Guidance for panel chairs

The chair’s role is to:

= keep the discussions to time by ensuring panellists remain on topic (only talking about points relevant to the criteria and requirements), and not repeating points already discussed. Panels should aim to spend around an hour and a quarter on each submission.

= give structure to the deliberations and move the discussion towards a decision; chairs should ensure each panellist has a chance to input on each section and the decision making is based on the criteria.
Guidance for panel chairs

The chair’s role is to:

= censor panellists where they make comments that are deemed prejudicial and personal opinions unrelated to the submission, for example assumptions about how much money a university has to resource Athena SWAN work.

= summarise the panel’s discussion when required, for example summarising how the panel have identified ways in which the submission does and doesn’t meet the criteria.
Guidance for panel chairs

The chair’s role is to:

= listen to and respect the moderator, as they will only speak where there is a reasonable/necessary point to be made.

= chair any subsequent discussion in the event that a panel requests further information or amendments.

= be aware of and raise any concerns about bias, and be open to others raising their concern.
Guidance for panel chairs

They will not:

= steer the panel to a particular conclusion.

We recommend that the chair give their opinion on the application after all the other panellists have contributed, however chairs are also panellists in their own right and can input at the end of the discussion for each section.
Guidance for panel chairs

- During panel discussions the chair should ensure that all panellists have the chance to speak.
- We recommend that the applications are assessed section-by-section and that everyone has the opportunity to comment on each section.
- For example, panellist 1 starts with the letter of endorsement, followed by panellists 2, 3, 4 and lastly the chair. When everyone has expressed their opinions, panellist 2 starts with the Description of the Department section and so on.
- The chair should ask the other panellists for their opinions before contributing their own.
Guidance for panel chairs

The chair should ensure panellists:

= keep in mind the criteria throughout the discussion, particularly during the final discussion and decision making.

= only raise points that have not been raised by another panellist, unless a panellist disagrees or needs to clarify a previous point.
Guidance for panel chairs

The chair should dissuade panellists from:

= focusing on presentational/formatting aspects of the submission, particularly during the final discussion and decision making.

= making decisions based on anything other than the criteria.

= using overly emotive language to discuss the submission.

= benchmarking submissions against each other, rather than the criteria.
## Guidance for panel chairs

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<th>Role of the chair</th>
<th>Role of the chair and moderator</th>
<th>Role of the moderator</th>
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<tr>
<td>To structure the assessment</td>
<td>To raise concerns about bias</td>
<td>To consider the consistency of the decision making based on the criteria and other panel decisions</td>
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<td>To keep the panel to time</td>
<td>To discourage panellists from making decisions based on irrelevant factors (such as the format of submissions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>To move the discussion towards a decision</td>
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<td>To clarify requirements and criteria when required</td>
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Guidance for panel chairs

The panel will seek to reach a unanimous decision, but may decide on the basis of a majority decision.
Essential reading

Can be found on our panellist resources webpage:

• Equality Charter Panellist role guidance
• Relevant handbooks
• Panellist training video

Unconscious bias resources:

• Harvard Project Implicit https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
• Royal Society Unconscious Bias video http://bit.ly/1OKzMh9
• Royal Society video on Making better decisions in groups https://bit.ly/2mgAgRK
Contact details

athena.swan@advance-he.ac.uk

020 7438 1010
For more information
www.advance-he.ac.uk
@AdvanceHE