



Department
for Education

Teaching Excellence Framework: Subject- level pilot specification

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Contents

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 1 | Summary | 4 |
| 2 | Introduction | 7 |
| 2.1 | Purpose of the TEF | 7 |
| 2.2 | Purpose of subject-level TEF | 8 |
| 2.3 | Implementation | 10 |
| 2.4 | Relationship with TEF Years 2 and 3 and lessons learned | 11 |
| 3 | Scope of the Year 3 subject-level pilots | 13 |
| 3.1 | Level of provision and mode of study | 13 |
| 3.2 | The devolved administrations | 13 |
| 4 | Subjects | 14 |
| 4.1 | Granularity | 14 |
| 4.2 | Subject classification system | 15 |
| 4.3 | Interdisciplinarity | 16 |
| 5 | Pilot design and structure | 19 |
| 6 | Models | 21 |
| 6.2 | Detailed design of Model A | 23 |
| 6.3 | Detailed design of Model B | 26 |
| 7 | Assessment method and submissions | 31 |
| 7.1 | Assessment method | 31 |
| 7.2 | Submissions | 31 |
| 8 | Metrics | 35 |
| 8.1 | Subject-level metrics | 35 |
| 8.2 | Non-reportable metrics | 36 |
| 8.3 | Splits | 38 |
| 8.4 | Benchmarking | 39 |
| 8.5 | Flagging | 39 |
| 8.6 | High absolute values and highly clustered values | 39 |
| 8.7 | Contextual data | 39 |
| 8.8 | Presentation | 40 |
| 9 | Panels | 41 |
| 9.1 | Panel Chair | 41 |

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| 9.2 | Assessors and panellists | 41 |
| 10 | Teaching intensity | 44 |
| 10.1 | Background and development | 45 |
| 10.2 | Presenting and using the teaching intensity metrics | 48 |
| 10.3 | Evaluation of the teaching intensity metric | 48 |
| 11 | Participating in the pilots | 50 |
| 11.1 | Eligibility | 50 |
| 11.2 | Profile of pilot participants | 51 |
| 11.3 | Participation | 52 |
| 11.4 | How to apply | 53 |
| 12 | Evaluating the pilots | 54 |
| 13 | Next steps | 55 |
| 13.1 | Next steps for pilot implementation | 55 |
| 13.2 | Longer term development of subject-level TEF | 55 |
| 13.3 | Contact details | 56 |
| 14 | Annex A – Relationship with Quality Assessment | 57 |
| 15 | Annex B – Franchised provision | 58 |
| 16 | Annex C – Subjects and groups | 59 |
| 17 | Annex D – Analysis using Year 2 data | 61 |
| 18 | Annex E – Teaching intensity examples | 63 |
| 18.1 | Provider declaration method | 63 |
| 18.2 | Student survey method | 67 |
| 18.3 | Use of data from the surveys | 67 |

1 Summary

1. This document sets out the Department for Education's (DfE) plans for the first year of subject-level pilots of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).
2. The TEF was introduced in 2016 to **drive up standards of teaching** and give students **clear, understandable information** about where they are likely to receive the best teaching and outcomes.
3. Participation is voluntary, but **almost 300 providers took part** in TEF Year 2. Each participating provider was awarded a rating¹ by a panel of senior academics, students and employer representatives, chaired by Professor Chris Husbands, Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University. Providers were **holistically assessed** against a set of metrics and a 15-page provider submission putting forward additional evidence.
4. Provider-level TEF has been an important step across the sector to help improve teaching excellence, and anecdotal evidence from providers indicates that it is already driving a renewed focus on teaching quality.
5. However, the biggest improvement TEF will make to the information on offer to students will be to produce **ratings at subject-level**. We know that most students choose their subject first, and then choose between providers offering that subject. Students need to know how a provider's teaching quality will relate to them in the subject they are looking to study. The subject-level pilots will develop TEF so it provides this for students.
6. Ministers have been clear that the TEF will develop and improve over time, and the pilots are an important step in that process. The design of subject-level TEF is **based on the design of TEF Year 2**. However, any changes to the framework following the lessons learned exercise looking at TEF Year 2 will be reflected in the Year 3 subject-level pilots. These will be set out in a lessons learned document and the **Year 3 provider-level specification**, to be published later this year.
7. This document is therefore focused on aspects of the framework that are **specific to the Year 3 subject-level pilots**. Readers unfamiliar with the provider-level framework, upon which subject-level is based should refer to the TEF Year 2 Specification until publication of the specification for TEF Year 3, and refer to the latter thereafter.
8. Providers who currently meet the eligibility criteria for provider-level TEF can apply to take part in the Year 3 subject-level pilots, whether or not they are entering for a provider-level assessment in Year 3, or have participated in Year 2². The Higher

¹ [Gold, Silver, Bronze, or a Provisional Award](#)

² Prior to the publication of the Year 3 provider-level specification, providers can use the eligibility criteria in the TEF Year 2 Specification (pages 12-15) as an indication of their potential eligibility.

Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) will select **30-40 providers** from across the UK Higher Education sector to take part. Participants will work with HEFCE and DfE to evolve the design of subject-level TEF throughout the pilots.

9. The pilots will run alongside TEF Year 3, from Autumn 2017 until Spring 2018, but the assessments will **not interact** with the provider-level exercise in any way. **No ratings** identifying individual providers will be published, as the pilots are purely developmental.

10. We will use the second level of the new **Common Aggregation Hierarchy** (recently published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency) to define 'subjects' for the purposes of subject-level TEF. This has 35 subjects. The same set of 10 TEF criteria that were used in TEF Year 2 will be used across all **35 subjects**.

11. We will pilot two models:

- **Model A:** a 'by exception' model giving a provider-level rating and giving subjects the same rating as the provider where metrics performance is similar, with fuller assessment (and potentially different ratings) where metrics performance differs.
- **Model B:** A 'bottom-up' model fully assessing each subject to give subject-level ratings, feeding into the provider-level assessment and rating. Subjects are grouped for submissions, but ratings are still awarded at subject-level.

12. In both models, a provider-level submission and **provider-level assessment is retained**. Assessment at subject- and at provider-level is determined by pilot panels, based on a **holistic consideration** of metrics and a written submission.

13. Eligible providers may have subjects without full reportable metrics. We will test methods for dealing with subjects with **non-reportable metrics** in both models. **Split metrics** will be provided at subject-level.

14. In addition to piloting assessment at subject-level, we will take the opportunity to pilot a **teaching intensity measure** by collecting data on contact hours, staff-student ratios and class sizes through institutional declarations and a student survey. This will be piloted in a selection of subjects in both models.

15. After the first year of subject-level pilots, the Department will **evaluate** the models. Participating providers and panellists from the pilots will be required to feed back about their experiences and the costs of participating in each model.

16. Later this year we will publish a **technical consultation** document on subject-level TEF to ensure providers, students, employers and other stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on the proposed design. We also plan to commission research to test aspects of subject-level TEF with a **wide group of students**.

17. Findings from the pilots, the consultation and the student research will ensure the design of subject-level TEF is informed by a thorough evidence base and experience of how different options work in practice. We are expecting that subject-level TEF will be **fully implemented in Year 5, with assessments in academic year 2019/20 and subject-level ratings published in spring 2020.**

2 Introduction

18. This document provides a specification for the subject-level pilots taking place in Year 3 of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). It takes on board the constructive input from a collaborative design process involving the Department for Education (DfE), stakeholder groups and the existing TEF Delivery Group, each of whom met to work through design questions for subject-level TEF between November 2016 and February 2017.

19. The design for subject-level uses the current approach to TEF³ as the starting point, departing only where justified by the subject-level context. Any changes to the provider-level framework as a result of lessons learned in TEF Year 2 will be reflected in the subject-level pilots. These will be set out in a lessons learned document and the Year 3 provider-level specification, to be published later this year.

20. This document is therefore focused on aspects of the framework that are specific to the subject-level pilots. Readers unfamiliar with the provider-level framework, upon which subject-level is based, should refer to the TEF Year 2 Specification until publication of the specification for TEF Year 3, and refer to the latter thereafter.

21. The detailed design will evolve throughout the pilots, with the help of providers and panellists participating in the pilots. The pilots will run alongside TEF Year 3, from Autumn 2017 until Spring 2018.

2.1 Purpose of the TEF

22. The Government has introduced the TEF to:

- Better inform students' choices about what and where to study
- Raise esteem for teaching
- Recognise and reward excellent teaching
- Better meet the needs of employers, business, industry and the professions.

23. This year's Higher Education Academy (HEA)-Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) Student Academic Experience Survey found student perception of value for money has fallen significantly, year on year, from 53% in 2012, to just 35% in 2017⁴. By encouraging and enabling providers to place greater focus on their teaching, TEF will drive up quality in the sector and improve value for money for students.

³ For more information, see [TEF year 2 government technical consultation response](#) and the [TEF year 2 specification](#).

⁴ [Jonathan Neves and Nick Hillman, The 2017 Student Academic Experience Survey \(Higher Education Policy Institute and Higher Education Academy, \(2017\).](#)

24. For the Higher Education sector to deliver the best outcomes, students must also be able to make informed choices about what and where they study and the benefits that they can expect from Higher Education. Students currently have insufficient data to make these choices: Youthsight data showed that 93% of applicants thought it was important to ‘access transparent and reliable information about teaching quality in universities when applying to university’, but only 59% of applicants were able to do so⁵.

25. We understand that excellent teaching can occur in many forms and there is no one size that fits all. As set out in the TEF Year 2 Specification, teaching quality is best considered in the context of students’ learning. The outcomes of students’ learning are determined by the quality of teaching they experience, the additional support for learning that is available and what the students themselves put into their studies, supported and facilitated by the provider.

26. The assessment framework therefore considers teaching excellence across three main aspects: Teaching Quality, Learning Environment, and Student Outcomes and Learning Gain. These are explained fully in the TEF Year 2 Specification. Together, the three aspects make up a balanced view of learning and teaching quality.

2.2 Purpose of subject-level TEF

27. The quality of teaching and outcomes for students is likely to vary not only between providers, but also between a provider’s subjects. For example, analysis using data from providers with suitable metrics who entered TEF Year 2 indicated that subject-level metrics behaved differently from provider-level metrics in 54% of cases⁶. Providers have also been consistently clear that there is wide variation between different subjects at the same provider.

28. There has been consistent support for moving to subject-level, as first set out during the consultation on the Green Paper. Around 67% of those who expressed a view in the consultation agreed that the aim should be for TEF to apply to all Higher Education providers, for all disciplines. For example, one respondent said – “to identify real excellence of teaching and learning it will be necessary to assess at subject-level not only to reflect the potential differences in quality of teaching across subjects, but to reflect the varying approaches required by different disciplines”⁷.

⁵ [“Teaching Quality Survey of applicants and graduates”, commissioned by BIS from Youthsight panel](#)

⁶ This analysis defined ‘subjects’ using the second layer of the Common Aggregation Hierarchy and 54% indicates the proportion of subjects across all providers in the dataset where the subject-level metrics differed from the provider-level metrics by at least one flag, excluding flags that changed to neutral from positive or negative.

⁷ [Summary of Consultation Responses, ‘Fulfilling Our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice’, May 2016](#)

29. During the passage of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, the importance of moving to subject-level was emphasised. Lord Blunkett commended the Minister's commitment to "move as rapidly as possible to subject rather than institutional comparators" and Lord Stevenson of Balmacara observed that "the more that can be said about what is actually going on in the courses and subjects that are taught in universities, the better that will be."

30. For the most part, students choose their subject first, and then choose between providers offering that subject: the Nuffield Foundation found that students specialised as early as possible, nominating their subject choice before they enter Higher Education⁸. Their report also found that certain subjects had a stronger association with graduate earnings than the choice of institutions, which influenced student choice.

31. Students' motives for entering Higher Education are varied, complex and personal⁹. However, a desire to improve labour-market prospects combined with interest in subject or course chosen are consistently cited as driving factors. For example, according to the Complete University Guide, 73% of students thought that course content was most important in determining what subject they should be studying, and 66% of prospective students wanted to improve their employment rates¹⁰.

32. As part of the collaborative design phase for subject-level TEF, DfE spoke to students about how they chose where to study. Among other factors, they outlined that they sometimes struggled to look beyond an institution's reputation to how well a particular subject fared within that institution. Other students also spoke of looking at course structure, modules and what particular schools had to offer them. Students need to know how a provider's teaching quality will relate to them in the subject they are looking to study.

33. Subject-level TEF will ensure that both students and providers can look behind provider-level ratings and access more granular information about a provider's teaching quality. This will allow students to compare providers using information most relevant to their likely experience, and encourage providers to drive up consistency in the quality of their provision.

34. As with TEF Year 2, **metrics for subject-level TEF will be benchmarked by subject**. This means that subject-level TEF will allow students to compare different providers offering the subject they wish to study, but will not attempt to make value judgements as to the relative worth of different subjects.

⁸ Britton, Jack, et al. ["How English domiciled graduate earnings vary with gender, institution attended, subject and socio-economic background"](#), *Institute for Fiscal Studies*, (2016)

⁹ Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) Sutton Trust; Great Britain. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), ["Tracking the decision-making of high achieving higher education applicants"](#), (2012)

¹⁰ Katie Pearson, ["Revealed: The unis most likely to get you a good job"](#), (2017)

2.3 Implementation

35. DfE intends to commission two pilot cycles of subject-level TEF: the first in 2017/18 alongside TEF Year 3 and the second in 2018/19 alongside TEF Year 4. **This specification relates to the subject-level pilots in TEF Year 3 only.** The outcome of the Year 3 subject-level pilots will inform the design of the subject-level pilots in Year 4 as well as the final approach to subject-level TEF.

36. DfE has commissioned the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to implement the Year 3 subject-level pilots. When the Office for Students (OfS) is established, it is anticipated that they will subsequently undertake implementation of the subject-level pilots. Given this, the OfS leadership team will take a close interest in the subject-level pilots so that the OfS will be ready to take responsibility for subject-level TEF once established. DfE remains responsible for the policy and its development throughout the pilots.

37. The timings for TEF and the subject-level pilots are outlined in Table 1 and Table 2 below. The exact timings for **the full provider-level TEF exercise in Year 3 and the subject-level pilots will be staggered slightly** to ensure that providers taking part in both exercises in the same year have adequate time to complete their TEF Year 3 provider-level submission prior to completing their subject-level pilot submissions.

38. **Indicative results generated for participating providers by the Year 3 subject-level pilots will not be published in a way that identifies individual providers and will not impact on students' decision-making, fee caps, or any other matter.** DfE will share findings from the pilots and evaluation after the Year 3 subject-level pilots conclude and before the Year 4 pilots begin.

Table 1: Provider-level TEF timings

| TEF year | Submissions due | Assessment results announced | To inform students applying in... | ...and entering in ... | Affects fees from... |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | N/A | N/A | Autumn 2016 | Autumn 2017 | Autumn 2017 |
| 2 | Winter 2016/17 | Spring 2017 | Autumn 2017 | Autumn 2018 | Autumn 2018 |
| 3 | Winter 2017/18 | Spring 2018 | Autumn 2018 | Autumn 2019 | Autumn 2019 |
| 4 | Winter 2018/19 | Spring 2019 | Autumn 2019 | Autumn 2020 | Autumn 2020 |

Table 2: Subject-level TEF pilot timings

| TEF Year | Subject-level pilot submissions due | Assessment results shared with providers | To inform students applying in... | ...and entering in ... | Affects fees from... |
|----------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3 | Winter 2017/18 | Spring 2018 | N/A – results not published | N/A – results not published | N/A – results not published |
| 4 | Winter 2018/19 | Spring 2019 | N/A – results not published | N/A – results not published | N/A – results not published |

2.4 Relationship with TEF Years 2 and 3 and lessons learned

39. The detailed design of provider-level TEF has been the subject of extensive design work and consultation with the sector, employers, students, and other interested stakeholders including through the White Paper, [Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice](#) (May 2016). The [TEF Technical Consultation](#) sought feedback on detailed proposals for how the TEF would operate at provider-level, which fed into both the [Government response](#) and the [Specification for TEF Year 2](#). TEF forms part of the Government's Higher Education reforms, and was debated in both houses through the passage of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. The Act is now in place, and the first year of TEF assessments, TEF Year 2, has been completed. Students making decisions about Higher Education this year will, for the first time, be able to use TEF ratings to help them make their decisions.

40. Throughout the design of subject-level TEF, we have taken the design of TEF provider-level as a starting point, seeking to change the framework only where this is justified on the basis of the move to subject-level assessments and ratings.

41. **This specification will therefore focus on areas in which the pilots will differ from provider-level TEF.** It will refer to the provider-level TEF throughout. The provider-level framework is currently captured in the TEF Year 2 Specification, and this should be referred to for any points of detail not covered in this document until the TEF Year 3 provider-level specification is published later this year: as the TEF Year 2 lessons learned exercise is currently ongoing, and will feed into the specification for TEF Year 3, this will replace the Year 2 Specification as the starting point for the Year 3 subject-level pilots. This will ensure that any **changes made to the framework as a result of the Year 2 lessons learned exercise will be incorporated in the pilots.**

42. As with provider-level TEF, we intend for subject-level TEF to provide a judgement on performance in addition to the baseline provided by quality assessment, in the area of teaching and learning quality (**See Annex A – Relationship with Quality Assessment**).

43. This specification is intended to set out plans for the Year 3 subject-level pilots in sufficient detail for providers to decide whether they wish to volunteer to participate. It is not as detailed in all areas of methodology as the Year 2 specification, as some points of detail will be finalised through discussion with pilot participants.

44. All plans for subject-level TEF as set out in this specification relate to the Year 3 subject-level pilots only, and are open for testing and adjustment through the pilots and consultation.

3 Scope of the Year 3 subject-level pilots

3.1 Level of provision and mode of study

45. **The scope of the Year 3 subject-level pilots is the same as that for provider-level TEF** (currently set out on page 9 in the TEF Year 2 Specification and clarifying paragraphs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 in the Year 2 additional guidance). **The Year 3 subject-level pilots will cover all undergraduate provision and all modes of delivery, including full-time, part-time, distance, work-based and blended learning.** The Year 3 provider-level specification, when published, will contain the definitive scope for both Year 3 provider-level assessments and the subject-level pilots.

46. **All subjects are in scope for the Year 3 subject-level pilots** (see further paragraph 83 in section 5 'Pilot design and structure' below). For detail on those providers offering franchised provision please see **Annex B** – Franchised provision.

3.2 The devolved administrations

47. Higher education providers across the UK took part in the TEF in Year 2. DfE is committed to continuing to design TEF in a way that enables providers across the UK to participate. **We therefore wish to include providers from each nation in the Year 3 subject-level pilots**, providing the opportunity to test the suitability and impact of models for providers in all parts of the UK.

48. For providers in Wales and Northern Ireland, we have confirmed with the relevant devolved governments that it is a matter for individual providers as to whether they wish to participate in the Year 3 subject-level pilots.

49. For Scottish providers, we are continuing to discuss with the Scottish Government as to whether they will give consent for Scottish providers who wish to participate in the Year 3 subject-level pilots.

50. We will continue to liaise with the Scottish and Welsh Governments and the Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland) in respect of subject-level TEF.

4 Subjects

4.1 Granularity

51. In considering the level of granularity at which subjects should be assessed and given ratings, we have considered at which level of granularity subjects will:

- be clearly understood by students making choices about what to study
- group courses that are likely to be reasonably similar in teaching quality (although there will always be courses that straddle subject boundaries)
- have large enough numbers of students that metrics are reportable
- not be so granular that the time and other resource required from providers and panellists becomes unmanageable.

52. The subjects prospective students understand are those most closely reflecting school and A-level curricula. However, these would not capture the diversity of the undergraduate sector. Some stakeholders asserted that students would ideally like information at course level. Whilst students clearly need some information at course level (e.g. on Unistats), assessment at this level would be impractical. Similarly, using very broad groupings – 5 to 6 disciplines such as ‘science’ – was strongly opposed by the majority of those we spoke to for two reasons; (i) that teaching quality would vary significantly within a grouping this big, so a single rating would not be meaningful and (ii) that such groupings were so broad they would provide no significant help to students beyond that given by provider-level ratings.

53. Feedback from our early design discussions with providers, students and subject bodies suggested that sets of groupings of around 20 subjects – the former Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) grouping or the first level of the Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) – contain too much aggregation to provide students with meaningful information. Whilst some categories (‘engineering’ or ‘law’) may be acceptable, they typically group all of social studies, or all of physical sciences, together into one subject, which is non-intuitive for students.

54. Our analysis has also confirmed that for up to approximately 40-45 subjects the metrics are likely to continue to be reportable for the vast majority of students. Using the second level of the Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH2) for example, which has 35 subjects, there are approximately 4,500 instances of subjects within providers across the sector as a whole¹¹. Across these instances, 97.7% of students are included in subjects with reportable metrics, suggesting that subject-level TEF results would have meaning for nearly all applicants.

¹¹ Taken from the TEF Year 2 providers eligible for a full TEF award. This number increases to 5,000 if you also include providers eligible for a provisional award.

4.2 Subject classification system

55. There was a strong consensus from the majority of those we spoke to that it would be greatly preferable for the TEF to use an existing subject classification system rather than to create a new one. The two classifications that received most support were the Units of Assessment used in the Research Excellence Framework (REF UoAs) and the CAH developed by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

56. Although using the REF UoAs would allow direct comparison of TEF and REF ratings for any given subject, the weight of feedback from the collaborative design discussion groups has indicated that the REF UoAs as they stand would not be suitable for students as the groupings used are heavily tailored to research. For example, one grouping includes both 'veterinary' and 'food science', two subjects which are completely different from a student perspective.

57. In theory, aligning REF and TEF subject classifications could be used to support better alignment of teaching and research. However, most of those we spoke to indicated that this could constrain the development of the sector and would not help to reduce burden or create better internal alignment around the two frameworks in practice: providers can enter academics into whichever UoA they deem most appropriate in the REF, so a single UoA would include academics from multiple different teaching departments and the ratings that each framework produced under each UoA would not be comparable.

58. There was also strong feedback that using REF UoAs for TEF would send a negative message contrary to our commitment to increase the parity of esteem between research and teaching, because it would mean research considerations would be driving the TEF as well as the REF. There may be benefit however, to ensuring that the TEF subjects align with REF UoAs when there is no reason for them not to.

59. Feedback on using the CAH was that it was useful to align TEF with a system that would be widely used in the sector and for student information purposes. The CAH has recently been developed by HESA as an aggregation system to sit alongside the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS), the new subject coding system. CAH and HECoS will together replace JACS, which is currently used by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) for students applying to university. It therefore aligns with the system of subject benchmarking currently used in TEF more closely than REF UoAs would. It will also have more meaning for students, as it has been designed around teaching and with student information purposes in mind. HECoS will be implemented for the academic year starting in the autumn of 2019¹².

¹² General information on HECoS and the CAH can be found on the [HESA website](#)

60. We have been grateful for the opportunity to work with HESA on the development of the CAH. The recently published final version has 35 subjects at level 2 of the hierarchy, and reflects our suggestions for making it suitable for TEF purposes. HESA have taken into account the number of students in each subject (which is important for metrics purposes), clarity for students and alignment with REF where there is no strong reason to deviate from it.

61. Based on the feedback we received, **the Year 3 subject-level pilots will use the 35 subjects set out in level 2 of the HESA CAH to classify ‘subjects’ for assessment.** The 35 subjects making up level 2 can be found at **Annex C – Subjects and groups**. As providers have not yet begun using the CAH, HEFCE will map JACS codes to the CAH for pilot participants: participants will not have to do the mapping themselves.

4.3 Interdisciplinarity

62. DfE recognises that interdisciplinary provision can have a number of benefits, including cross-fertilisation of practice and concepts. The British Academy’s recent call for evidence on interdisciplinarity found it to have an “essential role in addressing complex problems and research questions posed by global social challenges” and cited “the increased rigour it can bring to one’s understanding of one’s own discipline”¹³. Real world problems do not fit into subject or discipline classifications, and when knowledge is applied in the wider world it often requires multi-dimensional input.

63. We know that provision at many providers will cross the boundaries of any subject or discipline definitions we use. Through the Year 3 subject-level pilots, we intend to explore the extent to which the need for subject-level TEF to assign students and courses to subject groups creates challenges for the large number of providers for whom interdisciplinarity is an important part of their provision, whether that is through embedding interdisciplinary thinking in their single subject curricula, offering a wide range of joint honours, encouraging students to take up modules outside of their subject area, and other approaches.

64. The following sections explore how interdisciplinary approaches will be reflected in the Year 3 subject-level pilots. This approach is heavily based on how students studying joint or modular degrees were treated in TEF Year 2, and the provider-level approach to interdisciplinary provision. The pilots will help to identify challenges associated with applying this approach to subject-level TEF and inform the development of any solutions or adjustments needed to ensure that, as an unintended consequence, providers are not discouraged from taking an interdisciplinary approach in their provision should this be their preferred strategy.

¹³ [Crossing Paths: Interdisciplinary institutions, careers, education and applications](#)

4.3.1 Joint programmes

65. In the specific case of joint degree programmes, **the two component parts of a course will each be treated consistently with the equivalent single subject programmes in the Year 3 subject-level pilots**. Where the interdisciplinary nature of the programme improves the quality of teaching and leads to better student outcomes, then this will be relevant in addressing a number of the TEF criteria and may also show up in better metrics performance for each of the individual components versus the equivalent single programmes. This will mean that a student is able to compare TEF ratings for providers offering both single programmes and joint programmes in their area of interest.

66. To achieve this **students will be counted in the metrics pro rata against each subject**, as was the case in TEF Year 2. However, **where no subjects can be mapped, the student is listed under “combined”**. This means the provider may not have the opportunity to address the entire joint programme in a single submission. However, a provider can discuss the joint programme in the submission of each of the individual subjects that comprise it, where submissions form part of the assessment. We will aim to test provider experiences of this approach through the pilots by ensuring providers offering joint programmes are included in the pilot sample.

67. The provider **will not be given a separate rating for its joint programme**. It would seem reasonable to expect that a student seeking to study, for example, “Engineering and French”, would easily be able to look to the ‘Engineering’ and ‘Languages, linguistics and classics’ ratings in order to understand the teaching excellence picture for their joint programme. However, we will look to test this further through the pilots and next steps.

4.3.2 Modular degrees

68. Modular degrees are likely to pose a greater challenge for subject-level TEF than joint programmes, as students may be enrolled in a broad-based degree, possibly choosing their subject after their first one or two years.

69. Although providers across the UK offer modular degrees, input from Universities Scotland and providers in Scotland has suggested that this type of provision is particularly prevalent in Scotland, and that it is not possible to map at least the first year of many degrees in Scotland against a particular subject.

70. The CAH2 includes three subjects which may help accommodate a large proportion of modular provision:

- General and others in sciences
- Humanities and liberal arts
- Combined and general studies.

71. Analysis using data from providers with suitable metrics who entered TEF Year 2 indicated that these categories would represent approximately 2% of all instances of subjects within providers across the sector.

72. **Providers participating in the Year 3 subject-level pilots who offer modular degrees will be able to work with HEFCE to understand how their students are being captured and what impact this has on the relevant subject-level assessments.** The pilots will help us test whether these more open subject groups are suitable for some, all or most modular provision, and how being assessed in one of these broader subjects may affect the process and the rating it produces. We note, however, that there are currently no students mapped to 'General and others in science', so the subject-level pilots will focus on the other two broader subjects in Year 3. The pilots will also help us to understand how modular provision not captured by these categories might be sensibly and fairly assessed through subject-level TEF.

4.3.3 Other interdisciplinary approaches

73. The TEF seeks to recognise excellence wherever it is found. The TEF criteria do not require providers to demonstrate an interdisciplinary approach in making the case for excellence, since TEF takes a broad definition of teaching excellence and does not seek to prescribe a single approach to high quality teaching. However, since TEF is heavily focused on outcome measures, providers who choose to pursue an interdisciplinary approach will be able to demonstrate whether and how this approach leads to better outcomes for their students, and therefore why they have chosen to pursue it.

74. In some subjects, the advantages of an interdisciplinary approach may be reflected in metrics data and require no further explanation. Where providers wish to draw out the impact of their interdisciplinary approach separately from the TEF metrics, they will be able to do so through their written submissions. Furthermore, in both models being piloted, there will be a submission informing the overall provider assessment, in which interdisciplinary approaches can be evidenced, if appropriate.

75. As with the more specific approaches outlined above, the Year 3 subject-level pilots will provide the opportunity to **test how different interdisciplinary provision may be evidenced and assessed** through TEF, and how ratings in this area would be understood by students.

5 Pilot design and structure

76. It is critical that subject-level TEF provides robust, meaningful information to prospective students in a way which will help them to make better decisions whilst also minimising the administrative costs for participating providers. In designing subject-level TEF we have therefore needed to balance two sets of unavoidably tensioned priorities:

- **Granularity vs aggregation:** the need for a granular and thorough exercise, to ensure assessments are robust and the level of assessment and information is granular enough to be meaningful to students and add value above provider-level TEF; versus the need to ensure that subjects are sufficiently large to produce robust metrics and that the number of assessments does not create disproportionate burden for providers and those assessing them.
- **Diversity vs consistency:** the need to account for the diversity of the sector and of differences between subjects, and to avoid creating homogeneity through the application of a rigid test; versus the need to ensure consistency in how subjects and different provider types are treated and to ensure consistency and comparability across subject ratings.

77. We are hugely grateful for the constructive input of the sector through the collaborative design process, which has enabled us to develop two approaches that seek to strike this balance. Through this process, two broad approaches to subject-level TEF have emerged:

- **Model A:** A 'by exception' model giving a provider-level rating and giving subjects the same rating as the provider where metrics performance is similar, with fuller assessment (and potentially different ratings) where metrics performance differs.
- **Model B:** A 'bottom-up' model fully assessing each subject to give subject-level ratings, feeding into the provider-level assessment and rating. Subjects are grouped for submissions, but ratings are still awarded at subject-level.

78. Feedback from discussion groups suggested that both models have merits and challenges – some of which can be addressed through design but some of which would need to be tested in the pilots.

79. Model A is risk-based and proportionate, focusing on areas most likely to be outliers. It has the potential to be less burdensome than other options, thereby allowing a greater focus on individual subjects, which students have indicated they find more useful. In the pilots, we will need to test factors such as the extent to which it genuinely reduces burden, the validity of only assessing 'exceptional' subjects fully, and the impact that using the 35 more granular subjects has on the robustness and reliability of the metrics.

80. In contrast, Model B is a fuller assessment process as every subject is assessed, but the pilots will need to test whether the additional burden this creates makes for a more robust assessment process and more meaningful ratings. There was very little support for a model in which only broad groups with no individual subject ratings were given, as such broad groupings were widely felt to be of no use to students. Model B therefore uses 7 broad groupings for providers' subject submissions only, but uses the 35 more granular individual subjects for metrics and rating purposes.

81. **We are therefore piloting two models in the Year 3 subject-level pilots: Model A and Model B.** In particular, piloting two models will enable us to test whether the lighter touch, risk-based approach taken in Model A is sufficient for robust assessment, or whether the fuller assessment in Model B is significantly more robust while still being manageable.

82. We are keen that some providers participate in both models in order to aid comparison, but are wary of inadvertently limiting pilot participation to well-resourced providers by asking too much of pilot participants. We will therefore ask **most pilot participants to participate in only one model**, but will seek to ensure, if possible **a small group of providers is able to participate in both models**. No participant will be forced to take part in both models unless they consent. HEFCE will therefore aim to recruit approximately:

- **15 providers to participate in Model A only**
- **15 providers to participate in Model B only**
- **10 providers, if possible, to participate in both models.**

83. In early design discussions, we considered limiting the pilots to testing only a sample of subjects. However, based on feedback from the sector, subject bodies and students on how different subjects may perform differently in the models, we now plan to expand the pilots to allow all subjects to be in scope for both models in the pilots. This means that the **providers participating in the pilots will need to submit all their subjects to the assessment process** (although in Model A, only some will require submissions and undergo full assessment).

6 Models

84. Collaborative design discussion groups with the sector have been instrumental in the development of potential models for subject-level TEF. Any model considered by these groups has attracted mixed views throughout the sector, and differences have not generally been along Mission Group lines or reflective of particular types of provision.

85. Piloting two models will enable us to test whether the lighter touch, risk-based approach taken in Model A is sufficient for robust assessment, or whether the fuller assessment in Model B is significantly more robust while still being manageable. However, not all features of the models differ. There are a number of areas in which evidence and feedback from discussion groups has been compelling and consistent and we have taken a single approach in both models. These areas are set out in the following sections.

6.1.1 Provider-level assessment

86. Providers who participated in TEF Year 2 are already reporting that the exercise has started to drive an increased institutional focus on policies, practices and performance. Some important components of provision, such as careers services, student support, and institutional strategy, are inherently cross-subject.

87. On this basis, neither providers nor students participating in discussion groups considered that a provider's teaching quality is a product only of what is delivered within a subject area, and there was a clear and consistent view that assessing TEF at subject-level only would underestimate the importance of the institutional context and fail to reflect an important factor in teaching excellence and student outcomes.

88. Rather than basing provider-level ratings purely on an aggregation of subject-level ratings, **both models therefore include a provider-level submission and metrics, and provider-level assessment** in order to reflect the institutional context and the impact of the institution's strategy (although in Model B the subject-level ratings do form a large part of the provider-level assessment).

6.1.2 Consistent criteria and evidence

89. Through discussions with providers, students and subject bodies, as well as an analysis of QAA Subject Benchmark Statements, our view is that the provider-level TEF criteria (as set out in the TEF Year 2 Specification) are sufficiently broad and thorough to allow all subjects to make the case for excellence. Using a single set of criteria makes the framework easier to understand and produces comparable results. It reduces the burden for providers and better accounts for interdisciplinarity. **Both Models will use the single set of TEF criteria used in TEF Year 2.**

90. Given teaching excellence will be assessed against the same criteria in each subject, the metrics used at provider-level to provide evidence against these criteria remain relevant for all subjects, and subject benchmarks will ensure that differences in how outcomes are affected by choice of subject are captured, so that assessment focuses on teaching excellence. **The same metrics and benchmarks used in provider-level TEF will therefore be used at subject-level.** However, some metrics developed for use in future iterations of TEF may be relevant at subject-level only.

91. We will also be using the same **additional evidence list at subject-level as in provider-level TEF**, and hope to test through the pilots whether this approach is appropriate.

92. In line with feedback received, we do not currently plan to be prescriptive about the role of **Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Body (PSRB) accreditation** in the Year 3 subject-level pilots. Providers may choose to cite their accreditation if they consider that it helps to demonstrate one or more of the TEF criteria. Through the pilots, we will explore whether there are particular subjects in which PSRB accreditation should play a greater role, for example if panellists report that accreditation has been important to their assessment of particular subjects, such as highly regulated subjects.

6.1.3 Widening Participation

93. We explored with discussion groups how to best ensure providers were required to maintain a focus on delivering positive outcomes for students from all backgrounds when making the case for excellence when TEF moves to subject-level. In the Year 3 subject-level pilots, Widening Participation considerations will be built into the framework in two ways:

- The TEF criterion **SO3: Positive Outcomes for All will be assessed at both provider- and subject-level**, in each model. At provider-level, providers will likely wish to discuss their institutional strategy and the impact it has across the provider's performance as a whole; at subject-level, providers will likely wish to focus on specific challenges in delivering outcomes for all students in that subject, as well as how the institution's strategy is adopted and implemented in that subject and the impact this has. At both levels, as in provider-level TEF, assessors will not consider questions of access and admissions, as these are not measures of teaching quality, but will instead focus on ensuring a provider is delivering positive outcomes for all of its students, whatever their background.
- **The provider-level and subject-level metrics will be benchmarked to account for various student characteristics**, in the same way as for provider-level TEF. Benchmarks are used to allow meaningful comparisons between providers by taking into account the different mix of students at each provider. As with provider-level TEF, the benchmark will be a weighted sector

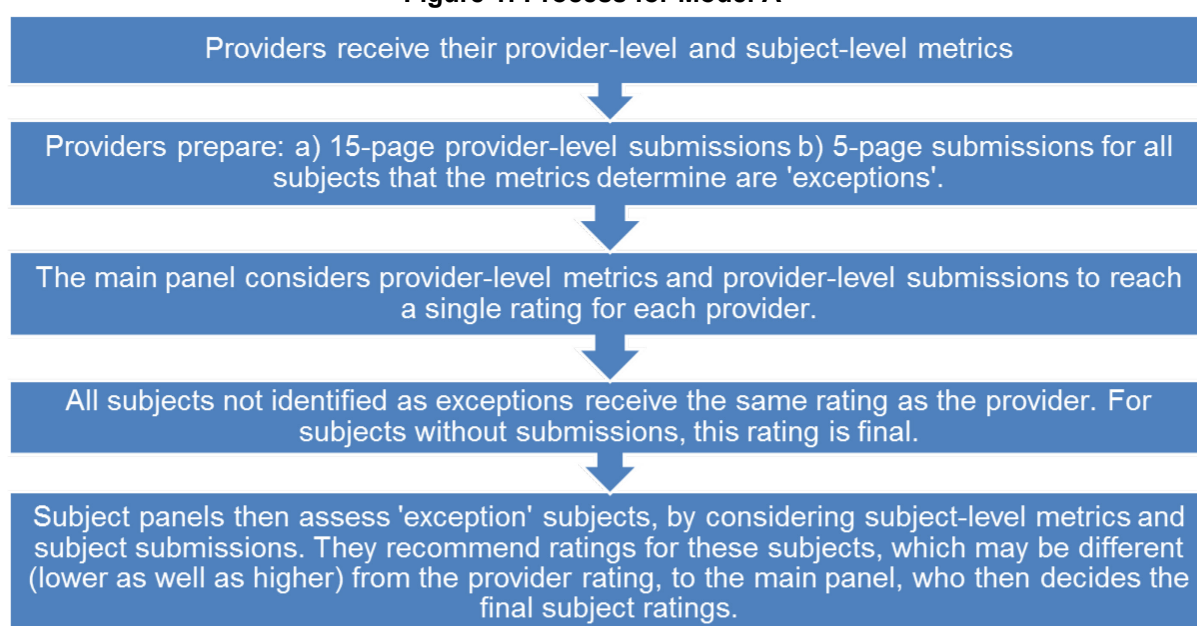
average where weightings are based on the characteristics of the students at the provider.

- We will include data split by Widening Participation characteristics in the Year 3 subject-level pilots, including the same characteristics as for provider-level TEF. These will be reflected in both the contextual data and the metric splits, both of which will be included in the provider-level and subject-level metrics. We will ask panellists to refer to the provider-level split data when the subject-level data is non-reportable. Further detail on the approach to split metrics for the Year 3 subject-level pilots is in the Splits section below.

6.2 Detailed design of Model A

94. Model A is a 'by exception' model that gives subjects the same rating as the provider where metrics are similar to the provider's, with fuller assessment by exception. The aim of this model is to reduce the burden that subject-level TEF could create and to focus fuller assessment on subjects that the metrics indicate may be performing differently and may receive a different rating to the rest of the provider. The process for this model is shown in Figure 1. All parameters of the model are open to testing and further development through the pilots.

Figure 1: Process for Model A



6.2.1 Subjects

95. This model uses the **35 CAH2 subjects for metrics, subject-level submissions, and ratings.**

6.2.2 Submissions

96. Provider-level submissions should be limited to **15 pages**, as in provider-level TEF. Subject submissions will only be produced for ‘exceptions’, and will be limited to **5 pages per subject**. Collaborative design groups consistently agreed that a limit lower than 5 pages would restrict a provider’s ability to set out its case for excellence for a subject. There is no minimum page length.

6.2.3 Generating the ‘exceptions’

97. Model A is based on the premise that the rating produced through provider-level TEF would be reflective of teaching quality and student outcomes in most parts of a provider, but that subject-level assessments would highlight some subjects that should be given a different rating. This is supported by data from providers with suitable metrics who entered TEF Year 2, which indicated that subject-level metrics performance mirrored the provider-level metrics 46% of the time¹⁴. Rather than assessing every subject fully to determine where subject performance differs from provider performance, Model A triages subjects on the basis of metrics, recognising that for most subjects, the rating will be the same as the provider rating. On this basis, full assessment of every subject is not necessary, and should be the exception, not the rule.

98. For the Year 3 subject-level pilots, we will apply the rule that **all subjects whose metrics would cause the initial hypothesis for that subject to be different from the provider-level initial hypothesis will be treated as exceptions**¹⁵. However, if the change in initial hypothesis is solely as a result of flags changing to neutral at subject-level from positive or negative at provider-level, the subject will not be generated as an exception, as this is likely to be due to a small sample size effect. Analysis using data from TEF Year 2 suggests this will mean that approximately 28% of all subjects across participating providers will be generated as exceptions¹⁶.

99. To test whether this rule for generating an exception is appropriate, a fixed proportion (likely to be 15%) of all other subjects – both with and without suitable metrics – will be selected for assessment in the pilot. We estimate that this means that, in total, 39% of all subjects across providers participating in the pilots will be assessed. Through the evaluation phase of the pilots, we will be able to analyse whether or not an assessment by exception method is appropriate and, if so, if the proposed rule for generating exceptions is targeted at the right level of sensitivity.

¹⁴ This analysis defined ‘subjects’ using the second layer of the Common Aggregation Hierarchy and 46% indicates the proportion of subjects across all providers in the dataset where the subject-level metrics generated the same flags as the provider-level metrics, or where any changes were flags moving to neutral from positive or negative.

¹⁵ For more information on how subjects with incomplete metrics will be treated, see below.

¹⁶ A summary of this data is attached at **Annex D – Analysis using Year 2 data**.

6.2.4 Criteria

100. **All ten current TEF criteria will be considered in both the subject-level assessments and the provider-level assessment.**

6.2.5 Provider-level ratings

101. As with TEF Year 2, **provider-level ratings are based on provider-level metrics and provider-level submissions.** Unlike in Model B, subject-level ratings do not have a bearing on provider-level ratings, as this would be circular.

6.2.6 Single subject providers

102. Providers whose eligible provision falls entirely within one of the 35 CAH2 subjects will not have any exceptions generated, as the subject-level metrics will be identical to the provider-level metrics.

103. We have considered whether single subject providers would be disadvantaged if their subject was not assessed by a subject panel but went straight to the main panel. This would be the case if other providers had all their subjects assessed by subject panels, but in the 'by exception' model the majority of subjects will not be assessed by subject panels.

104. **Single subject providers participating in Model A will therefore produce only a single 15 page submission** and this will be **assessed by the provider-level main panel** to give the same rating for provider and subject.

105. This should not disadvantage single subject providers in terms of the space afforded to discussion of their provision, as the case for excellence at provider-level and subject-level will be aligned.

106. Any providers who consider themselves 'single subject providers' but whose 'subject' is split between two or more of the 35 CAH2 subjects will not be treated as a single subject provider in the Year 3 subject-level pilots.

6.2.7 Challenges

107. As set out above, in order to test the validity of a 'by exception' model, some subjects with similar metrics to the provider-level metrics will also be fully assessed to ascertain whether they would receive different ratings through full assessment as opposed to being given the same rating as the provider. This will also help indicate whether the heavier reliance on metrics for 'non exceptions' in this model creates any disadvantages.

108. A further challenge with this model is that there is likely to be a large amount of variability in the number of exceptions generated for each provider, regardless of the rule

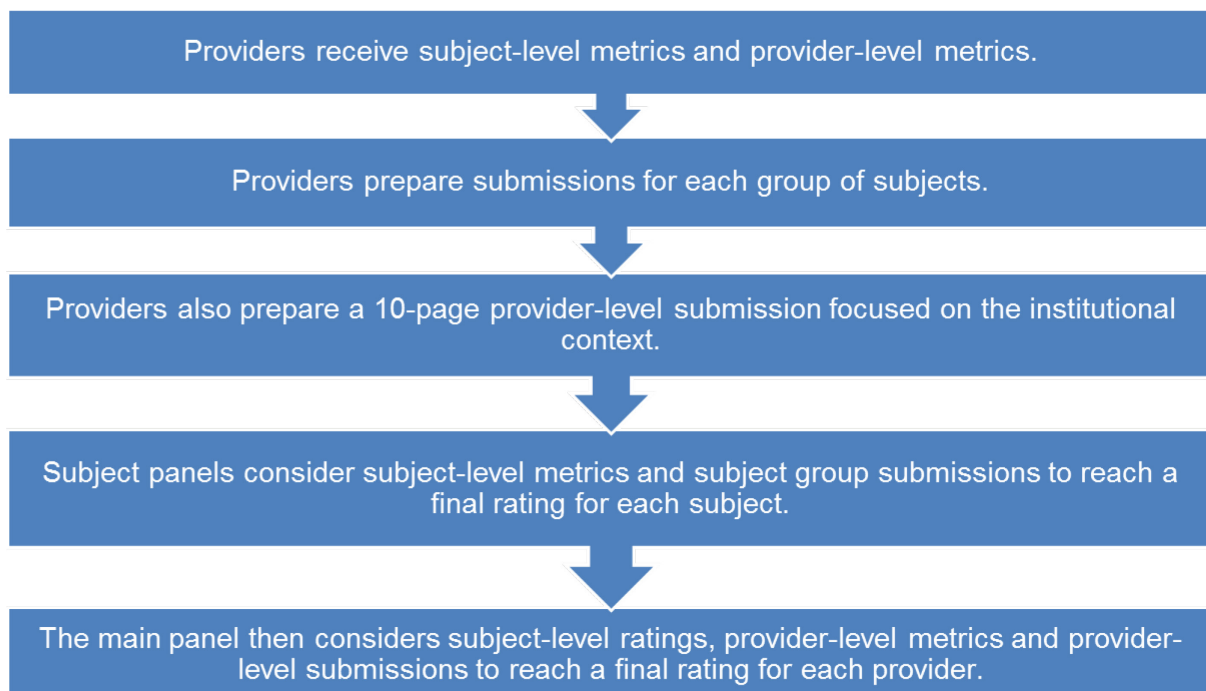
used for generating exceptions. Given that TEF emphasises consistency, this model might create an incentive for providers to limit the variability of their teaching quality across subjects to minimise the number of exceptions generated. We believe this incentive would align well with the aims of TEF, but the pilots will examine whether this would also have any negative effects.

109. Other challenges with this model include the impact of the provider-level submission on the subject-level ratings. In the current model, subjects that are not generated as 'exceptions' may be given a different rating to their initial hypothesis. This would occur where the final provider-level rating is different to the provider's initial hypothesis (e.g. due to consideration of the provider submission). In addition, where this occurs, some subjects will be generated as exceptions which have the same initial hypothesis as the final provider-level rating. These issues will be explored in the pilot.

6.3 Detailed design of Model B

110. Model B is a 'bottom-up' model that assesses each subject fully through metrics and submissions and gives ratings for all subjects, which are used alongside provider-level metrics and a provider-level submission to determine the provider-level rating. The purpose of this model is to test a method for assessing each subject fully in as manageable a way as possible, recognising that full assessment of each subject will always be a significant undertaking. This model also allows us to test a method for provider-level ratings being based in part on subject-level ratings. The process for this model is shown in Figure 2. All parameters of the model are open to testing and further development through the pilots.

Figure 2: Process for Model B



6.3.1 Subjects

111. This model **uses the 35 CAH2 subjects for subject-level metrics and ratings**. It also **maps the 35 subjects into 7 groups, which are used for submissions** (see **Annex C – Subjects and groups for these groupings**).

112. The 7 groups have been designed to group subjects together that are likely to have similar teaching practices, teaching quality, and student outcomes. This will reduce burden by allowing providers to take advantage of any synergies in preparing their submission. However, given the diversity in how providers organise themselves, we know that the 7 groups will not work well for everyone. **Providers can therefore choose to move at most one subject in and one subject out of each of these groups**, to help reflect the make-up of their specific structure. Providers do so **at their own risk**, knowing that assessor and panel structure and expertise is designed around the 7 subject groups that we have set (see **Annex C – Subjects and groups**).

6.3.2 Submissions

113. **Provider-level submissions will be limited to 10 pages**. To account for the fact that providers will have different numbers of subjects in each group, **group submissions will have variable maximum page lengths: 5 pages for each group in which a provider has 1 subject, with the page limit increasing by 1 page for each additional subject the provider has in that group**. All these are maximum page limits and there is no minimum length that providers are required to submit. The approach to group submissions is discussed in more detail in the Submissions section below.

6.3.3 Criteria

114. **All ten current TEF criteria will be considered in subject-level assessments**. Provider-level ratings will largely be based on subject-level ratings, so the provider-level submission will be more limited than in Model A or provider-level TEF. The provider-level submission should be focused purely on **institutional aspects of teaching excellence that cannot be sufficiently captured at subject level**, such as:

- Provider-wide resources and services (e.g. careers services)
- How the provider achieves positive outcomes for all
- How the provider recognises and rewards excellent teaching.

115. Feedback from discussion groups suggested **the criteria most relevant at this level were: TQ2: Valuing Teaching; LE1: Resources; SO3: Positive Outcomes for All**. Panel members determining provider-level ratings in Model B will therefore look in particular for evidence of these three criteria in provider-level submissions, and will not normally expect to see evidence of the other 7 criteria, as this model assumes these are sufficiently reflected in subject-level assessments and ratings.

6.3.4 Provider-level ratings

116. In Model B, **provider-level ratings are based on provider-level metrics, provider-level submissions, and subject-level ratings.** The subject-level ratings (generated through full assessment of subject-level metrics and group submissions) are used to form **an initial hypothesis of Gold, Silver or Bronze for the provider-level rating.** The provider-level panel considers this subject-based initial hypothesis, **alongside the initial hypothesis generated by the provider-level metrics and alongside the provider-level submission** in order to reach a provider-level rating.

117. **The initial hypothesis based on provider-level metrics will be determined in the same way as for provider-level TEF.** It is possible that the subject-based initial hypothesis and the initial hypothesis based on provider-level metrics may differ, and the pilots will explore how the panel deals with that in making its holistic assessment.

118. Based on feedback from the TEF User Group and some discussion groups, **the influence of a subject's rating on the subject-based initial hypothesis will be weighted by the proportion of the provider's students studying that subject** (calculated by headcount).

119. The calculation of the subject-based initial hypothesis will follow the principles used in provider-level TEF, which emphasise a need for consistency in provision in order to do well in TEF. **The subject-based initial hypothesis for the provider-level rating in Model B will therefore be calculated by applying the rules in this order:**

- **If 33% or more of a provider's students captured in the metrics are in subjects receiving a Bronze rating, the provider will receive a Bronze initial hypothesis.**
- **If at least 50% of a provider's students captured in the metrics are in subjects receiving a Gold rating, and fewer than 33% are in subjects receiving a Bronze rating, the provider will receive a Gold initial hypothesis.**
- **All other scenarios generate a Silver initial hypothesis.**

120. These rules ensure that a provider will receive a Bronze subject-based initial hypothesis if delivering Bronze-rated provision to a significant proportion (a third) of its students – even if most of its provision is rated Silver or Gold. This means that, to receive a Silver or Gold initial hypothesis, a provider must be rated consistently well across its subjects. The pilots will test the suitability of this approach in practice.

121. As set out in the Group submissions section below, the main panel will consider **the subject-based initial hypothesis alongside the initial hypothesis based on provider-level core metrics and the provider-level submission in order to reach a holistic judgement** and agree a provider-level rating.

6.3.5 Single subject providers

122. In Model B, at minimum a provider has the opportunity to produce a 5-page subject-level submission and a 10 page provider-level submission.

123. However, single subject providers cannot be treated in the same way as other providers in this model as this could technically lead to a position in which the 5 pages reviewed by the subject panel is given one rating and the 10 pages reviewed by the main panel is given a different rating, even though there is no distinction between provider-level excellence and subject-level excellence in these providers.

124. For the Year 3 subject-level pilots, **single subject providers will therefore only produce a single submission with a maximum of 15 pages** for Model B. **This will be assessed by and the relevant subject panel, which will assign a rating.** This rating will be the provider's subject-level rating and provider-level rating. However, **provider-level assessors and the main panel will review these ratings fully**, whereas their review of other subject-level ratings will be limited to moderation only. We will ask provider-level assessors and the main panel to look in particular for any elements of the single subject provider's submission that is more akin to what other providers would include in their provider-level submissions than their subject-level submissions, and to consider whether the fact that this has been assessed at subject-level only would have had an impact on the rating given. If so, the rating will be adjusted accordingly.

125. We recognise that the risk of this overall approach is that it could make the assessment process more fluid and less clear for single subject providers. However, since the pilots are developmental in nature, we anticipate that this exploratory approach will enable us to better understand how the different aspects of Model B would impact on single subject providers and their experience of and performance in subject-level TEF in practice.

126. As in Model A, any providers who consider themselves 'single subject providers' but whose 'subject' is split between two or more of the 35 CAH2 subjects will not be treated as a single subject provider in the Year 3 subject-level pilots.

6.3.6 Challenges

127. In comparison to Model A, Model B is likely to create a bigger burden for both providers entering and those assessing. By piloting both models, we will be able to test whether the additional resource investment required by Model B adds value, for example by producing more robust ratings.

128. The other challenge for Model B is that the 7 groups are unlikely to align with providers' structures, as all providers organise subjects differently. Grouping subjects is intended to reduce burden by maximising synergies between subjects, but conversely may add to burden where groups cross over providers' faculties, schools, or similar arrangements, as senior staff may need to be involved in ways that cut across usual

managerial structures. The pilots provide an opportunity to test the extent of these challenges and the effectiveness of possible mitigations. As noted above, in the Year 3 subject-level pilots, providers will be able to move at most one subject in and one subject out of each group in order to test whether a degree of flexibility in the 7 groupings would be helpful and feasible.

7 Assessment method and submissions

129. In order to test how different provider types and subjects perform in both models, participants will be assessed at both subject-level and provider-level according to one or both of the models. They will be given indicative ratings for their subjects and an indicative provider-level rating.

7.1 Assessment method

130. The overall principles of assessment in the Year 3 subject-level pilots will be the same as those used in provider-level TEF. **Assessment will be holistic, based on both core and (where possible) split metrics supplemented by additional evidence, and carried out by peers comprised of experts in teaching and learning as well as student representatives, employer representatives and widening participation experts.**

131. As set out above, we consider that the provider-level TEF criteria are sufficiently broad and thorough to cover teaching excellence at subject-level and across all subjects. **We will therefore use the same criteria for the Year 3 subject-level pilots as for provider-level TEF. We will use this set of criteria across all subjects, and use the same core metrics in subject-level assessments as for provider-level TEF.**

132. For subjects with reportable metrics undergoing full assessment, **the metrics will be used to generate an initial hypothesis** in the same way as provider-level TEF, which the relevant subject panel will consider alongside a submission in order to reach a rating for the subject.

133. The pilots will explicitly test whether this assessment method still works at subject-level and whether anything different or additional should be built into subject-level assessments – for example to give a more specific role to PSRB accreditation (see section on ‘Consistent criteria and evidence’ above), or subjects with unusually uniform outcomes such as medicine or nursing (see section on ‘High absolute values and highly clustered values’ below).

134. As noted in the Introduction, **any changes to the assessment method made in Year 3 provider-level TEF following the Year 2 lessons learned exercise will also be reflected in the Year 3 subject-level pilots.**

7.2 Submissions

135. As with provider-level TEF, providers will submit evidence to support their case for excellence in the form of provider submissions that will be used by assessors alongside metrics to assess teaching excellence.

136. **The purpose of submissions in the subject-level pilots is the same as in provider-level TEF, and the guidance on content set out for provider-level TEF will remain relevant for the Year 3 subject-level pilots.** We will also test through the pilots whether the same additional evidence list is appropriate at subject-level (including whether anything different or additional should be added, as noted above). However, there are three key differences in how submissions will work in the Year 3 subject-level pilots versus provider-level TEF, which are set out in the following subsections.

137. Using data from eligible providers participating in TEF Year 2, we have modelled what the distribution of workload in terms of producing submissions could be, in each model and across different provider types, according to the parameters we are piloting for each model. This is included at **Annex D – Analysis using Year 2 data.**

7.2.1 Subject-level submissions

138. In Model A, subject-level metrics will be compared to provider-level metrics in order to decide which subjects should undergo full assessment (see section on Generating the ‘exceptions’ above). For each of these ‘exception’ subjects, **providers will produce a submission of a maximum of 5 pages.**

139. All aspects of teaching excellence, and all 10 TEF criteria, will be relevant at both provider-level and subject-level in Model A. **Subject-level submissions should therefore focus solely on the subject-level context, and make the case for excellence in the subject against the 10 TEF criteria.**

7.2.2 Group submissions

140. In Model B, all subjects are assessed fully. The challenge is to build in sufficient opportunity for providers to make the case for excellence in each of their subjects without creating an overly bureaucratic system. Although metrics will be generated for each of the 35 subjects in Model B, the 35 subjects are mapped into 7 groups for the purposes of the submissions.

141. The purpose behind grouping subjects for the submissions is to streamline the process for both panel members and providers. For panel members, this means they will only need to review up to 7 submissions per provider, rather than up to 35. For providers, group submissions should help providers to streamline their evidence and avoid duplication. We know that shortening the submission does not necessarily reduce the burden, given the resource that marshalling evidence into a more limited narrative would require. Grouping subjects for submissions will mean **where there are areas of consistency between or across subjects in a group, these can be discussed together**, whereas if subjects were not grouped this would have to be repeated in multiple submissions, taking up valuable space.

142. We also anticipate that group submissions will give providers more flexibility over the focus they give to each subject in their evidence, while minimising burden. If the maximum page length for the group submission were divided equally between the subjects in that group, this would make for a short submission for each subject. While this may help address bureaucracy, it would be challenging to fully reflect subjects with more variable metrics or complex narratives. **Grouping the subjects for submissions therefore allows the provider to choose where to focus, and gives flexibility to the provider to dedicate more of the submission to those subjects for which is most important.**

143. Given the number of subjects a provider offers within each group will vary, **we will be piloting variable maximum page limits** to allow providers with more subjects in a group more space to reflect them, so that the model applies more consistently and fairly to different providers. These are shown in

144. Table 3 below. However, in order to capture the benefits sought through the group submissions, mentioned above, **participants should not seek to base the structure of their submission on the way the maximum page lengths are calculated** (for example, by assuming that the first 4 pages should be generic followed by a page per subject, etc).

Table 3: Variable page limit for group submissions

| Number of subjects in group | Maximum page limit |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 subject | 5 pages |
| 2 subjects | 6 pages |
| 3 subjects | 7 pages |
| 4 subjects | 8 pages |
| n subjects | n + 4 pages |

145. Providers participating in Model B will therefore write a maximum of between 5 and 13 pages per group. No provider will write more than 13 pages for the biggest group, and no provider will write more than 73 pages for their entire TEF application.

146. We recognise that this makes Model B a significant undertaking for some providers. In line with sector feedback, the pilots will enable us to explore whether this fuller assessment process leads to more robust assessment and ratings as compared to the more risk-based Model A.

7.2.3 Provider-level submissions

147. **As set out above, both models require a provider submission, reflecting clear and consistent feedback from the sector that teaching excellence is part**

determined by institutional policies, programmes and initiatives. In Model A, this submission will be approached in the same way as in provider-level TEF.

148. However, in Model B, provider-level ratings will largely be based on subject-level ratings, so the provider-level submission will be much more limited than in Model A or provider-level TEF. **It should be focused purely on institutional aspects of teaching excellence that cannot be sufficiently captured at subject-level**, such as:

- Provider-wide resources and services (e.g. careers services)
- How the provider achieves positive outcomes for all
- How the provider recognises and rewards excellent teaching

149. As set out above, feedback from discussion groups suggested **the criteria most relevant at this level were: TQ2: Valuing Teaching; LEI: Resources; SO3: Positive Outcomes for All**, so assessors and panels determining provider-level ratings in Model B will be looking in particular for evidence of these three criteria in provider-level submissions.

150. Any evidence assessed at subject-level need not be repeated in provider-level submissions, since subject-level ratings will be used to generate a subject-based initial hypothesis to be considered alongside provider-level metrics and the provider-level submission in reaching provider-level ratings. The subject-based initial hypothesis will be the main means by which the other 7 criteria feed in to the provider-level assessment.

151. Given the more focused nature of provider-level submissions in Model B, **we will pilot a reduced maximum length of 10 pages for provider-level submissions in Model B**, in contrast to the 15-page maximum page length in Model A and provider-level TEF.

8 Metrics

8.1 Subject-level metrics

152. **Each provider participating in the Year 3 subject-level pilots will receive both provider-level and subject-level metrics, both of which will include the same core metrics as provider-level TEF¹⁷. As in provider-level TEF, all core metrics will be reported separately for full time and part time students and will be benchmarked. Please note that, when published, the metrics section of the TEF Year 3 provider-level specification will supersede any references made here to the TEF Year 2 specification.**

153. **HEFCE's process for calculating and distributing the metrics will also follow the same approach used in provider-level TEF¹⁸. However, the treatment of missing or non-reportable data will be different for the pilots¹⁹ and provisional awards will not be relevant²⁰.**

154. To calculate the subject-level metrics, HEFCE will also undertake a mapping exercise. For the pilots, the 35 subjects are defined by CAH2. Both HECoS and JACS3 have been mapped to the CAH. **In order to calculate the metrics for the 35 CAH2 subjects, HEFCE will use HESA's JACS to CAH mapping to match the JACS3 codes to the appropriate CAH3 subjects and then aggregate this up to the 35 CAH2 subjects.** This approach will apply to calculation of both the core and split metrics at subject-level.

155. **Providers will not be required to do any coding or mapping of their courses, subjects or data.** For transparency, the metrics data received by providers will indicate which individual students have been mapped to each subject.

156. Providers will receive subject-level metrics for each subject taught at the provider where provision of that subject is in scope for the Year 3 subject-level pilots (see the 'Scope of the Year 3 subject-level pilots' section). **If the provider is being assessed under Model A, the provider will still receive metrics for all subjects and clear guidance will be provided about which subjects represent exceptions and will therefore require subject submissions to be separately assessed.**

¹⁷ Currently set out in pages 26 – 27 in the Year 2 Specification and clarifying paragraph 5.10.1 in the Year 2 Additional guidance

¹⁸ Pages 28 – 29 of the Year 2 Specification

¹⁹ See next section

²⁰ Provisional awards will not be used in the pilots given the pilots are purely developmental and no publishable ratings for individual providers will be generated.

157. In addition to the core metrics, **we will pilot the collection of data for supplementary metrics on teaching intensity** (see the ‘Teaching Intensity’ section for more information, including what is meant by a supplementary metric). **Any other core or supplementary metrics included in TEF Year 3, and any changes in the metrics for TEF Year 3, will be reflected in the Year 3 subject-level pilots.**

8.2 Non-reportable metrics

158. In TEF Year 2, a provider was required to have suitable metrics at provider-level in order to be eligible for a full TEF assessment. This means that they had to reach the reportability thresholds (for example, 10 or more students) for all six of the core metrics.

159. In the Year 3 subject-level pilots, **metrics will be broken down into 35 subjects.** This means that some providers who are currently eligible for TEF will find some of their core metrics for some subjects become non-reportable in the move to these smaller sample sizes.

160. Analysis based on the Year 2 data suggests that although 98% of students will still be in subjects with suitable metrics, 87% of providers would have non-reportable core metrics in at least one subject (because most providers have at least one small subject). This is particularly the case for alternative providers and colleges, which often have smaller cohorts.

161. To ensure TEF continues to recognise the diversity of the sector as it moves to subject-level, we want to ensure that providers who meet the eligibility requirements for provider-level TEF and have suitable metrics at provider-level continue to be eligible to participate in TEF once it moves to subject-level, even if not all its subjects have a full set of reportable core metrics at subject-level.

162. To ensure providers with some non-reportable metrics at subject-level can still participate in TEF if they are otherwise eligible, **the pilots will test options for treating non-reportable core metrics at subject-level in both Model A and Model B.** In particular, we will need to examine the basis on which panels are able to reach decisions for subjects with a limited evidence base.

163. It should be noted that just because a subject has some non-reportable metrics does not mean all of its metrics are non-reportable. It could have reportable metrics for retention and employment, for example, but have non-reportable NSS metrics. It will therefore be useful to explore through the pilots whether there is a suitable threshold above which a partial set of subject-level metrics can be used to inform panel decisions, but below which an alternative approach is needed.

164. There may be a minimum cohort size, below which it is impractical to assess or rate a given subject within a provider, but none is set for the Year 3 subject-level pilots. We recognise that this means that providers and panellists may find themselves

producing submissions for, assessing, and producing ratings for subjects with very small cohorts. It is not our intention that the final design of subject-level TEF will require this, and we would expect to have a minimum threshold in order to ensure a proportionate approach. However, we know that it will be important for providers to be able to share ratings for all their subjects with prospective students, so will continue to explore how this can practically be best achieved, including through the pilots and the consultation planned for later this year.

8.2.1 Assessment of subjects with non-reportable metrics in Model A

165. Model A gives subjects the same rating as the provider unless there is evidence that that subject is behaving differently. **Our starting position is therefore that subjects with no reportable core metrics in their majority mode are not treated as ‘exceptions’ in Model A as there is no evidence that they are performing differently.**

166. For subjects with partially reportable core metrics in majority mode, if the core metrics in majority mode that are reportable clearly indicate an initial hypothesis – i.e. at least three positive metrics (and no negative metrics); or at least two negative metrics – an initial hypothesis will be calculated accordingly. **If this is different from the initial hypothesis at provider-level, then that subject will be treated as an exception. In all other cases, the subject will not be treated as an exception.**

167. As set out above, in the pilot we will also test a sample (likely to be 15%) of non-exception subjects – including those with non- or partially reportable metrics – in order to test whether this rule for generating exceptions is appropriate. Given the exploratory nature of this sample, we plan to leave the assessment process for subjects without a full set of reportable core metrics more open, giving guidance to assessors/panels on how to use this data.

8.2.2 Assessment of subjects with non-reportable metrics in Model B

168. In Model B, the subject-level metrics are used to generate an initial hypothesis which is considered by the panellists alongside group submissions in order to produce subject-level ratings.

169. In this model, we want to test how panellists will deal with partial data sets for subjects. **We will test how they can make the assessments based on the metrics that are available for the subject, the group submission, and provider-level metrics as contextual information. They might also take into account the metrics performance of other subjects in that group.**

170. For most subjects in Model B, assessors will see metrics for each subject, and where the subject has suitable metrics these will generate an initial hypothesis. **Given the exploratory nature of our approach to this element of Model B, we plan to leave the assessment process for subjects without a full set of reportable core metrics**

more open, giving guidance to assessors/panels on how to use this data. We can then explore their approach through the evaluation and use this to inform further development of subject-level TEF. However, this approach may evolve in discussions with pilot providers, assessors and panellists throughout the pilots.

8.3 Splits

171. As in provider-level TEF, **each core metric will be presented for a series of sub-groups (called splits) reflecting Widening Participation priorities. These splits will be included in both the provider-level and subject-level metrics.**

172. **For provider-level metrics, the splits will be presented in the same way as for provider-level TEF. Provider-level splits will continue to form a key part of the TEF assessment process, regardless of the model adapted.** OFFA will work with providers to deliver better access for all through access agreements and to monitor any notable changes in recruitment patterns.

173. For subject-level metrics, we have had discussions with the sector about whether the splits can and should be included. The splits are an important part of highlighting widening participation priorities and feedback has supported this view, indicating that the splits should be included where possible. However, concerns were also raised about whether there is sufficient data for splits to be reportable at subject-level. A sufficient level of reportable data is needed across the sector to maintain consistent and robust assessments.

174. The data shows that, at subject-level, there will be an increase in the number of non-reportable splits reflecting the reduced populations. However, the level of non-reportability is not consistent across metrics, splits or subjects.

175. In choosing which splits to include at subject-level, we have balanced these two factors. On this basis, we will pilot the following approach in the Year 3 subject-level pilots :

- **The subject-level metrics will include all splits used in TEF Year 2, although ethnicity will only be reported at the higher of the 2 levels in the provider workbooks** (white background and black or minority ethnic (BME) background).
- On balance, **we have decided to maintain the splits for all subjects and providers across all metrics.** This reflects the value we believe this data brings to the assessment process.

176. Using data from TEF Year 2, our analysis suggests that these splits would be reportable approximately 72% of the time at subject-level.

8.4 Benchmarking

177. **The approach to benchmarking in the provider-level and subject-level metrics will be the same as for provider-level TEF.**

178. When benchmarking, the subject-level metrics, as per provider-level benchmarks, will be calculated based on a weighted sector average, where ‘the sector’ is made up of all undergraduate provision in scope for the TEF.

179. HEFCE is currently undertaking a review of the benchmarking factors as part of a broader benchmarking review led by the UKPI Steering Group²¹. **Any lessons learned from HEFCE’s review will be incorporated into the benchmarking approach for the Year 3 provider-level TEF and the Year 3 subject-level pilots.** We expect this to include changes to the definition of ‘subject of study’, which would increase alignment between the subjects used for benchmarking and the 35 CAH2 subjects that are being assessed in the pilots.

8.5 Flagging

180. **The approach to flagging in the provider-level and subject-level metrics will be the same as for provider-level TEF.**

8.6 High absolute values and highly clustered values

181. We are aware that there are some subjects where some indicators may be clustered at the top end of the spectrum (for example Medicine or Nursing where courses are highly regulated and students are likely to go straight into highly skilled employment after graduating). We will be conducting further analysis and working throughout the pilots to ensure that we are making best use of the data available to support assessors in making judgements.

182. As part of the pilots, **we will gather feedback on whether the approach to assessment should be varied with respect to such subjects.**

8.7 Contextual data

183. In addition to the metrics, **assessors will be supplied with the same contextual data and information as for provider-level TEF.** This includes contextual data that is specific to each provider as well as sector level contextual information that sets out the broader operating context for Higher Education in the nation relevant to the

²¹ https://www.hesa.ac.uk/files/ukpis/ukpis/UKPISG_17_02.pdf

provider. This will be included alongside both the provider-level and subject-level metrics.

184. **At subject-level, the provider-specific contextual data will be reported based on the cohort of students that study the relevant subject at the provider** (meaning the 'subject of study' contextual data is no longer relevant at subject-level). Likewise, **the sector level contextual information will be reported based on the cohort of students that study the relevant subject, but across all providers.**

185. **As for TEF Year 2, contextual data is used to support interpretation of performance but does not itself form the basis of any judgement.**

8.8 Presentation

186. **The metrics and contextual data will be presented in a similar way to the metrics workbooks used in provider-level TEF.**

9 Panels

187. Feedback from the sector, students and subject bodies has indicated that those making subject-level assessments should have relevant expertise in the subject they are assessing, but that moderation and consistency across all subjects is important and most likely to lead to improvements in teaching quality. The TEF Year 2 assessors and panellists were also selected to ensure a mix of other backgrounds such as different provider types, and the approach for subject-level TEF will need to ensure that subject expertise is balanced with representation of these features as well as of subject expertise.

188. We have therefore, with discussion groups, explored options for balancing subject expertise with other considerations. In line with the feedback received, **we will aim to have a pool of panellists for the Year 3 subject-level pilots that is sufficiently large to cover all subjects, but not to have different panels for the 35 individual subjects.**

189. In order to ensure that the subject-level pilots are purely developmental and have no impact on the ratings awarded by the full provider-level TEF exercise running in Year 3, HEFCE will recruit **a separate group of panellists** to take part in the pilots.

9.1 Panel Chair

190. **Professor Janice Kay CBE, Provost and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Exeter and Deputy Chair of the TEF Panel, will chair the main panel for the pilots.** Professor Kay will bring her experience from TEF Year 2 to the pilots, and will help to ensure that the approach taken by the panel in the Year 3 subject-level pilots is consistent with the approach taken in the full provider-level exercise in both Year 2 and Year 3.

191. **Professor Kay will still continue to serve on the TEF panel for Year 3 provider-level TEF. No other assessor or panellist will be part of both processes.**

9.2 Assessors and panellists

192. We do not think it is necessary to recruit separate panellists for Model A and Model B. Using the same panellists for each model will better facilitate comparison of the two models as panellists will be able to reflect on how the detail of each model affected how they considered evidence and reached decisions. **We will therefore use the same pool of panellists for both models, but they will be operate differently to suit each model.**

193. To ensure a sufficiently large pool of panellists to represent the different backgrounds and areas of experience we are seeking to reflect, and to ensure **each**

submission can be at least triple-read as is the case for provider-level TEF, **HEFCE will recruit approximately 110 panellists** for the pilots:

- **Seven subject panels each with approximately 12-14 members** (matching the 7 subject groups used in Model B and set out in Annex C – Subjects and groups)
- **A main panel of approximately 25-30 members, 7 of whom would also act as subject panel chairs.**

194. HEFCE will aim to ensure **each of the 7 subject panels has at least one academic member with expertise in each of the 35 CAH2 subjects covered by that group**. However, HEFCE will aim to recruit panellists that have responsibility for teaching and learning across more than one subject in the group, for example at Dean level, so they are well equipped to assess a range of subjects.

195. DfE is committed to putting students at the heart of TEF design. For this reason, we ensured that students had a role in the Year 2 TEF assessment panels. We hope to build on this experience, and further involve students in the design and assessment of TEF at the subject-level. **HEFCE will aim to recruit students to comprise approximately one-third of the panel members**. As with provider-level TEF, **each submission (both provider and subject submissions) will be assessed by at least one student**.

196. We hope to test two different approaches to organising the assessment in the Year 3 subject-level pilots, as set out in the following subsections.

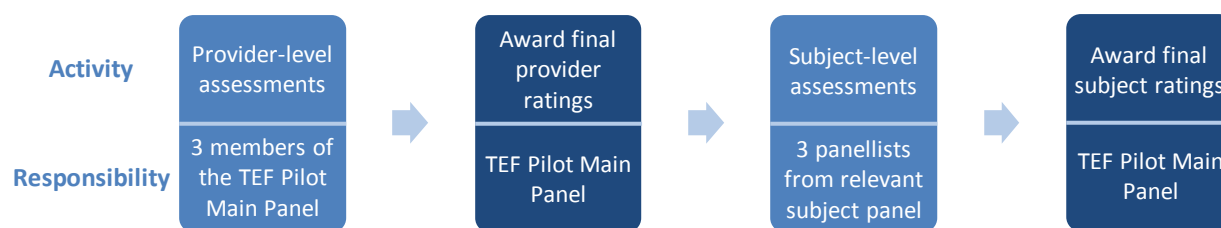
9.2.1 Panel structure for Model A

197. For Model A, **provider-level submissions will be considered by at least 3 members of the TEF Pilot Main Panel**, and this Panel will award ratings.

198. **Subject submissions will be considered by at least 3 panellists from the relevant subject panel**, at least one of which will have relevant expertise in the subject being assessed. **Each subject panel will discuss the panellists' findings and make recommendations to the TEF Pilot Main Panel which will moderate and award subject-level ratings.**

199. This process is set out in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 Panel structure for Model A



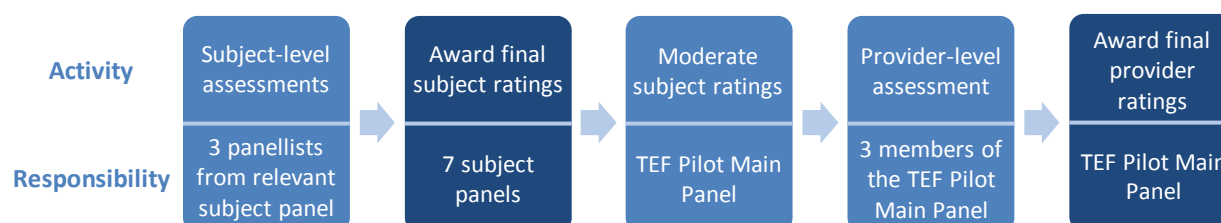
9.2.2 Panel structure for Model B

200. For Model B, **subject group submissions will be considered by at least 3 panellists from the relevant subject panel. Each subject panel considers recommendations from the panellists on each subject group submission and awards subject-level ratings. The TEF Pilot Main Panel moderates these to ensure consistency between subject panels.**

201. Subject-based initial hypotheses, provider-level metrics and provider-level submissions **are considered by at least 3 members of the TEF Pilot Main Panel and this Panel awards final provider-level ratings.**

202. This process is set out in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 Panel structure for Model B



10 Teaching intensity

203. As set out by the Government in the White Paper: *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice* (May 2016)²², there is strong evidence that factors such as contact hours matter to students' perceptions of their studies and Gibbs' dimensions of quality shows that large class sizes can have negative impacts on access to teaching staff, assessment and feedback, student engagement and depth of learning.²³

204. TEF takes a holistic view of teaching, described in the three aspects of the framework (Teaching Quality, Learning Environment, Student Outcomes and Learning Gain). However, the current metrics do not capture all aspects of teaching and we are committed to working with the sector to explore the potential for other measures (for example learning gain and teaching intensity) to contribute to the overall assessment of teaching excellence. Teaching intensity is part of the assessment criteria for the Teaching Quality aspect of the TEF²⁴. As Gibb (ibid) states: "The most important conclusion of (Dimensions of Quality) is that what best predicts educational gain is measures of educational process: what institutions do with their resources to make the most of whatever students they have."

205. **We are using a definition of teaching intensity to mean a measure that goes beyond counting contact hours.** The methods that we are piloting consider not just contact hours, but also class size, staff-student ratios, placements and field work to build up a more rounded picture of the nature, as well as the amount, of the teaching received.

206. Excellent teaching provides contact with high student engagement, leading to productive independent study and strong outcomes. This fits with for example Gibb's commentary that "The number of class contact hours has very little to do with educational quality, independently of what happens in those hours, what the pedagogical model is, and what the consequences are for the quantity and quality of independent study hours." Whilst we recognise that our models do not capture all elements of what encapsulates excellent teaching (which would include the experience and ability of those doing the teaching, the rigour and stretch of the material taught and many other factors which are incorporated into the TEF criteria) we consider this a helpful first step towards developing a measure that goes beyond simply counting contact hours, whilst allowing other factors to be addressed in the broader narrative submission.

²² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523546/bis-16-265-success-as-a-knowledge-economy-web.pdf

²³ Gibbs, G., 2010. *Dimensions of quality*. York: Higher Education Academy.

²⁴ TQ1 Teaching provides effective stimulation, challenge and contact time that encourages students to engage and actively commit to their studies

207. Given contact hours and teaching intensity are difficult to measure, particularly given the rich diversity of pedagogy and the difference made by both varying class sizes and the efficacy of the teaching, **we will be carrying out an initial exploratory pilot of a teaching intensity measure as part of the Year 3 subject-level pilots.**

208. This exploratory pilot will test the feasibility and utility of teaching intensity data to support the evidence already offered in provider metrics and submissions. **This will include the collection of new administrative and survey data and an analysis of the collected data, producing a set of measures which can be used by assessors in making judgements at subject-level.** HEFCE will undertake the data collection in partnership with pilot providers and as well as developing the new measures will review the collected data for consistency, validity, scalability, burden and potential for gaming. Pilot providers and panellists will be asked to comment on the new measures and their usefulness in informing the assessment.

209. This is a scoping pilot with the intent of exploring the feasibility and usefulness of collecting and assessing this data. This pilot requires the collection of new datasets; we recognise that sector wide roll out would take time and consultation. We are including it in the subject-level pilots as we think teaching intensity is best recorded at subject-level. However, the development of subject-level TEF will proceed to the timeline indicated in this specification, with first full assessments in 2020, regardless of whether or not similar progress can be made on the development of a teaching intensity metric.

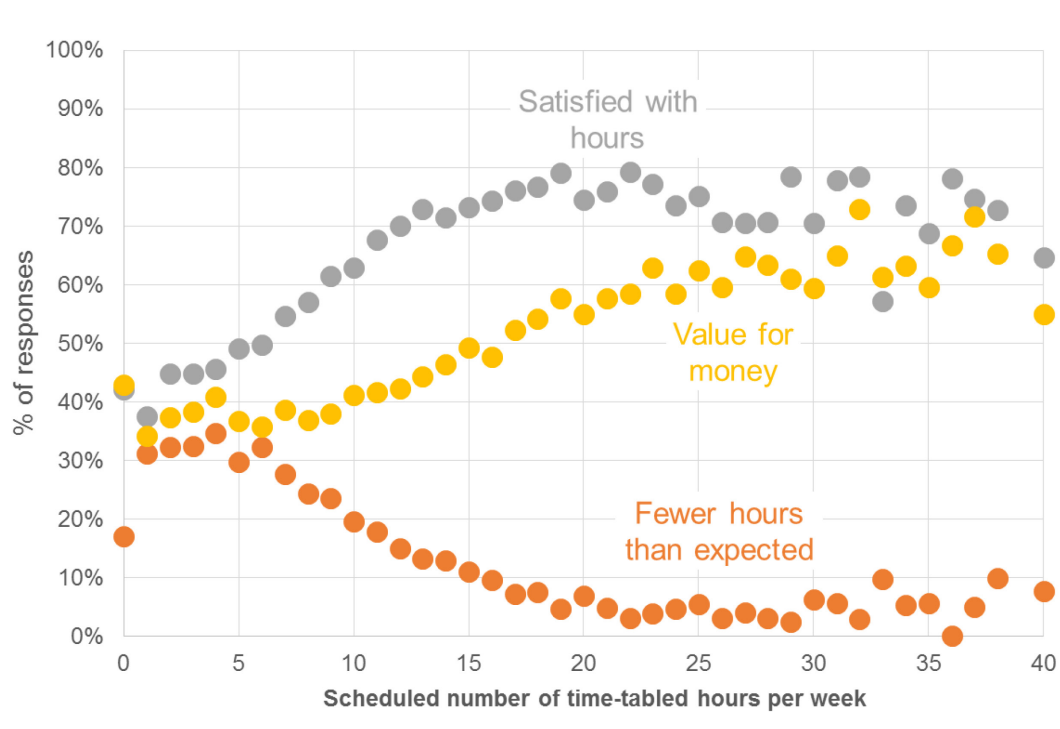
10.1 Background and development

210. Over the last year HEFCE have:

- Held a round table discussion with academics
- Held a workshop of 23 course design experts, HEFCE staff and DfE staff;
- Carried out telephone interviews with a range of publicly funded and alternative providers.
- Reviewed published research and literature on teaching quality.
- Provided recommendations to the Department.

211. The HEPI-HEA Student Academic Experience Survey asks students to report on their weekly hours of study. Figure 5 indicates some interesting trends. Between 5 and 20 hours there is a very clear correlation between increased hours and students reporting they are satisfied with hours / receiving value for money. This correlation does not hold across the whole spectrum of reported hours, indicating that there are other factors at play, particularly above 25 hours per week.

Figure 5: Students' views of their course and the quantity of teaching compared to the reported number of hours per week.



Source: HEPI-HEA Student Academic Experience Survey 2012-16. There are at least 20 responses in each group, and more than 100 for nearly all groups.

212. Given finite resources, there is clearly a trade-off between number of hours and the size of the groups in which students are taught. From Gibbs' Dimensions of Quality we see that large class sizes can have negative impacts on access to teaching staff, assessment and feedback, student engagement and depth of learning. However, there is evidence from the Student Academic Experience Survey that, in the event of having to make a choice, many students would prefer high contact hours to small class sizes.²⁵

213. In order to help assessors (and students) compare the contact offered between providers and subjects, we have concluded that teaching intensity should measure contact time in at least 2 dimensions, hours and group size.

214. It is an important principle of this pilot that the Government has no view on how teaching should be carried out, or whether certain types of teaching methods – for example seminars, laboratories, 'flipped classrooms' or other forms – are better than others. Similarly, the Government has no view on whether a large volume of large-group teaching is better or worse than a commensurately smaller volume of small-group teaching. That is a matter for individual providers to determine, in accordance with the principles of institutional autonomy and in recognition of the fact that a diversity of forms

²⁵ Neves and Hillman, 'HEPI-HEA 2016 Student Academic Experience Survey'

of provision is to be welcomed. It is also important to recognise the important role of Higher Education in facilitating and developing the skills of autonomous and self-directed learning.

215. The Government does, however, consider that excellent teaching is likely to demand a sufficient level of teaching intensity in order to provide a high quality experience for the student. Providers should therefore be investing resources into teaching, measurable through the volume of contact time provided, the small sizes of the classes in which teaching is delivered, or a combination of the two.

216. **We propose to pilot two measures of teaching intensity:**

- **A provider declaration of the contact hours they are providing, weighted by staff-student ratios**, to get a measure of teaching intensity (using a 'weighted contact hours' measure²⁶ as well as taking into account provision such as placements, field work and e-learning).
- **A student survey on number of contact hours, self-directed study and whether they consider the contact hours are sufficient to fulfil their learning needs.**

217. Reflecting the early-stage nature of this pilot, **we will only pilot these measures for a small range of subjects**, allowing us to begin developing the methodology in a proportionate manner. **Participating providers will therefore only submit teaching intensity information for those subjects.**

218. We have selected 5 subjects likely to be taught with different levels of intensity and modes of delivery, including some taught at particular provider types and some taught across a wide range of providers. We currently plan to conduct the teaching intensity pilot on the following subjects (this list may change once pilot participants are selected if these subjects would not allow the pilot to be representative of different provider types):

- Nursing
- Physics and astronomy
- Creative arts and design
- History and archaeology
- Law.

219. There are further details of both the provider declaration and the student survey measure at **Annex E – Teaching intensity** examples.

²⁶ This draws on work from a forthcoming paper by Huxley, Gervas; Jenny Mayo; Mike W. Peacey and Maddy Richardson. "Class size at university" Fiscal Studies (forthcoming). DOI: 10.1111/j.1475-5890.2017.12149

10.2 Presenting and using the teaching intensity metrics

220. During the pilots, **the teaching intensity results will be presented as a new class of metric, a ‘supplementary metric’**. Supplementary metrics will not form part of the of the initial hypothesis, but will instead be considered alongside the subject-level submission to inform the holistic judgement. **Unlike contextual data, assessors are permitted to use supplementary metrics as the basis on which to inform judgements as part of step 2 of the assessment process.**

221. This approach will allow providers to contextualise their teaching intensity values within their submissions and ensure that assessors are only considering teaching intensity as part of the wider assessment of excellence.

222. Given that teaching is likely to be different in each year of study, **teaching intensity metrics will be presented by year**. This will produce a set of headline results which could resemble the following:

| Provider Declaration | First Year | Second Year | Third Year |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|
| Gross Teaching Quotient (GTQ) ²⁷ | | | |
| Placements and Fieldwork | | | |
| e-Learning | | | |
| | | | |
| Student Survey²⁸ | First Year | Second Year | Third Year |
| Aggregated teaching intensity strand | | | |

223. For this first pilot, **measures may not be fully benchmarked, although assessors will be presented with contextual information to indicate the spread of results, for example the interquartile range for each value**. The precise way in which it can be contextualised will be developed using the pilot data. More detail on how the data will be collected can be found at **Annex E – Teaching intensity examples**.

224. **Providers interested in participating in the Year 3 subject-level pilots must also be willing and able to participate in the above exercises across the relevant sample subjects (for which they have TEF eligible teaching) to help shape work to develop a teaching intensity measure.**

10.3 Evaluation of the teaching intensity metric

225. This is an exploratory pilot. By piloting two different approaches to measuring teaching intensity, we will be able to gain a sense of their reliability, validity and accuracy and the resource involved in reporting and analysing the data. We will also be able to

²⁷ See **Annex D**

²⁸ Questions will be confirmed after cognitive testing process

determine the extent to which assessors are able use the data in making judgements. The findings will inform further work on the underpinning evidence base, including the relationship between teaching intensity and teaching excellence, the potential for scaling up the data collection and any unintended consequences / incentives to “game” the measures.

11 Participating in the pilots

226. **Participation in the pilots is voluntary, has no bearing on the full provider-level TEF exercise in Year 3 and has no bearing on a provider's current or future TEF rating. DfE plans to publish the findings of the pilots, but this will not include providers' individual indicative ratings produced by the pilots in a way that identifies individual providers.**

227. **By the end of July, HEFCE will email TEF main contacts at all UK higher education providers that are in scope for TEF, encouraging them to consider applying** and inviting them to briefing events to discuss the practicalities of participation. **A formal invitation will then be issued in the first week of September.** They will be asked to state whether they wish to take part, and if so to indicate whether they are willing to take part in Model A, Model B or both. Providers will have until **25th September 2017** to respond to HEFCE.

11.1 Eligibility

228. **The eligibility requirements for the Year 3 subject-level pilots will be the same as for TEF Year 2²⁹, which are based on:**

- Designation for student support
- Widening access and participation
- Suitable metrics
- Quality requirement

229. **Providers will have to have a full set of reportable core metrics at provider-level in order to participate in the subject-level pilots.** However, **we will not require providers to have a full set of reportable core metrics for each of their subjects.** More detail on how non-reportable subject-level metrics will be handled in the Year 3 subject-level pilots can be found in the section on Non-reportable metrics above.

230. We recognise that some types of providers may not currently be eligible for TEF but would be likely to become so before subject-level is fully implemented, which is expected in Year 5. These providers are not eligible for the Year 3 subject-level pilots, because we want the pilots to be as realistic as possible in order for the evidence generated to be useful for the further development of subject-level TEF. However, where certain types of providers are currently not eligible for TEF but are likely to become eligible in the future, **we will aim to test the pilot models with providers that have similar features to those not able to take part in order to get that perspective.**

²⁹ Pages 12-17 in the TEF Year 2 Specification

231. **As the pilots will not produce publishable ratings for individual providers, provisional awards will not form part of the subject-level TEF pilots.**³⁰

11.2 Profile of pilot participants

232. We are seeking expressions of interest from all types of eligible UK Higher Education provider for the subject-level TEF pilot in Year 3. **This includes those providers who entered TEF in Year 2, providers who are entering TEF for the first time in Year 3 and providers who have never entered TEF.**

233. **HEFCE will review expressions of interest to establish a sample of between 30 and 40 UK Higher Education providers** to take part in the Year 3 subject-level pilots. In considering expressions of interest, **HEFCE will aim to include representation from different types of providers.** The aim will be to include a spread of providers across five key provider characteristics –

- The size and breadth of providers, with the following categories:
 - Large multi-faculty providers
 - Medium multi-faculty providers
 - Single subject providers
 - Small specialist providers
 - Small non-specialist providers
- The operational types of providers, with the following categories:
 - Higher Education Institutions (HEI)
 - Alternative providers
 - FE colleges delivering their own provision
 - FE colleges delivering franchised HEI provision
- The type of student being taught, with the following categories:
 - High tariff providers
 - Medium tariff providers
 - Low tariff providers
 - Majority full time providers
 - Majority part time providers
- The quality of teaching at the provider, including the following categories:
 - Providers with a Gold rating in Year 2
 - Providers with a Silver rating in Year 2
 - Providers with a Bronze rating in Year 2
- The nation in which providers are based, with the following categories:
 - England

³⁰ See p17 'Provisional Awards'

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/556355/TEF_Year_2_specification.pdf

- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland.

234. **HEFCE will aim to include providers in each of these key categories** (noting that some providers will cover more than one ‘type’) **for both models** being piloted.. However, no provider will be forced to take

235. In addition to the above, **HEFCE will consider the spread of subjects offered by pilot volunteers and the spread of providers across the UK. For the purposes of Model A, HEFCE will consider how many of a provider’s subjects might be ‘exceptions’.**

236. Providers who expressed interest in participating in the pilots but are not selected will have an opportunity, alongside other stakeholders, to share their views on subject-level TEF in **a consultation to run alongside the pilot later in 2017.**

11.3 Participation

237. The pilots will run to a **similar timetable to TEF Year 3. Participants will be selected and informed by the end of October 2017. They will be issued with their provider-level and subject-level metrics by early December 2017** and will be required to **produce provider-level and subject-level submissions** according to the model(s) they are participating in, by early March 2018. They will also need to collect teaching intensity data in the sample subjects from November 2017 to mid-January 2018.

238. **Participants will be issued with indicative ratings to help inform evaluation of the models.** DfE will publish the findings of the pilots, but **this will not include individual provider and subject ratings** and **providers should not publish their own pilot ratings.**

239. Providers participating in both provider-level TEF and the subject-level pilots in Year 3 **will not be able to use feedback from the subject-level TEF pilot to influence or challenge the outcome of the Year 3 provider-level exercise.** This is because the pilots will produce ratings that are variable and not comparable due to their developmental nature.

240. The pilots will be developmental in nature, and we are keen for pilot participants to work with us and HEFCE to work out design details as the models set out in this document evolve through practical application. **Participants will work closely with HEFCE and DfE throughout the pilot process, and discussion may take place prior to or during the submission-writing phase, throughout the assessment phase, and following the pilots for evaluation purposes.** Participating providers will be expected to attend several events to discuss progress and provide feedback, and they will also be

expected to provide data on the costs of participating, using tools or templates provided by HEFCE.

11.4 How to apply

241. Providers who meet the eligibility requirements for the pilots are encouraged to apply. **By the end of July, HEFCE will email TEF main contacts at all UK higher education providers that are in scope for TEF, encouraging them to consider applying** and inviting them to briefing events to discuss the practicalities of participation. **A formal invitation email will then be issued in the first week of September.** They will be asked to state whether they wish to take part, and if so to indicate whether they are willing to take part in Model A, Model B or both. Providers will have until **25th September 2017** to respond to HEFCE.

242. Before applying to participate in the pilots, providers will need to ensure they are able to participate in all aspects of the pilot, **including the teaching intensity data collection**, and will need to consider **whether they wish to volunteer to participate in Model A, Model B, either, or both.**

243. **HEFCE and DfE are available to discuss any questions or concerns providers may have in advance of taking a decision on whether to participate in the pilots.** They can be contacted at TEF@hefce.ac.uk and tef.queries@education.gov.uk respectively.

12 Evaluating the pilots

244. It is clear that moving to subject-level TEF is a complex task, and the challenge of ensuring robust assessments while balancing burden is matched by the importance of getting this right for students. **Ministers therefore decided in February 2017 to extend the pilot phase of subject-level TEF by an additional year, so that TEF would not move to subject-level before Year 5.** Two full years of piloting is in line with the best practice demonstrated in the development of the REF.

245. The TEF Year 3 subject-level pilot will be the first year of the subject pilots. Following its conclusion, **we will evaluate the models piloted to inform the scope and nature of the second year of subject pilots.**

246. We intend to evaluate the models piloted against the following themes:

- **Meaningfulness for students** – the ability of the models to generate subject-level ratings that are meaningful for students and are more useful than the outputs of provider-level TEF.
- **Value for money** – the proportionality of cost of participation for providers and cost of delivery for Government.
- **Robust processes and metrics** – how well models allowed assessors/panels to make robust assessments, including how the metrics and submissions were used.
- **Supporting diversity of provision** – the capability of the models to recognise diverse and innovative forms of excellence.
- **Effects on provider behaviour** – how the models incentivise focus on and improvements to learning and teaching relative to provider-level TEF, and the extent to which the models avoid driving unintended consequences and minimise vulnerability to gaming.
- **Supporting widening participation and social mobility** – how the models encourage providers to deliver positive outcomes for students from all backgrounds.

247. **Indicative subject-level and provider-level ratings will be shared with each pilot participant** in order to inform evaluation discussions. **DfE will publish the findings of the pilots, but this will not include provider's individual indicative ratings** produced by the pilots.

248. All providers who participate in the pilots will be required to participate in evaluation activities to inform assessment of the models under the above themes. **This will include collection of data to indicate the cost to the provider of participating in each model.** HEFCE will work with providers to ensure this data is collected in a comparable and accessible way.

13 Next steps

13.1 Next steps for pilot implementation

249. Providers interested in taking part should apply by **25th September 2017**. HEFCE will review expressions of interest and will select pilot participants **and inform providers whether they have been selected by the end of October 2017**. Those selected to participate in the pilots will work with HEFCE to ensure arrangements are in place for them to participate in the pilots, and that they understand the process, before the pilots commence.

250. Those with relevant experience are encouraged to **apply to become panel members** for the pilots. HEFCE will recruit **academics, widening participation experts, employer and PSRB representatives and students** to be pilot panel members. Further details **will be shared when HEFCE launches the recruitment exercise for panellists in early September**.

251. The pilots will run from **Autumn 2017 to Spring 2018**, and will be followed by a period of evaluation **which pilot participants and panellists will be required to contribute to**.

13.2 Longer term development of subject-level TEF

13.2.1 Consultation on subject-level TEF

252. Given the importance of getting subject-level TEF right, we do not want to limit input to those who participate in the pilots. **There will therefore be an opportunity for all stakeholders to comment on the proposed design of subject-level TEF in a technical consultation planned for late 2017**. This consultation will form an important part of the iterative development of TEF, in particular as it moves to subject-level, and the **Department strongly encourages all stakeholders to contribute**, including those providers who are not selected (or choose not to apply) to participate in the pilots, as well as students, employers and representative bodies. The consultation will cover similar issues to the pilots.

13.2.2 Student views

253. In addition to the involvement of students as panellists in subject-level TEF, **we are planning to commission research to test aspects of subject-level TEF through a representative student poll**. This poll will examine how subject-level TEF will aid decision making, and guide improvements in the design of subject-level TEF. The Department will analyse the results of this student poll alongside the subject-level pilots and consultation responses, with a view to informing the design of subject-level TEF.

13.2.3 Lessons learned and independent review

254. **The TEF Year 2 lessons learned exercise**, being undertaken this summer, will inform the specification for TEF Year 3. Any changes to the framework as a result of this process will also be fed into the subject-level pilots.

255. Longer term, TEF remains an iterative process, and **the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 requires the Secretary of State to appoint a suitable independent person within one year of section 25 of the Act coming into force to prepare a report about the operation of any TEF** scheme that was in operation during any part of that period. The report must cover the matters set out in section 26(5) of the Act, including the process by which ratings are determined under the scheme, the sources of statistical information used in that process and, more generally, whether the scheme is in the public interest.

13.3 Contact details

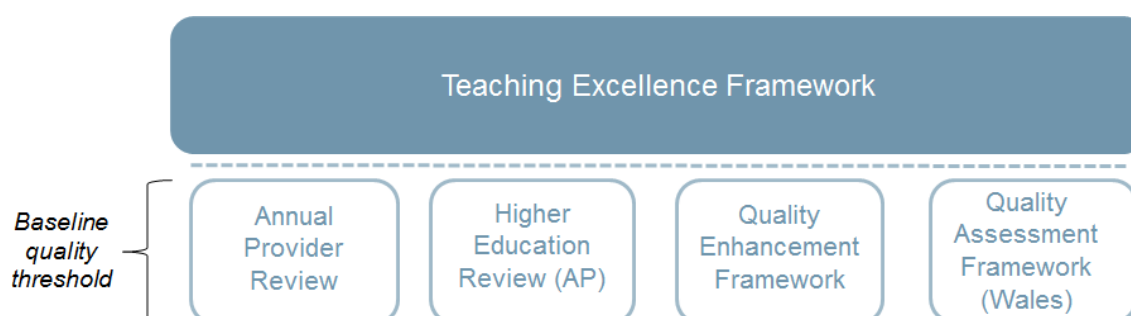
256. For any general queries on the **pilot specification**, please contact tef.queries@education.gov.uk. For queries relating to **participation** in the Year 3 subject-level pilots as a **provider, assessor or panellist**, please contact TEF@hefce.ac.uk.

14 Annex A – Relationship with Quality Assessment

257. As with provider-level TEF, quality assessment and the TEF will continue to work together to promote, support and reward continuous improvement and better student outcomes when we move to subject-level TEF.

258. As set out in the TEF Year 2 Specification, TEF assessors will not retest providers against baseline quality and standards through the Year 3 subject-level pilot. Rather, they will focus on performance above the baseline. This relationship is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Relationship between TEF and Quality



15 Annex B – Franchised provision

259. For the Year 3 subject-level pilots, as with TEF Year 2, the quality of provision will be assessed at the provider that delivers the teaching. This may not be the provider that awards the qualification or registers the student. Franchised provision taught by a partner of a degree-awarding body will be included in the teaching provider's TEF assessment, not in the degree-awarding body's TEF assessment, because we want to assess teaching where it takes place. A provider offering franchised provision on behalf of a degree-awarding body will be in scope for the Year 3 subject-level pilots provided it is quality-assured in its own right and meets the additional eligibility requirements set out in the next section.

16 Annex C – Subjects and groups

260. Table 4 shows the subject classification system for the Year 3 subject-level pilots. **The 35 subjects from the second level of the Common Aggregation Hierarchy will be used** for metrics, submissions (by exception) and ratings for Model A and metrics and ratings for Model B. The 7 subject groups will be used for submissions in Model B.

Table 4: Subject groupings for Model B

| 7 subject groups | 35 CAH2 subjects |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Medical and health sciences | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medicine & dentistry 2. Nursing 3. Pharmacology, toxicology and pharmacy 4. Psychology 5. Subjects allied to medicine 6. Veterinary science 7. Sport & exercise sciences |
| Engineering and technology | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Computing 9. Engineering 10. Technology |
| Natural sciences | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Agriculture, food and related studies 12. Biosciences 13. Chemistry 14. Mathematical sciences 15. Physics and astronomy 16. Physical, material and forensic sciences 17. General and others in sciences* |
| Social sciences | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Architecture, building and planning 19. Economics 20. Geographical and environmental studies 21. Politics 22. Sociology, social policy and anthropology 23. Education and teaching 24. Health and social care |
| Business and law | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25. Business and management 26. Law |
| Arts | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 27. Creative arts and design |
| Humanities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 28. Celtic studies 29. Communications and media studies 30. English studies 31. Languages, linguistics and classics 32. History and archaeology 33. Humanities & liberal arts 34. Philosophy & religious studies 35. Combined and general studies |

* This subject will not feature in the Year 3 subject-level pilots because in HESA's mapping of JACS to CAH, no students are currently mapped to 'General and others in sciences'. This subject will become relevant when the new HECOS coding system is introduced. We refer to 35 subjects throughout this document for completeness and consistency with how HECOS codes will be used in the future.

17 Annex D – Analysis using Year 2 data

Table 5: Exceptions generated by different rules using Year 2 data

| | | ALL | % TEF Units | % Students |
|---------|---|------|-------------|------------|
| | TEF UNITS | 3477 | 100% | 100% |
| | median UNITS/PROVIDER | 15 | | |
| | Average STUDENTS/UNIT | 463 | | |
| E0 | TEF UNITS Not suitable | 845 | 24% | 2% |
| E1 | TEF Units with different IH and at least one flag changed sign | 968 | 28% | 36% |
| E2 | TEF Units with same IH but at least one flag changed sign | 919 | 26% | 39% |
| E3 | of which ..TEF Units with same IH, one flag changed sign | 549 | 16% | 21% |
| E4 | of which ..TEF Units with same IH but at least two flags changed sign | 370 | 11% | 18% |
| E5 | No flags changed sign | 745 | 21% | 23% |
| | | | | |
| Model A | Total Exceptions E1+(15% of E0+E2+E5) | 1344 | 39% | 45% |

The charts below illustrate the likely submission length for providers in model A and model B. In Figure 7 the horizontal axis shows the number of subjects within each provider and the vertical axis shows the expected submission length based on the specific combinations of subjects at each provider. Model A pages are based on 15 + 5 per exception (see definition of exceptions in Table 5) and Model B pages are based on 10 + 5 pages per group for each group in which a provider has 1 subject, with the page limit increasing by 1 page for each additional subject the provider has in that group. Figure 8 shows median submission lengths by provider type.

Figure 7: Submission lengths in model A and B

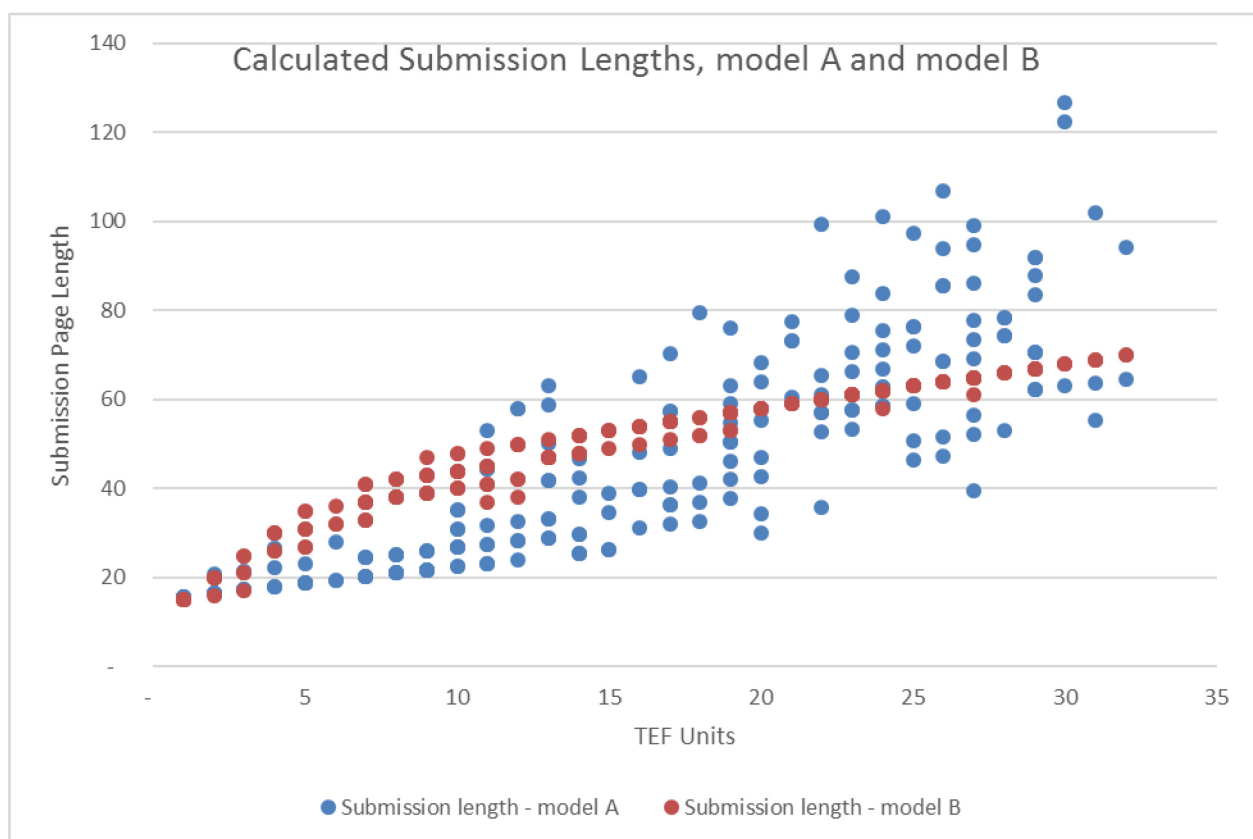
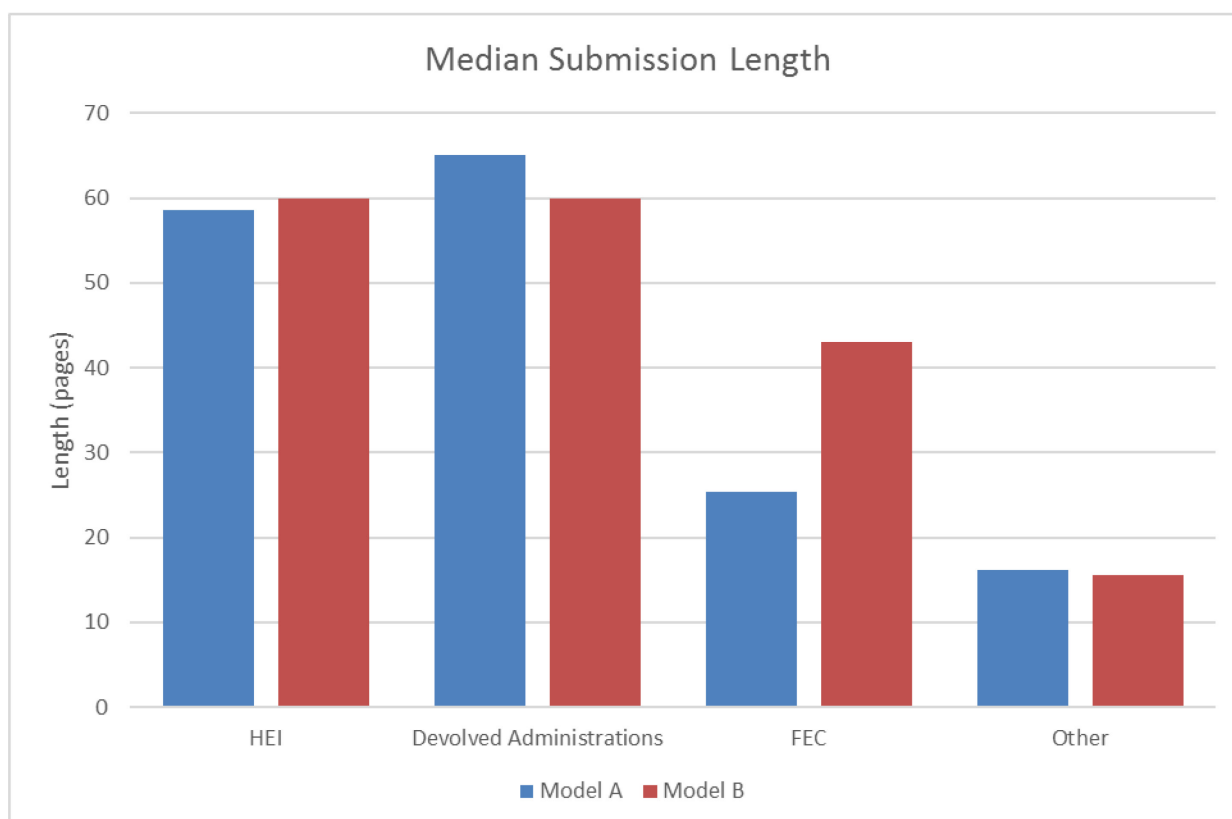


Figure 8: Median submission lengths across provider types



18 Annex E – Teaching intensity examples

18.1 Provider declaration method

261. For this exploratory pilot, **we will be measuring teaching intensity using a method that weights the number of hours taught by the staff-student ratio of each taught hour³¹**. This can be considered a measure that is similar to that of class size, but that reflects the fact that some groups may have more than member of staff teaching them.

262. Put simply, this model would value each of these at the same level:

- 2 hours spent in a group of 10 students with one member of staff.
- 2 hours spent in a group of 20 with 2 members of staff.
- 1 hour spent in a group of 5 students with one member of staff.

263. Table 6 sets out the bands that will be used in the pilot and the weighting established for each band. For example an hour of teaching with 16:1 student to staff ratio would be classified as Taught: $9 < X \leq 20$ (midpoint, 1:14) with a weighting of 1/14. This would be the case regardless of the form of teaching. **The Gross Teaching Quotient (GTQ) is calculated by multiplying the taught hours by the appropriate weighting and summing the total across all groups, followed by multiplying by 10 to arrive at an easily interpretable number.**

264. Following the pilot, we will consider if bands are the best way to express this data, and if so, where those bands should fall. HEFCE will establish the appropriate level for gathering this data, but it is likely to be required at module level. Recognising that there will be a variety of courses and modules in any given subject, **the GTQ will need to be aggregated up to subject-level**. The method of aggregation will be developed by HEFCE in collaboration with the pilot participants; however, it is likely to include a weighting factor to reflect the number of students for each course in a subject.

³¹ This draws on work from a forthcoming paper by Huxley, Gervas; Jenny Mayo; Mike W. Peacey and Maddy Richardson. "Class size at university" Fiscal Studies (forthcoming). DOI: 10.1111/j.1475-5890.2017.12149.

Table 6: Weighting bands

| Staff/student ratio = X | | 'Typical' students per staff member (R) | Weighting (W = 1/R) |
|--------------------------|--|---|---------------------|
| Taught: $X \leq 2$ | | 1.5 | 1/1.5 |
| Taught: $2 < X \leq 8$ | | 5 | 1/5 |
| Taught: $9 < X \leq 20$ | | 14 | 1/14 |
| Taught: $20 < X \leq 40$ | | 30 | 1/30 |
| Taught: $40 < X$ | | 75 | 1/75 |

265. This method

is not intended to value any particular method of delivery over others. The contact classified under this model could include (although not be limited to)³²:

- Lecture
- Seminar
- Tutorial
- Project supervision
- Demonstration
- Practical classes & workshops
- Supervised time in studio / workshop

266. **Placements, external visits and work-based learning will be reported separately, showing the total hours within each year of study.** In addition, HEFCE will seek to define a typology for e-learning. Some e-learning activities may fit well in the existing typology, or a typology emerging from this pilot but others, whilst still representing a teaching intensive, high-value, offer will not. In this case it may be necessary to report e-learning as a third category.

18.1.1 Number of hours provider survey

267. **Participating providers will be required to complete and submit a data return to HEFCE.** This data collection will focus on contact hours delivered to undergraduate cohorts in the relevant subjects, in the 2016-17 academic year. It will need to identify contact time at the level of modules, identifiable by JACS codes to allow aggregation on this basis, and spanning all years of undergraduate programmes. **A survey template will be circulated to providers in November 2017, for them to complete and return in mid-January 2018 via the HEFCE extranet.**

³² This list is taken from the QAA guidance on explaining contact hours:
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/contact-hours.pdf

268. Providers will be required to return information including: module identifier; subject of module (selecting the relevant JACS code from a drop down list); year of programme of study; number of hours of contact; type of contact (based on the QAA taxonomy); average number of academic staff delivering each hour of contact; staff grade (optional); class size.

18.1.2 Examples

269. The following tables show examples of a weekly GTQ for subjects with different teaching models. This specification does not include the full details – for example how a weekly figure will be calculated given the duration of individual courses and the distribution of teaching within those weeks or how a subject-level figure will be arrived at from data which exists at module level. The exploratory pilot is an opportunity to collate data from across the sector and identify the most useful methods of aggregation.

18.1.2.1 Example A

| Type of Contact (Staff/student ratio = X) | 'Typical' students per staff member (R) | Weighting (W = 1/R) | Taught Hours (H) | Total weighting (T=HxW) |
|--|--|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Taught: $X \leq 2$ | 1.5 | 2/3 | 0 | 0 |
| Taught: $2 < X \leq 8$ | 5 | 1/5 | 6 | 1.2 |
| Taught: $9 < X \leq 20$ | 14 | 1/14 | 2 | 0.143 |
| Taught: $20 < X \leq 40$ | 30 | 1/30 | 2 | 0.067 |
| Taught: $40 < X$ | 75 | 1/75 | 15 | 0.2 |
| Gross Teaching Quotient (=10 x $\sum T$) | | | | 16.1 |
| Placements and field work (Days per year) | | | | 10 |
| E-Learning Measure | | | | tbd |

18.1.2.2 Example B

| Type of Contact (Staff/student ratio = X) | 'Typical' students per staff member (R) | Weighting (W = 1/R) | Hours per week (H) | D Total weighting (T=HxW) |
|---|--|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Taught: $X \leq 2$ | 1.5 | 2/3 | 0 | 0 |
| Taught: $2 < X \leq 8$ | 5 | 1/5 | 0 | 0 |
| Taught: $9 < X \leq 20$ | 14 | 1/14 | 6 | 0.429 |
| Taught: $20 < X \leq 40$ | 30 | 1/30 | 2 | 0.067 |
| Taught: $40 < X$ | 75 | 1/75 | 4 | 0.053 |
| Gross Teaching Quotient ($=10 \times \sum T$) | | | | 5.49 |
| Placements and field work (Days per year) | | | | 65 |
| E-Learning Measure | | | | tbd |

18.1.2.3 Example C

| Type of Contact (Staff/student ratio = X) | 'Typical' students per staff member (R) | Weighting (W = 1/R) | Hours per week (H) | Total weighting (T=HxW) |
|---|--|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Taught: $X \leq 2$ | 1.5 | 2/3 | 4 | 2.666667 |
| Taught: $2 < X \leq 8$ | 5 | 1/5 | 0 | 0 |
| Taught: $9 < X \leq 20$ | 14 | 1/14 | 1 | 0.071429 |
| Taught: $20 < X \leq 40$ | 30 | 1/30 | 10 | 0.333333 |

| Type of Contact (Staff/student ratio = X) | 'Typical' students per staff member (R) | Weighting (W = 1/R) | Hours per week (H) | Total weighting (T=HxW) |
|---|--|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Taught: 40 < X | 75 | 1/75 | 12 | 0.16 |
| Gross Teaching Quotient (=10 x $\sum T$) | | | | 32.31 |
| Placements and field work (Days per year) | | | | 5 |
| E-Learning Measure | | | | tbd |

18.2 Student survey method

270. HEFCE will provide a single survey link to participating providers, **for onward distribution by the provider to its undergraduate students in the relevant subjects.** The survey will be conducted between **November 2017 and January 2018.**

271. The survey will comprise a set of questions that have been cognitively tested, about **students' perceptions of contact time and self study.** It will also **ask students for identifying information such as their: student number; provider (selecting from a drop down list); subject, level and mode of study (in each case selecting from a drop down list); and Year of programme of study.**

272. In addition, **they will be asked to supply a limited set of personal information** (to enable confirmation of data linking, for example, particular characters of their first name and surname or a part of their date of birth).

273. **HEFCE will use the student number to link to HESA and ILR student records where this is possible, in order to attach other demographic information and benchmark responses to the survey,** in a similar way to benchmarking the TEF metrics based on NSS responses.

18.3 Use of data from the surveys

274. The surveys will be used to test methods of collecting data on contact time; and to test the potential for such data to inform the TEF assessments. **HEFCE will process the data collected from both surveys, and provide data back to the participating providers** in a format suitable to inform the assessment. **Providers will have the**

opportunity to comment on this data within their relevant subject submissions, and the relevant subject pilot panels will consider the data as part of their assessments. Feedback will be sought from providers and the relevant subject pilot panels on the cost and effectiveness of the data collection process and on the interpretation and use of such data in the assessment.

275. As part of the pilot outcomes, **HEFCE intends to publish an analysis of the data, including the relationship between the two datasets. Published data will not identify individual providers.**



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