

Annex C

Project methodology

The project is a three-stage process with:

Phase one: a review of good practice in HEIs and identification of indicators that might form the basis of threshold standards, the requirements of research funders, and collection of baseline data

Phase two: in consultation with all interested stakeholders, developing the indicators into threshold standards, and considering how such standards might be deployed

Phase three: assessing the costs of implementing such a system and possible funding models to support it and deliver improvement.

This report covers phase one of the project, conducted between September 2001 and March 2002.

To understand the current provision of RDPs, understand the existing quality assurance, monitoring and regulatory systems, and identify examples of good practice, we collated baseline data through survey, and conducted interviews, visits and workshops with the academic community, major funders of research students, and other stakeholders. Because of the short timescale for phase one, institutional and stakeholder visits and the survey of current practice ran in parallel.

Institutional visits and interviews

A series of visits were made to selected institutions. These involved interviews with vice-chancellors, heads of graduate schools, heads of departments, academic and administrative staff responsible for RDPs, research active academics and students from a variety of disciplines, and individuals responsible for generic postgraduate training programmes.

We would like to thank everyone involved in preparing for and supporting our visits. Every institution went to great lengths to make us feel welcome and give us access to individuals and information at short notice. We visited the following institutions:

University of Cambridge
University of East Anglia
University of Edinburgh
Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London
University of Manchester
Middlesex University
University of Sheffield
University College London
University of Warwick

Stakeholder interviews

An initial meeting was held with representatives from the AHRB, and the six Research Councils – BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC and PPARC. Subsequent meetings were held with each Council/Board individually.

Interviews were also held with:

- The Wellcome Trust, GlaxoSmithKline, Civil Service Fast Stream, Royal Society of Chemistry, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).
- Society for Research in Higher Education (SRHE), Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE), Universities UK (UUK), Universities Scotland.
- National Postgraduate Committee, National Union of Students (NUS), Association of University Teachers (AUT), Overseas Research Students (ORS).
- Sir Gareth Roberts, Wolfson College Oxford and members of his review team at the Treasury and the DTI. Sir Martin Harris, Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester, and Chair of the HEFCE Review of Research project.

Presentations on the project objectives were made to:

Members of (SRHE) Postgraduate Issues Network (31 attendees)

Members of the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) Committee (11 attendees)

National Postgraduate Committee Annual Conference, August 2001

UUK Postgraduate Trends and Challenges Conference, November 2001

UUK Supporting and Developing Research Careers Conference, March 2002

Consultation workshops

Workshop I, 11th December (26 attendees)

Workshop II, 12th February (31 attendees: 18 common to both)

Survey

A two-part survey was used to review current practice across the sector. Part A looked at institutional regulations and procedures (108 respondents representing 55% of the sector); and part B examined practice at operating level (186 respondents). It was left to the institution to define what constitutes a distinct operating unit: faculty, school, department or group.

Responses were equally split between pre-1992 and post-1992 institutions. A full listing of respondents is given below.

Institution	Part A	Part B
University of Bath	3	3
Bath Spa University College	3	3
University of Birmingham	3	3
Birkbeck College	3	
Bolton Institute of HE	3	3
Bournemouth University	3	3
University of Brighton	3	3
University of Bristol	3	3
Brunel University	3	
Buckinghamshire College of HE		3
University of Cambridge	3	3
Chester College of HE	3	3
University College Chichester	3	3
City University	3	3
Coventry University	3	
Dartington College of Arts	3	
De Montfort University	3	3
University of Derby	3	
Edge Hill College of HE		3
Falmouth College of Arts	3	3
Goldsmiths College	3	
Harper Adams Agricultural College	3	3
University of Hertfordshire	3	3
University of Huddersfield	3	3
University of Hull	3	3
Keele University	3	3
Kent Institute of Art & Design	3	3
King Alfred's College, Winchester	3	3
King's College London	3	3
Kingston University	3	3
Lancaster University	3	
University of Leeds	3	3
Leeds Metropolitan University	3	3
University of Leicester	3	3
University of Liverpool	3	3
Liverpool John Moores University	3	3

Institute of Historical Research		3
Institute of Latin American Studies	3	
University Marine Biological Station, Millport	3	
Institute of Zoology	3	3
London Business School	3	3
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	3	3
The London Institute	3	3
Loughborough University	3	3
University of Luton	3	3
University of Manchester	3	3
Middlesex University	3	3
University College, Northampton	3	3
University of North London	3	
University of Northumbria at Newcastle		3
University of Nottingham	3	3
Open University	3	3
School of Oriental and African Studies	3	3
University of Oxford	3	3
University of Plymouth	3	3
University of Portsmouth	3	3
Queen Mary and Westfield College	3	3
RCN Institute	3	3
University of Reading	3	3
College of Ripon & York St John	3	3
Roehampton Institute	3	3
Royal Academy of Music	3	3
Royal College of Music	3	
Royal Holloway, University of London	3	3
Royal Veterinary College	3	3
St George's Hospital Medical School	3	3
College of St Mark & St John	3	3
St Martin's College	3	3
St Mary's College	3	3
University of Salford	3	3
University of Sheffield	3	3
Sheffield Hallam University	3	3
University of Southampton	3	3
Southampton Institute	3	3

South Bank University	3	3
Staffordshire University	3	3
Surrey Institute of Art and Design	3	3
University of Surrey		3
University of Teesside	3	3
Thames Valley University	3	
Trinity & All Saints	3	3
University College London	3	3
University College London - Institute of Child Health	3	3
University of Warwick	3	3
University of Westminster	3	3
University of Wolverhampton	3	3
Worcester College of HE	3	3
Writtle College	3	3
University of York	3	3
University of Aberdeen	3	3
University of Edinburgh	3	3
Edinburgh College of Art	3	
University of Glasgow		3
Glasgow Caledonian University	3	
Napier University	3	
University of Paisley	3	3
Robert Gordon University	3	
University of St Andrews	3	3
University of Stirling	3	3
University of Strathclyde	3	3
Bell College	3	
UHI Millennium University	3	3
University of Glamorgan	3	3
North East Wales Institute of Higher Education		3
University College of North Wales, Bangor	3	3
University of Wales, Swansea	3	3
University of Wales, Aberystwyth	3	3
University of Wales, Lampeter	3	3
The Queen's University of Belfast		3
University of Ulster	3	3