Reviewer's report

Title: Is publication important for annual performance assessment?

Version: 4 Date: 6 January 2010

Reviewer: Liz A Farmer

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting paper on a topic of relevance to most academic staff: publication output and its relevance to promotion and tenure applications. I found the paper generally tightly written and focused.

The title tends to beg the answer yes or no, and I wonder whether the article would benefit from a title change to suggest more of what is provided in the article content?

The sampling and the response rate appear adequate overall and the main limitations have been acknowledged.

I'm interested in the comment made several times concerning Asian authors, suggest remove one of the comments and add in a possible explanation?

The tables and figures contain significant interesting information that merits their inclusion in full.

Minor Essential Revisions
'Criterion' is singular, suggest use 'criteria'. Response rate given in abstract 69.9, in Figure is 69.6 and in text non response 30%. Needs checking.

page 8 'rational' should have an 'e' at the end

Discretionary Revisions

Some minor wording changes in the abstract would enhance comprehension. Third and fifth sentence need revision.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'