



## Background information on the PBRF Quality Evaluation 2025 Moderation team

This document provides background information about the Moderation team for the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) Quality Evaluation 2025. This information is provided to support the nominations process for the roles of the Co-Moderator, Co-Moderator – Māori, and Deputy Moderator – Pacific.

### The role of the Moderation team

The PBRF Quality Evaluation moderation process is designed to promote systematic reflection on the issues of consistency, standards, and cross-panel calibration by:

- > Creating an environment in which the judgements of the peer review panels generate consistency on a cross-panel basis, while at the same time not reducing the panel judgements to a mechanistic application of the assessment criteria
- > Providing independent review of the standards and processes being applied by panels
- > Ensuring the consistent application of extraordinary circumstances provisions and the consistent assessment of new and emerging researchers
- > Establishing mechanisms and processes by which material differences or apparent inconsistencies in standards and processes can be addressed by panels
- > Advising the TEC Board on any issues regarding consistency of standards across panels.

### The high-level moderation process

The Quality Evaluation moderation process is carried out by the Moderation team. The Moderation team will carry out this role by:

- > Participating in the selection process for peer review Panel Chairs
- > Advising Panel Chairs and the TEC on panel composition
- > Advising Panel Chairs and the TEC on the development of the Panel Specific Guidance
- > Advising on the interpretation of Guidelines, in conjunction with the SRG prior to its dissolution, as required
- > Monitoring the individual assessment process
- > Participating in the Moderation Panel meetings to review initial and final scoring
- > Contributing to the Moderation Panel report
- > Supporting the presentation of results to the sector with the TEC as required.

## How changes to the PBRF affect the approach to Moderation team structure and person specifications

The TEC has made changes to the person specifications and structure of the Moderation team for the Quality Evaluation 2025. These changes reflect the recommendations of the SRG on how to implement Cabinet's decisions on the PBRF Review.

In the 2018 round, the Moderation team included a Principal Moderator and two Deputy Moderators. For 2025, this has been changed to a structure that includes a Co-Moderator, a Co-Moderator – Māori, and a Deputy Moderator – Pacific.

The person specifications and roles have also been changed to better reflect the new PBRF Principles and the TEC's commitment under the Education and Training Act 2020 to honour its obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to uphold Māori-Crown partnership:

- > Partnership: the PBRF should reflect the bicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand and the special role and status of the Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- > Equity and Inclusiveness, ensuring equitable outcomes and that the PBRF encourages and recognises the full diversity of ontologies, epistemologies, knowledges, and methodologies in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This change also aligns with the recommendation of the Quality Evaluation 2018 *Report of the Moderation Panel and Peer Review Panel* that the TEC should consider appointing a Māori Moderator. The report noted that panels would have benefitted from better advice on interpreting and assessing research of relevance to Māori.

### Co-Moderators and Deputy Moderator Person Specifications

In appointing the Moderation team, the TEC will consider how well it reflects the diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity. Reflecting the new PBRF definition of research, the TEC will also consider nominees' experience of our distinctive research cultures and environments.

Both Co-Moderators and the Deputy Moderator – Pacific will:

- > be of senior academic standing
- > have an understanding of the diverse range of ontologies, epistemologies, knowledges, and research in Aotearoa New Zealand
- > be committed to upholding and respecting the Māori-Crown partnership and the obligations which flow from Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- > have a working familiarity with the Quality Evaluation peer review panel process, as either a Chair, Deputy Chair, or Panel member
- > be able to commit the necessary time.

### Māori Co-Moderator

One Co-Moderator will be a recognised expert in Māori ways of knowing, being, and conducting rangahau such as kaupapa Māori and mātauranga Māori. The Co-Moderators will have equal standing, and both will carry out the roles described above.

The Māori Co-Moderator will have a specific role working with the Māori Knowledge and Development (MKD) Panel Chair and its initial panelists as they develop panel specific guidance. They will work with

the MKD Panel Chair to advise other Panel Chairs on how elements of the MKD panel specific guidance apply across other panels (in order to ensure consistent assessment of Evidence Portfolios drawing on Māori research submitted in other panels) and will oversee and moderate the MKD panel cross-referrals process.

### **Deputy Moderator – Pacific**

The Deputy Moderator – Pacific will be a recognized expert in diverse Pacific ways of knowing, being, and conducting research. They will have a specific role working with the Pacific Research Panel Chair and its initial panelists as they develop Panel Specific Guidance. They will work with the Pacific Research Panel Chair to advise other Panel Chairs on how elements of the Pacific Research Panel Specific Guidance apply across other panels (in order to ensure consistent assessment of Evidence Portfolios drawing on Pacific research submitted in other panels) and will oversee and moderate the Pacific panel cross-referrals process.

As well as having this specific role in relation to Pacific research, they will work with the Co-Moderators across the whole process. The Deputy Moderator will help ensure that there are a range of skills, expertise and knowledge being applied to the moderation process.

The Deputy Moderator will also provide support to the Co-Moderators over the period of assessment and peer review panel meetings, including deputising for the Co-Moderators as necessary.