

The Responsible Use of Research Metrics at the University of Portsmouth

Part 3

Putting the Principles into Practice

Moving forward, we will further embed these principles in our policies and practices in the following ways.

A. The appointment of staff to roles that have a responsibility for research.

Applicants are asked to identify which, in their view, are their best outputs (up to a maximum of three) in terms of quality and to provide a short justification of that in terms of:

- (i) the research,
- (ii) its significance and contribution to knowledge (in terms of the research area/discipline to which we wish to appoint), and,
- (iii) their personal contribution to the output (case where there are co-authors) in terms of research idea, data processing and analysis, and write-up of results.

At the shortlisting stage the panel will take these summaries, in addition to all other information provided by the applicant, into consideration in determining those candidates to be invited for interview. At the shortlisting meeting the Panel will also agree as to which member of the Panel will take the lead in questioning the candidate (at interview) based on these summaries and a reading of the underlying papers.

At the interview stage this line of enquiry will enable the Panel to form a view as to the quality of the candidate's research. This expert judgement will then be taken into account, along with any other metrics that might be gainfully employed in informing research-related recruitment decisions. We insist that all such judgements/decisions employ metrics in a responsible manner and are in line with the eight principles governing the use of metrics in decisions relating to research at the University of Portsmouth.

The opinion on the candidate's research will be combined with the degree to which the candidate fulfils the other essential/desirable role attributes, in determining who should be offered the post.

A. The promotion of staff (research route).

The DVC and the co-authors of this document have reviewed the current University Promotions Policy (November 2019) and have agreed it fully complies with the principles outlined in *The Responsible Use of Research Metrics at the University of Portsmouth*.

B. Research Assessment (REF2021).

The decision to submit staff to REF2021 at Portsmouth is determined by whether they have a significant responsibility (>20% FTE) for research (as determined by the University Workload Planning System) and are independent researchers. The way these are defined and determined are laid down in the University's Code of Conduct. Neither of these criteria are directly dependent upon the quality of outputs produced, although in some instances the significant responsibility for research criteria may be indirectly related to output quality (case where output quality is a feature of a Faculty workload planning model – see [d] below).

The selection of outputs for REF2021 is DORA compliant, and is based upon output quality where: “... quality of outputs is based on academic judgement, and is developed through a combination of self-assessment, internal peer review, and external expert assessment (P.15).”

C. The use of quantitative research metrics in other areas.

The University recognises that there may be instances where quantitative metrics can play a useful role in informing decisions relating to research assessment and evaluation, as well as supporting research activity in a wider sense. This might include, for example, decisions about workload allocations for research, the awarding of sabbaticals, the selection of staff for membership of committees (internal and external) or identified preferred candidates to enter in external grant competitions (i.e., cases where demand management is in operation).

While we do not want to be overly prescriptive in how metrics might be gainfully employed in informing all research-related decisions and judgements, we do insist that all such judgements/decisions must use metrics in a responsible manner. In all such cases, our practices should be in line with the eight principles governing the use of metrics in decisions relating to research at the University of Portsmouth.