



Definition of rating categories

The definitions of the rating categories are given below. Descriptions of sub-categories in the A, B, C and Y categories have also been indicated. The definition of research at the end of the table should be consulted to clarify the interpretation of research as indicated in the various categories.

It must be borne in mind that the peer evaluation process is intricate and not mechanistic. Ultimately the judgement of the members of the Assessment Panels and their wisdom which has some intangible components must be relied upon. Hence interpretation of words such as 'wide impact', 'considerable', etc form an important part of the Assessment Panels' task in their role of assessment of reviewers' reports.

Category	Definition	Sub-category	Description
A	Researchers who are unequivocally recognised by their peers as leading international scholars in their field for the high quality and impact of their recent research outputs.	A1	A researcher in this group is recognised by all reviewers as a leading scholar in his or her field internationally for the high quality and wide impact (i.e. beyond a narrow field of specialisation) of his/her recent research outputs.
		A2	A researcher in this group is recognised by the overriding majority of reviewers as a leading scholar in his or her field internationally for the high quality and impact (either wide or confined) of his or her recent research outputs.
B	Researchers who enjoy considerable international recognition by their peers for the high quality and impact of their recent research outputs.	B1	All reviewers concur that the applicant enjoys considerable international recognition for the high quality and impact of his/her recent research outputs, with some of them indicating that he/she is a leading international scholar in the field.
		B2	All or the overriding majority of reviewers are firmly convinced that the applicant enjoys considerable international recognition for the high quality and impact of his/her recent research outputs.
		B3	Most of the reviewers are convinced that the applicant enjoys considerable international recognition for the high quality and impact of his/her recent research outputs.
C	Established researchers with a sustained recent record of productivity in the field who are recognised by their peers as having: ? produced a body of quality work, the core of which has coherence and attests to ongoing engagement with the field ? demonstrated the ability to conceptualise problems and apply research methods to investigating them.	C1	While all reviewers concur that the applicant is an established researcher (as described), some of them indicate that he/she already enjoys considerable international recognition for his/her high quality recent research outputs.
		C2	All or the overriding majority of reviewers are firmly convinced that the applicant is an established researcher (as described).
		C3	Most of the reviewers concur that the applicant is an established researcher (as described).

P	Young researchers (normally younger than 35 years of age), who have held the doctorate or equivalent qualification for less than five years at the time of application and who, on the basis of exceptional potential demonstrated in their published doctoral work and/or their research outputs in their early post-doctoral careers are considered likely to become future leaders in their field.		Researchers in this group are recognised by all or the over-riding majority of reviewers as having demonstrated the potential of becoming future leaders in their field, on the basis of exceptional research performance and output from their doctoral and/or early post-doctoral research careers.
Y	Young researchers (normally younger than 35 years of age), who have held the doctorate or equivalent qualification for less than five years at the time of application, and who are recognised as having the potential to establish themselves as researchers within a five-year period after evaluation, based on their performance and productivity as researchers during their doctoral studies and/or early post-doctoral careers.	Y1 Y2	A researcher in this group is recognised by all reviewers as having the potential (demonstrated by research products) to establish him/herself as a researcher with some of them indicating that he/she has the potential to become a future leader in his/her field. (Applicants on the borderline between P and Y should be rated at this level.) A researcher in this group is recognised by all or the over-riding majority of reviewers as having the potential to establish him/herself as a researcher (demonstrated by recent research products).
L	Persons (normally younger than 55 years) who were previously established as researchers or who previously demonstrated potential through their own research products, and who are considered capable of fully establishing or re-establishing themselves as researchers within a five-year period after evaluation. Candidates should be South African citizens or foreign nationals who have been resident in South Africa for five years during which time they have been unable for practical reasons to realise their potential as researchers. Candidates who are eligible in this category include: ? black researchers ? female researchers ? those employed in a higher education institution that lacked a research environment ? those who were previously established as researchers and have returned to a research environment.		This category was introduced to draw an increased number of researchers with potential from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as women into research. It also caters for persons previously established as researchers who have returned to a research environment after periods in industry or elsewhere. Applicants must demonstrate that they could not realise their potential or sustain their research ability by virtue of a lack of a research environment, or time spent in industry, or on maternity leave, or raising a family. For candidates to qualify for this category the employing institution must have demonstrated its financial commitment towards a development strategy for the staff member concerned.