

Assessment of Reviewers' Reports

Members of Assessment Panels must play an interpretative role when they assess reviewers' reports. For example, if a reviewer states that the applicant is publishing in top journals, yet the journals are in the bottom tier of journals in the field, then the validity of the reviewer's report must be called into question. Similarly they should recognise the weakness of reviewers' reports which overly praise the importance of the applicant's work and where the work concerned is clearly not of the calibre suggested in the report.

Reports by reviewers are **assessed** and **scored** as follows:

- 1 Excellent report:** Reviewer gives a thorough analysis and critique of recent research outputs and substantiates comments/judgements on the quality and impact of the research outputs of the last eight years as well as the international/national standing of the applicant.
- 1/2 Good report:** Reviewer gives a good analysis of recent research outputs and comments on the quality and impact of the research outputs of the last eight years as well as the international/national standing of the applicant.
- 2 Satisfactory report:** Reviewer gives an analysis of the quality and impact of recent research outputs and comments on the international/national standing of the applicant.
- 2/3 Partially usable report:*** Some aspects of the report are usable while other aspects are unsatisfactory. (e.g. no analysis of the outputs or standing is provided). These reports state, for example:
 "It appears that the applicant's work is..." / "I have heard from one of my colleagues..." / "It seems that his/her recent research outputs are..."
 *Note: A 2/3 ("partially usable") report has a relatively low weighting and cannot be used to determine an outcome in borderline cases. It can only be used as one of the usable reports if it confirms the opinion expressed by the majority of the other reports that are of acceptable quality (scored 1; 1/2 or 2)
- 3 Unsatisfactory report:**** Typical reasons:
 - i. Reviewer has not read any of the research outputs of the last eight years.
 - ii. Report by reviewer:
 - a. Is a testimonial / "over the top"
 - b. Is superficial
 - c. Contains sweeping and/or unsubstantiated statements not supported by the application
 - d. Over-generalises and/or provides no assessment, or
 - e. Fails to focus on the last eight years.
 - iii. Reviewer is inappropriate when:
 - a. a reviewer is not a peer
 - b. a reviewer is no longer active in the research field
 - c. a reviewer's report is biased or hostile

Note: Unsatisfactory reports are **not to be taken into account when deciding on a rating. For **audit purposes a reason** should be provided why the report was discarded.

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[How to use the above guidelines](#)

Quality of report	Contribution	Quality	Standing	
			Impact	National & International
Excellent [1]	Good analysis & critique	Good analysis	Good analysis	Good analysis
Good [1/2]	Good analysis	Good analysis	Good analysis	Good analysis
Satisfactory [2]	Some analysis	Some analysis	Some analysis	Some analysis
Partially usable [2/3]	No information or broad macro-level comments	Broad macro-level comments	Broad macro-level comments	Broad macro-level comments
Unsatisfactory [3]	<p>i. Reviewer has not read any of the research outputs of the last eight years.</p> <p>ii. Report by reviewer:</p> <p>a. Is a testimonial / “over the top”</p> <p>b. Is superficial</p> <p>c. Contains sweeping and/or unsubstantiated statements not supported by the application</p> <p>d. Over-generalises and/or provides no assessment, or</p> <p>e. Fails to focus on the last eight years.</p> <p>iii. Reviewer is inappropriate when:</p> <p>a. a reviewer is not a peer</p> <p>b. a reviewer is no longer active in the research field</p> <p>c. a reviewer’s report is biased or hostile</p>			

Notes:

Good analysis - comprehensive and substantiated detailed statements / judgments

Critique - evaluation in a detailed and analytical way that provides a balanced overview of positive and negative elements

Some analysis – some aspects are analysed to some extent, i.e. not a comprehensive analysis of all aspects and statements are not substantiated or not substantiated comprehensively in all cases

Broad macro-level comments - broad statements that are relevant without detailed substantiation / judgments