



# Research Assessment: Constructing the Research of the Future

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Dr Rosa Scoble  
Brunel University – UK



# Why Is Research Assessment Important?

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Why is research assessment so important?

A few facts about the research assessment in the UK and impact on sector behaviour



# A Few Facts

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- RAE engagement

	1996	2001
Number of submissions	2,894	2,598
Active staff	48,072	48,022



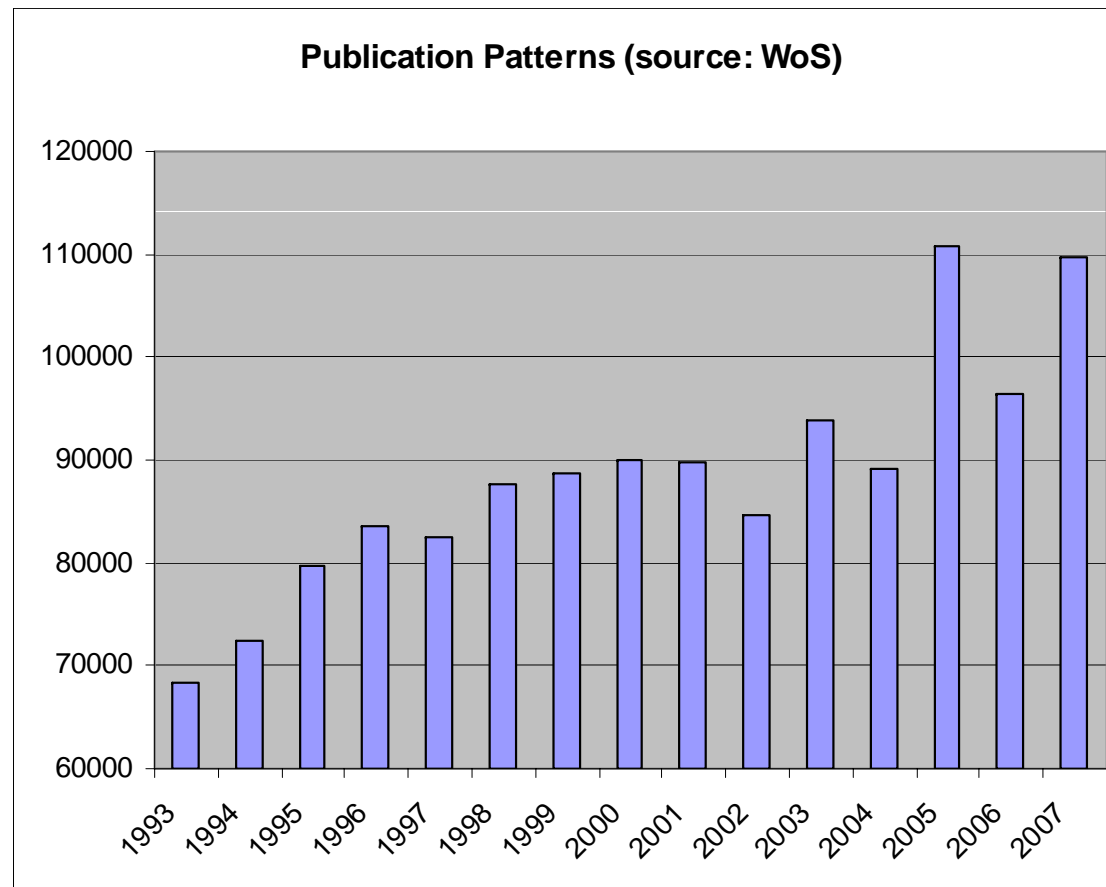
# A Few Facts

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- RAE funding 2007/8 (116 institutions) £1,415 million

	Max	Min	Avg
funding	£107,000,000	3,500	£12,000,000
% of total funding	95%	0.07%	19.6%

# Changes in Sector Behaviour





# Purpose of Funding from Research Assessment

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A fundamental question

Research Assessment is:

Reward for the Past or an Investment in the  
Future?

The assessment of the past is an indication to  
where best to invest for a sustainable future



# Two Problem Areas

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Two problem areas emerge:

- Assessment of quality that is fit-for-purpose
- System that promotes and encourages sustainability in research



# Assessment of Quality that is Fit-For-Purpose

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- Sufficiently flexible to: accommodate the assessment of different 'characteristics' of quality for:
  - the whole spectrum of disciplines
  - the different modes of research within disciplines



# System that Promotes and Encourages Sustainability

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- Any type of assessment that results in funding will introduce changes in behaviours at:
  - sector level
  - institutional level
  - individual level



# Summary

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- Research assessment system that:
  - is able to make a quality assessment in all disciplines by accommodating the distinct nature of research either in modes, outputs and/or methodologies
  - encourages a behaviour at sector, institutional and individual level that will assure a sustainable future for all disciplines

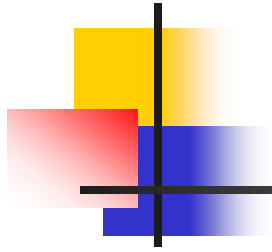


# What should we be looking at?

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If we want an assessment system that is both fit to assess quality and that it encourages a sustainable future...

What should we be looking at?



# Quality Assessment

# Quality Assessment

## How Can We Measure Quality?

- There are three main areas of research activity:
  - outputs
  - research student activity
  - income
  
- Students and income vary in level of activity within different disciplines
  
- Outputs display different characteristics based on their modes (some of which are more prominent for particular disciplines):
  - theoretical
  - applied
  - multidisciplinary

# Quality Assessment Disciplines

	Theoretical	Applied	Multidisciplinary
Arts	★	★★	★★★
Humanities	★★	★	★★★
Social Sciences	★★★	★★★	★★★
Sciences	★★★	★★★	★★★
Technologies	★★★	★★★	★★★

# Quality Assessment Outputs

	Peer review	Citation	Impact
Arts	★ ★		★ ★
Humanities	★ ★ ★		
Social Sciences	★ ★ ★		★ ★ ★
Sciences		★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★
Technologies		★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★

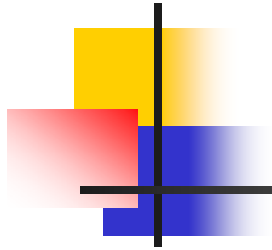


# Quality Assessment Multidisciplinary

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- How to assess multidisciplinary research
  - citation (WoS multidisciplinary journals include Science and Nature)?
  - expert review?

more questions than answers...



# Sustainable Future



# Sustainable Future

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- Changes in the behaviour of the system are mainly a consequence of the 'drivers' of the assessment process that are part of the methodology
- The 'drivers' are all the elements of the assessment that are either:
  - selected as indicators
  - part of the criteria



# Sustainable Future Characteristics

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Encourage through the assessment methodology

- Some characteristics:
  - expansion of the research base
  - multidisciplinary research
  - all modes of research
  - end-user engagement
  - planned future



# Sustainable Future

## Expansion of the Research Base

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- Drivers in the assessment that will:
  - reward research student activity
  - adjust quality assessment for new researchers



# Sustainable Future Multidisciplinary Research

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- Drivers in the assessment that will:
  - able to recognise contribution to multidisciplinary research
  - reward collaboration

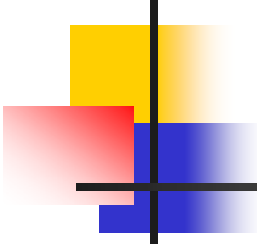


# Sustainable Future

## All Modes of Research

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- Drivers in the assessment that will:
  - recognise both impact and citation
  - where citation is unreliable adopt peer review to assess quality of theoretical research



# Sustainable Future

## End-user Engagement

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- Drivers in the assessment that will:
  - recognise and reward research that works with end-users

# Sustainable Future

## Planned Future



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- Drivers in the assessment that will:
  - reward sound and focused strategic plans
  - reward the development of groups and centres that allow continuity in research beyond individuals

# Sustainable Future

## How to Promote Engagement

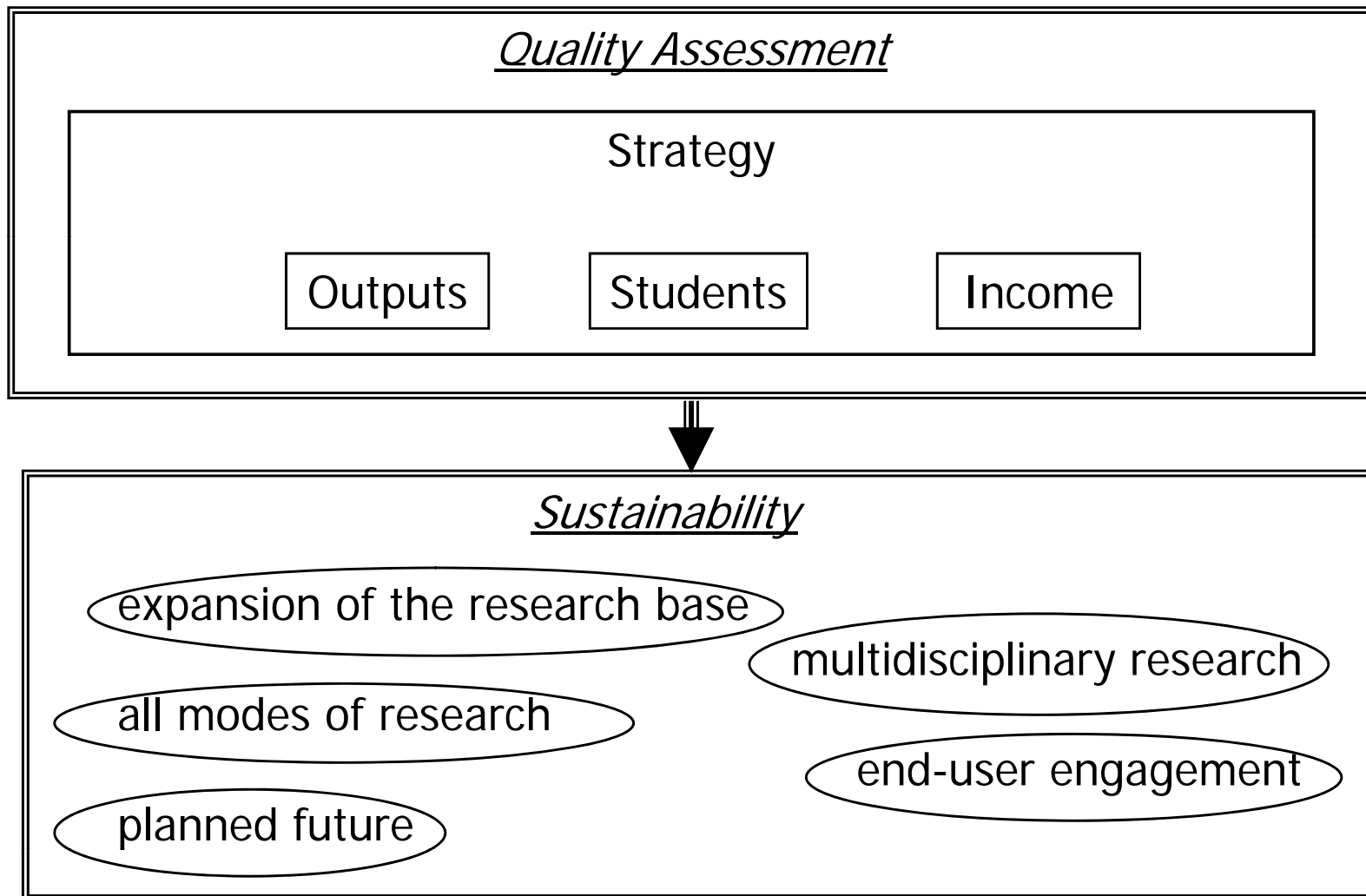
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To promote the engagement of institutions in a sustainable future - it is necessary to add other elements to the assessment that are not based on the individual researchers' performance

therefore:

assessment of the institutional strategies that promote sustainable research

# A Model for Research Assessment



# Research Assessment - UK

## Present and Future



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- successive assessments refined to reduce 'gaming'
- move to more metrics based systems might reduce gaming, but might put in peril sustainability



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# THANK YOU