

University of Nottingham - Performance Framework Principles

As a data-heavy and strongly regulated sector we have a very large number of potential indicators to consider, many of which are in use somewhere in the University either as measures or targets. To frame discussions about which indicators are most suitable for the University's Performance Framework, the following principles have been agreed:

Principle 1: Values

Our choice and use of performance indicators should support our values and be fully consistent with our commitment to the responsible use of metrics, recognising our signature of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment¹, our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and the professional standards of data presentation appropriate to a University environment.

Principle 2: Clarity

Indicators should be clearly defined and understood. Simpler indicators should be preferred to those which are complex to define, derive or explain.

Principle 3: Availability

Indicators should be based on reliable data available without excessive cost.

Other things being equal, our choice between similar indicators should take into account cost of collection e.g. whether one is being reported externally or for regulatory purposes.

Principle 4: Performance-oriented

Indicators should be chosen with a clear understanding of the actions (desired and potentially perverse) which would influence them. Targets should be set only where those owning the targets can act to affect progress. Timeliness should be considered with leading rather than lagging indicators preferred.

Principle 5: Cascadable

Indicators should be capable of supporting target-setting at different levels in the organisation.

Principle 6: Independent

External rankings should not be used as targets.

Principle 7: Benchmarking

We should prefer indicators which allow a comparison with other relevant organisations (although consistent with principle 6, such comparisons should not be set as targets).

Principle 8: Longevity

We should prefer indicators which can give us a time series of performance.

¹ <https://sfdora.org/read/>