

Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM) Report

Summary

This paper reports on the 2016 Annual Research Quality Monitoring Exercise (ARQM).

The ARQM in 2016 indicates 42% of total academic staff produced 3* / 4* outputs. This compares to a milestone of 49% in the Strategic Plan 2012-2016.

Whilst the figure is below the milestone, it represents an increase of 5% from 2015. Furthermore, following calibration after REF2014 and a review of the ARQM in 2015, there is a greater degree of confidence in the accuracy of the data.

One action required.

Recommended Action

Senate is asked to **consider** the paper.

Publication: Open

Background

The Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM) exercise was introduced in 2011 to monitor the quality of research outputs by our academic staff between external reviews provided by the Research Excellence Framework (REF). The ARQM estimates our performance against strategic milestones set out in the Strategic Plan 2012- 2016, in relation to the proportion of total academic staff producing 3*/4* outputs.

Methodology

The exercise comprised the following steps:

1. Establishment of a Panel (and sub-panels, as appropriate) in each School and the invitation of senior colleagues from research intensive institutions to act as external referees.
2. Identification of up to four outputs per research active City academic that were read and rated by the Panel. In a change from previous years, colleagues were required to identify and nominate their outputs using the CRO.
3. A sample of outputs were sent to external referees for evaluation and their ratings were then used to calibrate the ratings of the School Panel. The School Panels may have also used subject-appropriate proxies and metrics to calibrate their ratings
4. Only outputs published between 1st January 2012 and 31st December 2015 were considered. From ARQM 2016, publications should also have been deposited on the CRO, in line with institutional Open Access policies.
5. Schools were provided a list of academic staff on 'Education & Research' and 'Research Only' contracts from the central HR record. All FTE data used were also taken from the central HR records.
6. The Grade Point Average (GPA) of all output ratings was calculated per staff member. The GPA calculation took into account that, under special circumstances staff, could provide less than 4 outputs.
7. The FTE of staff with a GPA greater or equal to 3 was summed and divided by the total academic staff FTE. Total academic staff are those categorised as Teaching plus Teaching & Research in the HESA return 2014/15 (Note: The HESA figure for SMCSE was corrected for Research staff numbers). The result is the percentage of academic staff FTE with $GPA \geq 3$ for ARQM 2016.

The assessment of outputs is based on the star rating system used in REF 2014:

The criteria for assessing the quality of outputs are 'originality, significance and rigour'.	
Four star	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Three star	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.

Two star	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
One star	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work, or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

Results

The appended table provides the results of the ARQM exercise for 2016 with a comparison for the ARQM in 2015.

These data should be considered in light of the following factors:

Visiting Lecturers

To assess institutional compliance with HEFCE and REF Open Access policies, academic staff were required to upload and select their outputs for review using the CRO. To be able to do so with existing software and staff resource, it was not possible to include visiting lecturers in ARQM 2016. It should be noted that few Visiting Lecturers produce 3* / 4* outputs.

Systems and Software Challenges

Academic and Professional Services staff faced a number of challenges in using the CRO for ARQM 2016. Whilst these difficulties impacted most significantly on the reporting of ARQM outputs, academic and support staff also encountered problems with the labelling system that resulted in duplicate and ineligible outputs being recorded. Of the 1931 outputs considered and rated for ARQM, 66% (1266) were available and labelled on the CRO during the exercise and although normal publication processing times of 3-5 days increased to 5-10 days during the ARQM assessment period, this was a significant contribution requiring concerted efforts on the part of the publications team.

Comparison to milestone

The ARQM in 2016 indicates 42% of total academic staff produced 3* / 4* outputs. This compares to a milestone of 49% in the Strategic Plan 2012 - 2016.

School	FTE with GPA ≥ 3 for ARQM 2016	FTE of Education + Education & Research (excl. VLS) 2016	Percentage of staff FTE with GPA ≥ 3 for ARQM 2016	FTE with GPA ≥ 3 for ARQM 2015	Percentage of staff FTE with GPA ≥ 3 for ARQM 2015

Cass	79.10	155.0	51%	61.68	35%
SMCSE	84.65	119.5	71%	85.35	56%
CLS	5	81.9	6%	3	4%
SASS	64.7	153.1	42%	80.1	42%
SHS	38.93	134.6	29%	45.4	31%
City (excl VC Office)	272.38	644.10	42%	275.53	37%

Whilst the 2016 figure is below the milestone, it represents an increase of 5% from 2015. Furthermore, following calibration after REF2014 and a review of the ARQM in 2015, there is a greater degree of confidence in the accuracy of the data.

New ARQM milestones will shortly be set as part of the Vision and Strategy 2026.

September 2016
Professor Andrew Jones and Dr Karen Shaw