
FUTURE RESEARCH ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

PURPOSE

1. This paper provides an update on the Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP) and highlights a number of questions for discussion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. RKEC is asked to:
 - Note the progress of the Future Research Assessment Programme;
 - Note some of the key issues that FRAP seeks to address; and
 - Offer a view on the key questions to be addressed by FRAP.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3. There are no immediate financial implications of this paper however any future research assessment exercise will impact a significant level of programme funds, approximately £1.8Bn over the next REF period.

RISK ASSESSMENT

4. There are reputational risks for the Programme and SFC should FRAP: not address adequately concerns expressed in the sector around the impact of national research assessment on research culture and administrative burden; lead to recommendations that are not implementable; and cause significant delays to the announcement of the next assessment system.
5. Mitigating actions include: close and sustained engagement with the sector; gathering a broad base of evidence, including several independent analyses; and seeking regular input from the International Advisory Group.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

6. Ensuring that any proposed processes for national research assessment do not adversely affect people with protected characteristics is an important factor in the programme. The FRAP team is

working with sector bodies to ensure that the perspectives of those from protected groups are represented throughout the consultation and development process. Sector engagement events will be undertaken virtually to increase inclusion and participation from the sector. Equalities impact assessments of potential assessment models will be undertaken to ensure that any unintended consequences are identified, and mitigating actions put in place.

ISLAND COMMUNITIES

7. No direct links to the island communities have been identified.

CARBON REDUCTION

8. No direct links to the Scottish Government's priorities for carbon reduction and the achievement of 'net-zero' by 2045 have been identified.

PUBLICATION

9. This paper will be withheld from publication as it contains information which is part of an ongoing policy development process.

FURTHER INFORMATION

10. This paper was contributed by Dr Catriona Frith, Associate Director for Research Environment, Research England. SFC contact: Morag Campbell, email: mcampbell@sfc.ac.uk.