

TEF Independent Review and Future: The State of Play

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Independent Review of the TEF

- Required by Section 26 of Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA)
- Secretary of State for Education appointed Dame Shirley Pearce (former VC Loughborough) as the independent reviewer.
- Dame Shirley was required to prepare a report on the operation of TEF and submit it to the Secretary of State as soon as possible after 1 January 2019.
- Report was submitted in August 2019
- Secretary of State must lay report before Parliament and consider recommendations ...

The revolving door of Universities Ministers

To July 2019

Chris Skidmore

July to September 2019

Jo Johnson

September 2019 to February
2020

Chris Skidmore

Since February 2020

Michelle Donelan



Review Terms of Reference in HERA (paraphrased)

1. the process by which ratings are determined and the sources of statistical information used,
2. whether these are fit for use for the purpose of determining ratings
3. the names of the ratings and whether those names are appropriate,
4. the impact of the scheme on the ability of providers to carry out their functions (including in particular their functions relating to teaching and research),
5. an assessment of whether the scheme is in the public interest, and
6. any other matters that Dame Shirley considers relevant.

Process and Methodology

- Call for views
- Listening sessions – a programme of sessions which heard a wide range of views in person
- Commissions
 - analysis of the consultation responses
 - analysis of the statistics used by TEF, carried out by ONS and to be published
 - measuring of burden/VfM
 - how stakeholders use TEF (Employers, Applicants)
 - Research into international perceptions
- Advisory panel of 9 members with secretariat from DfE

What I can say ...

... is what's in the public domain, which is as follows:

- Providers with existing TEF awards have had them extended to 2021, and OfS have previously announced that there will be no new assessments during 2020.
- OfS have not yet decided when the future TEF exercise will take place and there is currently no timeframe around this decision, but will provide further information in due course.
- Before the future exercise takes place, OfS will consult on the scheme. They intend to consult after the government has published the Independent Review and its response to the recommendations.

What is happening

OfS have established a *Metrics Peer Review Group* in anticipation of the need to consider the recommendations of the independent review and develop new approaches to the metrics data used in TEF.

The two core purposes of the group are

- To undertake expert peer review of the OfS' proposed statistical methods for the future TEF metrics
- To comment on the presentation and clarity of the new TEF metrics from a metrics user perspective.

The group is 'maths-heavy', and includes

Amanda Chetwynd (Lancaster)

Jon Forster (Warwick)

Duncan Lawson (Coventry)

Emma McCoy (Imperial)

Terms of reference of the MPRG

To review and discuss the OfS' proposals on:

- a. the statistical robustness of the proposed metrics
- b. method of indicating performance (benchmarking, absolute and relative)
- c. methods of combining metrics to indicate overall performance
- d. testing the usability of the package of metrics
- e. methods of communicating metrics

The following areas will not be within the remit of this group:

- a. Which metrics should be used
- b. How metrics should be weighted
- c. How metrics should be used in the assessment process
- d. Quality assurance of metrics