

**ESRC OUTPUTS FRAMEWORK**  
**2005-6**

## INTRODUCTION & HIGHLIGHTS

1. This Outputs Framework forms part of the Office of Science & Innovation's (OSI's) Performance Management System that was implemented across all Research Councils in April 2005. More information about the Frameworks is available on the Research Council UK's web site:  
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/aboutrcs/operation/performance/deliveryplan/output/>
2. The Framework should be read in conjunction with the ESRC's [2005/06 Delivery Report](#) and [Annual Report](#) which provide a comprehensive summary of the Council's achievements over the period.
3. The Framework contains first-year data on selected aspects of ESRC's performance relevant to the Government's objectives for the UK science base. The data are presented in two parts. Output One covers aspects of ESRC's contribution towards maintaining a healthy UK science & engineering base, and Output Two describes some of the Council's work towards improving the exploitation of research.
4. Output One is divided into the following areas:
  - (i) Overview;
  - (ii) UK contribution to the global knowledge pool;
  - (iii) UK supply of newly trained people;
  - (iv) UK trained people pool;
  - (v) Facilities & infrastructure;
  - (vi) Positioning & relationships.

The metrics in each of these areas cover the following characteristics: quality, sustainability, scale, agility, productivity & efficiency, and user focus.

Output Two is divided into two areas: scale and quality, and the data cover:

- (i) Interaction with business & public services;
  - (ii) Collaborative research;
  - (iii) Commercialisation of research;
  - (iv) Cooperative training;
  - (v) People exchanges between the science base & user organisations.
5. The data for 2005/06 show:
    - The very high standard of ESRC research, with 95% of research projects judged to be of outstanding or good quality by independent peer review;
    - The independent evaluation of ESRC's longitudinal datasets and its E-Social Science Programme as World leaders.
    - The high usage and importance of ESRC sponsored research resources, with over 20,000 users registered with the Economic & Social Data Service, and 35,000 new datasets delivered;
    - The success of the Council's efforts to increase Ph.D. submission rates, with 82% of theses now submitted within 4 years;
    - The considerable public interest in Social Science, as evidenced by the 4000 attendees at the 2006 Social Science Week;
    - The need to address the issue of ageing staff profiles in some disciplines. This is a challenge that the Council is addressing through its [Demographic Review of the UK Social Sciences](#).

- The relevance of ESRC research across all areas of UK policy-making, as demonstrated by the Council's 14 concordats with Government Departments and the Devolved Administrations.
  - The Council's engagement with the business sector through specially designed seminars and events, its CASE and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, and the increasing numbers of academics working in user organisations.
6. The Research Councils are working together, through RCUK, and with the OSI to develop the Framework metrics and maximise their usefulness in describing aspects of Research Council performance.

<b>ESRC OUTPUTS FRAMEWORK</b>			
<b>OUTPUT ONE</b>	<b>METRICS</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>A HEALTHY UK SCIENCE &amp; ENGINEERING BASE</b>			
<b>Overview</b>			
Quality	1. The quality of ESRC research	2005/06 Outstanding 27% Good 68% Problematic 5% Unacceptable 0%	Expert analysis has shown that current bibliometric data are a misleading indicator of the impact of UK social science. The ESRC is working to develop robust metrics, and is reporting evaluation grades for its research as an interim measure. These grades are based on the independent peer review of end of award reports and are defined as follows:  Outstanding: High quality work making an exceptional research contribution Good: Good quality work making a strong research contribution Problematic: Work of an acceptable quality but with weaknesses in some areas Unacceptable: Poorly conducted research with unreliable results
Sustainability	1. The age profile of academics by discipline	See UK Trained People Pool below	
Scale	1. ESRC's annual budget	2005/06 = £135.5m	The figure shown here is ESRC's total expenditure, including non science-budget funding.

Agility	1. The amount spent on new initiatives and schemes.	2005/06 = £2.02M	The figure shown here reflects ESRC's re-prioritisation of programme spend to new research areas, and was reported as part of the RCUK Efficiency Delivery project.
	2. The number and value of interdisciplinary awards within ESRC's domain	2005/06 = 532 awards, with expenditure of £20m.	These data show the number and value of ESRC research awards involving more than one social science discipline.
	3. The number and value of research contracts involving other research councils and other non-social science funders.	2005/06 = 270 awards and expenditure of £22m	These data show the number and total value of ESRC's research contracts involving collaboration with other research councils and non social science co-funders.
Productivity & Efficiency	1. Savings made in the proportion of expenditure attributable to administration costs.	2005/06 = £0.4m	These administrative savings were reported by ESRC as part of the RCUK Efficiency Delivery project.
User Focus (science base)	1. Survey assessment of user confidence in the Research Councils	RCUK has recently conducted a survey of university researchers and administrators across the UK which shows that a very substantial majority believe that the Councils' grant application administration and peer review processes are excellent or good. The Joint Electronic Submission System is believed to have made the grant application process more efficient, particularly in reducing time and paperwork and enabling the development of collaborative proposals. The report will be published in the autumn.	

User Focus (business and public services)	1. Survey assessment of user confidence in the Research Councils	The House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee Report on Research Councils support for knowledge transfer identifies a need for the Councils to engage business users more effectively. Whilst Research Councils have striven to develop effective engagement with business over recent years, they take such feedback seriously and will be consulting with their stakeholders on strengthening this aspect of their operations	
<b>UK Contribution to Global Knowledge Pool</b>			
Quality	1. The relative quality of UK social science research.	2005/06 Outstanding 27% Good 68% Problematic 5% Unacceptable 0%	Expert analysis has shown that current bibliometric data do not provide robust comparisons of national research impact. In response, the ESRC has launched a series of international benchmarking studies to complement its work to develop robust metrics.  The first outcomes from the benchmarking series will be reported in 2007. As an interim measure, the Council is reporting evaluation grades for the work it funds. These grades reflect the results of independent peer review of end of award reports. For the definition of the ESRC's evaluation grades see Overview (Quality) above.

Scale	1. The number of publications arising each year from ESRC research.	2005 = 4695	The ESRC's Society Today Database records all publications produced during the award period, and captures post-award publications on a voluntary submission basis. The numbers of outputs notified in 2005 are reported here.
Agility	1. The rate of change in publications per annum in relation to ESRC's priorities.	Data to be recorded from 2007.	The first year of data establishes a benchmark and rates of change will be reported in subsequent years.
Productivity & Efficiency	1. The number of publications per £M of ESRC funding.	2002 = 89	We report here the total number of outputs recorded to date from ESRC awards that ended in 2002. This date allows for the inevitable time-gap between research and publication.
<b>UK Newly Trained People</b>			
Quality	1. The proportion of ESRC trained research students recorded as unemployed by the Joint Council first destination survey.	2001 finishers = 8%	In 2003 the Research Councils contracted the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to collect data on the first destinations of their PhD award-holders. Some transitional difficulties mean that the ESRC data for 2002 and 2003 finishers are not reliable. The Research Councils are working with HESA to improve this position. In the meantime, 2001 is the most recent year for which reliable data are available. The Council is reporting here on finishers who had also submitted their theses.
	2. The proportion of ESRC funded PhD theses submitted within four years.	2005 Submission Rate Survey: 4 year submission = 82% 5 year submission = 82% 6 year submission = 87%	ESRC's annual survey provides data on 4, 5 and 6 year submission rates.

Sustainability	1. The proportion of ESRC funded students recorded to be in permanent and temporary academic posts by the Joint Council first destination survey.	Permanent UK appointments 2001 = 34%  Temporary UK appointments 2001 = 27%  Further training 2001 = 3%	As explained above (see 'Quality'), 2001 is the most recent year for which the Council has reliable data on student destinations.
	2. ESRC studentship awards by gender and ethnic origin	Award offers by gender in 2005 = 56% female; 44% male  Award offers by ethnic origin in 2005 = 60% White UK/Irish 20% White European 2% White Other 3% Asian 1% Black 2% mixed race/other 11% Not provided	
Scale	1. The annual number of new ESRC studentship awards.	New awards in 2005 = 740	
Agility	1. The rate of change in the number of PhD awards in ESRC's priority areas.	Standard studentship awards in 2005/06 Management = 50 Statistics = 13 Socio-Legal Studies = 11 Economics = 58	These figures show the quota and standard competition studentships awarded for the 2005/2006 academic year in the areas identified as priorities in ESRC's 2005 Delivery Plan.
Productivity and Efficiency	1. The average cost of an ESRC studentship award.	2005/06 = £14,000	



User Focus (business and public services)	1. The proportion of ESRC funded students recorded as employed in the business and public service sectors by the Joint Council first destination survey.	Finishers in 2001 = 11%	As explained above (see 'Quality'), 2001 is the most recent year for which the Council has reliable data on student destinations.
<b>UK Trained People Pool</b>			
Scale	1. The number of academic staff in UK social science departments.	2004/05 = 28,365	This is the number of academic staff in social science departments in 2004/05 as recorded by HESA.
Sustainability	1. Age profiles of academics in leading research departments by discipline.	2004/05 The proportions of staff over the age of 45 in leading research departments are as follows: Psychology = 29% Town & Country Planning = 40% Geography = 32% Law = 43% Anthropology = 47% Economics & Econometrics = 37% Politics & International Relations = 38% Social Policy & Administration = 51% Social Work = 65% Sociology = 52% Business and Management = 43% Accountancy = 47% Middle East and African = 63% Asian Studies = 64% Linguistics = 52% Communications, Culture & Media Studies = 53% Education = 62%	This is the age distribution of all social science staff in 5 and 5* departments by discipline.

	2. The number of academic staff in HEIs in each social science discipline.	<p>2004/05  Psychology = 2884*  Town &amp; Country Planning = 658  Geography = 1678*  Law = 2507*  Anthropology = 309  Economics &amp; Econometrics = 1439  Politics &amp; International = 1364  Social Policy &amp; Administration = 1663  Social Work = 742  Sociology = 1371  Business &amp; Management St. = 5767  Accountancy = 768  Middle East and African = 149  Asian Studies = 161  Linguistics = 569*  Communications, Culture &amp; Media Studies = 1187  Education = 5202</p> <p>* NB. This figure includes all academic staff within the discipline, not only those classed as social scientists.</p>	This is the total number of academic staff in each social science discipline.
<b>Facilities and Infrastructure</b>			
Quality	1. Qualitative assessments of ESRC research resource investments.	<p>In 2003/04, international reviewers described our longitudinal studies as 'world class datasets that are increasingly being used throughout the world to answer key policy questions'. An international review in 2006 of the Council's E-Social Science Programme described it as 'transformational' and at the international leading edge.</p>	It is difficult to capture the standing of the Council's strategic facilities in a single metric, and qualitative judgments provide a better guide to the UK's international position. The ESRC will continue to benchmark the quality of its research resources against international standards.

Scale	1. The value of ESRC support for new research resources.	2005/06 = £5.2m	We report here the ESRC's investment in the acquisition and collection of major new datasets, and in supporting facilities to promote their exploitation by the social science community. In 2005/06, these included new sweeps of the Birth Cohort Studies and the British Household Panel, Scottish Longitudinal Study, and new facilities in e-social science.
Agility	1. The change in the proportion of ESRC expenditure dedicated to research resources.	2005/06 = 10.3%	This figure shows the proportion of ESRC's expenditure that is dedicated to research resources and facilities. Data for subsequent years will show changes over time.
User Focus (science base)	1. The level of usage of ESRC research resources.	Registered users 2004/05 = 20,279 Datasets Delivered in 2004/05 = 35,484	We report here on the number of users registering to access the datasets available from the ESRC's principal data facility, the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS), and the number of unique datasets delivered to users.
User Focus (business and public services)	1. The level of co-funding by business and government agencies of ESRC's research resources.	2005/2006 = £2.01M	We report here the co-funding received by ESRC from business and government agencies to support major data infrastructure and facilities.
<b>Positioning and Relationships</b>			
Scale	1. The total level of co-funding of ESRC research by external bodies.	2005/2006 = £10.557M	This indicator reflects the degree to which the ESRC levers more money into the science base. We have reported data based on formal co-funding agreements with ESRC, but it should be noted that additional co-funding directly to HEIs is not captured here.

	2. New co-funding for research and training.	2005/06 = £0.57m	The figure shown here was reported by ESRC as part of the RCUK Efficiency Delivery project.
	3. The number of ESRC interactions focused on public participation and engagement	Attendance at social science week events in 2006 was around 4,000. Attendance at the annual debates was 300; Attendance at the ESRC event at the BA festival (Dublin) was 150.	We have focused here on ESRC led events that will take place on an annual basis so that a reliable time series can be produced.
User Focus (science base)	1. The proportion of non-academic members of ESRC's Council and Boards.	2005/06 Membership:  Council = 43% (6/14)  Boards = 27% (24/89)	
	2. The number of researchers trained in media and public engagement skills	2005/06 = 225	
Quality	1. Evaluate the quality of interaction focused on public participation and engagement	An independent evaluation of ESRC's 2006 social science week concluded that it was '... a resounding success. The Week achieved all of its objectives, made a positive contribution to ESRC's science communication and science and society objectives, and delivered good value for money'. Feedback is also obtained from participants in the ESRC's annual debates that take place in November.	<a href="#">The full evaluation report on the 2006 Social Science Week is available on the ESRC's web site.</a>

<b>ESRC OUTPUTS FRAMEWORK</b>			
<b>OUTPUT TWO</b>	<b>METRICS</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>BETTER EXPLOITATION</b>			
<b>Scale</b>			
Interaction with business and public services	1. The number of ESRC concordat agreements with strategic partners.	2005/06 = 14	ESRC's formal strategic partnerships involve 10 Government Departments, all 3 Devolved Administrations, and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).
	2. The number of ESRC public policy and business-orientated seminars and workshops.	2005/06 = 16	<p>These events included 8 seminars for the public sector, of which 2 were directly related to business policy. There were also 8 business sector with financial services, insurance and health procurement among the sectors served.</p> <p>The ESRC's Westminster Economics Forum series brought together researchers, policy and business economists to develop business policy, and the results have fed into the DTI's planning. The Council's conference on 'Cash &amp; Care' was highly rated by participants and has resulted in a book commission. The 'Creative Industries Seminar' has prompted joint research activity with the Arts &amp; Humanities Research Council.</p> <p>Plans are in place to increase ESRC's interaction with business over the coming year.</p>
Collaborative research	1. The number of collaborative ESRC research projects.	2005/06 = 82	

	2. The amount of external funding for joint research (excluding joint Research Council projects)	2005-06 = £4.9M	
Commercialisation of research	1. The number of ESRC workshops and seminars to help develop entrepreneurial and commercialisation skills.	2005/06 = 3	The seminars were collaborative activities with professional bodies drawing on social science research to develop participants' understanding of research commercialisation processes and new business generation.
	2. The number of research projects on spin-outs and other commercialisation processes.	2005/06 = 25	These projects are additional to the work carried out by the ESRC's three Innovation Research Centres.
Cooperative training	1. The Number of collaborative studentships by type (CASE, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Government departments and agencies etc).	2005/06 = 135	Collaborative Studentships with Government Departments are jointly funded, selected and supervised. Partner organisations select research topics consistent with their strategic priorities. CASE numbers were boosted by a targeted publicity campaign. Plans are in place to increase KTPs in business organisations.
People exchanges between the science base and user organisations	1. The number of users placed in HEIs or ESRC research investments.	2005/06 = 21	The users placed in HEI's are drawn from a wide-range of organisations including: Help the Aged; BBC News; HM Treasury; and Tesco PLC.
	2. The number of academics placed in user organisations.	2005/06 = 15	The ESRC gave increased attention in 2005-06 to 'people transfer' as a key ingredient of knowledge transfer. In addition to the numbers of academics who gave devoted time in user organisations, the Council introduced a Placement Fellowship Scheme, co-funded by concordat partners that attracted 13 applications. The outcome of this competition will be reported in 2006-07.

Quality			
Interaction with business and public services	1. Surveys of concordat partner satisfaction.	The 2005/06 survey showed a high level of satisfaction. All partners have a good understanding of ESRC research, training and collaborative activities; the concordat meetings are effective or very effective for the majority of partners; and the ESRC had been extremely efficient in dealing with actions agreed at the meetings.	
	2. Evaluations of seminars and workshops to assess benefits and application of research findings.	The positive feedback from the 3 events held in 2005/06 has been used to inform the design of further events and collaborative activities.	
	3. Feedback reports from user representatives on ESRC boards.	The 2005/06 survey of ESRC's Board and Committee User Members showed general agreement that the role and purpose of user members was clear, relevant and appropriate. Users felt fully involved in meetings and the training given was sufficient. The Members also felt that they/their organisations benefited from their membership.	
Collaborative research	1. Evaluations of joint projects over £50,000 in value.	There were no joint projects evaluated in 2005/06.	Venture Fund project evaluations will be reported in future years.
Commercialisation of research	1. Systematic surveys obtaining feedback from seminar attendees on learning application	In 2005/06, 7 workshops were held for business sector audiences. Feedback from these events is informing the development of the ESRC's Business Engagement Strategy.	

	2. Follow up studies to track seminar impact.	In 2005/06, a sample of 40 people was surveyed 6 months after the ESRC's Getting Research Into Practice (GRIP) Workshops. The feedback was positive, with participants identifying insights into best practice and networking opportunities as key benefits.	
Cooperative training	1. End of placement reports from students in receipt of collaborative funding.	In 2005/06, 5 reports were received from POST/OST students and from students with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. A review of these activities is currently being undertaken.	.
	2. A survey of a sample of employers providing work experience for students	In 2005/06, 39 employers involved in ESRC Student Placement Schemes were surveyed. The results fed into the Council's review of Knowledge Transfer Schemes which is being considered by ESRC's Training & Development Board.	
	3. A survey of a sample of academic supervisors.	The 2005/06 survey of Knowledge Transfer Partnership Supervisors showed that 81% of projects had led to further collaborative activities.	
People exchanges between the science base and user organisations	1. End of placement reports from award-holders and their hosts.	We will report next year on the outcome of the ESRC's HM Treasury placement. Initial comments on this work have been very positive.	