

REF 2021 IMPACT UPDATE

Summary of "[Guidance on Submissions](#)" and "[Panel Criteria and Working Methods](#)"
(released January 2019)

Dates

Impact

1 August 2013 to 31 July 2020

Underpinning research

1 January 2000 to 31 December 2020.

Staff census

31 July 2020

REF 2021 submission

27 November 2020

Impact evidence submission

29 January 2021

What's new?

1. "Institutions must submit impact case studies in the appropriate UoAs." Meaning, impact case studies may be submitted to a UoA that is different to that of the author's outputs.
2. Impact underpinned by research from different universities or different units within the same university can submit identical descriptions of impact as long as they explain how the submitting unit "made a distinct and material contribution to the impact."
3. Main Panel A has changed its opinion on the use of testimonials over quantitative evidence and accepts both as valuable evidence of impact.

Continuing Case studies

1. An impact case study is marked as "continuing" if there has been **no** new underpinning research since REF 2014 and it has the **same** type of impact and named beneficiaries as the REF 2014 case study.
2. Main Panel A has changed its preference for new impact case studies over continuing impact case studies, saying they will assess continuation case studies on merit alongside new ones.

Reach and Significance

"**Reach** will be understood as the extent and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact as relevant to the nature of the impact."

"**Significance** will be understood as the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, informed or changed the performance, policies, practices, products, services, understanding, awareness or wellbeing of the beneficiaries."

Impact on Teaching

"Impacts on or through teaching within and beyond the submitting institution may be submitted."

"Sub-panels expect that impact on teaching within the submitting unit's own institution may most convincingly form a component of a wider case study that also includes impacts beyond the institution."