Association for Learning Technology (ALT). RAE 2008 – Consultation on assessment panels' draft criteria and working methods

Background

This document contains ALT's responses to the consultation. These were submitted to RAE shortly before the 19/9/2005 deadline using the web-forms through which RAE required all responses to be channelled. The responses were developed in the course of two consultation workshops in July and August 2005, convened by Diana Laurillard at DfES, and organised by ALT, and during a pre-conference workshop at the 2005 ALT Conference.

The aim of the workshops was to reach a consensus between a range of research-active colleagues on a response to the draft criteria and working methods consultation which, in particular, takes account of the needs of the learning technology research discipline.

Responses were submitted, in order of significance, under the following Main Panels and Units of Assessment (UOA).

(i)   UOA 45 – Education

(ii)   UOA 23 – Computer Science and Informatics

(iii)   UOA 37 – Library and Information Management

(iv)   Main Panel K

There is, inevitably, a large amount of overlap between the responses, particularly in respect of cross-referral.

Responsibility for this document rests with ALT, and the contribution of those who participated in the workshops is gratefully acknowledged. A detailed note of the two workshops is on the ALT web site at http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/rae2008cons.pdf. Also of relevance is ALT's 2005 Learning Technology Research Strategy, accessible from http://www.alt.ac.uk/documents.html.

The URL of this document is http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/rae2008responses_final.pdf.

Association for Learning Technology (ALT), September 2005. http://www.alt.ac.uk/

(i) UOA 45 - Education

1 How far do you agree that the descriptor provided by the sub-panel describes the main subject areas of the UOA?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

1.1. UOA 45 takes a welcome, broad view of what is acceptable research methodology in educational research.

1.2. The UOA 45 descriptor lacked some structural rigour when compared, for example, with that for UOA 23 (Computer Science and Informatics), which may reflect UOA 45's large and diffuse workload. The 5 section structure would be clearer as a 4 section structure combining the 'Cross Sectoral Issues' and 'Substantive Areas' sections into one – 'Research Areas', for example.

1.3. We welcome the inclusion of 'ICT in education', but this would be expressed more accurately as 'use of ICT in all aspects of education'. Under 'Research Areas', assuming the suggested combination is adopted, or, if it not, under 'Cross Sectoral Issues' or 'Substantive Areas', include also:

- "design of learning environments";
- "mobile and ambient learning";
- "learning design";
- "e-portfolios".

1.4. The descriptor should also include;

- under 'Sectors', "informal learning";
- under 'Disciplines contributing to Education', "computing", "cognitive sciences", "information management", "human computer interaction";
- under 'Methodological Investigation', "design studies".

1.5. Looking forward to 2013, RAE should recognise that education is a "rising ball". The UK needs education to have a full panel, not (as at present) a sub-panel. The main arguments are:

- it already has one of the highest workloads of all panels, and is an expanding area of research;
- it is a complex area with many related discipline areas requiring cross-referrals;
- it is strategically important, and research in this area plays a critical role in government strategy and policy on education.

No response to q 2.

3 How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing the submitted research outputs?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

3.1. Paragraph 20 should make it clear that for "curriculum, teaching and assessment materials" to be assessed, they should "embody original research", which is a more stringent requirement than the currently stated "have been based on or developed through research". Nor should there be a requirement for such materials to have been published, as against "referred to in published research". The phrase "Such materials must embody original research and make a contribution to knowledge in its field." would make the position much clearer.

No response to q 4-7 inclusive

8 If relevant in this UOA, how far do you agree that the sub-panel's criteria and working methods are appropriate for identifying and assessing practice-based or practice-led research equitably alongside other forms of research?

Strongly Agree   Agree   **Disagree**   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

8.1. E-learning is often multidisciplinary, so submissions could potentially appear in any of several UOAs. It is essential that a structure ("the consistency group") is in place to define the criteria and rules that will ensure that submissions are directed to panels appropriately. We should aim to:

(i)   make it straightforward for applicants and panels alike to decide whether a submission will need to be referred;

(ii)   keep the number of cross-referrals to UOA 45 to a manageable number;

(iii)   ensure that appropriate expertise is available to UOA 45 and to all other panels making judgments about the quality of research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies.

8.2. We propose the following as a way of achieving these aims.

(i)   Set up a 'Consistency Group' (as already suggested in discussions between the UOA 45 Chair and RAE) to enable UOA 45 to ensure that research on learning and teaching, wherever it is submitted, is assessed in a rigorous and consistent manner. This group will need sufficient resource to do what is likely to be a difficult job.

(ii)   Establish a 'Reference Group' of Specialist Advisers (SAs) in the domain of learning technologies, who can be called on by UOA 45 and other panels to assist judgments of research quality in this area. (It may be necessary for SAs from outside the UK to play a role. ALT can help with this via its links with the Sloan Consortium, ASCILITE, SURF, and IMS, and can also help with the provision of specialist advisor names within the UK.)

(iii)   Key tasks for the 'Consistency Group' are likely to be the following.

- Clarify the criteria for cross-referral from another panel to UOA 45, e.g. a substantial component of the research is on learning (child or adult), subject-specific learning, or the impact of digital technologies in education; the quality of the research is critically dependent on the quality of the educational component (a computing science submission on applications developed for education may build its case on the innovative nature of the software rather than its value to education, in which case it would not need to be referred; on the other hand, research that claims to make a contribution to educational research would either need to be referred, or should be judged according to the criteria defined by the panel, with the help of specialist advisers, as necessary).

- Specify in advance generic criteria that all panels can use to judge research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies, with the help of Specialist Advisers. These can then be incorporated into the relevant UOA criteria. (Note here that the requirement for any referred work to be assessed according to the procedures and values of the sending UOA may imply such things as different sampling rates for referred work, or that the referred work is itself a sample derived from the procedures of the sending committee. Such things need work in advance to stop confusion.)

- Negotiate these definitions and criteria with other panels to ensure they are clear and agreed, are aligned with other panels' expectations, and are seen to be beneficial.

- Reflect on the process for RAE 2008 and make recommendations for how research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies in particular, should be handled for 2013.

Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the UOA 45 Draft Statement should be rewritten to reflect these proposals.

9 General comments on any other aspect of the sub-panel's criteria and working methods. Where appropriate, respondents might wish to comment here, for example, on any non-standard data or data analyses that the sub-panel has requested:

These comments refer in particular to the "top level" document – RAE 2008 Consultation on assessment panels' draft criteria and working methods.

9.1. We strongly welcome the statement that the submission of pedagogic research is encouraged (to any relevant UOA) where it meets the Annex C definition. However, the term "pedagogic research" could be seen to exclude adult learning. A better term would be "research on learning and teaching".

Comments on the section 'Assessment of pedagogic research'

9.2. Paragraph 56. It seems unnecessarily restrictive to specify "in HE", as some work will be applicable cross-sector, or may explicitly set out to bridge the gap between HE and school, FE, work-based or community-based learning. The phrase "in HE" could simply be omitted. This fits better with the Annex C definition of research, which "includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors".

9.3. Also in paragraph 56. For the avoidance of doubt, and to ensure, for example, that ethnographic research (i.e. research containing descriptive accounts) is not ruled out, the phrase "Reports of studies" at the start of the second paragraph should be replaced by "Non-analytical studies".

9.4. Paragraph 57. Continuing the broader reference for pedagogical research it would be possible to omit the first reference to HE here, but not the second. The latter appears to relate to pedagogical research of the kind that is peculiar to HE, for example, an investigation of whether learners can benefit from being linked more closely into the research field as part of their undergraduate studies.

9.5. The latter part of paragraph 57 is critical, because it proposes a coordinating structure. This should be reflected in the 'boundaries' sections for all panels. The aim is to make sure the following.

(i)   That HE-related pedagogic research can be considered by UOA 45.

(ii)   That non-HE related pedagogic research can be considered elsewhere than in UOA 45.

(iii)   That panels have available to them those competent to make judgements in this area. (They may not always be capable of making isolated decisions about whether they already have such competence.)

(ii) UOA 23 – Computer Science and Informatics

1 How far do you agree that the descriptor provided by the sub-panel describes the main subject areas of the UOA?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

The descriptor is clear and starts very broadly but the emphasis on mathematics, engineering and especially science makes clear the main thrust of the panel which could be viewed as limited. It faithfully reflects the membership. The boundary description recognises the interdisciplinary aspect of UoA.

We welcome the initial broadness. Using technology in teaching, especially in CS itself, is a major activity of some researchers whose natural home is UOA 23. While one could view CS as a natural home for some of this work on learning technology, it will be important to make sure that there be consistency of treatment with other UoAs in this area. In particular smooth inter-working with UOA 45 will be essential. It may be tempting for the panel to think it has the necessary pedagogic expertise and so behave differently from other panels.

2 How far do you agree that the sub-panel's proposed weightings for research outputs, research environment and research esteem are appropriate to the UOA?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

Given the importance assigned to outputs, we are surprised at the 25% sampling rate inherited from main panel F. We are not sure how this will work with referred work - will the sample for referring be chosen by Cs or will the sampling be undertaken by the receiving panel.

We welcome the non-formulaic approach to journals and esteem.

3 How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing the submitted research outputs?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

ALT welcomes the inclusion of "wider fields" in paragraph 17 and believes that it is appropriate.

4. How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing the research environment component of a submission?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

No comment offered.

5. How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing evidence of esteem within a submission?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

With a wide field of application and a number of possible disciplinary submissions, the UOA has done it best to be embracing. This will need to be backed up by procedures and consistency and will need work.

6. How far do you agree that the sub-panel has identified appropriate criteria for assessing the vitality and sustainability of the research described in each submission, including its criteria for assessing the contribution of researchers at different career stages?

Strongly Agree   **<u>Agree</u>**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

No comment offered.

7. If relevant in this UOA, how far do you agree that the sub-panel's criteria and working methods are appropriate for identifying and assessing applied research equitably alongside other forms of research?

Strongly Agree   **Agree**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

The description of applied research is thoughtful and broad. ALT welcomes this but believes that there may be a resulting need for referrals and specialist advisors. This is especially true when assessing software and artefacts.

It is not clear how the description relates to paragraph 22 on practice based research which seems to sit in an isolated way. No operational consequences are drawn and the paragraph might appear to be there for token reasons.

8. If relevant in this UOA, how far do you agree that the sub-panel's criteria and working methods are appropriate for identifying and assessing practice-based or practice-led research equitably alongside other forms of research?

Strongly Agree   Agree   **Disagree**   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

See comment under 7 above, and general comments under 9 below.

9. General comments on any other aspect of the sub-panel's criteria and working methods. Where appropriate, respondents might wish to comment here, for example, on any non-standard data or data analyses that the sub-panel has requested:

9.1. E-learning is often multidisciplinary, so submissions could potentially appear in any of several UOAs including UOA 23. It is essential that a structure ("the consistency group") is in place to define the criteria and rules that will ensure that submissions are directed to panels appropriately. We should aim to:

(i)   make it straightforward for applicants and panels alike to decide whether a submission will need to be referred;

(ii)   keep the number of cross-referrals from UOA 23 to UOA 45 to a manageable number;

(iii)   ensure that appropriate expertise is available to any UOA making judgments about the quality of research on learning and teaching, and on learning technology.

9.2. We propose the following as a way of achieving these aims.

(i)   Set up a 'Consistency Group' to ensure that research involving learning and teaching, wherever it is submitted, is assessed in a rigorous and consistent manner. This group will need sufficient resource to do what is likely to be a difficult job.

(ii)   Establish a 'Reference Group' of Specialist Advisers (SAs) in the domain of learning technologies, who can be called on to assist judgments of research quality in this area. (It may be necessary for SAs from outside the UK to play a role. ALT can help with this via its links with the Sloan Consortium, ASCILITE, SURF, and IMS, and can also help with the provision of specialist advisor names within the UK.)

(iii)   Key tasks for the 'Consistency Group' are likely to be the following.

    •   Clarify the criteria for cross-referral to UOA 45, e.g. a substantial component of the research is on learning (child or adult), subject-specific learning, or the impact of digital technologies in education; the quality of the research is critically dependent on the quality of the educational component (a UOA 23 submission on applications developed for education may build its case on the innovative nature of the software rather than its value to education, in which case it would not need to be referred; on the other hand, research that claims to make a contribution to educational research would either need to be referred, or should be judged according to the criteria defined by the panel, with the help of specialist advisers, as necessary).

- Specify in advance generic criteria that all panels can use to judge research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies, with the help of Specialist Advisers. These can then be incorporated into the relevant UOA criteria. (Note here that the requirement for any referred work to be assessed according to the procedures and values of the sending UOA may imply such things as different sampling rates for referred work, or that the referred work is itself a sample derived from the procedures of the sending committee. Such things need work in advance to stop confusion.)

- Negotiate these definitions and criteria with other panels to ensure they are clear and agreed, are aligned with other panels' expectations, and are seen to be beneficial.

- Reflect on the process for RAE 2008 and make recommendations for how research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies in particular, should be handled for 2013.

(The remaining comments refer in particular to the "top level" document – "RAE 2008 Consultation on assessment panels' draft criteria and working methods", with a particular focus on paragraphs 55 – 57.)

9.3. Paragraph 55. We strongly welcome the statement that the submission of pedagogic research is encouraged (to any relevant UOA) where it meets the Annex C definition. However, the term "pedagogic research" could be seen to exclude adult learning. A better term would be "research on learning and teaching".

9.4. Paragraph 56. It seems unnecessarily restrictive to specify "in HE", as some work will be applicable cross-sector, or may explicitly set out to bridge the gap between HE and school, FE, work-based or community-based learning. The phrase "in HE" could simply be omitted. This fits better with the Annex C definition of research, which "includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors".

9.5. Also in paragraph 56. For the avoidance of doubt, and to ensure, for example, that ethnographic research (i.e. research containing descriptive accounts) is not ruled out, the phrase "Reports of studies" at the start of the second paragraph should be replaced by "Non-analytical studies".

9.6. Paragraph 57. Continuing the broader reference for pedagogical research it would be possible to omit the first reference to HE here, but not the second. The latter appears to relate to pedagogical research of the kind that is peculiar to HE, for example, an investigation of whether learners can benefit from being linked more closely into the research field as part of their undergraduate studies.

9.7. The latter part of paragraph 57 is critical, because it proposes a coordinating structure. This should be reflected in the 'boundaries' sections for all panels. The aim is to make sure the following.

(i)   That HE-related pedagogic research can be considered by UOA 45.

(ii)   That non-HE related pedagogic research can be considered elsewhere than in UOA 45, e.g. in UOA 23.

(iii)   That panels have available to them those competent to make judgements in this area. (They may not always be capable of making isolated decisions about whether they already have such competence.)

(iii) UOA 37 – Library and Information Management

__1. How far do you agree that the descriptor provided by the sub-panel describes the main subject areas of the UOA?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

LIM will be a natural location for the assessment of research done by some learning Technologists, whose work is situated within LIM disciplines, and also those researching on the learning and teaching process within those disciplines.

We welcome the clear descriptor statement that identifies areas of policy, systems and society to which learning technology research can contribute knowledge.

__2. How far do you agree that the sub-panel's proposed weightings for research outputs, research environment and research esteem are appropriate to the UOA?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

ALT welcomes the inclusive definitions of research outputs and their weighting of 75%.

__3 How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing the submitted research outputs?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

ALT particularly welcomes the reference to "HE or other levels" in Section 18.

__4. How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing the research environment component of a submission?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

No comment offered.

__5. How far do you agree that the sub-panel's range of indicators for excellence is appropriate for the UOA in assessing evidence of esteem within a submission?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

No comment offered.

__6. How far do you agree that the sub-panel has identified appropriate criteria for assessing the vitality and sustainability of the research described in each submission, including its criteria for assessing the contribution of researchers at different career stages?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

No comment offered.

__7. If relevant in this UOA, how far do you agree that the sub-panel's criteria and working methods are appropriate for identifying and assessing applied research equitably alongside other forms of research?__

Strongly Agree   **__Agree__**   Disagree   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

ALT also welcomes the LIM panel's intention to examine in detail at least 50% of the outputs.

__8. If relevant in this UOA, how far do you agree that the sub-panel's criteria and working methods are appropriate for identifying and assessing practice-based or practice-led research equitably alongside other forms of research?__

Strongly Agree   Agree   **__Disagree__**   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

See general comments below on cross-referral of cross-disciplinary research.

9. General comments on any other aspect of the sub-panel's criteria and working methods. Where appropriate, respondents might wish to comment here, for example, on any non-standard data or data analyses that the sub-panel has requested:

9.1. E-learning is often multidisciplinary, so submissions could potentially appear in any of several UOAs including UOA 37. It is essential that a structure ("the consistency group") is in place to define the criteria and rules that will ensure that submissions are directed to panels appropriately. We should aim to:

(i)   make it straightforward for applicants and panels alike to decide whether a submission will need to be referred;

(ii)   keep the number of cross-referrals from UOA 37 to UOA 45 to a manageable number;

(iii)   ensure that appropriate expertise is available to any UOA making judgments about the quality of research on learning and teaching, and on learning technology.

9.2. We propose the following as a way of achieving these aims.

(i)   Set up a 'Consistency Group' to ensure that research involving learning and teaching, wherever it is submitted, is assessed in a rigorous and consistent manner. This group will need sufficient resource to do what is likely to be a difficult job.

(ii)   Establish a 'Reference Group' of Specialist Advisers (SAs) in the domain of learning technology, who can be called on to assist judgments of research quality in this area. (It may be necessary for SAs from outside the UK to play a role. ALT can help with this via its links with the Sloan Consortium, ASCILITE, SURF, and IMS, and can also help with the provision of specialist advisor names within the UK.)

(iii)   Key tasks for the 'Consistency Group' are likely to be the following.

- Clarify the criteria for cross-referral to UOA 45, e.g. a substantial component of the research is on learning (child or adult), subject-specific learning, or the impact of digital technologies in education; the quality of the research is critically dependent on the quality of the educational component (a UOA 37 submission on information management in education may build its case on the innovative nature of the software rather than its value to education, in which case it would not need to be referred; on the other hand, research that claims to make a contribution to educational research would either need to be referred, or should be judged according to the criteria defined by the panel, with the help of specialist advisers, as necessary).

- Specify in advance generic criteria that all panels can use to judge research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies, with the help of Specialist Advisers. These can then be incorporated into the relevant UOA criteria. (Note here that the requirement for any referred work to be assessed according to the procedures and values of the sending UOA may imply such things as different sampling rates for referred work, or that the referred work is itself a sample derived from the procedures of the sending committee. Such things need work in advance to stop confusion.)

- Negotiate these definitions and criteria with other panels to ensure they are clear and agreed, are aligned with other panels' expectations, and are seen to be beneficial.

- Reflect on the process for RAE 2008 and make recommendations for how research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies in particular, should be handled for 2013.

(The remaining comments refer in particular to the "top level" document – "RAE 2008 Consultation on assessment panels' draft criteria and working methods", with a particular focus on paragraphs 55 – 57.)

9.3. Paragraph 55. We strongly welcome the statement that the submission of pedagogic research is encouraged (to any relevant UOA) where it meets the Annex C definition. However, the term "pedagogic research" could be seen to exclude adult learning. A better term would be "research on learning and teaching".

9.4. Paragraph 56. It seems unnecessarily restrictive to specify "in HE", as some work will be applicable cross-sector, or may explicitly set out to bridge the gap between HE and school, FE, work-based or community-based learning. The phrase "in HE" could simply be omitted. This fits better with the Annex C definition of research, which "includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors".

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9.6. Paragraph 57. Continuing the broader reference for pedagogical research it would be possible to omit the first reference to HE here, but not the second. The latter appears to relate to pedagogical research of the kind that is peculiar to HE, for example, an investigation of whether learners can benefit from being linked more closely into the research field as part of their undergraduate studies.

9.7. The latter part of paragraph 57 is critical, because it proposes a coordinating structure. This should be reflected in the 'boundaries' sections for all panels. The aim is to make sure the following.

(i)   That HE-related pedagogic research can be considered by UOA 45.

(ii)   That non-HE related pedagogic research can be considered elsewhere than in UOA 45, e.g. in UOA 37.

(iii)   That panels have available to them those competent to make judgements in this area. (They may not always be capable of making isolated decisions about whether they already have such competence.)

(iv) Main Panel K

1. How far do you agree that the criteria established by the sub-panels in the remit of the main panel reflect an appropriate degree of consistency, given the units of assessment (UOA) they cover?

Strongly Agree   Agree   **Disagree**   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

See general comment below

2. How far do you agree that the main panel's proposed working methods for the assessment phase of the RAE 2008 will ensure an appropriate degree of consistency between the sub-panels in its remit?

Strongly Agree   Agree   **Disagree**   Disagree Strongly   Don't Know

See general comment below

3. General comments

3.1. E-learning is often multidisciplinary, so submissions could potentially appear in any of several UOAs outside Panel K. It is essential that a structure ("the consistency group") is in place to define the criteria and rules that will ensure that submissions are directed to panels appropriately. We should aim to:

(i)   make it straightforward for applicants and panels alike to decide whether a submission will need to be referred;

(ii)   keep the number of cross-referrals to UOA 45 to a manageable number;

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(iii)   Key tasks for the 'Consistency Group' are likely to be the following.

- Clarify the criteria for cross-referral to UOA 45, e.g. a substantial component of the research is on learning (child or adult), subject-specific learning, or the impact of digital technologies in education; the quality of the research is critically dependent on the quality of the educational component (for example, a UOA 37 or UOA 23 submission on a system or application in education may build its case on the innovative nature of the system rather than its value to education, in which case it would not need to be referred; on the other hand, research that claims to make a contribution to educational research would either need to be referred, or should be judged according to the criteria defined by the panel, with the help of specialist advisers, as necessary).

- Specify in advance generic criteria that all panels can use to judge research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies, with the help of Specialist Advisers. These can then be incorporated into the relevant UOA criteria. (Note here that the requirement for any referred work to be assessed according to the procedures and values of the sending UOA may imply such things as different sampling rates for referred work, or that the referred work is itself a sample

derived from the procedures of the sending committee. Such things need work in advance to stop confusion.)

- Negotiate these definitions and criteria with other panels to ensure they are clear and agreed, are aligned with other panels' expectations, and are seen to be beneficial.

- Reflect on the process for RAE 2008 and make recommendations for how research on learning and teaching, and on learning technologies in particular, should be handled for 2013.

(The remaining comments refer in particular to the "top level" document – "RAE 2008 Consultation on assessment panels' draft criteria and working methods", with a particular focus on paragraphs 55 – 57.)

3.3. Paragraph 55. We strongly welcome the statement that the submission of pedagogic research is encouraged (to any relevant UOA) where it meets the Annex C definition. However, the term "pedagogic research" could be seen to exclude adult learning. A better term would be "research on learning and teaching".

3.4. Paragraph 56. It seems unnecessarily restrictive to specify "in HE", as some work will be applicable cross-sector, or may explicitly set out to bridge the gap between HE and school, FE, work-based or community-based learning. The phrase "in HE" could simply be omitted. This fits better with the Annex C definition of research, which "includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors".

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3.7. The latter part of paragraph 57 is critical, because it proposes a coordinating structure. This should be reflected in the 'boundaries' sections for all panels. The aim is to make sure the following.

(i)   That HE-related pedagogic research can be considered by UOA 45.

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