Performance-Based Research Fund

A guide for staff members participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation

Tertiary Education Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

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Preface from the Chief Executive

Tēnā koutou

The Tertiary Education Commission is pleased to publish the guidelines for the 2018 Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) Quality Evaluation following two years of engagement and support from the tertiary sector and other key stakeholders. These guidelines have been developed well in advance to provide the information and guidance needed by all those involved in the preparation for the 2018 Quality Evaluation.

The PBRF encourages and rewards the breadth and diversity of research excellence and its role in supporting and developing New Zealand and our tertiary education sector. As a result, we've aimed to create guidelines that support the evaluation of quality research in all its forms. We hope that researchers – regardless of the focus of their research – can see their work reflected in the 2018 Quality Evaluation processes.

Stakeholder feedback during the process of developing the guidelines has been vital and it has been rewarding to see the level of interest and engagement from both organisations and individuals. We have listened to our stakeholders and taken a new approach to the guidelines, with an overarching goal to make them more user-friendly, concise, and accessible.

A number of significant changes have been introduced into the 2018 Quality Evaluation. One of the key changes for the 2018 Quality Evaluation is the addition of the Pacific Research peer review panel to support and encourage the ongoing strengthening of Pacific research excellence.

I would like to thank our PBRF Sector Reference Group for contributing considerable time and expertise to the work and for developing thoughtful and considered solutions to a range of issues. I would also like to thank the peer review panel Chairs and initial cohort of panel members who have developed the panel-specific guidelines very early in the process to ensure that those participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation have the full range of information to support their submissions. These groups and TEC staff have worked hard to make the 2018 Quality Evaluation processes transparent and fit-for-purpose.

We know that the guidelines cannot provide rules and details that would address all possible circumstances that may arise during the Quality Evaluation process; however, we do expect that the intent and principles are applied by researchers and organisations as they prepare for and participate in the 2018 Quality Evaluation. The integrity of the PBRF and its international reputation can be ensured by all participating organisations demonstrating their willingness to support the Quality Evaluation process both in spirit and in detail.

Tim Fowler
Chief Executive
Tertiary Education Commission

How to use these guidelines

For the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) 2018 Quality Evaluation, the guidelines that provide different participants with all relevant information have been split into three audience-specific documents:

- **Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation**
- **Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process**
- **A guide for staff members participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation.**

This document, *A guide for staff members participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation,* provides staff members with an overview of the process, their responsibilities and the responsibilities of their employing tertiary education organisations (TEOs) and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). It also identifies the key areas of the Quality Evaluation process that relate to them and who can provide support. The guide is designed to be an overview of the process and it directs staff members to the relevant areas of the other guidelines.

The document, *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*, provides information that TEOs need to determine staff eligibility, complete Evidence Portfolios (EPs), understand and participate in the TEC audit process, and understand the reporting of results. It also provides information about other related processes, such as submitting conflict of interest notices and complaints to the TEC.

The document, *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process*, provides information about the assessment process undertaken by the 13 peer review panels. This includes information on the responsibilities of the panel, the scoring system and detailed scoring descriptors for EPs, the stages in the assessment process, the moderation process, and information about conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

The 13 peer review panels have developed guidelines (panel-specific) to provide subject and discipline-specific information to help staff as they develop their EPs.

The table below shows the main audience for each document. A tick (✓) indicates that the document also contains information relevant for that particular audience.

Audience	Guide for staff	Guidelines for TEOs	Guidelines for the assessment	Panel-specific guidelines
Staff members	Main audience	✓	✓	✓
TEOs	✓	Main audience	✓	✓
Peer review panels			Main audience	✓

Structure of the guidelines

These guidelines are divided into sections that focus on the different parts of the process. The sections and specific topics are listed in the table of contents.

Information on the background and purpose of the PBRF can be found on the PBRF pages of the TEC's website www.tec.govt.nz.

The online version of these guidelines contains internal links to help you navigate the document. The links within the text are shown as underlined. Links can also be recognised by the fact that when the

cursor passes over them, a text box appears saying 'Ctrl + click to follow the link'. You can also find links in the table of contents.

Changes to the guidelines

Any changes to the guidelines released on 30 June 2016 are set out in the table below. These changes may be included as a result of sector requests for clarification, or agreed changes to the process.

Change	Page reference	Date of update
Myth example reference to "Census data" changed to "staff eligibility information".	p.7	September 2017
Additional bullet in Completing the Research Contribution component section.	p.12	September 2017
Added the date of when individual staff members who have participated in the 2018 Quality Evaluation can request more detailed information on the assessment of their own EP.	p.17	September 2017

Information for staff participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation

This guide is for those individuals who are participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment through the tertiary education organisation (TEO) that employs them.

The guide:

- provides you with an overview of the Quality Evaluation process
- directs you to the relevant sections of the two parts of the 2018 Quality Evaluation Guidelines
- sets out what responsibilities you have to your TEO and what responsibilities your TEO has to you and the TEC
- addresses some of the common myths, misconceptions and frequently asked questions around the PBRF.

This document doesn't supersede the criteria or rules set out in the *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process,* but aims to guide you through the process.

What happens in the Quality Evaluation?

The primary purpose of the PBRF is to ensure that excellent research in the tertiary education sector is encouraged and rewarded.

The Quality Evaluation is an assessment of the research performance of staff at eligible TEOs.

The TEC appoints 13 subject-specific peer review panels to evaluate the quality of Evidence Portfolios (EPs) submitted by eligible TEOs.

TEOs determine which of their staff members are eligible to participate and then decide if each staff member's research is likely to meet the standard for a funded Quality Category. TEOs then compile EPs and submit them to the TEC through the PBRF IT System. EPs which are not likely to meet these standards are not submitted for assessment.

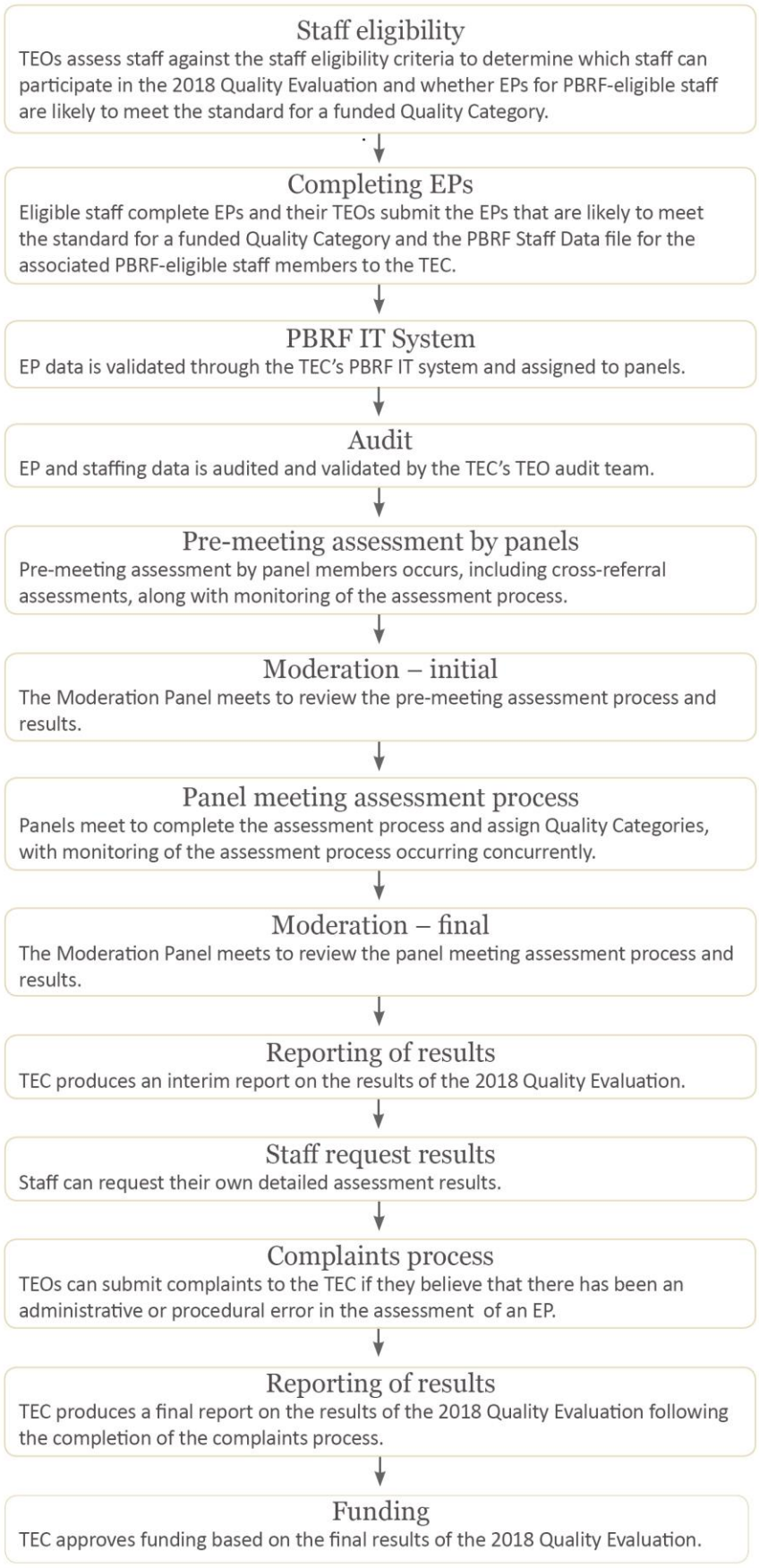
TEOs submit detailed information on staff submitting EPs for the TEC. This information will be submitted through the PBRF IT System and audited by the TEC to ensure that staff meet the eligibility criteria and that the information is accurate. This information will be used in the reporting of results and forms the basis of the funding calculation.

The peer review panels complete the assessment and assign one of six Quality Categories to each EP. The process is overseen by a Moderation Panel which ensures that standards and processes are applied consistently across all panels.

The TEC administers the submission and assessment process through the PBRF IT System, provides support for panels and TEOs, and considers and approves the findings of the Quality Evaluation for funding and reporting of results.

The following diagram shows the main parts of the Quality Evaluation process.

The stages of the 2018 Quality Evaluation process

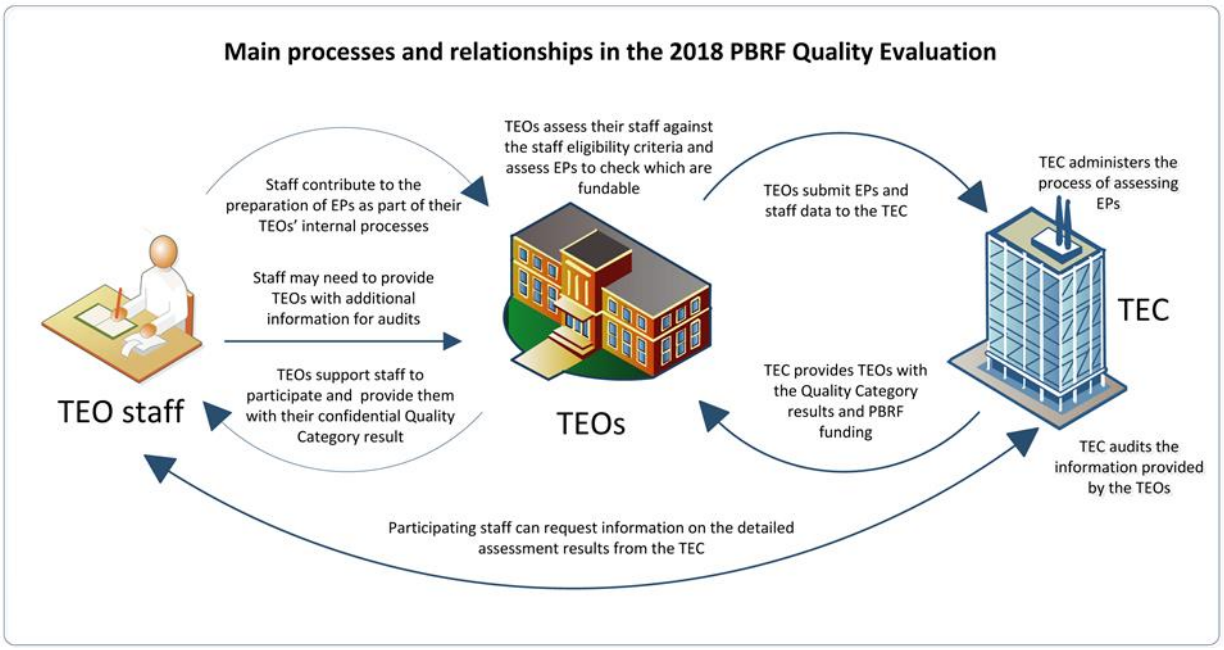


What is my role in the Quality Evaluation process?

As a staff member, your role in the PBRF Quality Evaluation process is primarily working with your employing TEO to ensure that it is able to submit robust and accurate information to the TEC. Both the TEC and your TEO will hold relevant information about you and the assessment of your research. Both organisations have responsibilities in this regard.

The diagram below shows the main relationships between you, your employing TEO and the TEC.

Main relationships in the Quality Evaluation process



What do I need to know about staff eligibility?

Your TEO is responsible for determining if you meet the staff-eligibility criteria and whether or not you are considered a new and emerging researcher. The details of the staff-eligibility criteria and the criteria for new and emerging researcher status are included in the section 'Staff Eligibility' in the *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*.

Myth: You need to be physically at your TEO on 14 June 2018 to be eligible.

You do need to be employed or contracted to a participating TEO on the staff eligibility date of 14 June 2018 (formerly referred to as the PBRF census date), but if you are sick, on leave or on holiday that day you will still be counted.

Myth: If you are employed on a teaching only contract, you are exempt.

The basis of PBRF eligibility is the length of your employment (at least one year), your FTE (minimum of 0.2 FTE throughout the eligibility year) and whether you are substantively involved in teaching at degree-level or above, and/or research. Teaching-only staff with substantive roles are not exempt but you may not need to submit an EP if your TEO determines that your EP is not likely to meet the standard for a funded Quality Category.

Myth: You have to write at least one book every six years to be PBRF eligible.

The staff-eligibility criteria relate to your employment, not the amount or types of research outputs you may have produced.

Myth: Your TEO has to submit your EP to the TEC even if it does not meet the standard for a funded Quality Category.
If your TEO believes that you are PBRF eligible, but does not think that an EP of your research and research-related activity will meet the standard for a funded Quality Category, the TEC does not require them to submit it for assessment. This decision is for your TEO to make. Your TEO may ask you to complete an EP to determine whether it should be submitted.

Myth: If you have recently completed a PhD you are automatically a new and emerging researcher.
Myth: You must have a PhD to be a new and emerging researcher.
A PhD is not a criterion for considering whether a staff member can be considered a new and emerging researcher. The criteria for PBRF-eligible staff members to be classified as new and emerging are based on undertaking substantive and independent research for the first time on or after 1 January 2012. Staff members may have completed substantive and independent research before they have completed a PhD, or not have a PhD but still be undertaking substantive and independent research. Note that a PhD thesis may be included in an EP as a research output, but it is not a requirement for eligibility or required to be included in an EP.

What do I need to know about completing an Evidence Portfolio?

Your employing TEO submits an EP with your research and research-related activity. You support the TEO to do this by following their internal processes. The TEC does not require staff members to sign off or approve the content of EPs although the TEO's internal processes may include this. The Vice-Chancellor or Chief Executive of your organisation completes a declaration that the information in EPs is complete, accurate and complies with the PBRF Guidelines.

Your Evidence Portfolio should reflect your best research

The EP is a sample of your best research achievements over the six-year assessment period; it should not be a description of all the research you have done over that period. Ensure Research Outputs (ROs) and Research Contributions (RCs) in the EP are within the assessment period. Any ROs or RCs that fall outside the assessment period will be removed as part of the audit process and **cannot be replaced**.

Quality over quantity

Panel members review about 70 EPs each. An EP that is clear, concise and tells a story will help the panel to understand your research far better than an EP where the maximum number of characters has been used for every field. Don't bury key information so that panel members need to search for the significance or importance of your research achievements. If you struggle to articulate why an RO or RC item is significant and important it may indicate that this item is not the best one to include.

Evidence Portfolios should provide a coherent view of your research

Think about how your RO and RC component items connect when you write your contextual summary and choose and order items. The Quality Evaluation assessment is for the most part aimed at assessing your platform of research and contributions as a whole and the various parts of your work should build a compelling picture of quality and excellence. This also means you should avoid repetition and duplication between and within the RO and RC components. The information you put in the Platform of Research – Contextual Summary section should tie all the components together.

Presentation of the Evidence Portfolio

TEOs will submit EPs for assessment through the TEC's PBRF IT System. The system ensures that the information submitted by a TEO is presented in a consistent way to panels. TEOs can provide a PDF copy of the submitted EP to you. The TEC will not provide this as it is considered to be the TEO's information.

The PBRF IT System allows you to complete your EP in te Reo Māori and supports the use of special characters.

Completing the sections in the Evidence Portfolio

Selecting a panel

Select the panel that is the best match to the Nominated Research Outputs (NROs) and any Other Research Outputs (OROs) described in your EP. The RO component is worth 70 percent of the total score so it is important that these outputs are assessed by the most appropriate panel.

Completing the Field of Research description

Keep this information brief. Its purpose is to help panel Chairs to assign your EP to panel members. This field should focus on the content of your NROs. If you undertake interdisciplinary research you should clearly identify the key areas that your research covers. This information will help the Chair of your panel assign your EP correctly and help them identify if they need to cross-refer it to another panel.

Completing the Platform of Research – Contextual Summary

This section should provide the panel with a clear introduction and overview to the research outputs and research-related activities presented within the EP, and reflect your overall platform of research. It should answer the questions: who are you, what are you doing and what is your research about?

If you undertake interdisciplinary research, the Platform of Research – Contextual Summary should expand on the information in your Field of Research Description.

You should also provide information on your specific research context, which may include for example:

- the research environment you are working in, such as applied research or professional practice
- any changes in the focus of your research within the assessment period
- the range of other research outputs completed in the assessment period but not in the EP, that indicates the breadth and depth of the research platform
- employment status, such as part-time employment, becoming research active during the assessment period, or teaching on sub-degree programmes.

The information in the Platform of Research – Contextual Summary will also support the panel to make judgements about the EP if it requires a detailed review by the panel at the Holistic assessment stage.

Completing the Research Output component

The PBRF Definition of Research has been updated. The definition is intentionally broad and includes original investigation of all types of research, including that of a creative, professional or applied nature. All outputs in the EP must meet the PBRF Definition of Research.

The full details of RO eligibility criteria and information requirements can be found in the section 'Completing the Research Output component' in the *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*, and the RO assessment descriptors can be found in the section 'Assessing the Research Output component' in the *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process*.

Some key points include:

- The number of outputs you can submit in the RO component has been reduced. You can still submit up to four NROs, but now you can only submit a maximum of 12 OROs instead of the 30 allowed in the 2012 Quality Evaluation.
- TEOs are responsible for ensuring that all ROs are eligible, so work with your TEO on this. New guidance has been developed to clarify eligibility of both standard and non-standard RO types.
- You need to identify your best ROs from the assessment period, categorise them by the correct RO type, and ensure that the TEO has the correct evidence for assessment and audit purposes.
- You must ensure that the evidence provided for each NRO is the actual research not just supporting information.

  Example 1: An NRO listed as a 'Composition' should have a score and/or audio recording submitted as evidence for the panel to assess, not just written documentation that lists the composer, title of the composition and date of performance.

  Example 2: An NRO listed as an 'Authored Book' should have a copy of the book submitted for assessment, not just a copy of the book's title page and bibliographic details.

- Where you are submitting outputs that are joint research (produced by two or more researchers) it is important that you explain the substantial and distinctive contribution that you have made to the output. This description needs to be completed in the Individual Contribution field for the NRO. You should:
  - use qualitative descriptions
  - focus on the significance and nature of your contribution
  - check with your co-authors/co-producers to make sure that your contributions are accurately reflected
  - include the status of your co-authors/co-producers where this is appropriate, for example, where a co-author is a postgraduate student.

Myth: The Quality Evaluation process favours people who undertake individual research, so this discourages people from undertaking joint research.

The Quality Evaluation process is designed to support a range of research outputs and activities, and allows people who do undertake joint research to explain the significance of their contribution to the work. The TEC and panels recognise that joint authorship is the norm in some disciplines, whereas single authorship is the norm in others.

- The RO component of your EP must, as a minimum, receive a score of two to be considered for a funded Quality Category. The standard for a score of two is set out in the tie-point descriptor which states: *The EP demonstrates a platform of research activity (or developing research activity) and output that is based on a sound and justifiable methodology, and that makes a contribution to*

research within the discipline or to applied knowledge, or both. This is normally demonstrated by the production of research outputs that have been subject to quality-assurance processes.

Myth: The Quality Evaluation process favours quantity over quality.

The Quality Evaluation focuses on quality over quantity. The changes to the 2018 Quality Evaluation – reducing the number of outputs from 34 to 16 – reinforce that message.

Completing the Research Contribution component

The new RC component replaces the Peer Esteem (PE) and Contribution to the Research Environment (CRE) components in EPs submitted in previous Quality Evaluation rounds. The number of items in the RC component has also been reduced from a maximum of 60 (30 in PE and 30 in CRE) to a maximum of 15 items.

The full details of what can be submitted in the new RC component, including the 12 RC types, and information requirements can be found in the section 'Completing the Research Contribution component' in the *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*, and the RC assessment descriptors can be found in the section 'Assessing the Research Contribution component' in the *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process*.

Key points include:

- You need to identify your best RCs (maximum 15), categorise them by the correct RC type, and ensure that your TEO has sufficient evidence to show that each item (a) occurred within the assessment period; and (b) can be attributed to you.
- You are not expected to include an item for each of the 12 RC types but evidence of both esteem and contributions are expected to receive a higher score.
- If you are a new and emerging researcher, your EP does not need to contain items in the RC component to be considered for a C(NE) Quality Category. Including items in the RC component may allow you to get to a higher Quality Category.
- Information in an RC entry can, and in some cases should, consist of aggregate information where this is appropriate. The Description section for each RC item has been increased from 1,024 in 2012 to 1,500 characters to support aggregated data. You are able to use an RC type a number of times. You should think about how best to use these.

  Example 1: A staff member has been invited to present their research in a number of different forums over the assessment period. Depending on the nature and significance of events, they may choose to submit one or multiple RC entries under Invitations to Present Research or Similar.

  Example 2: A staff member is supervising four Master's and two PhD students. They can choose to combine this information into a single RC entry for Student Factors, or submit one entry with information on the four Master's students and another entry on their PhD students, or one entry for each student (although this would use six of the 15 entries available for the RC component).

- You are able to submit examples of esteem and contribution from inside and outside of academia in the RC component. If your research is of an applied nature, end-users esteem and the esteem of a person or agency that commissioned the research, as well as contributions to the wider community and the impact of your research can be included in your EP for assessment. This may be especially important if you have recently moved from industry into an academic research environment.
- The introduction of the RC type 'Uptake and Impact' encourages staff members to submit evidence of research application that are indicators of a vital, high-quality research environment. It includes impact on policy, professional practice, or business processes, products, tools, or services as indicators of the social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits of the research. It is not

expected that all staff members submit items under this category, but it may be particularly relevant to those undertaking applied research. If examples of impact of your research are among your best examples of research contribution, then you should include these in your EP.

- Any research impacts included in the EP must have occurred in the assessment period, but these do not need to relate to research undertaken in the assessment period or submitted within the EP.
- If you include any metrics in your EP, bibliometric or research engagement metrics, it is important to state their usual source (for example, PubMed and Google Scholar) and provide context. This could include statements which show how your metrics compare within your discipline or sub-discipline, nationally or internationally.

Extraordinary circumstances

The provisions for special circumstances have been significantly changed for the 2018 Quality Evaluation. There will be two circumstance provisions; one for general extraordinary circumstances and one for extraordinary circumstances related to the ongoing impacts of the Canterbury earthquakes.

The general extraordinary circumstances provision has been significantly tightened with the objective that fewer than 10 percent of EPs submitted will use the general provision. The Canterbury extraordinary circumstances provision is excluded from the 10 percent guideline. Your TEO will assess all claims of extraordinary circumstances and only submit those which meet the criteria.

There are a number of changes to this provision and the full details of the extraordinary circumstances provisions can be found in the section 'Claiming extraordinary circumstances' in the *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*.

Some key points include:

- Both provisions will continue to assess the circumstances against reductions in quantity not reductions in quality. This means any impact on the quality of research is not a factor in considering extraordinary circumstances.
- TEOs can only submit an EP claiming extraordinary circumstances where:
  - they have determined that the staff member's circumstances are legitimate and the staff member has experienced a reduction in research outputs and research-related activity during the assessment period
  - the circumstances have occurred over a minimum time period of three years during the assessment period. The three years do not have to be consecutive.
- Only three types of circumstances that have had a negative impact on the quantity of research outputs and other research activities produced within the assessment period will be considered by the panel. These are:
  - *Long-term illness or disability* that would reduce the quantity of research outputs or activities during the assessment period. This could include ill health or injury, mental health conditions, sensory or developmental conditions, or other health conditions or diseases that may be progressive or have fluctuating or recurring effects.
  - *Extended personal leave* that prevents research activity from occurring during the assessment period. This could include shorter-term leave due to ill health, mental health conditions or injury and parental leave relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare. Sabbatical leave is **not** considered in this circumstance.
  - *Significant family/community responsibilities* that prevent research activity from occurring during the assessment period. This includes responsibility for dependents, such as caring for elderly or ill, injured or disabled family members, or commitments to specific communities, such as iwi or Pacific communities, to a level that reduces the opportunities to undertake research.

More than one circumstance type can be claimed.
Example 1: Long-term illness could have affected an individual for two years at the beginning of the assessment period, with extended personal leave affecting them for the final year of the assessment period.

Example 2: An individual could have been affected by significant family/community responsibilities at intermittent periods of time over the six years that, when combined, amounted to a minimum of three years.

› Employment status including part-time employment or being employed for part of the assessment period is no longer considered a circumstance in its own right. If you are affected by one of the three circumstances types and are also part-time you should include information in the Description section on your employment status where this impacted on your ability to undertake research in the assessment period. Alternatively, you can include information about your part-time status in your Platform of Research – Contextual Summary. This information may be particularly relevant at the Holistic assessment stage. For example, working three days a week throughout the period due to child-care commitments.

Myth: I need to include all of the issues that have hindered my research activity such as a high teaching load and lack of time for research.

The exceptional circumstances provisions can only be used to describe specific extraordinary situations which have a recognised and evidenced negative impact on the quantity of a staff member's research and research-related activity. Common employment-related circumstances that are part of normal organisational activity are not considered.

How does the scoring and assessment process work?

The scoring system uses a scale with a range from zero to seven (seven is the highest score on the scale and zero is the lowest). Only **whole** number scores can be allocated and the scores of two, four and six are tie-points. These tie-points are used to distinguish between different descriptions of quality.

A score is given to each of the two components in the EP (the RO and RC components).

The RO component is weighted at 70 percent of the total score while the RC component is weighted at 30 percent of the total score.

The table below provides an example of how a **total weighted score** is calculated.

EP component	Raw score (0–7)	Weighting (%)	Weighted score
RO	4	70	280
RC	5	30	150
	Total weighted score		**430**

There are six Quality Categories that can be assigned by a panel: A, B, C, C(NE), R and R(NE). The first four Quality Categories (A, B, C, C(NE)) attract funding. The C(NE) and R(NE) Quality Categories can only be awarded to new and emerging researchers.

Myth: No one gets a C unless they have at least four journal articles.

The only rule related to the awarding of a C Quality Category is that a total weighted score of at least 200 with an RO component score of at least two is required. This means that the research outputs submitted in the RO component must be of sufficient quality to meet the standard for a score of two, regardless of the type of research. The panel can overturn the weighted score at the Holistic assessment stage where the panel members collective consider this is appropriate based on all the information in the EP.

Myth: You must have a PhD and two quality-assured outputs to get a C(NE).

The minimum requirement to be awarded a C(NE) is at least one quality-assured output. The requirement of a PhD and two quality-assured outputs is based on advice in the 2012 Quality Evaluation guidelines. The output(s) in the RO component must be of sufficient quality to meet the standard for a score of two.

Tables that set out how the scoring relates to the Quality Categories can be found at the end of this guide.

The assessment process

The Quality Evaluation assessment is a five-stage process conducted in two parts:

- The pre-panel meeting assessment process where:
  - Preparatory Scores for the RO and RC components are determined by assigned panel members, and in some cases cross-referred panel members
  - Preliminary Scores for the RO and RC components are determined by the two primary panel members (panel-pair) after consultation with each other. This consultation may include input from any cross-referred panel members. An Indicative Quality Category will be automatically assigned based on the Preliminary component scores.
- The panel meeting assessment process where:
  - Calibrated panel scores for each of the two components based on the calibration of the preceding sets of scores are determined. A Calibrated Panel Quality Category will be automatically assigned based on these calibrated component scores
  - a Holistic Quality Category will be recorded for all EPs, with the panels undertaking a detailed review of those EPs that have claimed extraordinary circumstances or where the panel has identified any uncommon issues about the EP
  - a Final Quality Category is confirmed for each EP submitted to the panel.

The panels use the scoring and tie-point descriptors set out in the sections 'Assessing the Research Output component' and 'Assessing the Research Contribution component' in the *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process* to allocate scores to the RO and RC components.

A diagram of the assessment process can be found at the end of this guide.

One of the important aspects of the assessment process is calibration. Calibration in the context of the Quality Evaluation assessment is the process where panel members align their judgements (as individuals, panel-pairs and as a panel) against the RO component and the RC component scoring descriptors. Panels can make adjustments to scoring through the different stages of the assessment process as a result of this calibration.

Calibration occurs in a number of ways:

- as part of the training of panels
- the discussions that occur as part of a panel-pair, and with any cross-referral assessors
- the discussions that occur as part of a whole panel meeting and reviewing EPs.

The result of this calibration means that the scores given to your EP in the Preparatory scoring stage can differ from the ones given by the panel. The Calibrated Panel component scores are agreed after the panel members have gone through several stages of calibration and these are the component scores that you will receive if you request a detailed assessment report on your results.

Myth: To get a good score in the Quality Evaluation, your research needs to be published in prestigious international journals.

The definition of 'world class' in regard to research makes it clear that this is a standard that relates to the **quality** of the research not the topic, theme or location of the research, or place of publication. The TEC does not produce or provide journal rankings for the Quality Evaluation assessment process. You should refer to the panel-specific guidelines for the relevant panel for further advice if you intend including journal rankings in your EP.

The definition of world class is set out in the section *The scoring system for Evidence Portfolios* in the *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process*.

How can the peer review panels be expected to assess all the different research areas?

Panels are appointed for their expertise in assessment.

It is not expected that there will be a specific expert in every sub-discipline the panel will be assessing but as a whole the panel members will represent a broad base of skills, experience and knowledge.

Panel members are not representatives of the TEO, subject area or discipline – their focus is on assessing EPs against the scoring descriptors and Quality Category descriptors.

No one person or group is responsible for the final Quality Category assigned to an EP. The calibration process that occurs over the different scoring stages of the assessment process provides multiple opportunities for panels to ensure their review of an EP aligns with other EPs and against the component scoring descriptors. The monitoring and moderation processes have been developed to consider and, as necessary, amend any discrepancies in scoring at individual, subject area or TEO level.

What happens if I know a panel member?

The TEC has a process in place to manage conflicts of interest (COI). In some cases, a COI notice can be submitted by your TEO and it must contain sufficient information to allow the panel Chair to make a decision on what action, if any, should be taken. Only a TEO can submit a COI notice. Any panellist that is the subject of a COI notice will be advised of the perceived COI identified in the notice.

If you have a family member or close friend or colleague who is a panellist, you should speak to them to remind them or confirm with them that they have declared a COI to the TEC rather than submit a COI notice. Notices that don't contain sufficient information to make a determination on whether or not there is a COI will be returned to the TEO and the TEO has 10 days to submit a revised notice.

The full details for the Conflict of Interest notices process are included in the section 'Submitting conflict of interest notices for staff members' in the *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*. The Conflict of Interest policy is included in section

Guidelines for conflicts of interest and confidentiality in the *Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment process*.

Am I involved in the auditing of PBRF information?

It is the TEOs responsibility to provide evidence of research outputs and research contributions for auditing purposes, as well as its decisions on the eligibility of staff to participate.

Evidence requirements for audit focus on the eligibility of the item and this is information that your TEO will often already hold. In some cases, you may need to provide this information to your TEO on request.

Your TEO may need to provide your employment contract information to the TEC auditors to allow them to confirm your eligibility. The information needed to confirm this is likely to include start dates for employment, contract duration, your FTE, and contracted functions relating to teaching and research (this may also be in your position description). The TEC auditors are bound by confidentiality agreements and the privacy of your personal information will be strictly maintained by the TEC.

What happens when the results are released?

You can indicate on your EP if you want your TEO to provide you with your Quality Category results. Your Quality Category results are confidential and your TEO is required to maintain this information securely.

TEOs are expected to be transparent about the reasons for collecting PBRF data and the purposes that the information will be used for. If you are not aware of your TEO's processes and protocols regarding the use of Quality Category results, you should contact your Research Office or Human Resources Office.

Once the 2018 Quality Evaluation results are released to your TEO, you can also request a more detailed report on your results. See this section.

How can I get my PBRF funding?

Funding is allocated as a bulk fund to TEOs, not to the participating staff members. As a result, a TEO is responsible for all decisions on how the funding is used.

If you move to a different TEO during the funding period, the PBRF funding remains with your original organisation.

What can I do if I think my results are wrong?

The PBRF is a judgement-based assessment. However, if you believe that an administrative or procedural error may have occurred in the assessment process, you will need to discuss this with your TEO in the first instance. You should also request a copy of your detailed results from the TEC. The process for this is set out in this section.

If your TEO thinks that an error may have been made, they can submit a complaint to the TEC through the complaints process. More information on the complaints process can be found in the section *Complaints about administrative and procedural errors* in the *Guidelines for tertiary education organisations participating in the 2018 Quality Evaluation*.

Myth: Quality Evaluation scores will automatically go up over time. Once I've earned a B Quality Category in a Quality Evaluation I should expect to get a B or an A in future Quality Evaluations.

The Quality Evaluation assessment is only based on a sample of research activity over the previous six years. If your Quality Category result from the 2018 Quality Evaluation is different from that determined by for example, an internal assessment round, a previous Quality Evaluation, or self-assessment, this does not mean that an error has occurred in the assessment process.

How can I get a copy of my detailed results?

This is the one area where the TEC has direct responsibilities to participating staff members. As the TEC holds information about you, you are able to request this information directly.

Only individual staff members who have participated in the 2018 Quality Evaluation, or who have participated in previous Quality Evaluations, are able to request more detailed information on the assessment of their own EP.

TEOs cannot request this information on your behalf or on behalf of their previous staff members.

The form will be available to download from the TEC website in April 2019 or requested from your TEO's PBRF contact person.

Requesting your results

All requests for results must be submitted:

- by individual staff members
- on the form provided by the TEC.

The form must include the following information for the TEC:

- full name
- date of birth
- NSN (National Student Number provided by the TEO – you can check with your Research Office or equivalent if you do not know what your NSN is)
- the name of the TEO that submitted the EP
- contact phone number
- email address
- postal address to send the printed report to.

This information will ensure that the staff member is correctly identified by the TEC.

The completed Request for Evidence Portfolio Information form can be emailed or mailed to the TEC.

Email: sectorhelpdesk@tec.govt.nz with the subject line **PBRF Quality Evaluation results request**

Mail: Tertiary Education Commission
PBRF Quality Evaluation results request
ATTN: Sector Help Desk
PO Box 27-048
Wellington 6141
New Zealand

Processing of requests

After receiving a completed Request for Evidence Portfolio Information form from a staff member, the TEC will confirm the identity of the individual, prepare the report, and forward the report to the staff member at the address provided in the request.

New Zealand-based staff members will be posted a hard copy of the information. Overseas-based staff members will be emailed an electronic copy.

If the TEC has any concerns related to your identity, the information will not be released. You may need to check your information with the Research Office of the TEO that submitted the EP.

The TEC aims to provide requests within 20 working days from receipt of the form. Requests for results from the 2003, 2006 and 2012 Quality Evaluations may take longer to process.

The TEC will not release information on the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment to individual researchers until these results have been received by TEOs. This is expected to be in April 2019.

You can also request your 2003, 2006, and 2012 Quality Evaluation results from the TEC.

› For requests for 2003 and 2006 results, email: pbrfinfo@tec.govt.nz.
› For requests for 2012 results, email: sector.helpdesk@tec.govt.nz.

Information that will be released

The following information on the 2018 Quality Evaluation assessment will be released to staff members:

› a list of cross-referrals
› staff member details as submitted in the PBRF Staff Data file by one or more TEOs
› actions and observations including transfer of the EP to another panel
› Calibrated Panel component scores
› Calibrated Panel Quality Category
› Holistic Quality Category
› Final Quality Category.

To preserve the confidentiality of panel members, the names of assessors assigned to any EP will not be released to the staff member or the TEO.

For the 2018 Quality Evaluation we have returned to the practice of excluding the Preparatory and Preliminary score in these reports. These scores are from the initial stages of the scoring process, are not yet moderated or calibrated, and accordingly do not always reflect the Quality Category score. Following the 2012 Quality Evaluation, feedback indicated that these scores created some confusion about the assessment process.

Who do I ask if I have questions about the PBRF or I need help?

Your TEO will have a key contact person or people. If your TEO has a Research Office this may be the first place to contact. It may have also made information available to you online, for example an organisational intranet. Check there too.

Questions can be emailed to the TEC at pbrfhelp@tec.govt.nz if they are about the PBRF operational processes or policy.

Do I have to participate?

You should discuss this with your employing TEO as there may be specific contractual requirements.

Key dates for the 2018 Quality Evaluation

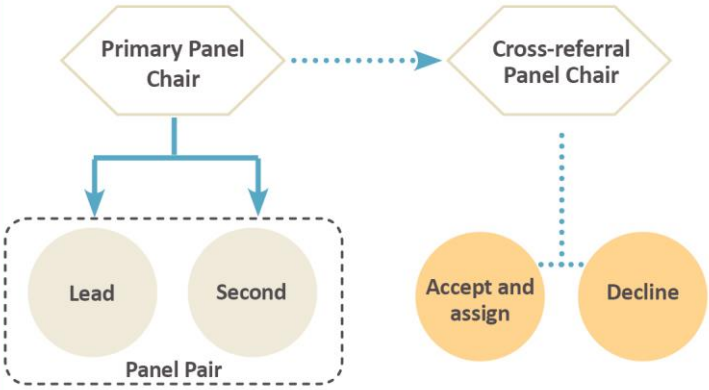
Phase	Deadline/activity	Date
Audit – process	TEO process assurance audit	May – December 2017
Eligibility periods	Eligibility period for ROs and RC items (the PBRF assessment period)	1 January 2012 – **31 December 2017**
	Staff must be employed or contracted within this period to be considered PBRF-eligible	15 June 2017 – **14 June 2018**
PBRF staff-eligibility date	Staff must be employed or contracted on this date to be eligible to submit an EP	**14 June 2018**
EP and Staff Data submission	Preliminary submission date for EP data and PBRF Staff Data files	6 July 2018
	Period for final review and correction of EP data and PBRF Staff Data files	6 July 2018 – 4.00pm 13 July 2018
	Close-off date for resubmission of EP data and PBRF Staff Data files	**4.00pm 13 July 2018**
	Deadline for Vice-Chancellor's/Chief Executive Officer's declaration to confirm accuracy of data and process of assessment within the TEO	**4.00pm 16 July 2018**
Notices of conflicts of interest	Deadline for TEOs submitting notices of conflicts of interest in relation to panellists	**4.00pm 31 July 2018**
Audit – data	Data evaluation audit	July – December 2018
Assignment	Assignment of EPs for assessment	14 July – 26 August 2018
Pre-meeting assessment and moderation	Pre-meeting panellist assessment of EPs	27 August – 2 November 2018
	Deadlines for panellist requests for additional cross-referrals	*21 September 2018*
	Deadline for completion of preparatory scores by all panellists including cross-referral assessors	*18 October 2018*
	Deadline for completion of preliminary scores	*2 November 2018*
	Initial Moderation Panel meeting	November 2018
Panel assessment and moderation	Panel meetings	19 November 2018 – 7 December 2018
	Second Moderation Panel meeting	December 2018
Reporting	Interim report on 2018 Quality Evaluation results released with indicative funding allocations	April 2019
Final Quality Categories and complaints	Final Quality Categories reported to TEOs	April 2019
	Staff requests for 2018 Quality Evaluation results start	April 2019
	35-day period for TEOs to lodge complaints	April 2019 – May 2019

Phase	Deadline/activity	Date
	60-day period for the TEC to investigate complaints	May – July 2019
Reporting and funding allocations	Final report on 2018 Quality Evaluation results released	September 2019
	Funding allocations for 2019 finalised	October 2019

Note: EP = Evidence Portfolio; PBRF = Performance-Based Research Fund; RC = Research Contribution; ROs = Research Outputs; TEO = tertiary education organisation.

Quality Evaluation assessment process

Chair Assignment Phase



> Primary Panel Chairs assign EPs to two members of their panel (Panel pair).

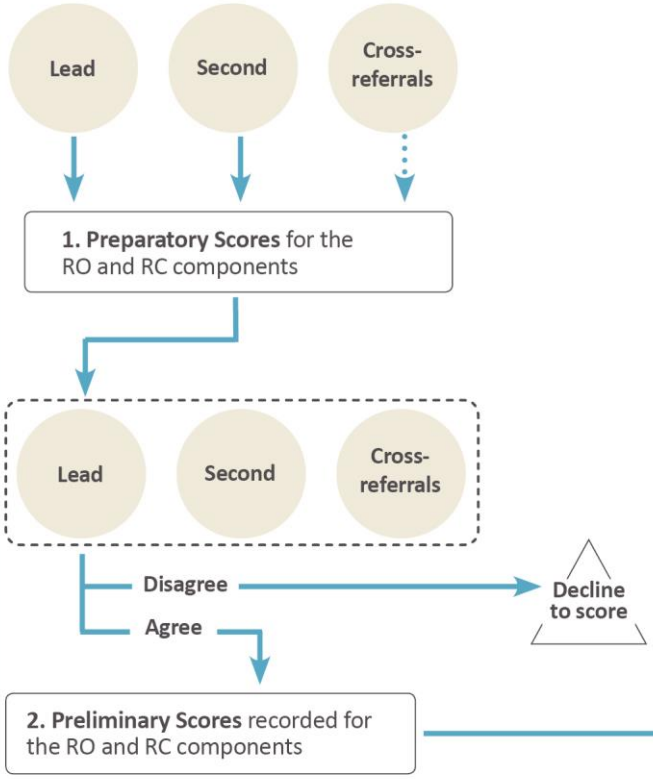
> Primary Panel Chairs may also refer EPs to one or more other Panels (cross-referral) and must provide specific advice on which part or parts of an EP need to be considered by the other panel in the Cross-referral assessment.

> The Chair of the Cross-referral Panel makes the decision whether to assign the EP to a member of their panel or whether to decline to assess the EP.

Assignment Phase

Panel members review their assigned EPs, record and advise Chair and TEC Panel Advisor of any additional conflicts of interest, advise Chair that the EP may require a cross-referral, and finalise their actual assessment workload.

Pre-panel Assessment Phase



> Primary panel members complete their assessment of EPs by assigning Preparatory Scores for the two components of the EP.

> Cross-referral panel members complete their assessment of EPs by assigning a Preparatory Score for one or both components of the EP, and complete a commentary which would include confirmation of the aspects of the EP assessed and provide a rationale for the component score(s) provided.

> Once all Preparatory Scores and all additional advice from Cross-referral Panels have been received, the Lead member of the Panel Pair may initiate a discussion between themselves and the Second member to decide on a Preliminary Score which is entered into the PBRF IT System by the Lead Panel member.

> If the EP has been cross-referred to another panel, the cross-referral assessor will be included in the discussion to determine the Preliminary component scores in all cases where the difference in scoring could impact on the result.

> If the Panel Pair cannot agree a Preliminary Score, the Lead will indicate Decline to Score for the EP. These EPs will go to the Panel to decide the component scores.

Pre-panel Meeting

Panel members will be able to review their EPs in preparation for presenting these at their Panel meeting.

First Moderation Meeting

Panel Assessment Phase

> Panels come together to make final decisions on all EPs primarily assigned to their Panel. The TEC Panel Advisor is the only person who can confirm scores in the PBRF IT System. Panel members will be able to view information.

Peer Review Panel Meeting

4. Calibrated Panel Scores → **5. Calibrated Quality Category**

Discussion will lead to agreement on the Calibrated Panel scores for the RO and RC components for each EP. EPs that were Declined to Score at the Preliminary scoring stage will be reviewed at this stage.

Holistic assessment process

6. Holistic Quality Category

The Holistic assessment process is to ascertain which Quality Category is most appropriate for an EP, taking all relevant factors into consideration. A detailed review at this stage is primarily for exceptions.

7. Final Quality Category

The Panel determines and records the Final Quality Category for each EP.

Second Moderation Meeting

Reporting of Results

Guides to scoring and Quality Categories

The table below is used for the scoring of all EPs except those identified as new and emerging researchers.

RC Score \ RO Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0	0	70	140	210	280	350	420	490
1	30	100	170	240	310	380	450	520
2	60	130	200	270	340	410	480	550
3	90	160	230	300	370	440	510	580
4	120	190	260	330	400	470	540	610
5	150	220	290	360	430	500	570	640
6	180	250	320	390	460	530	600	670
7	210	280	350	420	490	560	630	700
Quality Category	**R**		**C**		**B**		**A**	

The table below is used for the scoring of all participants identified as new and emerging researchers. A new and emerging researcher awarded a score of two for their RO component and a one or zero in their RC component, will have their total weighted score automatically rounded up from 140 or 170 to 200 in the 2018 Quality Evaluation.

RC Score \ RO Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0	0	70	**200**	210	280	350	420	490
1	30	100	**200**	240	310	380	450	520
2	60	130	200	270	340	410	480	550
3	90	160	230	300	370	440	510	580
4	120	190	260	330	400	470	540	610
5	150	220	290	360	430	500	570	640
6	180	250	320	390	460	530	600	670
7	210	280	350	420	490	560	630	700
Quality Category	**R(NE)**		**C(NE)**		**B**		**A**	

Glossary

The glossary contains the broad meanings of commonly used terms. Full descriptions of these can be found in the main body of the guidelines.

Term	Meaning
Assessment period	The period between 1 January 2012 and 31 December 2017. Only research outputs produced and research contributions undertaken in this period are eligible for inclusion in an Evidence Portfolio for the 2018 Quality Evaluation round.
Co-authorship	Process by which a research output is produced by more than one researcher.
Component scores	The scores from zero to seven that are assigned to each of the two components of an Evidence Portfolio (Research Output and Research Contribution).
Contract duration period	The timeframe a staff member is contracted for.
Co-production	Process by which a research output is produced by more than one researcher.
Course	The smallest component of a qualification that contributes credit toward the completion of the qualification. Other terms used to describe a course include unit, paper or module.
Degree-level course or equivalent	Course or equivalent that leads to a degree or related qualification. Degree-level courses include those at level 5 or above on the New Zealand Qualifications Authority framework. Courses taught as part of qualifications, such as certificates or diplomas that can form one or more years of study towards a degree, are included as degree-level courses.
Evidence Portfolio (EP)	TEOs collect information on the research outputs and research-related activity of their PBRF-eligible staff members during the assessment period. This information forms the EP that is submitted by the TEO to the TEC for assessment by a peer review panel.

Term	Meaning
Excellence	Excellence, in this respect, is not just about the production of high-quality research articles, books, exhibitions and other forms of research output. It also includes all of the following: › the production and creation of leading-edge knowledge › the application of that knowledge › the dissemination of that knowledge to students and the wider community › supporting current and potential researchers, such as postgraduate students, in the creation, application and dissemination of knowledge. The primary purpose of the PBRF is rewarding and encouraging excellence.
External Research Income (ERI)	A measure of the income for research purposes gained by a TEO from external sources. ERI is one of the three measures of the PBRF, along with the Research Degree Completion measure and the Quality Evaluation.
EFTS	Equivalent full-time student.
FTE	Full-time-equivalent.
Interdisciplinary research	Research that crosses two or more academic disciplines or subject areas.
Joint research	Research produced by two or more researchers.
Major role	A staff member contributes at least 25 percent of the delivery of the course and corresponding working time to the design of the course and/or the design of the assessment process.
Moderation Panel	Panel that meets to review the work of peer review panels to ensure that the TEC policy has been followed and the Quality Evaluation process has been consistent across the panels.
New and emerging researcher	A PBRF-eligible staff member who is undertaking substantive and independent research for the first time in their career and meets the criteria for new and emerging researcher status.
Nominated academic unit	The academic unit nominated by the TEO for each of the staff members for whom an Evidence Portfolio is being submitted.
Nominated Research Outputs (NROs)	The up to four best research outputs that the PBRF-eligible staff member nominates in their Evidence Portfolio. NROs are given particular scrutiny during the Quality Evaluation process.

Term	Meaning
Non-quality-assured research output	A research output that has not completed a formal process of quality assurance.
Other Research Outputs (OROs)	Up to 12 research outputs that the PBRF-eligible staff member nominates in their Evidence Portfolio if they have four Nominated Research Outputs. OROs form evidence of the staff member's platform of research.
Overseas-based staff	A staff member who is resident in New Zealand for less than 50 percent of their employment period and employed for less than 0.5 full-time equivalent. Overseas-based staff members are not eligible to participate in the 2018 Quality Evaluation.
Panel	See peer review panel and Moderation Panel.
PBRF staff-eligibility date	14 June 2018. The key date for determining staff eligibility.
PBRF staff-eligibility period	Any 12-month period that bridges the PBRF staff-eligibility date of 14 June 2018.
PBRF-eligible staff member	A person who is employed by a TEO or otherwise contracted by a TEO on a contract for service in their own right as individuals, an entity or trading name, through their employer, or any other contracting the TEO may have developed, and meets the staff-eligibility criteria.
PBRF IT System	Online information technology system used by the TEC to administer and support the Quality Evaluation process.
PBRF Staff Data File	A file submitted by participating TEOs that provides detailed information on all PBRF-eligible staff members for whom an Evidence Portfolio is being submitted, and any transferring or concurrently employed PBRF-eligible staff members.
Peer review panel	Group of experts who evaluate the quality of research as set out in an individual Evidence Portfolio. There are 13 peer review panels, each covering different subject areas.
Points/points scale	The points range used to score each of the two components of an Evidence Portfolio during the first stage in the assessment of an Evidence Portfolio. The points scale ranges from zero (lowest) to seven (highest).
Primary field of research	The research field of the staff member's research activity during the assessment period, and especially that of the (up to) four Nominated Research Outputs selected for their Evidence Portfolio.

Term	Meaning
Produced	'Produced' in the context of the PBRF means that the final version of the research output was first made available in the public domain during the assessment period.
Quality-assurance process	Formal, independent scrutiny by those with the necessary expertise and/or skills to assess quality.
Quality-assured research output	Research output that has been subject to a formal process of quality assurance.
Quality Category	A rating of researcher excellence assigned to the Evidence Portfolio of a PBRF-eligible staff member following the Quality Evaluation process. There are six Quality Categories: A, B, C, C(NE), R and R(NE). Quality Category A signifies researcher excellence at the highest level, and Quality Category R represents research activity or quality at a level that is insufficient for recognition by the PBRF. The A, B, C(NE) and R(NE) Quality Categories are available for new and emerging researchers. The A, B, C and C(NE) Quality Categories are funded Quality Categories.
Quality Evaluation	The process that assesses the quality of research output produced by PBRF-eligible staff members, the esteem within which they are regarded for their research activity, the contribution they have made to the research environment, and the impact their research has had within a given assessment period. The Quality Evaluation is one of the three measures of the PBRF, along with the Research Degree Completion measure and the External Research Income measure.
Research	See the PBRF Definition of Research in the guidelines.
Research Contribution (RC) component	A research contribution item is evidence that describes the contribution or recognition or impact of a staff member's research and research-related activities. The Research Contribution (RC) **component** is one of the two components of an Evidence Portfolio and is worth 30 percent of the overall assessment score. A research contribution **type** is one of the 12 defined categories for listing research-related activity in an Evidence Portfolio.

Term	Meaning
Research Degree Completion (RDC) measure	A measure of the number of research-based postgraduate degrees completed within a TEO where there is a research component of 0.75 equivalent full-time students or more and external moderation. One of the three measures of the PBRF, along with the External Research Income measure and the Quality Evaluation.
Research Output (RO) component	A research output is a product of research that is evaluated during the Quality Evaluation process. The Research Output (RO) **component** is one of the two components of an Evidence Portfolio. A research output **type** is one of the defined categories for listing research outputs in an Evidence Portfolio.
Staff-eligibility criteria	The criteria that staff have to meet to be eligible to participate in the Quality Evaluation.
Subject area	One of the 43 subject areas defined to represent the range of research disciplines assessed in the Quality Evaluation.
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission.
TEO	Tertiary education organisation.
Tie-points	The standards expected for the scores two, four and six in each of the two components of an Evidence Portfolio.
Total weighted score	The sum of the points allocated to each component of the Evidence Portfolio during the first stage of assessment, multiplied by the weighting for each component.
URI	A Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) is a string of characters used to identify a name or a resource on the Internet or in the TEC temporary repository of Nominated Research Outputs.
XML	XML (Extensible Markup Language) is a set of rules for encoding documents in machine-readable form. It is defined in the XML 1.0 Specification produced by the W3C.