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**UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (URI) REVIEWS**

**Selection Criteria & process for External Reviewer/s**

**Number of External Reviewer/s**

1. There will normally be two External Reviewers. In exceptional cases, such as where a large URI is being reviewed or where there are reasons for a more in-depth review[[1]](#footnote-1), more than two External Reviewers may be appointed, at the discretion of the Chair . The Chair, in discussion with the PVC Research, will decide how many External Reviewers are required, and their required skills, background and experience. The total number of External Reviewers may vary from one URI Review to another. The External Reviewers will be expected to look holistically at URI activities, and to comment on all aspects of the Review.
2. External Reviewers, as recognised experts in their fields, should be entirely independent and professionally objective. They should provide critical judgement, ensure the objectivity of the Review process, and help to determine how the URI compares to similar URIs of which they have had experience. Reviewers should bring an informed and unbiased view to the assessment of the URI. External Reviewers should judge whether the plans of the URI are appropriate, considering such factors as the current condition of the URI, trends in relevant academic areas, the nature of the URI, and the characteristics of the stakeholders and customers it serves. All Reviewers will be provided with a list of key themes/issues prior to the Review and these (including any additional themes/issues arising closer to the Review) are discussed during a Panel meeting at the beginning of the Review visit. External Reviewers are free to address other issues that arise during the course of the Review.

**URI Nomination of External Reviewer(s)**

1. The Chair decides the skills, background and experience required of the External Reviewers at the start of each Review’s preparation process, and advises the URI of their requirements. Although External Reviewers will be expected to have appropriate research and education standing, the Chair may also decide that the Reviewer should have other skills, such as academic leadership experience.
2. The URI will then be asked to provide a long list**[[2]](#footnote-2)** containing names of suggested external academics who could act as External Reviewers on the Panel. The long list will allow the Chair to select their first preference candidates, as well as a number of reserve candidates. In Reviews where there are more than two External Reviewers, one of the Reviewers may be industrially- or professionally-based, rather than from another academic institution. In some cases, a consultant with a specific expertise may be nominated (the Chair and PVC Research will decide whether this is appropriate).
3. Although the precise skills, background and experience required will be decided by the Chair, in general
4. **External reviewers SHOULD:**

* be sufficiently knowledgeable and expert in their individual field to have an expectation of how the areas of research relevant to the URI will develop in the next few years,
* be familiar with UK higher education, so as to provide assurance that their judgement in matters of standards and future developments in the field are sound,
* be balanced, in terms of geography, gender, minority representation and experience, and
* where possible, provide a balance in representing the different areas of research/work relevant to the URI.

1. **External reviewers SHOULD NOT:**

* have carried out a Reviewer role for the University (whether in a URI, School or Divisional Review) within the previous 3 years,

* have held a post at the University of Bristol for at least 3 years prior to the Review, and not have had formal links with the University during the previous 3 years (e.g. acting as an auditor, Reviewer, consultant etc.),
* have any potential conflict of interest[[3]](#footnote-3). Every effort should be made to ensure that External

Reviewers have no direct links (personal or professional) to the URI,

* have been an External Reviewer for the previous URI Review,
* be based overseas (unless in exceptional circumstances). The preference must always be to identify suitable External Reviewers from within the UK and/or Europe,
* have any direct contact with the URI under review and vice-versa, outside of the Review process.

1. **It is DESIRABLE that:**

* where nominees from outside the higher education system - e.g. from industry or professional bodies, or who are consultants - are submitted, because they have knowledge/experience of the appropriate area(s) of work/research, this should be clearly indicated to the Chair/Panel.

**Selection of External Reviewers**

Once the Chair has determined the required skills background and experience desirable in External Reviewers, the URIs should send their External Reviewer nominations, including links to website bios or CVs (if available), to the Review Co-ordinator.

The URI may indicate its priorities and preferences with regard to the strategic make-up of the Review Panel, which the Chair will take into consideration. The Chair has final responsibility for the make-up of the Review Panel.

1. Once the preferred External Reviewers have been selected by the Chair, the Review Co-ordinator will then approach the potential external reviewers to invite them to take part in the Review. (n.b. In some circumstances the Chair may deem it appropriate for the URI Director to approach agreed Externals, to invite them to participate in the Review, directly. This should be agreed with the kick-off group, and the URI Review Team should liaise with the Review Co-ordinator accordingly).

**Reimbursement and Fees**

1. For a review duration of 1 day, including an evening dinner the preceding day, the University offers a fee of £1000 for External Reviewers (less deductions for tax and National Insurance), plus reasonable expenses and accommodation costs.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Up to 8-10 names where possible: a minimum of 6 is preferred. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. All Panel members are responsible for notifying the Chair of the Panel in writing if they believe they have a potential conflict of interest. The Chair, in liaison with the PVC Research, will be responsible for determining whether the conflict should prevent the individual joining the Panel, or whether appropriate accommodations should be made (e.g. asking the Panel member to step out of the room for specific sessions during the Review visit). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)