



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
informatics

REF-2021

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8 April 2019

<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 $f(\text{score-distribution, num-submitted})$
 - Maximise average score – reputationally important
 - Maximise $\text{avg-score} * \text{num-submitted}$ – 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

- 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
 - Janet Ball <janet.ball@ed.ac.uk> – Research Services
 - Steve Renals <s.renals@ed.ac.uk> – REF coordination
 - Victoria Lindstrom <victoria.lindstrom@ed.ac.uk> – Research Data Manager



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Questions?