



COUNCIL OF DEANS OF HEALTH

The voice of the deans and heads of UK university faculties for nursing, midwifery and the health professions.

PRESS RELEASE

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Nursing and Midwifery research comes of age

The Council of Deans of Health congratulates colleagues on the excellent results for nursing and midwifery in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

In the outcomes that have been announced today the results in the subject area 'nursing and midwifery' ranked very well compared with the 67 other subject areas being assessed.

19% of the research submitted for assessment in nursing and midwifery was ranked as 4* (quality that is world leading on terms of originality, significance and rigour). This proportion is the 20th highest of the 67 subject areas.

In terms of the 'grade point averages' for the whole range of research quality assessments, nursing ranks 44th out of the 67 subject areas in the RAE.

These results recognise the remarkable enhancement of the quality of the assessed research in nursing and midwifery since the last RAE exercise in 2001, when nursing was the lowest ranked subject area.

The Chair of the Council of Deans, Sue Bernhauser, said:

"These are excellent results for nursing and midwifery and we congratulate all our colleagues whose research has been assessed so highly.

This demonstrates the tremendous advances in nursing and midwifery research in the UK since the last RAE in 2001. It now confirms the role of nursing and midwifery as a world class subject area in higher education.

Faculties and Schools of Health have clearly made very effective use of the research capacity funding which has been made available since the last RAE from a number of sources, including the Higher Education Funding Councils and Departments of Health across the UK.

Nursing and midwifery research is often able to have an immediate impact on the care and treatment procedures and pathways for patients. This confirmation of the high quality of nursing research is excellent news for patients and service users.”

ENDS

Notes for Editors

1. The Council of Deans of Health has 86 member universities throughout the United Kingdom. It is the principal source in higher education of collective views on all matters relating to education and research for nursing, midwifery and the health professions. The Council works to maintain and enhance the quality of Nursing and Health Professions education, and acts as a forum for the exchange of information and good practice.
2. The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has been undertaken by the four Higher Education Funding Councils in the UK. Expert panels assessed research submitted in 2,363 submissions from 132 higher education institutions in 67 subject areas.
3. Each submission was awarded a ‘quality profile’ showing the proportions of the research submitted in different quality categories: 4* world leading, 3* internationally excellent, 2* recognised internationally, 1* recognised nationally and 0 unclassified.
4. This differs from the previous RAE (2001) when submissions were awarded a single grade from 5* to 1.
5. Further details are available at www.rae.ac.uk