REF Issues

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REF Consultation

- Two HEFCE consultations
  - UKCRC REF Panel replied to both
  - Most recently in December 2009
- HEFCE Response to 2nd consultation
  - Issued March 2010
  - REF impact pilot currently underway.
- I will focus on Impact issues
  - Comparing our recommendations to HEFCE response
Diversity of Impacts

- UKCRC: broader societal and policy impacts should be included
- HEFCE:
  - “We embrace a wide definition of impact, including benefits to the economy, society, culture, public policy and services, health, the environment, international development and quality of life”
  - NB – impact on 'knowledge' not included
Incubation Periods

- **UKCRC**: Impact can take 10-15 years
  - may span multiple assessment periods
  - 100-word 'collaboration' case studies

- **HEFCE**:
  - “The REF will assess impacts that have already occurred, ... over a sufficiently long timeframe to allow the impacts to become evident”
  - Pilot allows impact from 1993
  - Submission of different phases to different REFs
  - General impact statement in pilot.
Intermediate Academic Work

- **UKCRC:** credit intermediate academic and scientific case studies

- **HEFCE:**
  - "the REF will provide full recognition where curiosity-driven research has benefitted the economy or society"
  - 'knowledge' impact "covered by the 'outputs' and 'environment' elements"
  - 'interim' impacts, may be included.
Work Exploited Elsewhere

- UKCRC: credit work exploited elsewhere
- HEFCE:
  - "Recognition that multiple units can contribute to an impact"
Diversity of Transfer Routes

- UKCRC: allow diverse knowledge transfer strategies
- HEFCE:
  - “demonstrate impacts according to criteria and indicators that are appropriate to research in each discipline-group”
  - Pilot illustrates different 'pathways'
  - NB – no CS&I impact pilot
Weighting of Impact

- **UKCRC**: equal weighting of impact and environment
  - To avoid bias to short-term transfer
  - Include all funding under environment
  - Lower weighting for 'collaboration' case studies

- **HEFCE**:
  - “Output quality will be the dominant element, with a significant weighting for each of impact and environment”
Conclusion

- Our issues addressed
  - But often in a vague or ambiguous way
  - Controversial issues unresolved

- So need for vigilance and continued advocacy