



Tertiary Education Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

Performance-Based Research Fund

Sector Reference Group – Consultation Paper #4
Establishing a Pacific Research Peer Review Panel

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Purpose

1. As a part of the review of the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF), the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment requested an investigation into the operational feasibility of establishing a peer review panel for Pacific research before the 2018 Quality Evaluation.
2. The Sector Reference Group (SRG) has sought advice from experts in the field of Pacific research¹ in the development of the proposal detailed in this paper (see Appendix 1 for details).
3. The paper has been prepared as part of design of the 2018 Quality Evaluation process. Specifically it:
 - sets out the background of the inclusion and assessment of Pacific research in the context of the Quality Evaluation process;
 - outlines the proposal for the establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel and the rationale;
 - sets out the objective and principles for this panel, along with the potential issues and mitigation actions;
 - invites feedback on the proposal set out in this paper; and
 - invites feedback on any other matters relating to the proposed panel not covered in this paper.

Design principles for the 2018 Quality Evaluation

4. The work of the SRG in the design of the 2018 Quality Evaluation is based on the following principles and considerations:
 - upholding the objectives and aims of the PBRF set out in Appendix 2;
 - drawing on the lessons learned as part of the previous Quality Evaluations;
 - accessing relevant experience and expertise across the SRG and the wider tertiary education sector;
 - ensuring that any proposed changes are exposed to rigorous sector and expert scrutiny;
 - achieving a level of consensus regarding how the 2018 Quality Evaluation should be conducted; and
 - avoiding changes that result in unreasonable compliance or high costs unless there is a robust rationale that indicates changes will result in significant improvements.

¹ The term “Pacific research” as used in this paper relates to the topic or subject of Pacific research rather than the ethnicity of researchers.

Background

5. In the *Investing in Excellence* report produced by the 2002 Working Group on the design and implementation of the PBRF, the Working Group acknowledged the need to ensure that the PBRF design fully recognises quality in Māori and Pacific research, and avoids discouraging the development of Māori and Pacific research capability.²
6. A peer review panel was established to assess Māori research (Māori Knowledge and Development) and while the Working Group raised matters of specific relevance to Pacific research, a peer review panel focused on Pacific research was not recommended at that time.
7. The Working Group did however recommend that the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) convene “an ‘esteemed body’ of Pacific researchers to help define excellence in Pacific research and develop guidance for the peer review panels and expert advisers on Pacific research.”
8. A PBRF Pacific Advisory Group (see Appendix 3 for membership) subsequently developed guidelines on Pacific research that were incorporated into the general guidelines for the 2003 Quality Evaluation. These same Pacific research guidelines were then reproduced in the 2006 Guidelines, streamlined in form but essentially unchanged in content (see Appendix 4).
9. For the 2003 assessment, three of the 11 peer review panels included a Pacific member and five of the Pacific Advisory Group’s members were appointed as specialist advisers, along with a sixth subject-matter expert to provide all panels with additional input should it be required. It was unknown how much Pacific research was contained in the Evidence Portfolios (EPs) submitted for assessment, however, only one EP was referred to a specialist adviser.
10. In the 2006 Quality Evaluation, three of the 12 peer review panels included a Pacific member and again only one EP was sent to a specialist adviser. However, EPs could be flagged as including ‘Pacific’ research in accordance with the Pacific research guidelines. This resulted in 562 EPs being categorised in this way but on further review it was noted that approximately 80% of these EPs did not contain research that met the Pacific research guidelines.
11. Concerns were raised about the apparent lack of understanding of the Pacific research guidelines and the recommendation was made that for future Quality Evaluations, the TEC take steps to ensure tertiary education organisations (TEOs) accurately apply the criteria for declaring that EPs contain Pacific research.
12. Concerns regarding the minimal recourse to Pacific specialist advisers in both rounds were explained in part by the general confidence expressed by peer review panels in assessing EPs containing Pacific research. Panel members felt competent in evaluating these EPs in a fair and consistent fashion, irrespective of whether their panel was one of the three that included a Pacific panel member.

Establishment of the Pacific Research Expert Advisory Group

13. Following the 2006 Quality Evaluation, sector feedback indicated support for establishing a peer review panel; however a lack of robust information on the potential number of EPs

² Ministry of Education and Transition Tertiary Education Commission, *Investing in Excellence*, December 2002, p.35.

to be assessed by a Pacific research peer review panel raised concerns regarding the feasibility of such a panel. The decision was made instead to establish an expert advisory group (EAG) focused on Pacific research for the 2012 Quality Evaluation.

14. The purpose of the Pacific Research EAG was to provide the peer review panels with advice on EPs identified as containing Pacific research through the cross-referral process. The EAG did not make the final decision on the Quality Category the EP would receive.
15. The membership of the Pacific Research EAG is set out in Appendix 5 and the criteria and assessment standards for the EAG can be found on the [TEC website](#).
16. As in 2006, researchers (through their TEO) were required to identify that their EP should be assessed by this EAG. This was done through the use of an indicator and required at least one Nominated Research Outputs (NRO) to meet the criteria set out by the EAG.
17. When a TEO or a Chair of a peer review panel requested a referral to the Pacific Research EAG for assessment, this referral was mandatory. The mandatory referral formalised the process for seeking additional input and addressed any concerns that EPs containing Pacific research may not be assessed by someone with appropriate knowledge and expertise. The Chair of the EAG was then responsible for determining that the research set out in the EP did meet the criteria set out by the EAG and was able to decline to assess the EP if it was found not to.³
18. The EAG assessed 131 EPs, while 14 were declined as the research did not meet the criteria. At the conclusion of the 2012 Quality Evaluation, it was determined that EPs assessed by the EAG were slightly more likely to be assigned a funded Quality Category overall, and either an “A” or “B” Quality Category.⁴
19. Following the conclusion of the 2012 Quality Evaluation, the EAG prepared a report to the TEC that summarised their processes, findings and recommendations. More specifically, the EAG noted:
 - a lack of understanding within some TEOs regarding the EAG’s criteria which reflected the issues raised following both the 2003 and 2006 Quality Evaluations;
 - Pacific research (field, scope and quality) is growing but much of the research is being done by non-Pacific researchers;
 - Pacific research has been strong in the social sciences and education subject areas; and
 - the underdeveloped extent of Pacific research and the number of subjects within the Pacific have paradigms, perspectives and critical stances that are not accurately reflected in mainstream research.
20. The EAG also recommended that consideration be given to establishing a Pacific research peer review panel for the 2018 Quality Evaluation process.⁵

³ TEC, *Pacific Research Expert Advisory Group Criteria – PBRF 2012 Quality Evaluation*, November 2011, p.4.

⁴ TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2012 Assessment*, October 2013, p.8.

⁵ TEC, *PBRF 2012 Quality Evaluation: Pacific Research Expert Advisory Group Final Report*, May 2013, pp.3 - 4.

Review of the PBRF in relation to Pacific Research

21. During 2012/2013 the Ministry of Education undertook a review of the PBRF in collaboration with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).
22. This review sought to build on the existing performance of the PBRF to identify how it could be improved. It included a specific focus on what changes could be considered to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the PBRF through the simplification of the Quality Evaluation process.
23. One proposal was to disestablish the Pacific Research EAG and establish a Pacific research peer review panel which would allow experts in Pacific research to more directly consider the unique paradigms, perspectives and critical stances unique to Pacific research, and assign Quality Categories to Pacific research EPs.⁶
24. The consultation found in principle support for this proposal which was consistent with sector feedback following the 2006 Quality Evaluation and reflects the continuing development of research in this area. Some practical concerns were raised about the viability of such a panel and the ability to manage conflicts of interest given the limited existing capacity and expertise in Pacific research.⁷ The SRG have paid particular attention to these concerns in the development of this paper.

Proposal

25. The SRG recognises the continued support for the establishment of a peer review panel for Pacific research to be included in the 2018 Quality Evaluation process. The SRG acknowledges that there has been a more iterative approach to addressing Pacific research in the PBRF and, as with the Māori Knowledge and Development (MKD) panel, this discipline has grown and will continue to grow. As a result, the SRG supports the establishment of a peer review panel as the next step in this process.

Rationale

26. The 2002 PBRF Working Group identified that the design of the PBRF needed to fully recognise quality in Māori and Pacific research, and avoid discouraging the development of Māori and Pacific research capability. At that time, the size of the discipline may not have supported the establishment of a separate panel; however, information from the 2012 Quality Evaluation identified an increasing number of EPs with a focus on Pacific research.
27. Data from the Pacific Research EAG indicates that 88 EPs (67%) of the 131 EPs contained three or four NROs determined as meeting the criteria for Pacific research. Further detail is shown in the table below.

Number of Pacific research NROs	1	2	3	4
Number of EPs	21	22	18	70

⁶ Ministry of Education, *Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund, Consultation Document*, August, 2013, p.21.

⁷ Ministry of Education, *Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund, Summary of Submissions received on the Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund Consultation Document*, March, 2014, pp.54-58.

28. Recognising that Pacific research can be considered interdisciplinary, and based on the advice provided in the *PBRF 2012 Quality Evaluation Guidelines* (“the Guidelines”) regarding panel selection and interdisciplinary research, it can be extrapolated that at least 88 EPs could select a Pacific research peer review panel as their primary panel for the 2018 Quality Evaluation, with a further 43 EPs being considered under a cross-referral process.
29. While the number of EPs may appear relatively low, comparisons can be made with the MKD panel which has seen increases in the number of EPs it has assessed as both the primary panel (responsible for final Quality Category results) and cross-referral assessments over time. These numbers are outlined in the table below.

Quality Evaluation	EPs assessed as primary panel	EP assessed as cross-referral panel
2003	79	81
2006	89 ⁸	57
2012	145	119

30. There are four significant factors that appear to have had a positive effect on the number of EPs sent to the MKD panel, which include:
- increased understanding within the sector of the assessment framework, specifically what Māori research means in the PBRF context;
 - increasing credibility in regard to the MKD panel and their assessments;
 - a mandatory assessment for any EP cross-referred to the MKD panel; and
 - from 2012, the weightings of EPs assigned to the MKD panel reflect the cost category of the underlying subject rather than all EPs being assigned the weighting of Māori Knowledge and Development (weighting of 1).
31. These factors are also likely to be significant in relation to increasing the numbers of Pacific research EPs. The small number of EPs declined by the Pacific Research EAG in 2012 appears to reflect an increased understanding of Pacific research in the sector, particularly compared with the 2006 Quality Evaluation. The establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel provides an opportunity to develop a more comprehensive framework for considering Pacific research, which would support the increasing understanding within the tertiary sector of this discipline.
32. The other aspect of this is the importance of Pacific research pedagogies, impacts and/or outcomes that this research may have on Pacific communities being appropriately recognised and assessed by a researcher’s peers. While the Pacific Research EAG was able to provide specialist advice in the early stages of the 2012 Quality Evaluation

⁸ The 2006 Quality Evaluation was a partial round which meant that researchers could choose not to submit an EP and have their 2003 Quality Category carried over. In addition to the 89 EPs assessed in 2006, a further 53 EPs had their Quality Categories carried over.

assessment, the EAG did not input into the later assessment including the determination of the final Quality Category.

33. The establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel would ensure that appropriate consideration of the research is provided throughout the Quality Evaluation process. Applying the two provisions that exist for the MKD panel (mandatory assessment of cross-referred EPs and the subject weighting applied to EPs) to a Pacific panel, provides additional assurance that Pacific researchers were not discouraged or disadvantaged by the Quality Evaluation process.⁹
34. The SRG has considered the likelihood of the next assessment round being able to appropriately recognise and assess Pacific research without a subject-specific panel. It believes that this is unlikely based on previous panel composition having relatively limited Pacific research expertise, and the low referral rates in the 2003 and 2006 Quality Evaluation processes, along with the disestablishment of the Pacific Research EAG, all of which are considered to have a detrimental effect on the discipline for the 2018 Quality Evaluation.

Objectives and principles of the Pacific Research panel

35. The SRG proposes that the peer review panel focussing on Pacific research be referred to as the Pacific Research panel and that the underlying principles that frame what research will be considered by the panel are:
 - Pacific research is defined both geographically and ethnically but will not be solely determined by the ethnicity of the researcher; and
 - Pacific research is inclusive of research areas that have not traditionally been considered Pacific knowledge and/or pedagogies, this may include research where there is more focus on areas including environment, policy and security.
36. As a result of these principles, it is important that the objectives of the Pacific Research peer review panel be clearly articulated for the sector. The SRG has defined this objective as:
 - The Pacific Research panel will take into consideration the diverse range of discourses and methodologies used by Pacific researchers in the respective research rather than simply define the notions of Pacific methodology, epistemology and worldview in exclusively narrow ways. There should also be recognition that research must be transformative, innovative and adaptive rather than merely “protective” of certain aspects of Pacific knowledge. It should also be reflective of the changing realities and globalisation of Pacific peoples rather than being constrained by narrow definitions. At the same time, there should be recognition of the significance of local identities, cultural ethos and Indigenous knowledge systems and their roles in sustaining Pacific communities.
37. The SRG has also agreed that a longer term goal of increasing Pacific membership on all PBRF Quality Evaluation peer review panels should be articulated in the new guidelines.

⁹ There is no current classification prescription for Pacific studies therefore applying the underlying subject weighting to EPs would be a reasonable approach.

38. The SRG believes that the four principles developed by the 2003 PBRF Pacific Advisory Group and subsequently refined by the Pacific Research EAG should continue to be:

- paradigm
- participation
- contribution; and
- capacity and capability.

39. The details of these principles have been revised by the Pacific research experts and the SRG to ensure they reflect the panel's principles and objective.

Paradigm

Pacific research may be characterised by one or more of the following:

- It may be informed by and embedded within the continuum of Pacific world views, knowledge, practices and values.
- It may be conducted in accordance with appropriate Pacific ethical standards, values and aspirations.
- It includes research carried out and/or reported in any Pacific language.
- It comprises a range of disciplines in the natural and social sciences and disciplinary research practices including quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- It may involve research processes and practices that may be consistent with Pacific values, standards and expectations, or provide critical analysis which challenges long held notions or offers new interpretations of these values, standards and expectations.
- It may include methods, analysis and measurements that recognise Pacific indigenous knowledge, cultural norms, philosophy, spirituality and experience.

Participation

Pacific research is likely to:

- Involve the active participation of Pacific peoples (as researchers, advisors and /or stakeholders).
- Involve researchers from outside the Pacific researching Pacific-relevant issues in the natural sciences or social sciences and whose approach must be consistent with the requirements of this guideline.
- Demonstrate community engagement - it recognises and validates the relationship between the researcher and the 'researched'.
- Engage the Pacific community right from the initial stages of the research.
- Develop post-graduate capacity including the mentoring of Pacific post-graduates and emerging researchers.

- Involve the organisation of conferences/workshops that focus on Pacific research and researchers.

Contribution

Pacific research is likely to:

- Be relevant and responsive to the social, economic, political and psychological needs and strengths of Pacific peoples.
- Have a demonstrable impact on the well-being of Pacific peoples.
- Contribute to and enhance the Pacific knowledge base in the relevant subject area.
- Contribute to a greater understanding of Pacific cultures' experiences and world views.
- Enhance and protect Pacific knowledge from bio-piracy and other forms of exploitation.
- Contribute to the advancement of Pacific knowledge, spirituality and development, and be responsive to changing Pacific contexts.

Capacity and capability

Pacific research:

- Builds the capacity and capability of Pacific researchers.
- Builds non-Pacific researchers' knowledge and understanding of Pacific research paradigms and issues.
- Enhances the capacity of Pacific communities to access and use the results of the research.
- Enhances various relevant epistemological and methodologies to Pacific research including indigenous approaches.

40. The SRG seeks feedback on the proposed objective and principles of the Pacific Research panel.

Issues and mitigation actions

41. As part of the development of this proposal, potential issues have been identified specifically the composition of the panel, recruitment of suitable members and management of conflicts of interest. Like other peer review processes, the appointment of PBRF panels relies on suitable nominations. Participating TEOs are less likely to nominate, or agree the appointment of key Pacific academics, particularly those with responsibilities for supporting other staff members to prepare EPs or participate in internal assessments, as the appointment to a PBRF panel rules out this level of involvement.¹⁰

¹⁰ TEC, PBRF Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012, May 2013, p.142.

42. The small size of the academic community has the potential for increased difficulties recruiting panel members and managing conflicts of interest, and the interdisciplinary nature of Pacific research means that a wide spread of expertise is likely to be required.
43. The MKD panel manages these same issues and there are processes within the existing framework of the Quality Evaluation that assist with the management of panel related issues, including:
 - the appointment of international panel members, particularly those from regional tertiary institutions such as; University of the South Pacific, National University of Samoa, University of Hawaii, and Australian universities:
 - the appointment of panel members from other non-participating New Zealand TEOs and research organisations; and
 - the two stage appointment process which allows Chairs to appoint additional members following the submission of EPs (when the exact nature of subject expertise is confirmed).
44. Another issue that has been raised is the cost of establishing an additional panel. The TEC has determined that due to the disestablishment of the two EAGs (Pacific Research and Professional and Applied Research) and Specialist Advisors, the establishment of an additional panel will be cost neutral for the 2018 Quality Evaluation.
45. Changes to the cross-referral process agreed as part of the review of the PBRF by the Ministry of Education have also caused some concerns, as well the feedback from peer review panels on the quality of advice provided on EPs in the 2012 Quality Evaluation. The SRG recognise that the research assessed by the MKD and a potential Pacific research panel are likely to be interdisciplinary. The 2018 Quality Evaluation will need to ensure that processes are in place to assist Chairs with making these referrals and that cross-referral advice provided to other subject-specific panels is clear and taken into consideration by the primary panel. This could also include changes to operational guidance and the assessment process, e.g. creating a specific opportunity for panellists to discuss cross-referral advice directly. These operational details will be worked through in a consultation in the middle of 2015.

Providing feedback

46. Feedback is sought from the sector and other key stakeholders on the proposal outlined in this paper.
47. The SRG also welcomes feedback on any other matters not included in this paper that relate to the establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel for the 2018 Quality Evaluation.
48. Feedback can be completed:
 - online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G3Y96H7>
 - or via email using the template provided on the TEC website, with completed templates being emailed to PBRFSRG@tec.govt.nz.
49. All feedback would be appreciated as soon as possible, but no later than 5pm 9 April 2015.

Appendix 1: Pacific expert group (advisory to SRG)

Dr Jenny Bryant-Tokalau	University of Otago
Dr Iati Iati	University of Otago
Associate Professor Malakai Koloamatangi	Massey University
Associate Professor Camille Nakhid	Auckland University of Technology
Professor Michael Reilly	University of Otago
Associate Professor Damon Salesa	University of Auckland
Dr Teresia Teaiwa	Victoria University
Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem	University of Auckland
Dr Timote Vaoleti	University of Waikato

Appendix 2: Objectives and principles of the PBRF

Objectives of the PBRF

The primary objectives of the PBRF are to:

- increase the quality of basic and applied research at New Zealand's degree granting TEOs;
- support world-leading research-led teaching and learning at degree and postgraduate levels;
- assist New Zealand's TEOs to maintain and lift their competitive rankings relative to their international peers; and
- provide robust public information to stakeholders about research performance within and across TEOs.

In doing so the PBRF will also:

- support the development of postgraduate student researchers and new and emerging researchers;
- support research activities that provide economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to New Zealand, including the advancement of Mātauranga Māori; and
- support technology and knowledge transfer to New Zealand businesses, iwi and communities.¹¹

Principles of the PBRF

The PBRF is governed by the following principles:

- *Comprehensiveness*: the PBRF should appropriately measure the quality of the full range of original investigative activity that occurs within the sector, regardless of its type, form, or place of output;
- *Respect for academic traditions*: the PBRF should operate in a manner that is consistent with academic freedom and institutional autonomy;
- *Consistency*: evaluations of quality made through the PBRF should be consistent across the different subject areas and in the calibration of quality ratings against international standards of excellence;
- *Continuity*: changes to the PBRF process should only be made where they can bring demonstrable improvements that outweigh the cost of implementing them;
- *Differentiation*: the PBRF should allow stakeholders and the government to differentiate between providers and their units on the basis of their relative quality;

¹¹ The objectives were revised as a part of the Ministry of Education's review of the PBRF and agreed by Cabinet in February 2014.

- *Credibility*: the methodology, format and processes employed in the PBRF must be credible to those being assessed;
- *Efficiency*: administrative and compliance costs should be kept to the minimum consistent with a robust and credible process;
- *Transparency*: decisions and decision-making processes must be explained openly, except where there is a need to preserve confidentiality and privacy;
- *Complementarity*: the PBRF should be integrated with new and existing policies, such as charters and profiles, and quality assurance systems for degrees and degree providers; and
- *Cultural inclusiveness*: the PBRF should reflect the bicultural nature of New Zealand and the special role and status of the Treaty of Waitangi, and should appropriately reflect and include the full diversity of New Zealand's population.¹²

¹² These principles were first enunciated by the Working Group on the PBRF. See [Investing in Excellence](#), pp.8-9.

Appendix 3: PBRF Pacific Advisory Group membership

2003 PBRF Pacific Advisory Group¹³	
Dr Airini	Auckland College of Education
Dr Melani Anae	University of Auckland
Ms Lanuola Asiasiga	Massey University
Dr Tupeni Baba	University of Auckland
Dr Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop	Consultant, Samoa
Dr Ana Koloto	Koloto & Associates Ltd
Dr Linita Manuatu	Auckland University of Technology
Ms Karlo Mila	Health Research Council
Miss Jean Mitaera	Whitireia Community Polytechnic
Dr Eci Nabalarua	University of Waikato
Dr Ueantabo Neemia-Mackenzie	University of the South Pacific
Ms Anna Pasikale	Tertiary Education Commission
Dr Kabini Sanga	Victoria University of Wellington
Mr David Schaaf	University of Auckland
Dr Margaret Southwick	Whitireia Community Polytechnic
Dr Teresia Teaiwa	Victoria University of Wellington
Dr Colin Tukuitonga	Ministry of Health
Mr Timote Vaioleti	University of Waikato
Mrs Nuhisifa Williams	University of Auckland
Josephine Tiro	Pasifika Education, Ministry of Education

¹³ TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2003 Assessment*, 2004, p.64; TEC, *PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2006 Assessment*, 2007, p.249.

Appendix 4: Extracts from the 2006 Guidelines for Pacific research

Introduction to Pacific Research

Pacific	The term 'Pacific' refers to Pacific peoples living in a Pacific nation, as well as Pacific peoples living in New Zealand while connected through their heritage and ancestry to a Pacific nation (the term 'Pasifika' is often used to denote this group of Pacific peoples).
Broad coverage	Pacific research encompasses research that reflects specific ethnic groups within the Pacific, as well as research that spans Pacific communities.
Particular principles of Pacific research	<p>The following principles inform the Pacific research guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The impact of Pacific research on Pacific communities and its relevance to those communities is particularly important, reflecting a commitment of Pacific researchers to benefit their communities through their research. For this reason, Pacific research may be more likely than other kinds of research to be applied in nature – although all forms of research will be accepted.• Contemporary Pacific research and discourse on Pacific research are emerging. As a result, there are a limited number of leaders in Pacific research; and those with significant research experience often commit significant resources to developing new and emerging Pacific researchers.• Pacific research is reflective of the traditions of the past, as well as the present and future. It often embodies paradigms, perspectives and critical stances that are not always captured in mainstream research. <p>Pacific research is an inclusive concept, incorporating research approaches that are both ethnic-specific and pan-Pacific in scope.</p>

Guidelines for Pacific Research

General expectations for standard of evidence to be supplied	<p>Pacific research covers a wide range of subject areas and results in many types of research output. In cases where the quality-assurance process or the channel for dissemination of an NRO may be unfamiliar to panel members, staff members are advised to provide information on both the quality-assurance processes and the dissemination channel.</p> <p>While conventional methods of quality assurance (such as peer review of journals and curating of exhibitions) will apply to Pacific research, other quality-assurance processes may also apply. One measure of quality assurance for Pacific research is the extent to which it has been disseminated to the community (which involves evidence of feedback from the community) prior to wider dissemination. Sometimes there is a delay in receiving feedback, and acknowledgement of the research occurs sometime in the future. The effort required in the targeting and dissemination of Pacific research, and the quality of dissemination channels themselves, may vary. Staff members should, therefore, indicate the type of approach used to disseminate research (including targeted dissemination). They should also indicate, where possible, any evidence of feedback or acknowledgement that may indicate quality assurance.</p> <p>In addition to generally used forms of quality assurance, indicators of research quality for Pacific research may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endorsement by community leadership, prior to wider dissemination• Endorsement through fono or Pacific media (recognising that these may be
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**Elaboration
of the
Definition of
Research**

community, national, regional, or pan-Pacific), prior to wider dissemination

- Evidence of dissemination or uptake of research findings by Pacific regional media, and Pacific research communities
- Endorsement and uptake across Pacific communities.

Pacific research is a broad descriptor that covers a wide range of subject areas and includes various Pacific approaches to research. It is expected that much of the research will be multidisciplinary and may include a range of methodological approaches.

An EP or a specific research output does not need to demonstrate all the following characteristics. But it should show a clear relationship with Pacific values and knowledge bases, and with a Pacific group or community.

Paradigm

Pacific research:

- Is informed by and embedded within the continuum of Pacific world-views, knowledge, practices, and values
- Is conducted in accordance with Pacific ethical standards, values and aspirations (such as responsiveness and reciprocity)
- Involves research processes and practices that are consistent with Pacific values, standards and expectations
- Includes methods, analysis and measurements that recognise Pacific philosophy and spirituality and experience
- Includes data derived from the broad range of Pacific knowledge and experience.

Participation

Pacific research:

- Involves the active participation of Pacific peoples (as researchers, advisers, stakeholders)
- Demonstrates that Pacific peoples are more than just subjects of research
- Demonstrates communal contact – that is, it recognises and validates the relationships between the researcher and the ‘researched’
- Engages the Pacific community in the initial stages of the research.

Contribution

Pacific research:

- Contributes to and enhances the Pacific knowledge base in all subject areas
- Contributes to a greater understanding of Pacific cultures, experiences and world-views
- Is relevant and responsive to the needs of Pacific peoples
- May lead to action by Pacific communities
- Protects Pacific knowledge
- Contributes to Pacific knowledge, spirituality, development and advancement
- Is responsive to changing Pacific contexts.

Capacity and capability

Pacific research:

- Builds the capacity and capability of Pacific researchers
- Enhances the capacity of relevant Pacific communities to access and use the research.
- Research that falls within the broad ambit of Pacific research (as outlined above) may be undertaken by Pacific or non-Pacific peoples.

Appendix 5: 2012 Pacific Research Expert Advisory Group membership

Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop (Chair)	Auckland University of Technology
Dr Camille Nakhid	Auckland University of Technology
Professor Michael Reilly	Otago University
Associate Professor Dr Damon Salesa	University of Michigan/University of Auckland
Dr Timote Vaoleti	University of Waikato
Dr Malakai Koloamatangi	University of Canterbury
Dr David Gegeo	University of Canterbury
Dr Diane Mara	University of Auckland

Appendix 6: Links to relevant papers

[Investing in Excellence](#), 2002

[PBRF: Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2006](#), 2005

[PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2003 Assessment](#), 2004

[PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2006 Assessment](#), 2007

[Pacific Research Expert Advisory Group criteria](#), 2011

[PBRF: Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012](#), 2013

[Recommendation reports from the MKD panel and the Pacific Research EAG](#), 2013

[PBRF Evaluating Research Excellence: The 2012 Assessment](#), 2013

[Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund, Consultation Document](#), 2013

[Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund, Summary of Submissions received on the Review of the Performance-Based Research Fund Consultation Document](#), March, 2014