



Workshop on Research Impacts

The UK REF as a Case Study

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**THE UNIVERSITY
OF AUCKLAND**

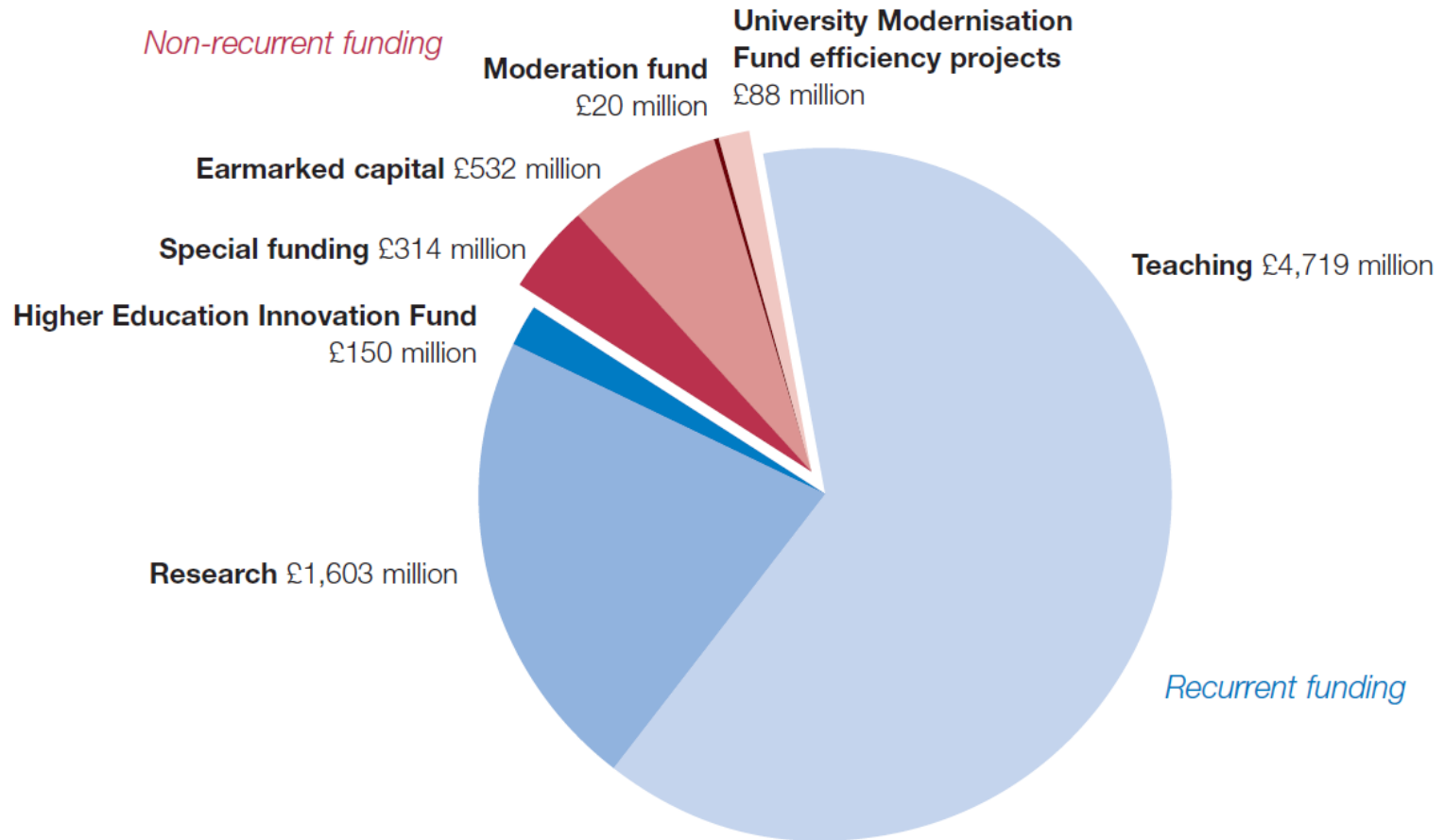
NEW ZEALAND

Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

Context

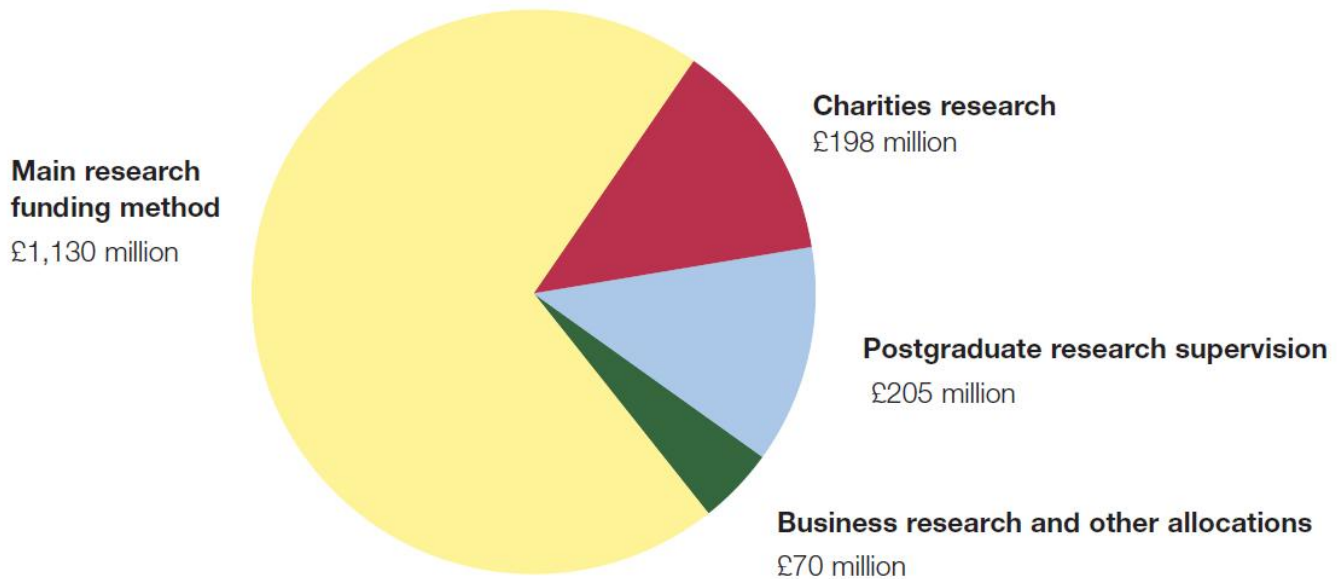
- REF – Higher Education Council for England (Scotland, Wales, NI)
- 130 universities (159 UK), 52400 staff, lots of £
- Block Grant, Quality Related (QR) funding
 - Dual Funding
- Periodic Peer Review to evaluate quality

Research works *wonders*



Research works *wonders*

Figure 3 **Elements of research grant, 2009-10: total £1,603 million**



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“For research, the funding method is designed to target funds where research quality is highest – we do not have sufficient money to support all the research that institutions do”

Hefce

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Research Quality Assessment

- As an essential element in the funding allocation process
- As an assurance mechanism
- To provide information and benchmarking for HEIs, research users and others
- RSE in 1986; RAE commenced in 1992 (1996, 2001, 2008); REF in 2014

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RAE 2008 quality profiles

UOA 36 Business and Management Studies

		Percentage of research activity in the submission judged to meet the standard for:					
	FTE Category A staff submitted ?	4*	3*	2*	1*	U/C	Submission
Aston University	88.82	15	45	35	5	0	View
University of Bath	62.70	30	40	25	5	0	View
University of Bedfordshire	8.00	0	15	45	35	5	View

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You are in: [Quality profiles](#) > [Select institution](#) > University of Sussex

RAE 2008 quality profiles

University of Sussex

Percentage of research activity in the submission judged to meet the standard for:

Unit of Assessment	FTE Category A staff submitted ?	4*	3*	2*	1*	U/C	Submission
4 - Other Hospital Based Clinical Subjects (joint submission with University of Brighton) ?	34.50	5	30	45	20	0	View
14 - Biological Sciences ?	27.30	5	30	45	20	0	View

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Table 6 Research funding weightings

Quality rating (with abbreviated description)	Funding weighting
4* (world-leading)	9
3* (internationally excellent)	3
2* (recognised internationally)	1
1* (recognised nationally)	0
Unclassified (below the standard of nationally recognised work)	0

*****54% world-leading or internationally excellent*****

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REF 2014

- Assesses performance 2008-2013
- 3 elements
 - Research outputs (65%)
 - 4 outputs (citation)
 - Research environment (15%)
 - Research impacts (20%  25%)

Impact Assessment – Key Elements

- Case Studies
- Pilots
- “May be at any stage of development or maturity, so long as some change or benefit beyond academia has taken place during the assessment period”
- Verifiable, users on panels
- Template

Impact Assessment - In and Out

- Impacts **beyond academia**, underpinned by (arising from) **excellent research** produced by the **submitting institution**, during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013 (**1993 to 2013!**)
- Impacts on research or the advancement of academic knowledge within the higher education sector – **OUT!**
- Impacts on students, teaching or other activities within the submitting HEI – **OUT!**
- Other impacts within the higher education sector, including on teaching or students - **IN**

Impact Assessment – Key Elements

Number of Category A staff submitted (FTE)	Required number of case studies
Up to 14.99	2
15 – 24.99	3
25 – 34.99	4
35 – 44.99	5
45 or more	6, plus 1 further case study per additional 10 FTE

Case Studies – Template

- 4 pages maximum
- Title of case study
- Summary of the impact (100 words)
- Underpinning research (500 words)
- References to the research (six)
- Details of the impact (750 words)
- Sources to corroborate the impact

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Case Study – Earth Systems

- Spinout for environmental monitoring (Manchester)
- Devices - water quality in situ and ground gas
- Private investment
- Altered accepted practice in industry
- Devices adopted by all major UK water companies
- 250 orders of one device
- Grant income
- Evidence – NERC Impact Study, Environmental and Local Authority Handbooks

Case Study – Clinical Medicine

- Characterisation of genes (Cardiff)
- Leads to improved diagnosis, prevention and treatment of inherited diseases
- Huntington’s Disease, Tuberous Sclerosis, autosomal polycystic kidney disease
- Work established current UK clinical practice regarding predictive genetic testing and influenced European & international policy
- Commercialisation of DNA diagnostics
- Royalty income

Case Study – English

- Macfarlane (Cambridge) – interrelations between landscape, nature and culture
- Enhanced public awareness of and engagement with nature and destruction of habitat
- Books, Guardian Essays, radio programmes
- Reach – sales figures, translations
- Significance – Prizes, invited public lectures, “Book of the Year” in press
- Evidence – reviews

Principle...

“Submissions will **not** be expected to provide impact case studies that are representative of the spread of research activity across the whole submitted unit. Institutions should select the strongest examples of impact that are underpinned by the submitted unit’s excellent research...”

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Impact - How Hard?

- Confirms that research **MUST** be useful
 - Reflects UK Treasury view (widgets)!
- Presents challenges for a number of universities
 - BUT they will respond (not fight it..)
- Industry connections vital
- Possibly creates issues for NEW directions
 - There will be a solution
- Will impact on students
- **It's coming!!**

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<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/>

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Breakout Groups

- 3 Groups
- 3 questions
- 40 minutes (13 per question!)
- Report back, summary on flipchart (Reporter – 5 mins)

Questions

- Are there better ways of measuring impact in a NZ context? What would be the optimal methodology?
- Is “impact assessment” relevant for all disciplines?
- What should universities in NZ do now in advance of any announcement of impact assessment in PBRF? Is there anything we should do together?