

OTAGO POLYTECHNIC MANAGEMENT POLICY		Number: MP1102.01
Title:	Performance Based Research Fund - Decisions	
ITPNZ Standard:	11 Research	
Policies Committee:	Approval Date: 12 Feb 09	Effective Date: 12 Feb 09
Previous Policy Number	n/a	Review Date: 23 Apr 12
Contact Authority:	Deputy Chief Executive	Status: current

Purpose To ensure the communication of PBRF individual staff members' quality categories in a manner which protects researcher confidentiality and enhances Otago Polytechnic's commitment to and improvement of research culture.

Background Performance Based Research Funding (PBRF)

The purpose of the PBRF, as agreed by Government, is to:

- increase the average quality of research
- ensure that research continues to support degree and postgraduate teaching
- ensure that funding is available for postgraduate students and new researchers
- improve the quality of public information on research output
- prevent undue concentration of funding that would undermine research support for all degrees or prevent access to the system by new researchers, and
- underpin the existing research strength in the tertiary education

A number of broad principles underpin the public reporting of the PBRF results. These include:

- protecting the confidentiality of individual staff members' Quality Categories
- maintaining the confidence and co-operation of the academic community
- minimising transaction and compliance costs
- minimising incentives for game-playing by TEOs
- contributing to international benchmarking of research performance within disciplines (as a tool to inform specific policy and funding decisions)
- protecting the integrity of long-established academic disciplines while at the same time recognising emerging disciplines and multidisciplinary subject areas
- having a sufficient level of disaggregation so that the quality scores and other published information are useful and meaningful for accountability purposes and for relevant stakeholders (eg students, research funders)
- providing information of a comparative nature that will assist TEOs to benchmark their research performance and enable them to improve their decision making with respect to priority setting and the allocation of resources

Otago Polytechnic

The Otago Polytechnic research plan aspires to create centres of research activity that are topical, collaborative and of high standard and which reflect the issues pertinent to Otago and/or the teaching strengths of the polytechnic and to support the endeavours of its staff to ensure their long-term investment and interest in research. This plan is supported by Otago Polytechnic's engagement in the PBRF.

General

PBRF scores have the potential to be perceived as performance indicators; however they do not fulfil this role. They are historical, end partway through a performance year, and are not indicative of future performance, or research underway. The PBRF

score is related to evidence portfolios submitted for research undertaken between 2000 and 2005 and thus cannot be related directly to current performance. The (PBRF) Working Group Report commented that the PBRF evaluation of research performance is based primarily on “quality aspects and not on productivity” and do not reflect performance in other areas of academic responsibility (eg teaching, contributions to the wider community, and administrative responsibilities).

Misuse of the PBRF quality categories has the potential to alienate staff, and undermine their commitment both to research productivity and effective reporting in the PBRF process.

Subject/discipline analysis will occur as in the previous PBRF (2003) round

- to analyse sector capability in specific disciplines/subject areas
- to facilitate student decision-making

**Statutory
Compliance**

Each TEO should have internal ethical or policy frameworks to ensure the confidentiality of the individual quality category information, and prevent this information from being used for unintended purposes.

**National
Guidelines**

Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) Guidelines 2006

**Policy and
Procedures**

1. TEC writes to the Chief Executive and requests nomination of person who shall be responsible for PBRF results information for that institution. Otago Polytechnic’s nominee is the Deputy Chief Executive, responsible for research.
2. The Deputy Chief Executive, shall receive a password protected CD from TEC containing individual quality category information. This was accessible at 9am on 30 April 2007 to enable the TEO to consider the quality categories assigned to its PBRF eligible staff prior to the release of the overall report at 1.00 pm on Tuesday, 1 May 2007. There was no public release by the TEC of the Quality Categories assigned to individual staff members’ Evidence Portfolios.
3. Staff will be notified that:
 - Quality category information has been received
 - Overall Institutional quality information will be made available internally and through public press release
 - Individual results are confidential, and will only be known to the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, who will ensure that results are made available to each individual
 - It is recommended that individuals discuss their individual score as part of the development of their individual research plan with institutionally-designated senior researchers/research coordinators in order to enhance performance in the future
 - Managers will not receive individual scores, nor will this information be directly linked to staff performance or human resource records
4. Managers will have access to individual research plans to assist and support individuals in their research. However, in order to support their research, individuals are strongly encouraged to discuss their individual score with their Group Manager, Head of School/Programmes and research leader. This is solely for the purposes of supporting development.
5. Reporting
Overall reports by discipline, panel and academic grouping will be available.

6. Appeal process

If an individual feels that a peer review panel has failed to follow the process outlined in the PBRF guidelines in assessing their evidence portfolio, it may be possible to make a complaint. Note that complaints cannot be made about substantive decision making by a peer review panel. Any complaints must come from the institution, not individuals, and attract a processing fee of \$200. If individuals think they may have grounds for a complaint, they are to discuss this directly with the Deputy Chief Executive.

Referral Documents

PBRF 2006 Use of Data by TEOs Consultation Paper
Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) Guidelines 2006
Otago Polytechnic Research Plan 2006-2008
<http://www.tec.govt.nz/upload/downloads/PBRF-sector-update-March07%20v1.pdf>

Delegation of Procedures