

6 February 2019

BY EMAIL

Nicholson House
Lime Kiln Close
Stoke Gifford
BRISTOL
BS34 8SR

Telephone 0117 931 7473
www.ref.ac.uk
Direct Line 0117 931 7486
Email admin@ref.ac.uk

Dear Colleague,

Research Excellence Framework 2021: Invitation to submit codes of practice

1. I am writing on behalf of the four UK funding bodies to invite all higher education institutions (HEIs) who intend to make a submission to the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021) to submit their code of practice on:
 - a. the fair and transparent identification of staff with significant responsibility for research (where an HEI is not submitting 100 per cent of Category A eligible staff);
 - b. determining who is an independent researcher; and
 - c. the selection of outputs, including approaches to supporting staff with circumstances.

The deadline for submitting the code of practice is **noon on 7 June 2019**.

2. The REF 'Guidance on submissions' (REF 2019/01) requires that each institution submitting to the REF develops, documents and applies a code of practice on the fair and transparent identification of staff and outputs for REF submissions. The 'Guidance on codes of practice' (REF 2019/03) sets out the requirements for these codes, and provides guidance to assist HEIs in drawing them up. All submitted and approved codes of practice will be published before the REF submission deadline. The provisional publication date is December 2019.
3. Our guidance on codes of practice and the process of approval are designed to help ensure that the UK funding bodies conduct the REF in accordance with their duties under the Equality Act 2010. HEIs have their own legal obligations. It is the responsibility of HEIs to

ensure that their codes of practice, and the manner in which they participate in the REF, are lawful.

4. The REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) will examine the codes and advise the UK funding bodies on their adherence to the published guidance. HEIs will have an opportunity to revise their code of practice, if necessary, after guidance from EDAP. The funding bodies will inform heads of institutions of the process and timetable for this. More information can be found at:
 - a. Institutions in England: <https://re.ukri.org/news-events-publications/publications/cop-circular-letter-to-institutions/>
 - b. Institutions in Northern Ireland: please email Research.branch@economy-ni.gov.uk
 - c. Institutions in Scotland: <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/research/research-excellence/research-excellence.aspx>
 - d. Institutions in Wales: http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/policy_areas/research/assessing_research.aspx
5. If an institution's code of practice is not submitted by noon on 7 June 2019, the relevant funding body will write to the head of institution in July 2019 to acknowledge the institution's decision not to submit a code and to confirm the institution's ineligibility to submit to REF 2021.
6. Each institution's code of practice must be submitted by noon on 7 June 2019, in Microsoft Word Document format through Smart Survey. The submission page on Smart Survey can be accessed here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/O2SHD/>.
7. Please direct enquiries to Hannah Daisley at info@ref.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely



Catriona Firth
Head of REF Policy