

Scoring scale for expert reviewers

The reviewer scores follow a numerical scale from 1 to 6. The scores are as follows:

Score	Description
6. (Exceptional)	The application is outstanding. It addresses all the assessment criteria and meets them to an exceptional level.
5. (Excellent)	The application is very high quality. It addresses most of the assessment criteria and meets them to an excellent level. There are very minor weaknesses.
4. (Very good)	The application demonstrates considerable quality. It meets most of the assessment criteria to a high level. There are minor weakness.
3. (Good)	The application is of good quality. It meets most of the assessment criteria to an acceptable level, but not across all aspects of the proposed activities. There are weaknesses.
2. (Weak)	The application is not sufficiently competitive. It meets some of the assessment criteria to an adequate level. There are, however, significant weaknesses.
1. (Poor)	The application is flawed or unsuitable quality for funding. It does not meet the assessment criteria to an adequate level.

All academic expert review forms have four core criteria (below) plus up to two scheme-specific ones. The scores on the form for each criterion are also on a scale from 1 to 6, where 6 is 'Exceptional'. If you feel unable to assess an application against a particular criterion, you can also indicate this by ticking 'Unable to assess.' For research applications the core criteria are as follows:

- Assessment criterion 1 - Originality; potential contribution to knowledge
- Assessment criterion 2 - Research design and methods
- Assessment criterion 3 - Value for money
- Assessment criterion 4 - Outputs, dissemination and impact.

Non-academic ('user') reviewers assess research applications according to the following criteria:

- Assessment criterion 1 - Likely importance of research to potential users
- Assessment criterion 2 - Timeliness of the outcomes for potential users
- Assessment criterion 3 - Effectiveness of plans for involving potential users and disseminating results to them.
- Assessment criterion 4 - Outputs, dissemination and impact.

However, you are also invited to score the scientific merit of applications (see above) if you wish.

The overall score descriptions for user reviewers are as follows:

Grade	Description
High	Research of high importance to users of research, for example, of such novelty or timeliness and promise that significant contribution to policy or practice is likely.
Worthy	Research that will add to understanding and is worthy of support, but which may not be of such relevance or urgency as to have a significant influence on policy or practice.
Reject	Research which is flawed in its proposed contribution to policy or practice or is repetitious of other work.

Applications that do not receive sufficiently supportive comments or scores are normally rejected without referral to the Grants Assessment Panels (GAPs) in responsive mode. This is primarily informed by the average expert reviewer score. The minimum threshold score for progressing to applicant response and panel is determined on an individual funding opportunity basis.

All sufficiently supported applications are forwarded to the applicant to respond to expert reviews and then to the Panels for consideration.

Scoring scale for Panel Introducers

Panel Introducers score applications on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is an exceptionally strong application. The following table summarises the meaning of the scores for our responsive mode research grants. However, all assessment criteria should be carefully considered before you arrive at an overall score. Please use the form to note any comments you might have about any aspect of the application, even though there are no specific sub-sections on the form. Other schemes, such as Knowledge Exchange Opportunities, have different score definitions according to different criteria. If you are asked to assess applications to opportunities where the assessment criteria are distinct from those given below you will be provided with separate guidance.

Please note that you may on occasion be asked to make assessments as Introducer where the applications have not previously been out to expert review. The following scoring scale still applies in such cases.

Score	Score definitions
10	The application is exceptional ; it very strongly meets all of the assessment criteria to the highest standard. The panel agrees that it is difficult to articulate how the application could be improved.
9	The application is outstanding ; it very strongly meets all of the assessment criteria.
8	The application is excellent ; it strongly meets all the assessment criteria.

7	The application is very good ; it meets the assessment criteria well but with some minor weaknesses/limitations .
Applications scoring below 7 are <u>not</u> recommended for funding.	
6	The application is good ; it meets the assessment criteria well but with some clear weaknesses/limitations .
5	The application is adequate ; it meets the assessment criteria but with clear weaknesses/limitations
4	The application is weak ; it meets the assessment criteria but with significant weaknesses/limitations .
3	The application is poor ; it meets the assessment criteria but has major weaknesses/limitations .
2	The application is unsatisfactory ; it does not meet one or more of the assessment criteria .
1	The application is unsatisfactory ; it does not meet any of the assessment criteria

