REF-2021

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http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/ref
REF

- Assesses the quality of our work in relation to
  - outputs (publications and other outputs) [60%]
  - societal and economic impact of our research [25%]
  - research environment [15%]

- Scored as a profile over
  - 4* - world leading
  - 3* - internationally excellent
  - 2* - recognised internationally
  - 1* - recognised nationally

- Our aim: Maximise $f(\text{score-distribution}, \text{num-submitted})$
  - Maximise average score – reputationally important
  - Maximise avg-score*num-submitted – financially important
Outputs

- REF-eligible staff (i.e. independent researchers) each return 1–5 outputs (average 2.5/FTE, at least 1/individual)
- Outputs must have been first made publicly available between 1 Jan 2014 – 31 Dec 2020. Outputs for current staff produced at their former institution during that period are eligible.
- Open-access policy
  - REF outputs must be open-access
  - published papers must be uploaded to PURE within 3 months of acceptance

http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/ref/outputs
http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/ref/ref-open-access-policy
Assessment of Outputs

• Output assessed by a subject-specific panel
  • ~15-20 members
  • we submit to UoA-11 (Computer Science & Informatics)

• Assessment is in terms of
  • **Originality**: important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge in the field
  • **Significance**: (potential to) influence knowledge and scholarly thought
  • **Rigour**: intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, sources, theories and/or methodologies
Scoring

- REF uses a 1–4* scoring system
  - 4* *World leading* ("agenda-setting", "great novelty", "forefront of research area", "major influence")
  - 3* *Internationally excellent* ("important contributions", "significant influence")
  - 2* *Recognised internationally* ("useful knowledge", "incremental advances", "influence")
  - 1* *Recognised nationally* ("minor influence")
  - 0 *Unclassified* (below 1* or out of scope)
The “100 words”

• A 100-word statement for each output that you write to support the quality of the output

• Different to the abstract!
  • include additional information which support the quality (significance, rigour, originality) of the output
  • factual information, additional evidence
  • do not repeat what is in the paper
  • can be fewer than 100 words if it gets the message across

• Will be very important in REF-2021 (e.g. at the 3*/4* boundary)
What should go in the 100 words?

- Evidence of significance
- Best paper award
- Future funding
- Resulting commercialisation
- Links to policy
- Links to new collaborations
- Quality of publication venue
100 words – *dos and don’ts*

- **Do** be concise – and start with a single sentence which explains why the work is significant
- **Do** provide factual evidence (e.g. accept rate of conference)
- **Don’t** provide citation data (not allowed)
- **Don’t** be negative or self-deprecating
- **Don’t** repeat items in the abstract or the paper
- **Don’t** explain how the research was funded
- **Do** mention if the work led to future funding, commercialisation, or collaboration
- **Do** have evidence if you use phrases like “the first”
- **Do** mention awards, invited keynotes arising from the paper
- **Don’t** write in first-person
- **Don’t** assume a good publication venue will guarantee 4*
Actions

• By 24 April please do the following:
  • Update/select your proposed REF outputs on PURE – https://www.pure.ed.ac.uk
    use tab 'Propose Outputs for REF 2021'
    select up to 6 outputs
  • Draft the 100-word statement for each output
  • (Ignore the PURE text box 'Co-authored output? Please describe your contribution')
  • Co-peer-review your 100-word statements with one or more colleagues in your institute, and update accordingly
  • Quality not quantity: one 4* output is worth more to us than five 3* outputs!
• Timetable
  • Now: REF-eligible staff select outputs and draft 100-word statements
  • May-June: school prepares updated mock-REF submission
  • Autumn 2019 - Summer 2020: Improving the submission
  • November 2020: University submission to REF
  • December 2021 (?): Results of REF-2021

• Informatics REF Team
  • Bjoern Franke <bfranke@inf.ed.ac.uk> – Impact
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Questions?