

# Performance-Based Research Fund

## **Feedback Template for**

## **2006 Quality Evaluation Consultation Paper**

<b>Feedback From:</b>	Council of New Zealand University Librarians (CONZUL)
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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this template is to provide a mechanism for collecting feedback on the matters raised as part of the PBRF 2006 Quality Evaluation 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. It should also be noted that the more information provided at the start of the PBRF redesign process the better, however the TEC will be seeking more detailed comment on each of the redesign areas as we move through the redesign process.

### *Timeframe for Feedback*

1. Completed templates and any other comments should be emailed to [pbrfinfo@tec.govt.nz](mailto:pbrfinfo@tec.govt.nz) or can be posted to the PBRF Project Manager, Tertiary Education Commission, PO Box 27 048, Wellington.
2. Feedback would be appreciated as soon as possible, but no later than 30 September 2004.

## 2. Timeline

A proposed timeline for the 2006 Quality Evaluation is provided in the Consultation Paper.

**What do you perceive to be the relative merits and feasibility of the indicative timeline?**

CONZUL, the Council of New Zealand University Librarians (a sub-committee of the NZ Vice-Chancellors Committee), wishes to comment only on the PBRF redesign process. We have no comments on sections 2 and 3 of this form.

**What are the specific dates or deadlines that must be met to enable appropriate and effective sector preparation for the next Quality Evaluation?** For example, what are the ideal/latest possible deadlines for provision of final guidelines, EP creation software, Census date, etc.

**What is your organisation's preference for timing of the next Quality Evaluation round – 2006 or 2007, and why?**

**Do you have any other comments regarding information provided in the following sections of the Consultation Paper?**

*Assessment Period for Research Outputs*

*Sector Reference Group*

*Consultation*

*Nominations Process*

*Guidelines*

**Any other comments or feedback?**

### **3. Evaluation**

The TEC is interested in general feedback on the WEB Research Evaluation Report. Feedback on redesign issues identified in the report should be included in the Redesign feedback (Section 4 of this template).

**Do you agree/disagree with the methodology or findings of the Phase 1 Evaluation?**

**Are there areas of the report that you found particularly informative or less so?**

**Are there areas of concern that the Phase 1 Evaluation does not appear to have addressed?**

**Phase 2 of the evaluation strategy is intended to review the medium-term impacts of the PBRF. Are there any specific impacts or areas you think should be included/excluded in this next phase?**

**Any other general feedback or comments regarding the Evaluation?**

## 4. Redesign

**Do you have any general comments regarding information provided in the following sections of the Consultation Paper?**

*Redesign Principles*

*Process for Redesign*

CONZUL, the Council of New Zealand University Librarians, wishes to comment on the PBRF redesign process principally from the perspective of the importance of access to information about New Zealand research outputs.

One of CONZUL's goals is to facilitate easy access to information from and about New Zealand research. We believe that that the re-design of the PBRF process offers an opportunity not only to streamline the evaluation process, but also to enhance the dissemination of the information and facilitate uptake of the results of New Zealand research, which is a key TEC and government strategy.

Currently there is no easy way to find comprehensive information about New Zealand research. While some research is published in international journals and can be found through international indexing and abstracting databases, much research, often of strong local interest, is published in New Zealand or disseminated without formal publication, and can be very difficult to discover. Information about such research is at best fragmented across various government and research organisation web sites and databases such as the National Library's *Index New Zealand* and *New Zealand Science* on Knowledge Basket (a commercial database host), and, at worst, is non-existent.

We note the comments in the WEB Research report on the difficulties the PBRF panels had in assessing the value of locally published outputs and believe that enhanced access to this material would lead to greater impact and higher citation rates, which would help to mitigate the difficulties of evaluation.

A high proportion of New Zealand research is publicly funded and funding agencies such as the TEC and FoRST already collect information about research outputs. Modern ICT offers an opportunity to establish a standards-based framework for access to comprehensive information about New Zealand research through a single 'portal'. With cooperation from the agencies involved, this could be either a single database or a

distributed database of metadata, which ultimately might link to the full documents stored in electronic form in institutional repositories or via commercial publishers.

The primary audience for this information is the research and development community, but practitioners who can apply the results and the general public also have an interest.

CONZUL has established a joint NZ Research Information Working Group with the National Library, which has drafted a set of initial principles, for further discussion with agencies such as the TEC. These principles include:

1. Published outputs of publicly funded research should, as a general rule, be publicly accessible.
2. The framework for access must be sustainable into the future.
3. Information should be collected once and used for multiple purposes. (Avoid duplicate data creation.)
4. Information should be accessible through a single 'portal'.
5. The framework should align with e-government strategies.
6. International standards for organising and accessing information should be followed (e.g. metadata and interoperability standards.)

CONZUL recognises that there are occasions when research outputs need to be kept confidential for commercial or other reasons, but these are exceptions to the general principle.

Hence CONZUL supports proposals in the TEC report for new IT systems for the collection and processing of Evidence Portfolios. CONZUL would be keen to be involved in further discussions regarding the design. We also recommend that involvement of the university IT Directors is critical to the success of the re-design and that the NZVCC Standing Committee on IT is an appropriate channel for this.

**Please provide comments regarding the issues identified for consideration in the redesign, in the table below.**

Appendix B of the Consultation Paper contains the full details of the issues. Please provide as much detail as you are able (noting that there will be further opportunity for more detailed comment as we move through the redesign and consultation process).

Area	Issue Number	Comments
TEO Participation	1 Participation	
Staff Eligibility	2 Eligibility	
Evidence Portfolio	3 Census	
	4 EP format, content and guidelines	We support the recommendations in Appendix B, no. 4 for improvements in the EP format and guidelines, particularly the collection of more structured and consistent data that will facilitate searching. We note that the design of the EP format will need to be done in conjunction with the design of the information systems, whereas your timetable in Appendix A suggests the final EP form will be released prior to the work on building the information system.

Area	Issue Number	Comments
	<p>5 TEC software for EP creation</p>	<p>CONZUL supports proposals in the TEC report for new IT systems for the collection and processing of Evidence Portfolios, though whether this should be a common IT system or a standards based framework for collecting data needs further discussion with TEOs, given the investment many have already made in research information systems. CONZUL would be keen to be involved in further discussions regarding the design. We also recommend that involvement of the university IT Directors is critical to the success of the re-design and that the NZVCC Standing Committee on IT is an appropriate channel for this.</p>
	<p>6 use of the data</p>	<p>We strongly support public access to the bibliographic data describing all the research outputs, not just the NROs, though not necessarily on the TEC website. This data needs to be searchable using the standard techniques for bibliographic databases and as noted above, CONZUL believes there should be a single ‘portal’ for access to all NZ research outputs, not just those funded by the TEC. So further discussion is required with other government agencies and investigation into whether this would be achieved by loading data from the different agencies into a single database (which might, for example, be hosted by the National Library) or by using a distributed database of metadata in agreed standard format, with a search engine which can search simultaneously across the whole distributed database.</p>
<p>Assessment Framework</p>	<p>7 Quality Categories</p>	

Area	Issue Number	Comments
	8 TEO internal Assessment	
	9 Women, Māori, Pacific researchers	
	10 Special Circumstances	
	11 component scores and weightings	
	12 research output component	In the interests of enhancing public access, we would prefer not to reduce the number of ROs which can be listed.

Area	Issue Number	Comments
	13 assessment of panel chairs/members	
Moderation Process	14 Inter-panel consistency	
Panels	15 operational processes	
	16 definition of research	
	17 Panel specific guidelines	
	18 panels and subject areas	

Area	Issue Number	Comments
	19 specialist advice	
	20 transfer of EPs	
	21 panel reports	
	22 conflict of interest	
Auditing	23 audit and verification	

Area	Issue Number	Comments
	24 NRO Audit	<p>We agree that both audit and access would be streamlined and enhanced by access to the electronic full-text of ROs. However, rather than submitting electronic copies to the TEC, we recommend encouraging TEOs to place these on open access institutional research repositories. Open access institutional repositories are becoming common in universities in North America and starting to develop in Australia. These repositories use OAI standards, which enable search engines to search across many repositories. CONZUL libraries are already taking the first steps towards such institutional repositories, focusing initially on digital copies of theses. We see this as the way of the future and something which the TEC should encourage, rather than setting up a separate process. In the meantime, we note that electronic versions of many of the ROs, at least those published internationally, are already available through the publishers' full-text databases, and urls for these copies should be included in the citations for ROs.</p> <p>Given that only 0.72% of the NROs were confirmed as ineligible by the audit, and assuming that this percentage will be reduced by better guidelines and processes next time, it is questionable whether it is worth auditing any more than a sample of NROs in future.</p> <p>We note the summary of the National Library's recommendations in the WEB Research report and, while it is difficult to comment fully without access to the whole National Library report, CONZUL is sympathetic to the general thrust of the recommendations. We do agree with WEB Research that more bibliographic checking at TEO level could prove burdensome, and each university would need to consider whether its library has the resources to be involved in this. However, such involvement is more likely to be acceptable if it is facilitating the goal of easy access to NZ research and not just assisting the PBRF evaluation process.</p>

Area	Issue Number	Comments
Reporting	25 reporting framework	
	26 TEOs that merge	
	27 privacy of individuals' results	
	28 annual reporting	
Fast track	29 fast-track	
External Research Income (ERI) and	30 ERI	

<b>Area</b>	<b>Issue Number</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Research Degree Completions (RDC)	31 RDC	
Funding	32 Funding	

**Please list any additional areas or issues requiring attention during the redesign process, that have not already been identified above:**

Area	Description of issue/comments

**Do you have any other general comments or feedback regarding the PBRF redesign?**

So, in future we would see a continuous process within the TEOs whereby the citations for ROs are recorded as they are published, electronic copies are deposited in institutional repositories, and the citation data is uploaded into a national “database” of research outputs. This may not all be achievable before the next PBRF round, but we believe it is the direction in which to proceed.

Such a system would greatly enhance access to research outputs as well as streamlining the PBRF audit and review process.