

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
A College of Queen's University Belfast

# **Research Excellence Framework**

## **REF2021**

### **Code of Practice**

#### **20 September 2019**

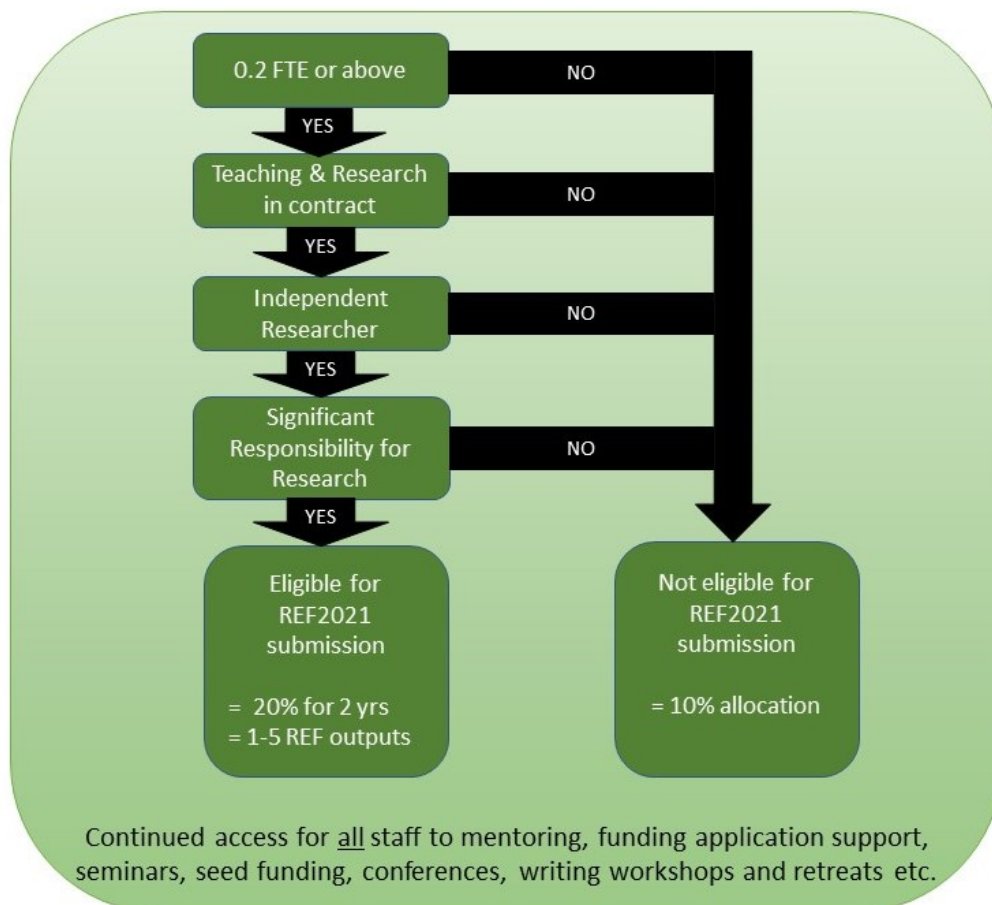
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## Executive Summary

As part of preparations for the Research Excellence Framework REF2021 (UK's periodic process for assessing HEI research quality and distributing quality research funding), Stranmillis University College has developed a Code of Practice which is being consulted on during April and May 2019. Our REF preparations are part of the College's ongoing Research and Scholarship Strategy to build research and scholarship across the College through offering support to all staff. The process set out in detail in the Code of Practice (and summarised below) is based on the REF [Guidance on Submissions](#) and [Guidance on Codes of Practice](#). It adheres to the REF principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity. Irrespective of REF2021, all staff will continue to have full access to support through the Research Office.

Figure 1: Summary of Stranmillis REF process (based on census date 31 July 2020)



# Code of Practice

## Part 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Internal Policy Context

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. Stranmillis University College submitted institutional returns to the Research Assessment Exercise (2008) and the REF2014. The College's submission to REF2014 was of a high quality which has enhanced our reputation on a national and international level. Our success has also resulted in an annual Quality Research direct payment from the Department for the Economy which helps to fund the Research Office and its activities.

This Code of Practice has been developed by the REF Steering Group, which reports to the College's Research and Scholarship Committee, the Academic Leadership Committee and the Senior Leadership Team.

The College is committed to promoting equal opportunities and the Code of Practice has been developed in accordance with principles set out in the College's Equal Opportunities Policy which affirms the College's opposition to "all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination". The College aims to create conditions whereby all staff are treated solely on the basis of merit, abilities and potential, irrespective of background or any irrelevant distinction.

Section 75 requires public authorities such as Stranmillis University College to avoid discrimination and promote greater equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without. The College will undertake an equality impact assessment in relation to the Code of Practice in accordance with the College's Equality Scheme and will monitor the impact of the application procedures outlined within the Code at each stage.

### 1.2 Update of Actions since REF2014

The main strategic development since 2014 has been a determination to build on the College's REF2014 success and to further support **ALL** academic staff in their research and scholarship.

Since REF2014 the College has developed a new *Research and Scholarship Strategy* (2017) which sets out our research mission to "extend our reputation as a national and international centre for high quality, practitioner-focused educational research" through the realisation of five objectives:

1. to engage in research of the highest quality in terms of originality, significance and rigour

2. to develop a rich, vibrant and supportive research infrastructure characterised by the highest standards of research integrity
3. to attract excellent staff and to develop and empower their careers as researchers
4. to ensure that our research has an impact on our teaching but also beyond academia yielding broader economic, social and cultural benefits
5. to extend our national and international reach by engaging in collaborative partnerships and disseminating our research

This strategy has been supported through the development of the staffing structure of the Research Office (now including a Director of Research and Scholarship, Research Impact Coordinator and Finance & Development Officer as well as a Research Office Administrator), and the appointment of a second Visiting Professor in 2013 in addition to the first Visiting Professor who was appointed in 2010. Both Visiting Professors are distinguished researchers working at top UK Russell Group universities. This investment in staffing has enabled the College to implement and further develop a large number of support initiatives such as an internal staff research mentorship programme, an internal seed funding competition, regular lunchtime research presentations, writing and funding workshops and monthly funding newsletters. In 2017/18 the College piloted a research writing week where four academic staff applied and were selected in-line with published criteria to participate in a residential writing retreat with supervision to help progress the writing of research articles for publication. This has already resulted in 3 papers being finalised and submitted to academic journals for review– one has already been published online. A total of 67% of our academic staff now hold doctoral qualifications achieved through the support of the College with funding provided through the College’s Staff Development Policy in line with its Doctoral Support Procedures. This is almost double the 35% average for Education Departments across all UK HEIs (HESA, 2018).

### 1.3 Adherence to the REF Principles

In developing this Code of Practice, the College seeks to address and reflect adherence to each of the four main principles:

**Transparency:** to ensure that all processes to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission are transparent. We endeavour to make this Code of Practice accessible to all (including those currently absent from work) and we have set out in Appendix 1 our programme of communication activity to disseminate and explain the content of the Code of Practice to all relevant staff.

**Consistency:** to ensure that the processes used to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission are consistent at all times between and across staff.

Unlike many larger HEIs the College intends to submit staff in just one Unit of Assessment (23-Education).

**Accountability:** to ensure that staff are made aware through this Code of Practice of roles and responsibilities of all involved in advising on and making decisions to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission. This will include the membership of the REF Steering Group, its terms of reference, the role of advisory members, the role of other College committees in scrutinising the work of the REF Steering Group (see Appendix 2), the equality and diversity training schedule for relevant staff (see Appendix 3), and the REF Appeals Panel (see Appendix 4).

**Inclusivity:** to ensure that the College promotes an inclusive environment, enabling the College to identify all staff who have significant responsibility for research, all staff who are independent researchers, and excellent research produced by staff across all protected groups. Particular care will be taken to ensure that all staff receive regular communication regarding REF2021 (including those who are currently absent from work) and to ensure that effective structures are in place to support the voluntary declaration of circumstances which might have constrained an individual staff member's ability to produce outputs throughout the assessment period.

The processes developed for the purposes of REF2021 and especially those developed to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission are a component of the ongoing strategy to promote research and scholarship right across the College among all staff and students. **ALL** staff, whether or not they are included in the REF2021 submission, will continue to have access to support from the Research Office (as detailed above).

#### **1.4 Communication with Staff**

Final guidance on REF2021 was published in January 2019, including guidance on Codes of Practice. National training events were then held in February 2019 and the Director of Research and Scholarship attended one such event in Birmingham on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2019. This Code of Practice (drafted in light of the guidance and training) was drafted and reviewed by the REF Steering Group in March 2019, approved by the Research and Scholarship Committee, Academic Planning Committee and Senior Leadership Committee and was circulated to all academic and research staff via the College's email system on 10 April 2019. Hard copies are available on request from the Research Office. This Code is also available in

alternative formats on request (in line with the provisions of the University College Equality Scheme<sup>1</sup> and equality policies, procedures and practice).

The publication of the Code and consultation period in April 2019 forms part of the more extensive REF communication plan set out in Appendix 1. The Code will be disseminated as follows:

- via staff email
- via the SharePoint Research webpage
- via an informal staff briefing held over lunchtime
- via Research and Scholarship Committee, Academic Leadership Committee, Senior Leadership Committee
- at Staff Council
- to the UCU (the College's recognised trade union for academic staff)

Hard copies of the Code of Practice will be posted to any eligible staff member who may be away from the University College for an extended period, such as on maternity, paternity, adoption leave, sickness absence or career break. The Human Resources team will send this document to the home address of any such employees, as well as clear guidance on how to respond within the specified timeframe.

## **Part 2. Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research**

### **2.1 Policies and Procedures**

The REF *Guidance on Submissions* (2019-01) states that “Each HEI participating in REF 2021 must return all eligible staff with significant responsibility for research.” (§116). Such 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” (§117). Such staff are referred to in the guidance as “Category A eligible’ staff.

The guidance also proposes 3 key indicators of significant responsibility for research as follows:

- Explicit time and resources are made available
- Staff are engaged actively in independent research

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<sup>1</sup> The College has been identified as a public authority for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) – “the Act.” The Act requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act. The College's Equality Scheme sets out its arrangements for meeting these duties.

- Research is an expectation of their job role.

The guidance indicates, however, that “where these criteria will also identify staff who do not have significant responsibility for research, the institution may develop and apply an agreed process to identify who among their staff meeting the core eligibility criteria have significant responsibility for research” (§116).

At Stranmillis all Senior Lecturers and Principal Lecturers have contracts which state that they are required to undertake scholarship and research, as well as teaching. Under the current workload allocation model (see Appendix 6) “the time allocated to Research and Scholarly Activity will normally be 10% of the total academic workload”. This reflects the teaching-intensive focus of the College.

A smaller number of lecturing staff will however be awarded an additional 10 per cent time from September 2019 based on an internal application process. The internal application process consists of a two-year research plan (focusing on planned research publications, income, partnerships and impact) and is judged according to criteria which will focus on the quality of each of the four elements of the two-year plan where research is clearly an employment expectation. The College has determined that only those successful in this application process will be considered to have Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR) with REF-eligible research outputs as a clear expectation of their job role. As a result 20 per cent of their workload (equivalent to one day per week FTE) will be allocated to research for a period of 2 years (2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years). All lecturing staff on a minimum 0.2 FTE teaching and research contract who are awarded the 20 per cent time allocation will also be expected to be Independent Researchers (see Part 3 below) and will be submitted for REF2021.

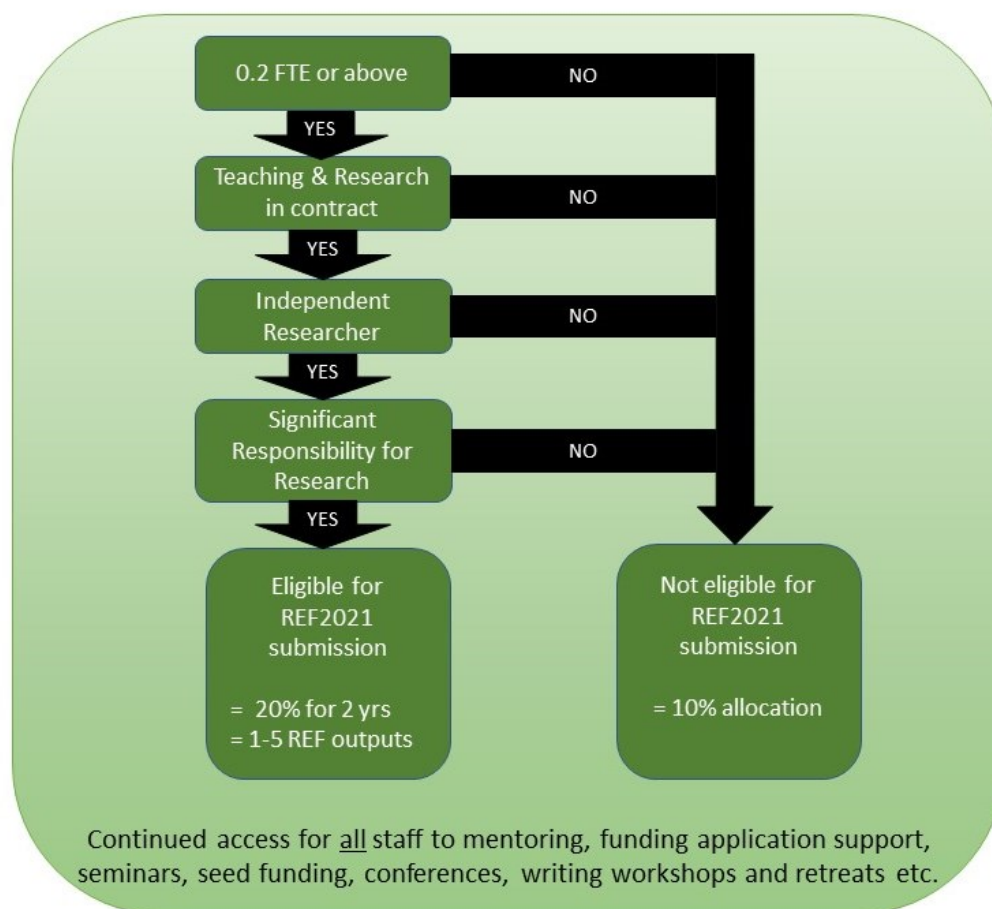
All staff will be advised in writing by the REF Steering Group in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020 whether they have met the criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research, and will be informed of the Appeals Process.

It is important to note however that **ALL** staff, irrespective of the outcome of the application for additional time (= Significant Responsibility for Research), will continue to have access to all forms of support through the Research Office including research mentorship, research conference funding, access to research funding support, and it is hoped that this support and development will help grow the REF submission yet further as we look ahead to the next REF in 2027.

It is also important to note that the growth of research and scholarship across the College among **ALL** staff will form an important part of the story to be told in the REF Institutional and Unit of Assessment environment statements (worth 15 per cent of the overall REF score).



The process is set out diagrammatically below in Figure 2:



Former staff on ‘teaching and research’ contracts, including those made redundant, all of whom will necessarily have had only 10% of their total workload allocated to Research and Scholarly Activity, will not be considered to have Significant Responsibility for Research. Where a member of staff on a ‘teaching and research’ contract is successful in applying for an additional 10% research time through the process detailed above (and is thus judged to have Significant Responsibility for Research) and subsequently leaves or is made redundant before the census date, their outputs will be deemed assessable within the College’s REF submission, provided that (in line with §211-216 of the REF *Guidance on Submissions*) the outputs were first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by Stranmillis on an appropriate ‘teaching and research’ contract. (see also 4.1)

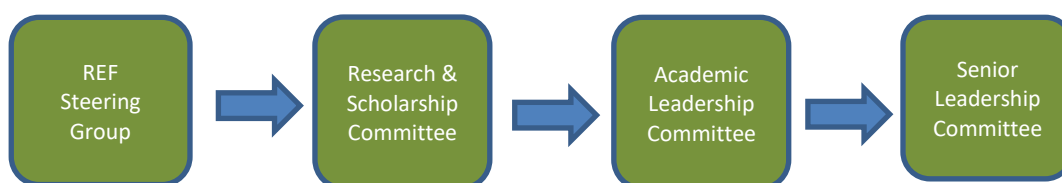
## 2.2 Development of the process

The process above was developed by the REF Steering Group and will form the basis of consultation with staff in April/May 2019. The consultation process will include emails to staff, postal communication to any relevant staff not currently at work, a staff briefing over lunchtime, and discussion at relevant staff committees (see Appendix 1).

## 2.3 Staff, Committees and Training

The REF Steering Group has developed this Code of Practice. The group was established in March 2019. Full details of its membership, the rationale for its membership, its terms of reference, and its method of working are set out in Appendix 2. A diagrammatic representation of the reporting structure is set out below (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Reporting Structure for REF Steering Group



Equality and diversity training has been facilitated for all members of the REF Steering Group and REF Appeals Panel in March/April 2019. This training was tailored to the REF processes and takes full account of the legal requirements under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Details of the training schedule and content of the training are provided (see Appendix 3).

## 2.4 Appeals Process

All staff who apply for Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher will be advised in writing by the REF Steering Group in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020 whether they have met the criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research, and will be informed of the Appeals Process. Full details of the Appeals Process for staff who wish to appeal the outcome of the process for Significant Responsibility for Research and/or Independent Researcher can be found in Appendix 4.

## 2.5 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) using the University College Equality Impact Screening template was carried out in April/May 2019 to inform the process to be used to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission. A full and final Equality Impact Assessment will be submitted with the final REF submission. See Appendix 11.

# Part 3: Determining Research Independence

## 3.1 Policies and Procedures

The *Guidance on Submissions* (REF2019-01) notes that staff on “research only” contracts must be independent researchers in order to meet the definition of

Category A eligible staff. The guidance further notes that all such staff will have Significant Responsibility for Research and so should be returned as Category A submitted staff (see §128).

Following the REF *Guidance on Submissions* (REF2019-01), the College defines an independent researcher as “an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual’s research programme” (§131).

The College, in accordance with the REF guidance, does not recognise research assistants as eligible to be returned to the REF (since their role is to support and carry out someone else’s research programme) unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher on the census date and satisfy the definition of Category A eligible staff (§129-130).

Having considered the possible indicators of independence proposed in the guidance and in light of the context of Stranmillis, eligible staff must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- acting as Principal Investigator or Co-investigator on an internally or externally funded research project. Examples include:
  - leading an internally funded seed project
  - leading or joint-leading a cross-border SCoTENS project
  - leading a funded evaluation for an external organisation
  - leading a government funded research project
- holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.
- leading a research group or centre.

Importantly the *Guidance on Submissions* (REF2019-01) notes that “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.” (§133). This is to counter the practice of individuals being named on publications to which they did not actually contribute.

All staff who apply for Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher will be advised in writing by the REF Steering Group in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020 whether they have met the criteria for Independent Researcher, and will be informed of the Appeals Process.

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

The REF Steering Group will use the criteria set out above to determine research independence. The REF Steering Group was established in March 2019. Full details of its membership, the rationale for its membership, its terms of reference, and its method of working are set out in Appendix 2.

Equality and diversity training has been facilitated for all members of the REF Steering Group and REF Appeals Panel in March/April 2019. This training was tailored to the REF processes and takes full account of the legal requirements under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Details of the training schedule and content of the training are provided (see Appendix 3).

### **3.3 Appeals Process**

All staff who apply for Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher will be advised in writing by the REF Steering Group in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020 whether they have met the criteria for Independent Researcher, and will be informed of the Appeals Process. Full details of the Appeals Process for staff who wish to appeal the outcome of the process for Significant Responsibility for Research and/or Independent Researcher can be found in Appendix 4.

### **3.4 Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) using the University College Equality Impact Screening template was carried out in April/May 2019 to inform the process to be used to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission. A full and final Equality Impact Assessment will be submitted with the final REF submission. See Appendix 11.

## **4. Selection of Outputs**

### **4.1 Policies and Procedures**

The College is planning a submission under Main Panel C, Unit of Assessment 23 (Education). It is acknowledged in the REF *Panel Criteria and Working Methods* (REF2019/02) that there is diversity of content and methodology within this Unit of Assessment, and this is reflected in the illustrative lists which are provided in the guidance (as follows):

“Research which addresses education systems, issues, processes, provision and outcomes in relation to sectors, such as: early years, primary, secondary, further, higher, medical, workplace, adult and continuing education. It also includes teacher, healthcare and other forms of professional education, vocational education and training; and informal, community and lifelong learning.

Research which addresses substantive areas, such as: curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, language, teaching and learning; children, young people, student and adult learners; parents, families and communities; culture, economy and society; teacher training, professionalism and continuing professional development (CPD); special and inclusive

education; participation, rights and equity issues; technology-enhanced learning; education policy; the organisation, governance, management, effectiveness and improvement of educational institutions; education, training, workplaces, industry and the labour market; comparative, international and development education.

Research which employs a range of theoretical frameworks and methodologies drawn from disciplinary traditions, including, but not limited to: anthropology, applied linguistics, economics, geography, history, humanities, mathematics, statistics, philosophy, political science, psychology, science and sociology. Research in the field of education deploys a range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies with structured, exploratory and participatory research designs. These include, but are not limited to: surveys, experiments and controlled trials; ethnography, interview and narrative enquiry; action research and case study; evaluation research; critical theory and documentary analysis; analytic synthesis; and systematic review.” (REF2019/02 §123)

The guidance also notes that the sub-panel will accept submissions in pedagogical research in higher education (see §124).

The College will follow the guidance on the eligibility of outputs (see *Guidance on Submissions* REF2019-01). This is represented diagrammatically in Appendix 7.

All Stranmillis staff who meet the agreed criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research and Research Independence as defined in this Code of Practice (see Parts 2 and 3 above) will, in conjunction with the Director of Research and Scholarship, identify a minimum of one research output for external review by the College’s Visiting Professors. The Visiting Professors will be asked to review the outputs against the overall REF criteria as set out in the *Guidance on Submissions* (REF2019-01) Annex A Table A2.

Former staff on ‘teaching and research’ contracts, including those made redundant, all of whom will necessarily have had only 10% of their total workload allocated to Research and Scholarly Activity, will not be considered to have Significant Responsibility for Research. Where a member of staff on a ‘teaching and research’ contract is successful in applying for an additional 10% research time through the process detailed above (and is thus judged to have Significant Responsibility for Research) and subsequently leaves or is made redundant before the census date, their outputs will be deemed assessable within the College’s REF submission, provided that (in line with §211-216 of the REF *Guidance on Submissions*) the outputs were first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by Stranmillis on an appropriate ‘teaching and research’ contract. (see also 2.1)

Table A2: Outputs sub-profile: Criteria and definitions of starred levels

The criteria for assessing the quality of outputs are 'originality, significance and rigour	
Four star	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Three star	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
Two star	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
One star	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

More detail is provided in the REF *Panel Criteria and Working Methods* (REF2019/02 §203) where Main Panel C supplementary criteria are provided. These will inform the grading of the outputs as follows:

- a. In assessing work as being **four star** (quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see some of the following characteristics:
  - outstandingly novel in developing concepts, paradigms, techniques or outcomes
  - a primary or essential point of reference
  - a formative influence on the intellectual agenda
  - application of exceptionally rigorous research design and techniques of investigation and analysis
  - generation of an exceptionally significant data set or research resource.
- b. In assessing work as being **three star** (quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence), sub-panels will expect to see some of the following characteristics:
  - novel in developing concepts, paradigms, techniques or outcomes
  - an important point of reference
  - contributing very important knowledge, ideas and techniques which are likely to have a lasting influence on the intellectual agenda
  - application of robust and appropriate research design and techniques of investigation and analysis
  - generation of a substantial data set or research resource.

- c. In assessing work as being **two star** (quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see some of the following characteristics:
- providing important knowledge and the application of such knowledge
  - contributing to incremental and cumulative advances in knowledge
  - thorough and professional application of appropriate research design and techniques of investigation and analysis.
- d. In assessing work as being **one star** (quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see some of the following characteristics:
- providing useful knowledge, but unlikely to have more than a minor influence
  - an identifiable contribution to understanding, but largely framed by existing paradigms or traditions of enquiry
  - competent application of appropriate research design and techniques of investigation and analysis.
- e. Research will be graded as ‘unclassified’ if it falls below the quality levels described above or does not meet the definition of research used for the REF.

The Visiting Professors will provide feedback on each potential REF output to the REF Steering Group. The REF Steering Group will then consider every output that has been reviewed by the Visiting Professors before making the final decision on which will be submitted.

Using the criteria set out above, the following procedure will be followed:

1. A minimum of one output per submitted staff member and a maximum of five outputs will be submitted (except where individual circumstances allow otherwise).
2. Outputs with the highest star grading will be submitted, based on the Visiting Professors’ (external reviewers) application of the REF criteria above, and taking into account the REF requirement to submit a minimum of one output per submitted FTE and the requirement that the total number of outputs must equal 2.5 times the summed FTE of submitted staff.
3. The grading by the external reviewers (Visiting Professors) will be used by the Steering Group to determine the final submission, if the total number of outputs received exceeds the number required.
4. The final submission will take into account any reduction in outputs as a result of a request to the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) in light of individual staff circumstances (see below).

## 4.2 Staff, committees and training

The REF Steering Group will consider the grading of the outputs by the external reviewers (Visiting Professors) and will decide on the final submission of outputs.

The committee was established in March 2019. Full details of its membership, the rationale for its membership, its terms of reference, and its method of working are set out in Appendix 2.

Equality and diversity training has been facilitated for all members of the REF Steering Group and REF Appeals Panel in March/April 2019. This training was tailored to the REF processes and takes full account of the legal requirements under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Details of the training schedule and content of the training are provided (see Appendix 3).

## 4.3 Staff Circumstances

In accordance with the REF *Guidance on Submissions* (REF2019-01) the College recognises that an individual's personal circumstances can have a significant impact on their research productivity.

The College has therefore set out below how the process by means of which staff deemed to have Significant Responsibility for Research (see Part 2 above) and judged to be working as Independent Researchers (see Part 3 above) can voluntarily declare any individual circumstances.

The College accepts all of the equality-related circumstances as identified by the funding bodies advised by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) which may, in isolation or together, have an impact on an individual's research activity. These circumstances are set out below:

- a. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher – where they became an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016, with at least a 0.2 'teaching and research' or 'research only' contract.
- b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- d. 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'.<sup>2</sup>
  - ii. Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.

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<sup>2</sup> A person is considered to have a disability if they have or have had a physical and/or mental impairment which has a "substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". Long-term impairments include those that last or are likely to last for at least 12 months.



- 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 of the REF guidance (this has been included in full as Appendix 8)
- 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.

As outlined above, part-time working hours are already taken account of in the calculation of the total number of outputs (2.5 x total FTE).

The College supports the view (outlined in the *Guidance on Submissions*) that the individual staff member is best placed to consider whether equality-related circumstances have affected their productivity over the REF assessment period. The College also believes that they should not feel under pressure to declare their circumstances if they do not wish to do so.

Consequently, staff deemed to have Significant Responsibility for Research (see Part 2 above) and judged to be working as Independent Researchers (see Part 3 above) will be provided with clear information about the applicable circumstances, and will be invited to complete the REF Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances Form (see Appendix 9). This will be submitted by email to the REF Steering Group by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. The REF Steering Group will consider each application carefully in line with the REF guidance and will provide the outcome of the application before the census date of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020. The application must include sufficient information and supporting evidence to allow an informed decision to be made by the REF Steering Group.

This will allow the College to consider the need to submit a request to the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel for a unit reduction in outputs and for removing the minimum requirement of one output (if necessary) by the deadline of March 2020. The reductions are detailed in Appendix 8. All submitted information may be subject to REF audit in 2021 and will be destroyed on completion of the REF in December 2021 (see REF2019/01 §196).

All personal information will be held by the College in accordance with current data protection legislation - General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and the Data Protection Act 2018. See Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021 (Appendix 10).

#### **4.4 Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) using the University College Equality Impact Screening template was carried out in April/May 2019 to inform the process to be used to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission. A full and final Equality Impact Assessment will be submitted with the final REF submission. See Appendix 11.

## 5. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Timescale of Meetings/Communication with Staff

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>June 2015</b>	Governing Body	Research Strategy approved
<b>Sept 2015</b>	Research Workshop Day (all academic staff)	Briefing on 2015 Research Strategy, lessons from REF2014, Working with the Media, Applying for EU funding
<b>Nov 2015</b>	Education Committee, Governing Body	Approval of Code of Ethics in Research
<b>Sept 2016</b>	Research Workshop Day (all academic staff)	The Stern Report (Summary of recommendations), How to get published, Applying for External Funding
<b>June 2017</b>	Governing Body	Revised Research Strategy approved
<b>Sept 2017</b>	Research Workshop Day (all academic staff)	REF update, academic writing workshop, impact strategy, library resources, Researchgate
<b>Nov 2017</b>	Education Committee, Governing Body	Approval of Research Impact Strategy
<b>June 2018</b>	Public	Launch of Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement
<b>Sept 2018</b>	Research Workshop Day (all academic staff)	Briefing on REF preparations, Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement, Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series
<b>Jan 2019</b>	Senior Leadership Committee	Presentation on REF2021
	Final REF guidance published	
<b>Feb 2019</b>	Visiting Professors	Advice on grading of papers for REF
<b>Feb 2019</b>	Training Day on REF Code of Practice – Birmingham	Guidance on content of Code of Practice

<b>Mar 2019</b>	Academic Leadership Committee	Presentation on REF preparations and options for Code of Practice
<b>Mar 2019</b>	Equality & Diversity Training for REF Steering Group and REF Appeals Group	
<b>8 April 2019</b>	Academic Leadership Committee	Approval of Code of Practice
<b>10 April 2019</b>	Lunchtime Seminar on REF	Briefing to Staff on Code of Practice
<b>10 April – 3 May 2019</b>	Dissemination and consultation of the Code of Practice leading to staff agreement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ via staff email</li> <li>▪ via Staff Council (12 April)</li> <li>▪ via the SharePoint Research webpage</li> <li>▪ via an informal staff briefing held over lunchtime</li> <li>▪ via Research and Scholarship Committee, Academic Leadership Committee, Senior Leadership Committee,</li> <li>▪ via the College's Union Forum (e.g. UCU)</li> </ul>	Content of Code of Practice
<b>02 June 2019</b>	Equality Impact Assessment of finalised documentation.	
<b>06 June 2019</b>	Staff Agreement: Approval of the Code of Practice by UCU branch (sole recognised union for academic staff at Stranmillis)	
<b>7 Jun 2019</b>	Submission of Code of Practice to REF for approval	
<b>31 Dec 2019</b>	Deadline for submission of Individual Staff Circumstances Form	
<b>31 July 2020</b>	Census date	
<b>31 Dec 2020</b>	End of publication period	
<b>31 March 2021</b>	Closing date for submissions	

<b>May 2021 – March 2022</b>	Panels assess publications	
<b>2021 (after submission deadline)</b>	Consult on final Equality Impact Assessment	
<b>April 2022</b>	Publication of outcomes	

## Appendix 2: REF Steering Group

### Membership

<b>Executive Members</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Director of Research & Scholarship	Overall responsibility for REF submission
Director of Student & Learning Services	SMT with experience of Section 75 & REF2014
Research Impact Coordinator	Responsibility for REF impact case studies
<b>Co-opted Members</b>	
HR Manager	Expertise in Equality and Diversity, EIAs & REF2014
Finance & Development Officer	Research Office team member
<b>In Attendance</b>	
Research Office Administrator	Research Office team member (secretariat)
<b>Advisory Membership</b>	
Visiting Professor 1	Expertise from Russell Group HEI
Visiting Professor 2	Expertise from Russell Group HEI

### Mission

To oversee the College's preparations to ensure a high-quality submission to the REF 2021.

### Terms of reference

1. To keep abreast of REF guidance and criteria, and take any necessary action.
2. To liaise as necessary with the Department for the Economy (NI funding department) and central REF panel.
3. To oversee and evaluate the preparation for REF2021, developing appropriate criteria to judge the quality of possible submissions.
4. To be responsible for considering and drafting the criteria/processes to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission.
5. To oversee the development of the College's REF Code of Practice, and ensure its communication to all staff across the College in consultation with Human Resources.
6. To facilitate and review Equality Impact Assessments at appropriate stages of the submission preparations in relation to the potential impact of the Code of Practice processes (to identify staff with significant responsibility for research,

to determine research independence and to select outputs for REF submission) on the nine equality categories as defined in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability and dependency.

7. To oversee the completion of the College's REF Environment statement and to review research-related metrics that contribute to the environment profile.
8. To oversee the selection, coordination and completion of the College's REF impact case studies.
9. To provide regular updates to relevant College committees and wider staff on the College's preparations for REF2021.

### **Method of working**

The REF Steering Group will meet monthly and report to the College's Research and Scholarship Committee, and Academic Leadership Committee.

The REF Steering Group will be serviced by the Research Office Administrator.

Where there is a conflict of interest (e.g. in discussing applications by members of staff who are themselves on the REF Steering Group) the member shall be replaced for that discussion by the Director of External Affairs and Community Engagement (who also received the relevant training in Equality and Diversity).

## **Appendix 3: Training Schedule for REF Steering Group/Appeals Panel**

### **REF Steering Group**

15<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 2pm, Executive Meeting Room, Main Building

Training on Equality and Diversity (Section 75) was facilitated by the HR Manager for the following:

- Director of Research and Scholarship
- Director of Student and Learning Services
- Research Impact Coordinator
- Finance and Development Officer
- Research Office Administrator

The training session entitled “Introduction to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act” is a module created by the Centre for Applied Learning of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and was accessed through the e-learning portal.

In particular the training covered the following topics:

- the importance of having due regard to respecting and promoting the 9 equality dimensions identified in Section 75 (persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without).
- the importance of having regard to the promotion of good relations between persons of different political opinion, religious belief and racial group.
- the content of an Equality Impact Assessment

### **REF Steering Group and REF Appeals Committee**

Equality Training

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019, 2.30pm, Executive Meeting Room, Main Building

Training on Equality and Diversity (Section 75) in the context of REF was facilitated by the HR Manager for the following:

- Director of Student and Learning Services
- Research Office Administrator
- Head of Arts and Humanities
- Head of Health, Physical Activity and Sport

Training focused on relevant equality legislation and its impact on roles and procedures.



## Appendix 4: Appeals Process for SRR and Independent Researcher

All staff will be advised in writing by the REF Steering Group in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020 whether they have met the criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research and Independent Researcher, and will be informed of the Appeals Process.

Information about the appeals process is included in this Code of Practice but will also be available on the College's Research staff intranet/SharePoint pages. Information about the appeals process will also be included in all communication with individual staff in relation to the selection process for Significant Responsibility for Research and the identification of Independent Researchers.

Grounds for appeal are expected to fall within one of the following categories:

1. Exclusion on any of the Section 75 protected characteristics
2. Failure to take into account fully the impact of work pattern (e.g. part-time hours) or absence from work (e.g. long-term sickness, career break, maternity leave)
3. Inappropriate application of the Code of Practice criteria
4. Inappropriate application of the REF2021 *Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria and Working Methods*

The following are NOT grounds for appeal:

1. Disagreement with the approved criteria in the Code of Practice for identification of staff with significant responsibility for research or research independence
2. Allocation of research outputs to an individual, on the basis of the minimum one and maximum five output quota.

Informal Appeals:

It is hoped that any staff queries, concerns and issues relating to the identification of Significant Responsibility for Research and Independent Researcher can be addressed informally through face-to-face discussion. Staff will be required to speak with their line manager and the College's Director of Research and Scholarship in the first instance before considering a formal appeal.

Formal Appeals:

Staff who wish to make a formal appeal against the outcome of their application for Significant Responsibility for Research and/or Independent Researcher should complete the template provided (see Appendix 7) with 28 days of receipt of the outcome. Appeals should be addressed to the REF Appeals Panel c/o Director of Teaching and Learning. The Panel will convene to consider the evidence in support

of the appeal. The appellant will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Panel and may be accompanied by a colleague. Having heard the evidence, the Panel will discuss the evidence and make a decision which will be communicated in writing to the appellant no later than two weeks after the panel meeting has taken place.

The REF Appeals Panel is independent of the REF Steering Group and comprises:

- The Director of Teaching and Learning (chair)
- The Head of Arts and Humanities
- A member of the HR department (in attendance)

The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

Where an appeal is lodged by a member of the Appeals Panel, that member will be replaced for the appeal by the Head of Health, Physical Activity and Sport.

## Appendix 5: REF Appeals Form<sup>1</sup>

### Section 1: Individual Details

Name of Appellant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Appeal: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 2: Grounds for Appeal

I hereby wish to lodge a formal appeal on the following (one or more) grounds:

1.	Exclusion on any of the Section 75 protected characteristics	
2.	Failure to take into account fully the impact of work pattern (e.g. part-time hours) or absence from work (e.g. long-term sickness, career break, maternity leave)	
3.	Inappropriate application of the Code of Practice criteria	
4.	Inappropriate application of the REF2021 <i>Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria and Working Methods</i>	

My appeal relates to the following selection process(es):

1.	Identification of Significant Responsibility for Research	
2.	Determination of Independent Researcher	

### Section 3: Supporting Information

Please provide supporting information for your appeal. You may expand this box and attach supporting evidence if necessary.

Please submit this form to [research@stran.ac.uk](mailto:research@stran.ac.uk)

<sup>1</sup> Staff are required to speak first to their line manager and Director of Research and Scholarship by way of informal appeal before a formal appeal will be considered. See Appendix 4.

### Appendix 6: Summary of Workload Allocation Model

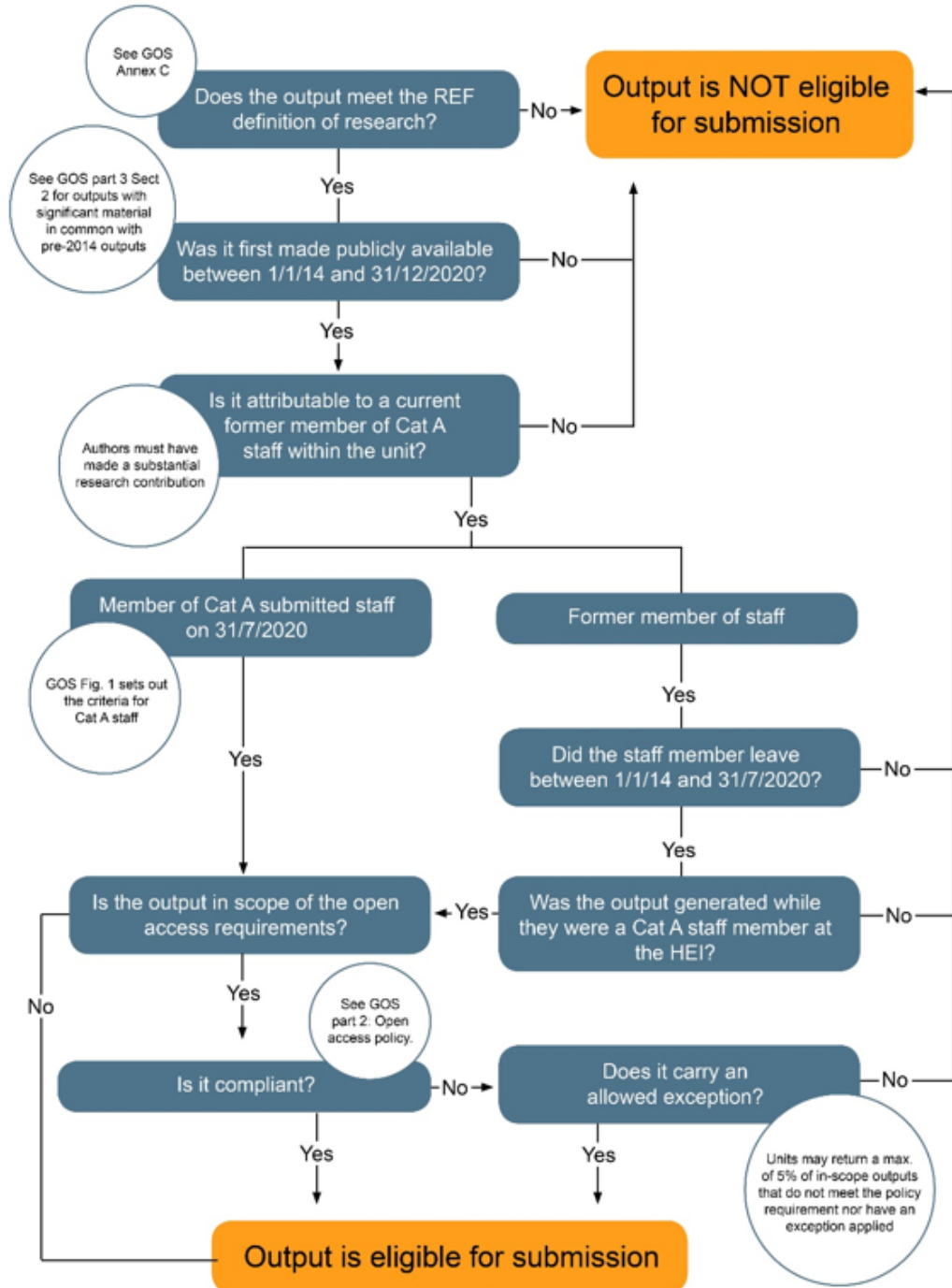
Activity	Criteria	Lecturer: Education with Scholarship	SL and PL
<p><b>1. Formal Scheduled Teaching (FST) and Duties Related to Formal Scheduled Teaching (DRFST)</b></p>	<p><b>Lecturer (Scholarship)</b></p> <p>400 Formal Scheduled Teaching hours which includes work-based learning plus 1.5 hours for Duties Related to Formal Scheduled Teaching hour for preparation &amp; marking for 1 FST hour (this may be increased to a maximum of 2 hours where there are, for example, higher student numbers)</p> <p><b>Senior Lecturer and Principal Lecturer</b></p> <p>A minimum of 300 teaching contact hours which includes work-based learning, plus 2 hours for Duties Related to Formal Scheduled Teaching hour for preparation &amp; marking etc. as described above.</p>	<p>80% (165 full days)</p>	<p>60% (124 full days)</p>

Activity	Criteria	Lecturer: Education with Scholarship	SL and PL
<b>2. Academic Related Duties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- College meetings (including quality assurance processes)</li> <li>- Training/development</li> <li>- Student Recruitment and Admissions including Open Day, Interviews, Careers Events, College events, Outreach Events etc.,</li> <li>- Contribution to Widening Participation events</li> <li>- Exam Invigilation</li> <li>- CPD or consultancy</li> <li>- Representing College at major events or on significant external groups</li> </ul>	5% (75 hours or 10 full days)	5% (75 hours or 10 full days)
<b>3. Scholarship &amp; Research</b>	<p>Examples of outputs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An article in a professional periodical or peer-reviewed journal</li> <li>- A conference paper</li> <li>- A research report</li> <li>- A book chapter/book</li> <li>- A set of classroom resources</li> </ul>	10% (150 hours or 20 full days)	10% (150 hours or 20 full days)

Activity	Criteria	Lecturer: Education with Scholarship	SL and PL
	<p>- Part-time doctoral studies</p> <p><b>Examples of work which will attract additional research time for a defined period</b></p> <p>Successful application based on two-year research plan.</p>		20%(300 hours or 40 full days)
<b>4. Academic Leadership and management</b>	<p>Specific Leadership or Coordinating Roles – see table below</p> <p>Significant Additional Contribution to other College Activities e.g the College’s Widening Participation Strategy or Additional Significant input into Student Recruitment (Careers Events, Outreach Events etc.) beyond Academic Related Activities above.</p>	See below	See below
<b>5. Income Generation Activities</b>	<p>These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a successful funding bid</li> <li>• income generated through consultancy work</li> <li>• international recruitment</li> </ul>	Specify number of days	Specify number of days

Activity	Criteria	Lecturer: Education with Scholarship	SL and PL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivery of full cost recovery courses</li> <li>• extended CPD or consultancy</li> </ul> <p>In exceptional cases it may be possible for a lecturer to be bought out of normal teaching duties as a result of substantial Income Generation Activities.</p>		

## Appendix 7: Output Eligibility





## Appendix 8: Reductions for Staff Circumstances<sup>3</sup>

### Annex L: 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 L1: 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 L2: 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.

<sup>3</sup> Annex L from REF *Guidance on Submissions* (REF2019/01)

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:

- a. 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.
- b. Additional paternity or adoption leave<sup>22</sup>, or shared parental leave<sup>23</sup> 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. 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. 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.

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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.

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.

### **Appendix 9: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances Form**

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 the College’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 for the College’s Unit of Assessment whether the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

#### **Applicable circumstances**

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

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, you are requested to

complete the attached form. Further information can be found in paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01). Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the College 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 the College decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the ['Guidance on submissions'](#) document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

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

### **Changes in circumstances**

The College recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should contact the College's REF Steering Group to provide the updated information.

To submit this form, you should email [research@stran.ac.uk](mailto:research@stran.ac.uk) by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

**Name:** [Click here to insert text.](#)

**Department:** [Click here to insert text.](#)

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

Yes

No

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

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

<p><b>Disability (including chronic conditions)</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Mental health condition</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Ill health or injury</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</b></p> <p><i>To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Caring responsibilities</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b></p> <p><i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

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

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

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

I agree

**Name:** Print name here

**Signed:** Sign or initial here

**Date:** Insert date here

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

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

I would like to be contacted by:

Email  Insert email address

Phone  Insert contact telephone number



## Appendix 10: Staff Data Collection Statement for 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 us to the REF.

If you are a researcher who has been included as part of our submission to the REF 2021, in 2020 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](http://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 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](http://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 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.

### **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 December 2021. 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 us 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.

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

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/>

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](mailto:dataprotection@ukri.org)

## Appendix 11: Equality Impact Assessment

### 1. Stranmillis University College's Obligations

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires Stranmillis University College (the College), when carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity within the nine categories of persons, namely:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group,
- age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without, and

without prejudice to the obligations above, to also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The University College screening template allows the College to assess whether they impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity using the following criteria:

- What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?(minor/major/none)
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

### 2. Assessing the Impact on Equality of the REF Code of Practice and associated Code of Practice

The screening template has been used to assess the equality impact of the Code of Practice and related policies and procedures. Each policy and procedure has incorporated within the Code of Practice has been assessed and presented in a single document. The resulting data will be reviewed at each stage of the process and the full and final Equality Impact Assessment, taking account of the data will be submitted with the submission.

*(Screening of policies forms part of the College's statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998)*

## **Part 1 Policy scoping**

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives, for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

It should be remembered that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the College), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the College).

1 (a):

**• Title of the policy/decision to be screened**

Stranmillis University College Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Code of Practice including the procedures for the following:

- Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research
- Determining Research Independence
- Selection of Outputs

**• Brief Description of Policy** *(Is this a new, revised or existing policy?)*

This is a new Code of Practice for entry in the REF 2021. This supersedes the Code of Practice for the REF 2014 Code of Practice.

As part of preparations for the Research Excellence Framework REF2021 (UK's periodic process for assessing HEI research quality and distributing quality research funding), Stranmillis University College has developed a Code of Practice.

The process set out in detail in the Code of Practice (and summarised below) is based on the REF [Guidance on Submissions](#) and [Guidance on Codes of Practice](#). It adheres to the REF principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity. Irrespective of REF2021, all staff will continue to have full access to support through the Research Office.

- **Aims and objectives of policy** (*what is it trying to achieve?*)

The Code of Practice:

- provides guidance for staff charged with responsibility for making decisions about staff inclusion in the REF 2021;
- provides transparent guidelines for staff considering entry to the REF 2021
- aims to promote equality of opportunity between Section 75 categories of eligible staff;

- **Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the policy?**

No

- **Who wrote or initiated the policy?**

The Director of Research and Scholarship wrote the Code of Practice with support and feedback from the REF Steering Group.

1 (b): Implementation factors

- **Who owns and implements the policy?**

Head of Estates

- **Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?**

No

**If yes**, are they:

Financial? (Please specify)

Other? (Please specify)

1 (c): **Main stakeholders affected**

- **Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? *Please select.***

Staff

Students

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions



1 (d): **Other policies with a bearing on this policy**

- **What are they?** (Please list)

Staff Development Policy  
Doctoral Support Procedures  
Grievance Policy  
Increased Flexible Working Procedure

Incorporated in the Code of Practice and forming part of this equality screening exercise are procedures for:

- Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research
- Determining Research Independence
- Selection of Outputs

- **Who owns them?** (Please list)

Staff Development Policy – HR Manager  
Doctoral Support Procedures- Director of Scholarship and Research  
Grievance Policy- HR Manager  
Increased Flexible Working Procedure - HR Manager

1 (e): **Available evidence**

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative<sup>4</sup>) have you gathered to inform this policy? *Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.*

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Details of evidence/information</b>									
Religious belief	<p>The religious belief of current staff to whom the University College REF Code of Practice may potentially apply is set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="592 779 1497 1167"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="592 779 911 1061">Non-determined</th> <th data-bbox="911 779 1198 1061">Protestant</th> <th data-bbox="1198 779 1497 1061">Roman Catholic</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="592 1061 911 1167">% of potentially eligible staff</th> <th data-bbox="911 1061 1198 1167">% of potentially eligible staff</th> <th data-bbox="1198 1061 1497 1167">% of potentially eligible staff</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 1061 911 1167">4.5%</td> <td data-bbox="911 1061 1198 1167">65.9%</td> <td data-bbox="1198 1061 1497 1167">29.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The number of staff who self-selected to participate in the REF 2014 exercise was low (5 in total) and therefore may potentially disclose the religious belief of the relevant staff.</p>	Non-determined	Protestant	Roman Catholic	% of potentially eligible staff	% of potentially eligible staff	% of potentially eligible staff	4.5%	65.9%	29.5%
Non-determined	Protestant	Roman Catholic								
% of potentially eligible staff	% of potentially eligible staff	% of potentially eligible staff								
4.5%	65.9%	29.5%								
Political opinion	The University College has only recently begun to monitor this category and does not currently have data relating to this staff group. This will be reviewed when new data becomes available.									

<sup>4</sup> Evidence and/or information can be drawn from a number of sources. Examples may include management information systems, internal or external research, data collected through surveys or consultations. Anecdotal evidence (e.g., feedback from staff, students, customers, etc.) may also be informative.

<p>Racial group</p>	<p>The racial composition of current staff to whom the University College REF Code of Practice may potentially apply is set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="592 369 1485 692"> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 369 874 589"> <p>White – Irish % of potentially eligible staff</p> </td> <td data-bbox="874 369 1157 589"> <p>White- British % of potentially eligible staff</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1157 369 1485 589"> <p>Information not provided % of potentially eligible staff</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="592 589 874 692"> <p>9.1%</p> </td> <td data-bbox="874 589 1157 692"> <p>70.5%</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1157 589 1485 692"> <p>29.5%</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>The 2011 census data shows that 98.2% of the NI population is white and 1.8% of the NI population is made up of other non-white ethnic groups. There are no black and minority ethnic staff among College staff eligible potentially eligible to participate in REF.</p>	<p>White – Irish % of potentially eligible staff</p>	<p>White- British % of potentially eligible staff</p>	<p>Information not provided % of potentially eligible staff</p>	<p>9.1%</p>	<p>70.5%</p>	<p>29.5%</p>				
<p>White – Irish % of potentially eligible staff</p>	<p>White- British % of potentially eligible staff</p>	<p>Information not provided % of potentially eligible staff</p>									
<p>9.1%</p>	<p>70.5%</p>	<p>29.5%</p>									
<p>Age</p>	<p>The percentage of staff in each age bracket to whom the University College REF Code of Practice may potentially apply is set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="646 1093 1497 1648"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="646 1093 1031 1234">Age Bracket</th> <th data-bbox="1031 1093 1497 1234">% of potentially eligible staff</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 1234 1031 1339">30 – 40:</td> <td data-bbox="1031 1234 1497 1339">11.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 1339 1031 1444">40 – 50:</td> <td data-bbox="1031 1339 1497 1444">47.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 1444 1031 1550">50 - 60</td> <td data-bbox="1031 1444 1497 1550">34.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 1550 1031 1648">Over 60</td> <td data-bbox="1031 1550 1497 1648">6.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>All staff who selected to be included in the REF 2014 submission were aged over 40. The percentage of staff aged below 40 has increased by 4% between 2014 and 2019.</p>	Age Bracket	% of potentially eligible staff	30 – 40:	11.4%	40 – 50:	47.7%	50 - 60	34.1%	Over 60	6.8%
Age Bracket	% of potentially eligible staff										
30 – 40:	11.4%										
40 – 50:	47.7%										
50 - 60	34.1%										
Over 60	6.8%										

<p>Marital status</p>	<p>The marital status of current staff to whom the University College REF Code of Practice may potentially apply is set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="647 371 1482 1140"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="647 371 1067 512">Marital Status</th> <th data-bbox="1067 371 1482 512">% of potentially eligible staff</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 512 1067 689">Cohabiting with Partner</td> <td data-bbox="1067 512 1482 689">2.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 689 1067 792">Married</td> <td data-bbox="1067 689 1482 792">80.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 792 1067 934">Separated</td> <td data-bbox="1067 792 1482 934">5.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 934 1067 1037">Single</td> <td data-bbox="1067 934 1482 1037">12.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 1037 1067 1140">Not declared</td> <td data-bbox="1067 1037 1482 1140">9.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>While the numbers returned in the 2014 REF were low, participation rates in the REF 2014 submission (analysed by this equality dimension) were comparable to the population of eligible staff at that time.</p>	Marital Status	% of potentially eligible staff	Cohabiting with Partner	2.5%	Married	80.0%	Separated	5.0%	Single	12.5%	Not declared	9.1%
Marital Status	% of potentially eligible staff												
Cohabiting with Partner	2.5%												
Married	80.0%												
Separated	5.0%												
Single	12.5%												
Not declared	9.1%												
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>The University College has only recently begun to monitor this category and does not currently have data relating to this staff group. This will be reviewed when new data becomes available.</p>												

<p>Men and women generally</p>	<p>The percentage of men and women to whom the University College REF Code of Practice may potentially apply is set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="647 371 1497 719"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="647 371 1070 512">Category</th> <th data-bbox="1070 371 1497 512">% of potentially eligible staff</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 512 1070 613">Female</td> <td data-bbox="1070 512 1497 613">72.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 613 1070 719">Male</td> <td data-bbox="1070 613 1497 719">27.3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In the 2014 submission 40% of those included in the REF return were female and 60% were male. However, the numbers returned were very low as stated previously and therefore percentages are disproportionality affected.</p>	Category	% of potentially eligible staff	Female	72.7%	Male	27.3%
Category	% of potentially eligible staff						
Female	72.7%						
Male	27.3%						
<p>Disability</p>	<p>The percentage of current staff to whom the REF Code of Practice may potentially apply who have declared a disability is set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="647 1115 1497 1400"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="647 1115 1070 1294">% of potentially eligible staff who have declared a disability</th> <th data-bbox="1070 1115 1497 1294">% of potentially eligible staff who have not declared a disability</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="647 1294 1070 1400">13.6</td> <td data-bbox="1070 1294 1497 1400">86.4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>As previously stated the number who self-selected to be returned in the 2014 REF was low (5 in total). No staff with a disability selected to be returned in the REF 2014 submission. The percentage of staff declaring a disability amongst potentially eligible staff for REF 2021 is higher than the percentage in 2014. Approximately 6% of staff who were eligible to participate in the REF return had declared a disability. This has risen to 13.6%</p>	% of potentially eligible staff who have declared a disability	% of potentially eligible staff who have not declared a disability	13.6	86.4		
% of potentially eligible staff who have declared a disability	% of potentially eligible staff who have not declared a disability						
13.6	86.4						
<p>Dependants</p>	<p>While the numbers returned in the 2014 REF were low, participation rates in the REF 2014 submission (analysed by this equality dimension) were comparable to the population of eligible staff at that time.</p>						

**1 (f): Needs, experiences and priorities**

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? *Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories*

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Details of needs/experiences/priorities</b>
Religious belief	<p>None in relation to this Code of Practice or the incorporated policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</li> <li>• Determining Research Independence</li> <li>• Selection of Outputs</li> </ul> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that there will be any adverse impact on any individual because of their religious belief.</p>
Political opinion	<p>None in relation to this Code of Practice or the incorporated policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</li> <li>• Determining Research Independence</li> <li>• Selection of Outputs</li> </ul> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that there will be any adverse impact on any individual because of their political opinion.</p>
Racial group	<p>None in relation to this Code of Practice or the incorporated policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</li> <li>• Determining Research Independence</li> <li>• Selection of Outputs</li> </ul>

	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that there will be any adverse impact on any individual because of their race.</p>
Age	<p>Selection of Outputs</p> <p>Early Career Researchers are likely to come from a range of age groups and not just young people. The definition of Early Career Researcher used in the REF is not limited to young people.</p>
Marital status	<p>None in relation to this Code of Practice or the incorporated policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</li> <li>• Determining Research Independence</li> <li>• Selection of Outputs</li> </ul> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that there will be any adverse impact on any individual because of their marital status.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>None in relation to this Code of Practice or the incorporated policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</li> <li>• Determining Research Independence</li> <li>• Selection of Outputs</li> </ul> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that there will be any adverse impact on any individual because of their sexual orientation.</p>
Men and women generally	<p><b>Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</b></p> <p>Under the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 women are protected from unlawful discrimination, related to pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Pregnancy, maternity and other family leave may impact on the research plan produced by an individual and this must be borne in mind in decision making processes.</p>

## Selection of Outputs

Under the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 women are protected from unlawful discrimination, related to pregnancy and maternity. Pregnancy, maternity and other family leave may impact on the number of outputs produced by an individual due to time out of work or an impact on their ability to work effectively.

Consequently, where researchers have taken time out of work, or their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period has been affected, because of pregnancy and/or maternity, in accordance with the Selection of Outputs Policy and Procedures an individual may voluntarily declare any individual circumstances including 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 of the REF guidance (included in full as Appendix 8) or removal of the minimum requirement of one output.

Researchers who are not at work due to family leave or pregnancy may miss out on key information relating to the process. The University College will ensure that female researchers who are pregnant or on maternity leave are kept informed about and included in the submissions process.

Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 protect from discrimination, harassment and victimisation of trans people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex. An individual may experience constraints relating to their ability to work productively throughout the REF assessment period having been constrained due to gender reassignment and/or associated leave. Under the Selection of Outputs Policy and Procedures individuals may voluntarily declare any individual circumstances including those relating to gender assignment and a reduced number of research outputs may potentially be returned or the minimum requirement of one output removed.

The University College will ensure that all researchers who are absent for any reason, including



	gender reassignment, are kept informed about and included in the submissions process.
Disability	<p><b>Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</b></p> <p>There may be a need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff in delivering on a research plan.</p> <p>Selection of Outputs</p> <p>If a disabled researcher's impairment may affect the quantity of their research outputs.</p> <p>Consequently, where researchers have taken time out of work, or their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period has been affected because of their disability individuals may voluntarily declare any individual circumstances including those relating to their disability and a reduced number of research outputs may potentially be returned or the minimum requirement of one output removed.</p>
Dependants	<p><b>Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research</b></p> <p>Pregnancy, maternity and other family leave may impact on the number of outputs produced by an individual due to time out of work or an impact on their ability to work effectively.</p> <p>Selection of Outputs</p> <p>Pregnancy, maternity and other family leave may impact on the number of outputs produced by an individual due to time out of work or an impact on their ability to work effectively.</p>

**Part 2 Screening questions**

<b>2 (a): What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?</b>		
<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>	<b>Level of impact? minor/major/none</b>
Religious belief	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on religious belief.	None
Political opinion	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on political opinion.	None
Racial group	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on racial group. However academic staff and research staff are currently underrepresented by those from racial groups other than white British and Irish. To address this issue the College will continue to use welcoming statements and advertise UK wide when vacancies arise to increase the diversity profile of this particular staff group.	None
Age	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on age.	None
Marital status	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within	None

	should have no impact on marital status.	
Sexual orientation	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on sexual orientation.	None
Men and women generally	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on men and women generally given the provisions of the Selection of Outputs Policy and Procedure which potentially allows a reduced number of research outputs to be returned or the minimum requirement of one output removed in certain circumstances.	None
Disability	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on those declaring a disability given the provisions of the Selection of Outputs Policy and Procedure which potentially allows a reduced number of research outputs to be returned or the minimum requirement of one output removed where an individual has declared exceptional circumstances on the grounds of a disability.	None
Dependants	The operation of this Code of Practice and policies and procedures incorporated within should have no impact on those with dependents given the provisions of the Selection of Outputs Policy and Procedure which potentially allows a reduced number of research outputs to be returned or the minimum requirement of one output removed where an individual has declared exceptional circumstances.	None

<b>2 (b): Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?</b>		
<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>If Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide reasons</b>
Religious belief	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	.
Political opinion	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	
Racial group	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity,</p>	

	<p>relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	
<p>Age</p>	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p> <p>Support Early Career Researcher regardless of age by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of a programme of research seminars, sharing learning from colleagues' research activity (this is aimed at helping encourage less experienced colleagues to become research active at a REF returnable level).</li> <li>-Support for staff to assist them in submitting applications for research grants;</li> <li>-Provision of financial support for staff</li> </ul>	

	undertaking doctoral study.	
Marital status	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	
Sexual orientation	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	
Men and women generally	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p>	

	<p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Disability awareness training for all staff including those involved in a key role in the REF Code of Practice.</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p>	
<p>Dependants</p>	<p>Training for staff involved in panels, decision making roles and appeals panels, as set out in the REF Code of Practice, addressing equality of opportunity, relating to REF (e.g. unconscious bias and equality training).</p> <p>Endeavour to ensure there is diversity in REF selection and appeals panels.</p> <p>Revision of an "Increased Flexible</p>	

	<p>Working” policy to facilitate consideration of changes to working hours and/or duties to accommodate individual staff circumstances, e.g., those with caring responsibilities.</p>	
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<b>2 (c): To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?</b>		
<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>	<b>Level of impact minor/major/none</b>
Religious belief	None	None
Political opinion	None	None
Racial group	None	None

<b>2 (d): Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?</b>		
<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>If Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide reasons</b>
Religious belief	General awareness training has been provided to staff in key roles in the REF Code of Practice with regards to the good relations and promoting equality of opportunity both generally and in relation to the REF. Training outlined the requirements of relevant equality legislation and used case studies to explore equality issues in the explicit context of the selection of staff for the REF.	n/a

	<p>The Code also sets out responsibilities with regard to promoting equality and diversity for those with decision making roles in each of the policies and procedures.</p>	
<p>Political opinion</p>	<p>General awareness training has been provided to staff in key roles in the REF Code of Practice with regards to the good relations and promoting equality of opportunity both generally and in relation to the REF. Training outlined the requirements of relevant equality legislation and used case studies to explore equality issues in the explicit context of the selection of staff for the REF.</p> <p>The Code also sets out responsibilities with regard to promoting equality and diversity for those with decision making roles in each of the policies and procedures.</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Racial group</p>	<p>General awareness training has been provided to staff in key roles in the REF Code of Practice with regards to the good relations and</p>	<p>n/a</p>

	<p>promoting equality of opportunity both generally and in relation to the REF. Training outlined the requirements of relevant equality legislation and used case studies to explore equality issues in the explicit context of the selection of staff for the REF.</p> <p>The Code also sets out responsibilities with regard to promoting equality and diversity for those with decision making roles in each of the policies and procedures.</p>	
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2 (e): **Multiple identity**

**Are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?**

*Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category, for example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; and young LGBT people.*

Any individual issues of multiple identity will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice.

2 (f): **Disability Duties**

Consider whether the policy:

- Discourages disabled people from participating in public life and fails to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

N/a

- Provides an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people or encourages their participation in public life.

As indicated above under section 2 (b) it is hoped that through general training for key staff on this Code of Practice as well as Disability Awareness training there will be more awareness of the social identities under section 75 which includes those with a disability.

**Part 3. Screening decision**

**3 (a): Policy does not require a full EQIA.**

Please provide details of the reason for this decision.

There is no evidence to suggest that this policy has a major impact on any of the Section 75 categories and therefore a full equality impact assessment consultation on the Code of Practice as defined under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act is not required. However, the implementation of the Code and associated policies and procedures will be subject to ongoing impact assessment via review of equality screening exercise and resulting monitoring data at each stage and a full and final Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be conducted based on the final submission. The findings and recommendations from the EQIA will be used to develop the research profile of any group or groups shown to be underrepresented in the REF submission.

**3 (b): Policy has minor equality impacts which can be mitigated/provided by an alternative policy and therefore does not require an EQIA.**

In this situation please provide details of the reason for this decision together with the proposed changes/amendments for alternative policy to be introduced.

### 3 (c): Policy requires a full EQIA

Please provide details of the reason for this decision.

There is no evidence to suggest that this policy has a major impact on any of the Section 75 categories and therefore a full equality impact assessment consultation on the Code of Practice as defined under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act is not required. However, the implementation of the Code will be subject to an impact assessment at each stage and a full and final equality impact assessment (EQIA) will be conducted based on the final submission. The findings and recommendations from the EQIA will be used to develop the research profile of any group or groups shown to be underrepresented in the REF submission.

3 (d): **Timetabling and prioritising:** *If option C has been selected under screening decision, then complete the following table:*

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	3
Social need	1
Effect on people's daily lives	2

**3 (e): Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? If yes, please provide details.**

The Code of Practice is affected by the timescales and requirements stipulated by REF 2021.

## Part 4. Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help the College identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the College to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

**Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy/decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.**

<b>Equality</b>	<b>Good relations</b>	<b>Disability Duties</b>
Number of requests for the Code of Practice and associated policies and procedures in a different format.	n/a	Issues or complaints raised by people with a disability in the implementation of the Code of Practice.
Breakdown by section 75 category of staff applying for Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher, success rates and appeals.		
Number and nature of individual circumstances raised under the Selection of Outputs policy and procedure success rates and related appeals.		
Number and nature of complaints and/or appeals on the grounds of equality factors received in implementation of the Code of Practice.		
Participation in the REF submission across each of the Section 75 categories.		



**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

<b>Screened by:</b>	<b>Position/Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
R McQuaid	HR Manager	02/06/2019
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Position/Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Dr N Purdy	Director of Research & Scholarship	05/06/2019