follow.

REF2029 Volume Measure and associated Code of Practice guidance published

REF published the [REF2029 Volume Measure guidance](#) and the associated [Code of Practice guidance](#) on 16 January, alongside an [Overview of the assessment framework](#).

The volume measure in REF2029 will be used to determine the number of outputs and impact case studies required for each UoA submission. It ensures that the scale of an institution's submission aligns with its research capacity, and the basic formula of staff x 2.5 to calculate the volume of outputs required carries over from REF2021. However, there are also some changes from previous exercises:

- The volume measure is based on contracts rather than individuals (so if someone has held both eligible and ineligible contracts during the relevant period, only the FTE associated with the eligible contract will be used to calculate the volume measure).
- For REF2029, the eligibility of outputs for submission to the REF exercise is not tied to the volume measure.
- An average FTE across two HESA staff returns will be used in the calculation of the volume measure. REF's [Initial decisions](#) page outlined the funding bodies' intention to calculate the volume measure for REF2029 using data held in the HESA Staff record. REF2029 is the first such exercise that will use HESA data rather than a staff census date. This move is intended to improve the robustness of the data, avoid a REF census-date cliff-edge, and reduce the number of data collection exercises. [See REF's overview page here](#).

REF2029 People, Culture & Environment Pilot guidance published

On 14 January, REF updated their PCE pages with the guidance and template being used for the pilot exercise, and opportunities for the community to join events to discuss the pilot further.

[The guidance](#) has been developed as part of the work to develop the PCE assessment for REF2029. The REF team are exploring this through two key projects:

- [PCE Indicators Project](#): A project led by Technopolis and CRAC-Vitae, in collaboration with several sector organisations, has developed indicators for assessing PCE. The project team engaged extensively with the research community through workshops and a sector survey to co-develop a shortlist of indicators to be used to evidence and support institutions' PCE submissions.
- [PCE Pilot](#): The PCE Pilot is being delivered by the REF team to trial PCE assessment for REF2029. A broad sample of HEIs (not including Sussex) are taking part in the pilot by preparing submissions in a sample of REF UoAs and at institution level. These submissions will draw on the indicators developed by the PCE Indicators Project and will be assessed by a group of pilot panels composed of experts in research assessment, and in PCE generally, within academia.

Pilot Guidance

[The guidance](#) for the Pilot gives participating HEIs flexibility in how they approach their submissions, and flexibility to assessment panels in how they approach the assessment. The Pilot will help the REF team to refine their approach and so any final template and guidance for PCE assessment in REF2029 may vary significantly from the pilot. As such, the REF team do not recommend that these documents are used for decision making outside of the Pilot itself. The Pilot will produce recommendations that will be published in September 2025 and the final criteria and definitions for PCE in REF2029 will be published winter 2025-26. [See REF's overview page here](#).

[Click here to read more about the PCE pilot, along with the included UoAs and the pilot panel membership.](#)

REF2029 main- and sub-panel recruitment now open

REF's main and sub-panels are at the heart of the REF assessment process, and they bring together specialist expertise in each UoA. There are four main panels and 34 sub-panels.

REF are seeking to recruit members to their main and sub-panels for REF 2029. Please note, you must have the support of your UoA to apply for a panel role.

The closing date for sub-panel chair and deputy chair applications is **midday 6 February**.

The application form will remain open for all other roles until **midday 28 April 2025**.

You can apply for the following roles:

- Sub-panel member (including chair and deputy chair)
- Main panel international expert
- Main panel PCE expert
- Main panel user expert
- Main panel interdisciplinary expert

[See REF's overview page here](#), and [click here to apply](#).

Sussex Awards now open for nominations

The new Sussex Awards programme recognises the brilliant work of our Professional Services, academic staff and our postgraduate researchers, along with groups of staff and students, across a range of award categories. The Education, Research Culture and Research Impact Awards have been brought together, along with new categories, giving Sussex more opportunities to celebrate the breadth of work taking place across our Faculties and Divisions.

There are 15 broad categories covering education and students, global and civic engagement, research and innovation, and other areas, providing opportunities to nominate colleagues across the many various roles in our community. The awards have been combined and extended to make them more inclusive for all Sussex staff, including Professional Services in Schools and Divisions, responding to feedback on previous awards programmes.

You can nominate individuals or groups of staff in almost every category, and postgraduate researchers are eligible in many categories too.

Judging panels will review all the nominations, and shortlisted nominees will be invited to an awards ceremony at the Attenborough Centre on Tuesday 6 May 2025, where the winners will be revealed.

[Click here to see the award categories and to submit a nomination](#).

Reminders

Send ERA info to RQI

RQI maintain a central list of External Research Advisor (ERA) information. Please send the following details of any ERAs associated with your School/UoA to rqi@sussex.ac.uk:

- ERA's name

- ERA's institution

Training

Elements Assessment Module training sessions

Going forward, please contact the RQI team directly (rqi@sussex.ac.uk) to request a one-on-one or group overview/training session on the Elements Assessment Module. Please let the team know your Unit of Assessment and how you will be interacting with the module in your role (if known), so the session can be tailored to your needs.

If you do not wish to be included in this distribution list or would like an individual or team to be added, please reply to this email with details.

[Research Quality and Impact Team](#)

Research and Innovation

Falmer House

rqi@sussex.ac.uk

<https://twitter.com/SussexUniRQI>