



Wednesday 6th June 2007

Dear Colleague

Re: BEF Research Portfolio and BEFRED progress

Further to previous correspondence I am pleased to be able to update you on the progress of the BEF's Research Portfolio and BEFRED.

As you may be aware, concerns have been expressed in connection with the quality of work that is uploaded onto BEFRED. In response to this the BEF have decided to make the following changes:

1. A minimum standard guideline for undergraduate dissertations of 60% has been put in place, below which work would not be accepted for inclusion on BEFRED, unless circumstances were exceptional. Please see the updated AEP Instructions attached.
2. A further disclaimer will be clearly visible every time a non-peer-reviewed research abstract is returned by a search on BEFRED, stating that not all work is peer reviewed and that research findings are to be used at the end user's own risk.
3. The words used to define the term "peer review" have been reassessed to take into account the previous point.

Alongside these changes the following suggestion has been reiterated:

4. In order to make the inclusion of work onto BEFRED as smooth as possible it is recommended that an Establishment's Subject or Course Assessment board would be the ultimate decision maker as to whether one of its students' work was published on BEFRED. This decision would take into account exceptional circumstances highlighted above, and also make the decision process as speedy as possible.

An additional category has been added Masters level work: that of work in progress, as for PhDs.

Now is the time to get final year degree students to upload their abstracts onto BEFRED. The process should take them a maximum of 10 minutes. Once they have done this the records will sit in your holding box, inaccessible to the general public, waiting for you to decide whether or not they are suitable to be uploaded. The procedure of students uploading and AEP's approving abstracts will be reviewed later this year. If you would like any help with this, or AEP accounts setting up, please contact me.

The concept of the Research Lead Body, as discussed at the meetings in November, is actively being pursued. If you would like to be involved with this, please contact me. It is envisaged this Body would explore means of improving standards of research in academic establishments, and help establishments to access research and other funding.

A number of Journals are currently being contacted to establish whether they would be happy for their abstracts to be uploaded onto BEFRED. If you have any suggestions as to where equine and related work has been published please let me know, and I will add these Journals to the list.

To keep abreast of developments, please log on to the BEF's website at http://www.bef.co.uk/Equine_Research

If you would like any further information, or to discuss the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes

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Enc Updated AEP Instructions