

## Impact FAQs

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### What may constitute evidence of impact?

In short, you should log anything that demonstrates that your research has contributed to enhanced understanding about an issue, changes in practice or ways of working in an organisation, changes to policy and legislation, at any scale or level of society, including culture, environment, quality of life, economy, society, policy, public services, etc.

This includes evaluation data, emails from people who have used your research in their own work (note, this does not include academic colleagues and students), and “thank you” emails after events at which you have addressed a public or practitioner audience. These informal emails and thank you letters can be followed up for stronger corroboration when needed.

On the link in the footnote below you can find the lists of types of evidence that each of the REF main panels identified as relevant to their subject areas. This is a mix of numerical evidence, citations in different forms of user-generated documents, and testimonials from people who can corroborate that the research informed a particular process.

### What if my research has impact before I have outputs?

If your research has impact before any outputs are published, you can outline this in the section that describes the underpinning research and link to outputs when they get published and logged on PURE.

### What is the relationship between activity and impact?

The activity module in PURE allows you to log participation in meetings, memberships of industry or government bodies, providing evidence to Parliament, and a range of other activities you conduct in order for your research to be disseminated and applied. In most cases this type of impact results from knowledge exchange activities, which, on PURE, are categorised as *Business Community* or *Public Engagement and Outreach*. Once you have identified the most appropriate type of activity, the logging of this should be self-evident. Please contact your School PURE support or email [pure@ed.ac.uk](mailto:pure@ed.ac.uk) if you have issues.

### My research has several strands of impact – do I create several impact records?

You can have several impact records linked to one research output and, equally, several pieces of evidence linked to one impact record. There are no prescribed rules for how you “cut it”. If you think your work may lead to a REF impact case study, you can still log several strands of impact as separate records. When we get closer towards submission, you will then work with colleagues to choose what to focus the actual case study narrative on, taking into account the strength of the evidence. For example, if your work has contributed in several organisations, you may create one impact record for each of the organisations. If your work contributed to debate at national level, but also has been used in several local authorities, you

may want to create one record for the impact on public debate and one for use in local authorities. What is important is that the evidence is logged.

## How do I log impact from collaborative work?

You can link several people to an impact record and a piece of evidence so please add relevant colleagues when you log your record. You can also add people from other organisations if you find that useful.

Currently, you can only have one person associated with an activity but this is being reviewed and we expect to see improvements in the future PURE releases. In the meantime, each individual will need to log each of the activities they took part in that led to the impact.

## What happens next?

Staff with editor rights can view and report on records. This would include staff within your School and College research offices, and in some instances Research and Impact directors/champions for the Schools. They will make use of this for a variety of purposes including the preparation of REF impact case studies.

If you download your CV from PURE you can choose to have impact records included.

Impact records are not made public on Research Explorer, as most records will not be appropriate for making public. If you would like to publicise your impact please contact your School research or communications offices and they may be able to write up a story based on your PURE record. Once entered, you can edit your record at any time, including adding more evidence, by opening it from your profile.