

This information has been extracted from the Panel Criteria and Working Methods document (REF 01.2012) published by the REF Team in January 2012.

### UOA Descriptor

**Descriptor:** The UOA covers all forms of research in social work, social policy and administration and criminology, including those in governmental, voluntary and community, private for profit and not for profit areas. Research includes:

- a. Theory, methodology, empirical research, ethics and values, and pedagogy as they apply to social work, social care, social policy, criminology and criminal justice policy, gerontology and substantive issues in these areas of study.
- b. Comparative research and research into international institutions, policy and practice.
- c. Research that uses a range of disciplinary approaches including (but not exclusively) the following: business and management, demography, development studies, economics, education, geography, health studies, history, law, politics, psychology and sociology.
- d. Relevant links with other stakeholders, professionals, service users and carers.
- e. Policy-making processes, practice, governance and management, service design, delivery and use, and inter-professional relationships.

**Boundaries:** Social work, social policy and administration, and criminology are essentially multidisciplinary subjects and are closely related to a range of other disciplines within the social sciences and more broadly. Appropriate methods will be used in cases of substantial overlap with other sub-panels, as set out in Part 1, paragraphs 92-100. For the avoidance of doubt, it is recognised that criminological research may fall within the boundaries of Sub-panels 20 (Law), 22 (Social Work and Social Policy) and 23 (Sociology). All three subpanels welcome such work, which will be assessed in accordance with the arrangements noted above, in particular making use of joint assessors and crossreferral as deemed appropriate by the sub-panels.

### Outputs

<b>Citations</b>	This sub-panel will not be provided with citation data by the REF Team.  No panels will use impact factors, journal lists, rankings, or publisher quality information.
<b>Eligible output types</b>	All outputs are eligible providing they embody research as defined for the purposes of the REF <sup>1</sup> .
<b>Non-text or practice-based submissions</b>	Accepted.  For practice-based outputs, HEIs need to provide paper-based explanatory presentation of the output/s. Can be accompanied with limited visual media, e.g. DVD.  Datasets, etc – must be accompanied with a written justification in REF2 (max 300 words).

<sup>1</sup> 'For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared'. See REF 02.2011 Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions for the full definition.

<p><b>Double-weighted outputs</b></p>	<p>Accepted in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>HEIs may request that outputs of extended scale and scope be double-weighted. HEIs may include a 'reserve' output with each output requested for double-weighting.</p> <p>A justification (max 100 words) will need to be submitted for consideration by the sub-panel.</p>
<p><b>Co-authored or collaborative outputs submitted in different submissions (same HEI but different UOAs, or different HEI same/difference UOA)</b></p>	<p>Accepted but only where an author has made a significant contribution to the output.</p> <p>No additional information is required, although if the sub-panel is unclear as to the significant contribution of an individual to the output then it may request further information from the HEI through an audit.</p>
<p><b>Co-authored or collaborative outputs submitted in the same submission (same HEI and same UOA)</b></p>	<p>All panels consider that the fullest and most favourable impression of research will normally be gained when each co-authored output is listed once within a submission.</p> <p>Co-authored outputs within the same submission only be accepted in very exceptional cases against a maximum of 2 individuals per submission (must be explained in REF2, max 100 words).</p>
<p><b>Additional output information required</b></p>	<p>The sub-panel welcome factual details about all outputs (max 100 words per output in REF2) (see paragraph 61 in the Main Panel C Panel Criteria).</p>

## Criteria and level definitions

In assessing outputs, the sub-panels will look for evidence of originality, significance and rigour and apply the generic definitions of the starred quality levels as follows:

In assessing work as being four star sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:

- outstandingly novel in developing concepts, techniques or outcomes
- a primary or essential point of reference in its field or sub-field
- major influence on the intellectual agenda of a research theme or field
- application of exceptionally rigorous research design and techniques of investigation and analysis, and the highest standards of intellectual precision
- instantiating an exceptionally significant, multi-user data set or research resource.

In assessing work as being three star, sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:

- an important point of reference in its field or sub-field
- contributing important knowledge, ideas and techniques which are likely to have a lasting influence
- application of robust and appropriate research design and techniques of investigation and analysis, with intellectual precision
- generation of a substantial, coherent and widely admired data set or research resource.

In assessing work as being two star, sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:

- providing valuable knowledge to the field or sub-field and to the application of such knowledge
- contributing to incremental and cumulative advances in knowledge in the field and subfield
- thorough and professional application of appropriate research design and techniques of investigation and analysis.

In assessing work as being one star, sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:

- useful knowledge, but unlikely to have more than a minor influence in the field
- an identifiable contribution to understanding, but largely framed by existing paradigms or traditions of enquiry
- competent application of appropriate research design and techniques of investigation and analysis.

Research will be graded as 'unclassified' if it falls below the quality levels described above or does not meet the definition of research used for the REF.

## Impact

<b>Eligibility of submitting the impact of teaching</b>	Excluded unless they extend significantly beyond the submitting HEI. Impact case studies will therefore focus on the impact on HE (including, for example, on teaching or HE policy).
<b>Impact case studies – quality of the underpinning research</b>	The case study must include references to confirm the quality, for example, peer reviewed external income, outputs in peer reviewed journals, outputs have won prestigious prizes, etc

## Environment

<b>Additional environment data to be provided</b>	None required.
<b>Environment elements weightings (5 elements)</b>	0% - overview (information only) 25% - strategy 25% - people 25% - income, infrastructure & facilities 25% - collaboration & contribution to the discipline
<b>Structure of submissions</b>	Not mentioned.