



Checklist for an Effective Review

College members were asked how they would characterise an effective review and these are some of the responses they gave. Use them as a checklist to help ensure your review is of sufficient quality.

Preparation

- Ensure you read the entire proposal thoroughly.
- Familiarise yourself with the strategic aims of the AHRC and the aims of the scheme for the proposal you are assessing.
- Be aware of the full range of grades and their descriptors at your disposal
- Contact staff at the AHRC if anything is unclear

Analysis

- Be realistic about your own confidence and expertise. Provide clear evidence of your own expertise in the subject area and state if you're unsure about something.
- Always provide evidence to support your observations.
- Take account of the information you are being asked to provide under each review form heading. Ensure sufficient detail is provided for each one.
- Give a clear assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. Are they major or minor?
- Provide an evaluation of the risks associated with the project.
- Contextualise the proposal you are reviewing within current work in the field, and comment on its relative importance/significance.
- Identify any inconsistencies and contradictions in the proposal.
- Identify issues which need clarification by the PI in their response
- In the case of interdisciplinary applications, do the different disciplines meet up in a coherent way?
- Provide enough information to inform a judgement on the relative quality of this proposal compared to other applications.
- Be receptive to new ideas and approaches to
 - thinking within your discipline
 - methodology

Delivery

- Provide an impartial, objective, fair and analytical assessment of the proposal you're reviewing.
- Avoid overly negative or personal comments.
- Make criticisms constructive where possible, identifying how they could be realistically addressed by the PI.
- Ensure you are providing an evaluation, not a description of the work proposed.
- Ensure that the language you use is clear and jargon-free. Could your review be understood by a non-expert?
- Is your grade justified by and consistent with your comments?
- Ask yourself whether a non-expert could make a final grading decision based upon your review.