

Examples of corroborating evidence identified from qualitative analysis of high versus low-scoring REF2014 case studies

Examples from high-scoring case studies

Credibility of sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimonials from high-level stakeholders in highly relevant organisations, e.g. NHS and WHO • Independent evidence from other research teams; highly credible organisations, e.g. WHO report or secondary data sources (e.g. Government statistics) • Peer-reviewed evidence of impact from impact case study authors e.g. showing impact on computing speed or RCTs, quote from journal article by a museum's Head of Research showing impact of research on curatorial practice
Evidence of pathways versus impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of claimed impacts, e.g. links to NICE guidelines or new industry standard explaining how and where research is cited, evidence of audience or visitor numbers • Link to Government press release showing a policy was based on research by the submitting unit • Testimonials about the impact of the research contained in media reports • Evidence of policy engagement to attribute impact to research in cases where policy impacts were achieved • Evidence of impacts arising from evidence-based policy, rather than just evidence of policy change
Eligibility of impacts evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only eligible impacts are evidenced
Specificity and link to impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative explaining what each source corroborates with references to page numbers where relevant • Corroborating evidence is provided for all claimed impacts

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Examples from low-scoring case studies

Credibility of sources
<p>Potential conflicts of interest undermine credibility of source, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A case study corroborated by testimonials from those who commissioned the research • A publisher commenting on the success of the book they published • Statements on spin-out company websites • Unpublished or non-peer-reviewed reports by the team responsible for the impact • Testimonial from staff at submitting unit
Evidence of pathways versus impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Download figures and other statistics relating to pathway rather than reach of impact • A funding proposal (e.g. original Knowledge Transfer Partnership application) • Collaboration agreements • Links to project websites and Facebook pages • Lists of media coverage without explaining what impact they evidence • Link to training materials rather than evidence that training had benefits • Links to conference and other presentations • Evidence of policy engagement with no evidence of policy impacts • Evidence of policy change in contexts where there are doubts over likelihood of implementation or enforcement • Evidence of policy change without explaining which aspects were linked to the research
Eligibility of impacts evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of potential future interest, rather than retrospective impact claims • Evidence that research was cited by other researchers • Indicators of esteem such as keynote presentations, invitation to contribute articles to <i>The Guardian</i> newspaper
Specificity and link to impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists of names (with or without positions and affiliations) that do not state what the person is able to corroborate (and are not cross-referenced to a quote from a testimonial in the case study) • Lists of hyperlinks, reports or other forms of evidence that are not cited in the “Details of the impact” section and do not explain what claims they evidence • Generic customer service email address to corroborate impact • Lists of research outputs without explaining how they corroborate impacts • No evidence provided to support key claims, e.g. missing economic data or testimonials to corroborate economic impact • Missing evidence for claimed impacts, e.g. a single piece of corroborating evidence from one individual beneficiary saying they were using an endangered language in a new way • Claim for causality based on similarity of two devices is not supported as an image/specification is only given for one of the devices