



UKRI consultation on KEF2 options
**Response from the Chartered Association of
Business Schools**

27th April 2022

Consultation on KEF 2 options - Chartered ABS response

Note: questions 1 to 3 related to the details of the responding organisation.

Perspective level calculation methodology

Q4: Are you in agreement with RE making the proposed methodology change for KEF2?

Proposed response: Yes, make proposed change - Use the proposed alternative methodology for KEF2.

Proposal to move to five quintile levels

Q5: Please rank from the following options where 1 = most preferred and 3 = least preferred

No change - retain ten deciles (options 1 or 2) – **Proposed rank:** 3

Proposed change - use five 'quintile' levels of involvement (options 3 or 4) – **Proposed rank:** 1

Alternative option for change - use four 'quartile' levels (options 5 or 6) – **Proposed rank:** 2

Perspective level labelling options

Q6: Please state your preference for labelling perspective level outcomes

Proposed response: Words - use words to label the levels of involvement (Research England's proposed outcome)

Q7: Are there any other comments you wish to make in relation to the above Methodology proposals?

Proposed response: The proposal to remove the scaling from the methodology for perspective calculations seems sensible as it should make it more likely that high performance in the underlying metrics will be reflected in the final perspective decile scores. We are in favour of reducing the number of labels used to report KEF results from deciles to quintiles (using word labels) as we believe this will make it easier for external users to interact with and make use of the KEF results in deciding which universities they should consider approaching for their knowledge exchange requirements.

Changes to underlying metrics

Q9: On the basis that we will continue to have both a turnover and an external investment spin-out metric in this perspective, please rank the proposed denominators for the spin out turnover metric by preference. Where 1 = your most preferred option and 3 = your least preferred option.

No change – use 'number of active spin-outs which have survived at least three years' as denominator (Research England's proposed action) – **Proposed rank:** 1

Change option 1 – use 'number of active firms' as denominator – **Proposed rank:** 2

Change option 2 – use 'HEI research income (Total research grants and contracts)' as denominator – **Proposed rank:** 3

Q10: On the basis that we will continue to have both a turnover and an external investment spin-out metric in this perspective, please rank the proposed denominators for the investment in spin-outs metric by preference. Where 1 = your most preferred option and 4 = your least preferred option.

No change – use ‘Number of newly registered companies’ as denominator - **Proposed rank: 3**

Change option 1 - use ‘Number of active spin-outs which have survived at least three years’ as denominator (Research England's proposed action) – **Proposed rank: 1**

Change option 2 – use ‘Number of active firms’ as denominator – **Proposed rank: 2**

Change option 3 – use ‘HEI research income (Total research grants and contracts)’ as denominator – **Proposed rank: 4**

Q12: Please select your preferred metrics for the Skill, enterprise & entrepreneurship perspective from the following options:

Proposed response: Remove CPD/CE learner days – remove the metric, leaving only CPD/CE income and graduate start up metrics in the perspective

Q14: Please select your preferred outputs for inclusion in the Co-authorship with non-academic partners as a proportion of total outputs:

Proposed response: Include Trade journals - add trade journals to the output types used to capture co-authorship with a non-academic partner

Q15: Are there any other comments you would like to make in relation to the above proposals to change the underlying metrics?

Proposed response: The focus on co-authorship and funded research excludes many other forms of engaged scholarship and related activities (e.g. conference presentations, good practice guides, policy/practice impact, entrepreneurs in residence etc.) that are common in business schools. This may be difficult to measure but deserves recognition. If trade journals feature academic research that led to real-world impact for non-academic partners then it makes sense for this to be reflected in the ‘Research Partnerships’ perspective.

Perspective title changes

Q16: Title change - IP & commercialisation - Please select the title that you consider should be used in the next iteration of the KEF for this perspective.

Proposed response: New title - Research commercialisation

Q17: Title change - Working with business - Please rank the following title options by order of preference to be in the next iteration of the KEF for this perspective. Where 1 = your most preferred option and 3 = your least preferred option.

No change - Working with business - **Proposed rank: 3**

Change option 1 - Research and development for business - **Proposed rank: 1**

Change option 2 - Business Services - **Proposed rank: 2**

Q18: Title change - Working with the public & third sector - Please select the title that you consider should be used in the next iteration of the KEF for this perspective.

Proposed response: New title - Research and development for the public & third sector

Q19: Title change - Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship - Please rank the following title options by order of preference to be in the next iteration of the KEF for this perspective. Where 1 = your most preferred option and 3 = your least preferred option.

No change - Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship - **Proposed rank: 3**

Change option 1 - Provision of CPD and graduate start-ups - **Proposed rank: 2**

Change option 2 - Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship education – **Proposed rank: 1**

Q20. Are there any other comments you would like to make in relation to the above proposals to amend the KEF perspective titles?

Proposed response: We are in favour of changes that more clearly articulate the actual meaning of the metrics from which the perspectives are derived. However, changing the titles does little to address the issue that an excessive focus in the metrics on financial benefits to business and HEIs excludes a wide range of activities undertaken by business schools in particular that are not easy to measure, but have significant economic, societal, policy and practice impact. This risks understating business schools' contributions to Knowledge Exchange and potentially disincentivising impactful engaged scholarship activities with businesses, social enterprises, community enterprises, not-for-profit organisations, and policy-makers.

Dashboard design

Q21. Should the KEF dashboard continue to present the provider outcomes through the polar area chart of an individual provider's results, or should we explore moving to a simpler non-graphical (e.g. 'tiled') representation at a provider level (as illustrated in figure 40 of the KEF review report)?

Proposed response: Change - explore moving to a simpler non-graphical method, for example a 'tiled view' of providers and perspective 'tiles' to show provider performance relative to their cluster

Use of perspective level score

Q22. Should the KEF continue to present a single high level perspective level result, or should it be the 'lens' through which we present a range of metrics? Please rank your preferences from the following options, where 1 = your most preferred option and 4 = your least preferred option.

No change - continue with a single high level perspective level result (that enables users to also view the constituent metrics) - **Proposed rank: 4**

Change option 1 - Remove the single perspective result, however continue to present the constituent metrics in the 'perspective' groups – **Proposed rank: 2**

Change option 2 - Remove the single perspective result, and allow users to freely group metrics in any way they wish. – **Proposed rank: 3**

Change option 3 - Remove the single perspective result, and allow users to choose between seeing metrics presented in the perspective groups or displays in their own group selections – **Proposed rank: 1**

Q23. Are there any other comments you wish to make in relation to the KEF Dashboard design?

Proposed response: The KEF dashboard should be designed to be useful and easy to use but without confusing users or enabling them to interpret or group the metrics data in a way that could be misleading. The dashboard should have the capacity to cater to users with different levels of

understanding around KEF – ranging from little knowledge to advanced – so that more knowledgeable users can group metrics as they wish, whilst for less familiar users the default metrics groupings may be a more appropriate starting point.

Narrative statements

Q24. On the basis that the quantitative data underpinning the KEF metrics will be updated annually, how often should self-assessment scores and associated narrative statements be substantively updated?

Proposed response: Every three years - every third year that the quantitative data is updated

Q25. On the basis that the quantitative data underpinning KEF metrics will be updated on an annual basis, how often should the LG&R narrative statements be substantively updated?

Proposed response: Every three years - every third year that the quantitative data is updated

Q26. On the assumption that quantitative data underpinning the KEF metrics will be updated annually, but narratives will be updated every 2 or three years, should the updates for all three narrative statements (institutional context, P&CE and LG&R) be aligned so they are all updated on the same frequency and in the same year? Alternatively, should they alternate and/or should the institutional context be updated more frequently?

Proposed response: Mostly together – The P&CE and LG&R narrative statements should be updated on the same frequency and timescale, but providers should have the opportunity to make substantive updates to the institutional context every year

Q27: Are there any other comments you wish to make in relation to the frequency or alignment of the narrative statements?

Proposed response: The approach should again strike a balance the need for up-to-date data for KEF users versus minimising the administrative workload for institutions in collating and submitting it.