

## Protocol for tertiary education organisations on the treatment of PBRF Quality Categories<sup>1</sup>

*An important aspect of the Quality Evaluation is maintaining the confidentiality of staff member's individual Quality Categories. This protocol was established to ensure that tertiary education organisations (TEOs) maintain the confidentiality of individual Quality Categories for all staff, and that they have processes and protocols to keep Quality Category information secure.*

All participating TEOs are subject to the Privacy Act. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner has provided advice that TEOs are unlikely to breach the Privacy Act as long as they are open and clearly articulate the reasons for collecting PBRF data, and the purposes the information will be used for. This transparency can be achieved by a TEO's commitment to the recommended protocol provided, or developing their own version based on those principles. The Tertiary Education Union (TEU) has been consulted and supports the intent of this protocol but reserves the right to decline its support of institution-developed protocols if these differ markedly from the TEC recommended protocol.

The TEC expects that participating TEOs have ensured staff are familiar with the protocol. Any complaints received by TEC about a TEO's use of individual Quality Categories will be referred back to the relevant TEO.

### Recommended protocol

1. The TEO will establish processes and protocols for maintaining confidentiality of individual Quality Categories for all staff, and processes and protocols to keep this information secure. This includes ensuring that any trend data collected and distributed will not identify any individual staff member.
2. All staff participating in PBRF Quality Evaluations (including those staff named below in point 4 in the recommended protocol) will be informed by their employing TEO of:
  - a. the processes and procedures by which PBRF data, including individual Quality Categories, will be communicated and to whom
  - b. those people and positions within the TEO who will have access to an individual's Quality Category
  - c. the uses to which individual Quality Categories (and Component Scores if staff members volunteer this information to their TEO) may be put and the uses to which they may not be put
  - d. this SRG recommended protocol
  - e. any TEO developed protocol that relates to the use of Quality Category results and any endorsement by relevant unions.
3. The TEO will advise individual participating staff of their personal Quality Category (and any other data relating to the assignment of the Quality Category relevant to them that is provided to the TEO by the TEC), unless the staff member requests otherwise.
4. The TEO will restrict access to individual Quality Categories to the minimum number of staff necessary to achieve the following purposes:
  - a. validation of the accuracy of the Quality Categories, along with FTE and subject cost categories for individual staff

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<sup>1</sup> This recommended protocol for TEOs was developed by the 2012 Quality Evaluation PBRF Sector Reference Group, in consultation with the sector, the Tertiary Education Union and other stakeholders. It is publicly available at <https://www.tec.govt.nz/Documents/Forms%20Templates%20and%20Guides/PBRF-teo-guide.pdf>

- b. internal management and allocation of financial resources (consistent with the purposes of the PBRF)
- c. to identify strengths of Departments/Schools
- d. as an externally-validated benchmark to help ensure appropriate internal calibration of assessments of research.

*Advice must be given by TEOs to staff members, prior to their participation in the 2018 Quality Evaluation, that the TEO may use individual Quality Categories for these purposes. TEOs should ensure that no identification of individual Quality Categories can be made outside this small number of staff.*

- 5. The TEO will, in conjunction with staff and relevant union representatives, will seek to establish agreed codes of practice and complaint procedures that govern the behaviour of staff members participating in the PBRF Quality Evaluation. The TEO's code of practice relating to staff participation in the PBRF Quality Evaluation will state that:
  - a. maintenance of the confidentiality of individual Quality Categories (and Component Scores if staff members volunteer this information to their TEO) is a priority for the TEO
  - b. staff members will not be required to divulge their Quality Categories or Component Scores
  - c. each staff member has an opportunity to discuss their Quality Category with their manager if the staff member desires
  - d. in the event that a staff member advises a manager of their Quality Category, or Component Scores, or both, that manager will ensure that these are kept private and confidential and will not use that information other than for purposes authorised by the individual staff member concerned and within the restrictions specified in this SRG recommended protocol.
- 6. The TEO will not use individual Quality Categories or information leading to the revelation of individual Quality Categories, for purposes other than those consistent with this SRG recommended protocol and advised to staff members prior to participation in the 2018 Quality Evaluation. In particular:
  - a. the TEO will not use individual Quality Categories as a basis for salary determinations
  - b. the TEO will not request individual Quality Categories for recruitment purposes. Recruitment decisions should be made on the basis of all evidence of teaching, research, and service performance as they relate to the specific role, as well as the TEO's overall staff profile (particularly since the offered Quality Category cannot be verified by the TEO)
  - c. the TEO will not use individual Quality Categories for performance appraisals or for disciplinary action against staff.
- 7. The TEO will not divulge individuals' Quality Categories to any third party without the prior authorisation of the individuals concerned. In particular, the TEO will ensure that individual Quality Categories of staff, either employed by the TEO concerned or by another TEO, are not revealed through marketing or advertising activity initiated by the TEO.

## Appendix Two – Massey University Protocol for use of PBRF 2018 Quality Categories



### PROTOCOL FOR USE OF PBRF 2018 QUALITY CATEGORIES

This information will be made available to all Massey University staff affected by the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF), including researchers, managers and administrators.

#### Overview

The PBRF Sector Reference Group (SRG), in examining the design of the 2012 Quality Evaluation, conducted extensive consultation in 2009 with the sector regarding the reporting of individuals' PBRF Quality Categories.

After considering the sector responses to this consultation, the TEC determined that TEOs were entitled to receive this information as an externally validated verification of the quality of research produced by its researchers, but recommended that each TEO develop a protocol to be followed in dealing with individual PBRF Quality Categories to ensure personal information is managed appropriately.

The proposed Protocol for Massey University is closely based on the Protocol recommended in the publicly available PBRF Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2018.

#### **Massey University Protocol for Managing Research Excellence**

1. In accordance with the '**Protocol for tertiary education organizations on the treatment of PBRF Quality Categories**', Massey University commits to informing staff participating in, and contributing to the NZ PBRF Quality Evaluation of:
  - a. The processes and protocols by which PBRF data, including individual Quality Categories, will be communicated and to whom;
  - b. Those people and positions within the University who will have access to an individual's Quality Category;
  - c. The uses to which individual Quality Categories (and Component Scores if known) may be put and the uses to which they may not be put; and
  - d. The Sector Reference Group recommended protocol.
2. Specifically, the outcomes of externally assessed staff Quality Categories (e.g. PBRF) will be kept secure at all times and will only be accessible to the direct line managers, college Pro Vice-Chancellors, college Research Director/Assistant PVC Research, the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Research, Academic and Enterprise and Research and Enterprise staff.
3. The University will advise individuals participating in PBRF of their personal Quality Category (and any other data relating to the assignment of the Quality Category relevant to them that is provided to the University by the Tertiary Education Commission), unless the staff member specifically requests otherwise.

4. The University will restrict access to individual PBRF Quality Categories to the minimum number of staff necessary to achieve the following purposes:
  - a. Validation of the accuracy of the Quality Categories, along with FTE and subject cost categories for individual staff;
  - b. Internal management and allocation of financial resources (consistent with the purposes of the PBRF);
  - c. To identify strengths of Department/Schools; and/or
  - d. As an externally validated benchmark to help ensure an appropriate internal calibration of the assessments of research excellence.
  
5. The University shall only use individual Quality Categories for the purposes of the PBRF Quality Evaluation. The University ensures staff that no identification of individual Quality Categories can be made outside of an approved and restricted group of staff, who have been formally identified.
  
6. The University will, in conjunction with staff and Tertiary Education Union (TEU) representatives, establish codes of practice that govern the behavior of staff members participating in the PBRF Quality Evaluation. This code of practice also includes the Massey University [Privacy Statement](#) for PBRF purposes. The TEO's code of practice relating to staff participation in the PBRF Quality Evaluation will indicate that:
  - a. Maintenance of the confidentiality of individual Quality Categories (and Component Scores if known) is a priority for the University;
  - b. Staff members will not be required to divulge their Quality Categories;
  - c. Each staff member has an opportunity to discuss her/his Quality Category and Component Scores with her/his manager if the staff member desires;
  - d. In the event that a staff member advises a manager of her/his Quality Category, or Quality Category and Component Scores, that manager will not use that information other than for purposes authorized by the individual staff member concerned and within the restrictions specified in this Sector Reference Group recommended protocol; and
  - e. A defined complaints procedure can be used in the event of a grievance occurring.<sup>2</sup>
  
7. The University will not use individual Quality Categories, or information leading to the revelation of individual Quality Categories, for purposes other than those consistent with this protocol and advised to staff members prior to participation in the any Quality Evaluation. In particular, the University:
  - a. Will not use individual Quality Categories as a basis for salary determinations;
  - b. Will not request individual Quality Categories for recruitment purposes. If the University makes recruitment decisions informed by individuals Quality Categories, then the University will consider the Quality Categories in the context of other evidence of research excellence and with due account of the University's overall quality profile (particularly since the offered Quality Category cannot be verified by the University); and
  - c. Will not use individual Quality Categories for performance appraisals or for disciplinary action against staff.

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<sup>2</sup> Code of Responsible Research Conduct

(<http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/PolicyGuide/Documents/Research/Code%20of%20Responsible%20Research%20Conduct.pdf?BBD750C33827941FCA508DCB59B48210>)

8. In addition, the University will not divulge any individuals' PBRF Quality Category to any third party without the prior authorization of the individuals concerned. In particular, the University will ensure that individual Quality Categories of staff, either employed by the University concerned or by another Tertiary Education Organisation, are not revealed through marketing or advertising activity initiated by the University.