



Tertiary Education Commission  
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

**Performance-Based Research Fund**  
Education panel-specific guidelines 2012  
Quality Evaluation

## Introduction

The Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) 2012 Panels have developed guidelines to assist staff members with the processes of developing and submitting Evidence Portfolios (EPs). These guidelines provide advice on specific areas that relate to the subject area of Education and do not replace or supersede the requirements for EPs that are set out in the *PBRF Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012*.

The Education panel-specific guidelines must be read in conjunction with the *PBRF Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012*. In areas where the panel-specific guidelines do not provide additional information, this is because the advice provided in the *PBRF Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012* applies.

The panel will be primarily interested in assessing the quality of the NROs and the staff member's contribution to them, and can also take into account the quality of the outlets through which the research has been published.

Please note that peer review panels assess EPs without reference to Quality Categories gained by staff members from their participation in the 2003 and/or 2006 Quality Evaluations.

## Education panel-specific guidelines

### Description of panel coverage

The Education Panel assesses EPs in one subject Education, which covers the areas set out below. These areas are based on the NZARE list of educational research interests. They should be considered a guide – they are not intended to be exhaustive.

Areas covered: Philosophy of education; history of education; sociology of education; educational anthropology; comparative education; educational administration; education management and leadership; educational politics and policy; educational planning; educational development; economics of education, educational psychology; teaching and learning; human development; child development; social psychology; applied behavioural analysis; behaviour management; educational counselling and guidance; special education; disability studies; atypicality and exceptionalism; alternative education; assessment; educational programme evaluation; educational research methods/design/data analysis; ICT in education; educational technology; teacher education; Māori education; kaupapa Māori education; mātauranga Māori education; bilingual education; multi-cultural education; Pacific education; early childhood education; primary education; secondary education; tertiary education; adult and community education; continuing education; parent education; curriculum studies including studies in any subject areas taught in initial teacher education and New Zealand schools; gender education; sexuality education; language and literacy education; and other areas of educational research.

The Education Panel could also consider research into related areas such as health education, nurse education, speech and language education, professional education and development of human services personnel, particularly if the discipline of education is a key focus. Otherwise it might be more appropriate that the EP is sent to the subject specific panel with a cross-referral to the Education Panel.

Māori education research (including kaupapa Māori education research and mātauranga Māori education research) will be considered by the Education Panel but may in some cases be referred to the Māori Knowledge and Development Panel.

Where an EP has a focus on the creative and performing arts such as art, drama, dance etc., and/or a curriculum subject area such as English, social science, science, mathematics etc., but where the context is primarily education/teacher education, the following guide should apply. If the Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) are

primarily concerned with the pedagogy of education in relation to the particular curriculum area, even in the context of an exhibition or a performance, the EP should be assessed by the Education Panel with a possible cross-referral to the Creative and Performing Arts Panel and/or the relevant subject specific panel. This does not prevent staff members, whose subject specific research also addresses pedagogy, from submitting their EP to a subject based panel.

### **Cross-Referrals**

It is expected that most **cross-referrals** to the Education Panel will come from the following panels: Humanities Law; Social Sciences and Other Cultural/Social Sciences; Māori Knowledge and Development; Health; and Creative and Performing Arts.

The membership of peer review panels is designed to enable panels to assess the quality of research in most areas, including those which have a professional or applied outcome. It is recognised, however, that a small number of staff members will have research outputs that require expert advice from outside the scope of the panel membership and/or that may need to be considered by one of the two Expert Advisory Groups.

### **Expectations for standard of evidence to be supplied**

Much of the work in education is designed to inform professional practice, particularly within New Zealand but also in international arenas. Such work is entirely appropriate and the key consideration is the extent to which the work meets the PBRF Definition of Research (and see this panel's Elaboration of the Definition of Research immediately below). The primary consideration is the scholarly significance of the output along with evidence of the quality-assurance process.

It is expected that most research outputs submitted will be quality-assured. Quality assurance will include peer-review for journals, referee reports for books and conference papers, and other equivalent quality-assurance processes. If a non-standard quality-assurance process has been used, e.g. in relation to practice-based research outputs (such as a commissioned report) or creative research outputs (such as a film, video or exhibition), staff members are expected to explain in the "Description" field precisely how quality has been assured for the NRO.

Staff members completing EPs may wish to indicate in some way the relative ranking a journal may have, or note other impact factors pertinent to the field of education and, in particular, its influence/impact in the researcher's specific field which could be interdisciplinary.

## **Elaboration of the definition of Research**

Researchers in practice-related areas (such as curriculum or teaching-related research) are encouraged to explain clearly how the activities reported in their NROs meet the requirements of the PBRF Definition of Research. (For the PBRF Definition of Research, see general Guidelines Chapter 1 Section D: What Counts as Research?).

A précis of the theoretical approach, research methodology and/or underpinnings should be included in the "Description" field for each NRO. This will also be necessary in relation to any creative outputs.

Descriptive reports of classroom practice are not usually counted as research. But an analytic study, set in the context of other research, can be the basis of research. An example of professional practice that could count as research is a research-informed professional initiative or study that has had an impact nationally and/or internationally on education practice. In contrast, and not counting would be, for example, a single classroom study or initiative where there the evidence of impact is insufficient or the study lacks a systematic approach.

Preparation or revision of curriculum documents is not normally regarded as research, but a study of the intellectual processes involved in their development and the consultation of other research literature may be counted as research. Preparation or revision of a standard text with no evidence of critical analysis and innovation, or explicit consideration of other peoples' ideas, is unlikely to meet the requirements of the PBRF Definition of Research; but preparation of a text analysing and/or synthesising the latest information in the field covered, discussing controversies, guiding students understanding, and underpinned with references, is likely to count as research.

## **Types of research output**

The quality of education research can be demonstrated in a number of ways, including its influence on other researchers working in similar areas, or on curriculum development, education policy, and practice. The discipline of education has a clear dissemination role, demonstrating the practical significance of a range of disciplines.

The most common types of research output that contribute to a Research Output (RO) are likely to be refereed journal articles, books, chapter contributions to books, conference presentations, research reports and proceedings, and doctoral theses. Other types of research output could include written, oral, electronic, or creative works. Refereed journal articles and published chapters will rank higher than conference presentations and proceedings, although it is recognised that there maybe exceptions that could be justified. Within the conference context, an invited keynote

presentation could get a favourable weighting, although this could be listed under Peer Esteem.

Some research outputs, such as scholarly books, are more substantial and take longer to produce than others. An edited collection does not rate the same as a book, and the EP should make evident the extent of the staff member's intellectual and written contribution. The panel will take account of these matters in appraising outputs including the recognition of the difference between edited collections of wide international status and reach, and local/in house collections.

New Zealand journals and publications are valued, particularly insofar as they increase the potential for New Zealand research to make a difference for children, students and teachers in this country. Meeting the criteria for A and B grade EPs, however, in most cases would assume that the staff member is also publishing internationally. (It is recognised that there are international publications that indicate genuine international dissemination as well as international journals that are in reality local journals from other countries.) Staff members are advised to clearly set the context of their NRO publications, because all are valid.

Excluded material includes media interviews, presentations to schools, and school journal writing. These may, however, be relevant to the Peer Esteem component and/or the Contribution to the Environment component of the EP.

Any textbooks submitted must have a research component.

TEOs should note that all research outputs included in EPs must be consistent with the PBRF Definition of Research, as set out in the general Guidelines, and must be accompanied by evidence as to quality.

### **Additional advice from expert advisory groups**

EPs can be referred to an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) by either a TEO or by the Chair of a peer review panel.

Where an EP has been referred to an EAG and has **at least one** NRO that meets the criteria set out by that EAG, additional advice can be sought. A score and opinion on the EP will be provided back to the peer review panel the EP is assigned to.

The criteria that will determine whether or not the Pacific Research and the Professional and Applied Research EAGs will accept EPs for consideration will be published on the TEC website.

### **Indications of the minimum quantity of research output expected to be produced during the**

The general Guidelines apply. See Chapter 2 Section C: Guidelines for Completing the Research Output (RO), Component and Chapter 3 Section C: Assessing and

**assessment period**

Scoring the Three Components of an EP.

In relation to new and emerging researchers, the general Guidelines apply: Assessing New and Emerging Researchers.

Recognising that many staff members in the field of education are still acquiring higher degrees, a doctoral thesis (Ph.D or professional Ed.D) is a valid quality assured output and maybe selected as an NRO. Conference presentations and proceedings are generally given lesser weight as NROs. The general rule for a C(NE) applied by the Education Panel is at minimum, a doctoral thesis and two refereed journal articles, OR four refereed journal articles, OR equivalent.

For new researchers who have doctorates in progress, the guideline of four refereed journal articles, or equivalent, as NROs is applied for an EP to be ranked as a C(NE).

The Education Panel will consider the variations in collaborative and solo work and would usually expect to see a balance.

**Special circumstances**

The general Guidelines apply (see this Chapter 2 Section F: Dealing with Special Circumstances).

**Definitions of Quality Categories**

The general Guidelines apply, see the topic: What do the Quality Categories Mean? in Chapter 3 Section A: Panel Assessment: Introduction, and the final three topics of Chapter 3 Section D: Assessing and Scoring the Three Components of an EP – starting with Scoring an EP: Allocating Points for Research Outputs.

**Treatment of non-standard, non-quality-assured and jointly produced research outputs**

The general Guidelines apply, see the topics: Quality-Assured and Non-Quality-Assured Research Outputs and Outputs involving Joint Research in Chapter 2 Section C: Guidelines for Completing the Research Output Component.

Where there are multiple authors, staff members must ensure that their contribution to the research output is clearly defined in the "My Contribution" section. In cases where co-authors include the same NRO in their EPs, staff members are encouraged to confer about the details of their contributions, to ensure that there is no conflict in the information provided.

**Proportions of Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) to be examined<sup>1</sup>**

It is intended that the Education Panel will examine 25% of all NROs in EPs submitted to it.

**Use of specialist advisers**

The general Guidelines apply, see the topic: Using a

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<sup>1</sup> "Examined" is defined as either reading an NRO in full, substantially or sufficiently to make an informed assessment, or (for NROs which by their nature cannot be read) an equivalent level of scrutiny.

Specialist Adviser in Chapter 3 Section B: Allocating EPs to Panel Members and Obtaining Additional Input.

**Elaboration of the descriptor and tie-points for the Research Output (RO) component**

**The RO component descriptor**

The general Guidelines apply, see topics: Scoring the RO component and Scoring an EP: Allocating points for research outputs in Chapter 3 Section C: Assessing and Scoring the Three Components of an EP.

It is recognised that there can be a wide range of standards of refereeing applied to journals and other outputs.

When an NRO has multiple authors, it is vital that the notes indicate the personal contribution of the staff member.

*Tie-points*

The general Guidelines apply (see Chapter 3, Section C: Scoring an EP: Allocating Points for Research Outputs).

**Elaboration of the descriptor and tie-points for the Peer Esteem (PE) component**

**The PE component descriptor**

The general Guidelines apply, see topic: Scoring an EP: Allocating points for peer esteem in Chapter 3 Section C: Assessing and Scoring the Three Components of an EP.

Peer esteem must be related to research and its impact, rather than to teaching or professional practice, although peer esteem from the profession concerning the impact of a staff member's research is valid. Some examples relevant to education are the following:

- Invitations from end-user professional groups to present research findings and/or to consider the pedagogical impact in of research.
- Examining theses for another institution – the name of institution and the date should be stated.
- Invitations to provide expert advice on research related matters to an education agency, institution, panel, review, taskforce, commission etc.
- Participation in relevant degree of professional qualification – accreditation panels.
- Citations are valid, but also noting that citation indexes are not a particularly effective measure of peer esteem or impact in some fields of education where, for example, citations in policy or curriculum documents may also be valid as PE and yet are not counted in the citation index.

*Tie-points*

The general Guidelines apply (see Chapter3, Section C: Scoring an EP: Allocating Points for Peer Esteem).



**Elaboration of the descriptor and tie-points for the Contribution to the Research Environment (CRE) component**

**The CRE component descriptor**

The general Guidelines apply, see topic: Scoring an EP: Allocating points for contribution to the research environment in Chapter 3 Section C: Assessing and Scoring the Three Components of an EP.

Some examples relevant to education are these:

- Mentoring new researchers, including colleagues and postgraduate students. (This can be particularly important in education owing to the emergent nature of research in many organisations. Evidence of the benefits of mentoring to other researchers would be helpful. For example: supporting a scholarship or refereeing for a position or an award.)
- Influencing national and international education research and government policies and priorities.
- Citing the numbers of doctoral or masters students currently being supervised and/or completed including the proportion of this supervision and role.
- Contributing to furthering understandings of education in multidisciplinary disciplinary studies and endeavours.
- Leadership in, influence of, and research contributions to relevant professional associations and bodies.

*Tie-points*

The general Guidelines apply (see Chapter 3, Section C: Scoring an EP: Allocating Points for Contribution to the Research Environment).

**Other relevant information required for panel assessors to accurately assign Quality Categories to EPs**

While the general Guidelines will apply, this discipline has well-researched challenges for educational researchers, particularly teacher educators. These include high teaching loads and the transition challenge for those who have moved from the schools sector where leading research was rarely part of their role. In addition some colleges have merged with universities within the PBRF timeline. Many staff members in the field of education are still acquiring degrees, recognised earlier. The Education panel-specific guidelines acknowledge these matters, and endeavour to give clarity to the value of research relevant to the profession of education.