



Terms of Reference Research Evaluation 2012-2017

Aim

Periodic external evaluation of scientific research is essential for two reasons:

1. To improve the quality of research and research management;
2. To provide accountability of the performed research towards government and society at large, the scientific community and funding agencies,.

Therefore, universities in the Netherlands have agreed to carry out a self-evaluation every three years and an external review every six years. This process is guided by the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) that has been defined by the three main Dutch organizations responsible for publicly funded research in The Netherlands – the Association of Universities of the Netherlands, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

Objectives

The external research evaluation has the following objectives:

- To assess the quality of research programs and PhD programs carried out at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Utrecht University (FVM-UU) during the period under review (2012-2017) compared to an international benchmark (not a comparison within FVM-UU);
- To identify research areas that have the potential to stimulate innovation and have societal impact;
- To identify research areas that are currently of the highest international standard, how these may be strengthened and suggest conditions for their continued development.
- To identify research areas that have the potential to develop towards the highest level of international research and to determine what is necessary to ensure such development.
- To identify research areas that are not internationally or nationally competitive and lack evident development potential.
- To identify research areas that are missing that could be considered to be essential for the FVM-UU.
- To identify the need for infrastructural support that would facilitate development towards greater excellence.
- To assess the plans in relation to preserve the identity of Veterinary Medicine.

Research organization at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Utrecht University

The Institute of Veterinary Research (IVR) is responsible for research management within the FVM-UU and, therefore, Utrecht University will participate in this research assessment through this research institute.

Research within the IVR is structured into six programs:

- Fertility & Reproduction (FR)
- Regenerative Medicine, Stem Cells & Cancer (RM&SC)
- Behaviour & Welfare (B&W)
- Risk Assessment (RA)
- Infection&Immunity (I&I)
- Applied Veterinary Research (AVR)



In addition, we ask the committee to provide a qualitative assessment of the IVR as a whole in relation to its strategic targets and to the governance and leadership skills of its management. Please also make recommendations concerning these two subjects.

In accordance with the SEP, we ask you to reflect on the following three aspects in your report:

- a. PhD programmes;
- b. research integrity;
- c. diversity.

Delineation and required expertise of committee members

The members of the review committee should have a positive attitude towards fundamental and applied aspects of veterinary research, and the multidisciplinary character of the discipline of Veterinary Sciences.

The following expertise is required of the members of the review committee:

- Excellent expertise in at least one of the following fields of Veterinary Sciences: Reproductive Biology, Regenerative Medicine, Behavioral Sciences, Risk Assessment Sciences, Infection Biology and Veterinary Science.
- Reasonable expertise in and overview of fields other than his/her own specialization.

The international review committee will consist of six members, including the chair, in order to cover all fields mentioned above. The chairman should have a bird’s eye view of the entire research area.

Assessment

We ask the committee to assess the quality and relevance to society of the research conducted by the IVR as well as its strategic targets and the extent to which it is equipped to achieve them. This should be done by judging the unit’s performance on the three SEP assessment criteria below. Be sure to take into account current international trends and developments in science and society in your analysis.

Research Quality	The quality of the unit’s research and the contribution that research makes to the body of scientific knowledge. Also assesses the scale of the unit’s research results (scientific publications, instruments and infrastructure developed by the unit, and other contributions to science).
Relevance to society	The quality, scale and relevance of contributions targeting specific economic, social or cultural target groups, of advisory reports for policy, of contributions to public debates, and so on. The point is to assess contributions in areas that the research unit has itself designated as target areas.
Viability	The strategy that the research unit intends to pursue in the years ahead and the extent to which it is capable of meeting its targets in research and society during this period. It also considers the governance and leadership skills of the research unit’s management.



Please provide a written assessment on each of the three criteria and assign the research unit to a particular category (1, 2, 3 or 4) in each case, in accordance with the SEP guidelines. Please also provide recommendations for improvement.

We ask the committee to assess the societal relevance of our research. We will include a chapter on this topic in our self-evaluation and give a reflection on the economic and social value of the programs, including recent examples of publications and/or activities that underscore the societal impact of the work.

	Research quality	Relevance to society
Demonstrable products	1. Research products for peers - Research articles (refereed vs non-refereed) - Scientific/scholarly books - Other research outputs - Dissertations	4. Research products for societal target groups - Professional publications - publications aimed at the general public - inaugural addresses - Lectures – participation in public debate, seminars
Demonstrable use of products	2. Use of research products by peers - Bibliometric data - use of research facilities	5. Use of research products by societal groups - patents/licenses - contract research
Demonstrable marks of recognition	3. Marks of recognition from peers - Science awards/scholarly prizes - Research grants awarded to individuals - Invited lectures - Memberships of scientific committees, editorial boards, etc	6. Marks of recognition by societal groups - media performances - public prizes

Depending on the wishes of the committee we will include societal stakeholders in the evaluation process.

Based on the written material provided, the committee is asked to evaluate the activities reported and will present this in a written report. The committee will have meetings with the chairs of the research programs, the chairs of the departments, the Dean and Vice-Dean of Research of the FVM and PhD-candidates and will visit the various research buildings of the FVM. At the closure of the visit, the committee will announce their preliminary review.

Final report

The committee is asked to deliver a written report in December 2018.