



## **BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY**

### **Code of Practice for Research Excellence Framework 2021 (Identification of Staff and Selection of Outputs)**

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## **Abbreviations**

APR	Annual Performance Review
ARA	Annual Research Audit
BGU	Bishop Grosseteste University
CoP	Code of Practice
E&D	Equality and diversity
ECU	Equality Challenge Unit
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FTE	Full-time equivalent
IR	Independent Researcher
IRP	Individual Research Plan
PIC	People and Inclusion Committee
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RKEC	Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee
RSG	REF Strategy Group
SRR	Significant Responsibility for Research
UoA	Unit of Assessment
VC	Vice-Chancellor
VCEG	Vice Chancellor's Executive Group
WA	Workload allocation

## **Bishop Grosseteste University and its approach to REF 2021**

This section provides information on the institution's background that contextualises the development of its Code of Practice for REF 2021.

Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU) is a small and specialist higher education institution, and is a member of the GuildHE sector and Cathedrals Group of universities. The institution's current Strategic Plan sets out the aim for an enhanced submission in REF 2021, building upon the scale and quality of the return made in 2014.<sup>1</sup> The production of the Code of Practice (CoP) for the 2021 exercise is set in the context of that strategic ambition, and its intentions regarding submission.

BGU made a return to the Research Assessment Exercise in 2008, with two units of assessment; and its second to REF 2014 with three units and 11 (FTE) staff. BGU intends to submit more Units of Assessments for 2021, up to 5, and more staff, between around 50 and 70 FTE.

BGU is taking an open and inclusive approach to the REF 2021, and is aiming to submit all members of staff meeting eligibility criteria and holding 'Significant Responsibility for Research' (SRR) without making requests for Unit of Assessment (UoA) exceptions. Submission intentions are a reflection of the BGU academic portfolio, with its historical establishment in teacher training, education and professional development-related fields, together with ongoing diversification and expansion in other disciplines. The majority of eligible staff will be represented by a submission to UoA23 (Education), utilising the breadth of the Unit's descriptor; in addition to smaller, but significant returns of up to 4 other humanities and social sciences related Units.

The particular profile of the University's staffing base is significant, especially with regard to BGU's approach to determining SRR. A substantial proportion of staff are recruited from professional-practice backgrounds, especially education, rather than through a more direct academic/university-career pathway. The number of staff without doctorates or registered for doctoral study is a prominent feature of this group.

A key internal reference point for the CoP and its determining of SRR is the specific guidance relating to research activity within academic-staff workload allocation (WA) that has been in place since 2010. In addition, an Individual Research Plan (IRP) was also introduced as part of Annual Performance Review (APR) processes. This guidance to WA and the IRP was revised in 2015, following REF 2014, and through consultation. BGU also introduced a centralised Annual Research Audit (ARA) of activity and output in 2016. The guidance to WA and the IRP, and the ARA, have been updated in relation to the external requirements, expectations and guidance relating to REF 2021, and underpin BGU's CoP and its processes for determining eligibility and submission.

The University has an institutional repository to which it subscribes as part of a joint GuildHE Research/JISC provision, which will hold outputs that are 'in scope' of the REF 2021 open access policy requirements.

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1. BGU 2014-19 [Strategic Plan](#).

## Bishop Grosseteste University

### Code of Practice for REF 2021 (Identification of Staff and Selection of Outputs)

#### Part 1: Introduction

##### 1.1 Purpose

1. This Code of Practice provides information and advice to the University's staff on the eligibility of staff members and the selection of outputs for REF 2021. It is also a requirement for all institutions intending to make a submission. The CoP has been produced with reference to the REF 2021 final *Guidance on codes of practice, Guidance on submissions, and Panel criteria and working methods*;<sup>2</sup> and other sources as appropriate, such as guidance provided by Advance HE (Equality Challenge Unit)<sup>3</sup> and advice received through the sector-representative body, GuildHE Research.
2. The Code of Practice sets out specific guidance as required by REF 2021<sup>4</sup> in relation to:
  - The fair and transparent identification of staff with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)
  - Determining who is an Independent Researcher (IR)
  - The selection of outputs, including approaches to supporting staff with circumstances.
3. The CoP applies from the date of approval by the REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Panel, between August and November 2019, subject to feedback and revision.
4. The CoP is a guide to the REF 2021 processes relating to:
  - Staff eligibility
  - Output selection
  - Unit of Assessment (UoA) allocation
  - Disclosure of individual circumstances
  - Equality impact assessment (EIA)
  - Staff training
  - Appeals regarding identification of staff and independent research.

##### 1.2 Institutional E&D policies and strategies

5. Equality and diversity strategies and policies are overseen by the University's People and Inclusion Committee (PIC). The institution's Diversity and Equality Policy was reviewed with effect from March

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2. REF2019/01 January 2019 [Guidance on submissions](#); REF2019/02 January 2019 [Panel criteria and working methods](#); REF2019/03 January 2019 [Guidance on codes of practice](#).

3. Advance HE *Equality Impact Assessment and the Research Excellence Framework 2021*, briefing March 2019.

4. REF *Guidance on codes of practice*, 2.

2019.<sup>5</sup> The Policy's Statements and Aims and Objectives inform the production of the University's REF 2021 CoP. The PIC is also responsible for Equality Impact Assessment, and the CoP for 2021 adopts the Committee's revised *Equality Impact Assessment Guidance* document, incorporating screening template, 2015.

6. The CoP has been referred to the PIC as part of the processes of production, consultation and communication. Institutional EIA processes have been followed in relation to the production of the CoP.

### **1.3 The REF 2014 Code of practice**

7. The development of the 2021 CoP updates, revises and builds on the version created for REF 2014. The document incorporates reference to the updated guidance on research activity relating to institutional workload allocation and to annual performance review processes and accompanying Individual Research Plan. The CoP also refers to the establishment and purpose of an Annual Research Audit, and other planning undertaken since the publication of the initial *Decisions* and other documentation informing the early stages of the evolution of the current Framework.<sup>6</sup>
8. The 2021 CoP incorporates Equality Impact Assessments that embody the expectations and requirements of the 2010 Equality Act, the 2011 Public Sector Equality Duty, and the 2000-2 Part-time Workers and Fixed-term Employees regulations (see Part 2.5 below).

### **1.4 Principles**

9. This CoP sets out the University's approach to procedures for the identification of staff and the selection of outputs. In support of this, the CoP addresses four REF 2021 principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity, and avoids discrimination in relation to the ten protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.<sup>7</sup>
10. Application of the four principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity are reflected in the processes relating to the production, approval and communication of the CoP, and in the design and implementation of processes relating to the identification of staff, selection of outputs, disclosure of circumstances, and appeals (see Parts 2-4 below).

### **1.5 Communication**

11. The approach to development of the CoP has been communicated through different modes of delivery throughout the preparation for submission to the REF in order to ensure that all eligible colleagues, including those absent from the institution, are included and informed (see also **Appendix A**).

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5. BGU [Diversity and Equality Policy](#), version 3, March 2019

6. REF2017/04 November 2017 Updated April 2018 REF 2021 [Decisions on staff and outputs](#).

7. REF *Guidance on codes of practice*, 3-13.

12. The development, approval and communication of the CoP has passed through the University's established, formal, deliberative committee process (**Appendices A and B**):
- REF Strategy Group (RSG) (a sub-group of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee)
  - Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC)
  - School Boards
  - People and Inclusion Committee
  - Academic Enhancement Committee (AEC)
  - Senate
  - University Council.
13. The production of the CoP has been informed by, and communicated through, the University's departmental/senior advisory groups:
- Senior Management Group
  - Vice Chancellor's Executive Group.
14. The CoP's design and communication will also incorporate interaction with and through:
- Open staff fora
  - Intranet and staff email dissemination
  - BGU's REF Implementation Plan Interim Report 3 (Oct 2019) and Interim Report 4 (Sep 2020)
  - The UCU.

## Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

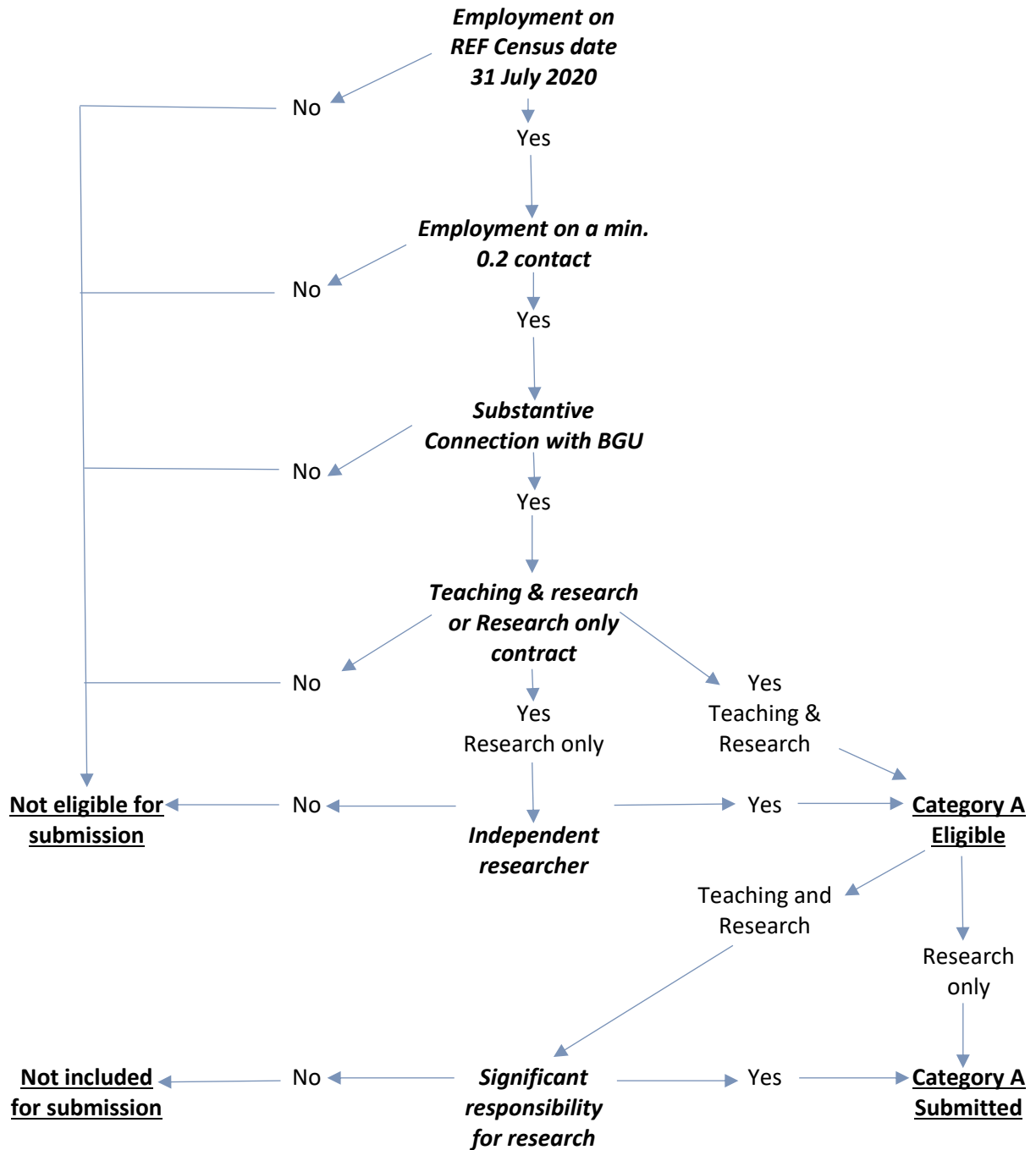
### 2.1 Policies and procedures

#### Criteria

##### Eligible staff

15. Eligibility for submission of staff to REF 2021 is informed by the definitions, requirements and criteria set out in the REF 2021 document: *Guidance on submissions*. This has been circulated on a regular basis as part of the REF preparation, consultation and communications processes, and staff are advised to consult the document in full.
16. The process for identifying eligible staff, Significant Responsibility for Research (see paragraphs 22-32 below), and those who will be submitted is presented in summary (see **Figure 1** below).
17. Eligible staff - 'Category A Eligible' - comprise staff meeting the following criteria:
- Staff employed on the REF 2021 Census date
  - Staff on contracts of a minimum of 0.2FTE
  - Staff holding a 'substantive connection' with the University
  - Staff on 'teaching and research' or 'research only' contracts
  - Independent Researchers (IRs) - see Part 3 below.

**Figure 1: Staff eligibility, Significant Responsibility for Research, and submission**





18. Eligible staff are expected to have a substantive connection through research that is clearly connected with a submitted Unit of Assessment. The University will provide a statement evidencing substantive connection for staff employed on a minimum fractional contract (0.20-0.29 FTE) with reference to the following indicators:

- Participation in and contribution to a UoA's research environment
- Wider involvement in the University
- Research activity focused in the University
- Period of time with the University.

19. The Category A Eligible staff pool identified by REF 2021 also includes:

- Staff who held responsibility for research ('teaching and 'research' or 'research only'), but who changed to a contract of non-eligible status and/or ceased to have significant responsibility for research within the REF cycle
- Staff employed by BGU but based in an overseas unit where applicable, and with research activity clearly and directly related to a submitting unit.

20. Staff not normally eligible for submission include:

- Academic staff with 'teaching and 'research' contracts who are not considered to hold SRR (see paragraphs 22-32 below)
- Academic staff with 'research-only' contracts who are not considered to undertake IR (see Part 3 below)
- Academic staff with SRR within a UoA subject to application for exception for submission to REF 2021
- Staff on other contracts including non-academic and senior managers, where they do not meet eligibility criteria and the expectations of holding SRR.

#### **Former staff**

21. Former staff including staff who have been made redundant are not eligible for submission, although their outputs may be (see Part 4 below).

#### **Eligible staff for submission: Significant Responsibility for Research**

22. The University will meet the REF 2021 expectation of submitting all eligible research-active staff holding SRR, where SRR is an expectation of those staff as a function of their employment. This CoP sets out the agreed University's processes for determining SRR, and therefore identification of 'Category A submitted' staff (see also **Appendix C**).

23. The University's process for identifying Category A eligible and submitted staff follows the REF 2021 guidance, which sets out the following criteria by which staff can typically be considered to hold SRR. University staff identified as holding SRR and for Category A submission will normally meet all of the following three criteria:

- 'Explicit time and resources are made available'
- They 'engage actively in independent research'
- 'That it is an expectation of their job role'.

### **Identifying SRR: 1 - Time and resources**

24. Explicit time and resources are considered to be identifiable through ‘a proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the context of the institution’s practices and applied in a consistent way’; and through ‘research allocation in a workload model or equivalent’.
25. The University’s process identifies eligible staff with SRR as those holding:
- 300 hours plus WA research hours (0.2) (FTE).

### **Identifying SRR: 2 – Independence**

26. Category A Eligible staff are expected to be identified through reference to the general definition and related indicators of independent research (see paragraphs 17 above and 66-69 below).
27. The University’s process identifies eligible staff with SRR as normally expected to be conducting activity that meets the general definition and indicators of an IR (see Part 3 below), and other REF 2021 indicators for IRs with SRR:
- Eligibility to apply for research funding as the lead or co-applicant
  - Access to research leave or sabbaticals
  - Membership of one or more of the University’s Research and Knowledge Exchange Units.
28. Category A Eligible staff registered for programmes of doctoral study are not normally considered by the University as being able or expected to fulfil the definition of IR as ‘self-directed research’ (see 29 below), and, therefore, to meet the requirements and expectations of holding SRR.
29. Category A Eligible staff recently completing doctoral study within the academic year up to the Census Date (1 Aug 2019 – 31 July 2020), or the part-academic year between Census Date and the end of the in-scope period for outputs for final submission (31 December 2020), may meet criteria 1 and 2 (paragraphs 25 and 27, but will not normally be expected to fulfil the REF 2021 requirement and expectation of producing a minimum of one accepted output for staff holding SRR by final submission. They are, therefore, not considered to hold SRR through ‘expectation of role’ (see paragraphs 30-2 below).

### **Identifying SRR: 3 – Expectations**

30. Expectation of role is considered to be identifiable through ‘current responsibilities as indicated in, for example, career pathways or stated objectives’; and through ‘expectations of research by role as indicated in, for example, job descriptions and appraisals’.
31. The University’s process identifies eligible staff with SRR as those also meeting the following role expectations:
- Completion of an IRP or equivalent as part of APR
  - Meeting stated targets appropriate to 300 hours plus WA research hours (0.2) (FTE), as monitored through APR
  - Completion of the ARA.

32. Category A Eligible staff completing doctoral study on or after 1 Aug 2019 are not normally expected to meet the SRR 'expectation of role' criterion (see paragraph 29 above).

#### **Decision making and communication**

33. All research-active academic staff who are eligible and hold SRR will be identified for submission by the REF Strategy Group (RSG) (see **Appendix B**). The Group will generally be able to identify all eligible and submittable staff holding SRR with reference to the ARA. The ARA provides information in relation to the indicators that guide the appropriate identification of staff, including: contractual term, contractual fraction, contract type, research WA hours, doctoral study and qualification, and ARA completion itself.
34. The RSG will not normally make reference to APR and IRP records (see 35 below). As an indicator of SRR, their completion and the meeting of stated targets is an expectation of staff holding appropriate research WA allocation, and their monitoring is the responsibility of academic departments.
35. Annual Research Audit exercises are scheduled for completion by staff and analysis during Jun-Sep 2019 and May-July 2020, prior to the REF 2021 Census Date. ARAs will be notified clearly, and processes regarding identifying eligibility will be circulated regularly, including among any staff who may be absent from the institution.
36. The RSG will also make reference to other sources as appropriate, in order to consider staff not included in the last ARAs, for example staff recently joining, changing their contract status or workload expectations, or absent. These sources will also record WA and role expectations, typically: IRPs, Annual Performance and Probationary Reviews, and CVs.
37. Staff eligible for submission will be informed by the Chair of the RSG, including their UoA allocation. Ineligible staff will be made aware of procedures for appeal (see Section 2.4 below).
38. Staff with personal circumstances will be referred to appropriate processes (see Part 4 below).
39. The final pool of eligible staff identified for submission will be confirmed by the RSG and recommended for approval by the VC/VCEG.

#### **Variation**

40. No variation of the criteria for SRR by individual UoA is being proposed.

#### **Stages**

41. The approval of the CoP has passed through the formal committee process (see paragraph 12 above), with a timeline up to submission for external approval to REF 2021 (see **Appendix A**).

## **2.2 Development of process(es)**

### **Consultation and agreement**

42. The CoP has been consulted upon and agreed through a schedule of formal committee and informal group meetings, and through other fora and means as appropriate (see paragraphs 11-14 above and **Appendix A**).

### **Communication**

43. The approved CoP has been communicated through a schedule of committee, group meetings and other means (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendix A**).

## **2.3 Staff, committees and training**

### **Appointing designated staff and committees/panels**

44. The REF Strategy Group is the decision making group that has responsibility for the identification of eligible staff and determining which staff hold SRR, and making final recommendations to the VC/VCEG (see **Appendix B**). The Group is also responsible for ensuring the representativeness and appropriateness of its membership.

45. The RSG is a sub-group of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, and has staff membership in common. The RKEC provides advice to the RSG on REF policy and the implementation of the Code in general terms, but does not inform decision making with regard to eligibility and SRR at the individual level.

### **Role descriptions and terms of reference**

46. The roles of the members and the terms of reference of the RSG have been updated and approved (see **Appendix D**) in conjunction with the development, consultation and communication of the CoP (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendix A**).

### **Training**

47. The REF Strategy Group and REF Appeals Panel members will receive appropriate equality and diversity training tailored to their specific roles in the REF process and in a timely manner by the Head of HR, Chair of the RSG and other staff as appropriate. The training will include:

- The purpose and context of the REF
- Changes since REF 2014
- The institution and the REF
- Equality and diversity in the REF (including Equality Impact Assessment)
- Unconscious bias

- Identifying staff
- Selecting outputs
- Handing personal circumstances and appeals.

48. Use will also be made of external training resources (Advance HE/ECU) as appropriate.

## **2.4 Appeals**

### **Communication**

49. Staff will be made aware of the appeals process as part of the approval, communication and implementation of the CoP (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendix A**).

### **Appeals process**

50. Appeals will be received by the Chair of the Appeals Panel (Executive Dean).

51. Appeals against decisions regarding eligibility at any point of the REF process will only be possible in the case of failure to adhere to the CoP or in relation to personal disclosure.

52. In the first instance staff should direct enquiries clearly stating the grounds for the appeal in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Panel who will convene the REF Appeals Panel as required. In all cases appeals will be heard in advance of finalisation of the institution's submission and in advance of the REF Census date. Where a *prima facie* case of unfairness has been demonstrated, staff will be entered into the REF as appropriate.

53. Decisions of the REF Appeals Panel within its terms of reference are final. Staff, may, if appropriate, take their case further and within the institution's grievance procedure as required.

54. Staff whose work is not entered for the REF will remain eligible for all forms of research and staff development support across the institution in the normal manner.

55. Appropriate equality and diversity training will be provided for the REF Appeals Panel in a timely manner (see paragraph 47 above).

56. The institution has an obligation to provide information as part of the REF which will be accessed by those individuals nominated above together with a REF Administrator. All personal data relating to the REF will be processed fairly and lawfully and in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Individuals have a right to check or amend the data held, to know what it is being collected for and how it will be used, and due care will be taken to ensure confidentiality. The data collected for the REF will only be used to inform the REF and to inform future research strategy.

57. Any member of staff at the University seeking further information, clarification or guidance surrounding eligibility and selection for the REF are invited to contact the Chair of the REF Strategy Group or the Head of HR in the first instance.

### **The REF Appeals Panel**

58. The membership of the REF Appeals Panel will not include staff who are members of the REF Strategy Group or Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. The respective membership of the two groups will be monitored by HR in liaison with the RKEC as appropriate.

59. The roles of the members and the terms of reference of the REF Appeals Panel have been updated and approved (see **Appendix E**) in conjunction with the development, consultation and communication of the CoP (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendices A-B**).

60. The outcome of the Appeals Panel will be communicated to individual members of staff by the Chair of the Appeals Panel.

### **2.5 Equality impact assessment**

61. Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) will be conducted by the REF Strategy Group in relation to the 2019 and 2020 Academic Research Audits, and prior to final submission, and will inform the staff identification and output selection processes.

62. EIAs will follow the guidance and processes set out in REF 2021 *Guidance on codes of practice* and by the Advance HE (Equality Challenge Unit).<sup>8</sup>

63. EIAs will conduct analyses of staff characteristic profiles with reference to compliance with the Equality Act, Public Sector Equality Duty, and part-time and fixed-term regulations, and in relation to:

- Determining SRR
- Determining Independent Researchers
- Output selection (distribution by number, UoA, Panel and quality)
- The combination of the above three
- Staff disclosures
- Staff appeals.

64. EIAs will identify any negative or positive impacts of identification and selection processes, and recommend any actions arising to prevent discrimination or advance equality, and undertake ongoing monitoring relating to the adjustment of processes if appropriate.

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8. Advance HE *Equality Impact Assessment and the Research Excellence Framework 2021*, briefing March 2019; REF *Guidance on codes of practice*, 16-8.

65. The REF Strategy Group is responsible for the submission and publication of the final EIA report.

### **Part 3: Determining research independence**

#### **3.1 Policies and procedures**

##### **Criteria**

66. This section relates to staff holding 'research-only' contracts. For independence of research for staff on 'teaching and research' contracts and in relation to SRR see paragraphs 26-29 above. For a summary of the process of the determining eligibility of research-only contracts and their independence, see Fig. 1 above.

67. Eligible ('Category A') staff are required to meet the criteria of being an Independent Researcher (IR). The general REF 2021 definition on an IR is:

- 'An individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme'.

68. Additional indicators of an IR are as follows:

- Leading or acting as Principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project
- Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement
- Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

69. IRs are also recognised by REF 2021 Panel C and D to include those meeting the following indicators:

- Being named as a Co-Investigator on an externally funded research grant/award
- Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.

70. The University aims to submit all staff on research-only contracts undertaking IR.

71. Staff not normally meeting the criteria of IR include:

- Research associates and assistants, unless they meet the definition of an IR.

##### **Decision making and communication**

72. Staff who hold research-only contracts and meet the general definition of IR will be identified by the REF Strategy Group. The Group will generally be able to identify staff with research-only contracts and IRs with reference to the ARA, which records contractual status. The Group will also seek additional information from line manager and research-project leads as appropriate to inform the interpretation of IR activity.

73. The process for identifying IRs through the Annual Research Audit follows that for identifying staff holding SRR. This includes: the ARAs scheduled; reference to other sources as appropriate, in order to

consider staff not included in the last ARAs; notification of outcomes and referral to the personal circumstances and appeals processes (see paragraphs 35-38 above).

#### **Stages**

74. The approval of the CoP has passed through the formal committee process (see paragraph 12 above), with a timeline up to submission for external approval to REF 2021 (see **Appendix A** below).

### **3.2 Staff, committees and training**

#### **Appointing designated staff and committees/panels**

75. The REF Strategy Group is the decision making group that has responsibility for the identification of eligible staff and determining which staff are IRs, and making final recommendations to the VC/VCEG (see **Appendix B**). The Group is also responsible for ensuring the representativeness and appropriateness of its membership (see also paragraphs 44-45 above).

#### **Role descriptions and terms of reference**

76. The roles of the members and the terms of reference of the RSG have been updated and approved (see **Appendix D**) in conjunction with the development, consultation and communication of the CoP (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendix A**).

#### **Training**

77. The REF Strategy Group will receive appropriate equality and diversity training tailored to their specific roles in the REF process and in a timely manner by the Head of HR, Chair of the REF Strategy Group and other staff as appropriate (see paragraphs 47-48 above).

### **3.3 Appeals**

#### **Communication**

78. Staff will be made aware of the appeals process as part of the approval, communication and implementation of the CoP (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendix A**).

79. The appeals process in relation to decisions regarding IRs follows that relating to SRR (see Section 2.4 above).

80. The membership, role and terms of reference of the Appeals Panel, and communication of decisions by the Panel are set out above (paragraphs 49-60 and **Appendix E**).



### 3.4 Equality impact assessment

81. Equality Impact Assessments relating to IR will follow those relating to eligibility and SRR (see paragraphs 61-64 above).

## Part 4: Selection of outputs

### 4.1 Policies and procedures

#### Selection of eligible outputs (see Figure 2 below)

82. The selection of outputs for submission to REF 2021 is informed by the definitions, requirements and criteria set out in the REF 2021 documents: *Guidance on submissions* and *Panel criteria and working methods*.<sup>9</sup> This has been circulated on a regular basis as part of the REF preparation, consultation and communications processes, and staff are advised to consult the document in full.

#### Identifying eligible outputs: 1 - Definition of research

83. The outputs selected for submission will meet the general definition of research, being the 'product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared'.

#### Identifying eligible outputs : 2 - Public availability

84. Submitted outputs will comprise those brought into the public domain between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2020.

#### Identifying eligible outputs: 3 – Current and former staff attribution

85. Outputs selected will be those attributable to a current or former who made a substantial research contribution to the output and which must be produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by either a:

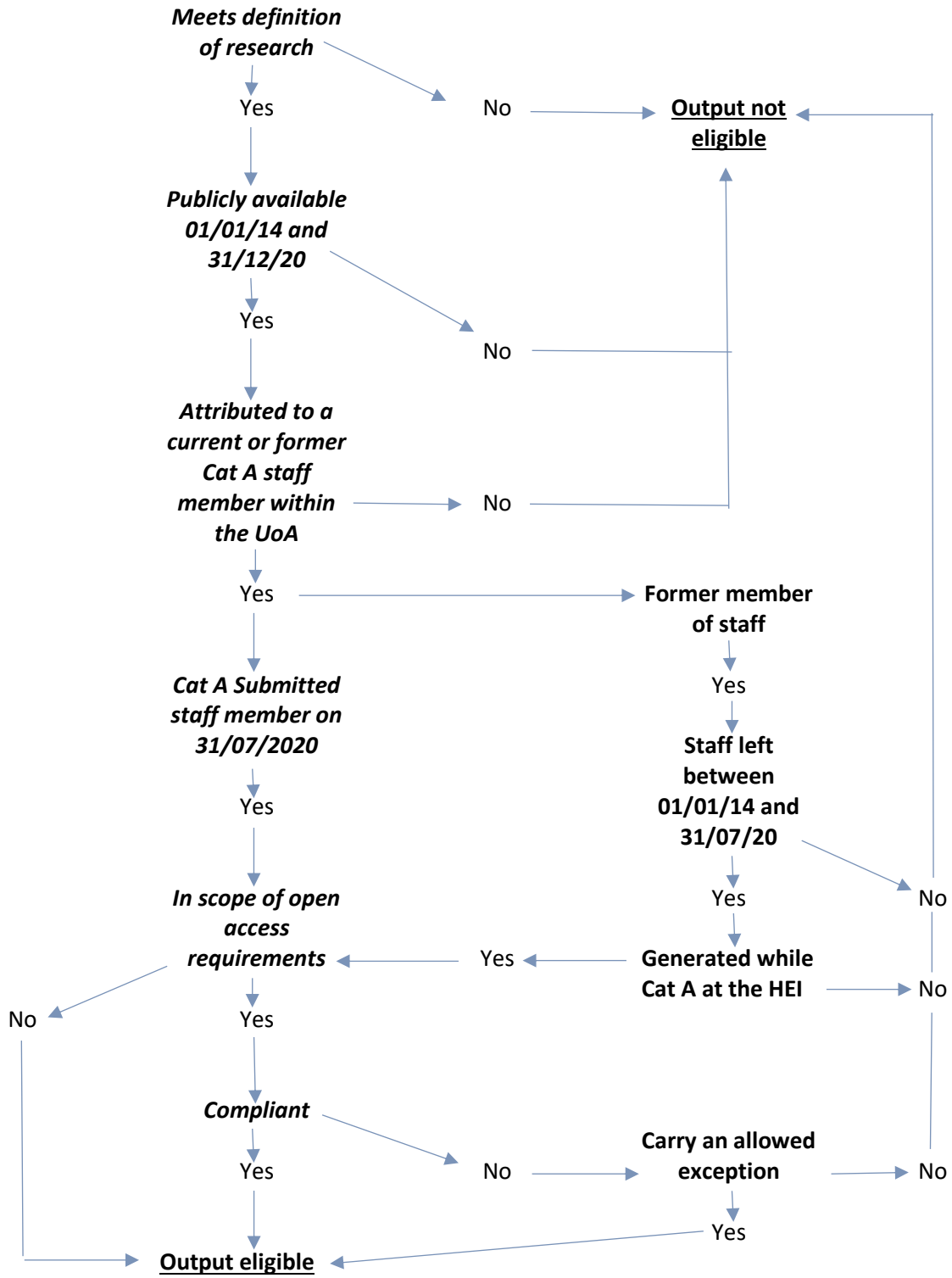
- Category A Submitted staff member, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time they produced the output, or
- Former staff member who was employed by the submitting HEI according to the Category A eligible definition when the output was first made available.

86. Outputs will be eligible of former members of staff if first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by the University as a Category A eligible, including outputs of:

- Staff of the institution who are no longer employed on a Category A status basis
- Staff of the institution who are Category A eligible but no longer hold SRR on the Census date

9. REF 2021 *Guidance on submissions*, Part 3 Section 2: Research outputs; and *Panel criteria and working methods*, Annex C.

**Figure 2: Identification of output eligibility**



- Staff whose outputs were first made available while on a period of unpaid leave of absence or secondment of no more than two years.

87. For staff leaving the University between the public availability of the pre-published version of an output and the publication of the final version, outputs will be submitted in their final version wherever possible.

88. Outputs will not be submitted for new members of staff joining the University after the Census date where those outputs first become publicly available in the period August to December 2020).

#### **Identifying eligible outputs: 4 - Open access**

89. Submitted outputs will be in an open access form where they fall 'in scope' of the open access policy.

90. Outputs for submission that need to meet open access requirements, 'in-scope', will include journal articles with an ISSN or a contribution to a conference proceedings with an ISSN, **and** have a date of acceptance for publication after 1 April 2016.

91. Outputs that do not fall within the definition of being in scope can be submitted providing they meet the other eligibility criteria.

92. Non-compliant outputs of up to the threshold of 5% or 1 output per UoA, whichever is the higher, will be submitted if appropriate.

93. Non-compliant outputs meeting any of the accepted grounds for open-access policy exception will be submitted with an exception if appropriate.

94. Outputs for submission needing to meet open access will also meet the technical requirements specified in the REF 2021 policy relating to deposit, including deposition:

- Within the institution's repository
- As soon after acceptance and no later than 3 months after publication for outputs accepted for publication between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2018
- As soon after acceptance and no later than 3 months after this date for outputs accepted for publication between 1 April 2018 and 31 December 2020.

95. Outputs for submission will also meet the technical requirements specified in relation to discovery and access, and will continue to from the date of deposition.

96. Outputs for submission that replace or augment an originally deposited output will also meet the technical requirements of deposit, discovery and access.<sup>10</sup>

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10. REF 2021 *Guidance on submissions*, paragraphs 234-245.

97. Reserve outputs may be submitted where appropriate, associated respectively with outputs expected to be made publicly available between the submission date of 27 November 2020 and 31 December 2020.

#### **Identifying eligible outputs: 5 – Output type**

98. Outputs will be submitted in accordance with the REF 2021 principle that ‘all forms of research output will be assessed on a fair and equal basis’.
99. Outputs submitted may include reviews, textbooks or edited works where they meet the REF 2021 definition of research.
100. The REF Strategy Group is responsible for the classification of outputs, and acknowledges the diversity of output types especially with regard to Panel D.<sup>11</sup>
101. Output submission will aim to avoid submitting more than one output where outputs form one of two or more with significant material in common and with insufficiently distinct material to be treated as more than one output.
102. Outputs submitted will not include theses, dissertations or other items submitted for a research degree; but may submit other publicly accessible items based on research carried out for a research degree.
103. Outputs submitted will not include those produced by a research assistant or research student supervised by a Category A eligible staff member unless that member co-authored or co-produced the output.

#### **Determining the submitted eligible output pool**

104. The submitted pool of outputs will include (see also **Figure 3** below):
- A minimum of one output for each Category A submitted staff member, which has been produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored by the member (unless individual circumstances apply)
  - Further outputs up to the total required for the submitting, taking into account any applicable reductions for staff circumstances
  - A maximum of five outputs attributable to an individual staff member, without precluding the submission of further outputs where co-authored and attributable to another eligible staff member.
  - A UoA will require an average of 2.5 outputs per member of Category A staff submitted.

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11. See REF 2021 *Panel criteria and working methods*, Annex C.

105. Staff are encouraged to, and peer supported in making a quality self-evaluation of their outputs as part of ongoing, dialogic and formative staff-development processes, and the rating is returned by staff members through the ARA. Internal and external review stages will aim to verify the level of the self-evaluations, and to identify exceptions only, or to make an evaluation where no self-evaluation has been recorded.
106. The institution's aim is to submit its best research from outputs within the pool over and above those required to meet the minimum number attributable per Category A Submitted staff member and the 2.5 average per FTE per unit. The approach to selection reflects the University's general strategic objective of enhancing the quality of the submission made to REF 2014. This will be achieved by aiming to reduce the proportion of the outputs additional to those meeting the minimum submission requirements that are considered likely to receive a 1\* or 0 classification.

**Figure 3: Determining the output pool**

**The number of outputs required**

*FTE of  
Cat A  
Submitted*

**X**



**Number  
of  
outputs**

**2.5**

**The content of the output pool**

*Max of 5  
attributed to  
individuals*



*Min of 1 per Cat A  
Submitted*



*Eligible outputs of  
former staff*



**Submitted  
outputs**

### **Co-authored, co-produced and double-weighted outputs**

107. Co-authored outputs listed in a submission will count as a single output. Co-authored outputs eligible for return in different UoA submissions may be returned in all such submissions.
108. Single-weighted co-authored outputs may be returned more than once within the same submission in exceptional circumstances to Panel D. Substantial co-authored outputs submitted within the same submitting unit and with a double-weighting request may be attributed to a maximum of two members of staff, and may have an associated reserve output (see 109 below).

### **Reserve outputs**

109. Reserve outputs will be submitted in accordance with the minima of one and maxima of five outputs per Category A staff member submitted.

### **Interdisciplinary research identifier**

110. Outputs will be identified as meeting the definition of interdisciplinary research where appropriate in accordance with REF 2021 *Panel criteria* guidance.

### **Additional information**

111. The submission of outputs will be accompanied by additional information where it is specified in the REF 2021 *Panel criteria and working methods* paragraphs 248-273 and where applicable in relation to:
  - Factual information about the research questions, methodology or means of dissemination where these are not described within the output itself
  - Factual information about the significance of the output where this is not evident within the output itself
  - Where the output includes significant material published prior to 1 January 2014
  - Details of the contribution of the staff member to whom a co-authored or co-produced output has been attributed.

### **Development of processes**

112. The processes for selecting outputs have been developed through the REF Strategy Group, in consultation with appropriate support department personnel.
113. Outputs will be identified as meeting the definition of interdisciplinary research where appropriate in accordance with REF 2021 *Panel criteria* guidance.
114. Processes reflected in the Code have been designed with reference to:
  - Recent ARAs, which provide information relating to: the potential alignment of outputs to UoAs, output types, and staff members (including current and former employee status)
  - The systems and processes of the University's institutional repository.

## Stages

115. The approval of the Code has passed through the formal committee process (see paragraph 12 above), with a timeline up to submission for external approval to REF 2021 (see **Appendix A** below).

## 4.2 Staff, committees and training

### Appointing designated staff and committees/panels

*Procedures for identifying designated staff and committees/panels responsible for determining research independence (distinguishing between those with advisory and those with decision-making roles).*

116. The REF Strategy Group is the decision making group that has responsibility for identifying eligible outputs and other related submission requirements (reserve outputs, interdisciplinary research identifiers, and ‘additional information’; paragraphs 107-111), and making final recommendations to the VC/VCEG (see **Appendix B** below. The Group is also responsible for ensuring the representativeness and appropriateness of its membership (see also paragraph 44 above).

### Role descriptions and terms of reference

*Information provided should include role descriptions for individuals and terms of reference for committees/panels, modes of operation, and record-keeping procedures, as well as information about where these roles/committees/panels fit into the wider institutional management structure.*

117. The roles of the members and the terms of reference of the RSG have been updated and approved (see **Appendix D**) in conjunction with the development, consultation and communication of the Code (see paragraphs 11-14 and **Appendix A**).

### Training

*Details of training provided to individuals and committees involved in identifying staff, the timescale for delivery and content (including how it has been tailored to the REF).*

118. The REF Strategy Group will receive appropriate equality and diversity training tailored to their specific roles in the REF process and in a timely manner by the Head of HR, Chair of the REF Working Group and other staff as appropriate (see paragraphs 47-8 above).

## 4.3 Staff circumstances

### Procedures for taking into account circumstances

119. The University, as part of its commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, has put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances (see **Appendices F and G**).

120. The declaration of personal circumstances is not mandatory, and staff are not placed under any pressure of expectation to declare.
121. The purpose of collecting this information is:
- To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be entered into REF where they have:
    - circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
    - circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
    - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
  - To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual's ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs.
  - To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.
122. Applicable circumstances include:
- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
  - Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
  - Qualifying periods of family-related leave
  - Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020
  - Disability (including chronic conditions)
  - Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
  - Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
  - Caring responsibilities
  - Gender reassignment
  - COVID-19 related circumstances (REF6a only)

#### **Procedures for declaration**

123. Staff will be invited to complete a declaration form if their ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the above circumstances. Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information. The institution will not be routinely consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc, in relation to the declaration of staff circumstances process.
124. The form will be received by received by the Head of HR, who will confirm acceptance of the personal circumstances in confidence with the staff member and with the Chair of the REF Strategy group.



125. If the institution applies to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), the University will need to provide UKRI with data that have been disclosed about individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

126. The University recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case staff are invited to contact HR to provide the updated information.

#### **Procedures for adjustment for UoA expectations**

127. The adjustment of UoA expectations will be managed within the REF Working Group and communicated in confidence to the UoA lead where appropriate, and without reference to information relating to individual members of staff.

#### **4.4 Equality impact assessment**

128. Equality Impact Assessments relating to staff circumstances will follow those relating to eligibility and SRR (see paragraphs 61-64 above).

#### **Part 5: Appendices**

- Appendix A: Timeline for the consultation, approval and communication of the CoP
- Appendix B: Institutional REF management and administration structure
- Appendix C: Guidance to REF 2021: Workload allocation and performance review
- Appendix D: The REF Strategy Group membership and terms of reference
- Appendix E: The REF Appeals Panel membership and terms of reference
- Appendix F: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances memo
- Appendix G: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances form
- Appendix H: Further information

## Appendix A: Timeline for the consultation, approval and communication of the CoP

### REF 2021 timeline

The production and implementation of the CoP aligns with the following schedule of requirements specified by REF 2021.<sup>12</sup>

07 Jun 2019	Submission of draft CoP for approval by the REF 2021 E&DA Panel
16 Aug 2019	First notification of CoP approvals and resubmission requests (by 20 Sept)
08 Nov 2019	Second notification of CoP approvals and resubmission requests (by 15 Nov)
Dec 2019	Provisional date for the publication of the approved CoP Submission of estimated staff and output intentions to submit
Jan 2020	Collection of final version CoPs
31 Jul 2020	Census date of selected staff
27 Nov 2020	Final submission of staff and outputs

### External advice, guidance and consultation

The CoP's production has been informed by the following external advice, guidance and consultation.

31 Jan 2019	REF 2021 publication of Final Guidance on Codes of Practice
21 Feb 2019	REF 2021 workshop on CoPs
04 Mar 2019	GuildHE Research workshop on CoPs
26 Mar 2019	GuildHE Research Leads meeting
17 Apr 2019	Advance HE (ECU) workshop on E&D

### Internal consultation

The CoP's production, approval and communication has been informed by the following stages:

22 Mar 2019	REF Working Group meeting
25 Mar 2019	Vice Chancellor's Executive Group
01 Apr 2019	Senior Management Group
24 Apr 2019	Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee
08 May 2019	School Boards
08-14 May 2019	Open staff fora
14 May 2019	Meeting with UCU
22 May 2019	Academic Enhancement Committee
29 May 2019	People and Inclusion Committee
12 Jun 2019	Senate

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12. REF 2021 workshop on codes of practice, 21 February 2019; REF 2021 *Guidance on submissions*, 12.

The Code's processes for identifying members of staff with significant responsibility for research have been agreed by academic staff. This agreement was reached following the completion of the internal consultation schedule set out above (p. 26). This specifies the consultation, approval and communication timeline, including consideration of the processes for identifying staff with SRR (paras 22-32, pp. 9-11). These steps were defined following consideration of the University's current culture, structures, and ways of working in relation to staff representation, and were included in the Code for consideration by staff as part of the consultation on the document as a whole.

#### *Formal committee passage*

Staff acceptance of processes for establishing SRR were sought through consulting the staff representatives of the three academic Schools of the University at their Boards. The Boards are attended by all Programme and subject team Leaders. In addition, School representatives on the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, and REF Strategy Group (a sub-committee of RKE Committee) were consulted. The approval of academic staff representatives at these groups and committees, of the Code and its processes relating to determining SRR, were communicated to the University's Academic Enhancement Committee and Senate.

#### *Informal staff meetings*

Open meetings were held for staff through the consultation and approval period, with meetings held in May and as a concluding opportunity on 11 September 2019. These were scheduled to give staff a more informal context to raise any questions, concerns or objections. A slide presentation was given to outline the Code, and to explain in detail the processes for determining SRR. The processes for identifying SRR contained within the Code and presented were accepted by those attending these staff fora.

#### *Staff intranet and email*

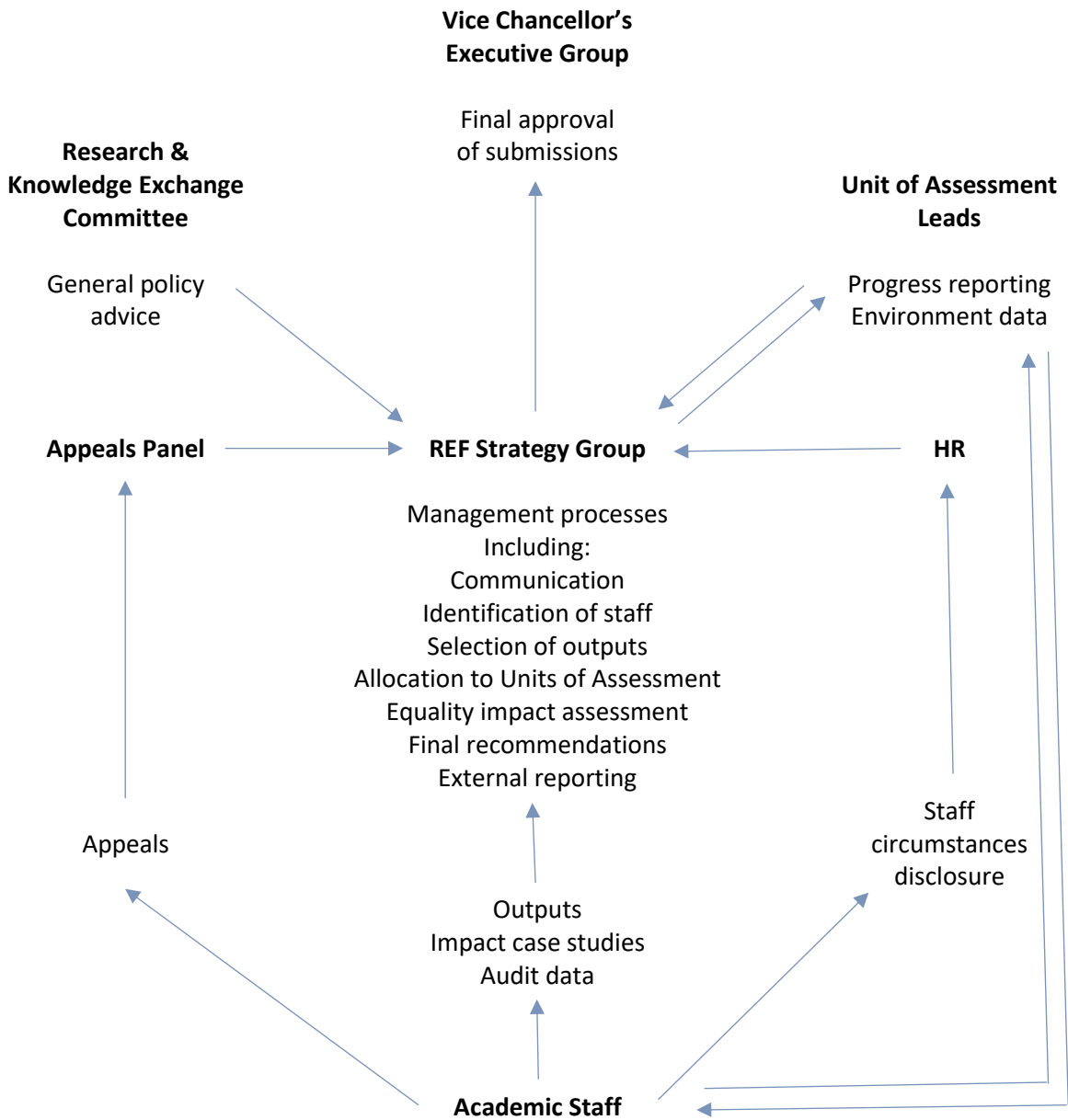
Within the consultation period, all academic staff were sent copies of the draft Code, slides of the presentation given to the open meetings, the FAQs published by Research England, together with referral to REF2019/01-03. All-staff intranet posts and emails gave staff members an additional opportunity to raise any questions, concerns or objections relating to the Code and the determination of SRR. The staff intranet posts and emails sent as part of the consultation period did not give rise to any concerns or objections to the SRR-identification processes.

#### *Union consultation*

The regional UCU officer attended a Joint Consultative Committee on 14 May 2019. The Officer did not raise any objections to the content of the Code, but requested that the University give consideration to the Union's position with regard to the submission of the outputs of members of staff made redundant, making reference to paragraphs 21 of the Code, p. 9, and 86, p. 17. The Officer also undertook to communicate with UCU members of the BGU staff. No further questions, concerns or objections have been drawn to our attention since from the UCU regional officer, and the University is content to consider this constituting further acceptance by staff of SRR processes. The University has not altered paragraphs 21 and 86, in line with requirements and expectations set out in REF Steering Group, 'Key decisions', January 2019.

The CoP will be distributed at regular intervals, with the BGU REF Implementation Plan Interim Reports in November 2019 and September 2020, and at a midpoint in summer 2020, in advance of the Census date.

**Appendix B: Institutional REF management and administration structure**



## **Appendix C: Guidance to REF 2021 - Workload allocation and performance review**

### **1. Aim**

This guidance document:

- Provides advice to academic staff and managers on workload allocation and annual performance review (APR) in relation to preparation for submission to REF 2021 in November 2020
- Accompanies BGU's [Code of Practice for REF 2021 \(Identification of Staff and Selection of Outputs\)](#), which informs the processes for the identification of staff and selection of outputs for REF 2021, with particular reference to staff eligibility
- Updates the guidance to workload allocation and performance review provided in the University's 2015 Workload Allocation Model
- Relates to staff holding 'teaching and research' contracts
- Applies to workload allocations for the academic year 2019-20 onwards, and to performance review processes for the end of the academic year 2018-19 onwards.

### **2. Context**

The research section of the 2015 WAM was revised following the REF 2014 exercise. This updated guidance reflects the new requirements and guidelines for REF 2021, which includes the expectation that all staff with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR) are submitted.

The document reflects the three Indicators that REF 2021 considers as typically representing SRR:

- 'Explicit time and resources are made available'
- 'To engage actively in independent research'
- 'And that it is an expectation of their job role'.

For further information on SRR and related external documentation, staff are advised to refer to the BGU's [Code of Practice for REF 2021](#).

### **3. Research and SRR**

Research is:

- 'For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared' (REF 2021).

This guidance, therefore, relates to the research that incorporates a 'process of investigation', 'new' knowledge and understanding, and is 'effectively shared' through measurable output and/or with evidence of public impact where applicable/appropriate.

For the purposes of this guidance and its reference to REF 2021, *Scholarship* is considered here to be associated with, and a normal expectation of that activity located within the *Teaching and Learning* academic workload category. Scholarship is:

- 'the maintenance and development of, and engagement with, the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines' (HEFCE 2006).

REF 2021, additionally, defines SRR and its relationship with indicators associated with workload allocation and performance:

- 'Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role'.

REF 2021 sets out a range of non-inclusive range of indicators that may be referred to determine SRR, including in relation to workload and APR:

- 'Explicit time and resource', including a 'proportion of time'/'allocation within a workload model'
- 'Independent research', including 'eligibility to apply for research funding', 'access to research leave', 'membership of research centres'
- 'Expectation of job role', including 'career pathway' or 'stated objectives', 'job descriptions', 'appraisals'.

#### **4. Researcher categories, indicators and SRR**

Workload time may be allocated with reference to:

- Alignment with BGU research workload categories and indicators (see Table 1)
- Evidence presented at APR through Individual Research Plans (IRP) or equivalent
- Internal School or Research and Knowledge Exchange Unit research plans and priorities
- REF 2021 Unit of Assessment (UoA) plans and priorities.

Staff will be placed into one of following 2 groups in relation to REF 2021 preparation and submission:

##### ***Academic staff researchers with SRR (for submission)***

- Professors
- Readers
- Advanced researchers
- Mid-stage researchers
- Early career and developing researchers (not doctoral students).

##### ***Academic staff researchers not with SRR***

- Early career and developing researchers (doctoral students; or recent completion, since 1 August 2019, of a doctoral programme)
- Advanced scholars and emerging researchers.

Research workload categorisation and allocation is made by making reference to a range of typical and measurable indicators (see Table 1):

- Registration to, or recent completion (since 1 August 2019), of a doctoral programme
- Internal roles
- External roles
- Income generation
- Output-level targets

- Impact/Knowledge exchange/Public engagement
- Typical REF 'reach' and 'significance' performance levels.

#### **5. Researcher workload allocation and performance review**

***Academic staff researchers with SRR*** are expected to fulfil the following:

- Devote a significant amount of time to research, supported through workload allocation (more than 300 hrs FTE)
- Complete an APR, including IRP or equivalent, in relation to stated research objectives
- Complete the Annual Research Audit (ARA).

***Academic staff researchers not with SRR*** are expected to fulfil the following:

- Devote time to research, supported through workload allocation (doctoral students and those completing doctoral study after 1 August 2019, 300 hrs (FTE); other early career and developing researchers up to 200 hrs FTE)
- Complete an APR in relation to stated research objectives
- Complete the ARA.

#### **6. Annual performance review and the Individual Research Plan**

Members of staff completing the IRP form as part of their APR should detail their research relating to the current academic year, including details of progress towards meeting existing APR and IRP targets as appropriate. Information on research progress and achievement, and proposed targets for the forthcoming year can be organised under the indicators and examples of activity set out in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: Research Workload Model: indicative research category indicators**

REF SRR	Researcher Category	Typical WA Hrs FTE	INDICATOR 1: Doctoral Student	INDICATOR 2: Internal Roles/activity	INDICATOR 3: External Roles/activity	INDICATOR 4: Research-income generation	INDICATOR 5: Typical output-level targets (RCUK2014)	INDICATOR 6: Impact/KE/PE (RCUK2014)	INDICATOR 7: REF reach/significance	
✓	Professor	N/A		Research committee/ working grp representation	Journal editor	REF submission	Monograph Peer-reviewed journal article Book Edited book Book chapter Non-reviewed article Manual/guide Policy briefing report Technical report Technical standard Consultancy report Working paper Conference proceeding Book review Abstract Other	Formal working group, expert panel or dialogue	4* World-leading	
✓	Reader	700-800			Journal editorial team member	REF case-study lead/contributor				External talk or presentation
✓	Advanced Researcher	500			REF UoA team lead RKEU lead Doctoral degree supervisor	Peer reviewer Bid referee Network lead Network member Conference attendance				
✓	Mid-stage Researcher	400		Doctoral degree supervisor	Journal editorial team member Network member Conference attendance	REF submission CI Research charity bid contributor	Peer-reviewed journal article Book chapter Non-reviewed article Conference proceeding Book review Abstract Other	Scientific meeting Participation in open day or visit Participation in an activity, workshop or similar	2* internationally recognised	
✓	EC/ developing researchers	300			Network member Conference attendance	REF submission	As above	As above	1* nationally recognised	
N/A	EC/ developing researchers (Doctoral)	300	✓		Conference attendance		Non-reviewed article Conference proceeding Book review Abstract Other			
N/A	EC/ developing researchers	100-200			Conference attendance		As above			



**Annual Performance Review – Individual Research Plan Form**

**INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PLAN (IRP)**

**Academic staff with SRR** (see BGU [Code of Practice for REF 2021](#)) are expected to complete an APR in relation to stated research objectives, including the completion of an IRP or its equivalent as appropriate.

The IRP form or equivalent as part of APR should detail research relating to the current academic year, including details of progress towards meeting existing APR and IRP targets as appropriate, and information on intended activities and proposed targets for the forthcoming year. The content can be organised under the categories specified below (see BGU [Guidance on REF 2021, Workload Allocation and Performance Review](#)).

The following can be appended to or inserted into the APR form.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list your research progress/achievements in the current year under the following categories:

Internal Roles/Activities (see for examples: Table 1 in [Guidance on REF 2021, Workload Allocation and Performance Review](#))

- 

External roles/Activities (see for examples: Table 1 in [Guidance on REF 2021, Workload Allocation and Performance Review](#))

- 

Research-income generation (including bids in progress, successful and unsuccessful bids, and progress/completion of projects)

- 

Output targets (including progress towards and achieved outputs, and doctoral studies)

- 

Impact, knowledge transfer, public engagement (including dates of events, hyperlinks, numbers attending, citations, funding)

- 

Appraisal target(s) if existing member of staff:

- 

Were target(s) met? Yes / partially met / ongoing / no

-



Please provide a brief description of your intended research activities over the forthcoming academic year under the following categories:

Internal Roles/Activities (see for examples: Table 1 in [Guidance on REF 2021, Workload Allocation and Performance Review](#))

- 

External roles/Activities (see for examples: Table 1 in [Guidance on REF 2021, Workload Allocation and Performance Review](#))

- 

Research-income generation (including bids in progress, successful bids, and progress/completion of projects)

- 

Outputs (including progress towards and achieved outputs, and doctoral studies)

- 

Impact, knowledge transfer, public engagement (including dates of events, hyperlinks, numbers attending, citations, funding)

- 

Proposed new research target(s) for the forthcoming year:

- 

Points you wish to discuss at appraisal:

Please identify any perceived barriers to achieving the research intentions outlined above together with training needs or other support you consider appropriate at this time.

Perceived barriers to research

Training needs

Line Manager's comments

Comments

Proposed targets for referral to the Head of School:

-

## **Appendix D: The REF Strategy Group membership and terms of reference**

The management of the University's submission to the REF and related processes is the responsibility of the REF Strategy Group.

### **Membership**

The membership of the REF Strategy Group is as follows:

- Head of Research (Research and Innovation Centre) (Chair)
- Reader (Research and Innovation Centre) (Deputy Chair)
- Nominated representative of the School of Humanities
- Nominated representative of the School of Social Sciences
- Nominated representative of the School of Teacher Development
- Representative of HR (advising with regard to Equality and Diversity; the four principles, avoidance of discrimination, personal disclosure, and appeals)
- Representative of Library and Information Services (advising on open access compliance)
- Representative of IT (advising on submission systems)
- Representative of Finance (advising on financial and environmental data).

### **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for the REF Working Group are as follows:

- To develop, implement and monitor the University's [Code of Practice for REF 2021 \(Identification of Staff and Selection of Outputs\)](#),
- To communicate regularly with staff with regards to:
  - External REF policy requirements and guidance
  - Internal management of REF processes (see REF Implementation Plan Interim Reports)
  - Development and implementation of the University's Code of Practice (including Declaration of personal circumstances and Appeals processes) (see paragraphs 10-3 above).
- To meet the equality and diversity expectations of REF 2021, including:
  - To ensure the adherence to the four principles and avoidance of discrimination (see paragraphs 8-9 above)
  - To plan and receive appropriate equality and diversity training (see paragraph 45)
  - To conduct Equality Impact Assessments of its processes and outcomes (see paragraphs 59-60).
- To manage the Annual Research Audit process for staff and output information collection (see paragraphs 30-4).
- To provide general or individual guidance to staff on eligibility and the expectations of SRR, and eligible output.
- To identify staff meeting criteria (see Figure 1 above) for:
  - Eligibility (Category A Eligible)
  - Significant responsibility for research
  - Independent Researchers
  - Submission (Category A Submitted).
- To select research outputs meeting eligibility criteria (see Figure 2 above).

- To identify impact case studies, Unit of Assessment location, and other material, information and data required for submission.
- To monitor all procedural matters, and to report progress, outcomes, recommendations and decisions as appropriate to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, People and Inclusion Committee, Academic Enhancement Committee and Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group.
- To act on any general policy recommendations made to the REF Strategy Group by the People and Inclusion Committee, Research Committee and Academic Enhancement Committee.
- To receive the outcome of considerations of disclosures of personal circumstances (see Section 4.3 above), and make appropriate adjustments to submissions.
- To receive the outcome of considerations of the Appeals Panel (see Sections 2.4 and 3.3 above), and make appropriate adjustments to submissions.
- To liaise with Unit of Assessment leads regarding the output expectations informed by outcomes of personal circumstance declaration consideration and Appeals Panel processes, without reference to the personal and confidential content of declarations and appeals.
- To provide regular and timely feedback to all staff and their Heads of School on outcomes regarding the identification of staff and selection of outputs.
- To adhere to and monitor processes with regard to data protection and GDPR expectations and requirements.
- To finalise the recommendations for the institution's 'Intentions to submit' for the approval of the VC/VCEG by November 2019.
- To finalise the institution's submission to REF 2021 for the provisional approval of the VC/VCEG by March 2021
- To complete and return the institution's final submission to REF by March 2021, subject to the final approval the VC/VCEG by March 2021, reflecting as appropriate changing or new circumstances between the REF Census date and final submission.
- To fulfil all of the external reporting requirements of REF 2021.

## **Appendix E: The REF Appeals Panel membership and terms of reference**

### **Membership**

The membership of the REF Appeals Panel, completely independent of the REF Strategy Group and approved by HR in liaison with the Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee as appropriate, is as follows:

- Executive Dean (Chair)
- Nominated Professor or Reader (not part of the REF Strategy Group)
- Nominated Representative of the People and Inclusion Committee (not part of the REF Working Group)
- Nominated Representative of HR (not part of the REF Strategy Group)
- Nominated Representative of Registry
- External advisor as appropriate identified by the Appeals Panel.

### **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference of the REF Appeals Panel are as follows:

- To meet the appeals requirements set out in the University's [Code of Practice for REF 2021 \(Identification of Staff and Selection of Outputs\)](#)
- To consider appeals from staff against the outcomes of processes relating to the identification of staff who meet or do not meet the criteria (see Figure 1 above) for:
  - Eligibility (Category A Eligible)
  - Significant responsibility for research
  - Independent Researchers
  - Submission (Category A Submitted).
- To meet the equality and diversity expectations of REF 2021, including:
  - To ensure the adherence to the four principles and avoidance of discrimination (see paragraphs 8-9 above)
  - To plan and receive appropriate equality and diversity training (see paragraph 45)
  - To conduct Equality Impact Assessments of its processes and outcomes (see paragraphs 59-60).
- To notify the Chair of the REF Strategy Group that an appeal has been lodged
- To make aware and notify appellants in writing of appeal decisions relating to the selection of staff for the REF
- To report and advise the Chair of the REF Strategy Group in writing on appeal decisions relating to the selection of staff for the REF.

### **Timeline**

The attention of staff will be drawn to the appeals process periodically as part of all-staff circulars on the REF. These communications will also make reference to the declaration staff circumstances processes and the Code of Practice more generally, including processes for identifying staff. The communication of the circulars will be timed to coincide with and inform the following internal and external reporting points:

- September 2019 – HESA Staff return
- December 2019 – Intentions to submit return
- April 2020 – annual staff audit of research activity



- July 2020 – REF2 2021 Census
- February 2021 – finalising submission templates
- March 2021 – submission

The Appeals Panel process will resolve all appeals before final submission by 31 March 2021.

## **Appendix F: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances memo**

### **MEMO**

#### **REF2021: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances**

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see REF 2021 [Guidance on submissions](#), paragraphs 117-22). As part of the university's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be entered into REF where they have:

- a. circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
- b. circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
- c. two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.

To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual's ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs.

To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

#### **Applicable circumstances**

- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment
- COVID-19 related circumstances (REF6a only)<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> As well as effects due to applicable circumstances (such as ill health, caring responsibilities), this includes other personal circumstances related to COVID-19 (such as furloughed staff, health-related or clinical staff diverted to frontline services, staff resource diverted to other priority areas within the HEI in response to

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form. Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the *Guidance on submissions* (REF 2019/01). Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

### **Ensuring Confidentiality**

The form will be received by received by the Head of HR, who will confirm acceptance of the personal circumstances in confidence with the staff member, and, without reference to the nature of the personal and confidential circumstances, the Chair of the REF Strategy Group.

If the institution decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the *Guidance on submissions* document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

### **Changes in circumstances**

The university recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should contact their HR partner to provide the updated information.

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COVID-19); and / or external factors related to COVID-19 (for example, restricted access to research facilities).



**Appendix G: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances form**

**REF2021: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances - Form**

To submit this form you should send it to the Head of HR.

**Name:** Click here to insert text.

**Department:** Click here to insert text.

Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020?

Yes

No

Please complete this form if you have one or more applicable equality-related circumstance (see above) which you are willing to declare. Please provide requested information in relevant box(es).

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p><b>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</b></p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>
<p><b>Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2020.</b></p>	<p>Tick here <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</b></p> <p>Dates and durations in months.</p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>
<p><b>Family-related leave;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory maternity leave</li> <li>• statutory adoption leave</li> <li>• Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more.</li> </ul> <p><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>
<p><b>Disability (including chronic conditions)</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>



<p><i>when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	
<p><b>Mental health condition</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.
<p><b>Ill health or injury</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.
<p><b>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</b></p> <p><i>To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.
<p><b>Caring responsibilities</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b></p> <p><i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.
<p><b>COVID-19</b> (Applicable only where requests are being made for the removal of the minimum of one requirement)</p> <p><i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p> <p><i>The overall impact of the COVID-19 effects should be considered in combination with other applicable</i></p>	Click here to enter text.

<p><i>circumstances affecting the staff member's ability to research productively throughout the period.</i></p>	
<p><b>Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement.</b></p> <p><i>To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by the Head of HR and Chair of the REF Strategy Group as appropriate.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree

**Name:** Print name here

**Signed:** Sign or initial here

**Date:** Insert date here

I give my permission for an HR partner to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the relevant contact within my department/faculty/centre. (Please note, if you do not give permission your department may be unable to adjust expectations and put in place appropriate support for you).

I would like to be contacted by:

- Email  Insert email address  
 Phone  Insert contact telephone number

## Appendix H: Further information

Any member of staff at BGU seeking further information, clarification or guidance regarding eligibility and selection for the REF are invited to contact the Chair of the REF Strategy Group or the Head of HR in the first instance.

Supporting and other information can be found at:

### BGU

- [Diversity and Equality Policy](#), version 3, March 2019
- REF Implementation Plan Interim Report 2 November 2018
- 2014-19 [Strategic Plan](#).

### AdvanceHE (Equality Challenge Unit)

- Advance HE *Equality Impact Assessment and the Research Excellence Framework 2021*, briefing March 2019.

### REF2021

- REF 2021 [Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances template](#)
- REF2019/01 January 2019 [Guidance on submissions](#)
- REF2019/02 January 2019 [Panel criteria and working methods](#)
- REF2019/03 January 2019 [Guidance on codes of practice](#)
- REF2017/04 November 2017 Updated April 2018 [Decisions on staff and outputs](#)
- REF Steering Group, [Key decisions](#), January 2019.