

Statement on the Responsible Use of Metrics

The University has developed the following set of principles outlining its approach to research assessment (e.g. in appoint and promotion of academic staff, staff “selection” for REF, etc) using metrics, including the responsible use of quantitative indicators. These principles draw upon the [Leiden Manifesto](#) and the [Metric Tide](#) and are designed to represent current good practice and to act as a guide for future activities.

As stated in the Leiden Manifesto, “research metrics can provide crucial information that would be difficult to gather or understand by means of individual expertise. But this quantitative information must not be allowed to morph from an instrument into the goal.”

All research assessment using metrics at the University of Greenwich should be:

Linked to expert judgement

Research assessment is closely linked with expert judgement. Criteria and/or indicators used will be chosen based on the purpose of the assessment and, where appropriate, quantitative indicators can be used to inform judgements and challenge preconceptions, but not to replace expert judgement.

Supported by reliable data

Where used, quantitative data sources should be selected for their reliability (i.e. accuracy, quality, transparency and coverage¹). Any limitations inherent in the selected data sources must be explicitly acknowledged to avoid data being considered out of context, or being used to mislead. Research quality should never be represented by a single metric.

Tailored

Disciplinary differences in research inputs, processes and outputs should be taken into account. Any disciplinary biases in indicators used must be explicitly acknowledged and addressed.

Research assessment and management activities should also be tailored to the scale of the research activity being assessed. Particular caution is needed when interpreting quantitative indicators in small scale assessments such as the assessment of an individual researcher.

Responsive

Those responsible for research assessment should recognise and anticipate the potential effects of indicators, and be prepared to update them in response.

Transparent

Assessment criteria and any quantitative data used must be transparent and available (on request) to those being assessed. Those conducting assessments must disclose the data sources used and ensure that researchers can review and correct data about their work.

¹ A good example of this are Snowball metrics: <http://snowballmetrics.com/>