

Dear All,

Further to your letter dated 5th February 2021 sent by Fabian Frenzel, I am responding to your request seeking further clarification on the process and methodology of the screening exercise undertaken to inform the case for change, before 1st individual consultation meetings.

The questions raised, and my responses, are below as follows:-

Further questions have been posed relating to how we conducted a fair and objective process of screening particularly:-

- a) How we established a 'primary' engagement of targeted staff in CMS/PE?**
- b) What metrics were used to determine 'primary', and how were the separate elements in the 'basket of indicators' used and weighted?**

ANSWER –We have taken these questions together to avoid repetition. Firstly of all, we do not accept the term “targeted staff” as this is not an accurate reflection of circumstances, but we have repeated the term for clarity. In answer to the questions, the metrics used were those described in the clarification document shared on 1st February 2021, which showed a variety of indicators were factored into the assessments of an individual’s primary research focus. We did not deem it necessary to weight the indicators, however overall research outputs formed the main basis of our assessments which included the title, abstract, where published but most importantly the content. Publications which feature on an individual’s IRIS record were read and for each publication (or where obvious themes of research were apparent each group of articles) a view was then taken as to whether on balance alignment with the definitions used for the purposes of the screening exercises was apparent. The overall profile of outputs was then evaluated to establish the primary focus of outputs reviewed. For the avoidance of doubt no attempt was made at any point to judge the quality of any output, but a view was taken on the degree of alignment, or otherwise to School strategic priorities as outlined in the Case for Change.

The focus of any research grant activity (whether successful or otherwise) was also considered for purposes of the screening exercise. The information provided by grants was not weighted against publications data, not least due to the fact that insights provided were normally confirmatory in nature. The same exercise was then carried out for self-declared areas of interest taken from School Staff web pages and also other relevant School pages, primarily the list of research interests on the CPPE website. Research interests were also evaluated for alignment with definitions used for the purposes of the screening exercises. Stated research interests were considered more germane where there were limited other indicators in the form of research papers or grant applications.

The assessment made in the screening exercise was led by the School Executive (Devlin and Ladley) in agreement and approved by the University Executive and College team. Colleagues are reminded that the purpose of the consultation process is to consider the validity of the assessment made in the screening exercise. If you do not feel you should have been placed at risk because you do not have primary research interests in CMS/PE and that your primary research interests align to School strategic priorities as outlined in the Case for Change, this is very much an issue to be discussed at the individual consultation meetings.

c) Were any other journals used apart from the one identified?

ANSWER – The journal cited in the definition was given as an example only and not as an exhaustive list of the journals considered. We considered all publications as per the IRIS record and therefore a range of different journals were included. However it is important to stress that the assessment of outputs as to whether they aligned with the criteria shared was not based primarily on where they were published but rather the content of the output.

d) With regards to the concepts used for the definitions of CMS/PE, were any of these used as proxies for CMS/PE in your analysis of indicators, which ones and with what weighting?

ANSWER – Again, we did not weight concepts, but took them as a guide to the domain of interest.

We are committed to discussing the outcomes of the assessment with everyone and it is important that we are able to talk you through how we reached the initial assessment we did and for you to have the opportunity to review that assessment, challenge it and provide further evidence where deemed necessary. As confirmed in my previous correspondence I wish to re-iterate that no member of staff has yet been selected for redundancy. The assessments made in the screening exercise in relation to staff who have been placed at risk of redundancy are provisional and are subject to consultation. As has been made clear in other correspondence from myself and Emma Stevens we do not agree that an additional first collective consultation meeting is required prior to individual consultation meetings commencing.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Jim Devlin

Dean of ULSB

Cc Dan Ladley

Henrietta O'Connor

Caroline Johnson

Brigid Boucher