



Mid-term Review of the Centres of Research Excellence (CoREs)

Guidelines for Preparing the Documentation for the 2017 Mid-Term Review

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Background to the Self-Assessment

A mid-term review of the 10 Centres of Research Excellence (CoREs) that are funded until 2020 is being carried out in 2017. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will undertake part of the review, summarising each CoRE's progress against activities specified in their strategic/research plans. The TEC has asked the Royal Society of New Zealand to undertake the other part of the review by convening a panel of experts to act as a review committee to provide findings and reflective commentary to the TEC on both the progress each CoRE has made to date and on their future strategic direction. The Panel will consider written material provided by the TEC and by each of the Centres and will also meet representatives from each CoRE before preparing their report.

The TEC has prepared and circulated the Terms of Reference for the Centres of Research Excellence mid-term review (ToR). That document provides information on the background, purpose and scope of the review. A copy of the ToR can be found on the CoREs Review web site [here](#).

Each Centre is requested to prepare a written submission for the Review Panel that assesses and provides evidence for their Centre's contribution towards meeting the Government's expectations for CoREs as set out in the Mission Statement for the Fund (please refer to the Terms of Reference).

This document provides the instructions for preparing the submission, which will be in two parts.

-) A **self-assessment report** on the progress made by the Centre during this funding period. The report is structured to generate information that will enable the Review Panel to assess the performance of the Centre against a specific set of key questions.
-) An **appendix** to the submission containing supporting documents such as copies of:
 - the Centre's most recent **Annual Report**;
 - the **Strategic/Research Plan for 2015/16**;
 - a **draft of the Strategic/Research Plan for 2018-2020**; and
 - a **report from the Centre's research advisory group(s)** that assesses the Centre's research programme and comments on research quality.

Please note that this review will not assess ongoing funding or compare CoREs with each other. The Panel will take into account the 'maturity' of each CoRE and use each CoRE as its own benchmark when forming its opinion.

Submission Deadline

Centres must submit all documentation to the CoREs Fund Review Secretariat at the Society by 5.00 p.m. on **Monday 01 May 2017**:
cores@royalsociety.org.nz

Part 1 – Report on Progress from the Centre (Director)

General Comments

The Report from the Centre (Director) is the key document for the review. It should inform the Review Panel on why the Centre exists, what its research focus is and how it has developed during this funding period. It should also describe how the Centre has developed and maintained a focus on research excellence and what its future plans are.

This part of the submission is in the form of a self-evaluation of progress made, supported by evidence. Centres should note the government's expectations for CoREs (as outlined in the Mission Statement for CoREs) and pay specific attention to the key questions that are to be addressed in the review (listed below). The Mission Statement, which is appended to the ToR, also provides more detail on the criteria that will be used to assess the key questions.

- Is the Panel comfortable that the information provided by the research advisory groups shows that each CoRE continues to meet standards of research excellence?
- Has evidence been provided that each CoRE continues to operate in a collaborative partnership?
- Has evidence been provided that CoRE continues to deliver benefits to New Zealand?
- Has evidence been provided that each CoRE continues to engage with end-users and stakeholders?
- Has evidence been provided that each CoRE is contributing to tertiary education outcomes?
- Is there evidence that the CoRE demonstrates authority at a national and international level?
- Is there evidence of strong governance and management for each CoRE?
- Have the activities completed by the CoRE to-date contributed to delivering against its outcomes?
- Is there confidence that the CoRE will plausibly deliver against its outcome statements?

The report should be divided into sections as described below. There is an overall page limit to the report of between 15 and 20 pages (not including the appendices). The appendices are to be used to provide supporting information. It is recommended that except where Centres wish to give particular emphasis to a point, that information is not duplicated in the main body of the report and appendices.

Reporting Sections:

Annotations or references to link to specific evidence in the appendices should be given.

1. Introduction

This section should briefly introduce the Centre and summarise its activities during this funding period.

- Identify the institutions involved in the operation of the Centre. These will be the host organisation and collaborative partners.
- Please also describe any precursor research centre or group which formed the foundation of the present Centre and in the submission give emphasis to new or additional activities or outputs arising from the CoRE funding.
- Briefly summarise, in general terms, the establishment and further development of the Centre.
- Briefly summarise and assess the Centre's broad achievements from its inception as measured against the government's Mission Statement for CoREs.

2. Research Excellence

This should be the major component of the self-assessment. The Mission Statement for CoREs states *“CoRE research must be leading edge research of world-class quality in an area of importance to New Zealand. CoRE research demonstrates academic strength as well as planned and effective progress towards defined impacts with public good and/or economic benefits”*.

In self-assessing you may wish to give consideration to the following:

- Development of a concept of a focused central (core) research programme.
- Introduction of new ideas/innovation to the research portfolio.
- Conduct/progress/quality of the research.
- Impact of the research.

3. CoRE Collaboration and Collaborative Practices

“The CoRE model is a collaborative research partnership hosted by a TEI. It has appropriate governance and processes to ensure all partners contribute to delivery of agreed strategic outcomes.”

In self-assessing you may wish to give consideration to the following:

- Roles of Host and Partner institutions.
- Description of agreements in place and processes used to facilitate collaboration.
- Outcomes achieved or which have benefited from the collaborative arrangements.

4. Engagement with End-users

“CoREs are characterised by active and outward-facing engagement with next-stage and potential end-users to ensure the CoRE delivers the strategic benefits it seeks for New Zealand.”

In self-assessing you may wish to give consideration to the following:

- Involvement of potential end-users in the planning of current and future research.
- Impact and uptake of research results.
- Outreach activities, including for example and where appropriate, participation in external policy development and public good bodies, raising public awareness, sector education activities (seminars/workshops), training industry/sector personnel and demonstration projects.

5. The CoRE as an element in the tertiary education system

“A CoRE builds research capability in areas of existing excellence. It translates new knowledge into teaching and the training of future researchers and offers specific and novel opportunities for graduate students, emerging and established investigators across its partner institutions.”

In self-assessing you may wish to give consideration to the following:

- How the Centre plans its contribution to the teaching and learning environment
- Evidence of educational outcomes and employment opportunities for graduates.
- The role played by key investigators in influencing the experience of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows working within the Centre.

6. The role of the CoRE at a national and international level

“A CoRE demonstrates authority in its research area, both in New Zealand and overseas.”

In self-assessing you may wish to give consideration to the following:

- Description and evidence of the networks the Centre is part of; the Centre’s role and the impact the Centre has on the national and international research community.
- Leadership displayed by the Centre in facilitating stakeholder debate on issues of significance.
- The public visibility of the Centre as a showcase and source of knowledge.

Part 2 – Guidelines for Completing Appendices

General Instructions

Please add documentation to support the information provided in Part 1. There is no page limit for this section, but please be aware that the panel will principally base their assessment on the information from Part 1 and will look to the documents in Part 2 to provide evidence of the statements or claims made elsewhere.

The following sections/documents must be included in the Appendix.

- the Centre's most recent **Annual Report**,
- the **2015/16-2017 Strategic/Research Plan**,
- a draft of the **2018-2020 Strategic/Research Plan**, and
- a report or statement from the Centre's external research advisory group(s) on the Centre's research programme including their assessment of research excellence.

Please ensure that nothing is included in the appendices that is not directly referred to in self-assessment.