

#101

**COMPLETE**

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## Page 1: Personal Details

**Q1**

Your name

**Researcher** Belinda Hewitt**Q2**

Your organisation (leave blank if not applicable)

School of Social and Political Sciences, The University of Melbourne

**Q3**

Are you making this submission on behalf of your organisation?

**Yes, I am making this submission on behalf of my organisation****Q4**

Email address

belinda.hewitt@unimelb.edu.au

**Q5**

What best describes your interest in making a submission?

**I am a researcher at an Australian university****Q6**

Submissions may be made public unless you request otherwise.

**Respondent skipped this question****Q7**

What form of submission do you wish to make?

**Provide my responses through the online survey**

## Page 2: Upload Response

**Q8**

Respondent skipped this question

Please upload your submission.

Page 3: ERA and/or EI choice

**Q9**

I only want to answer questions on ERA

Please indicate whether you wish to answer questions on ERA and/or EI.

Page 4: ERA Policy /1

**Q10**

To what extent is ERA meeting its objectives to:

Continue to develop and maintain an evaluation framework that gives government, industry, business and the wider community assurance of the excellence of research conducted in Australian higher education institutions.

Comment:

Provide a national stocktake of discipline level areas of research strength and areas where there is opportunity for development in Australian higher education institutions.

Comment:

Identify excellence across the full spectrum of research performance.

Comment:

Identify emerging research areas and opportunities for further development.

Comment:

Allow for comparisons of research in Australia, nationally and internationally, for all discipline areas.

Comment:

**A small amount**

This is not easy for us to assess the impact of ERA on other bodies, and have no evidence to suggest that it is

**A moderate amount**

It depends on the discipline (it works for some and not for others), many areas of research are interdisciplinary and that is not captured

**Not at all**

Rather than the full spectrum it actually focusses attention in on a narrow range of activities

**Not at all**

It is not a very flexible tool for identifying emerging areas

**A small amount**

Nationally it is okay, but internationally it does not work at all

**Q11**

The ERA objectives are appropriate for meeting the future needs of its stakeholders.

**Strongly disagree,**

If you disagreed with the above statement, please explain your answer.:

Not sure of other stakeholders, but for the universities without block funding resources attached it does not have the any relevance.

Page 5: ERA Policy /2

**Q12**

What impact has ERA had on:

the Australian university research sector as a whole

**Takes up a lot time, takes resources from Australian researchers, it has resulted in a gaming of the system that has had negative outcomes, it discourages interdisciplinary research**

researchers

**created a lot of stress for early career academics who feel that they are not contributing enough, people who do interdisciplinary were not recognised,**

Other?

**led to the demise of important, but non-ranked Australian journals**

**Q13**

How do you, or your organisation use ERA outcomes?

Some individuals use the rankings as part of the Institutional section of ARC applications. Some disciplines use them on job advertisements. Enables disciplines to justify their existence to their university.

**Q14**

ERA outcomes are valuable to you or your organisation.

**Strongly disagree,**

Do you have any suggestions for enhancing ERA's value to you/your organisation?:

Make it relevant to funding outcomes or remove the ERA altogether to free up 10000's of hours dedicated to the exercise

**Q15**

How else could ERA outcomes be used?

see above - attach to funding

Page 6: ERA Methodology /1

**Q16**

The current methodology meets the objectives of ERA.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

It is good that not everything is based on a STEM approach, but it is not clear how the peer assessment feeds into the actual evaluation process.

**Q17**

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the overall ERA methodology?

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q18**

Does the discipline-specific approach for evaluating research quality (citation analysis or peer review for specific disciplines) continue to enable robust and comparable evaluation across all disciplines?

It is better than evaluating all disciplines against a STEM model

**Q19**

The citation analysis methodology for evaluating the quality of research is appropriate.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

yes, for some larger disciplines it is appropriate, but for other smaller highly specialised disciplines it is completely inappropriate and irrelevant.

**Q20**

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the citation analysis methodology?

Strengths

**simple, straight forward and takes less time**

Weaknesses

**yes, for some larger disciplines it is appropriate, but for other smaller highly specialised disciplines it is completely inappropriate and irrelevant.**

**Q21**

Can the citation analysis methodology be modified to improve the evaluation process while still adhering to the ERA Indicator Principles?

**No,**

If you answered 'Yes', please describe how the methodology could be improved.:

Possibly could involve some kind of reputational assessment of the journal to assess each

**Q22**

The peer review methodology for evaluating the quality of research is appropriate.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

For some disciplines it is appropriate and others not.

**Q23**

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the peer review methodology?

Strengths

**there are some disciplines that simply cannot be assessed quantitatively**

Weaknesses

**Not very clear or transparent about what the assessment criteria are. Also does not do a good job of capturing interdisciplinary research**

**Q24**

Can the peer review methodology be modified to improve the evaluation process while still adhering to the ERA Indicator Principles?

**Yes,**

If you answer 'Yes', please describe how the peer review methodology could be improved.:

Provide a better and clearer set of assessment criteria, such as the ARC assessor handbook instructions. Also, enabling interdisciplinary criteria or assessments to be made.

## Page 7: ERA Methodology /2

**Q25**

The volume and activity indicators are still relevant to ERA.

**Strongly disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

We should be able to chose our best quality publications irrespective of the category they fall into. Rather than being restricted to a % and representative sample from all staff in each category. All staff registered in the code had to have something included. This results in some codes becoming a dumping ground for weaker publications in other disciplines.

**Q26**

The publishing profile indicator is still relevant to ERA.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

We did not understand this question

**Q27**

The research income indicators are still relevant to ERA.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

It depends, because income is not necessarily an indicator of quality. It really disadvantages disciplines that don't need money for research and this is not a grant assessment exercise but a research quality (output not input) exercise.

**Q28**

The applied measures are still relevant to ERA.

Patents

Comment:

**Neither agree nor disagree**

These are not relevant to all disciplines

Research commercialisation income

Comment:

**Neither agree nor disagree**

These are not relevant to all disciplines

Registered designs

Comment:

**Neither agree nor disagree**

These are not relevant to all disciplines

Plant breeder's rights

Comment:

**Neither agree nor disagree**

These are not relevant to all disciplines

NHMRC endorsed guidelines

Comment:

**Neither agree nor disagree**

These are not relevant to all disciplines

## Page 8: ERA Methodology /3

**Q29**

The five-band ERA rating scale is suitable for assessing research excellence.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

It keeps it simple, but with simplicity there is less information and nuance.

**Q30**

Noting that 90% of units of evaluation assessed in ERA 2018 are now at or above world standard, does the rating scale need to be modified to identify research excellence?

**No,**

If you answered 'Yes', please explain how the rating scale can be modified to identify research excellence.:  
It is the process that provides the ratings, not the scale.

**Q31**

The ERA low volume threshold is appropriate.

**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:  
you don't want to assess fields of research with very little activity, but also encourages material from a low volume discipline to be recoded into other FORs.

**Q32**

Are there ways in which the low volume threshold could be modified to improve the evaluation process?

In addition to low volume threshold there could be more flexibility in relation to the choice of publication category

**Q33**

What is the more appropriate method for universities to claim research outputs—staff census date or by-line?

**By-line,**

Please explain your answer.:  
If by-line means the institutional affiliation on the publication than this could actually reduce gaming in the system where people are hired or fired just prior to census

**Q34**

What are the limitations of a census date approach?

see above, comment about gaming

**Q35**

Would a by-line approach address these limitations?

**Yes,**

Please explain your answer.:  
because your publication would refer to the place you were employed when you did the research

**Q36**

What are the limitations of a by-line approach?

if there is a double by line (i.e. moved institutions while research was being produced) that there is a way of counting both.

**Q37**

ERA adequately captures and evaluates interdisciplinary research.

**Strongly disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:  
Interdisciplinary research is handled poorly. We have heard panel discussion had more trouble. This thing is an assessment of disciplines, not an assessment of interdisciplinarity, but a lot research is interdisciplinary.

**Q38**

If you disagreed with the previous statement, how could interdisciplinary research best be accommodated?

Just send to primary discipline. It is incredibly difficult to manage, this kind of approach will never be able to adequately assess interdisciplinary research. If assessed at the primary discipline level the innovation will be more likely to be recognised.

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Page 9: ERA Methodology /4

**Q39**

Respondent skipped this question

My institution would meet ERA low volume threshold in Indigenous studies at:

**Q40**

Respondent skipped this question

In ERA, the best approach for evaluating Indigenous Studies is (choose one):

**Q41**

Respondent skipped this question

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of your preferred approach for evaluating Indigenous studies in ERA?

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Page 10: ERA Process /1

**Q42**

ERA should move to an annual collection of data from universities.

**Strongly disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

This exercise already is too burdensome, every year would just increase that burden

**Q43**

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of an annual data collection.

Advantages

**None**

Disadvantages

**More work****Q44**

Respondent skipped this question

In future ERA rounds, should the volume of outputs submitted for each unit of evaluation be published?

**Q45**

Respondent skipped this question

In future ERA rounds, research outputs should be published with their assignment to specific disciplines following completion of the round.

**Q46**

Respondent skipped this question

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of publishing research outputs with their assignment to specific disciplines?

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**Q47**

Respondent skipped this question

What other data do you think the ARC should publish following an ERA round? (Note - in ERA 2018 metadata included: Research output title, Research output type, reference year, outlet, publisher, ISBN, ERA round, and Institution)

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Page 11: EI Policy /1

**Q48**

Respondent skipped this question

Considering that EI is a new assessment, to what extent is EI meeting its objectives to:

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Page 12: EI Policy /2

**Q49**

Respondent skipped this question

The EI objectives are appropriate for the future needs of its stakeholders.

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**Q50**

Respondent skipped this question

What impact has EI had on:

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**Q51**

Respondent skipped this question

How do you, or your organisation, use EI outcomes?

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**Q52**

Respondent skipped this question

The EI outcomes are valuable to you or your organisation.

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**Q53**

Respondent skipped this question

How else could EI outcomes be used?

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Page 13: EI Policy /3

**Q54**

Respondent skipped this question

The current Engagement definition is appropriate.

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**Q55**

Respondent skipped this question

The current Impact definition is appropriate.

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**Q56**

Respondent skipped this question

The current end-user definition is appropriate.

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**Q57**

Respondent skipped this question

Are there any end-user categories excluded in the current definition of research end-user that you think should be included? Please explain your answer.

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**Q58**

Respondent skipped this question

Are there other key terms that need to be formally defined?

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Page 14: EI Methodology /1

**Q59**

Respondent skipped this question

Are the two-digit Field of Research codes the most appropriate method to define units of assessment for Engagement and Impact?

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**Q60**

Respondent skipped this question

Are there other ways to classify units of assessment in EI, for example SEO codes?

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**Q61**

Respondent skipped this question

Should there be more or fewer units of assessment per university?

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**Q62**

Respondent skipped this question

The EI low-volume threshold should continue to be based on the number of research outputs submitted for ERA.

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**Q63**

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree, how should eligibility for assessment in EI be determined?

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**Q64**

Respondent skipped this question

The low-volume threshold is set at the appropriate level.

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Page 15: EI Methodology /2

**Q65**

Respondent skipped this question

Overall, the engagement indicator suite for the assessment of research engagement is suitable.

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**Q66**

Respondent skipped this question

The cash support from research end-users using HERDC data is appropriate for the assessment of research engagement.

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**Q67**

Respondent skipped this question

The research commercialisation income is appropriate for the assessment of research engagement.

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**Q68**

Respondent skipped this question

Are there additional metrics that would be appropriate across many or all disciplines?

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**Q69**

Respondent skipped this question

Are there alternative metrics that would be appropriate across many or all disciplines?

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**Q70**

Respondent skipped this question

Should any of the current engagement metrics be redesigned?

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**Q71**

Respondent skipped this question

The co-supervision of HDR students should be made an engagement indicator in future rounds of EI.

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**Q72**

Respondent skipped this question

In your opinion, are any of the ERA applied measures appropriate indicators of research engagement in EI?

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Page 16: EI Methodology /3

**Q73**

Respondent skipped this question

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing research engagement with end-users.

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**Q74**

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

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**Q75**

Respondent skipped this question

One engagement submission per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the research engagement within that discipline.

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**Q76**

Respondent skipped this question

The engagement narrative needs to be longer.

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**Q77**

Respondent skipped this question

Additional evidence is needed within the narrative.

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Page 17: EI Methodology /4

**Q78**

Respondent skipped this question

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing Impact.

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**Q79**

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? Please explain your answer. If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

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**Q80**

Respondent skipped this question

One impact study per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the research impact within that discipline.

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**Q81**

Respondent skipped this question

The impact narrative needs to be longer.

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**Q82**

Respondent skipped this question

There is need for additional evidence to be provided within the impact narrative.

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**Q83**

Respondent skipped this question

In your opinion, are there quantitative indicators that could be used to measure the impact of research outside of academia?

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**Q84**

Respondent skipped this question

If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, please name and describe the quantitative indicator/s, and the disciplines for which they are relevant.

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Page 18: EI Methodology /5

**Q85**

Respondent skipped this question

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing approach to impact.

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**Q86**

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? Please explain your answer. If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

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**Q87**

Respondent skipped this question

One approach to impact narrative per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the activities within that discipline.

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**Q88**

Respondent skipped this question

The approach to impact narrative needs to be longer.

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**Q89**

Respondent skipped this question

There is a need for additional evidence to be provided.

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**Q90**

Respondent skipped this question

Would there be benefit in combining engagement and approach to impact?

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Page 19: EI Methodology /6

**Q91**

Respondent skipped this question

The engagement rating scale is suitable for assessing research engagement.

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**Q92**

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptors for the engagement rating scale are suitable.

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**Q93**

Respondent skipped this question

The impact rating scale is suitable for assessing impact.

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**Q94**

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptors for the impact rating scale are suitable.

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**Q95**

Respondent skipped this question

The approach to impact rating scale is suitable for assessing approach to impact.

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**Q96**

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptions for the approach to impact rating scale are suitable.

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Page 20: EI Methodology /7

**Q97**

Respondent skipped this question

Should EI continue to include an interdisciplinary impact study in addition to the two-digit Field of Research impact studies?

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**Q98**

Respondent skipped this question

Should the EI low volume threshold be applied to the unit of assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research in EI 2024 with the option to opt in if threshold is not met?

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**Q99**

Respondent skipped this question

Should the unit of assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research include engagement in the next round of EI?

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Page 21: Overarching Issues Common to ERA and EI

**Q100**

Every five years

How often should ERA occur?

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**Q101**

What impact would a longer assessment cycle (i.e. greater than three years) have on the value of ERA results, particularly in the intervening years?

It would enable researchers to produce higher quality outputs rather than rushing and compromising to get the papers out. Would reduce the burden of the assessment process

## Page 22: Overarching Issues Common to ERA and EI

**Q102**

Respondent skipped this question

How often should the EI assessment occur?

**Q103**

Respondent skipped this question

What impact would a longer assessment cycle (i.e. greater than three years) have on the value of EI results, particularly in the intervening years?

## Page 23: Overarching Issues Common to both ERA and EI

**Q104**

ERA and EI should be combined into the one assessment.

**Neither agree or disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

They should be done at the same time to be more time efficient and allow sufficient break in between the assessments.

**Q105**

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of ERA and EI being combined into the one assessment.

Advantages

**streamlined the processes**

Disadvantages

**less efficient****Q106**

Are there other ways to streamline the processes to reduce the cost to universities of participating in ERA and EI?

**Yes,**

Please explain your answer.:

It makes sense to do both at the same time, one combined assessment of quality and impact every 5 years to reduce the burden. Focus on identifying not every publication but allowing researchers or codes to only nominate the top if they meet the minimum threshold.

## Page 24: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

**Q107**

In your view, what data sources could ERA utilise?

ORCID?

Google Scholar

Scopus

All these data bases pick up all types of publications and who uses them

**Q108**

In your view, what are the most time consuming elements of the ERA submission?

Doing large volumes of the peer assessment.

Preparing and organising the submission, particularly for larger disciplines is hugely time consuming thus reducing the number of publications to a limited number of quality publications would reduce this burden at the university and at the level of ARC peer assessment.

**Q109**

Are there efficiencies that could be introduced?

**Yes,**

Please describe.:

Identify quality publications for FOR codes

Page 25: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

**Q110**

**Respondent skipped this question**

In your view, what are the most time consuming elements of the EI submission?

**Q111**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there efficiencies that could be introduced?

Page 26: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

**Q112**

ORCID iDs should be mandatory for ERA.

**Strongly agree,**

Please explain your answer.:

see above for streamlining ERA and EI

**Q113**

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of mandatory ORCID iDs?

Advantages

**streamlines the process**

**Q114**

**Strongly agree**

The automatic harvesting of output data using ORCID iDs would streamline a university's submission process.

**Q115**

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of automatic harvesting of output data using ORCID iDs?

Advantages

**makes it easier and streamlines the process**

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**Q116**

DOIs should be mandatory for ERA.

**Strongly agree,**

Please explain your answer.:

speeds everything up, you get a link through

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**Q117**

**Respondent skipped this question**

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of mandatory DOIs?

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Page 27: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

**Q118**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there other ways to collect data to reduce the cost and burden to universities of participating in ERA and EI whilst maintaining the robustness of the ERA and EI process?

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**Q119**

**Respondent skipped this question**

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages?

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Page 28: Additional Comments

**Q120**

Please provide any additional comments:

Change the methodology so that only a certain number of publications are assessed per person rather than every single publication in a field of research. With a smaller number of items to process this will reduce the burden on university systems and also means that peer review may be of a higher quality because the reviewers will have time to read them.

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