

LSTM Code of Practice on submission of staff and outputs to REF-2021

Contents

Part 1	Introduction	5
	Transparency.....	6
	Consistency	7
	Accountability	7
	Inclusivity	7
	Definitions of staff categories.....	7
Part 2	Identifying Category-A-eligible staff with R&T contracts and a ‘significant responsibility for research’.	7
Part 3	Identifying Category-A-eligible staff with R-only contracts who are ‘independent researchers’	8
Part 4	Equality Impact Assessment on staff inclusion.....	9
Part 5	Communication and appeals	9
Part 6	Outputs	10
	Assessment.	10
	Inclusion of outputs in the submission.	12
	Staff circumstances.....	14
	Calculation of reductions in outputs.....	15
Part 7.	Equality Impact Assessment on selection of outputs	15
Part 8.	Staff, committees and training	16
	Individuals	16
	The Director	16
	The REF-Coordinator.....	16
	The Director of Strategic Projects	16
	The REF-Working Group.....	16
	Departmental Heads.....	16
	Global Director of Human Resources.....	17
	Committees.....	17
	Senior Management Group (SMG) of the Management Committee (Terms of reference in Annex-2).....	17
	Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC).....	17
	Special Circumstances Panel	17
	<i>Training.</i>	18
Annex 1 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019).....		19
	Reductions for staff circumstances.....	19
	Early career researchers	19
	Table 1 Early career researchers: permitted reduction in outputs.....	19
	Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks.....	19
	Table 2 Secondments or career breaks: permitted reduction in outputs	19

Qualifying periods of family-related leave.....	19
Combining circumstances	20
Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6.....	20
Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions	21
Annex 2	22
Management Committee 2018/19	22
Membership.....	22
Terms of Reference.....	23
Annex 3 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019).....	24
Definitions of staff categories	24
Category A eligible staff	24
Substantive connection.....	25
Independent researchers.....	26
Significant responsibility for research.....	28
Research staff data requirements (form REF1a).....	29
Early career researchers	30
Annex 4 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019).....	31
REF2021 Published list of eligible fellowships	31
Research Fellowships	31
Annex 5 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019).....	34
REF2021 Research Outputs.....	34
Eligibility definitions for research outputs	34
Eligibility of outputs produced or authored by former staff	35
General eligibility of outputs.....	36
Key terms	37
Tolerance of non-compliance	37
Criteria for open access	37
Deposit requirements	38
Discovery requirements.....	38
Access requirements.....	38
Timing of compliance with access requirements and embargo periods	39
Exceptions to the open access requirements	39
Deposit exceptions.....	39
Access exceptions	40
Technical exceptions.....	40
Further exceptions	40

Timing of publication	40
Confidential reports	41
Annex 6 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019).....	43
Staff circumstances	43
Measures to support staff with individual circumstances.....	43
Summary of applicable circumstances.....	44
HEIs' processes.....	44
Supporting staff declaration	45
Recognising the effect of staff circumstances	45
Assessing the effect on the overall output pool	46
Removing the 'minimum of one' requirement	46
Unit reduction requests	47
Calculating reductions.....	47
Data requirements for unit reduction requests and requests to remove the minimum of one requirement (REF6a/b).....	48
Request process	49
Annex 7	50
Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances: Letter to be sent to LSTM academic staff.....	50
Annex 8	55
LSTM Staff Data Collection Statement.....	55
Annex 9	58
Timeline with Key Dates.....	58

Part 1 Introduction

This document describes the Code of Practice (COP) that the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) will use to prepare its submission to Research England's (RE) *Research Excellence Framework* (REF-2021) including the process by which staff and outputs will be selected for inclusion. A key aim of the COP is to demonstrate LSTM's commitment to fairness and transparency in its mechanisms for the selection of both staff and outputs. The present draft of the COP was modified in August 2020 following postponement of the submission deadline to March 2021 as a result of COVID-19.

LSTM is a new Higher Education Institute (HEI status granted in 2013) and this is our first submission to *Research Excellence Framework* (REF) as an independent institute¹. We are a small, specialised research institute, largely funded by competitively awarded research grant income, and with extensive overseas activities in the Global South. In addition to research and teaching, many of our staff also devote significant time to clinical care in the NHS.

It is important to note that:

- Submission of researchers to REF2021 is only one aspect of the wide-ranging contributions made by staff to LSTM's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.
- LSTM is committed to recognizing all aspects of the contribution made by staff and to support their efforts within the context of the institutional Strategic Plan.
- The submission or not of individual members of staff to the REF will not influence career progression or reflect the value of those staff to the overall performance of LSTM.

The COP is in-keeping with LSTM's broader policies to promote Equality & Diversity and forms part of actions taken by LSTM since REF-2014 which include:

- Adoption of the Athena-SWAN Charter and the award of 'Bronze' status to both LSTM and its constituent two Faculties; an application for a 'Silver' Award was submitted in April 2019
- Formation of an institution-level 'Equal Opportunities' Committee (EOC) chaired by the Director.
- Appointment of specialist Equality and Diversity Officer
- Introduction of the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2017-2020 with underpinning action plan.
- REF planning that assumes the inclusion in the submission of all staff who fulfil the definitions set-out by the REF-2021 Team, with no plans for exclusion of staff.

¹ LSTM's submission to REF-2014 was made jointly with the Universities of Liverpool and Warwick.

The draft COP was made available on the internal LSTM website in November 2018, emailed to academic staff and drawn to the attention of academic staff absent from work. All academic staff were invited to Departmental Meetings between December 2018 and the end of February 2019 where the draft COP was presented, and questions answered by either the REF-Coordinator or the Director of Strategic Projects; staff both in the UK and based overseas had the option of joining these meetings remotely. After this process of consultation with staff the draft COP was amended based on feedback received and reviewed and endorsed by the EOC and by the LSTM Management Committee. The final agreed version of the COP is now available on the intranet and on LSTM's external facing website. The COP will also be published by the REF-2021 in December 2019.

The COP was written within the context of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public-Sector Equality Duty from 5 April 2011. LSTM's aim is to promote equality of opportunity across the full range of protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) of the processes described below will be carried out by trained staff within the HR Department under the direction of the Global Director of HR at relevant points within REF preparations (see below). This will be monitored by LSTM's Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) which will report to the Management Committee; the outcomes of EIAs on identified returnable staff and outputs will be shared with staff.

All personal data relating to staff will be held in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and will only be seen by the relevant panel members, as set out in this document. Details of how the REF team at Research England will use any personal information collected are included in [Annex 8](#).

Transparency: All processes for the selection of staff for inclusion in REF-2021 will be transparent. This transparency will apply both to the selection of staff for inclusion in the submission (as set out below) and the selection of outputs, as set out in Part 6. The COP has been made available in an easily accessible format and publicised to all academic staff across LSTM, via email, departmental meetings and postings on the staff intranet; it has been drawn to the attention of those absent from work (by use of an alternative email address and/or letter to provided addresses). The programme of communication to disseminate the COP and explain the processes related to selection of staff and outputs for submission involved six open meetings (including one at our major overseas unit in Malawi). Provisions were made for staff to join any of these consultations remotely. Staff were invited to submit questions, suggestions or comments a) in person at the meeting, b) by completing a feedback form available at the open meetings, c) via the staff intranet (with the option to maintain anonymity) or d) by speaking in person to the REF co-ordinator.

Consistency: Processes for selection of staff and outputs will be consistent across LSTM and the COP will be implemented uniformly. The COP sets out the principles to be applied to all stages of the process at all levels within the institution where decisions will be made.

Accountability: Responsibilities are clearly defined in the COP, and individuals and bodies that are involved in selecting staff for REF submissions have been identified by role. The COP outlines what training individuals who have a role in selecting staff will undergo. Operating criteria and terms of reference for individuals and committees are outlined in the COP.

Inclusivity: The COP aims to promote inclusivity, enabling LSTM to identify all ‘Category-A-eligible staff’ who have ‘a significant responsibility for research’. For the purposes of this COP, no distinction will be made between staff on permanent, open-ended contracts and those on fixed term contracts; similarly, no distinction will be made based on whether staff are based in Liverpool or overseas.

Definitions of staff categories

Category-A-eligible staff. The definitions of ‘Category-A-eligible staff’ are described in paragraphs [117 to 122](#) of the Guidance on Submissions (see [Annex 3](#)).

- Staff with an academic contract of employment of 0.2 FTE (or greater) on the LSTM payroll at the census date (31st July 2020), **and**
- Whose contract classification is either ‘research only’ or ‘teaching and research’, **and**
- Who have a demonstrable ‘substantive connection’ (defined in the Guidance on Submissions in paragraphs [123-127](#), see [Annex 3](#)) with LSTM, **and**
- Who are ‘independent researchers’ (paragraphs [128 to 134](#) of the Guidance on Submissions, see [Annex 3](#)).

Category-A staff included in the REF-2021 submission will be defined as:

- Category-A-eligible staff (as above)
- Who have ‘a significant responsibility for research’ (paragraphs [138](#) and [141 to 144](#) of the Guidance on Submissions see [Annex 3](#)).

Part 2 Identifying Category-A-eligible staff with R&T contracts² and a ‘significant responsibility for research’.

² For the purpose of this document, contract refers to the HESA code

The REF-coordinator, working with senior members of the HR Department, will identify those staff who meet the REF-2021 definition of eligibility. An audit will be conducted to identify R&T contract staff based on job title and HESA code.

The HR Department will communicate with individual staff identified by this audit to inform them that they currently have 'significant responsibility for research' by the end of August-2019 (staff who are expected to be absent from LSTM for an extended period will be informed by a letter to their designated contact address).

Part 3 Identifying Category-A-eligible staff with R-only contracts³ who are 'independent researchers'.

The Guidance on Submissions document defines 'research independence' as ([paragraph 131](#))

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

and lists possible indicators of this ([paragraph 132](#))

132. Institutions should note that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and where appropriate multiple factors may need to be considered. The following indicators are considered appropriate by all main panels

- 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. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships can be found at www.ref.ac.uk, under Guidance
- leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

REF guidelines state that postdoctoral research assistants (PDRAs) are not expected to be included in the REF submission; only those meeting the criteria described below to identify 'independent researchers' will be included. In line with the guidance on indicators of 'independent researchers' outlined above⁴, the REF working group will conduct an audit on staff on R-only contracts that will draw on Job Title and the grant database to determine staff who, at the time of the audit demonstrate:

³ For the purpose of this document, contract refers to the HESA code

⁴ Grant supplements or no-cost extensions directly related to COVID-19 will be excluded from analysis of indicators

- Evidence of acting as principal investigator of an externally funded research project with a value of no less than £50,000; or,
- Evidence of independently won, competitively awarded post-doctoral fellowships where research independence is a requirement⁵; or,
- Evidence of significant intellectual input⁶ into the award and delivery of a collaborative grant, such as being lead on a work-package (or equivalent for an interdisciplinary project).

Based on this audit the HR Department will communicate with individual staff (including those absent from work or based overseas) to inform them whether they are currently 'independent researchers' in the view of LSTM and the REF-2021 definitions of eligibility. An initial audit will be conducted by the end of August 2019 to assist with REF preparations, the final audit will take place in August 2020. Where a member of staff disagrees with the findings from this audit, they will be invited to a meeting (with the REF-Coordinator and a senior member of the HR Department) to review the evidence listed above. These interviews will be completed within two months of the audits. If corrections to evidence or new information which meets the definition of research independence is presented during the meeting a new letter will be issued to confirm the individual is viewed as an independent researcher. Staff will have the opportunity to appeal the outcomes from these initial decisions as outlined in Part 5.

Part 4 Equality Impact Assessment on staff inclusion

Equality impact assessments have been ongoing throughout the development and implementation of the COP. These have been performed by trained members of the HR Department. An initial EIA was undertaken on the draft COP and this exercise was repeated on the final version. Additional EIAs are planned for the end of August 2019 and August 2020, (following the conclusion of any appeals), to review the process and outcomes of selection of staff to be included in our REF submissions. A further EIA will be completed within two months of our final REF submission (to review the outputs included in our REF submissions). LSTM's Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) will review each EIA and make a report to the Management Committee; the outcomes of EIAs on included staff and outputs will be shared with staff in a presentation by the REF coordinator to which all academic staff will be invited (recorded and accessible for those absent and/or overseas), and a summary shared in writing with all staff. The Management Committee, after completing a Root Cause Analysis, will implement actions to ensure greater future equity for its researchers.

Part 5 Communication and appeals

⁵ REF have published a list of eligible fellowships, for information see [Annex 4](#).

⁶ This information will be obtained based on records of grant attribution held by the RMS office.

Following receipt of the letter from the HR Department (see [Part 3](#)) individuals will have the opportunity to appeal against a decision relating to exclusion from the REF-2021 submission.

- In the first instance, individuals will be invited to raise their concerns with one of the four Heads of Departments ⁷. This will be handled in a consistent manner for all cases and could include concerns that the processes described in the COP have not been followed, disagreement with interpretation of evidence, failure to consider equal opportunity issues or concerns about bias in the application of the COP. Individuals will have four weeks to arrange to meet with a HoD, who will then either agree to uphold the original decision or disagree and make a recommendation to the REF Working Group to change this decision. This will be communicated to the individual by email from the HoD. Following a recommendation for change, the REF Co-ordinator may request HR to send a revised letter to the individual.
- Where an HoD has agreed to uphold the original decision and the individual still disagrees, they will be given an opportunity to submit a written appeal to the Senior Management Group (SMG) of the Management Committee, for consideration. The deadline for such written appeals will be within four weeks from the email sent by the HoD.
- In considering written appeals, the SMG will consult as appropriate with the Departmental Head and will inform individuals of the result of the deliberations in writing, normally within 10 working days.
- Individuals will have a final right of appeal to the LSTM Board of Trustees nominated Equalities and Diversity member, sitting with the Director of Strategic Projects and designated member of EOC. The deadline for such written appeals will be the end of November 2019. Final decisions on appeals will be communicated by HR, normally within 10 working days.

In recognition that an individuals' 'independent researcher' status may change during the course of the processes outlined above, we will repeat the audit in August 2020, using the same processes and communication channels. The deadline for staff to submit a formal appeal following this repeat exercise will be October 2020 and the appeals process will be complete by December 2020.

Part 6 Outputs

Assessment.

All LSTM outputs included in REF-2021 will meet the eligibility criteria given in paragraphs [202 to 212](#) of the Guidance on Submissions (see [Annex 5](#)). LSTM expects that most of its submitted outputs will be research publications (all of which will meet the Open Access criteria set out in paragraphs [223 to 263](#) of the Guidance on Submissions, [Annex 5](#)).

⁷ LSTM has approximately 220 academic staff, organised into four academic departments: Department of Clinical Sciences, Department of International Public Health, Department of Tropical Disease Biology and Department of Vector Biology.

LSTM will also consider for submission non-text outputs including patents and software (and listed in [paragraph 217](#) of the Guidance on Submissions, [Annex 5](#)); staff proposing to submit outputs other than standard research publications are invited to discuss these with the REF coordinator.

217. In addition to printed academic work, research outputs may include, but are not limited to: new materials, devices, images, artefacts, products and buildings; confidential or technical reports; intellectual property, whether in patents or other forms; performances, exhibits or events; and work published in non-print media. An underpinning principle of the REF is that all forms of research output will be assessed on a fair and equal basis. Sub-panels will not regard any particular form of output as of greater or lesser quality than another per se.

All relevant research outputs have been subject to annual robust and transparent internal peer review since 2016. Criteria for assessment have been those set out in the REF-2021 Panel Criteria & Working Methods (hereafter 'Panel Criteria' paragraphs 192 to 194 of the Panel Criteria, which set out the judgement of outputs in terms of their quality, significance and rigour.

192. Significance will be understood as the extent to which the work has influenced, or has the capacity to influence, knowledge and scholarly thought, or the development and understanding of policy and/or practice.

193. Rigour will be understood as the extent to which the work demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, sources, theories and/or methodologies.

194. The generic definitions of the starred quality levels in the overall quality profile in each of the three sub-profiles – outputs, impact and environment – are in Annex A of 'Guidance on submissions'. The panels would like to emphasise that 'world-leading', 'internationally' and 'nationally' in this context refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the nature or geographical scope of particular subjects, nor to the locus of research, nor its place of dissemination.

In line with Panel Criteria for Main Panel A, LSTM are using citation data as an additional means to judge outputs but assessments based entirely on journal placement, ranking or citation measures will not have been deemed valid.

The peer review process will have encompassed the reading of all outputs agreed suitable for assessment. Panels of experienced academic staff (usually Professors) will take place annually to assess outputs. The REF-Coordinator and the Director of Strategic Projects will participate in each annual assessment panel; otherwise the staff serving on assessment panels will change annually with the aim that all Professors, with the exception of Heads of Department

and members of SMG who may be involved in the appeals process, will serve on at least one annual panel. Every member of reading panels will undergo training on methodology for output review and equality and diversity.

As a minimum, each output will have been read by three senior members of staff. LSTM may choose to supplement its internal assessment expertise with input from external colleagues at the discretion of the REF Coordinator or by request of staff. A database has been updated annually to record individual assessments and grade-point averages (GPA). Staff have been given annual feedback via their HoDs on the GPAs achieved by the outputs they submitted.

The assessment processes will be transparent to staff. LSTM will ensure that the relevant information is available for all staff to access on the staff intranet, including:

- Details of processes and methodologies adopted.
- Membership of reading panels and external reviewers.
- Criteria for assessment, including interpretation of specific guidance, and how this has informed a strategy for maximizing the quality of outputs to be returned.
- Timescales for activity.

Inclusion of outputs in the submission.

The REF-coordinator will recommend to the Director which outputs LSTM should include in its REF submissions. This will be done in a stepwise manner.

- ‘Category-A-submitted’ individuals will be listed, and their total FTE will be determined; this figure x 2.5 will be the default number of outputs to be included in the submission.
- The confidential decisions of the REF Special Circumstances panel (below) will then be consulted, and any adjustments will be made.
- Any outputs from staff who have left LSTM due to compulsory redundancy⁸ or disciplinary action will be removed.

In making recommendations on selection of outputs for inclusion, the REF-Coordinator will ensure that:

- All authors are returned with no fewer than one ‘indexed’ output (unless Special Circumstances apply, and the author has no eligible outputs during the REF period).
- No authors are returned with more than five ‘indexed’ outputs.

⁸ Note this does not apply to staff made redundant due to the end of a fixed term contract.

LSTM's objective in preparing its submission for REF 2021 will be to achieve the strongest possible quality profile. A minimum of one output and a maximum of five outputs will be submitted for each Category A submitted staff member. Within this output range, the number of outputs selected for any one staff member will vary depending on their contribution to maximizing the quality profile.

LSTM undertakes an annual output assessment process (mock REF) where staff submit potential outputs which are independently reviewed and scored by a minimum of three members of academic staff. Output scores and feedback are moderated by the REF coordinator and communicated to authors via the Head of Department. Researchers may re-submit outputs for assessment at any point to allow for re-appraisal of work and the REF working group may undertake external calibration as appropriate to benchmark the accuracy of internal review.

The REF Working Group will select outputs as follows:

- The highest scoring outputs from the mock REF exercise from each individual Category A submitted staff will be selected to ensure that each member of staff has the minimum of one output.
- The remaining output pool will be selected by identifying the highest scoring publications remaining across the pool of available outputs working down from 4* to 1*, ensuring that no member of staff has more than five outputs attributed to them and that no more than 5% of the selected outputs are non-compliant with the REF Open Access Policy. It is recognised that some outputs within a UoA scope may have received identical internal scores. Ranking will be informed by additional considerations including:
 - Strategic decisions in line with research environment or UoA submission strategies
 - Use of citation data
 - Re-assessment and/or external review
- Outputs that are co-authored with other members of Category A submitted staff in the same UoA, will be allocated to authors to ensure that the highest scoring outputs are included in the submission while also ensuring that the minimum of one and no more than five outputs are attributed to a single individual.

The final decisions on the submission of outputs will be made by the LSTM Director, following advice by the REF coordinator, and will be based entirely on judgements of quality. A decision not to return particular work should be seen in this context. As the selection of outputs is based on academic judgement and has no implications for the position of individual members of staff, no appeals process will be provided for the selection of outputs.

Final selection of REF2021 outputs will take place in early 2021 following completion of the 2020 output assessment exercise and consideration of any outputs to be published towards the REF2021 submission deadline.

Staff circumstances.

The REF-2021 team has set out guidance on circumstances that might affect an individual's ability to produce research outputs during the assessment period and has adopted an equal opportunities statement; details of these documents are provided in [Annex 6](#).

Where individual circumstances have significantly constrained a person's ability to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period, staff will have the opportunity to disclose relevant circumstances at any time point up to the final REF submission date in March 2021. This process will be managed at HEI-level (not at Department-level) by completion of an on-line form with an option for hard copies to be sent to staff with difficulties accessing our intranet ([Annex 7](#)). Staff will be only be informed on a single occasion of the opportunity to declare Special Circumstances by an email, sent to all academic staff in November 2019; a verbal explanation of the process will also be given at the academic staff meeting held scheduled for December 2019. New academic staff joining LSTM in 2020, or newly independent researchers, will be provided with the opportunity to declare Special Circumstances to the HR department as part of the induction process. All personal information provided by staff will be held in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and will only be seen by the LSTM Special Circumstances Panel in confidence.

Individual staff circumstances will be judged to determine reductions in numbers of outputs (according to the Guidance on Submissions [paragraph 151 to 201](#) provided in [Annex 6](#)):

- Part-time employment status – a reduction of up to 1.5 outputs; or,
- Qualifying as an 'early career researcher' (see [paragraphs 148 to 149 Annex 1, Table 1](#)); or,
- Qualifying as a 'junior clinical academic' ([paragraphs 162 and 163](#) of the Guidance on Submissions) – a reduction of up to 1.0 outputs; or,
- Absence from work due to working part-time, secondments or career breaks - see [Annex 1, Table 2](#); or,
- Periods of statutory Family Leave (see [Annex 1](#)).

The following complex circumstances shall be taken into account by LSTM:

- Disability, ill-health and injury (disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as "a physical and/or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". Long term means a condition that lasts, or is likely to last, 12 months or more).
- Absence from work on the advice of a registered medical practitioner.
- Childcare, family leave or leave for caring responsibilities (where such leave has been formally requested).
- Gender reassignment.

- Any other personal circumstances which are considered to have had a significant impact on an individual's ability to produce the expected volume of research outputs in the assessment period. (These might include, but are not limited to, health and safety restrictions imposed on pregnant and breastfeeding women which may have prevented them from undertaking laboratory-based, or field-work-based research during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020).

Where staff have had one or more complex circumstances – including in combination with any circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs – LSTM will decide on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs submitted and will provide a rationale for its decision.

REF-2021 permits the inclusion of outputs from staff formerly employed as Category-A-eligible (former staff). Outputs attributable to these staff will be eligible for inclusion where the output was first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by the institution as a Category A eligible member of staff ⁹.

Calculation of reductions in outputs.

A *REF Special Circumstances Panel*, comprising the Global Director of HR, a designated member of the EOC and the Director of Strategic Projects will be convened (in January 2020 and again in October 2020) to consider submissions of special circumstances. This Panel will also have the responsibility to decide whether any 'Category-A-submitted' individual will be included without the minimum requirement of one output. In cases where Special Circumstances will be declared, this information, including details of the nature of the Special Circumstance that will be included in our submission, will be communicated to said staff in writing. The Global Director of HR will offer to meet with all staff declaring complex circumstances to ensure that the necessary support has been provided.

Part 7. Equality Impact Assessment on selection of outputs

An EIA will be completed on selection of outputs following our REF submissions. The EOC will be convened in March 2021 to receive this report. The EOC will make a report to the Management Committee by the end of April 2021 and results will then be disseminated to staff via email and a presentation (recorded and available on the intranet) by the REF coordinator. If this EIA highlights inequity in the selection of outputs, Management Committee, will commission a Root Cause Analysis and Implement the recommendations arising from such analysis.

⁹ LSTM will only include outputs from previous staff members that were employed with a HESA R&T contract.

Part 8. Staff, committees and training

Individuals

The Director, guided by expert advice from the REF-Coordinator and HR Department will be responsible for final decisions regarding LSTM submission and the inclusion of individuals and outputs to the REF.

The REF-Coordinator, an academic member of staff, reports to the Director and has been empowered to make operational and planning decisions regarding all aspects of REF submission strategy. They are responsible for administrative overview and for the following processes relating to LSTM's preparations for REF:

- Strategic selection of the Units of Assessment to which LSTM should make submissions and the assignment, where appropriate, of the research activity of individuals to a Unit of Assessment. This will be made after full consideration of the nature of the research outputs, the panel criteria and membership, and issues of critical mass.
- Ensuring all REF policies and processes are developed and implemented in compliance with the LSTM Equality Statement and underpinned by appropriate training. That due regard for any potential equality impact has been taken and associated equality impact assessments have been completed.
- Leadership in developing the strategy for REF submissions within LSTM
- Providing recommendations to the Director on submission strategy including the assessment of output quality and fit against UoA criteria.

The Director of Strategic Projects, an academic member of staff, assists with REF preparation and reports to the REF-Coordinator. They will be a member of the Special Circumstances Panel

The REF-Working Group consists of the REF-Coordinator, the Director of Strategic Projects and three members of the Research Management Services team with responsibilities for Research Information. The REF Working Group supports the REF-Coordinator in the collation of data and development and implementation of policies and processes.

Departmental Heads are responsible for:

- Overseeing preparatory activity for the selection and development of Impact Case Studies and Impact Templates.
- Communication to academic staff of outcomes and actions from the REF working group discussions and the application of the COP.
- Ensuring consistency within their Departments in the application of the COP.
- Fulfilling obligations in the appeals process ([see above](#)).

- Overseeing the communication and implementation of all REF processes and production of REF material for relevant submissions.

Global Director of Human Resources is responsible for:

- Overseeing the development and review of REF-related policies from a HR perspective, ensuring support for a positive environment in which to work and study.
- Ensuring that UK equality legislation is reflected in LSTM's REF preparations.
- Chairing the Special Circumstances Panel.
- Advising on issues relating to complex circumstances ([as set out above](#)).
- Providing training and advice to all those who have responsibility for decision-making in relation to the impact of complex circumstances.

Committees.

LSTM has appointed, through its existing policies and procedures, the following groups with responsibility for decisions relating to REF:

Senior Management Group (SMG) of the Management Committee ([Terms of reference in Annex-2](#)).

- Responsibility for overall submission strategy (including definition of the 'pool' of submitted staff, the selection of outputs and the configuration of submissions).
- Defining framework and timetable for preparation and overseeing submission preparations.
- Ensuring appropriate guidance material and advice is available to staff.
- Considering any appeals raised by staff members following the implementation of the COP.
- Ensuring all activities comply with the LSTM's Equality Statement.

Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC).

- Responsible for scrutiny of draft and final versions of the COP.
- Responsible for receiving Equality Impact Statements (prepared by the REF Coordinator and Global Director of HR) concerning staff inclusion and selection of outputs.
- Responsible for reporting to SMG with regards to the above EIAs.

Special Circumstances Panel.

- To consider anonymised cases of complex circumstances and decide on reductions in output numbers.
- To carry out all responsibilities in compliance with the LSTM Equality Statement and to attend appropriate training as set out in the associated training plans.

Training.

All individuals (including output-assessment panels) and committee members will complete both the LSTM approved on-line E&D course and a face-to-face course on unconscious bias/Inclusive Practice.

All members of output-assessment panels will receive training (from the Director of Strategic Projects) on assessment. This will address author contributions, and judgement of originality, rigour and significance and cover the option to consult citation counts (normalised for 'All Science Journal Classification' centiles).

Annex 1 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019)

Reductions for staff circumstances

1. Given the reduced output requirement for 2021, the tariffs for the defined reductions differ from those set in REF 2014. This is to ensure that a broadly equivalent reduction is given in the context of the submitted output pool, and to ensure that panels receive a sufficient selection of research outputs from each submitted unit upon which to base judgements about the quality of that unit's outputs.

Early career researchers

2. ECRs are defined in the 'Guidance on submissions' (paragraph 148). Table L1 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for ECRs who meet this definition.

Table 1 Early career researchers: permitted reduction in outputs

Date at which the individual first met the REF definition of an ECR	Output pool may be reduced by up to:
On or before 31 July 2016	0
Between 1 August 2016 and 31 July 2017 inclusive	0.5
Between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018 inclusive	1
On or after 1 August 2018	1.5

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks

3. Table L2 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside of the HE sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.

Table 2 Secondments or career breaks: permitted reduction in outputs

Total months absent between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020 due to a staff member's secondment or career break	Output pool may be reduced by up to:
Fewer than 12 calendar months	0
At least 12 calendar months but less than 28	0.5
At least 28 calendar months but less than 46	1
46 calendar months or more	1.5

4. The allowances in Table L2 are based on the length of the individual's absence or time away from working in HE. They are defined in terms of total months absent from work.

5. As part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5), reduction requests on the basis of part-time working hours should only be made exceptionally. For example, where the FTE of a staff member late in the assessment period does not reflect their average FTE over the period as a whole.

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:
- Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
 - Additional paternity or adoption leave²², or shared parental leave²³ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.

7. This approach to reductions for qualifying periods of family-related leave is based on the funding bodies' considered judgement following consultation in the previous REF exercise that the impact of such a period of leave and the arrival of a new child into a family is generally sufficiently disruptive of an individual's research work to justify the specified reduction.

8. While the above reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months, shorter periods of such leave could be taken into account as follows:

- a. a. By applying a reduction in outputs where there are additional circumstances, for example where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities.
- b. b. By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other circumstances, according to Table L2.

9. Any period of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions in paragraph 6 above may in individual cases be associated with prolonged constraints on work that justify more than the defined reduction set out. In such cases, the circumstances should be explained in the request.

Combining circumstances

10. Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances that have a defined reduction in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of 1.5 outputs. For each circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.

11. Where Table L1 is combined with Table L2, the period of time since 1 January 2014 up until the individual met the definition of an ECR should be calculated in months, and Table L2 should be applied.

12. When combining circumstances, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously.

13. Where an individual has a combination of circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs and additional circumstances that require a judgement, the institution should explain this in the reduction request so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances. The circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs to be requested should be calculated according to the guidance above (paragraphs 2 to 10).

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

14. In UOAs 1–6, the number of outputs may be reduced by up to one, without penalty in the assessment, for Category A submitted staff who are junior clinical academics. These are defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or its equivalent prior to 31 July 2020.

15. This allowance is made on the basis that the staff concerned are normally significantly constrained in the time they have available to undertake research during the assessment period. Where the individual meets the criteria in paragraph 14, and has had significant additional circumstances – for any of the other reasons set out in the 'Guidance on submissions' in paragraph 160 – the institution can make a case for further reductions in the unit reduction request.

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

16. Where staff have had other circumstances during the period (see paragraph 160e. in this 'Guidance on submissions' document) – including in combination with any circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs – the institution will need to make a judgement about the effect of the circumstances in terms of the equivalent period of time absent, apply the reductions as set out in Table L2 by analogy, and provide a brief rationale for this judgement.

22. 'Additional paternity or adoption leave' refers to leave of up to 26 weeks which is taken to care for a child where the person's spouse, partner or civil partner was entitled to statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave, and has since returned to work. The term 'additional paternity leave' is often used to describe this type of leave although it may be taken by parents of either gender. For the purposes of the REF, we refer to this leave as 'additional paternity or adoption leave'.

23. 'Shared parental leave' refers to leave of up to 50 weeks which can be shared by parents having a baby or adopting a child. This can be taken in blocks, or all in one go.

Annex 2

Management Committee 2018/19

Membership

Director (Chair)	Professor David Laloo
Deputy Director (Deputy Chair)	Professor Stephen Ward
Director of Strategic Operations	Mr Einion Holland
Dean of Education	Professor Philip Padfield
Global Director of Human Resources	Ms Sam Airey
Dean of Clinical Sciences and International Public Health	Professor Bertie Squire
Dean of Biological Sciences	Professor Alister Craig
Head of Department of International Public Health	Professor Shabbar Jaffar
Head of Department of Clinical Sciences	Professor Daniela Ferreira
Head of Department of Tropical Disease Biology	Professor Giancarlo Biagini
Head of Department of Vector Biology	Professor Martin Donnelly
Director of Finance	Mr Duncan Preston
Elected by School Staff Forum (SSF)	Mr Diderik Van Halsema
Elected by School Staff Forum (SSF)	Dr Emily Adams
Secretary to the Committee	Ms Kathleen Carroll
REF Co-ordinator	Professor Hilary Ranson

- 1.1 Election of the two Staff Representatives to the Management Committee will be organised by the SSF Committee. Once elected, the two Staff Representatives will automatically become members of the SSF Committee and will be in office for a period of 3 years. SSF Committee members may be re-nominated for a second term of three years if they wish.
- 1.2 The EA to the Director will serve as Secretary to the Committee and ensure that its minutes are prepared for the Chair (or Deputy) to present to Management Committee and once approved, made available via the intranet to all members of LSTM (except reserved business).
- 1.3 Management Committee will meet every month and is quorate with seven members present, one of whom must be the Chair or Acting Chair.
- 1.4 Exceptional meetings of the Management Committee can be called as required and can, in exceptional circumstances, be held electronically.
- 1.5 Management Committee may direct the formation of working groups to make recommendations on specific issues. Working groups will normally comprise at least one member of Management Committee.

Terms of Reference

Management Committee is responsible for developing higher level strategy and oversight of the day-to-day management of LSTM. Specifically, responsibilities are:

- To monitor against the financial plan and oversee expenditure against budget and monitor progress against the Strategic Plan.
- To ensure that holistic financial planning across all LSTM activities occurs (e.g. teaching, research and so on).
- To agree and recommend to the Board of Trustees, the Strategic Plan, annual revenue, capital budgets and cash flow.
- To consider, develop and facilitate the implementation of the research, teaching, human resources, financial and estates strategies.
- To provide oversight, monitor and approval responsibilities for relevant returns to HEFCE, HESA and other stakeholders.
- To make recommendations and report up to the Board of Trustees.
- To approve the introduction, continuation, suspension and closure of education and training programmes and the appointment of external reviewers for periodic review of programmes.
- Ownership of and responsibility for the Risk Register.
- To develop and maintain the brand and image of LSTM.
- To provide oversight of strategy development and advise on higher level operational activities of LSTM subsidiary companies e.g. LSTM Consulting and the Well-Travelled Clinics Ltd.
- To advise the Director and Board of Trustees on developing, maintaining, extending or terminating links with external institutions.
- To receive the Minutes from the Animal Welfare Ethical Review Board; Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team (SAT); Building Steering Group; Corporate Safety Oversight Committee; Equal Opportunities Committee; Fundraising Steering Group; Governance Oversight Committee; Information and Communication Technology Committee; Learning and Teaching Committee; Research Committee; School Staff Forum; Senior Management Group (SMG); Space Allocation Committee, Tropical Clinical Trials Unit and the Well-Travelled Clinics Board.
- To monitor and develop LSTM joint ventures e.g. the Wellcome Trust Liverpool Glasgow Centre for Global Health Research and the NIH Centre for Infectious Diseases Research.
- To monitor major capital projects and targets related to previous regional development funding for CTID.
- To receive, ratify and where appropriate, adopt employment recommendations with core LSTM financial implications from the SMG.
- To ensure that the requirements of equality and human rights legislation are integrated into strategic planning, decision making and operational processes.

Last updated 03.10.18

Annex 3 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019)

Definitions of staff categories

Category A eligible staff

117. Category A eligible staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date, whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'¹⁰. Staff should have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit (see paragraphs 123 to 127). Staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher (paragraphs 128 to 134).

118. The funding bodies are aware that there are a very small number of instances where Category A eligible staff are not returned to HESA due to internal employment structures. They are working with the affected institutions, including the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England and the University of the Highlands and Islands in Scotland, to ensure that a robust alternative is in place to ensure that eligible and submitted staff are identified in a fair and consistent manner.

119. The funding bodies recognise that staff on 'teaching and research' contracts cannot always be assumed to be independent researchers. Where this is the case, staff who are not independent researchers should be identified as part of the process for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research (see paragraphs 138 to 143).

120. Regardless of their job title, all staff who satisfy the definition in paragraph 117, are considered Category A eligible staff. By way of further guidance, please note that so long as they satisfy the criteria at paragraph 117:

- a. Staff who hold institutional/NHS joint appointments **are** considered Category A eligible. For clinical academics where the HEI is the primary employer (and the other contract is honorary) the staff member should be returned with the full FTE of the primary employment contract with the HEI. Where a clinical academic holds two employer contracts (for example, A+B contracts) they may be returned by the HEI for that fraction of their employment with the HEI.
- b. Pensioned staff who continue in salaried employment contracted to carry out research and meet the definition in paragraph 117 **are** considered Category A eligible staff.
- c. Where academic staff are on unpaid leave of absence, or on secondment to an organisation other than a UK HEI on the census date **and** are contracted to return to normal duties up to two years from the start of their period of absence or secondment, **either** the seconded staff member **or** any staff recruited to cover their duties that meet the eligibility criteria should be considered Category A eligible. The FTE of the post should be included only once in the submission, and the minimum of one output required for whichever staff member is returned. Submitting units may include the outputs of both staff in the submitted output pool. Where these are attributable to the staff member who is not returned, the staff details in REF1b should be completed.
- d. Where a staff member is working on secondment as contracted academic staff at another UK HEI on the census date and meets the definition of Category A eligible in both HEIs, the two institutions concerned should agree how the FTE is to be apportioned to each, and the minimum of one output requirement must be met by both institutions (this could be the same or a different output for each HEI). The staff member's total FTE may not exceed their contracted FTE with their main employer. The FTE of any staff

¹⁰ Individuals whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research' are staff returned to the Higher Education Statistics Agency Staff Collection with an academic employment function of either 'Academic contract that is research only' or 'Academic contract that is both teaching and research' (identified as codes '2' or '3' in the ACEMPFUN field).

- directly recruited to cover the secondment at the 'home' HEI, who meet the definition of Category A eligible staff, will also be considered eligible for return. The combined FTE of the seconded and cover staff should not exceed the total contracted FTE of the post, and must not exceed 1.0 FTE in total. The minimum of one output requirement should also be met for the cover staff.
- e. Other than individuals on secondment on the terms described in sub-paragraph d., an individual will **only** meet the definition Category A eligible by more than one HEI if they have a contract with and receive a salary from more than one HEI. In such cases:
 - i. The two HEIs must ensure that the total FTE value of the individual sums to no more than the individual's total contracted FTE duties, and must not exceed 1.0 FTE in total. If any individual is returned in submissions with a contracted FTE that sums to more than 1.0, the REF team will rectify this through verification, and will apportion the FTE to each HEI pro-rata to the individual's contracted FTE at each HEI.
 - ii. The same research outputs may, but need not be, attributed to the staff member in each submission.
 - f. No individual may be returned in more than one submission, except as described in sub-paragraphs d. and e.:
 - i. Where an individual holds a joint appointment across two or more submitting units within the same institution, the HEI must decide on one submission in which to return the individual.
 - ii. Where a staff member is serving a notice period at an institution, having started employment with a different institution on the census date, if they meet the eligibility criteria, the individual will be deemed eligible for return by the first institution only.
 - g. Staff whose salary is calculated on an hourly or daily basis are eligible **only** if they meet the definition in paragraph 117 **and** on the census date have a contract of employment of at least 0.2 FTE per year, over the length of their contract. Institutions should calculate the mean FTE of these staff using the number of hours or days worked in the HESA reporting years that fall wholly within the REF assessment period (2014–15 to 2019–20), based on the standard hours or days of a full-time employee at that institution.
 - h. Staff who hold more than one contract for different functions within the HEI, are eligible if one of those contracts satisfies the definition of Category A eligible staff in paragraph 117. Such staff should be returned with an FTE that is no greater than that of the qualifying contract.
 - i. Where an individual holds one contract with multiple functions, the individual should be returned with the FTE of the contract that makes them eligible for submission to the REF, not the FTE specifically related to their research duties within that contract.

121. Academic staff who are employed by the submitting HEI and based in a discrete department or unit outside the UK are eligible **only** if the primary focus of their research activity on the census date is clearly and directly connected to the submitting unit based in the UK. In assessing this, HEIs should be guided by the indicators suggested for evidencing a substantive connection (see paragraphs 123 to 125).

122. Staff described in paragraph 121 should be returned to HESA. No additional information should be submitted; however, HEIs will need to be able to verify the connection in the event of audit.

Substantive connection

123. For staff employed on minimum fractional contracts (0.20 to 0.29 FTE) on the census date, the HEI will need to provide a short statement (up to 200 words) evidencing the clear connection of the staff member with the submitting unit. A range of indicators is likely to evidence a substantive connection, including but not limited to:

- evidence of participation in and contribution to the unit's research environment, such as involvement in research centres or clusters, research leadership activities, supervision of research staff, or supervision of postgraduate research (PGR) students
- evidence of wider involvement in the institution, for example through teaching, knowledge exchange, administrative, and/or governance roles and responsibilities
- evidence of research activity focused in the institution (such as through publication affiliation, shared grant applications or grants held with the HEI)
- period of time with the institution (including prospective time, as indicated through length of contract).

124. Staff who do not have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit will not be eligible for inclusion, such as those who hold substantive research posts at another institution (either within or outside the UK) **and** whose research is not clearly connected with the submitted unit. A statement evidencing a substantive connection will not be required for staff members with a contract of employment greater than or equal to 0.3 FTE on the census date; however, a substantive research connection remains an eligibility requirement for all staff and HEIs will need to be able to verify this in the event of audit.

125. Staff whose connection cannot be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the REF director, as advised by the relevant sub-panel, will be considered ineligible and removed from the REF database (see also paragraph 137).

126. The funding bodies recognise that there are also particular personal and discipline-related circumstances where the minimum fractional contract will commonly apply for staff members who have a substantive connection with the submitting unit. Therefore, in these instances, a statement evidencing a substantive connection will not be required for staff with contract of employment between 0.20 and 0.29 FTE. These instances are as follows:

- where the staff member has caring responsibilities
- where the staff member has other personal circumstances (e.g. ill health, disability)
- where the staff member has reduced their working hours on the approach to retirement
- where the fractional appointment reflects normal discipline practice (for example, where joint appointments with industry or practice are typical in the submitted unit).

127. Institutions will need to identify the applicable circumstances in lieu of providing a statement at the point of submission. This information will not be made available to panels. No additional information should be submitted; however, HEIs will need to be able to verify the circumstances in the event of audit. Where audit determines the cited circumstances are not applicable, the funding bodies will seek assurance from the HEI that the staff member(s) has a substantive connection as set out in paragraph 123.

Independent researchers

128. Staff employed on 'research only' contracts must be independent researchers (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) to meet the definition of Category A eligible. All staff on 'research only' contracts who are independent researchers will have significant responsibility for research so should be returned as Category A submitted staff.

129. Research assistants (sometimes also described as postdoctoral research assistants, research associates or assistant researchers) as defined in paragraph 130, are not eligible to be returned to the REF unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) on the census date **and**

satisfy the definition of Category A eligible staff in paragraph 117. They must not be listed as Category A submitted staff purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.

130. Research assistants are defined as academic staff whose primary employment function is 'research only', and they are employed to carry out another individual's research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right (except in the circumstances described in paragraph 129). They are usually funded from research grants or contracts from Research Councils, charities, the European Union (EU) or other overseas sources, industry, or other commercial enterprises, but they may also be funded from the institution's own funds.

131. For the purposes of the REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme.

132. Possible indicators of independence are listed below. Institutions should note that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and where appropriate multiple factors may need to be considered. The main panels have set out in the 'Panel criteria' (paragraphs 187 to 189) the indicators they consider appropriate for their disciplines. The following indicators are considered appropriate by all main panels

- 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. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships can be found at www.ref.ac.uk, under Guidance
- leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

133. A member of staff is not deemed to have undertaken independent research purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.

134. Institutions are required to develop processes for determining research independence in accordance with the guidance in paragraphs 128 to 133 and document these processes in their code of practice (see REF 2019/03).

Category A submitted staff

135. Category A submitted staff are defined as Category A eligible staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date. This will include all staff on 'research only' contracts who are 'Category A eligible'. Staff on 'teaching and research' contracts will be included according to one of the following approaches:

- a. Where the 'Category A eligible' staff definition accurately identifies staff in the submitting unit with significant responsibility for research, the unit should submit 100 per cent of staff.
- b. Where the 'Category A eligible' staff definition does not accurately identify staff (on 'teaching and research' contracts) in the submitting unit who have significant responsibility for research and are independent researchers, the institution will need to implement processes to determine this. Institutions will need to develop, consult with staff on, and document in their code of practice, the processes to be followed for identifying who among those meeting the definition of 'Category A eligible' staff have significant responsibility, and are therefore in scope for submission. The onus will be on institutions to provide evidence that 'Category A eligible' staff on 'teaching and research' contracts who are not submitted do not have significant responsibility for research. Further guidance on this approach is set out in paragraphs 138 to 143.

136. Where a Category A submitted staff member is deemed ineligible through audit (for example, if they are not considered to meet the definition of an independent researcher, or there is a dispute over which HEI employs the staff member) they will be removed from the submission, and their FTE subtracted from the submitted total.

137. Where a staff member is removed through audit, all of the outputs attributed to that staff member in the submission will also be removed. Where this leads to a lower number of outputs in the submission than is required for the new total submitted FTE, any 'missing' outputs will receive an unclassified score. Where the total number of outputs is higher than the recalculated requirement, all remaining outputs will be included in the assessment.

Significant responsibility for research

138. The funding bodies require institutions to submit all eligible staff with significant responsibility for research. 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. The definition of research for the REF is provided in Annex C.

139. In many institutions and in many discipline areas the core eligibility criteria as set out in paragraph 117 will accurately identify staff with significant responsibility for research. For institutions where this is not uniformly the case and the approach set out in paragraph 135.b is followed, the following additional guidance is provided to support institutions to identify staff with significant responsibility for research in a consistent way. In all instances this should be based upon the expectations of staff as a function of employment, and not upon the quality or volume of what has been delivered as a result of that employment function. In developing their processes, it is expected that HEIs will adhere to the principles underpinning the policy, which seeks to ensure that all eligible staff who have any significant responsibility to undertake research are returned to the REF. Where deemed necessary, the funding bodies may seek to verify through audit that HEIs have adhered to the processes set out in their code of practice.

140. The indicators set out in this guidance are not intended to be exhaustive, but should provide an illustration to HEIs to help inform the development of their own processes. Additionally, the indicators are not intended to define a minimum threshold, and staff may be identified as having significant responsibility for research without fulfilling all of the below. However, the funding bodies would not consider an HEI's process appropriate if that process identified staff as without significant responsibility for research where the staff fulfil the majority of the indicators outlined.

141. **Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom:**

- a. **'Explicit time and resources are made available'**. Indicators of this could include:
 - a specific proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the context of the institution's practices and applied in a consistent way
 - research allocation in a workload model or equivalent.
- b. **'To engage actively in independent research'**. Indicators of this could include (HEIs are also advised to refer to the indicators of independence, paragraph 132, as additional guidance on this aspect):
 - eligibility to apply for research funding as the lead or co-applicant
 - access to research leave or sabbaticals
 - membership of research centres or institutes within the HEI.
- c. **'And that is an expectation of their job role'**. Indicators of this could include:
 - current research responsibilities as indicated in, for example, career pathways or stated objectives
 - expectations of research by role as indicated in, for example, job descriptions and appraisals.

142. The submission approach may vary by UOA where employment practices vary at this level. It is expected that variations will be based on disciplinary norms (for example, close working with industry), rather than purely local differences in practice. The institution's criteria for identifying staff should be developed collaboratively with the academic staff body and evidence of institution-wide consultation on the criteria should be available in the institution's code of practice. The criteria must be:

- objective
- non-discriminatory
- transparent.

They must allow for appropriate staff engagement, contain clearly defined responsibilities, and take due regard of the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 75 in Northern Ireland) (see REF 2019/03). Evidence of agreement by staff representative groups should be provided. The processes should be context dependent, drawing on standard ways of working at the institution, and it should be possible to test these criteria fairly and evenly against the responsibilities of all academic staff.

143. Institutions must be able to verify through audit that eligible staff who are not submitted do not have significant responsibility for research, with the evidence for this related to the institution's documented process. Where an audit process identifies staff with significant responsibility for research that have not been submitted, their FTE will be added to the unit's submission and the total output requirement will be recalculated accordingly. An unclassified score will be added to the outputs sub-profile for each missing output in the recalculated total.

144. Where a staff member is removed through audit, all outputs attributed to that individual will be removed from the unit's submission and the total output requirement will be recalculated (see paragraph 137).

Research staff data requirements (form REF1a)

145. The following data are required on all Category A submitted staff:

- a. HESA staff identifier. This is for verification and equal opportunities monitoring purposes.
- b. Staff reference code: a code determined by the HEI (collected only where there is no HESA staff identifier).
- c. Initials.
- d. Surname.
- e. Date of birth. This is for verification purposes to enable the REF team to uniquely identify staff.
- f. Open research and contributor ID (ORCID), where held.
- g. Contracted FTE on the census date. The minimum FTE that may be reported is 0.2.
- h. For staff between 0.2 to 0.29 FTE, details of the research connection with the submitted unit (see paragraphs 123 to 127).
- i. If the individual is on a fixed term contract, secondment, or period of unpaid leave, the start and end dates (day, month and year) of the contract, secondment or period of unpaid leave. Staff on rolling contracts or a series of renewable fixed-term contracts will be regarded as fixed-term for this purpose, although institutions may wish to draw attention to their use of rolling contracts in the textual part of their submissions, especially where a fixed-term contract has an expiry date soon after the census date.
- j. Any research groups that the individual belongs to, where relevant and up to a maximum of four. This is not a mandatory field. Some sub-panels may ask HEIs to describe research groups in REF5b (the unit-level environment template), but neither the presence nor absence of research groups is assumed.

Early career researchers

146. A request to the funding bodies for a reduction in the submitting unit's output requirement may be made in connection with early career researchers (ECRs), as described in the proposals set out in paragraphs 160 and Annex L. Requests may also be made for ECRs to be returned without the minimum of one requirement in exceptional circumstances, as described in paragraphs 178 to 183.

147. Regardless of whether or not a request for an output reduction is made in connection with ECRs, all staff included in a submission who meet the definition of an ECR will be identified as ECRs in the submission through the HESA staff record. This will not affect the REF 2021 scores. This is to enable the funding bodies to examine any effects for ECRs in the sector analysis as described in paragraph 37. To enable this analysis, the HESA staff return for 2019–20 will include a field for HEIs to identify all eligible academic staff on 'research' or 'teaching and research' contracts who meet the REF definition of an ECR.

148. ECRs are defined as members of staff who meet the definition of Category A eligible on the census date, and who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016. For the purposes of the REF, an individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which:

- a. they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, and
- b. they first met the definition of an independent researcher (paragraphs 131 to 133).

149. The following do not meet the definition of an ECR (this list is not exhaustive):

- a. Staff who first acted as an independent researcher while at a previous employer – whether another HEI, business or other organisation in the UK or elsewhere – before 1 August 2016, with a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater.
- b. Staff who first acted as an independent researcher before 1 August 2016 and have since had a career outside of research or an extended break from their research career, before returning to research work. Career breaks outside the HE sector are included in the types of circumstances where requests for output reductions may be made (see paragraph 160).
- c. Research assistants who would not normally meet the definition of an independent researcher, as set out in paragraph 129.

Annex 4 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019)

REF2021 Published list of eligible fellowships

Research Fellowships

Table 1 provides a list of competitive research fellowships, presented in alphabetical order by funder, that have been confirmed by the funder to require research independence. This list is intended to guide institutions when developing their criteria to identify independent researchers. **It should not be taken to be exhaustive** and the funding bodies recognise that many relevant fellowship schemes are not captured, including research fellowships funded by HEIs, which may require research independence.

Table 1

Funder	Fellowship scheme
AHRC	AHRC Leadership Fellowships - Early Career Researchers
AHRC	AHRC Leadership Fellowships
BBSRC	BBSRC David Phillips Fellowships
BBSRC	BBSRC Future Leader Fellowships (from 2018 known as BBSRC Discovery Fellowships)
British Academy	BA/Leverhulme Senior Research Fellowships
British Academy	British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowships
British Academy	JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships
British Academy	Mid-Career Fellowships
British Academy	Newton Advanced Fellowships
British Academy	Newton International Fellowships
British Academy	Wolfson Research Professorships
British Heart Foundation	Career Re-entry Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Clinical Research Leave Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	BHF-Fulbright Commission Scholar Awards
British Heart Foundation	Intermediate Basic Science Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Intermediate Clinical Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Senior Basic Science Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Senior Clinical Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Springboard Award for Biomedical Researchers
British Heart Foundation	Starter Grants for Clinical Lecturers
Cancer Research UK	Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship
Cancer Research UK	Career Development Fellowship
Cancer Research UK	Career Establishment Award
Cancer Research UK	Senior Cancer Research Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Early Career Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Established Career Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Postdoctoral Fellowship* ¹
ESRC	ESRC Future Cities Catapult Fellowship
ESRC	ESRC Future Leaders Grant
ESRC	ESRC/Turing Fellowships

ESRC/URKI	Early Career Researcher Innovation Fellowships
European Research Council	ERC Advanced Grants
European Research Council	ERC Consolidator Grants
European Research Council	ERC Starting Grants
Health Education England	ICA Clinical Lectureship
Health Education England	ICA Senior Clinical Lectureship
Leverhulme Trust	Early Career Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Research Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Emeritus Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Major Research Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	International Academic Fellowship
MRC	MRC Career Development Awards*
MRC	MRC New Investigator Research Grants (Non-clinical) *
MRC	MRC New Investigator Research Grants (Clinical)*
MRC	MRC Clinician Scientist Fellowships*
MRC	Senior Non-Clinical Fellowships
MRC	Senior Clinical Fellowships
NC3R	David Sainsbury Fellowship
NC3R	Training fellowship
NERC	Independent Research Fellowships
NERC/UKRI	Industrial Innovation Fellowships
NERC/UKRI	Industrial Mobility Fellowships
NIHR	Advanced Fellowship
NIHR	Career Development Fellowship
NIHR	Clinical Lectureships
NIHR	Clinical Trials Fellowship
NIHR	Clinician Scientist
NIHR	Development and Skills Enhancement Award
NIHR	Knowledge Mobilisation Research Fellowship
NIHR	Post-Doctoral Fellowship
NIHR	Research Professorship
NIHR	School for Primary Care Post-Doctoral Fellowships
NIHR	Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Engineering for Development Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	Industrial Fellowships
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	UK Intelligence Community (IC) Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Arts & Humanities Awards (for permanent staff)
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Personal Research Fellowship
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Sabbatical Research Grants (for permanent staff)
STFC	CERN Fellowships

STFC	Ernest Rutherford Fellowship
STFC	ESA Fellowships
STFC	Innovations Partnership Scheme Fellowships
STFC	Returner Fellowships
STFC	RSE/STFC Enterprise Fellowships
STFC	Rutherford International Fellowship Programme
UKRI	UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships
UKRI	UKRI Innovation Fellowships
Wellcome Trust	Intermediate Fellowship in Public Health and Tropical Medicine
Wellcome Trust	Principal Research Fellowships
Wellcome Trust	Research Award for Health Professionals
Wellcome Trust	Research Career Development Fellowship
Wellcome Trust	Research Fellowship in Humanities and Social Science
Wellcome Trust	Senior Research Fellowship
Wellcome Trust	Sir Henry Dale Fellowship

We are awaiting information from the funder on the following fellowships:

Royal Society	Sir Henry Dale Fellowship
Royal Society	Royal Society Wolfson Fellowship
Royal Society	Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship
Royal Society	JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship
Royal Society	Newton Advanced Fellowship
Royal Society	Newton International Fellowship
Royal Society	Royal Society/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Society	University Research Fellowship

¹ Those asterisked support the transition to independence. Applicants should demonstrate readiness to become independent and the award enables them to become so. It could be argued those at the start of an award are not 'independent' yet, but those well in the award may be.

Annex 5 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019)

REF2021 Research Outputs

202. Each HEI must decide which outputs to select for submission, in accordance with the following guidance and its internal code of practice (see REF 2019/03).

203. The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2021 is intended to provide increased flexibility to institutions in building the portfolio of outputs for submission. There are many reasons why an excellent researcher may have fewer or more outputs attributable to them in an assessment period. It is therefore not expected that all staff members would be returned with the same number of outputs attributed to them in the submission. As set out in REF 2019/03, to aid institutions in promoting equality, complying with legislation and avoiding discrimination, institutions must document and apply fair and transparent processes for the selection of outputs. These must demonstrate how they have taken into account equality and diversity considerations, and any equality-related circumstances affecting staff ability to research productively during the period.

204. As part of the standard analyses provided to panels (see Annex J), we will include data on the distribution of outputs attributed to staff in submissions. There will be an opportunity in the unit-level environment template (REF5b) for institutions to contextualise the distribution of outputs, drawing on the processes described in the code of practice.

Eligibility definitions for research outputs

205. Submissions must include a set number of items of research output, equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for submission. This number will be adjusted, as appropriate, to take account of successful requests for staff circumstances (see paragraphs 151 to 201). Each output must be:

- a. The product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. (The full definition of research for the purposes of the REF is in Annex C.)
- b. First brought into the public domain during the publication period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 or, if a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period (see paragraphs 261 to 263).
- c. Attributable to a current or former member of staff, who made a substantial research contribution to the output, which must be either:
 - i. produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a Category A submitted staff member, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time they produced that output, or
 - ii. produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a former staff member who was employed by the submitting HEI according the Category A eligible definition when the output was first made publicly available.
- d. Available in an open access form, where the output is within scope of the open access policy (see paragraph 223).

206. A summary of output eligibility is set out in Figure 2.

207. The submitted pool of outputs should include:

- a. 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 that staff member (unless individual circumstances apply).

b. Further outputs up to the total required for the submitting unit, taking into account any applicable reductions for staff circumstances. A maximum of five outputs may be attributed to an individual staff member (both Category A submitted staff, as well as any former staff whose outputs are eligible for submission). The attribution of the maximum number of outputs to a staff member will not preclude the submission of further outputs on which that staff member is a co-author, where these are attributed to other eligible staff in the unit.

208. A diagram illustrating the submitted output pool requirements is set out in Figure 3.

209. Outputs may only be attributed to individuals who made a substantial research contribution to the output. This information will be made available to panels to enable them to establish whether a substantial research contribution has been made. The 'Panel criteria' sets out whether the panels require any additional information for co-authored outputs.

210. Outputs determined to be ineligible through audit will be removed from the submission and an unclassified score added to the profile to account for the 'missing' output. Where this involves removing the only output associated with a Category A submitted staff member, the REF team may audit the eligibility of the staff member, and review the submitted FTE accordingly.

Eligibility of outputs produced or authored by former staff

211. The introduction of a transitional approach to non-portability of outputs will allow a submitting unit to include the outputs of staff formerly employed as Category A eligible (former staff). Outputs attributable to these staff are eligible for inclusion where the output was first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by the institution as a Category A eligible member of staff. This includes:

a. For staff who remain employed at the institution but are no longer employed as Category A eligible staff on the census date (for example, senior administrative staff), any outputs that were first made publicly available at the point the staff member was employed as Category A eligible.

b. Any outputs first made publicly available while a former staff member was on an unpaid leave of absence or secondment (whether to another UK HEI, or beyond HE/overseas), where the leave or secondment period was no greater than two years.

212. The outputs of staff who continue to be employed by the institution as Category A eligible staff (i.e. meet the criteria set out in paragraph 117) but who no longer have significant responsibility for research on the census date are not eligible.

213. A former staff member may not have outputs attributed to them in more than one submission by the institution. Where an individual held a joint appointment across two or more submitting units within the same institution, the HEI will need to decide on one submission in which to return any outputs attributed to that individual.

214. Where an output is first made publicly available in the REF 2021 publication period in both pre-published (such as online first, or pre-prints) and in final form, and the author moved institution in the intervening period, the institution employing the staff member when the pre-published version of the output was made first publicly available should submit the final version, where possible. Where it is not possible to identify the final version (for example, for some practice research outputs), the institution should submit the version that was made publicly available when the member of staff was employed at the HEI.

215. Outputs of former staff are only eligible where they were first made publicly available in the period when the staff member was employed by the submitting institution as a Category A member of staff. Any outputs first made publicly available in the period preceding or following this will not be eligible for submission, except in the case set out in paragraph 214. The funding bodies may seek to verify through audit that the outputs of former staff meet the eligibility criteria, including the timeframe and staff eligibility requirements.

216. Outputs that are first made publicly available in the final months of the publication period (August to December 2020), are only eligible for submission by an HEI that employs the staff member as Category A eligible on the census date.

General eligibility of outputs

217. In addition to printed academic work, research outputs may include, but are not limited to: new materials, devices, images, artefacts, products and buildings; confidential or technical reports; intellectual property, whether in patents or other forms; performances, exhibits or events; and work published in non-print media. An underpinning principle of the REF is that all forms of research output will be assessed on a fair and equal basis. Sub-panels will not regard any particular form of output as of greater or lesser quality than another per se. A glossary of output categories and collection formats is attached in Annex K.

218. Institutions that wish to submit outputs produced in the medium of Welsh are welcome to do so. Such outputs will be assessed equitably, as described in paragraphs 285 and 286.

219. Reviews, textbooks or edited works (including editions of texts and translations) may be included if they embody research as defined in Annex C. Editorships of journals and other activities associated with the dissemination of research findings should not be listed as an output on REF2.

220. Where two or more research outputs in a submission include significant material in common (for example, a journal article that also appears as a chapter in a book) the sub-panels will assess each output taking account of the common material only once. Where a sub-panel judges that they do not contain sufficiently distinct material and should be treated as a single output, an unclassified score would be given to the 'missing' output.

221. Theses, dissertations or other items submitted for a research degree including doctoral theses may not be listed. Other assessable published items based on research carried out for a research degree may be listed.

222. HEIs may not submit any output produced by a research assistant or research student supervised by a Category A eligible staff member employed in the unit, unless the staff member co-authored or co-produced the output.

Open access

The scope of this policy

223. The requirement to comply with the open access policy applies to the following outputs that are listed in REF2:

- a. the output type is a journal article with an ISSN or the output is a conference contribution in conference proceedings with an ISSN and
- b. the date of acceptance of the output for publication (see paragraph 227) is after 1 April 2016.

224. Any submitted output that fits both aspects of this definition is an 'in-scope' output. Other than the exception in paragraph 231, in-scope outputs must fulfil the open access criteria set out below to be eligible for submission.

225. Any output meeting the wider eligibility criteria, but that does not meet both aspects of this definition, may be listed in REF2 without meeting the open access policy requirement. For clarity, the open access requirement does not apply to output types such as:

- monographs and other long-form publications
- non-text outputs

- working papers or outputs submitted to pre-print systems that are not the version 'as accepted for publication'
- the data which underpins some research
- confidential reports that are not published because of commercial or other sensitivity.

226. The policy requirement does not apply to outputs underpinning research impact.

Key terms

227. 'Date of acceptance' means the date given in the acceptance letter or email from the publisher to the author as the 'firm' accepted date.

228. Outputs that are published by a journal or conference proceedings which do not require peer review are within the scope of this policy. In this instance, the author's final accepted version must be deposited. The date of acceptance in this instance should be taken as the date that the publisher confirms that the article has been received from the author and will subsequently be published.

229. 'Date of publication' means the date that the final 'version of record' is first made publicly available (such as on the publisher's website). This will usually mean that the 'early online' date, rather than the print publication date, should be taken as the date of publication.

230. Author's accepted manuscript refers to the final peer-reviewed text which may otherwise be known as the 'author manuscript' or 'final author version' or 'post-print'.

Tolerance of non-compliance

231. For each submission to a unit of assessment, units may submit a maximum of five per cent non-compliant in-scope outputs, or one non-compliant in-scope output, whichever is higher, per submission. HEIs will be able to review the percentage of listed, in-scope outputs that they have identified as not compliant or as having an applicable exception, for each submission prior to the submission deadline. If an institution wishes to proceed with a submission exceeding the tolerated proportion/number of non-compliant in-scope outputs, the institution will be invited to identify which outputs should be removed as ineligible. An unclassified score will be added for the removed ('missing') outputs. Where an audit process demonstrates that outputs identified as compliant do not meet the open access requirements and exceed the tolerated proportion/number, these outputs will be removed, and an unclassified score added for the 'missing' outputs. The maximum of five per cent of outputs will be rounded to the nearest whole output number. There is no minimum threshold of in-scope outputs in applying the tolerance band.

232. Other than as set out in paragraph 231, all in-scope outputs must fulfil the open access criteria set out in paragraphs 234 to 251, or have an applied exception.

233. Policy exceptions are detailed in paragraphs 252 to 255, and include: deposit exceptions, access exceptions, technical exceptions, further exceptions. Where an output is submitted to REF2 with an exception, HEIs should identify that an exception applies. There will not be a limit on the volume of exceptions to the policy for in-scope outputs submitted. Use of exceptions will not affect REF outcomes.

Criteria for open access

234. The criteria consist of three elements:

- a. Deposit requirements
- b. Discovery requirements
- c. Access requirements.

Deposit requirements

235. The output must have been deposited in an institutional repository, a repository service shared between multiple institutions, or a subject repository.

236. The output must be deposited within the repository within a specified timeframe, determined by the date of acceptance:

a. Outputs accepted for publication from the 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2018. The output must have been deposited as soon after the point of acceptance as possible, and no later than three months after the date of publication.

b. Outputs accepted for publication from the 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2020. The output must have been deposited as soon after the point of acceptance as possible, and no later than three months after this date.

237. The output must have been deposited as the author's accepted manuscript. Where the published 'version of record' is available for deposit within the required timeframe, and where the journal or conference publisher permits it, the 'version of record' may be deposited instead of the accepted manuscript. Outputs that have been provisionally accepted for publication, under the condition that the author makes revisions to the manuscript that result from peer review, are not considered as the final text.

238. The funding bodies recognise that many researchers derive value from sharing early versions of papers using a pre-print service. Institutions may submit pre-prints as eligible outputs to REF 2021 (see Annex K). Only outputs which have been 'accepted for publication' (such as a journal article or conference contribution with an ISSN) are within the scope of the REF 2021 open access policy. To take into account that the policy intent for 'open access' is met where a pre-print version is the same as the author-accepted manuscript, we have introduced additional flexibility into the open access requirement: if the 'accepted for publication' text, or near final version, is available on the pre-print service, and the output upload date of the pre-print is prior to the date of output publication, this will be considered as compliant with the open access criteria (deposit, discovery, and access).

239. Some UK funders have a preference for gold open access. 'Gold' open access usually means the immediate, permanent, and free to access availability of the published version of record on the publisher's website and with a licence that permits copying and reuse. Outputs that are made open access through the 'gold' route, at the point of first publication, in accordance with other funder's requirements and definitions, meet the requirement of the REF 2021 open access policy. HEIs will need to confirm that outputs were available immediately after publication via the gold route.

240. Where a deposited output is later replaced or augmented following its initial deposit, the updated manuscript may be deposited in place of the originally deposited output.

Discovery requirements

241. The output must be presented in a way that allows it to be discovered by readers and by automated tools such as search engines. The discovery requirements should typically be fulfilled through the storage and open presentation of a bibliographic or metadata record in the repository. Once discoverable, the output should remain so.

242. Where a deposited output is later replaced or augmented following its initial deposit, this must also meet the discovery requirements.

Access requirements

243. The output must be presented in a form that allows anyone with internet access to search electronically within the text, read it and download it without charge, while respecting any constraints on timing (as detailed in paragraphs 246 to 251). It is advised that outputs licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-

Commercial Non-Derivative (CC BY-NC-ND) licence would meet the minimum requirement. Once accessible, the output should remain so.

244. Outputs whose text is encoded only as a scanned image do not meet the requirement that the text be searchable electronically.

245. Where a deposited output is later replaced or augmented following its initial deposit, this must also meet the access requirements. Embargo periods may not re-start with subsequent deposits: they are linked to the date of publication.

Timing of compliance with access requirements and embargo periods

246. The policy allows authors to respect embargo periods set by publishers of: up to 12 months for Main Panels A and B; or 24 months for Main Panels C and D. Outputs that are under embargo at the submission deadline are compliant with the policy requirements (provided that the embargo lengths are within the policy requirements).

247. The required timing of compliance with the access requirements depends on whether an embargo period is specified.

248. The policy allows authors to respect embargo periods set by publishers, within specified maximum periods. Where a publisher specifies an embargo period, an output will be compliant with the policy requirements where it is deposited as a 'closed' deposit. Closed deposits must meet the deposit and discovery requirements (unless an exception applies). The full text should be available to read and download after the embargo period has elapsed.

249. The routes to determine the timing of compliance with the access requirements are set out below:

- a. Route 1: For outputs deposited with no or 'zero' embargo. Where the output has no or a 'zero' embargo period it must meet the access requirements as soon as possible and no later than one month after deposit.
- b. Route 2: For outputs deposited under embargo. Where the output is deposited under embargo, it must meet the access requirements as soon as possible and no later than one month after the end of the embargo period. The embargo period typically begins at the point of first publication (including 'early online' publication).

250. Embargo periods should not exceed the following maxima:

- a. 12 months for Main Panel A and Main Panel B.
- b. 24 months for Main Panel C and Main Panel D.

251. Interdisciplinary research outputs returned in a UOA in Main Panel A or B that span boundaries with a UOA in Main Panel C or D may respect the longer of the two embargo periods. The interdisciplinary identifier should be applied for these outputs (see paragraphs 273 to 274).

Exceptions to the open access requirements

Deposit exceptions

252. The following exceptions deal with cases where the output is unable to meet the deposit requirements. In the following cases, the output will not be required to meet any of the open access criteria (deposit, discovery or access requirements).

- a. At the point of acceptance, it was not possible to secure the use of a repository.
- b. There was a delay in securing the final peer-reviewed text (for instance, where a paper has multiple authors).
- c. The staff member to whom the output is attributed was not employed on a Category A eligible contract by a UK HEI (defined in paragraphs 52 to 63) at the time of submission for publication.

- d. It would be unlawful to deposit, or request the deposit of, the output.
- e. Depositing the output would present a security risk.

Access exceptions

253. The following exceptions deal with cases where deposit of the output is possible, but there are issues to do with meeting the access requirements. In the following cases, the output will still be required to meet the deposit and discovery requirements, but not the access requirements. A closed-access deposit, where allowed, will be required.

- a. The output depends on the reproduction of third-party content for which open access rights could not be granted (either within the specified timescales, or at all).
- b. The publication concerned requires an embargo period that exceeds the stated maxima and was the most appropriate publication for the output.
- c. The publication concerned actively disallows open-access deposit in a repository and was the most appropriate publication for the output.

Technical exceptions

254. The following exceptions deal with cases where an output is unable to meet the criteria due to a technical issue. In the following cases, the output will not be required to meet the open access criteria (deposit, discovery or access requirements).

- a. At the point of acceptance, the staff member to whom the output is attributed was employed at a different UK HEI, and it has not been possible to determine compliance with the criteria.
- b. The repository experienced a short-term or transient technical failure that prevented compliance with the criteria (this should not apply to systemic issues).
- c. An external service provider failure prevented compliance (for instance, a subject repository did not enable open access at the end of the embargo period, or a subject repository ceased to operate).

Further exceptions

255. Two further exceptions to the policy are outlined below:

- a. 'Other exception' should be used where an output is unable to meet the criteria due to circumstances beyond the control of the HEI, including extenuating personal circumstances of the author (such as periods of extended leave), industrial action, closure days, and software problems beyond those listed in the technical exceptions. If 'other' exception is selected, the output will not need to meet the open access criteria (deposit, discovery or access requirements).
- b. The output was not deposited within three months of acceptance date but was deposited within three months of the earliest date of publication. In this instance, the output will need to meet all other policy requirements. This exception does not need to be applied retrospectively to outputs compliant with the policy from 1 April 2016 to 1 April 2018 which fulfilled the policy requirements within three months of publication.

Timing of publication

256. The relevant date for determining whether or not an output was produced within the publication period, and hence is eligible for submission, will be the date at which the submitted output first became publicly available (or, for confidential reports, was lodged with the relevant body). Where this is near to the start or the end of the publication period (1 January 2014 and 31 December 2020 respectively) and the actual date at which it became publicly available is not clear, we may require HEIs to submit evidence of the date it became publicly available. In particular:

- a. Where the date of imprint on a publication lies outside the publication period but the actual date of appearance is within the publication period, evidence of the actual date on which it became publicly available will be required for data verification purposes, such as a letter from the publisher.

b. Outputs expected to be made publicly available between the submission date and the end of the publication period (that is, between 27 November 2020 and 31 December 2020) should be flagged in submissions (see paragraph 265.a); where only some of the data requirements for those outputs can be supplied, we will require full details to be submitted by 29 January 2021. HEIs may have to physically submit any output so flagged for verification purposes. A reserve output may be submitted for any output that is pending publication (see paragraph 266). An output expected to be made publicly available after 31 December 2020 should not be submitted, even if it has been accepted for publication.

c. For web content and electronic corpora, HEIs will need to maintain proof of the date at which the item became publicly available and of its content at that date, for example a date-stamped scanned or physical printout or evidence derived from website archiving services.

d. For non-text outputs, such as performances, we will require evidence of when the output was disseminated in the public domain.

e. For products, we will require evidence of the date when the product was produced in the form in which it is submitted.

257. Where an author-accepted manuscript is the version of an output to be first made publicly available, either that date or the earliest date that the version of record is first made publicly available will be accepted.

258. An output first published in its final form during the REF 2021 publication period that was 'pre-published' in the previous publication period – whether in full in a different form (for example, as a pre-print), or as a preliminary version or working paper – is eligible for submission to the REF, provided that the 'pre-published' output was not submitted to REF 2014.

259. Other than the exception described in paragraph 258 above, an output published during the REF 2021 publication period that includes significant material in common with an output submitted to REF 2014 is eligible only if it incorporates significant new material. In these cases:

a. The panel may take the view that not all of the work reported in the listed output should be considered as having been issued within the publication period; and if the previously published output was submitted to REF 2014, the panel will assess only the distinct content of the output submitted to the REF.

b. Submissions should explain, where they believe necessary, how far any work published earlier was revised to incorporate new material.

260. Other than the exception for outputs pending publication in paragraph 256.b, if an HEI cannot make available a requested output or provide evidence of its publication within the publication period that item will be removed from the submission and the 'missing' output awarded a grade of unclassified. There will be no opportunity to submit a substitute item.

Confidential reports

261. Confidential reports include any item produced for and lodged, in the publication period, with a company, government body or other research sponsor(s), but which has not been published because of its commercial or other sensitivity. A confidential report may only be submitted if the HEI has prior permission from the sponsoring organisation that the output may be made available for assessment. HEIs will confirm permission has been secured when they make submissions. If the REF team requests a confidential report for assessment, the HEI must make it available.

262. Confidential reports will only be shared with the REF team and those involved in the assessment process. All panel members, advisers, observers and others involved in the assessment process are bound by a confidentiality agreement. Therefore, it should be possible for HEIs to submit confidential reports without compromising any duty of confidentiality upon them. There may be main or sub-panel members who HEIs believe would have a commercial (or other) conflict of interest in assessing confidential reports. HEIs will be required to name such individuals when making submissions.

263. Outputs identified by institutions as confidential will not be listed as part of the published submissions. Confidential reports submitted to the REF will be destroyed as soon as no longer required for assessment purposes.

Annex 6 - Extract from REF Guidance on Submissions (January 2019)

Staff circumstances

151. The UK funding bodies are committed to supporting and promoting equality and diversity in research careers. As part of this commitment, the measures set out in this section have been put in place to recognise the effect that individuals' circumstances may have on research productivity.

152. Part 3, Section 2 of this document sets out the requirements for the submitted output pool. The total number of outputs returned from each submitting unit must be equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission. A minimum of one output will be required for each Category A submitted staff member. There will be no minimum requirement for submitting the outputs of former staff. No more than five outputs may be attributed to any individual staff member (including former staff).

153. The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2021, as summarised in paragraph 152, is intended to provide increased flexibility to institutions in building the portfolio of outputs for submission. There are many reasons why an excellent researcher may have fewer or more outputs attributable to them in an assessment period. It is therefore not expected that all staff members would be returned with the same number of outputs attributed to them in the submission.

154. It is anticipated that the flexibility described above will be reflected in institutions' expectations of individual researchers. Institutions must set out in their code of practice how their output selection process takes into account the circumstances of individual researchers and how appropriate support is provided to affected individuals.

155. The funding bodies have made every effort to try to eliminate any incentives towards discriminatory practices by HEIs in the process; to the extent that there are any such inadvertent incentives, it is the HEIs' responsibility as employers and public bodies to ensure that they avoid engaging in discriminatory practices.

Measures to support staff with individual circumstances

156. As a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, the funding bodies have put in place processes to recognise the effect that an individual's circumstances may have on their productivity. The approach to staff circumstances set out here has been developed by the funding bodies to meet a number of key principles:

- a. Ensure recognition of the effect circumstances can have upon an individual researcher's productivity.
- b. Create the right incentives for HEIs to support staff with circumstances (and avoid introducing negative incentives, for example around recruitment).
- c. Recognise the potential disparity in the available output pool for units in particular contexts, for example where there are high proportions of staff with circumstances, or for very small units.
- d. Maintain the integrity of exercise – both in supporting equality and diversity and ensuring the credibility of assessment process.

157. All HEIs participating in REF 2021 will be required to establish safe and robust processes to enable individuals to declare voluntarily their individual circumstances and have the impact of those circumstances reflected in the HEI's expectations of their contribution to the output pool. These processes must be documented in the institution's code of practice.

158. Where required, submitting units may optionally request a reduction, without penalty, in the total number of outputs required for a submission. It is expected that requests will only be made where the cumulative effect of circumstances has disproportionately affected the unit's potential output pool. The reductions applied should be set out in accordance with the guidance set out below.

159. In addition, in all UOAs, an individual may be returned without the required minimum of one output without penalty in the assessment, where the nature of the individual's circumstances has had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the period, so that the staff member has not been able to produce the required minimum of one output. Further details are set out in paragraphs 178 to 183. This measure is intended to minimise any potential negative impact on the careers of particular groups of researchers who have not been able to produce an output in the period due to their individual circumstances.

Summary of applicable circumstances

160. The funding bodies, advised by EDAP, have identified the following equality-related circumstances that, in isolation or together, may significantly constrain the ability of submitted staff to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. Details of the permitted reductions are set out in Annex L:

- a. Qualifying as an ECR (on the basis set out in paragraphs 148 and 149 and Annex L).
- b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- d. Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6, as defined in paragraphs 162 to 163.
- e. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Disability: this is defined in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1 under 'Disability'.
 - ii. Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.
 - iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances set out in Annex L.
 - iv. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - v. Gender reassignment.
 - vi. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

161. As part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5) reduction requests on the basis of part-time working hours should only be made exceptionally. For example, where the FTE of a staff member late in the assessment period does not reflect their average FTE over the period as a whole.

162. In UOAs 1–6, the number of outputs may be reduced by up to one, without penalty in the assessment, for Category A submitted staff who are junior clinical academics. These are defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or its equivalent prior to 31 July 2020.

163. This allowance is made on the basis that the clinical staff concerned are normally significantly constrained in the time they have available to undertake research during the assessment period. Where the individual meets the criteria in paragraph 162, and has had significant additional circumstances – for any of the other reasons in paragraph 160 – the institution can make a case for further reductions as part of the unit reduction request, using the tariffs set out in Annex L as a guide.

HEIs' processes

164. The funding bodies expect all HEIs participating in the exercise to put in place safe and supportive processes to enable staff to declare voluntarily their individual circumstances, and to recognise the effect of those circumstances on a staff member's ability to contribute to the output pool at the same rate as other staff.

165. To aid institutions in promoting equality, complying with legislation and avoiding discrimination, institutions must document in a code of practice and apply fair and transparent processes for the selection of outputs. Further information can be found in the 'Guidance on codes of practice' (REF 2019/03). The funding bodies may seek to verify through audit that HEIs have adhered to the approaches set out in their code of practice.

Supporting staff declaration

166. It is the funding bodies' view that the individual staff member is best placed to consider whether equality-related circumstances (as set out in paragraph 160) have affected their productivity over the REF assessment period and that they should not feel under pressure to declare their circumstances where they do not wish to do so. It is also important to ensure that processes are applied equally to all applicable circumstances, whether previously known to the institution or first identified through the staff circumstances process. Therefore, submitting institutions should not take account in the REF submission process of any individual circumstances other than those that staff have consented to declare voluntarily.

167. Submitting institutions will need to develop robust processes that support staff to declare individual circumstances in a consistent way, with an appropriate degree of confidentiality. Particular regard should be paid to the declaration of sensitive issues such as ongoing illness or mental health conditions.

168. The process for supporting staff to declare circumstances should be conducted proactively: instead of relying on individuals coming forward, staff should be invited to complete a form about their individual circumstances, and provided with clear information about the applicable circumstances (as set out in paragraphs 160 to 163) and how the declaration process will operate. HEIs should document in their code of practice how this process will be undertaken. It should be made clear to staff that they are not required to complete and return this form where they do not wish to do so. To support institutions with this process, we will provide a template declaration form that could be used by institutions for this purpose.

169. Responding to concerns raised in the 2018 consultation on the 'Draft guidance on submissions', the funding bodies require that institutions' processes include measures to guard against undue pressure being placed on staff to declare circumstances, either centrally or at unit level. Institutions should consider where the process should be managed (i.e. centrally or at faculty/departmental level), who should be involved in the process, and what guidance should be provided both to those involved in the process and to those in management positions within submitting units.

Recognising the effect of staff circumstances

170. A key aim of the measures is to give recognition to the effect that individual circumstances may have on a researcher's ability to contribute to the unit's overall output pool (from which submitted outputs will be selected). The funding bodies consider that this recognition is a core part of a research environment that promotes equality and diversity, and that responsibility for this rests with institutions.

171. Institutions will have different approaches to preparing REF submissions, and it is not appropriate for one set approach to be prescribed. Therefore, an HEI's code of practice will need to describe how, in the context of its own approach to preparing submissions, the institution will adjust its expectations about staff contributions to the overall output pool where circumstances are declared.

172. The processes for supporting staff with circumstances should be consistent across the institution. Careful consideration should be given to the nature and timing of support offered and any adjustments to expectations should be made in consultation with the individual affected. In developing processes to support staff and adjust expectations, institutions are encouraged to be guided by the tariffs in place for requesting reductions to the output requirement (see Annex L). Further guidance is set out in the 'Guidance on codes of practice'.

Assessing the effect on the overall output pool

173. Submitting units may wish to consider the cumulative effect of staff circumstances on the unit's overall output pool and whether a request should be made for a reduction to the total number of outputs required for the submission.

174. In view of the flexibility offered by decoupling, and the reduction in output requirement since the previous exercise – from four outputs per person in REF 2014 to an average of 2.5 per FTE in REF 2021 – it is the funding bodies' view, supported by advice from EDAP, that institutions will not routinely need to request reductions to the number of outputs required by a submitting unit. The measures set out above (paragraphs 166 to 172) are considered an effective way to recognise the effect of circumstances on individual staff productivity and ensure the aim of promoting equality and diversity is met.

175. It is clear that there are some instances, however, whereby the available output pool for a given unit has been disproportionately affected by equality-related circumstances. In such instances, it would be appropriate for the institution to seek a reduction to the total number of outputs required for that submitting unit. Such cases may include where there are very high proportions of staff in the unit whose individual circumstances have affected their productivity over the REF assessment period, including in very small units, or where disciplinary publishing norms make it likely that an individual will have generated a smaller number of outputs across the publication period.

176. HEIs are required to set out in their code of practice their processes for determining where a reduction request is necessary. The funding bodies consider that the size of the available output pool (from which selection will be made) in terms of its proximity to the total number of outputs required would be one useful indicator for determining whether a reduction request should be made.

177. Where making requests, submitting units should apply the tariffs set out in Annex L. Requests must be accompanied by a supporting statement that includes information on the context of the unit (for example, size, proportion of those with declared circumstances), how the circumstances affected the unit's output pool and why this was determined to be disproportionate, and how this complies with the process set out in the institution's code of practice.

Removing the 'minimum of one' requirement

178. All Category A submitted staff must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the submission, including staff with individual circumstances. However, where an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020), so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output, a request may be made for the minimum of one requirement to be removed (form REF6a). Where the request is accepted, an individual may be returned with no outputs attributed to them in the submission, and the total outputs required by the unit will be reduced by one.

179. Requests may be made for an individual researcher who has not been able to produce an eligible output where any of the following circumstances apply within the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020:

- a. an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to one or more of the circumstances set out in paragraphs 160 to 163 (such as an ECR who has only been employed as an eligible staff member for part of the assessment period)
- b. circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research, where circumstances set out in paragraph 160 apply (such as mental health issues, caring responsibility, long-term health conditions) or
- c. two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave, as defined in Annex L.

180. Where the circumstances cases do not apply, but the individual's circumstances are deemed to have resulted in a similar impact (including where there are a combination of circumstances that would not individually meet the thresholds set out), a request may still be made and the institution should clarify this within the request form. Where an individual has a combination of circumstances, all the applicable circumstances should be cited in the request and information provided about the effect of the combined circumstances on the researcher's ability to produce an eligible output in the period.

181. The rationale for including two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave is based on the funding bodies' and EDAP's considered judgement, informed by the REF expert panels, that the impact of two or more periods of such leave may be sufficiently disruptive of an individual's research that they have not been able to produce an eligible output.

182. The request should include a description of how the circumstances have affected the staff member's ability to produce an eligible output in the period. The information provided in the request must be based on verifiable evidence, which may be audited in 2021, following the REF submission deadline.

183. Where a request is agreed, one output will be removed from the total output pool required for the submitting unit. This will be in addition to any reduction (of up to 1.5 outputs) applied for that staff member in REF6b, according to the guidance set out in paragraphs 186 to 191. If the staff member concerned moves institution before or on the census date, the removal of the minimum of one requirement may be applied by the newly employing institution.

Unit reduction requests

184. Reduction requests will be made at the level of the submitting unit, and should set out the requested reduction to the total number of outputs required for that unit. This section provides further details about calculating requests, what the data requirements are, and how requests should be made.

185. Where a unit has not submitted a reduction request and is returned with fewer than 2.5 outputs per FTE, and/or has not attributed a minimum of one output to each Category A submitted staff member, any 'missing' outputs will be graded as 'unclassified'.

Calculating reductions

186. For REF6b, the total reduction should be calculated as a sum of the reductions arising from individual staff in the unit with applicable circumstances, which have constrained their ability to work productively during the assessment period. This should be calculated within the following guidance:

- a. Reductions arising from the circumstances of individual staff should be determined according to the tables and guidance in Annex L, up to a reduction of 1.5 outputs per staff member affected. This should include reductions, up to 1.5 outputs, arising from the circumstances of staff for whom a request is also being made to remove the minimum of one requirement (see paragraphs 178 to 183).
- b. Where multiple circumstances have affected individual staff, the guidance on combining circumstances in Annex L should be followed.
- c. The reductions applying to individual staff in the unit should be summed. Rounding to the nearest whole number should be applied to give a whole number of outputs for reduction.

187. For each member of staff for whom a request is made in REF6a to remove the minimum of one requirement (as set out in paragraphs 178 to 183), a further reduction of one output will be added to the unit request. The combined total across REF6a and 6b will set out the unit's requested reduction.

188. HEIs must ensure that the proposed reduction would not result in a smaller total output requirement than the number of Category A submitted staff in the unit for whom a minimum of one output is required.

189. When making a request institutions may take account of where an individual's circumstances are ongoing at the point of making the request, in applying defined reductions, making a judgement on circumstances equivalent to absence, or removing the minimum requirement.

190. In order to provide clarity and consistency on the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty where a reduction request is being made, we have set out defined reductions for staff circumstances (as listed in Annex L). Additionally, the application of reductions (including those that will require a judgement) will be considered on a consistent basis in advance of the census date.

191. The guidance set out in Annex L will apply across all UOAs, and where a reduction is applied, the remaining number of submitted outputs will be assessed without any penalty.

Data requirements for unit reduction requests and requests to remove the minimum of one requirement (REF6a/b)

192. For each member of staff for whom a request to remove the minimum of one requirement is being made, the following information must be provided in REF6a:

- a. Information to enable the REF team to identify the staff member within the submission.
- b. Details about which circumstances listed in paragraph 160 (or whether different circumstances) apply.
- c. A brief statement (max. 200 words) describing how the circumstances have affected the staff member's ability to produce an eligible output in the period.

193. For each unit reduction request, the following information must be provided in REF6b:

- a. Details about the number of staff in the unit with each of the defined circumstances and information that will enable the REF team to identify these staff members within submissions (including the HESA ID).
- b. For each member of staff with circumstances requiring a judgement, information to enable the REF team to identify the staff member within the submission, a brief outline (max. 200 words) of the nature of the circumstances and how the HEI determined an appropriate reduction, and the reduction proposed.
- c. A supporting statement (max. 300 words) outlining the rationale for requesting a unit reduction in accordance with the HEI's code of practice.

194. The information returned in REF6a/b for any type of circumstances must be based on verifiable evidence (although, for the avoidance of doubt, the REF typically will accept individuals' self-descriptions of their circumstances and institutions are expected to approach any verification of circumstances with tact and care and only in accordance with the law).. EDAP may request further details during the process of reviewing the request, and all submitted information will be subject to audit during the assessment year (2021).

195. Information submitted in requests will be kept confidential to the REF team, EDAP and the main panel chairs, who are all subject to confidentiality undertakings in respect of all information contained in submissions. REF sub-panels will know where a reduction in the overall number of outputs in the submitting unit has been agreed without penalty on the basis of individual circumstances, but will not have access to further information about the circumstances. These arrangements will enable individuals to declare the information in a confidential manner, and enable consistent treatment of individual circumstances across the exercise.

196. Information submitted in requests will be used only for the respective purposes of considering: requests for a reduction in the number of outputs required from the submitting unit overall, and for removing the minimum of one requirement for an individual staff member. This information will not be published and will be destroyed on completion of the REF in December 2021.

197. It is the responsibility of the HEI to ensure that the personal data in requests is submitted in compliance with current data protection legislation – General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and the Data Protection Act 2018 – and all other legal obligations.

Request process

198. In autumn 2019, we will invite institutions to submit unit reduction requests and requests for removing the minimum of one requirement; the deadline for submitting requests will be March 2020. Requests will be submitted via the secure submission system. The outcome of requests will be provided before the census date.

199. Where there are changes to the Category A submitted staff employed in the unit after the request has been submitted, institutions will be able to amend REF6a/b and make requests for further reductions at the point of submission, as follows:

- a. Staff included in the unit request who are no longer employed in the unit on the census date should be removed from the request, and the approved reduction recalculated accordingly.
- b. Any applicable circumstances of staff who join the unit on or before the census date, but following the original request submission, may be added to the request form. In these cases, HEIs should include the information outlined in paragraph 192 a.-c. and/or paragraph 193 a.-b., as relevant. Decisions in these instances will be taken during the assessment year – with respect to the new details only.

200. All unit reduction requests will be considered by EDAP on a consistent basis across all UOAs. EDAP may seek advice on submitted requests from the main panel chairs. EDAP will make recommendations about the appropriate number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty in the case of circumstances requiring a judgement. EDAP will also make recommendations on accepting requests for the removal of the minimum of one. Where required, EDAP may request further information to confirm the correct application of tariffs. EDAP will provide a written explanation where a request is not accepted in full, or in part. The membership and terms of reference of EDAP are available at www.ref.ac.uk under 'Equality and Diversity'.

201. An appeals process will be in place to consider any concerns an institution has with respect to the processes followed in determining reductions. In this event, the institution should contact the REF team in the first instance. Full details of the appeals process will be provided to institutions when we invite institutions to submit circumstances requests.

Annex 7

Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances: Letter to be sent to LSTM academic staff.

Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see [‘Guidance on submissions’](#), paragraphs 117-122). As part of LSTM’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;
 - 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.

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (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 2021
- 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
- Any other personal circumstances which are considered to have had a significant impact on your ability to produce the expected volume of research outputs in the assessment period

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the above circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form. Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01), reproduced in Annex 5 of LSTM’s Code of Practice. 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 LSTM 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

If LSTM 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. This will be provided on a pseudonymised basis to maintain confidentiality. Please see the ['Guidance on submissions'](#) document (paragraphs 151-201), reproduced in Annex 5 of LSTM's Code of Practice, for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be collated by the LSTM REF HR Contact and then disclosed only to the LSTM REF Special Circumstances Panel, comprising of the Global Director of HR, a designated member of LSTM's Equal Opportunities Committee and the Director of Strategic Operations. All submitted information will be treated in strictest confidence.

The outcome from the panel will be communicated to staff who have submitted individual circumstances forms, via the HR Department.

A member of the HR Department will only contact you by your preferred means of contact as indicated on the form to arrange a meeting to discuss your circumstances should you indicate on your form that you wish for this to happen. You may also choose to indicate that you wish the HR Department to discuss your circumstances with your line manager. Should you choose this option, the HR Department will contact you prior to contacting your manager to agree next steps.

Discussing your circumstances with you and your manager will assist LSTM in ensuring that you can access support mechanisms available through the organisation, linked to your personal circumstances.

Please note – you will not be contacted by the LSTM HR Department about support mechanisms linked to your personal circumstances, or information shared with your line manager unless you explicitly confirm you wish this to happen on your form.

Should LSTM decide to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction, the minimum required information regarding your individual circumstance(s) will then be included in the REF submission, pseudonymised by your HESA number or LSTM staff number if you have not been reported to HESA.

Once submitted to UKRI, any submitted data will be kept confidential to their REF team, REF [Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel](#), and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. Their REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

Changes in circumstances

LSTM recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2021). If this is the case, then staff should contact the LSTM REF HR Contact via REFCircumstances@lstmed.ac.uk or via post to LSTM REF HR Contact, HR Department, LSTM, Pembroke Place, Liverpool L3 5QA to provide the updated information.

To submit this form you should return by email to REFCircumstances@lstmed.ac.uk or by post to LSTM REF HR Contact, HR Department, LSTM, Pembroke Place, Liverpool L3 5QA.

Forms should be submitted by 30 November 2019 in the first instance, however information can be updated at any time by contacting the LSTM REF HR Contact.

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 2021?

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>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>
<p>Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2021.</p>	<p>Tick here <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</p> <p><i>Dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>
<p>Family-related leave;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statutory maternity leave • statutory adoption leave • Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more. <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>Disability (including chronic conditions)</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>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Mental health condition</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>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

<p>Ill health or injury</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>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</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>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Caring responsibilities</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>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</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>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement.</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 in LSTM by the HR Department and the REF Special Circumstances Panel.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the UKRI REF team, their 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 a member of the LSTM HR Department 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 discussed with my line manager by the LSTM HR Department. (Please note, if you do not give permission your line manager 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

Annex 8

LSTM Staff Data Collection Statement

LSTM Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021

The purpose of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) is to assess the quality of UK research and to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research by the four UK higher education funding bodies. The REF is managed by the REF team, based at Research England (RE), on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies. RE is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and under this arrangement UKRI has the role of 'data controller' for personal data submitted by LSTM to the REF.

If you are a researcher who has been included as part of our submission to the REF 2021, in 2021 we will send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI for the purpose of the REF2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name and details such as your date of birth, research groups, and contract dates will be provided along with details of your research. If you are submitted with individual circumstances that allow a reduction in the number of outputs submitted, without penalty, some details of your personal circumstances will be provided.

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at www.ref.ac.uk in particular publication 2019/01, 'Guidance on submissions'.

Sharing information about you

UKRI may pass your data, or parts of it, to any of the following organisations that need it to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research and to carry out their statutory functions connected with funding higher education:

- Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland (DfE)
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
- Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

Some of your data (Unit of Assessment, HESA staff identifier code and date of birth) will also be passed by UKRI to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to enable it to verify coded data returned to it as part of our HESA staff return (see www.hesa.ac.uk). Data returned to the REF will be linked to that held on the HESA staff record to allow UKRI and the organisations listed above to conduct additional analysis into the REF and fulfil their statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 (England, Wales and Scotland) or the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Northern Ireland).

UKRI and the organisations listed above will use the information to analyse and monitor the REF2021. This may result in information being released to other users including academic researchers or consultants (commissioned by the funding bodies), to carry out research or analysis, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679). Where information not previously published is released to third parties, this will be anonymised where practicable.

UKRI will require that anyone who has access to your data, held in UKRI's records, paper or electronic, will respect its confidentiality and will only process it in accordance with instructions issued for the purposes specified by UKRI.

Parts of your data will be passed to the UKRI REF expert panels and the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (whose members are independent of UKRI) for the purpose of conducting a systematic evaluation of submissions, in accordance with predetermined criteria and methods. Panels will make judgments about the material contained in submissions and will not form quality judgments about individuals. All panel members are bound by confidentiality arrangements. Further information is available from <https://www.ref.ac.uk/panels/equality-and-diversity-advisory-panel/>

LSTM will also use data collected for its REF submission to assess your *research performance*; this particularly applies to the internal scores of outputs that you submitted to LSTM's annual review. LSTM has set out its *research performance* expectations on its intranet, see

<https://lstmed.sharepoint.com/Departments/HR/Documents/Research%20Performance%20-%20Guidance%20Document.pdf>

Publishing information about your part in our submission

The results of the assessment exercise will be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, in April 2022. The published results will not be based on individual performance nor identify individuals.

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies and will be made available online. Published information is likely to include **textual information including impact case studies in which you may be referenced**. Your name and job title may be included in this textual information. Other personal and contractual details, including your date of birth and all information about individual staff circumstances will be removed.

UKRI will also publish a list of the outputs submitted by LSTM in each UOA. This list will not be listed by author name.

Data about personal circumstances

You may voluntarily disclose personal circumstances to your submitting unit, which could permit us to submit your information to the REF without the 'minimum of one' requirement (without penalty), or to submit a reduced number of outputs without penalty. If (and only if) we apply either form of reduction of outputs, 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.

Staff are invited to disclose any personal circumstances confidentially, using LSTM's Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances form, to the LSTM REF HR Contact. Disclosures will be forwarded to the LSTM REF Special Circumstances Panel, comprising of the Global Director of HR, a designated member LSTM's Equal Opportunities Committee and the Director of Strategic Projects. All submitted information will be treated in strictest confidence.

You will have the opportunity to request that a member of LSTM's HR Department contacts you to discuss your personal circumstances, and support mechanisms linked to this, by indicating your wish on the Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances form. You may also indicate on your form that you wish a member of the HR Department to contact your line manager to discuss your personal circumstances. Should you choose this second option, the HR Department will contact you prior to contacting your manager to agree next steps. The LSTM HR Department will only contact you or your line manager if you have explicitly requested this on your Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances form.

Data submitted to UKRI will be kept confidential to their REF team, Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements.

Information forwarded to the UKRI REF Team, their Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel and main panel chairs by LSTM will be pseudonymised, using the staff member's HESA identification number (or LSTM staff number, where they have not been returned to HESA).

The UKRI REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase. LSTM will retain this information in line with our data retention policy.

As set out above, unless redacted, the information to be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, will include a single list of all the outputs submitted by us. The list of outputs will include standard bibliographic data (including the author name) for each output but will not be listed by author name.

Accessing your personal data

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, you have the right to see and receive a copy of any personal information that UKRI holds about you. Further information about the Act and GRPR, and guidance on making a subject access request, can be found on the RE web-site at <https://re.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards/foi-data-protection/>

The REF privacy notice is available from <https://www.ref.ac.uk/submission-system/privacy-notice/>

If you have any concerns about your information being used for these purposes, please contact:

Data Protection Officer
UK Research and Innovation
Polaris House
Swindon, SN2 1FL

Email: dataprotection@ukri.org

LSTM's privacy statements can be found at <https://www.lstmed.ac.uk/lstm-privacy-statement> particularly the staff privacy notice, which includes your right to request access to the data LSTM will return to UKRI for REF purposes.

Should you have any queries regarding data protection at LSTM, please contact:

Emily Griffiths
Data Protection Officer
LSTM
Pembroke Place
Liverpool
L3 5QA

Email: dataprotection@lstmed.ac.uk

Annex 9

Timeline with Key Dates

