

ESRC Scorecard 2011/12

The Scorecard reflects on the strategic deliverables as specified in the ESRC Delivery Plan 2011-15 and outputs of activities will be reported on to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) every six months in September 2011 (Q2) and March 2012 (Q4). Reporting in Q1 and Q3 will be by exception only; ie where there are significant delays, cancellations or changes in corporate focus. The Scorecard is based on the Council's own internal quarterly management system (Corporate Plan) and is sufficient to provide a proper level of evidence and assurance on ESRC's performance. This is also reported to Council.

The following table sets out milestone reports for 11 high-level strategic objectives. These will be used to assess progress against the ESRC Delivery Plan areas in the first year of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period (2011/12). Target dates for delivery of this information are specified, and progress against corporate milestones in subsequent quarters will be indicated by RAG (Red-Amber-Green) status and descriptive summary in the 'Progress' column.

The Scorecard includes monitoring and evaluation plans, contribution to cross-Council programmes, as well as progress on increasing our administration efficiency, and these will be updated each year throughout the CSR period.

Information in italics refers to the sections in the Delivery Plan that describe the specific Delivery Plan Objectives

Delivery Plan Objectives	Deliverables 2011/12	Target Date	Progress and Milestones (where appropriate)	RAG Status
A.	Delivering Strategic Priorities			
1. Align and shape our investments in three strategic priorities (<i>DP</i>)	<i>a)</i> Maximise economic and societal impact and address identified gaps of social science research through knowledge exchange,	31 March 2012	Q1: Approval of scope of the strategic priorities by Council.	

<i>section 3):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Performance and Sustainable Growth (DP Section 3.1) • Influencing Behaviour and Informing Interventions (DP Section 3.2) • Vibrant and Fair Society (DP Section 3.3) 	<p>communication, and re-aligning existing investments to address key questions within the strategic priorities (the refinement and implementation of the three strategic priorities will be approved by Council in May 2011).</p>		<p>Q2: Consider next steps to address any gaps through re-focussing current investments and maximising their impact to address the strategic priorities.</p>	
	<p><i>b)</i> Continue to fund and co-fund different types of initiatives, from individual projects to larger awards and centres, as well as seeking opportunities for co-investment in research, infrastructure and capacity-building activities to address key questions within the strategic priorities (the refinement and implementation of the three strategic priorities will be approved by Council in May 2011).</p>	31 March 2012	<p>Q1: Develop and promote ESRC portfolio of schemes for 2011/12.</p> <p>Q1: Consider and develop some limited new investments to address strategic priorities e.g. launch initiative on Rising Powers.</p> <p>Q4: Increase capacity in macroeconomics and behavioural economics through our postgraduate training infrastructure and targeted investments.</p>	
<p>B. Delivering Our Priorities</p>				
<p>2. Streamline existing funding opportunities (DP section 4.1)</p>	<p><i>a)</i> Work in collaboration with the academic community to introduce the most effective mechanisms to manage demand for research funding in the social sciences.</p>	31 December 2011	<p>Q1: Introduce the initial programme of measures to manage demand and improve submissions.</p>	
	<p><i>b)</i> Continue to concentrate support for excellence in social science through streamlining existing funding opportunities focusing on longer and larger awards and greater concentration of funding for</p>	30 June 2011	<p>Q1: Launch the Centres and Large Grants competition.</p>	

	postgraduate training.			
3. Invest in Future Leaders (<i>DP section 4.1 and Text Box</i>)	c) Introduce the Future Leaders scheme which will support the production of high quality research outputs and also encourage development of skills in impact generation, international collaboration and scientific leadership.	31 March 2012	Q1: Launch the Future Research Leaders scheme for early career researchers.	
4. Concentrate our PhD funding in the best centres (<i>DP section 4.2</i>)	d) Develop and commence implementation of a co-ordinated strategy in collaboration with the British Academy and Nuffield to support capacity building in Advanced Quantitative Methods.	31 December 2011	Q1: With the British Academy and Nuffield Foundation develop an overarching strategy to address skills shortages in Advanced Quantitative Methods.	
	e) Maintain a strong leadership role over the quality of postgraduate training.	31 December 2011	Q3: Fund around 600 new students from the 2011/12 academic year of which at least 45 per cent of students will be in the targeted areas.	
5. Protect our core investments in the national data infrastructure (<i>DP section 4.3</i>)	f) To promote widespread use of our UK data resources and infrastructure to maximise exploitation through e.g. a secondary data analysis programme, targeting specific studentships, and promotion of the studies internationally.	31 December 2011	Q2: Develop a specification for a new integrated national data service. Q4: Increase opportunities for exploiting <i>Understanding Society</i> , the Birth Cohort Studies and other social science datasets through the development of a secondary data analysis initiative.	
	g) To implement our plans for managing a new Birth Cohort Study ensuring a strong interdisciplinary basis for the governance	31 March 2012	Q1: To issue an interim contract for the study team.	

	structure, data collection strategy, and piloting of the data collection instruments.		Q2: To have put in place the governance structure for the Birth Cohort Study.	
	<i>h)</i> Commission the Birth Cohort Facility.	31 March 2012	Q1: Issue the call specification for the Leadership Team.	
6. Develop our partnerships across HEIs and research user communities (<i>DP section 4.4</i>)	<i>i)</i> Implement a strategy for engagement with the academic community and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) particularly to; raise awareness of high-quality social science research, encourage demand management, develop training provision, and promote knowledge exchange and the three strategic priorities.	30 June 2011	Q1: Organise a series of six regional visits hosted by HEIs.	
	<i>j)</i> Raise awareness of social science through the ESRC Festival of Social Science.	31 December 2011	Q1: Launch a call for events for the Festival of Social Science.	
7. Continue to encourage and promote international collaboration (<i>DP section 4.5</i>)	<i>k)</i> Review the ESRC's international schemes to inform the development of opportunities for UK social scientists to include international perspectives in ESRC and cross-Council activities.	31 December 2011	Q2: Streamline existing visiting fellowships and scholar exchange schemes through the launch of a new ESRC International Partnership Scheme.	
	<i>l)</i> Maintain and strengthen current links and opportunities with a range of international partners worldwide as well as engage with RCUK to promote international collaboration.	31 December 2011	Q1: Launch the new India-Europe Research Networking Scheme with our partners in France, Germany, the Netherlands and India. Q3: Announce the second call for proposals under the Open Research Area with European	

			partners.	
	<i>m)</i> Continue and expand our partnership with Department for International Development (DfID) to support social science research that addresses the needs of developing countries.	31 March 2012	Q1: Launch a call for round III of phase 2 of ESRC/DfID Poverty Alleviation Programme. Q4: Commission awards from the first round of ESRC/DfID Growth Programme.	
C.	Supporting Cross-Council Themes			
8. Contribute to the RCUK interdisciplinary research programmes (<i>DP section 5, Appendix II for ESRC Commitment to RCUK Programmes</i>)	<i>a)</i> Continue to develop strategic collaborations through the Global Uncertainties Programme (GU) and develop a strategy to maximise impact from the programme.	30 September 2011	Q1: Launch Strategic Plan for the Global Uncertainties (GU) Programme. Q3: Agree cross GU Programme knowledge exchange mechanisms. Q4: Fund a further tranche of GU Programme fellows and commission an ESRC led call.	
	<i>b)</i> Continue supporting RCUK interdisciplinary research programmes and encouraging focus on the cross-Council themes: Living with Environmental Change; Ageing; Lifelong Health and Wellbeing; Digital Economy; Energy; Global Food Security; and Connected Communities.	31 March 2012	Q4: Contribute to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-led Connected Communities research programme including leading a stream of commissioning activity. Q4: With Medical Research Council (MRC) and potentially other RCUK and government partners scope an initiative on extended working lives under the auspices of the Lifelong Health and Wellbeing Programme (LLHW). Q4: Develop further partnership proposals to	

			take forward the Living with Environmental Change (LWEC) objectives. Q4: Develop proposals on energy demand reduction in conjunction with the RCUK Energy Programme.	
D.	Economic And Social Impact			
9. Continue to prioritise the generation of economic and social impact (<i>DP section 6</i>)	<i>a)</i> Encourage more innovative use of existing knowledge exchange mechanisms and promote best practice through ESRC's Impact Toolkit, and communicate this effectively to the academic and user communities.	30 June 2011	Q1: Introduce a more flexible knowledge exchange funding mechanism that complements the opportunities already supported within Pathways to Impact. Q1: Further promote our impact toolkit to offer guidance and support for researchers.	
	<i>b)</i> Further extend the ESRC portfolio of impact evaluation studies to explore creative and innovative methodologies to assess economic and societal impact, including assessment of people and data infrastructure.	31 March 2012	Q4: Commission and manage the 2011 impact evaluation programme, including further development of the work on the impact of skilled people, and an economic impact evaluation of research infrastructure. Q4: Develop further methodologies to identify economic and societal impact and to evaluate new approaches in impact generation.	

<p>10. Expand our collaborative activities with the private sector (<i>DP section 4.4 and 6.2</i>)</p>	<p><i>c)</i> Expand our collaborative activities with the private sector to encourage more research that will directly affect business and maximise the benefits of ESRC research beyond the academic community, working with the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) where appropriate.</p>	<p>31 March 2012</p>	<p>Q1: Develop an implementation plan for the co-investment framework.</p> <p>Q3: Identify and progress priorities with the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) for areas such as Living with Environmental Change (LWEC), business engagement, entrepreneurship, and energy.</p> <p>Q4: Enhance our impact on the private sector by building on the co-funded Knowledge Transfer Network for financial services, and our extensive portfolio of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.</p>	
<p>E. Managing Our Resources</p>				
<p>11. Increase our administrative efficiency (<i>DP section 7</i>)</p>	<p><i>d)</i> Work to reduce our administrative costs by 23 per cent in real terms over the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period 2011-15, particularly through: greater streamlining of our processes; greater RCUK harmonisation and integration and; a reduction in Shared Services Centre (SSC) costs.</p>	<p>Annual progress report on 31 March 2012</p>		