

Annual Research Plans Guidance for Peer Reviewers

April 2019

Process

- Two reviewers allocated to each ARP, one from researcher's School
- Reviewers will be supplied with a PDF copy of each ARP they have been assigned. (Technical problems led to some information from previous years being displayed on the online form.)
- Each reviewer summarises their review and enters their feedback on RADAR. Please contact Nicola or Dawn if you need assistance (radar@gsa.ac.uk)
- Reviews are then discussed in review panel meetings. Feedback will be documented, and recommendation based on consensus reached at meeting.
- If no consensus reached, ARP will be referred to a moderation panel.
- Results released to researcher, their line manager, convenor of School's REC.
- In some cases, feedback will follow later (if necessary to release results in good time for activity planning), but not if the outcome is likely to prove disappointing.

Questions to Consider

- Fundamentally, does the ARP describe completed and planned *research* activity, that is clearly and competently articulated as such?
- Is the quality of the research of a good standard, appropriate to an academic role at the relevant level/career stage?
- Will planned activity constitute research and result in research outputs? Are planned activities also specific, achievable and realistic, with a defined timetable?
- Based on the evidence provided (e.g. previous track record), are you confident that the researcher will be able to achieve their research objectives?
- Do the other activities described in the ARP contribute to GSA's research environment and the potential impact of research undertaken here (including by other GSA colleagues)?

Research

- Outputs and projects should constitute academic research. We will use the REF 2021 Definition:
 - **A process of investigation**
(What is being investigated? Why? What are the research questions? What processes and methodologies have been employed, and why?)
 - **Leading to new insights**
(What new knowledge has been generated? How does it relate to prior knowledge and contribute to knowledge in the relevant field(s)?)
 - **Effectively shared**
(Has the work been disseminated in a way that will enable other academic scholars to respond and engage with it, while providing confidence that it has been conducted with appropriate rigour?)

Research through creative practice

- Research through creative practice is definitely in scope, but the research process, questions, insights, and manner of dissemination must be articulated and the research value justified – certainly for completed outputs (the process for planned outputs may be less linear).
- It does not matter how acclaimed, accomplished or prestigious the work might be in other respects – if the research element is not clear, then it does not justify the allocation of research time based on an ARP. Assessment of quality relates to the quality of the research.
- How does the work go beyond ‘creative practice in itself’ and/or the development of an individual’s creative practice, to contribute to what we (researchers/scholars/ practitioners) know and understand about the field in which the work is situated? Is there a contribution to practice *and* to academia?
- Use of the GSA practice based research template was strongly encouraged – check the RADAR outputs and give credit where the template has been used well.

Research relating to teaching practice

- Research into education in art, design and architecture is a GSA research theme
- Such work must contribute to knowledge in the wider academic field – beyond GSA. It should also be situated within a relevant theoretical context.
- Case studies or evaluations of teaching practice or student projects at GSA do not necessarily constitute good quality research (even when presented and/or published). Assess such outputs and activities judiciously.
- For an emergent researcher (see penultimate slide), such work might contribute to their track record, but we would expect planned projects and activities to go significantly beyond evaluation of GSA teaching practice, and related scholarship.

Assessing Research Quality

- Again, please be guided by the REF assessment criteria: Originality, Significance, Rigour
 - Makes a new and original contribution to knowledge in the field (and indicates how it relates to prior knowledge)
 - (Potential) influence on scholarly thought and practice. Is it a (potential) point of reference? How influential?
 - Does it advance thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences?
 - Is it rigorous? Does it demonstrate intellectual coherence and integrity, appropriate methods, theories, concepts, sources and analyses – providing confidence about the reliability of findings?

Sections of the ARP

- Section 3: Update on Objectives
 - Has the researcher made reasonable progress towards objectives described in the last ARP? Give credit when they have.
 - Are they now involved in notable new projects and activities? Are these relevant to their research trajectory?
 - Has progress been affected by other circumstances, e.g. Mackintosh fire? Take this into account (where the fire is concerned, in relation to productivity in past year).
- Section 4: Completed Outputs
 - All cited outputs must be in RADAR. Reviewers should check, and undertake some assessment of outputs where possible. Follow hyperlinks from the PDF to access RADAR output.
 - **If cited output is not in RADAR, it should be excluded from your assessment.**
 - First, determine if the output constitutes research.
 - If so, assess the research quality (see previous slide).
 - Has information been provided to help you to do so? For instance, information about peer review (where applicable)? Give credit when it has been.
 - Consider the extent of the researcher's contribution to joint outputs.

Sections of the ARP

- Section 5: Research Projects

- Give particular credit for funded research projects or equivalent (e.g. academic book contract issued), where the researcher has played a significant role in developing or undertaking the project or proposal (e.g. PI, Co-I).
- The research dimension should be clearly articulated – not all types of activity justify research time on the ARPs
- What is the researcher's role? Will they undertake self-directed research, or play a more minor role in another researcher's project?
- Give more credit for projects in development when there is a clear plan and timetable, with defined partners, goals, funders (where relevant) etc.
- Speculative or aspirational ideas should not be assessed so positively (in this section).
- Researchers were asked not to provide details of completed projects, as these should be reflected in the completed or planned outputs sections. Therefore, do not allow completed projects to influence your ARP assessment unduly.

Sections of the ARP

- Section 6: Forthcoming Outputs

- Just as in Section 4, researchers should have clearly articulated the research element of any planned outputs, and that is what you should assess.
- Give credit where a clear and confirmed route to dissemination is provided.
- Are you confident that the output will be achieved, based on track record and other activities?
- Give credit if the output is likely to be complete in time for REF (realistically, summer 2020).
- Consider the extent of the researcher's contribution to joint outputs.

- Section 8: Environment

- Does the researcher make a positive contribution to research at GSA? Would research time enable them to continue to do so?

Sections of the ARP

- Section 9: Impact

- Not all researchers make a significant contribution to impact (and environment). If the other sections of the ARP are strong, that should not preclude them from being awarded research time.
- For those who do, good quality impact activity should contribute to the justification for research time.
- Impact, in this context, is an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia – *based on underpinning GSA academic research*.
- *Not* impacts on research or academic knowledge within the higher education sector, *nor* impact on teaching practices or programmes at GSA.

Sections of the ARP

- Section 10: Longer-term research plans
 - This section is important. Give credit to those who have given thought and consideration to this section, as it is part of the justification for future research time.
 - It should describe longer-term research plans and aspirations for the period beyond summer 2020.
 - Give credit where researchers have been specific about what they hope to achieve, and have indicated and how they intend to complete their objectives.
 - E.g. grants they aim to apply for, publications they intend to write (and for whom), artefacts they plan to produce, experience they hope to gain or roles they aim to hold (e.g. peer reviewing, editorships).

Reviewer's Statements - Requirements

- Up to 500 words (see RADAR guide).
- To what extent does the ARP genuinely describe research (including completed outputs that are in RADAR)?
- Consider originality, significance and rigour of the work – it's apparent quality.
- Consider the potential for new outputs to be completed in time for REF 2021.
- Take account of track record – degree of confidence that plans seem realistic and achievable.
- Consider trajectory and ambition – is work appropriate for career stage, is there good future potential?
- Has the ARP itself been completed well? Is it clear, as concise as possible, has the author tried to explain the nature and quality of the research to the reviewer, have they followed the guidance and answered the questions.
- Be critical where justified, but please maintain an objective and polite tone, and avoid blunt or derogatory statements.
- Researchers will not see your comments or know who reviewed their ARP.

Possible outcomes for research time

- For a 'standard' teaching and research type role:
 - No time = no research allocation but 10% for scholarship remains
 - Normative time = 20% of contracted time
 - Normative time/emergent researcher = 20% of contracted time (see penultimate slide)
 - Enhanced time = 40% of contracted time
- Those in more research intensive roles may request what is already 'normative' for them, or describe this as 'enhanced'. For someone already on at least 40% research time, an 'Enhanced Time' ARP outcome does not result in additional time. Such considerations would instead be determined by contract, activity plans, funded research projects etc.
- If enhanced time is requested but not (in your assessment) justified by the ARP, you may instead recommend normative time (or no time).

Possible outcomes for research time

Current allocation	2019/20 request	Possible outcomes 2019/20
First ARP	Normative	Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
First ARP	Enhanced	Enhanced, Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
None	Normative	Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
None	Enhanced	Enhanced, Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
Normative	Normative	Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
Normative	Enhanced	Enhanced, Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
Enhanced	Normative	Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time
Enhanced	Enhanced	Enhanced, Normative, Normative/Emergent or No Time

Normative research time

- Demonstrates a firm plan for research, articulated as such.
- A convincing plan for quality research outputs and/or projects would be expected as a minimum
- The case is significantly strengthened where there is evidence of good quality completed outputs and projects.
- Where the researcher is an early career researcher, other evidence of their potential to produce high quality research can be used (e.g. PhD completion and postdoc work, conference papers, involvement in projects, strength of proposed research plans)
- Most established, active academic researchers in teaching and (potentially) research roles will qualify for normative time

Enhanced research time

- Enhanced research time should be exceptional.
- Those recommended for enhanced research time must have demonstrated a level of prior research activity and quality of proposed outputs that significantly exceeds the norm (quality, scale and scope)
- You should also be convinced that the researcher has the ability to deliver what is proposed – for example, there are funded projects, track record of completed outputs, book contracts, exhibition confirmed in a major venue
- Enhanced time is not intended as an indicator of status or seniority, a permanent or automatic state, or reward for past accomplishments only. It is essentially pragmatic, to facilitate the production of substantial, very high quality examples of GSA research (at this point – particularly if there is a good chance of completion in time for REF).

Emergent researchers

- ARPs will play a role in REF. To avoid potential tension between REF considerations and the rights of less-experienced (in research terms) colleagues to seek to develop a new research career, we would like to flag those who are deemed to qualify for research time as **emergent researchers**.
- An early-career researcher on a 'conventional' academic career pathway, with a PhD and postdoctoral experience, is likely to qualify for standard, normative time if they demonstrate capacity to produce outputs and or play a significant role in projects. Review of their ARP should take their career stage into account.
- There are others at GSA, for instance with a background in practice and teaching, who are keen to move into research. They have a right to make a case through the ARPs process, but may not yet be an established researcher. If they make a good case for research time, but have not yet had the opportunity to establish experience and a track record, reviewers are asked to flag such staff as 'emergent researchers' recommended for normative time. These are people seeking to make the transition from teaching and practice into academic research.
- This will be factored into the process for identifying significant responsibility for research in REF 2021.
- To qualify, relevant ARP authors do need to provide a strong justification. If they do not, they may be recommended for No Time.
- Research and Enterprise plan to introduce dedicated support and mentoring for this cohort, to assist their development, over a defined period of time.
- If in doubt, discuss potential normative / normative (emergent) / no time decisions at review panel meetings

No time

- ARP authors who have demonstrated limited understanding of research, or minimal evidence that they have undertaken or intend to undertake research, are unlikely to have provided adequate justification for research time.
- Those who appear to have made very little effort to justify and explain the research content of their work may not qualify for research time.
- If there is very little evidence that research of an appropriate scope and standard for an academic member of staff has been undertaken or is (seriously) planned (and appears feasible), the individual may not qualify for research time. (But take their FTE into account when considering scale of activities.)
- Those who appear to have made minimal efforts to complete the ARP form to the required standard are unlikely to be recommended for research time.

Guide to completing ARP peer reviews in RADAR – 2019/20

As an ARP peer reviewer, you can submit your review comments via the RADAR repository.

This guide provides a walk-through of the process, to support you in completing and submitting your reviews.

Please note that your allocated ARPs will be emailed to you as PDFs – please DO NOT *view* the ARPs via RADAR.

Please contact the RADAR team if you have any queries about completing your ARP peer reviews in RADAR:

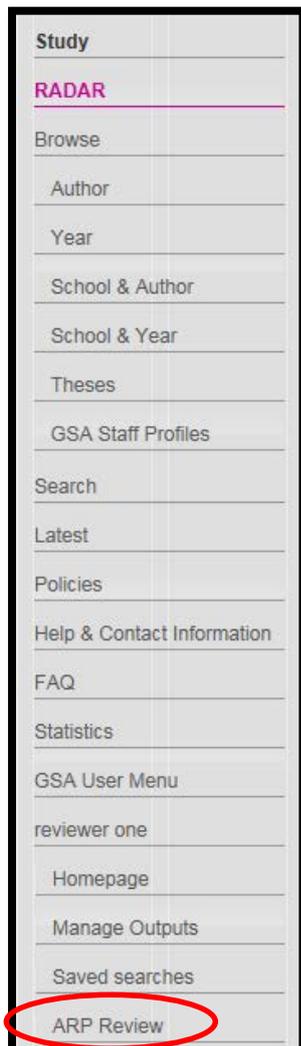
radar@gsa.ac.uk

**** IMPORTANT ****

Please note: If you need access to any file accompanying a research output which is “Secured”, DO NOT click on the “Request a copy” button - this will otherwise reveal your identity to the ARP’s author.

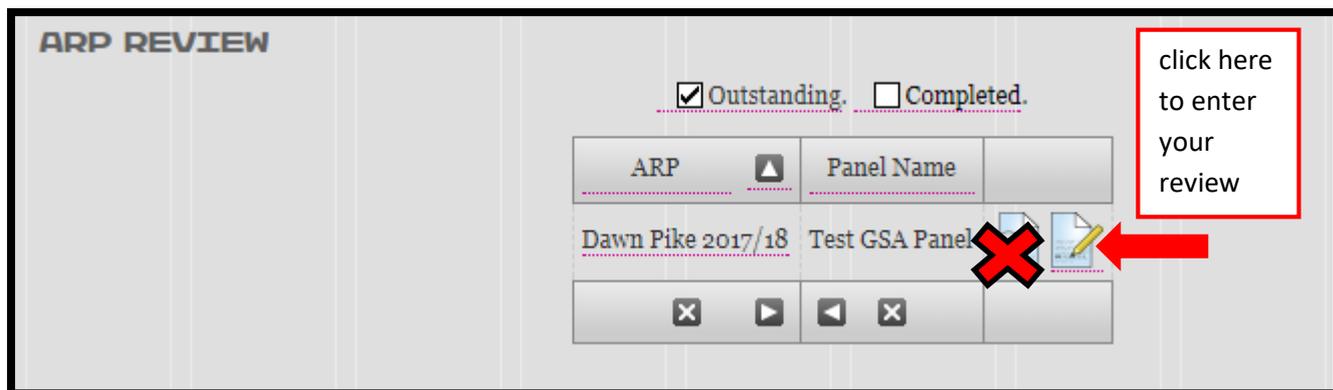
Instead, please email radar@gsa.ac.uk and we will find an alternative way to provide you with access to any restricted documents, thereby maintaining both your confidentiality as a reviewer, as well as the wider blind review process.

1. Log in to RADAR at <http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/>
2. Scroll down the left hand menu and click on “ARP Review”:



3. You should now see your allocated ARPs listed, including the name of each ARP's author; the name of the panel which you are a member of; and two icons on the right hand side of each ARP:

- ~~"View"~~ (represented by a magnifying glass) - please **DO NOT view** this year's ARPs via RADAR – see below!
- **"Edit"** (featuring a yellow pencil)



Note that you will receive regular automated email reminders, alerting you that you have ARP reviews to complete. Once you have completed and submitted your reviews (see below), the reminders will cease.

4. Unfortunately, a technical issue has affected some ARPs this year, meaning that the ARPs should not be **viewed via RADAR** by peer reviewers in this round of annual research planning. This issue will be remedied for the next round, but for the current round, ARPs will be exported and emailed to you as PDFs for viewing instead. You will still be able to click through to any **"Completed Outputs"** which are "live" in RADAR, by clicking on the four digit hyperlinked **"RADAR ID"** – this will open the output's details in RADAR:

4. Your best completed research outputs		
Output ID	Title	Description
4686	Making the most of what we have got: RADAR and annual research planning	Conference presentation covering: RADAR as a "digital archive of research and enterprise output"; [...]

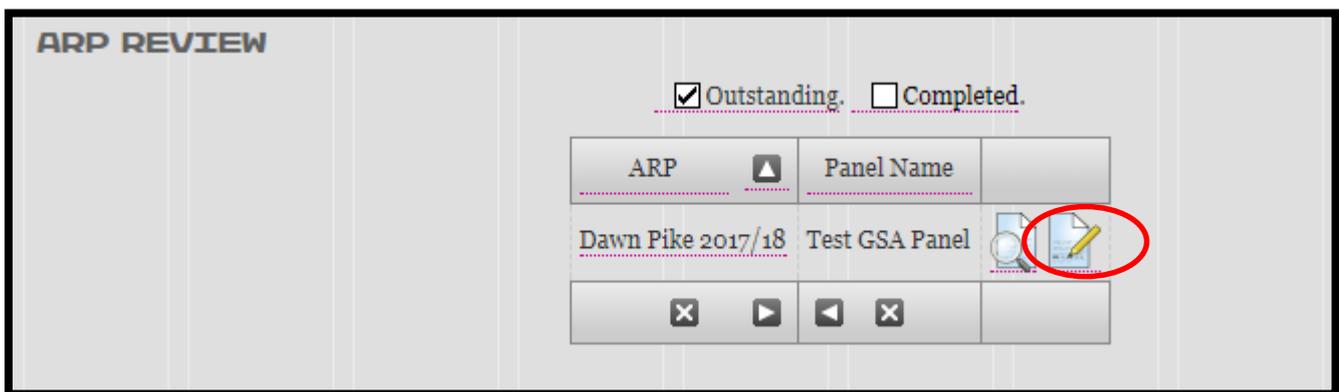
**** IMPORTANT ****

Please note: If you need access to any file (accompanying an output you are viewing) which is “Secured”, **DO NOT** click on the “Request a copy” button, as this will otherwise reveal your identity to the ARP’s author.

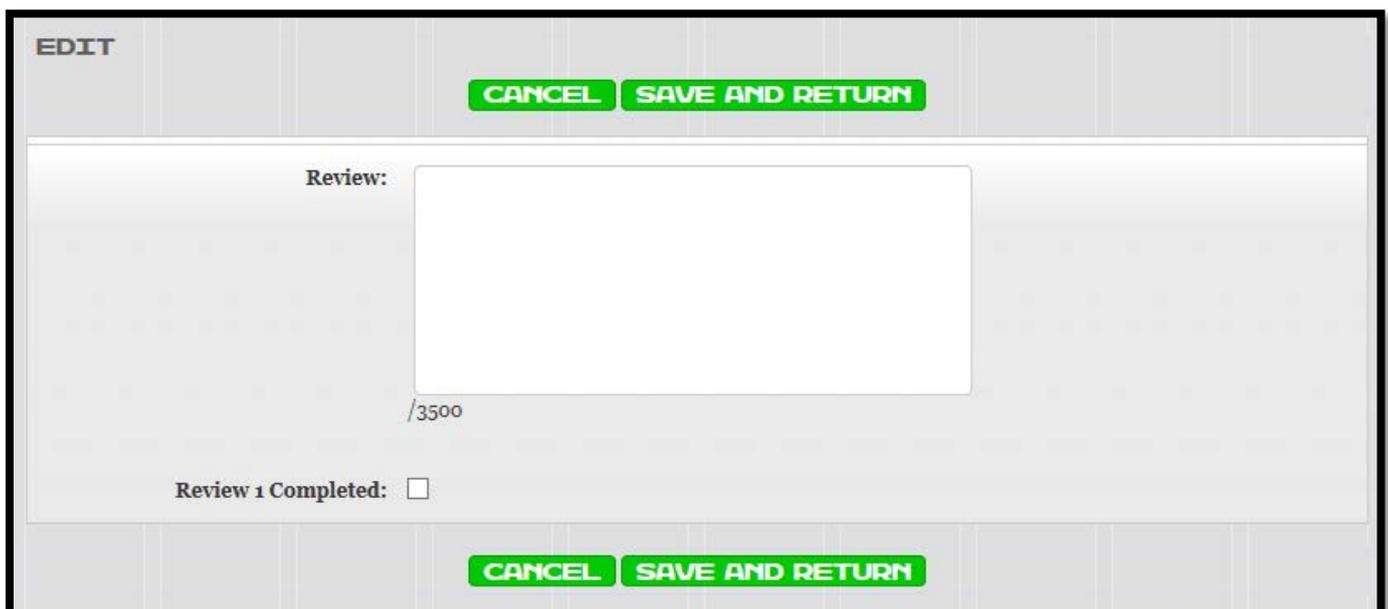


Instead, please email radar@gsa.ac.uk and we will find an alternative way to provide you with access to any restricted documents, thereby maintaining both your confidentiality as a reviewer, as well as the wider blind review process.

5. To enter your review, click on the “Edit” icon next to the ARP you are reviewing:



6. You will now be presented with a text box to enter your review:



Note that a character count is in place, with the maximum of 3,500 characters approximately equating to 500 words. Once the character limit is reached, any additional text will be cut, so please be vigilant if you are cutting and pasting text into your review in RADAR.

If you want to return to editing or completing your review later, click on the green “**Save and Return**” button.

7. When you have completed your review, and you are ready to submit it, click on the small box (“**Review 1 Completed**”), then click on the green “**Save and Return**” button – your review is now complete.



The screenshot shows the 'EDIT' interface of the RADAR system. At the top left, the word 'EDIT' is displayed. Below it, there are two green buttons: 'CANCEL' and 'SAVE AND RETURN'. The main area contains a text input field labeled 'Review:' with the text 'test test test' inside. Below the input field, the character count '/3500' is shown. At the bottom left, there is a checkbox labeled 'Review 1 Completed:' which is checked. At the bottom right, there are two more green buttons: 'CANCEL' and 'SAVE AND RETURN'. Red circles highlight the 'Review 1 Completed:' checkbox and the bottom 'SAVE AND RETURN' button.

8. Please contact the RADAR team if you have any queries about completing your ARP peer reviews in RADAR: radar@gsa.ac.uk

Nicola Siminson

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