

Performance-Based Research Fund

Feedback template for Evaluating applied and practice-based research

Feedback from:	New Zealand Council of Engineering Deans (NZCED)
Contact details:	Prof. Thomas Neitzert School of Engineering AUT University Private Bag 92006 Auckland 1142

1 Purpose

The purpose of this template is to provide a mechanism for collecting feedback on the matters raised as part of the PBRF Assessment Framework Consultation paper.

The objective is to obtain feedback in such a way that will speed the collation and review of feedback pertaining to specific areas of interest.

Respondents are encouraged to use this template to provide feedback, but should not feel limited in any way from providing comments in addition to those requested in the template.

Timeframe for feedback

Completed templates and any other comments should be emailed to **PBRF.2012Redesign@tec.govt.nz** or can be posted to Dr Damien Cole, Tertiary Education Commission, P O Box 27048, Wellington 6141.

Feedback would be appreciated as soon as possible, but no later than 5pm, Friday, 30 January 2009.

2. Questions

The SRG seeks further sector guidance on the following options:

- Whether panel chairs should be empowered to seek independent referees advice to comment on research impact for evidence portfolios where the researcher has been appointed to a TEO from professional practice or industry within the assessment period.
- Whether a fund rewarding professional engagement or creative excellence should be recommended alongside the PBRF to allow those involved in applied and practice-based research to have the option of having their excellence measured on different criteria. Such a fund was recommended for consideration in the report of the 2006 ETA Panel.
- Whether an additional 'entrepreneurial' panel to provide specific assessment of research commercialisation as a supplement to academic research evaluation should be established.
- Whether TEOs should be able to exclude clinical practice from an academic's teaching load, even when this is part of a degree programme, in determining eligibility.
- Whether academics appointed directly from professional or industrial experience should be allowed a 5-6 year period of grace before becoming eligible for the PBRF quality evaluation.
- How professional and industrial bodies can be encouraged to engage in genuine debate with the TEC on issues involved in the rigorous and comprehensive evaluation of the quality and impact of applied and practice-based research. Would the sector support a TEC sponsored forum on these issues?

The **New Zealand Council of Engineering Deans (NZCED)** consists of representatives of eight tertiary institutions delivering four year professional engineering degrees.

We are aware of a submission being made by the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ) and are in support of this submission. In addition we like to make the following comments:

1. That the current PBRF rules have weakened both the teaching and practical application of research in engineering practice areas, as well as the willingness of academics to engage in consulting and other areas of knowledge transfer which do not result in mainstream PBRF evidence.
2. That we do not support changes that embed applied and practice-based research as special cases, as this will further damage their credibility

as valid areas of research. The PBRF measures of quality should instead be extended so as not to discriminate against these kinds of research.

3. That fitness of purpose should be introduced as an appropriate measure of quality for applied research, supported by training of panels and the ability of chairs to seek confidential statements from nominated referees.

4. That TEC should ensure panels adhere closely to the published panel specific guidelines for assessing quality.

Kind regards

Prof. Thomas Neitzert
Chair, NZCED