

## REF 2021: Staff circumstances worked examples

Worked examples

**REF6a**

Example 1:

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx
Circumstance type*:	<input type="checkbox"/> Early career researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Secondment/Career break <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family-related leave <input type="checkbox"/> Junior clinical academic <input type="checkbox"/> Requiring judgement
Supporting information*: (max 200 words)	<p><u>Circumstances</u></p> <p>The case set out at paragraph 179c of the guidance applies: two periods of family-related leave, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher had one period of statutory adoption leave for a period of eight months from June 2014.</li> <li>• The researcher had one period of statutory maternity leave for a period of six months from March 2017.</li> </ul> <p><u>Effect on research</u></p> <p>Due to these circumstances, including absence from research and the impact on research productivity from the provision of care for two young children during this period, the researcher has not been able to produce an eligible output.</p>

Example 2:

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx
Circumstance type*:	<input type="checkbox"/> Early career researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Secondment/Career break <input type="checkbox"/> Family-related leave <input type="checkbox"/> Junior clinical academic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requiring judgement
Supporting information*: (max 200 words)	<p><u>Circumstances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher was diagnosed with cancer in July 2016</li> <li>• Period of 17 months absence from work from August 2016 whilst undergoing treatment</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Returned to work January 2018 at 0.5 fte for 4 months, during which time the researcher told to focus on teaching duties</li> <li>• Further period of 20 months absence from May 2018 for further treatment</li> <li>• Returned to work January 2020 at 0.5 fte, again focusing on teaching duties</li> <li>• Due to return on full-time basis in May 2020 but may take some months before able to resume normal research productivity.</li> </ul> <p><u>Effect on research</u></p> <p>Researcher was not able to research productively for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 months absence after diagnosis</li> <li>• 4 months whilst working 0.5 fte</li> <li>• 20 months further absence</li> <li>• 2 months working 0.5fte since return in January, expected to continue until May 2020</li> <li>• Additional disruption likely whilst adjusting to working full-time</li> </ul> <p>Effect deemed comparable to case at para 179b of the guidance, as circumstances led to a total of 43 months during which the researcher was unable to research productively, plus the likely continuing disruption for the remainder of the assessment period. Due to these circumstances, the researcher has not been able to produce an eligible output.</p>
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**REF6b**

Example 3 (part of a unit reduction request)

Context:

Member of staff first met the definition of an ECR on 1 August 2016. In September 2017 the researcher took a 12 month career break, returning to work in September 2018.

Period of time since 1 January 2014 until first meeting definition: 31 months

Length of career break: 12 months

Total absence: 31+12 = 43 months

Apply tariffs in Table L2

What would be returned in REF6b:<sup>1</sup>

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx				
Circumstance type*:		(X)			(X)
	Early career researcher		Tariff band:	1-Aug-2016 – 31-Jul-2017	
				1-Aug-2017 – 31-Jul-2018	
				1-Aug-2018 or later	
	Secondment/Career break	X	Tariff band:	12 – 27 months	
				28 – 45 months	X
				46 months or more	
	Family-related leave		Tariff band:	1 period of leave	
				2 periods of leave	
				3 or more periods of leave	
Junior clinical academic					
Requiring judgement					

Example 4 (part of a unit reduction request)

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx
Circumstance type*:	Requiring judgement
Reduction proposed:	0.5
Supporting information*: (max 200 words)	<p><u>Circumstances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher's partner diagnosed with MS in December 2015</li> <li>• In October 2016 it was recognised that full-time care was needed</li> <li>• Researcher took unpaid leave from start of November 2016 for 11 months, before full-time professional care was put in place in October 2017</li> <li>• On return to work, for a period of a year until partner moved into a care home in October 2018 the researcher took their partner for</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> There will be no need to separately record the ECR circumstance in the REF6b form in this instance. Instead, the period of time from 1 January 2014 until the member of staff met the definition of an ECR is added to the length of their career break and the combined total entered as a secondment/career break circumstance.

	<p>fortnightly hospital visits, and experienced significant stress as partner's condition deteriorated.</p> <p><u>Effect and calculation</u></p> <p>Research was affected from November 2016 until October 2018. The researcher was not able to research at all for 11 months while on unpaid leave. Following their return to work, it is estimated that the circumstances reduced their ability to research productively by around a quarter over the following year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 months unpaid leave</li> <li>• 3 months as a result of ongoing disruption to research for one year</li> <li>• Total disruption: 14 months</li> </ul>
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Example 5 (part of a unit reduction request)

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx
Circumstance type*:	Requiring judgement
Reduction proposed:	0.5
Supporting information*: (max 200 words)	<p><u>Circumstances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher accused of research misconduct by a colleague at the end of April 2016</li> <li>• Researcher placed on suspension for 3 months whilst university investigations conducted</li> <li>• During this period the researcher was attacked by the colleague, requiring hospital treatment</li> <li>• Researcher returned to work at the start of August 2016 after being cleared of the alleged misconduct</li> <li>• However, the researcher experienced difficulty returning to research due to ongoing anxiety and depression, which continued for 6 months when professional help was sought</li> <li>• The researcher's research productivity was affected for a further 3 months whilst undergoing therapy and appropriate medication levels determined</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From May 2017 the researcher was able to work at normal level of productivity.</li> </ul> <p><u>Effect and calculation</u></p> <p>Research was affected for 12 month period, including a period of 3 months absence, where the researcher was not able to conduct research, and a period of 9 months during which their ability to research was severely affected and research findings significantly delayed due to their ill-health and consequent treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 months absence whilst suspended</li> <li>6 months unable to research productively due to anxiety and depression</li> <li>3 months unable to research productively whilst receiving treatment</li> </ul> <p>Total disruption – 12 months</p>
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Example 6 (part of a unit reduction request)

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx
Circumstance type*:	Requiring judgement
Reduction proposed:	0.5
Supporting information*: (max 200 words)	<p><u>Circumstances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researcher began suffering from a mental health condition in March 2015</li> <li>Over the following 20 months, the researcher's work was significantly affected and they were absent from work for a total of 14 months</li> <li>Between December 2016 and end of February 2017, researcher more able to attend work, but was not able to return to normal research productivity</li> <li>From March 2017, researcher has been able to research productively</li> </ul> <p><u>Effect and calculation</u></p>

	<p>The researcher's productivity was affected over a two year period, including severely for a period of 20 months that included absence from work for a total of 14 months and a further 6 months in work during which the circumstances impacted the researcher's ability to conduct research at all. This was followed by a further period of three months during which research capacity was around half their normal productivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 months absence</li> <li>• 6 months unable to research productively</li> <li>• 1.5 months due to research capacity being reduced by 50% over 3 month period</li> </ul> <p>Total disruption - 21.5 months</p>
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Example 7 (part of a unit reduction request)

HESA staff identifier*:	xxx
Circumstance type*:	Requiring judgement
Reduction proposed:	1
Supporting information*: (max 200 words)	<p><u>Circumstances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period of maternity leave for 12 months, commencing October 2015</li> <li>• On return to work in October 2016, agreed focus on teaching duties for three months whilst readjusting to being back</li> <li>• For six months from January 2017, researcher was struggling with an undiagnosed mental health condition and not able to research</li> <li>• In July 2017, they were diagnosed with a mental health condition, and signed off work for four weeks whilst arranging treatment</li> <li>• Returned to work in August 2017 and started to build up research gradually over next 4 months</li> </ul> <p><u>Effect and calculation</u></p> <p>The circumstances affected the researcher's productivity from October 2015 until December 2017. Following return from maternity leave, the researcher was not able to conduct research at all for a period 10 months, followed by a period of four months during which they gradually built up</p>

their research productivity. This is estimated to have affected productivity in this period by around 50%.

- 3 months disruption whilst focusing on teaching
- 6 months disruption leading up to diagnosis
- 1 month absence following diagnosis
- 2 months reduction due to researching at 50% capacity over 4 month period

Total: 0.5 reduction for maternity leave; 0.5 reduction for 12 month disruption to research