

REF2021 Code of Practice



#TakeOnTomorrow

REF2021 Code of Practice

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REF2021 Code of Practice

1. Introduction

As part of Northumbria's submission to the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF2021) we are required to develop, document and apply a code of practice that outlines how Northumbria will identify staff with significant responsibility for research; determine who is an independent researcher; and how we will approach the selection of outputs, including support for staff with individual circumstances. The funding bodies that run the REF have provided detailed guidance and a structured template for HEIs to use. This code of practice is based on that template. All Northumbria decision-making bodies will adhere to the principles of this code of practice, ensuring equality, transparency, consistency and accountability.

The Research Excellence Framework is an assessment of universities, not individuals and, regardless of whether a member of staff has been submitted or not to the REF, the University will continue to support all staff on teaching & research contracts to develop significant responsibility for research in future, even if they do not have significant responsibility for research at the point of identifying this for REF2021.

This code of practice aims to demonstrate equality and fairness to all staff by addressing the following principles:

Transparency: in all processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence, and selecting outputs for inclusion.

Consistency: The processes outlined in this code of practice are consistent across the institution.

Accountability: Responsibilities are clearly defined, and individuals and bodies that are involved in i) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, ii) determining research independence, and iii) selecting outputs for REF submissions are identified by role. The code of practice states what training those who are involved in the processes have had.

Inclusivity: The processes described in the code promote an inclusive environment, enabling Northumbria to identify all our staff who have significant responsibility for research, all staff who are independent researchers, and the research produced by staff across all protected characteristics and groups.

Why do we need a code of practice?

Our code of practice sets out our approach to ensuring equality of opportunity in REF2021 and the related decision-making processes. Its key purpose is to set out our responsibilities in respect of promoting equality and diversity, complying with the relevant legislation, and avoiding discrimination, when preparing our submission.

We need to set out how we will identify eligible staff with significant responsibility for research; how we will determine which of our colleagues on research-only contracts are independent researchers; how we will go about selecting which outputs to submit; and how we will support staff whose circumstances have affected their ability to produce research and outputs during the REF period (1st January 2014 – 31st July 2020).

We also need to provide details of the bodies making decisions about the REF at Northumbria, their responsibilities and operating criteria, and the training they have received as a necessary part of their REF roles.

Throughout the remainder of the REF period, in the lead-up to submission in November 2020, and following the submission, staff at Northumbria and the funding bodies will be able to refer to our code of practice for assurance on processes connected to the REF.

1.1 Northumbria's REF2021 Strategy

In RAE 2008 Northumbria submitted 162 FTE staff in twelve units of assessment. This equated to approximately 19% of our REF-eligible staff base. In that exercise 6% of our research was assessed as being world leading. In REF2014 we submitted 343 FTE in sixteen units of assessment (29% of our eligible staff) and 16% of our research was rated at 4* (world leading) level.

Since 2008, Northumbria has undergone a major transformation, prioritising research alongside education and investing in its people and facilities to become a truly research-rich institution. Our strategic investment in research has changed the University's academic make-up, with the vast majority of staff now undertaking independent research. We now believe our research-active staff base to be around 1,000 people – around 80% of all those eligible. A submission of this size would represent an almost three-fold increase on REF2014 and would reflect our growing global reputation for academic excellence and would align to our strategic plans for a transformation that will ultimately put us among the sector's top universities. In order to achieve this level of submission and demonstrate the breadth and quality of our research, this code of practice and the processes described within it aim to be highly inclusive. Unlike previous research assessment exercises, REF2021 requires that all staff with significant responsibility for research are submitted. This code of practice sets out how we will ensure that all these staff are correctly identified and submitted to REF2021.

As part of our transformation, new colleagues are allocated experienced mentors and we give careful consideration when planning their work during their early years to ensure that they have a manageable balance of responsibilities to support them to develop their academic profile at a practicable and supportive pace. Academic career progression is open to all based on merit, with excellence the key criteria to achieving promotion. We are committed to invest in our people, but we also want individuals to take responsibility for their own growth, learning and development. We encourage colleagues to seize opportunities open to them, supported by, amongst other things, coaching, training, sabbaticals, secondments, placements, and study abroad.

1.2 Equality, diversity and inclusion

Northumbria University is proud to be a multicultural community; we value diversity and are determined to ensure that the opportunities we provide are open to all. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strongly underpin the University's Vision 2025 and Corporate Strategy 2013 - 2018. Northumbria University is committed to providing an environment in which diversity is valued and encouraged, where there is equal access to opportunities and services and in which all prospective and existing staff and students are treated fairly, with equity, dignity and mutual respect. Northumbria's Equality and Diversity Policy is included at [annexe 1](#).

This code of practice aims to ensure that no one individual or group is treated less favourably in terms of protected characteristics during the preparations for, and submission of, Northumbria's submission to REF2021.

At the heart of Northumbria's Strategy is the recognition that our people play the crucial role in enabling the University to achieve its ambitions, this is clearly outlined in the University's first strategic outcome 'exceptional people empowered to achieve shared ambitions'.

Following REF2014, a new structure to drive forward progress on EDI was implemented and new Equality and Diversity leadership responsibilities created within Faculties. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of the University and has four sub-committees reporting into it: Athena SWAN University Self-Assessment team; LGBTQ* Steering group; Accessibility Review Group; and the EDI Special Interest Group. The Terms of reference for these groups are included in this code of practice at [annexe 3](#).

Since REF2014 we have:

- Reviewed our approach to Recruitment and Selection to ensure that there is gender representation in all panel membership.
- Introduced a new Vice Chancellor's Diversity and Inclusion Fund to accelerate EDI activity, events and initiatives across the University that will contribute to a culture of diversity and inclusion.
- Created a LGBTQ* Steering group, to work with our LGBTQ* Staff network to support our work to advance LGBTQ* inclusion within the University. We have also signed up to the Stonewall Diversity Champion Programme.
- Continued to support a number of specialist women's networks and we are now in the process of setting up a Women's network to cover both academic and professional services staff.
- Signed up to the 'Time to Change' pledge to become an employer that will address mental health stigma and discrimination. This has included the training of 41 Mental Health First Aiders and a programme of mental health awareness training.
- Introduced of a support package to support EU and international Colleagues
- Hosted the Trans Lives North East Conference in November 2018.
- Delivered a comprehensive programme of inclusive sport initiatives.
- Invested in the University's financial inclusion offer to ensure students from most disadvantaged backgrounds are supported.
- Introduced a package of support for disabled students to ensure equal access to learning and all aspects of the student experience.

The sub-committees support our ongoing work to address gender inequality, LGBTQ* inclusion, accessibility to all and considerations of the needs of other special interest groups. The University's commitment to equal opportunities is set out in our Equality and Diversity Policy and our high-level priorities are identified each year within our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report. The development of this code of practice is underpinned by all our policies and practices to ensure fairness, transparency, consistency, accountability and Inclusivity.

1.3 The legislative context

Throughout all stages of the planning and selection processes of REF2021, the University is required to meet key legislative requirements. The Equality Act 2010¹ provides legal protection to nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. In each of these areas the University has a legal responsibility to advance equality of opportunity, to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not. In addition, pursuant to the Fixed Term Employees Regulations 2002 and the Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000, the University should not treat those employed on fixed term contracts and those staff working part-time less favourably than comparable permanent full-time employees.

Northumbria University is committed to ensuring all staff are treated fairly and to fully supporting those staff who work on a part-time basis or are engaged on fixed term contracts. Part-time staff have the same opportunities to benefit from training and access to sabbatical opportunities as full-time staff. When it comes to promotion and progression opportunities, Northumbria's Appointments Board gives due consideration to any special circumstances that may have had an effect on any individual, while ensuring that the quality and impact of

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

achievements are demonstrated to the required standard. No quotas are applied and promotion is approved purely on merit.

The University has relatively low numbers of staff on fixed term contracts; staff on these contracts are subject to the same probation and Performance Development Appraisal (PDA) as staff employed on permanent contracts, which involves access to all training and development opportunities. The University has a redeployment process to support those staff who are nearing the end of their contract.

Since REF2014, the University has continued to roll out Unconscious Bias training for all staff. We identified in the REF2014 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) that work was required around, gender, caring responsibilities and part-time working and within our institutional Athena SWAN submission we have developed actions that consider additional support. These include:

- Widening our work to further identify and remove barriers to women’s progression, so that we can significantly improve our gender profile in senior roles
- Reducing our gender pay gap by targeted action
- Inclusion of ‘part-time working for posts will be considered’ in all adverts (unless a business exception applies)
- Implementation of measures to improve support for staff around caring responsibilities, offering resources and practical support to help colleagues manage priorities faced at work and at home

In REF2014, the process the University adopted for staff to disclose their individual circumstances was centralised and staff appeared to be confident to disclose via that the process. The process outlined in this code of practice has been amended to reflect the change in the guidance whilst still retaining the sensitivity and confidentiality that was welcomed in the previous REF process.

1.4 Code of practice timetable

Northumbria launches a wide ranging 10-week consultation with all eligible staff on the REF2021 Code of Practice	12 December 2018
Formal consultation ends	28 February 2019
Development of code of practice, including continued engagement with representative staff groups	March – June 2019
Deadline for submission of Codes of Practice to REF2021	By noon, 7 June 2019
Funding bodies notify institutions that code of practice meets REF requirements; or requests resubmission of the code of practice	By 16 August 2019
If necessary, Institution resubmits code of practice to funding bodies	By 20 September 2019
Funding bodies notify institutions that code of practice meets REF requirements; or requests a second resubmission of the code of practice	By 8 November 2019
Institution resubmits code of practice to funding bodies	By 15 November 2019
Funding body notifies institution whether or not code of practice meets REF requirements	By 29 November 2019
Publication of approved codes of practice	December 2019

2. Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

2.1 Category A eligible staff

'Category A Eligible' describes staff meeting the core eligibility criteria for REF2021 who will form the total pool of eligible staff. These are:

- academic staff on a 'teaching and research' or 'research-only' contract and
- have a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater and
- will be employed by the Northumbria on the census date of 31 July 2020.

To meet the definition of Category A Eligible, staff employed on 'research only' contracts must be *independent* researchers. All staff on 'research only' contracts who *are* independent researchers will have significant responsibility for research and will be returned to REF2021 as Category A submitted staff. (See [section 3](#) on identifying independence in staff on research-only contracts.)

[REF Strategy Group](#) is responsible for ensuring that all REF-eligible staff are considered for submission to REF2021.

Being eligible for the REF ('Cat. A Eligible') is not the same as being submitted to the REF ('Cat. A Submitted').

2.2 Substantive connection

For staff employed on minimum fractional contracts (0.20 to 0.29 FTE) on the census date, Northumbria will need to provide a short statement (up to 200 words) evidencing the clear connection of the staff member with the University and the submitting unit of assessment. A range of example indicators likely to evidence a substantive connection provided by the REF Guidance are:

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

Staff who do not have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit will not be eligible for inclusion. However, REF2021 recognises that there are also particular personal and discipline-related circumstances where the minimum fractional contract will commonly apply for staff members who do have a substantive connection with the submitting unit. Therefore, in these instances, a statement evidencing a substantive connection will not be required for staff with contract of employment between 0.20 and 0.29 FTE. These instances are as follows:

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

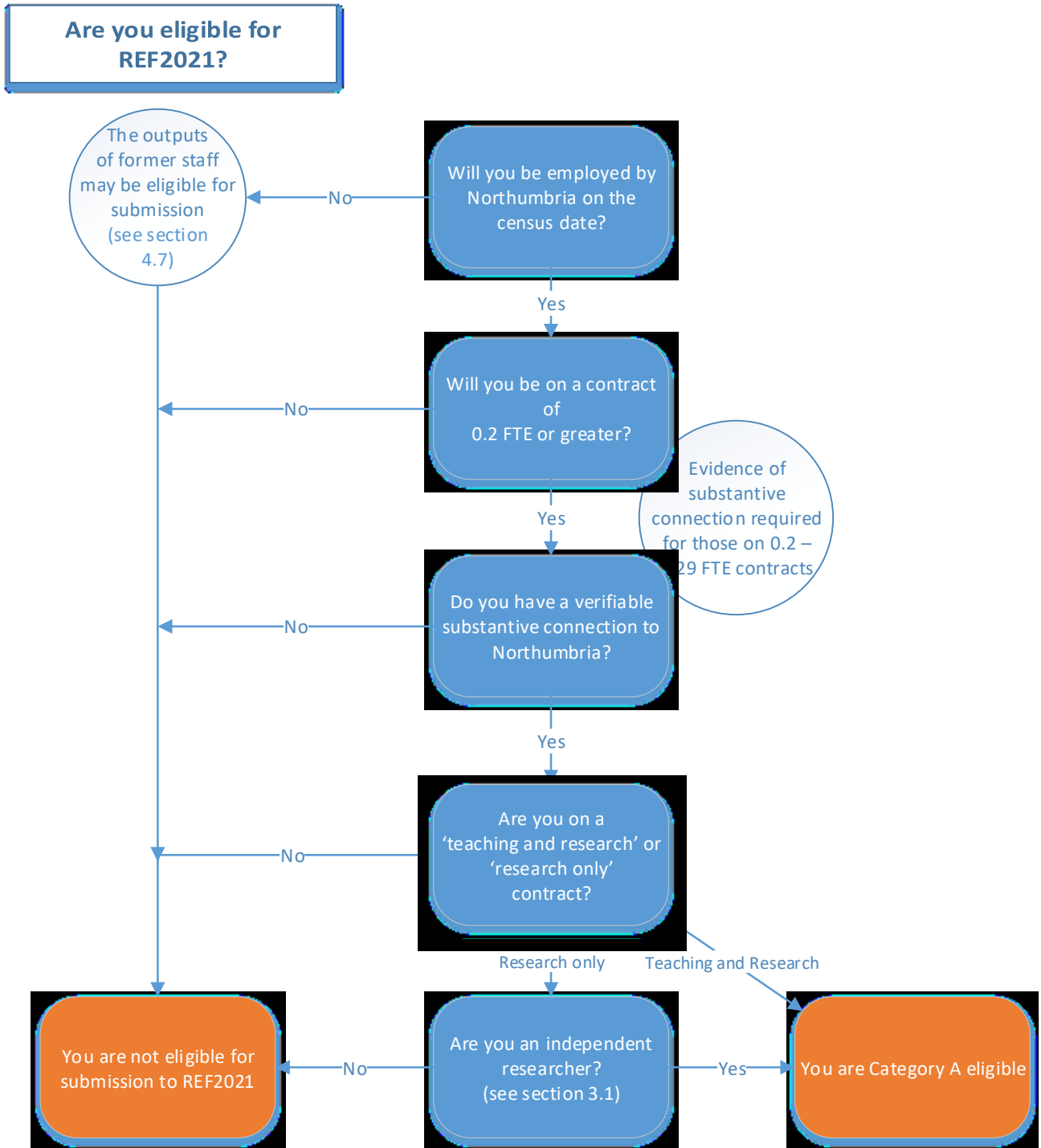


Figure 2.2. REF Eligibility

For further information, see REF [Guidance on Submissions](#) (paragraphs 117 – 127)

2.3 Category A submitted staff

Category A Submitted staff are a subset of Category A Eligible and are staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date. In institutions where all Category A Eligible staff have significant responsibility, all eligible staff should be submitted. In institutions like Northumbria where the basic criterion for Category A Eligible staff does not accurately identify only those staff with significant responsibility for research, a smaller group of ‘Category A Submitted’ staff should be identified — those staff with ‘significant responsibility for research’.

All staff with significant responsibility for research at Northumbria will be submitted to REF2021.

2.4 Significant responsibility to undertake research

2.4.1 How we identify staff with significant responsibility for research

The identification of staff to be submitted in REF2021 is radically different to previous research assessment exercises and completely changes the way we think about staff submission. The rules of previous RAEs and REF2014, meant that staff across the sector were selected for submission at the discretion of their university, based on the quality of their research outputs. Institutions could choose to submit a small number of staff with high-quality outputs in order to achieve a high grade point average (GPA); although this was not the approach taken by Northumbria. In REF2014 we achieved a doubling of staff numbers entered compared to 2008 whilst at the same time achieving a higher than sector average increase in GPA.

The independent review of university research funding undertaken by Lord Nicholas Stern², published in July 2016, made a series of recommendations about the management and operation of the REF, one of which was that all research active staff should be returned to future exercises. This recommendation was motivated, in part, by the ‘game playing’ in previous exercises and in response to concerns that selecting staff had potentially detrimental effects on individuals, their career progression and morale. In his report, Stern used the term “significant responsibility to undertake research” to identify research active staff. Where an institution is not submitting 100% of its Category A staff, REF2021 requires universities to include in their codes of practice the policy and procedures governing the process for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research.

The REF [Guidance on Submissions](#) provides the following definition: “Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role” and provides the following indicators:

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

² [Building on success and learning from experience: an independent review of the Research Excellence Framework.](#)

When determining how we would identify such staff at Northumbria, we felt it was important that we should consider at least two of these indicators in our methodology. Time made available for research is indicated by an individual's Research, Scholarly and Enterprise (RSE) allocation in their annual workload. The expectation that they undertake research as part of their role is best indicated by specific objectives agreed as part of the annual Performance Development Appraisal (PDA).

These indicators were selected because they are established, simple and widely understood, and we expect that they will accurately capture those staff at the University who are carrying out independent research and generating research outputs.

Northumbria also considered a range of other indicators, such as holding or studying for a doctorate, being a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on a research grant, being a member of a Multi-Disciplinary Research Theme, etc. However, none of these, either in isolation or in combination, accurately identified all staff with significant responsibility for research.

Staff at Northumbria with significant responsibility for research for the purposes of REF2021 are those staff with either a 2019/20 PDA objective to produce an output to which a contribution has been made as an independent researcher or a 2019/20 workload allocation for Research, Scholarship and Enterprise (RSE) of more than 30% of their contracted FTE, or both.

2.4.2 RSE for activities other than independent research

Significant RSE allowances are occasionally allocated for activities other than independent research, such as the generation of enterprise income and doctoral study. Where a significant proportion of RSE is allocated for these purposes and an individual's RSE is higher than 30%, clarification will be sought from line managers and Heads of Department to establish the size of the non-independent research element. REF Planning Group will then determine whether these workloads indicate significant responsibility for research and make recommendations to REF Strategy Group. However, any staff in this category can still be identified as having significant responsibility, and be submitted to REF2021, via an appropriate PDA objective.

2.4.3 2019/20 workloads and PDAs

The planned RSE workload in place at the start of semester one teaching – October 2019 – will be used to determine significant responsibility in the majority of cases. Workloads will be reviewed in February and July 2020, but only where material and significant changes have occurred during the academic year will significant responsibility be reassessed. Identification of any non-independent research elements of RSE will be undertaken, as outlined above, as part of these reviews.

The PDA objectives agreed with line managers as part of the 2019 PDA round (for the 2019/20 academic year) will be used to identify staff with significant responsibility for research.

2.4.4 Long-term absence

In exceptional cases where, because of long-term absence, an individual has neither a 2019/20 workload nor PDA, significant responsibility will be determined by the Faculty REF Lead in consultation with the individual's line manager and Head of Department based on the likely RSE workload allowance and/or PDA objectives that would have been in place had the member of staff not been absent.

Following the census date, a full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the outcomes and any differential impact on groups with protected characteristics examined to mitigate the risk of inadvertent discrimination in our processes. ([See section 2.7](#))

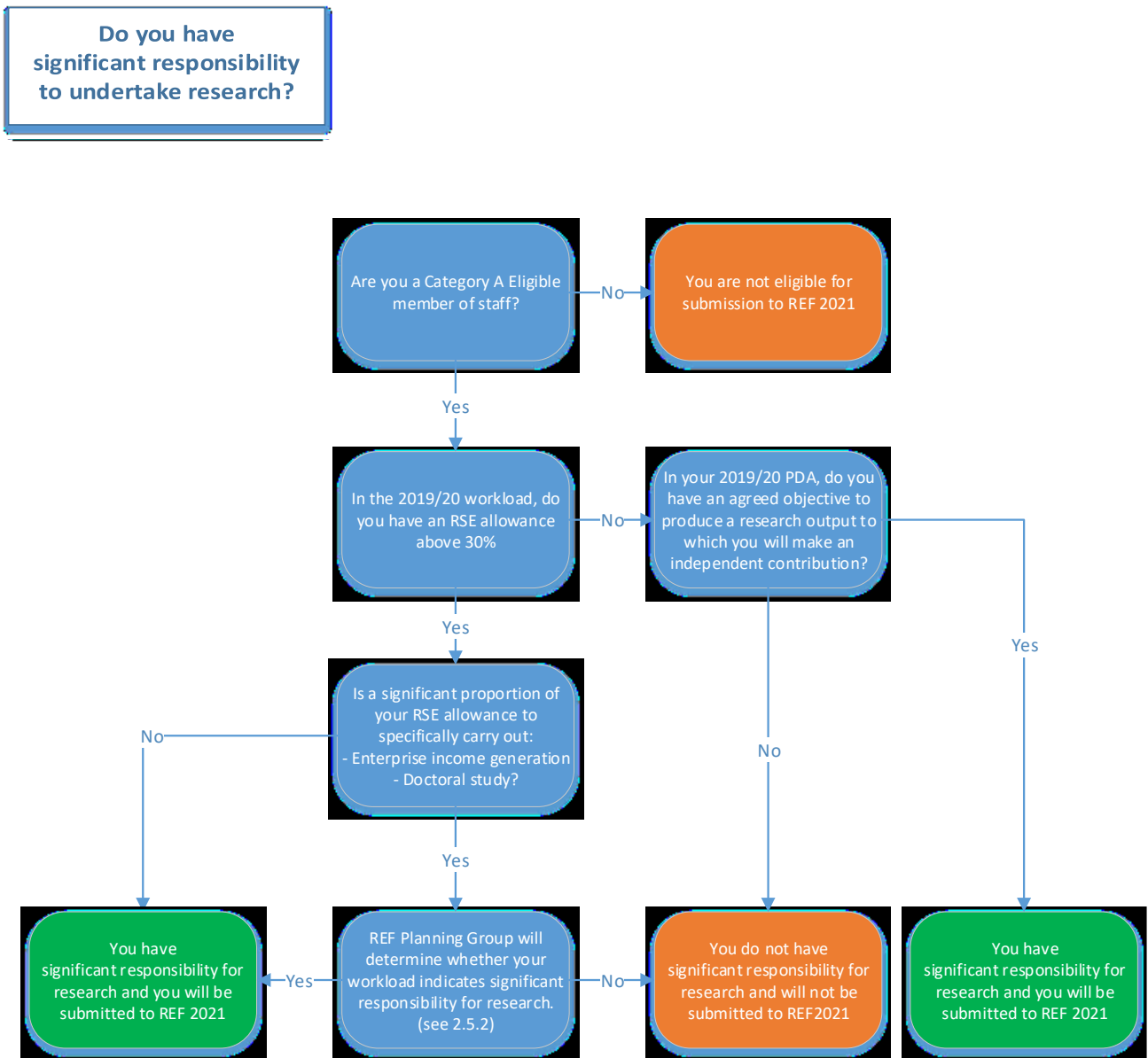


Figure 2.4: Significant Responsibility to undertake research – Staff on Teaching and Research Contracts

For further information, see REF [Guidance on Submissions](#) (paragraphs 138 – 144)

2.5 Communication of identification of significant responsibility and independence

Following the census date of 31st July 2020 all Category A Eligible staff employed on that date will be informed via email:

- For staff on teaching and research contracts, whether they have been identified as having significant responsibility for research
- For staff on research-only contracts, whether they meet the definition of an independent researcher

At this point, Northumbria will commit to submit to REF2021 all those staff identified as having significant responsibility for research and, in the case of research-only staff, independence.

Where staff are considered not to have significant responsibility for research, or not to be independent researchers, the email will include the reasons behind the decision in accordance with the established criteria, and details of Northumbria's appeals process.

2.6 Development and approval of Northumbria's code of practice and REF processes

In November 2017, REF2021 published the document [Decisions on staff and outputs](#) (REF 2017/04). This was, in effect, the first version of 'the rules of REF2021'. In it, the REF2021 team outlined the intention to implement the recommendation of the Stern review that all staff with significant responsibility for research are returned to the REF, and the requirement for institutions to have processes in place to identify those staff with significant responsibility.

In April 2018, Northumbria's REF Strategy Group met to consider how best Northumbria might identify those staff with significant responsibility.

The consultation for Northumbria's draft code of practice was launched on 12th December 2018. Professor George Marston, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) invited all academic staff to take part in the consultation on significant responsibility. 17 Faculty and Unit of Assessment events, hosted by Faculty PVCs and Unit of Assessment Leads were held at City and Coach Lane Campuses and were attended by more than 200 colleagues. Consultation was also undertaken at meetings of Research Directors, the University's Professoriate and Faculty Executives.

The University consulted with UCU, the recognised trade union for academic and research colleagues. Comprehensive feedback from UCU was sought and considered when drafting the final code of practice. As the Research Excellence Framework is of utmost importance to all our colleagues, we have also engaged with Unison, the recognised trade union for our Professional Support staff as well as holding a number of information sharing and Q&A sessions which many of these colleagues have attended.

We have engaged with representative staff groups to discuss the code of practice and to understand any potential impact on the groups they represent. These groups included the recognised trade unions, the Early Career Researcher Forum, the University's LGBTQ* Network and Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team.

We have sought approval from Academic Board as Northumbria's principal academic governance body with elected staff representation and this approval will be formally documented at its meeting on the 12 June 2019 and have shared the developing code with the Board prior to its submission.

The University and College Union (UCU) have indicated their agreement with the University's definition and identification of significant responsibility for research, and are in broad agreement with the code of practice. (See [annexe 8](#)).

What feedback was received during the consultation?

The REF2021 code of practice consultation ran over three months and closed on 28 February 2019. The draft was made available on the NU Points of View intranet site and was viewed by over 600 individual members of staff and generated 63 responses to the specific questions contained in the online questionnaire.

Alongside the online survey, more than 200 members of Northumbria staff attended Faculty and Unit of Assessment-specific events facilitated by Research and Innovation Services, generating further feedback.

Whilst there were some recurring observations on a small number of areas, there was general agreement around the proposed methodology for identifying staff with 'significant responsibility for research'. Recurrent issues included: the clarity of some of the language used, particularly in defining or identifying specific criteria; usage of the data collected and the reasons for choosing a workload threshold of 30%; further clarity sought around PDA objectives and workload models; and suggestions for adjusting the proposed methodologies.

2.7 Equality Impact Assessments

As part of the consultation on the code of practice, REF Strategy Group requested an Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken on the proposed processes for identifying significant responsibility for research and research independence. The EIA is included at annexe 7.

The objective of this formative EIA was to identify:

- Where discrimination may inadvertently occur within the process of defining significant responsibility
- Where the approach to defining significant responsibility may have a positive impact on the advancement of equality.
- Where there is an opportunity to take steps for the REF submission or more broadly that will have a positive impact.

As data on 2018/19 PDA objectives was not available at the time of the EIA, the assessment was based solely on 2018/19 workload data and in that sense is so far inconclusive. The EIA considered equality data collected in relation to all Category A Eligible staff on 31st January 2019.

Based on workload data alone some potential negative impacts were found in the following areas: Part-time staff, staff in the 45-64 age bracket and women. Potential positive impact was found in respect of BME staff and staff who had declared a disability. This data has been considered by REF Steering Group and REF Planning group in advance of the 19/20 workloads being set.

The EIA will be reviewed at regular points in the preparation for the REF2021 submission, including:

- Following the 2019/20 workload setting and PDA round in Autumn 2019. This EIA will include both indicators being used to determine significant responsibility. Any apparent negative impacts on those with protected characteristics either in isolation or in combination will be further investigated via a breakdown of the data at unit level, consideration of the data alongside other information and an intersectional analysis. The REF Strategy Group will undertake a thorough assessment of ways to mitigate any negative impact and ways to share good practice across the organisation.
- Following the census date.

- Prior to submission, when selecting outputs.
- Following the completion of the panel around individual circumstances to consider the outcome of those declarations.
- Following submission. This final EIA will be submitted to REF2021 and will include:
 - the final analysis of data comparing the characteristics of staff with significant responsibility for research with the characteristics of all eligible staff
 - the final analysis of data comparing the characteristics of those identified as independent researchers with an appropriate comparator pool
 - an examination of the distribution of outputs across staff in the unit
 - actions taken to prevent discrimination or advance equality during the submission process
 - information about any policies or practices that had a positive impact on equality during the submission process

2.8 Communicating the code of practice

A comprehensive communication strategy is in place to ensure that all eligible staff are informed of this code of practice and that it is available to all staff throughout the REF preparation period and beyond.

Following its submission to the funding body in June it will be made available on the [University's REF intranet pages](#) and on the external web site.

At the same time, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) will send an email to all staff to introduce the code of practice. Any Category A. Eligible staff on long-term absence from the University when it is published, will receive a letter to their home address, explaining how they can access the code. Print copies may also be made available to staff, students, partners and visitors.

Faculty Associate PVCs (Research and Innovation) and unit of assessment leads will present the code of practice at specially arranged University events. New members of academic staff who join the University after publication will be sent an introductory email introducing it and including a link to the University REF website and contact details for their unit of assessment leads.

2.9 Northumbria's REF2021 Management and Governance

Overall responsibility for the REF2021 submission lies with the University Executive (UE). However, planning and preparations are being overseen on behalf of UE by the REF Strategy Group. The full Terms of Reference and membership of all Northumbria's REF Governance Groups are included as [annexe 5](#).

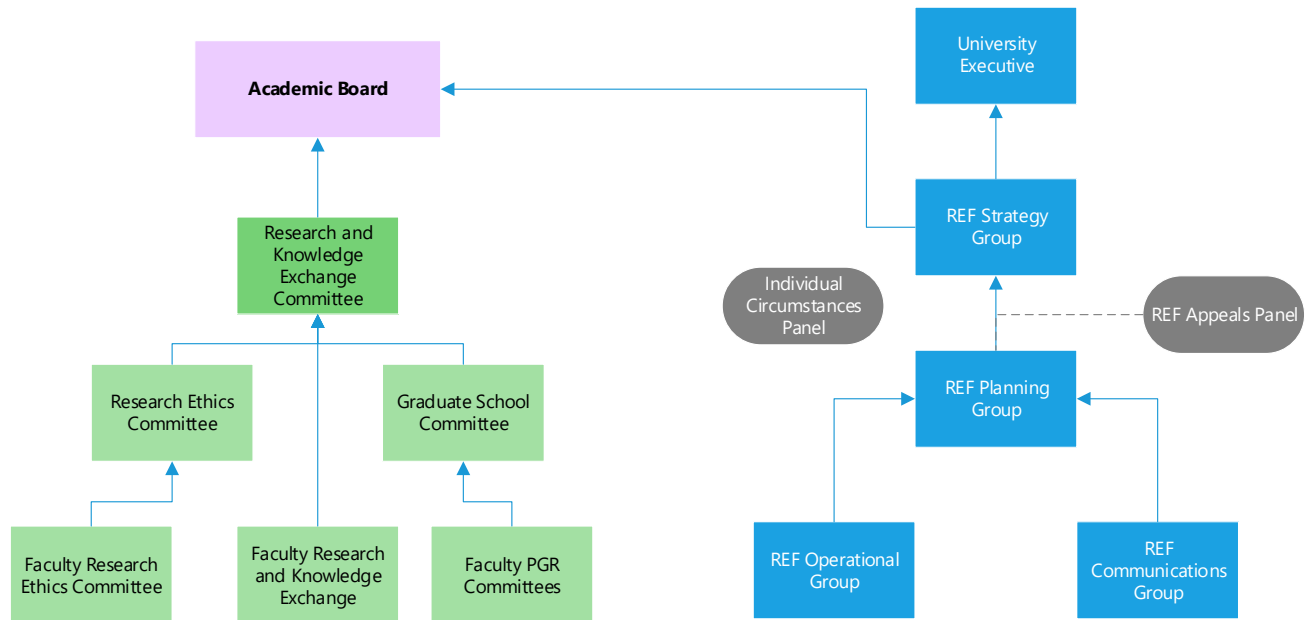


Figure 2.9 REF governance structure

2.9.1 REF Strategy Group

The REF Strategy Group reports to the University Executive. Its primary roles are to provide strategic guidance to the REF Planning Group as it prepares the University's REF submission; and to make final recommendations to University Executive on the nature of Northumbria's REF submission. The group will scrutinise the application of the processes used by each unit of assessment to ensure consistency of interpretation, and that the code of practice has been adhered to.

The Group provides guidance and recommendations on strategic elements of REF, including:

- Size of the REF submission
- Shape of the REF submission: mix and size of Units of Assessment
- Creation of the University's code of practice
- Communication and consultation with staff
- REF recruitment strategy

2.9.2 REF Planning Group

The REF Planning Group reports to REF Strategy Group. Its primary role is to prepare a successful REF submission for the University. In undertaking this, the Group considers and advises on policy implications in support of the strategy set by the REF Strategy Group.

2.9.3 REF Operational Group

The REF Operational Group reports to REF Planning Group (REFPG). Its primary role is to manage the operational aspects of delivering a successful REF submission for the University. In undertaking this, the Group will consider and advise REFPG on the operational implications of strategic decisions.

2.9.4 REF Communications Group

The REF Communications Group reports to REF Planning Group. Its role is to plan and manage internal and external communications on Northumbria's REF strategy, preparations, submission and outcomes.

2.10 Equality and diversity training

All staff at the University undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity training every two years. In addition, members of the REF Strategy Group, REF Planning Group, REF Operational Group, REF Appeals Panel and Directors of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will undertake Unconscious Bias training specifically for REF. The training will cover:

- Role of participants in embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in REF
- Legislation covering the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Equality of outcomes in previous exercises to assess research quality
- REF2021 overview including differences with REF2014 and codes of practice
- Individual staff circumstances
- Unconscious bias
- Defining and explaining in context of academia and scope for bias in REF2021

This training is being delivered by Advance HE³ and will take place on three days in May and June 2019. Further training will take place for any new or additional staff involved in REF preparations following these sessions.

2.11 Grounds for appeal

If, in any case, the processes laid out in this code of practice are not followed and there is a material effect on outcomes, individuals can appeal decisions taken by the REF Planning Group with regard to:

- Non-submission to REF2021 of Category A Eligible staff identified as having significant responsibility for research
- A judgement taken on significant responsibility in the absence of a 2019/20 workload and PDA
- Non-submission to REF2021 of independent researchers (staff on research-only contracts)
- Identification of independence in research-only staff

In line with Research England guidance, the REF process will not consider appeals regarding allocation of workloads or objectives set at PDA. These should be progressed and resolved via the established faculty, line management and HR routes at the appropriate time.

Academic judgements, for example staff allocation to a particular UoA, or decisions regarding selection of outputs, are not grounds for appeal. Staff identified as having significant responsibility for research (and independence for research-only staff) may not appeal *against* their inclusion in REF2021.

As outlined above (2.4.4), in exceptional cases where, because of long-term absence, an individual has neither a 2019/20 workload nor PDA, significant responsibility will be determined by the Faculty REF Lead in consultation

³ <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/>

with the individual's line manager and Head of Department based on the likely RSE workload allowance and/or PDA objectives that would have been in place had the member of staff not been absent. In these cases, staff will be able to appeal the decision on significant responsibility.

How do I appeal?

You can appeal to the REF Appeals Panel if you:

1. *Are on a Teaching & Research contract, have been identified as having significant responsibility for research but you are not being submitted to REF2021 (see [section 2.5](#))*
2. *Have no workload or PDA for 19/20 because of a long-term absence and a judgement has been made that you do not have significant responsibility for research (see [section 2.4.4](#))*
3. *Are on a Research-only contract, have been identified as being an independent researcher but you are not being submitted to REF2021 (see [section 3.1](#))*
4. *Are on a Research-only contract and believe the code of practice has not been applied correctly with regard to identifying your independence (see [section 3.1](#))*

If any of these circumstances apply to you, you should initially hold informal discussions with your Faculty REF Lead and your Head of Department or UoA lead (see flow chart below).

If these informal discussions fail to resolve your concerns, you should submit a formal appeal to the Assistant Director of Human Resources at: ref2021appeals@northumbria.ac.uk. Appeals should outline the reasons for the appeal and must be received by the Assistant Director of Human Resources by 20 October 2020.

The REF Appeals Panel will be convened and will consider all appeals by 23rd October 2020. All appeals shall be dealt with in an impartial and fair manner. All parties (i.e. appellants and representatives of the REF Planning Group) shall have the right to a fair hearing in person and have the opportunity to articulate their views fully. The Panel shall have the right to question the appellant and any representatives from the REF Planning Group. Appellants will have the right to be accompanied by their trade union representative or a work colleague.

Both the appellants and the REF Planning Group will be informed of the outcomes in writing by 29th October 2020.

2.12 Appeals process timetable

Census date on which staff must be in post at the submitting institution and meet the eligibility criteria to be returned as Category A submitted staff	31 July 2020
Email to all eligible staff stating significant responsibility and independence status	10 September 2020
Informal discussions with UoA leads and Faculty REF Lead	10 September 2020 onwards
If required, letters of appeal to the Assistant Director, Human Resources	By 20 October 2020
Appeal panel considers appeals	21 – 23 October 2020
Appellants and the REF Planning Group will be informed of the outcomes	By 29 October 2020
Deadline for REF submission	31 March 2021

This appeals process will allow members of staff to initially hold informal discussions as outlined above and then, if necessary, any subsequent appeals to be considered by the REF Appeals Panel before the final submission is made.

2.13 REF Appeals Panel

The appeals panel will be made up of senior staff not otherwise involved in decisions about identifying staff for REF2021. All panel members will receive the appropriate training, including Unconscious Bias. REF Strategy Group and REF Planning Group members shall be ineligible for membership of the Appeals Panel.

- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Employability and Partnerships) - Chair
- Deputy Director, Human Resources
- Senior Academic, not otherwise involved in REF management

2.14 Complaints

To ensure that institutions' approved codes of practice are implemented fairly and consistently, the funding bodies will put in place measures to enable individuals to make a formal complaint, where it is believed that the agreed processes have not been followed. Individual complaints will not be able to challenge the adequacy of an approved code of practice itself.

It is expected that complaints regarding the implementation of an HEI's code of practice will be resolved through the appeals process inherent within the code. There may be instances where complaints regarding the implementation of an HEI's code of practice cannot be satisfactorily resolved through an HEI's appeals process. For such circumstances, the UK funding bodies will offer a robust and independent process that will duly consider such complaints and appropriate action.

Complaints may be made by individuals directly affected by the (non-)implementation of an HEI's code of practice or by those outside the process who have reason to believe that an institution has breached its approved code of practice. The funding bodies aim to develop a process that enables individuals to provide information confidentially. Further details of this process will be set out by the funding bodies in autumn 2019.

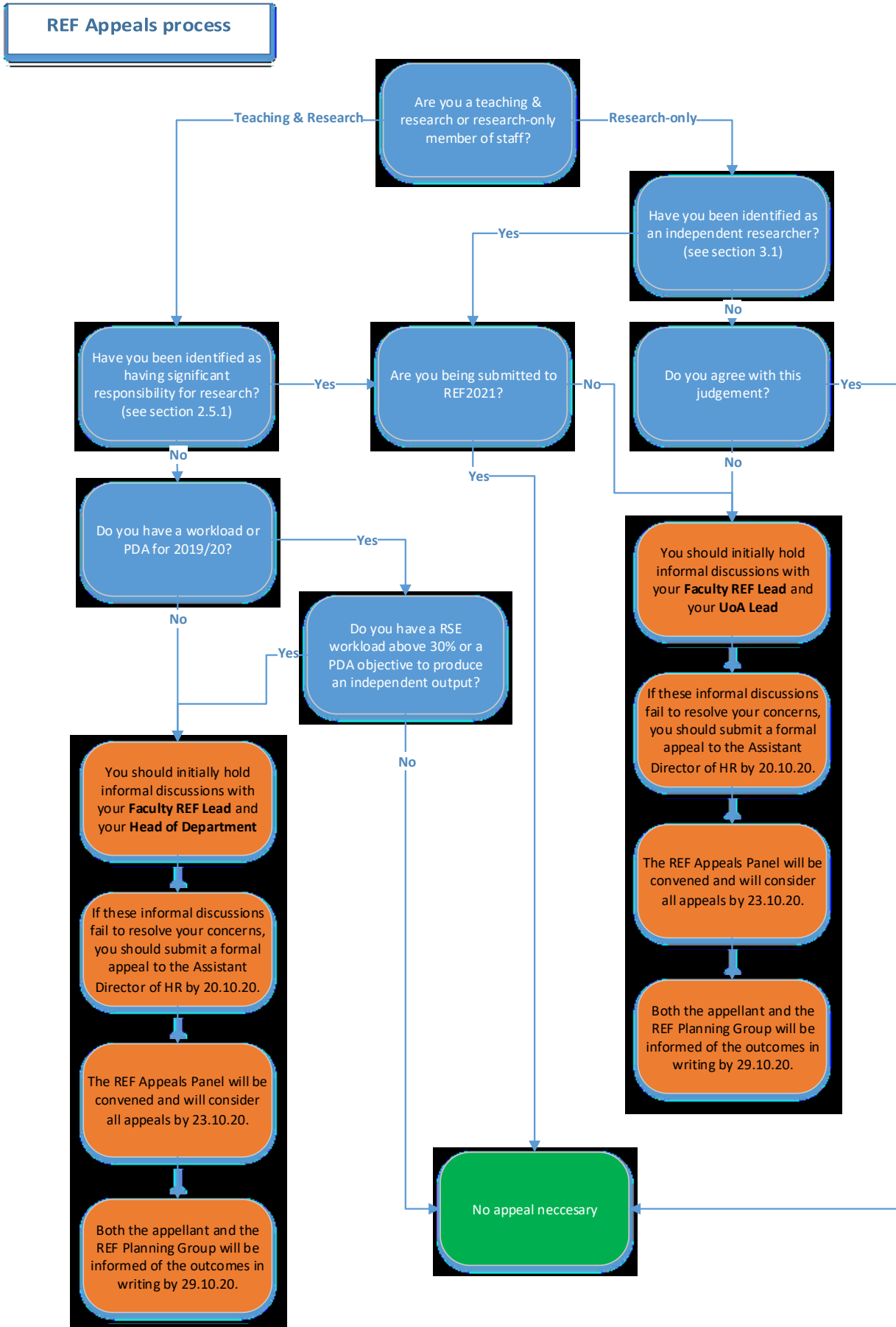


Figure 2.14 – Appeals process

3. Determining research independence

3.1 Research Independence – staff on research-only contracts

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

The REF Guidance provides three indicators of independence considered appropriate by all four main panels⁴:

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

Main panels C and D provide an additional two indicators:

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

Staff on research-only contracts at Northumbria University are identified as research assistants for the purposes of REF2021 — and hence are not independent — unless they meet the following criteria.

For units of assessment in Panels A and B, research-only staff will be deemed independent if they fulfil any of the indicators 1, 2, or 3. For units of assessment in Panels C and D, research-only staff will be deemed independent if they fulfil any of the indicators 1, 2, or 3, or both of the indicators 4 and 5.

In 2020, UoA leads will make recommendations in the context of their disciplines to REF Planning Group on which staff on research-only contracts meet the criteria for independence and are therefore Category A Eligible, and have significant responsibility for research. The REF Planning Group will make final decisions on independence using the standard criteria outlined above. To help inform this discussion an equality impact analysis (EIA) will be carried out on the outcomes and any differential impact on groups with protected characteristics examined to mitigate the risk of inadvertent discrimination in our processes, and how greater inclusion can be achieved in the future.

Following the census date of 31st July 2020, all research-only staff employed on that date will be informed via email whether they meet the definition of an independent researcher.

At this point, Northumbria will commit to submit to REF2021 all those eligible staff on research-only contracts identified as being independent researchers.

Where staff are considered not to be independent researchers, the email will include the reasons behind the decision in accordance with the established criteria, and of Northumbria's appeals process. The appeals process will allow members of staff to appeal after they have received this feedback, and for that appeal to be considered by the REF Appeals Panel before the final submission is made (see [section 2.12](#)).

All research-only staff across all grades will be considered on an individual case by case basis against the criteria set out above. We have not suggested that different approaches be taken for different disciplines, as we believe that our code is sufficiently flexible to account for differences in practice across disciplines.

⁴ The REF has four main panels, A-D. A full list of these main panels and Units of Assessment is included at [Annexe 3](#)

The REF Planning Group will consider the independence of staff on research-only contracts in July 2019 to inform the 19/20 HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) return. This exercise will be repeated in July 2020, prior to the census date, to determine independence for all research-only staff employed on the 31st July 2020.

All staff on research-only contracts employed on 31st July 2020 will be advised via email by the REF Planning Group following the census date whether they meet the definition of an independent researcher and therefore whether or not they will be submitted to REF2021.

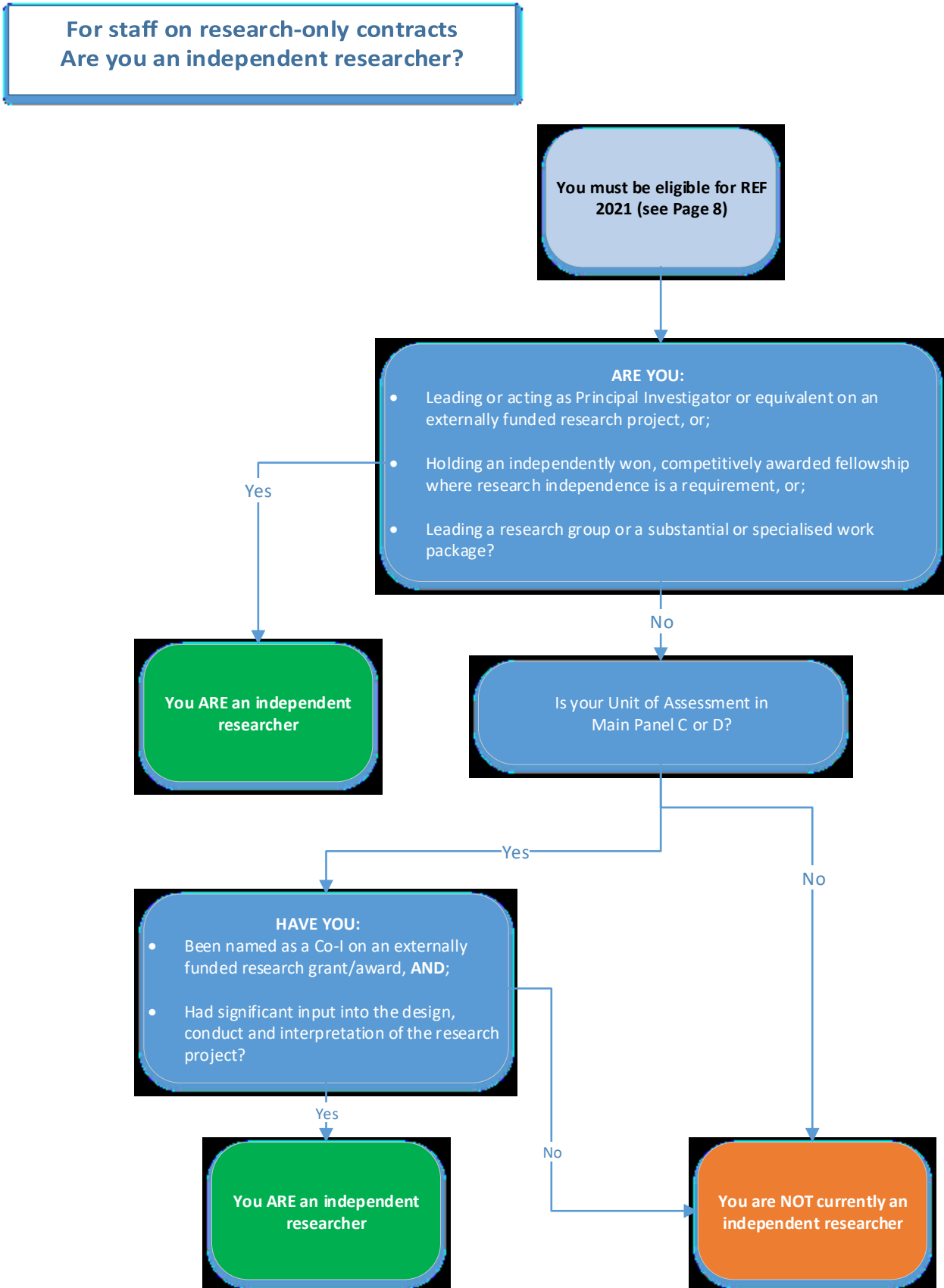


Figure 3.1: Research independence for staff on research-only contracts

For further details, see REF [Panel criteria](#) (paragraphs 187 to 189)

4. Selection of outputs

4.1 Selecting outputs for submission

Northumbria will seek to maximise the quality of the outputs profile in each unit of assessment (UoA). The following procedures have been developed to ensure the fair and transparent selection of the strongest outputs available within each unit. The review process predates development of the code of practice and will be repeated during several review periods prior to the final submission, enabling newly published outputs to be reviewed and selected fairly against older outputs.

The REF Planning Group is responsible for putting in place a transparent and rigorous peer review process in order to assess the quality of eligible outputs, and then to select outputs for submission.

4.2 Selection of outputs for review

Given differing publishing volumes between disciplines it will not always be possible to peer review every eligible output. In each unit, staff will initially be invited to nominate what they consider to be their strongest outputs for internal review. Unit of assessment leads may also select additional eligible outputs for review to ensure that all potentially strong publications have been identified and considered. This will include the outputs of former staff.

4.3 Reviewing process

Each nominated output will be reviewed by a minimum of two academic staff with appropriate subject expertise. Unit of assessment leads will be responsible for ensuring that there are no conflicts of interest.

As a formative exercise to understand the REF2021 criteria of originality, significance and rigour in the context of their discipline, authors will be encouraged to review and rate their own outputs. However, these self-assessments will not be taken into consideration when the agreed mean score is determined. Before making a recommendation, UoA leads will be able to consult with authors, subject experts, Heads of Departments, Faculty PVCs, PVC REF, Faculty REF Leads, colleagues in RIS, or may request a further assessment, as appropriate.

Where outputs require a supporting statement, these statements will also be taken into account in determining a rating. Outputs may be re-reviewed prior to submission and the evolution of any supporting statements, or of the output itself (for example portfolios), will factored in to any such reviews.

4.4 External calibration

At various points prior to submission, a selection of internally reviewed outputs will be subject to external peer review. Subject experts, nominated by unit of assessment leads, will be invited to review a sample of outputs from the unit, selected by the unit of assessment lead. The results of these external reviews will be used to calibrate the internal reviews and to inform future internal reviews.

4.5 Output eligibility and author contribution

Outputs will be reviewed only where the output meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the Guidance on Submissions (paragraphs 202 – 222), and the staff member satisfies the author contribution criteria as outlined in the Panel criteria and working methods, (paragraphs 216-236). When these criteria are met, outputs will be

assessed based on the quality of the research content alone and not the contribution of the author. Where the same output has been nominated by more than one individual in the same unit it will be given the same score.

Where two or more outputs in a unit include significant material in common (for example, a journal article that also appears as a chapter in a book) the reviewing process will determine whether they contain sufficiently distinct material for more than one output to be submitted.

Output eligibility in REF 2021

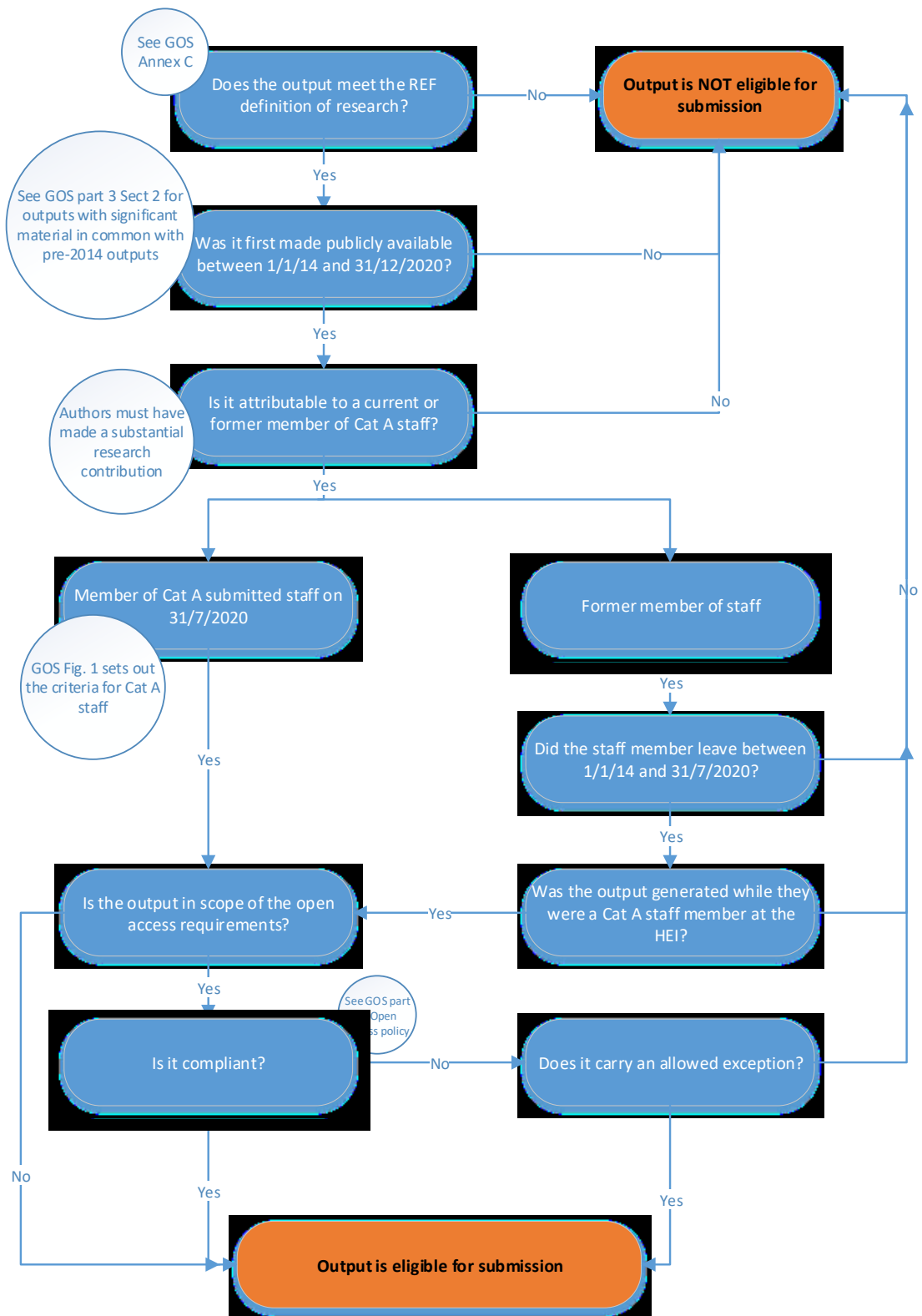


Figure 4.5 – Output eligibility in REF2021

For further details, see REF [Guidance on Submissions](#) (paragraphs 205 – 222)

4.6 Scoring scale

Outputs will be scored internally and externally using a 13-point scale:

U	2*-	3*	4*+
1*-	2*	3*+	
1*	2*+	4*-	
1*+	3*-	4*	

There are a number of reasons for using the 13-point scale, which has a single grade for unclassified, but three grades for each of the star ratings:

- It has previously been used by REF panels when assessing outputs
- It allows a degree of discrimination when considering which outputs to include Pool A and Pool B⁵, and follows widely accepted principles that Northumbria University decides classifications through refined scoring scales.

4.7 Former staff

The outputs of former staff that were first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by Northumbria as a ‘Category A Eligible’ member of staff can be submitted to REF2021. This includes:

1. Staff who have left the employment of the institution on the census date.
2. Staff who remain employed at the institution, but no longer meet the core eligibility criteria.
3. Former staff who were on a period of unpaid leave of absence or secondment, no greater than two years.

We believe that it is in the positive interests of former staff that their outputs are considered for submission to REF2021 and we believe it is fair and appropriate that they should be considered, given the support and resources provided by Northumbria during their employment and the period when the output was generated. All eligible outputs of former staff will therefore be considered equally with the outputs of current staff members during the review process, although outputs of current staff will be prioritised for submission in cases where outputs are judged to be of equal quality. (See [section 4.9.2.](#))

4.8 Grading of outputs

Outputs will be graded by originality, significance and rigour and may be assessed by internal and/or external assessors. Where outputs are multidisciplinary they may be assessed by internal and/or external assessors from different disciplines. Outputs will be assessed using a 13-point scale (see 4.6). Where an output is assigned a range of grades, the UoA Lead will determine a recommended grade for each output that will take into account the raw assessments, the mean value of the assessments (excluding any assessment provided by the author(s)) and the quality of the feedback provided by the assessors. Where the range of scores for an output vary significantly, the UoA Lead will flag the recommended grade as having a higher margin of uncertainty.

⁵ See [section 4.9](#)

Before making a recommendation, the UoA Lead may consult with the author(s), subject experts, Heads of Departments, Faculty PVCs, PVC REF, Faculty REF Leads, colleagues in RIS, or may request a further assessment, as appropriate. Recommendations will be made by the UoA lead to the Faculty REF Leads who will be responsible for final decisions regarding the grading of outputs.

4.9 Selection of outputs for submission

In order to implement the rules around the number of outputs to be submitted, we will employ the concept of Pool A outputs and Pool B outputs. All outputs will be checked for REF2021 Open Access (OA) compliance and Northumbria will aspire to be as close to 100% OA compliance as is possible in its submission.

Within each unit, the outputs will be ranked by their agreed score. The unit of assessment lead will review the list and agree whether the ranking is fair and appropriate. They will then select the strongest outputs available and allocate them to eligible staff using the following methodology:

4.9.1 Pool A

Pool A outputs are the outputs that are required so that every submitted member of staff in a unit of assessment submits a minimum of one output and Pool A outputs will be selected in such a way that this component of the output pool delivers the highest possible Grade Point Average (GPA) for the UoA. Pool A outputs will usually be each individual's strongest output.

4.9.2 Pool B

Pool B outputs will be selected in such a way that the total output pool (Pool A plus Pool B) delivers the highest possible GPA for the UoA such that the total number of outputs submitted is 2.5 times the total FTE⁶ (including eligible outputs from staff no longer employed at Northumbria University). Pool B outputs will be ranked and selected in rank order to arrive at the number required for submission.

The identity of the staff member will not be taken into consideration, other than to ensure that maximum attribution of five outputs to an individual is not exceeded. Where an output can be attributed to more than one co-author within the unit, then it will normally be allocated to the individual who has the weaker next available output.

Where the cut-off for the required number of outputs falls in the middle of a quality band (2+* for example), the following criteria will be taken into account to select for submission those outputs within the quality band:

1. Equality and Diversity. To ensure that, as far as possible, the selected outputs are representative of the submitted staff pool in terms of protected characteristics, consideration will be taken of E&D data.
2. Factors affecting the output, including: Open Access compliance; the consistency of an output's scores in internal and/or external reviews; the likely 'fit' of the output within the UoA; any considerations around possible double weighting, commonality of material with another submitted output etc.
3. Factors affecting the unit of assessment, including: balance of research areas; the overall OA compliance profile of the UoA etc.
4. Outputs produced by current staff will be selected for submission over former staff' outputs.

⁶ Subject to rules around special circumstances and reductions in the number of outputs to be submitted

These criteria will only come into play where all else is equal and we are required to select outputs from a group of outputs reviewed as indistinguishable in terms of quality. In these cases, a panel comprised of the UoA lead and REF Planning Group members will apply the criteria.

The REF Planning Group will scrutinise the process used by each unit of assessment in reviewing the outputs, selecting and allocating them to staff members. Only where Planning Group is satisfied that this code of practice has been adhered to, that the process has been rigorous, fair and transparent, and that the outcome is the strongest selection of outputs without bias to any individuals, will its approval will be given. The REF Planning Group will in turn report to the REF Strategy Group, who will provide oversight of processes.

After each stage of review and selection, all eligible staff will be notified of the moderated score for their reviewed outputs (regardless of whether they are eventually selected for submission or allocated to them). Unit of assessment leads are responsible for communicating feedback to staff, and will do so within a reasonable timescale. Where outputs are re-reviewed prior to submission, unit of assessment leads will communicate any changes to the original score to staff.

4.10 Staff circumstances

REF2021 has, to an extent, decoupled staff and outputs, allowing staff to be submitted with any number of outputs between a minimum of one and a maximum of five. In theory, this gives units of assessment the flexibility to manage their submissions, ensuring that the total number of outputs returned is equal to 2.5 times the total FTE of Category A submitted staff, without any expectation that all staff will be returned with the same number of outputs. However, to support equality and diversity in research careers and the REF, the 2021 guidelines recognise the effect that an individual's circumstances during the REF period may have on their productivity. This approach to staff circumstances is intended to:

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

4.11 Applicable circumstances

Northumbria and REF2021 recognise that the following circumstances, in isolation or together, may have significantly constrained the ability of staff to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. These fall into two categories: 1) defined tariff circumstances and 2) circumstances requiring a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs.

- 1) Circumstances with defined tariff reductions (see annexe 6):
 - a. Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
 - b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
 - c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave
 - d. Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2021

- 2) Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs:
 - e. Disability (including chronic conditions)
 - f. Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
 - g. Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
 - h. Caring responsibilities
 - i. Gender transitioning

As part of Northumbria's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in all our activities, we have put in place supportive and confidential structures to enable staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period; particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances.

These structures and the processes outlined below will:

- Enable staff with significant responsibility for research who have not been able to produce any REF-eligible outputs during the assessment period to be entered into REF if 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;
 - circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances;
 - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- 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 and production of research outputs (where permission has been given by the individual to use the declared circumstances in this way).
- Establish whether there are any units of assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the REF2021 for a reduction in the number of outputs required to be submitted.

In order to ensure the appropriate level of confidentiality and consistency across units of assessment, the processes related to the declaration of circumstances will be managed centrally by Human Resources.

The University provides mandatory training on Equality and Diversity and Unconscious Bias training. All staff involved in the decision-making process of REF will also be required to undertake Unconscious Bias training specific to REF provided by Advance HE.

The disclosure of individual circumstances will be centrally managed by Human Resources and membership of the Individual Circumstances Panel is included at [section 4.13](#). All HR and Organisational Development Managers are CIPD qualified (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) and have undertaken specific training in relation to discrimination. The OD Manager with specific responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be a member of the Individual Circumstances Panel. The individual concerned has undertaken recent specific training in:

- Disability Discrimination
- Mental Health Awareness training
- Gender Equality training
- Intersectionality
- GDPR awareness
- LGBTQ* Inclusion
- Race Equality
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and the Research Excellence Framework 2021: A workshop for practitioners

4.12 Declaration of individual staff circumstances

Individual circumstances and their effect on the individual's productivity over the assessment period must be voluntarily declared. Staff with circumstances are not obliged to declare them and should not feel under any pressure to do so. The University will however be proactive in inviting eligible staff to declare relevant circumstances.

Individual circumstances other than those that staff have declared voluntarily will not be taken into account in Northumbria's REF submission process. Voluntary declaration will be used consistently for all types of circumstances to ensure that every individual has the same opportunity to make the decision whether or not to declare their circumstances and have them taken into account by their institution. The University will not consult HR records, sickness data, contract start dates, etc. to instigate the establishment of individual circumstances but will proactively invite eligible staff to do so. Staff are encouraged to discuss their circumstances with their line manager and/or unit of assessment lead, in advance of declaring them formally, if they wish.

From September 2019 staff will be provided with clear information about applicable circumstances, how the declaration process will operate and will be invited to declare relevant circumstances. To enable staff to voluntarily and confidentially declare individual circumstances, a form ([annexe 2](#)) will be made available at [Northumbria's REF Intranet Pages](#). All staff will be emailed a link to the form and a description of the processes involved. Staff on long term absence - maternity leave, sabbaticals, career breaks etc – will also be sent a letter to their home address. An ongoing communications plan for the duration of the circumstances window will include: email reminders to all REF-eligible staff; dedicated intranet pages; open sessions for all eligible staff, ticker and screen savers.

Staff will be invited to confidentially declare relevant circumstances by completing the form and sending it to a dedicated, secure email account. This will only be able to be accessed by the Individual Circumstances Panel.

Circumstances that are clearly defined and do not require a judgement will be processed by the Head of REF Preparations upon receipt. These include qualifying as an ECR, absence due to secondments or career breaks outside of the HE sector and qualifying periods of family-related leave, and can be validated by reference to relevant HR records. For circumstances that require a judgement to be made, including those with an equivalent effect to absence, a panel will be convened to determine appropriate reductions.

In both cases, the appropriate unit reduction will be determined using the tariffs in the Guidance on Submissions and reproduced here in [annexe 6](#).

What does this mean for me?

If you have had circumstances since January 2014 that you feel have impacted negatively on your ability to carry out research and produce outputs, you are invited to confidentially declare these circumstances.

The information you provide will be seen only by a small panel of senior staff from Human Resources, Research and Innovation Services and an academic member of the University's Equality and Diversity Committee. Using tariffs provided by REF2021, the panel will decide what reduction in the number of outputs required by the unit would be appropriate for your circumstances.

This potential reduction (but not your declared circumstances) will be communicated to your unit of assessment lead. If a significant number of colleagues in your unit of assessment declare circumstances eligible for a reduction in outputs, then the unit of assessment might decide to request a reduction in the total number of outputs it is required to submit to REF2021. Such a request would be submitted to and subsequently considered by the REF2021 Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP).

Regardless of whether the unit decides to request this overall reduction in submitted outputs, the available reductions associated with your personal circumstances will be noted and, if appropriate, the unit's expectations about your contribution to the output pool will be adjusted accordingly.

You also have the option to give your permission for the information on the template to be passed to your line manager, to enable them to adjust expectations more generally and put in place appropriate support for you.

4.13 Individual Circumstances Panel

The Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP) will be made up of senior staff from HR and RIS and a senior academic member of staff from the University's Equality and Diversity Committee, who will be otherwise uninvolved in REF management:

- Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion), Human Resources
- Head of REF Preparations, Research and Innovation Services
- Senior Academic, not otherwise involved in REF management, E&D Committee

The ICP will agree appropriate reductions for circumstances that require a judgement to be made, including those with an equivalent effect to absence. However, the panel will also receive reports on clearly defined cases, to ensure that criteria are being applied appropriately and consistently.

All individuals involved in the ICP will be required to have attended the University's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training due to the sensitivity of the data that they will be required to review. Advice will be available from the University's Occupational Health team who have specialist knowledge relating to impact of disability. The Panel will also have access to advice from the Deputy Director of HR.

The ICP will not assess or question the validity of the declared circumstances but will need to be satisfied that verifiable evidence for the circumstances could be produced in the event of a post-submission audit. Cases for consideration will be anonymised by the Organisational Development Manager as far as practical. The panel will review the declarations and determine appropriate and consistent reductions in outputs. The ICP will meet at three points, in October and December 2019, and February 2020.

It is Northumbria's view that the individual staff member is best placed to consider whether equality-related circumstances have affected them over the REF assessment period. While the information provided must be based on verifiable evidence, the University and the REF will typically accept individuals' self-descriptions of their circumstances.

Northumbria will ensure that the personal data contained in requests is managed in compliance with GDPR (EU) 2016/679 and the Data Protection Act 2018 – and all other legal obligations.

4.14 Removing the 'minimum of one output' requirement

All Category A submitted staff must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the submission, including staff with individual circumstances. However, where an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020), so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output, a request may be made for the minimum of one requirement to be removed.

Where any such request is accepted by the REF team, an individual may be returned with no outputs attributed to them in the submission, and the total outputs required by the unit of assessment will be reduced by one.

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

- a. an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to one of more of the circumstances set out in the Guidance on Submissions (paragraphs 160 to 163) (such as an ECR who has only been employed as an eligible staff member for part of the assessment period) or
- b. circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research, where circumstances set out in the Guidance on Submissions paragraph 160 apply (such as mental health issues, caring responsibility, long-term health conditions) or
- c. two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave, as defined in Annexe 6.

What does this mean for me?

If any of these circumstances apply to you, and you haven't been able to produce any REF-eligible outputs during the assessment period, providing you declare your circumstances, your unit of assessment will make a request to submit you to the REF without any outputs. This request will require a brief statement describing how the circumstances have affected you.

For each member of staff for whom a request to remove the minimum of one requirement is being made, Northumbria must provide: information to enable the REF team to identify the staff member within the submission; details about which circumstances apply; a brief statement (max. 200 words) describing how the circumstances have affected the staff member's ability to produce an eligible output in the period. The information provided in the request must be based on verifiable evidence, which may be audited in 2021, following the REF submission deadline.

It is intended that this description of the individual circumstances will be drawn from the information declared via the template. Only where there is insufficient information in the declaration template to enable this outline to be produced will the HR Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) contact the individual

for further details. In such cases, only the minimum information required to produce the short summary for the REF2021 team will be sought from the individual.

Northumbria's view is that individual staff members are best placed to consider whether exceptional equality-related circumstances have affected their productivity over the REF assessment period. Where staff have been unable to produce an eligible output during the assessment period and have declared any of the exceptional circumstances listed above, Northumbria will submit all such individual requests to REF2021 to remove the minimum of one output requirement.

A key aim of the measures included in REF2021 is to give recognition to the effect that individual circumstances may have on a researcher's ability to research productively and contribute to the unit's overall output pool. Northumbria will therefore adjust its expectations about staff contributions to the overall output pool where individual circumstances are declared. Careful consideration will be given to the nature and timing of support offered and any adjustments to expectations will be made in consultation with the individuals affected.

4.15 Request to reduce the number of outputs required by units of assessment

What will be the effect of reducing the number of outputs required to be submitted by a unit?

If a significant number of staff in a unit of assessment have encountered circumstances during the REF period that have prevented them from producing as many outputs as they otherwise might have done, then the unit of assessment has the option to make a request to REF2021 to submit fewer outputs (less than 2.5 per FTE). This reduction in outputs is calculated using the tariffs published as part of the REF Guidance. For instance, if ten people each had six months' maternity leave during the REF period, this would entitle the unit to request a reduction of ten outputs in the submission.

REF2021 will consider such requests but will only agree to them where the unit has been disproportionately affected by the cumulative individual circumstances.

In nearly all cases, these reductions, if granted, will lead to an improved overall rating for the unit's outputs. Outputs internally reviewed as lower in quality will not need to be submitted, improving the grade point average (GPA). The outputs produced by the individuals who have declared the circumstances leading to a reduction will not necessarily be those 'not submitted' as a result. All outputs will be assessed for quality (as outlined in [section 4.8](#)) and the selection of outputs to be submitted will be made purely on this basis.

In October and December 2019, and February 2020, the Head of REF Preparations will calculate the total number of reductions available to each unit of assessment, and will inform the UoA lead of this total. In all cases, the Head of REF Preparations will inform the relevant Faculty HR Manager that a self-disclosure of equality-related circumstances has been made and reviewed.

The HR Manager will be provided with the nature of the circumstances, but the UoA leads will only be provided with the names of the individuals who have declared circumstances (to enable adjustments to the expectations about staff contributions to the overall output pool), the total approved unit reduction, and whether any request to remove the 'minimum of one' requirement has been approved.

Unit of assessment leads will then consider the cumulative effect of declared staff circumstances on the unit's overall output pool and whether a request should be made for a reduction to the total number of outputs required

for the submission. Such requests will be made where the available output pool for the unit has been disproportionately affected by equality-related circumstances – including Early Career Researchers.

For each unit reduction request that includes circumstances requiring a judgement (points e. to i. page 30), Northumbria will need to provide information to enable the REF2021 team to identify the staff member within the submission, a brief outline (max. 200 words) of the nature of the circumstances and how Northumbria determined an appropriate reduction. It is intended that this outline of the individual circumstances will be drawn from the information declared via the template. Only where there is insufficient information in the declaration template to enable this outline to be produced will Human Resources contact the individual for further details. In such cases, only the minimum information required to produce the outline for the REF2021 team will be sought from the individual.

All unit reduction requests will be considered by REF2021’s Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) on a consistent basis across all institutions and UoAs. EDAP will also make recommendations on accepting requests for the removal of the minimum of one. Where required, EDAP may request further information from HEIs to confirm the correct application of tariffs. EDAP will provide a written explanation where a request is not accepted in full, or in part.

Information submitted in requests to REF2021 will not be published and will be destroyed on completion of the REF in April 2022.

Circumstances Timeline	
Spring 2019	All staff involved in REF Management receive specialist REF2021 EDI and Unconscious Bias training
Summer 2019	Northumbria Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP) convened
Summer 2019	Northumbria communicates its processes for staff to declare individual circumstances and opens its window for declarations
Autumn 2019	REF opens submission system for requests for reductions in the number of outputs required by a unit
Jan-Feb 2020	Northumbria ICP receives and considers the reductions that would apply to each individual circumstance declaration received
Feb-March 2020	UoAs consider the cumulative effect of individual circumstances and decide whether to request a reduction in the total number of outputs required
March 2020	REF deadline for requests for reductions in the number of outputs required by a unit
March-July 2021	Consideration of requests for reductions by REF
By September 2020	Outcome of original requests announced by REF
March 2020-March 2021	Additional requests for reductions for new staff who have joined after the original deadline – but on or before the census data – can be submitted
October 2020	HESA return, including ECR and SigRes status for all Category A Eligible staff
2021	Consideration of requests for additional reductions by REF and outcomes communicated

5. Appendices

Annexe 1 - Equality and Diversity Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

General Statement

1. Northumbria University is committed to providing an environment in which diversity is valued and encouraged, where there is equal access to opportunities and services and in which all prospective and existing staff and students are treated fairly, with equity, dignity and mutual respect.
2. We acknowledge the unique contribution that all individuals can make and it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that no one individual or group is treated less favourably in terms of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment,
3. marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other inappropriate or irrelevant criteria or distinction.
4. It is in relation to these protected characteristics that University commits to 'have due regard to the need to':
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
 - Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is low.
 - Foster good relations between people from different groups.
5. This commitment will be embedded into our day to day activities and functions.
6. It is through the implementation of the Equality and Diversity policy that the University will meet and exceed the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Responsibility

7. Northumbria University aims to promote equality and diversity in relation to its role as:
 - An employer;
 - A provider of education;
 - A provider of services;
 - A procurer and commissioner of services.
8. This policy applies to all staff, students and visitors to the University, together with those contracted to work for or at the University. This includes secondees, those with honorary contracts or visitor status. Responsibility for implementation of the policy is as follows:
 - The Vice-Chancellor in conjunction with the Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy, with named staff having specific responsibilities;
 - The Equality and Diversity Committee, the Equality and Diversity Action Group and the Equality and Diversity Sub-group of the Joint Negotiating Committee support the effective implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy;
 - Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors, Directors and Committee Chairs are responsible for ensuring that their respective Faculties, Services and Committees are both aware of and support the Equality and Diversity Policy;

- All staff, students, and visitors have a collective responsibility to promote equality and diversity and to behave in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy;
- All external partners, placement providers, third party suppliers, contractors, individuals, groups, organisations and others who interact with the University are aware of and respect the University's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Implementation

The University undertakes to:

- Ensure equality of access for all potential staff and students, including the employment of staff, consultants and contractors, the admission of students, the provision of educational and training opportunities, and the provision of services to individuals and organisations;
 - Promote the spirit of equal opportunity and to ensure that members of the University community act respectfully towards each individual and group;
 - Comply with the terms of all equality legislation;
 - Ensure that effective systems for the monitoring and evaluation of equality diversity are in place;
 - Make changes in any area of University practice where there is evidence of failure to provide an appropriate and professional service;
 - Work proactively towards eliminating discrimination, harassment and bullying on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other inappropriate or irrelevant criteria or distinction;
 - Promote harmonious and productive relations between different groups and value diversity in our staff and student body, by ensuring that harassment and discrimination are not tolerated under any circumstances.
9. Effective implementation will be achieved through the implementation of the University Equality and Diversity Plan and Single Equality Scheme, which in turn, will be supported by Faculty and Service Action Plans.

Breaches of the Policy

10. Breaches of this Policy by staff, students, partners, contractors or any other visitors to the University will be investigated and appropriate action taken.
11. Members of staff who wish to raise a concern or believe they have experienced any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate policy or procedure, for example the Grievance Procedure, available from the Human Resources Department or from [Human Resources Policies and Procedures](#).
12. Students who believe they have experienced any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the Student Complaints Procedure. A copy of this procedure is available in the [Handbook of Student Regulations](#).
13. Any member of the public, partner, contractor or visitor wishing to raise a concern in relation this Policy should direct this to the [Chief Legal Officer](#).

Monitoring of the Policy

14. The Board of Governors will receive an annual Equality and Diversity Report which will detail progress in relation to equality and diversity and the implementation of this Policy.

Publication and Communication

- 15.** The Equality and Diversity Policy will be published on the University's equality and diversity webpage and disseminated throughout the organisation and to internal and external partners and stakeholders.
- 16.** Comments or questions about the Equality and Diversity Policy should be sent to equality@northumbria.ac.uk.

University Links and Supporting Documents

- 17.** This policy should be read in association with the following supporting University Policies:
 - [Corporate Strategy](#)
 - [Equality and Diversity Website](#)
 - [University Admissions Policy](#)
 - [Human Resources Policies and Procedures](#)

University Contacts

- 18.** General Enquiries (switchboard) - 0191 232 6002
Student Support and Wellbeing - 0191 227 4127
Disabilities Support Team - 0191 227 3849
Human Resources - 0191 227 3278
Legal Services Team - 0191 227 4010
Students Union - 0191 227 4810
Trade Union Office - 0191 227 4105
- 19.** Copies of this Policy are available in alternative formats. In the first instance please contact Human Resources for details. Tel: +44 (0) 191 227 3278. Email: equality@northumbria.ac.uk.

This document was updated on **01st July 2017** and will be reviewed by **01st July 2019**.

Annexe 2 - Individual Circumstances Declaration Form

This document is being sent to all Category A Eligible staff, eligible for submission to REF2021.

As part of the Northumbria's commitment to supporting equality, diversity and inclusivity in the REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

- To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be entered into REF where they have;
 - circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
 - circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
 - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual's ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs.
- To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted in that Unit.

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (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
- 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 transitioning

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of these circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form.

Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so.

This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide associated information. Of course you are able to discuss your circumstances with your line manager and/or unit of assessment lead, in advance of declaring them formally, if you wish

Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the [Guidance on Submissions \(REF 2019/01\)](#).

Ensuring Confidentiality

Staff will be invited to confidentially declare relevant circumstances by completing this form and sending it to a dedicated, secure email account ref2021circumstances@northumbria.ac.uk. This will only be able to be accessed by the Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP). The Panel will be made up of senior staff from HR and RIS and a senior academic member of staff from the University's Equality and Diversity Committee, who will be otherwise uninvolved in REF management:

- Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion), Human Resources
- Head of REF Preparations, Research and Innovation Services
- Senior Academic, not otherwise involved in REF management, E&D Committee

The Individual Circumstances panel will agree appropriate reductions for circumstances that require a judgement to be made, including those with an equivalent effect to absence. However, the panel will also receive reports on clearly defined cases, to ensure that criteria are being applied appropriately and consistently.

If the institution decides to apply to REF2021 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.

Data submitted by Northumbria 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.

Circumstances Timetable

Summer 2019	Northumbria communicates its processes for staff to declare individual circumstances and opens its window for declarations
31st January 2020	Deadline for Northumbria staff declaration of circumstances
February 2020	Northumbria ICP receives and considers the reductions that apply to each individual circumstance declaration received
March 2020	UoAs consider the cumulative effect of individual circumstances and decide whether to request a reduction in the total number of outputs required
By 31 st March 2020	Deadline for Northumbria to submit requests for reduction in the number of outputs required by a unit
September 2020	Outcome of initial requests announced by REF2021
March-Nov 2020	Additional requests for reductions for new staff who have joined after 31 st January (the original deadline) but on or before 31 st July, can be submitted
2021	Consideration of requests for additional reductions by REF and outcomes communicated



Changes in circumstances

The University recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should submit a further form to provide updated information.

Once completed this form should be emailed to: ref2021circumstances@northumbria.ac.uk
Before 12 noon on 31st January 2020

Name: Click here to insert text.

Department: Click here to insert text.

Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2021?

Yes

No

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

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p>	Click here to enter a date.
<p>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</p> <p><i>Dates and durations in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter dates and durations.
<p>Family-related leave;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statutory maternity leave • statutory adoption leave • Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more. <p><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter dates and durations.
<p>Disability (including chronic conditions)</p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.
<p>Mental health condition</p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter text.



Ill health or injury <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>	Click here to enter text.
Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance <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>	Click here to enter text.
Caring responsibilities <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>	Click here to enter text.
Gender transitioning <i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	Click here to enter text.
Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement. <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>	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 Individual Circumstances Panel
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF2021 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

The information submitted above will be used only for REF2021.



However, you also have the option to give your permission for the information to be passed to Human Resources and/or your line manager, to enable them to adjust expectations more generally and put in place appropriate support for you.

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

I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to my Head of Department. (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

Once completed this form should be emailed to: ref2021circumstances@northumbria.ac.uk
Before 12 noon on 31st January 2020

Annexe 3 - List of Main Panels and Units of Assessment

Main Panel	UoA	Unit of Assessment
A	1	Clinical Medicine
	2	Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
	3	Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
	4	Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
	5	Biological Sciences
	6	Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Sciences
B	7	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
	8	Chemistry
	9	Physics
	10	Mathematical Sciences
	11	Computer Science and Informatics
	12	Engineering
C	13	Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
	14	Geography and Environmental Studies
	15	Archaeology
	16	Economics and Econometrics
	17	Business and Management Studies
	18	Law
	19	Politics and International Studies
	20	Social Work and Social Policy
	21	Sociology
	22	Anthropology and Development Studies
	23	Education
	24	Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism
D	25	Area Studies
	26	Modern Languages and Linguistics
	27	English Language and Literature
	28	History
	29	Classics
	30	Philosophy
	31	Theology and Religious Studies
	32	Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
	33	Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies
	34	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

Annexe 4 - Terms of Reference of Northumbria's Equality and Diversity Committees

Annexe 4a - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Terms of Reference 2018/19

Purpose

The Equality and Diversity Committee is a Committee of the University Executive. Its primary role is to lead the development of equality and diversity related activities across the University ensuring excellence through inclusion for all students and staff. Specific responsibilities of the Committee are:

- To provide leadership on, and agree, the University's direction in relation to Equality and Diversity, consider the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications of the People Plan 2018-23.
- To approve the development of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles and measures for their implementation arising from the People Plan 2018-23 and related plans, and monitor their delivery and continued effectiveness.
- To ensure that the University is compliant with legislative requirements in relation to Equality and Diversity, whilst seeking to develop leading practice across aspects of equality and diversity.
- To oversee the development, and monitor performance against, the objectives and action plan set out in the Equality and Diversity Annual Report, for consideration and review by the University Executive and Employment and Finance Committee.
- To commission the development of, and review (and where appropriate approve) policies and procedures to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including specific policies and embedding of support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in existing arrangements, including planning and resourcing processes where appropriate.
- To oversee and monitor pay gap reporting across a number of categories, notably in relation to requirements for the Gender Pay Gap Reporting compiled on an annual basis and its implications for equality and diversity and approve its publication, following review by University Executive, Employment and Finance Committee and relevant aspects to Remuneration Committee.
- To oversee the work of the Committees and Groups of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee: Equality and Diversity Special Interest Group, the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team, the Campus Accessibility Group and the LGBTQ* Steering Group.
- To support and advise on any other activities or arrangements of institutional significance as they relate to Equality and Diversity and Inclusion which affects staff and students and other stakeholders engaged with the University.

Mode of Operation

The Committee will carry out its duties through:

- Consideration of regular reports and data in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion measures and SPIs, identifying positive and adverse trends and identify actions.
- Consideration of policy proposals and information relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Consideration of decisions and recommendations from its sub-committees:
- Equality and Diversity Special Interest Group, the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team, the Campus Accessibility Group and the LGBTQ* Steering Group.
- Ensuring appropriate consultation and communication with all relevant groups in the University on issues of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Constitution

- The Committee shall consist of sufficient representation from across staff and student-related committees as these pertain to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters, without seeking to be
- Membership of the Committee is reviewed annually and should be reported to University Committee.
- The quorum for the Committee is 50% of its members, plus one, thereby amounting to a simple majority. The Committee meets at least three times per year and may transact decisions, where considered acceptable by the Chair, by written resolution by a simple majority of members where it is not possible/or expedient to physically meet.
- Committee members' participation in meetings via teleconferencing and video-conferencing facilities will be deemed the equivalent to them being physically in attendance and count towards the quorum for the meeting, although physical attendance is strongly encouraged

Membership

- Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive (Chair)
- Susan Broadbent, Head of Student Support and Wellbeing
- Ryan Bush, Vice-President (Welfare), Northumbria Students' Union
- Dr Adam Dawkins, Head of Governance & Chair of the LGBTQ* Steering Group
- Professor Dianne Ford, Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, Health and Life Sciences (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Glen McHale, Pro Vice-Chancellor, E&E & Chair of the Athena SWAN SAT (until December 2018)
- Lorraine Masters, Deputy Director of HR (Organisational Development) & Chair of the Equality and Diversity Sub-Group
- Emrys Pritchard, Assistant Director (Health and Safety) Campus Services & Chair of the Campus Accessibility Group
- Lucy Winskell, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Employability and Partnerships) & Chair of the Athena SWAN SAT (from December 2018)
- Nick Woolley, Director of Student and Library Services
- Jay Wilson, Head of Legal Services
- Sharon Stewart, Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) (Secretary)
- Individuals holding the portfolio of Director of Equality, Diversity and Development

Annexe 4b - LGBTQ* Steering Group - Terms of Reference

Purpose

The LGBTQ* Steering Group is a body of the University's Equality and Diversity Committee of the University Executive. Its principal role is to provide a forum to consider and advise Equality and Diversity Committee on cultural and policy matters and their implementation to support the visibility and wellbeing of LGBTQ* staff at Northumbria, and the implications of these for students and other stakeholders. The specific roles of the Group are:

- To advise on, and through its membership, directly contribute to the University's status as a Stonewall Diversity Champion, advising on the development of supportive and progressive policies and procedures across all areas, including recruitment, retention, training, networking and development initiatives and activities for LGBTQ* staff and their allies.
- To benchmark Northumbria's performance against the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index measures as means of developing Northumbria's performance against the 10 areas of employment policy and practice, and recommend action and implement it with a view to making a future institutional submission to the Index.
- To develop University policy for recommendation to the Equality and Diversity Committee specific to LGBTQ* staff where this required, and advise on and impact assess wider University policy to ensure LGBTQ* considerations are factored into its development, approval and review.
- To identify resource and wider support needs to advance the LGBTQ* policy and practice.
- To provide an advisory and organising forum for LGBTQ* individual or programmes of activity at the University or involving staff outside the University, such as Northern Pride and Trans Remembrance Day, LGBT+ History Month.
- To provide a forum for any other LGBTQ* related matters brought to its attention, noting that the Group does not deal with specific staff cases which need to be addressed through existing HR or other policies and procedures, although there may be wider trends and lessons to learn from individual cases and experiences.

Reporting Relationships and Interactions with Other Bodies, Groups and Individuals

The Group reports to the Equality and Diversity Committee of University Executive, and seeks input and feedback from a number of groups and societies, including: i. the LGBTQ* Staff Forum ii. the SU LGBTQ* Society.

Constitution

The Group should normally meet a minimum of two times per year in order to transact its business, and should only meet where it is necessary to do so to consider, recommend and/or decide upon significant business

Membership

- Professor Chris Ashford, Business and Law
- Neil Bellamy, Credit Controller and UNISON LGBT Branch Representative
- Ryan Bush, Vice-President Welfare, Northumbria Students' Union
- Professor Jamie Callahan, Professor of Leadership and HR Development, Business and Law

- Dr Jacky Collins, Senior Lecturer, Arts, Design and Social Sciences
- Dr Adam Dawkins, Head of Governance (Chair)
- Dr Katy Jenkins, Associate Professor in International Development, Arts, Design and Social Sciences
- Rachel Jones, Faculty Registrar (Health and Life Sciences)
- Dr Guido Noto La Diega, Senior Lecturer, Business and Law – Chair of LGBTQ* Staff Network
- Dr Su McAnelly, Health and Life Sciences
- Dr Andy Mullen, Senior Lecturer, Arts, Design and Social Sciences
- Lazlo Pearlman, Arts, Design and Social Sciences
- Dr Roger Penlington, Associate Professor, Engineering and Environment
- Dr Antonio Portas, NU STEM Outreach Specialist, Engineering and Environment
- Sharon Stewart, Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) (Secretary)
- Daniel Thomson, PR and Media Manager, Marketing

Annexe 4c - Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team – Terms of Reference

Purpose

The primary role of the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team is to lead a successful application for the University's Athena SWAN award at the highest level possible. In undertaking this, the Team will consider sector strategy and initiatives that impact on the Athena SWAN agenda and work to promote the advancement of gender equality. Under the following headings, the specific responsibilities of the Committee are:

Strategy and Policy Development

- To lead successful applications for the University's Athena SWAN award at the highest level possible.
- To monitor national developments and strategies that impact on the position of women (and men where appropriate) in academic roles in STEM and AHSSBL, professional support staff and trans staff and students, and to advise on any strategic implications.
- To identify, share and promote good practice in relation to Athena SWAN.
- To ensure an effective route, through membership, for dissemination and discussion of all relevant areas of the Athena SWAN application.
- To provide guidance, as needed, to departmental SAT's to ensure that departmental Athena SWAN applications are completed to the required standard and within the agreed timescales.

Strategy and Policy Approval

- To discuss and recommend (as appropriate) university strategy and policy to support the Athena SWAN submission and action plan.

Monitoring and Review

- To develop the Athena SWAN action plan, and monitor progress against the actions identified in the original submission, for inclusion where relevant in the revised submission.
- To monitor, review and make recommendations to the Equality and Diversity Committee on the submission of departmental Athena SWAN applications.

Reporting Relationships/Interactions with other bodies

To report to the Equality and Diversity Committee on the progress of the University's and Departmental Athena SWAN applications. To inform appropriate sub-committees of relevant initiatives arising from the Action Plan, as appropriate.

Constitution

Quorum: 50% +1 members

Frequency of meetings: A minimum of 4 meetings per annum

Parent Body: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Committees reporting to the body: None

Membership

- Lucy Winskell, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Employability and Partnerships) (Chair)
- Professor Rebecca Strachan (Deputy Chair)
- Sharon Stewart, Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) (Secretary)
- Staff Representatives:
 - Faculty Directors of Equality, Diversity and Development
 - Professional Services representative
- Student Representatives:
 - Student Union Sabbatical Officer for Welfare
 - Gender Diversity Student Representative or Women Student Representative
- Professional Support members:
 - Deputy Director of Research and Innovation Services
 - Head of Governance Services
 - Graduate School Manager
 - PR & Media Manager
 - Data and Systems Manager

Annexe 4d - Accessibility Review Group – Terms of Reference

Purpose

To improve access to both the internal and external environments at Northumbria University and to develop existing procedures and policies to provide a safe and accessible working environment for disabled people at the University.

- To consider accessibility across the University Estate to ensure that, so far as practicable, University premises are accessible to all staff, students and visitors.
- To agree minimum physical standards to be implemented in buildings across the estate.
- To review the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan process to ensure that all staff and students have access to a personal plan and that visitors are aware of generic building emergency plans.
- To receive feedback from staff and student representatives with disabilities, taking action to resolve or provide services where appropriate.
- To act a stakeholder group for future projects and initiatives which impact on the University estate.
- Review the effectiveness of the services provided by Campus Services to drive continuous improvement and to ensure that services are realigned as necessary to meet the evolving needs of disabled staff, students and visitors.

Constitution

Statutory meetings: Monthly

Reports to: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Quorum: n/a

Membership

- Emrys Pritchard, Assistant Director (Health and Safety), Campus Services (Chair)
- Brian Cowan, Assistant Director (Facilities Services), Campus Services
- Andrew Mowbray, Head of Campus Planning & Development, Campus Services
- Heidi Robinson, Timetabling Manager, Campus Services
- Graham Park, Community Representative Co-ordinator, Students' Union
- Sharon Stewart, Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion), Human Resources
- Emma-Jane Phillips, Senior Lecturer, Engineering & Environment
- Karen Morrison, Student Support Manager (Disability), Academic Services
- Joe Evans, Customer Services Manager, IT Services
- Ryan Bush, Vice President Welfare, Students' Union
- Angela Lennard (Secretary)

Annexe 5 - Terms of Reference of Northumbria's REF Governance Groups

A5.1 REF Strategy Group

The REF Strategy Group reports to the University Executive. Its primary roles are to provide strategic guidance in the development of the REF2021 submission, oversight of the REF Planning Group as it prepares the University's REF submission and making final recommendations to University Executive on the nature of Northumbria's REF submission. REF Strategy Group is responsible for ensuring that all REF-eligible staff are considered for submission to REF2021.

The Group provides guidance and recommendations on strategic elements of REF and ensures compliance with University's REF Code of Practice, including:

1. Size of the REF submission: balance between research power and quality;
2. Shape of the REF submission: mix and size of Units of Assessment;
3. Communication and consultation with staff;
4. REF recruitment strategy;
5. Creation of the University's Code of Practice;
6. Compliance with specific obligations within the Code of Practice:
 - a. ensuring all REF-eligible staff are considered for submission to REF2021;
 - b. determining whether REF-eligible staff have significant responsibility for research;
 - c. considering Equality Impact Assessments related to REF processes;
 - d. processes for review and selection of outputs; and
 - e. ensuring all Units of Assessment interpret and apply the relevant processes consistently.

Constitution

Quorum:	50% +1 members
Frequency of meetings:	A minimum of 8 meetings per annum
Secretary:	Alona Welby, Executive Officer
Parent Body:	University Executive
Committees reporting to the body:	REF Planning Group

Membership

Vice-Chancellor	Professor Andrew Wathey (Chair)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Professor Peter Francis
Pro Vice-Chancellor (REF) & Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, Art, Design and Social Sciences	Professor Tom Lawson
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)	Professor George Marston
Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, Business and Law	Professor John Wilson
Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, Engineering and Environment	Professor John Woodward
Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, Health and Life Sciences	Professor Dianne Ford
Director of Human Resources	Jane Embley
Director Strategic Planning	Dan Monnery
Director, Research and Innovation Services	Jennifer Stergiou
University Librarian	Kathryn Smith

A5.2 REF Planning Group

The REF Planning Group is a sub-group of the REF Strategy Group. Its primary role is to prepare a successful REF submission for the University. In undertaking this, the Group will consider and advise on policy implications in support of the strategy set by the REF Strategy Group. Under the following headings, the specific responsibilities of the Group are:

Strategy and Policy Development

1. To deliver a REF submission in line with University strategy.
2. To be alert to national strategy and policy that may impact on the REF submission and to advise on any external influences.
3. To discuss and make recommendations (as appropriate) on University strategy and policy implications to support the REF submission.
4. To develop and approve the processes required for developing the submission for the next REF.
5. To determine the process for review and selection of outputs in line with the Code of Practice
6. To determine the process for review of environment statements and impact case studies, monitoring the process and analysing the outcomes.
7. To develop such documents that may be required for the REF submission (e.g. Code of Practice).
8. To make recommendations on the inclusion of UoAs, identification of staff and allocation to UoAs, and the relevant target thresholds for each UoA.
9. To ensure the infrastructure is in place to manage the submission and satisfy the requirements of the Guidance on Submissions and Audit Guidance.
10. To work to maximise the inclusion of all staff undertaking high quality research in relevant UoAs in line with the approved Code of Practice.
11. To provide validation and quality assurance to all areas of data being returned to the REF.

Monitoring and Review

1. To develop the REF submission plan, and monitor progress against the actions identified.
2. To review the documentation supporting impact and the environment.
3. To ensure appropriate Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are completed and reviewed.
4. To monitor the review of outputs, environment statements and Impact Case Studies.
5. To assess the submission in each Unit of Assessment.

Reporting Relationships/Interactions with other bodies

1. To report to REF Strategy Group and provide recommendations in accordance with Code of Practice.
2. To inform the other relevant sub-committees or departments of relevant actions or initiatives arising from the REF submission plan.

Specific Obligations Within the Code of Practice

1. Deciding which staff on research-only contracts meet the criteria for independence and ensuring they are notified of their status.
2. Recommending to REF strategy group whether each REF-eligible member of staff has significant responsibility for research based on consideration of workload and PDA objectives.

3. Ensuring a transparent and rigorous peer review process in order to assess the quality of eligible output and reporting of the moderated scores of outputs to staff.
4. The selection of outputs for the REF submission.
5. Ensuring the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) and making recommendations to REF Strategy group.

Constitution

Quorum:	50% +1 members
Frequency of meetings:	A minimum of 4 meetings per annum
Secretary:	Christine Downes
Parent Body:	REF Strategy Group
Committees reporting to the body:	REF Operational Group, REF Communications Group

Membership

Ex-Officio Members

Pro Vice-Chancellor (REF)	Professor Tom Lawson (Chair)
Faculty REF Leads	Professor Jane Entwistle, Faculty of Engineering and Environment Professor David Gleeson, Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences Professor Alan Reed, Faculty of Business and Law Professor Ian Sutcliffe, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
UoA Leads/Deputy Leads	
UoA3	Professor Iain Sutcliffe, Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy Dr Jill McKay (Deputy), Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy Professor Tim Rapley (Deputy), Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
UoA4	Professor Pam Briggs, Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience Dr Michael Smith (Deputy), Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
UoA11	Dr Hubert Shum, Computer Science and Informatics Dr Alan Godfrey (Deputy), Computer Science and Informatics
UoA12	Dr Guillaume Zoppi, Engineering Dr Mike Lim (Deputy), Engineering
UoA13	Dr Giovanni Pesce, Architecture, Built Environment & Planning Dr Ayse Torun (Deputy), Architecture, Built Environment & Planning
UoA14	Dr Nick Rutter, Geography and Environmental Studies Dr Kathryn Cassidy (Deputy), Geography and Environmental Studies
UoA17	Professor Jackie Harvey, Business and Management Studies Professor Ron Beadle (Deputy), Business and Management Studies
UoA18	Professor Chris Ashford, Law Professor Chris Newman (Deputy), Law
UoA20	Professor Stephen Taylor, Social Work and Social Policy Dr Toby Brandon (Deputy), Social Work and Social Policy
UoA24	Professor Glyn Howatson, Sport and Exercises, Leisure and Tourism
UoA27	Dr Katherine Baxter, English Language and Literature
UoA28	Professor Charlotte Alston, History Professor Matthew Kelly (Deputy), History

UoA32 Professor Ysanne Holt, Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
Dr Justin Marshall (Deputy), Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory

REF Panel Members Professor Brian Ward, Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences

Research & Innovation Services Jenni Stergiou, Director
Andrew Poole, Head of REF Preparations

In Attendance

Human Resources Jackie Rose, Human Resources Manager
University Library Kathryn Smith, University Librarian
Ellen Cole, Scholarly Communications Librarian
Research & Innovation Services Lucy Jowett, Research Impact Manager
Alisha Peart, Research Impact Manager
Vice Chancellors Office (Planning) Tony Barrass, Corporate Information Manager
Mark Harland, Senior Business Analyst (REF)

Additional or substitute members of the representative Services, and co-options from other Services will be agreed as business requires.

A5.3 REF Operational Group

The REF Operational Group is a sub-group of the REF Planning Group (REF PG). Its primary role is to manage the operational aspects of delivering a successful REF submission for the University. In undertaking this, the Group will consider and advise REFPG on the operational implications of strategic decisions. Under the following headings, the specific responsibilities of the Committee are:

1. To consider the various components of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) in respect of the areas of expertise represented (staffing, outputs, impact, environment data and other metrics, management information and REF modelling).
2. To monitor and discuss the operational aspects of REF2021 guidelines and University REF strategy with a view to agreeing or recommending a University approach to delivery.
3. To determine operational aspects of the REF submission as required by REFPG and support the development of the REF submission plan.

Constitution

Quorum:	50% +1 members
Frequency of meetings:	A minimum of 4 meetings per annum
Secretary:	Kevin Richardson
Parent Body:	REF Planning Group
Committees reporting to the body:	None

Membership

Research & Innovation Services	Andrew Poole, Head of REF Preparations (Chair) Christine Downes, REF Support Coordinator Lucy Jowett, Research Impact Manager Alisha Peart, Research Impact Manager
Human Resources	Sharon Stewart, Organisational Development Manager (EDI) Jackie Rose, Human Resources Manager
University Library	Ellen Cole, Scholarly Communications Librarian Kathryn Smith, University Librarian
Vice Chancellors Office (Planning)	Tony Barrass, Corporate Information Manager Mark Harland, Senior Business Analyst

Additional or substitute members of the representative Services, and co-options from other Services will be agreed as business requires.

Annexe 6 - Reductions for staff circumstances

1. Given the reduced output requirement for 2021, the tariffs for the defined reductions differ from those set in REF2014. 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

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

2. 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

3. 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.

4. 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

5. 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 leave⁷, or shared parental leave⁸ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Any period of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions in paragraph 5 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

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. When combining circumstances, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously.

⁷ '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'.

⁸ '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.

12. 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 1 to 9).

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

13. 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.

14. 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 13, and has had significant additional circumstances – for any of the other reasons set out in the ‘Guidance on submissions’ the institution can make a case for further reductions in the unit reduction request.

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

15. Where staff have had other circumstances during the period – 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.

Annexe 7 - Equality Impact Assessment – January 2019

Service or Committee	REF Strategy Group
Name of policy :	REF2021 Code of Practice
Name(s) of those undertaking the Equality Analysis:	Mark Harland / Sharon Stewart / George Marston
What are the main aims of this policy?	<p>Main aims are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outline how 'Significant Responsibility for Research' will be determined. 2. Outline how 'Independence for staff on Research-only contracts' will be determined 3. Outline the proposed process to be used for the 'Selection of Outputs' 4. Outline how 'Individual staff circumstances' will be considered.
Who are the main stakeholders of the policy?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff involved in the Implementation of the Code of practice <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) REF Strategy Group ii) REF Planning Group iii) REF Operational Group iv) UOA leads v) Human Resources vi) University Executive vii) REF Comms Group 2. Staff directly affected by the Code of Practice i.e. those staff who meet the definition of Category A eligible 3. Board of Governors
Who is responsible for developing this policy?	REF Strategy Group
Is this a new or existing policy?	Each HEI is required to develop, document and apply a new Code of Practice based on the published guidance.
Who is responsible for approving it?	University Executive
Who is responsible for implementing it?	REF Strategy Group, REF Planning Group and REF Operational Group
Is the policy equality relevant?	Yes
Is there the possibility of discrimination or adverse impact?	Yes
Does the policy provide an opportunity to promote equal opportunities?	Yes. The Code of Practice outlines how considerations of Equality and Diversity legislation will be made to ensure that we are fulfilling our legal obligations. It is aimed to ensure fairness in all processes through the principles of transparency, consistency and inclusion.
Does the policy provide the opportunity to foster good relations between people from different groups?	Yes. The Code of Practice outlines the consideration of protected characteristics and outlines clearly, why these are important to take into account.

<p>Please identify what data has been collected in relation to this policy:</p>	<p>The following data has been collected: Equality data in relation to category A eligible staff Age Disability Race Sex Pregnancy and Maternity</p> <p>Data on Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation is not available.</p> <p>In addition to the protected characteristics we have also considered: Mode of Employment (Part-time or full-time) Occupancy (permanent or fixed term contracts) Nationality</p>
<p>Please identify any internal/external groups consulted regarding this activity:</p>	<p>Consultation has commenced in relation to the draft Code of Practice. This has involved discussions with UCU, and information sharing with staff since July, which has included several workshops delivered to staff to outline the changes being proposed in the REF2021 draft guidance in comparison to REF2014.</p> <p>The consultation proposal was issued to academic staff on the 12th December 2018 and is open for feedback from staff until the end of February 2019.</p> <p>Additional consultation has taken place at various Committees and Boards within the University.</p> <p>The outputs of this Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed code of practice will be shared with the Trade Unions</p>

Considering Evidence and Data

Please use this section to consider evidence and data to properly assess the likely or actual impact on each of the groups in turn. You should consider wide ranging data sources such as any relevant surveys, archived materials, database records, audits, consultation results, research, studies, reports feedback etc regarding this particular function or policy.

Analyse the existing evidence and data. What does it tell you? Provide relevant or necessary details in the columns below:

<p>General Observations</p>	<p>The data is at January 2019 and is based on headcount not FTE.</p> <p>Category A eligible staff are academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date, and whose primary function is to undertake either 'Research only' or 'teaching and research'. Staff should have a substantive connection with the submitting institution. Staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher. Staff meeting these criteria will form the total eligible staff pool but may not necessarily be submitted.</p>
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1. Significant responsibility for research

Staff with significant responsibility for research are those staff with a workload allocation for Research, Scholarship and Enterprise of more than 30% of their contracted FTE and/or those with a PDA objective to publish an output to which a contribution has been made as an independent researcher.

The data presented within this Equality Impact Assessment is based on workload only (i.e. those staff who have an allocation of more than 30% workload as recorded in WAMs). The data for staff who have a PDA objective linked to REF is not available at this time.

Based on workload only, we anticipate that we will submit 780 (61%) of the 1285 staff.

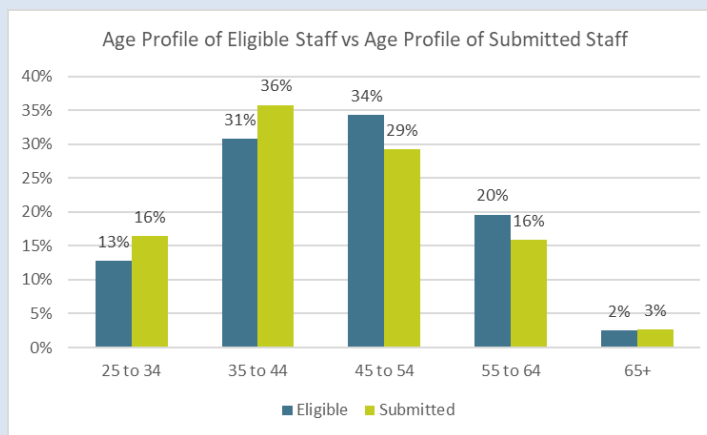
It is anticipated that when we incorporate the data on PDA objectives this will increase the percentage of staff submitted by between 10 to 12%.

2. Independence for Staff on Research-only contracts

For REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme. It is proposed that staff on research-only contract at Northumbria who are grades 4 and 5 are not independent researchers, staff on grade 6 may or may not be independent and staff on grade 7 are independent researchers. However, all staff across these grades will be considered on an individual case by case basis against the following criteria:

- Leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.
- Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.
- Acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project.
- Leading a research group or substantial work package.
- Significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.

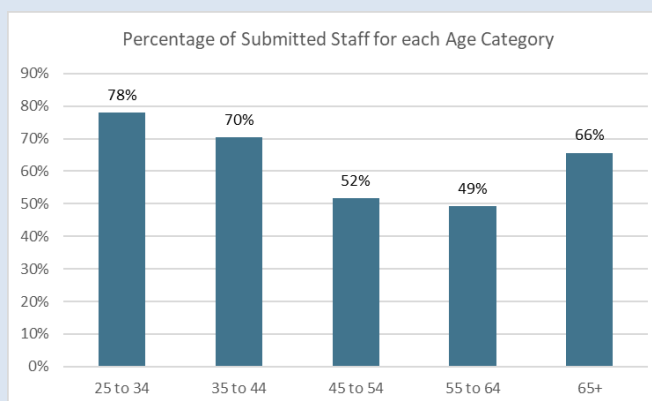
Age

Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only


Age	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
25 to 34	164	13%	128	16%
35 to 44	396	31%	279	36%
45 to 54	441	34%	228	29%
55 to 64	252	20%	124	16%
65+	32	2%	21	3%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%

Based on workload allocation data, the largest percentage of staff who would be submitted are in the 35 to 44 age band, followed by the 45 to 54 age band. The overall profile of staff who would be submitted, broadly aligns with overall age profile of category A eligible staff.

When looking at each age band in turn we can see that staff in the 45 to 54 age band and the 55 to 64 age band are less likely to be submitted.



78% of Category A eligible staff aged 25 to 34 would be submitted

70% of Category A eligible staff aged 35 to 44 would be submitted

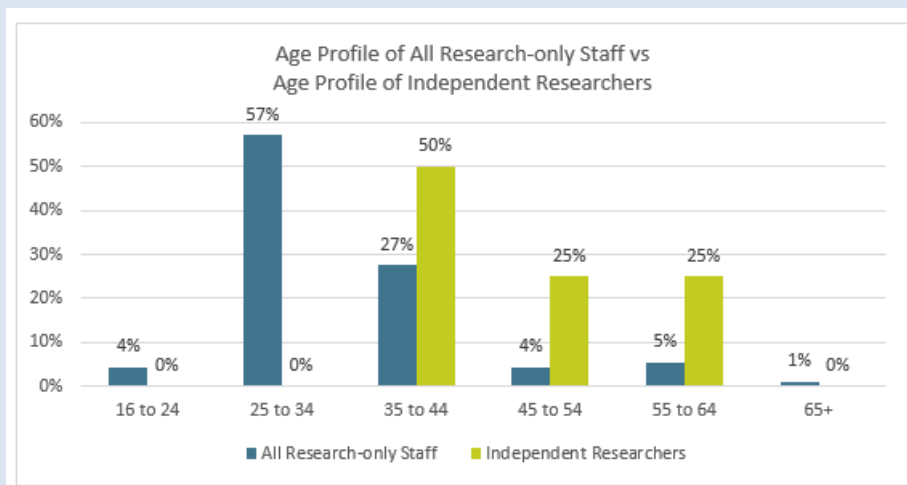
52% of Category A eligible staff aged 45 to 54 would be submitted

49% of Category A eligible staff aged 55 to 64 would be submitted

66% of Category A eligible staff aged 65+ would be submitted

Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

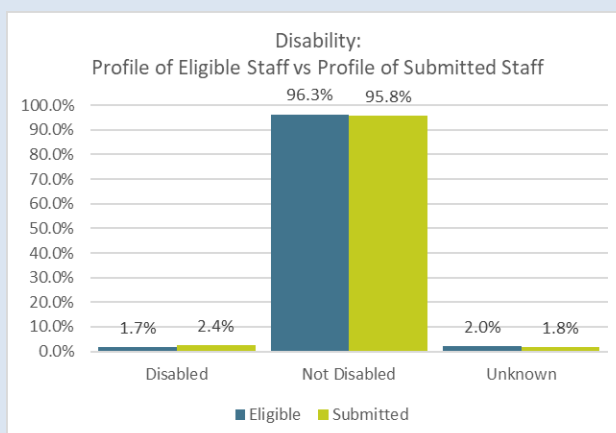
Age	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
16 to 24	4	4%	0	0%
25 to 34	52	57%	0	0%
35 to 44	25	27%	2	50%
45 to 54	4	4%	1	25%
55 to 64	5	5%	1	25%
65+	1	1%	0	0%
Total	91	96%	4	100%



The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted, however the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grades below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

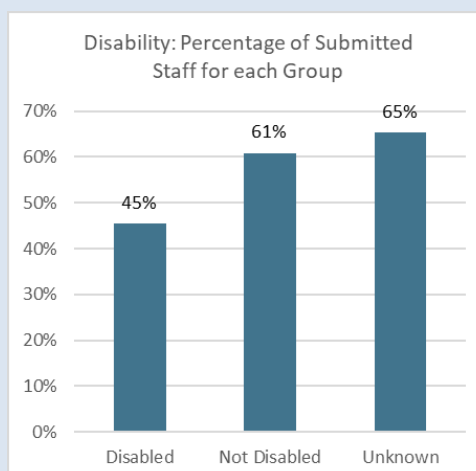
Disability

Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only


Disability Group	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Disabled	22	1.7%	12	2.4%
Not Disabled	1237	96.3%	484	95.8%
Unknown	26	2.0%	9	1.8%
Total	1285	100%	505	100%

Based on workload allocation data, 1.71% of the category A eligible staff consider themselves disabled, this equates to 22 individuals. We believe that disability could be under-disclosed by staff in the University. We also have 26 individuals for whom their disability status is unknown as they have selected 'prefer not to say' or the information is not provided.

45% of Category A eligible staff who have declared a disability would be submitted
 61% of Category A eligible staff who have not declared a disability would be submitted
 65% of Category A eligible staff for whom disability status is unknown would be submitted



Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Disability Group	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Disabled	1	1.1%	0	0.0%
Not Disabled	84	92.3%	4	100.0%
Unknown	6	6.6%	0	0.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%



The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted, the figures are too low to draw any real inference. Overall within the pool we only have 1 individual who has disclosed a disability and 6 Individuals for whom the information is unknown.

The proposal indicates that grades below 7 will be considered on a case by case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Individual Circumstances

In certain circumstances, the research productivity of an individual may have been affected by a disability.

A reduction in the total number of outputs required for submitting units due to individual circumstance may be sought.

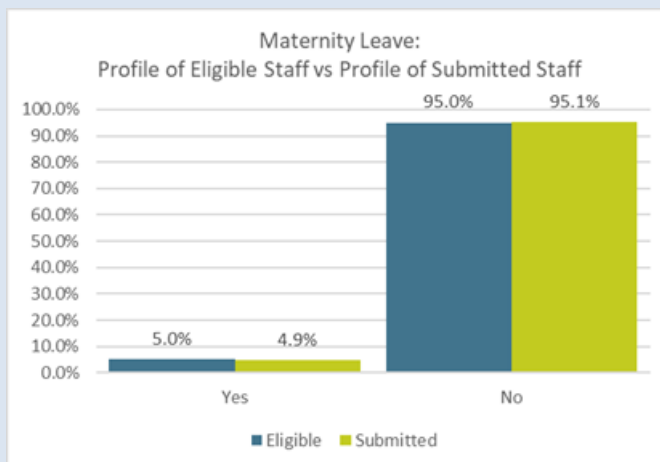
The process for staff to disclose individual circumstances will, in exceptional cases, allow for staff to be returned without the required minimum of one output.

<p>Gender Reassignment</p>	<p>There is no University data currently available in relation to gender reassignment and we are therefore unable to include it within this equality impact assessment.</p> <p><u>Individual Circumstances</u></p> <p>In certain circumstances, the research productivity of an individual may have been affected if they are gender transitioning</p> <p>A reduction in the total number of outputs required for submitting units due to individual circumstance may be sought</p> <p>The process for staff to disclose individual circumstances will, in exceptional cases, allow for staff to be returned without the required minimum of one output.</p>
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p>There is no reliable data currently available in relation to Marriage and Civil Partnership.</p> <p>We will consider carefully any representations made by staff if they feel there has been any discriminatory impact directly linked to their marital status, at this stage we do not anticipate that this will be the case.</p>

Pregnancy and maternity

Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only

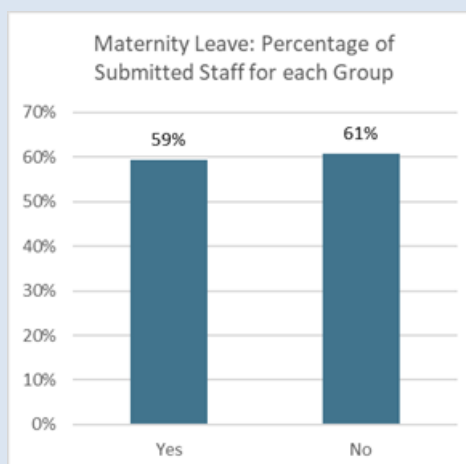
(Please note: historical maternity or family leave data taken in any previous employment is not held on our database)



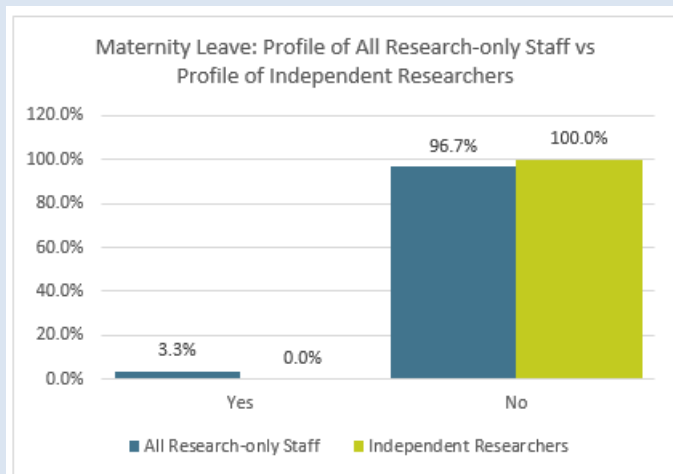
Maternity Leave	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Yes	64	5.0%	38	4.9%
No	1221	95.0%	742	95.1%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%

Based on Workload Allocation data, there appears to be no discernible impact on those individuals who took Maternity leave.

59% of Category A eligible staff who were absent due to 'Maternity leave' would be submitted
 61% of Category A eligible staff who were not absent due to 'Maternity leave' would be submitted


Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Maternity Leave	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of All Research-only Staff	Headcount	% of Independent Staff
Yes	3	3.3%	0	0.0%
No	88	96.7%	4	100.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%

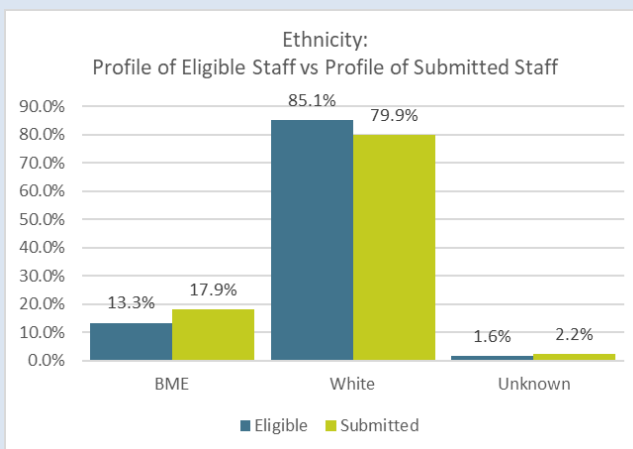


The impact of applying the criteria is that none of the 3 women who have been on maternity leave would be submitted, this is directly linked to the grade of the woman being below grade 7. However, the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Race

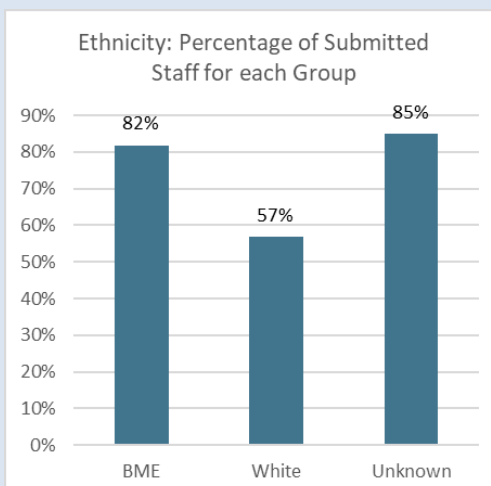
Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only



Ethnicity Group	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
BME	171	13.3%	140	17.9%
White	1094	85.1%	623	79.9%
Unknown	20	1.6%	17	2.2%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%

Based on Workload Allocation data, there appears to be no negative impact on BME staff. We also have a number of individuals who have not disclosed their ethnicity, the analysis shows that there is no adverse impact to this group.

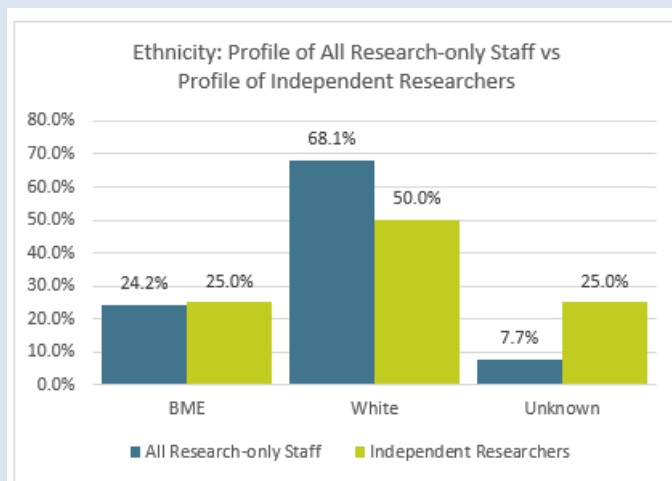
- 57% of Category A eligible staff who are white would be submitted
- 82% of Category A eligible staff who are BME would be submitted
- 85% OF Category A eligible staff where ethnicity is unknown would be submitted



There is no evidence of discrimination towards minority ethnic groups.

Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Ethnicity Group	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
BME	22	24.2%	1	25.0%
White	62	68.1%	2	50.0%
Unknown	7	7.7%	1	25.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%



The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted, however the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

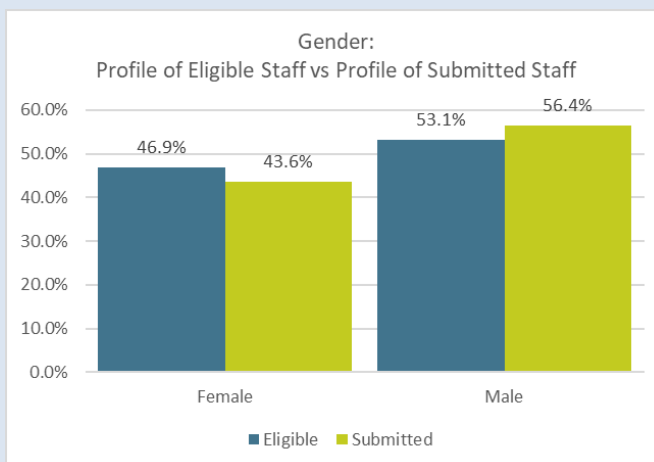
Religion or Belief (or lack of religion or belief)

There is no University data currently available in relation to Religion or Belief, we have now included this as part of data collected within the Equal Opportunity Monitoring form for new appointments but we have not commenced collecting this data for current staff.

We will consider carefully any representations made by staff if they feel there has been any discriminatory impact directly linked to their Religion or Belief, at this stage we do not anticipate that this will be the case.

Sex

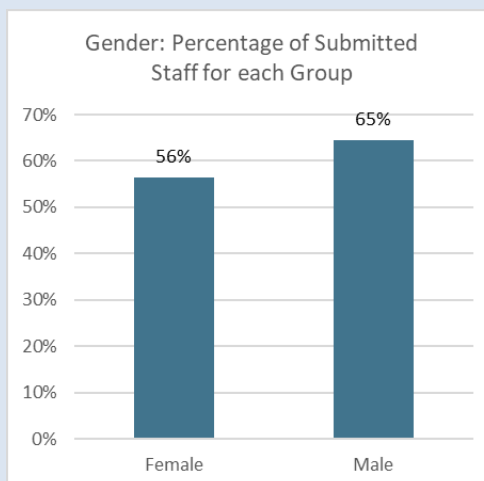
Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only



Gender	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Female	603	46.9%	340	43.6%
Male	682	53.1%	440	56.4%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%

Based on workload allocation data, a lower proportion of females would be submitted than would be expected when looking at the % of females in the overall Category A eligible pool.

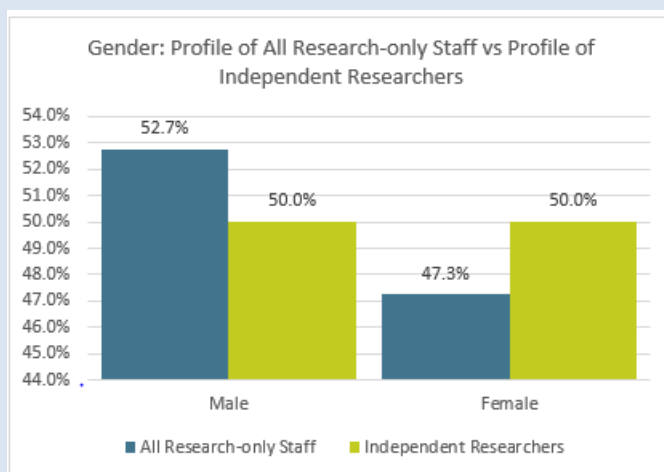
65% of Category A eligible staff who are male would be submitted.
56% of Category A eligible staff who are female would be submitted.



This is likely to warrant further examination if the same profile is shown when the full data set is available and analysed.

Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Gender	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of All Research-only Staff	Headcount	% of Independent Staff
Male	48	52.7%	2	50.0%
Female	43	47.3%	2	50.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%



The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted, the balance is evenly split however the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Sexual Orientation

There is no University data currently available in relation to Sexual Orientation, we have now included this as part of data collected within the Equal Opportunity Monitoring form for new appointments but we have not commenced collecting this data for current staff.

We will consider carefully any representations made by staff if they feel there has been any discriminatory impact directly linked to their sexual orientation, at this stage we do not anticipate that this will be the case.

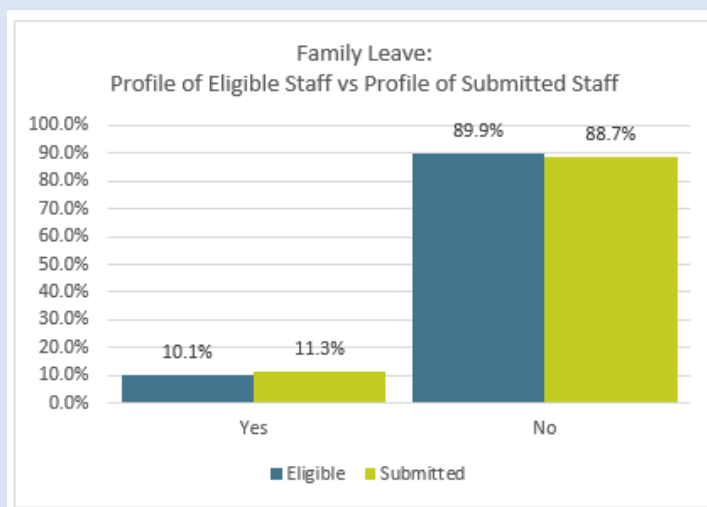
Additional Considerations

All Family Leave

Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only

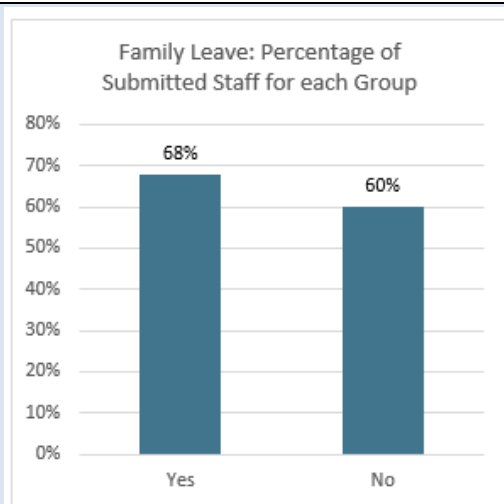
This data includes all Family Leave, it includes, parental leave, shared parental leave, maternity leave and adoption leave.

Family Leave	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Yes	130	10.1%	88	11.3%
No	1155	89.9%	692	88.7%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%



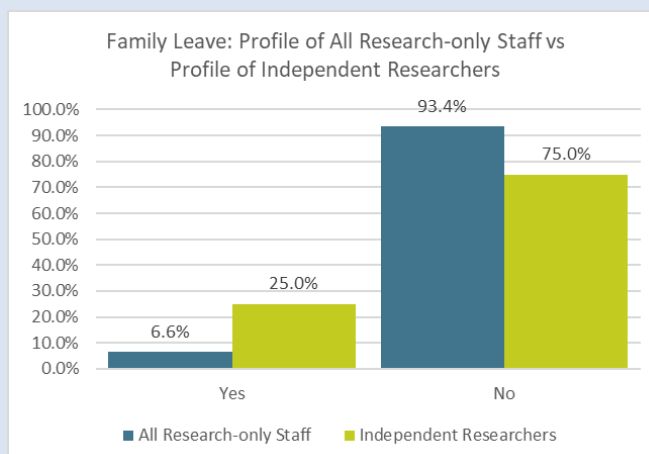
Based on Workload Allocation data, there appears to be no discernible impact on those individuals who took Family leave.

68% of Category A eligible staff who were absent due to 'Family Leave' would be submitted
 60% of Category A eligible staff who were not absent due to 'Family leave' would be submitted



Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Family Leave	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of All Research-only Staff	Headcount	% of Independent Staff
Yes	6	6.6%	1	25.0%
No	85	93.4%	3	75.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%

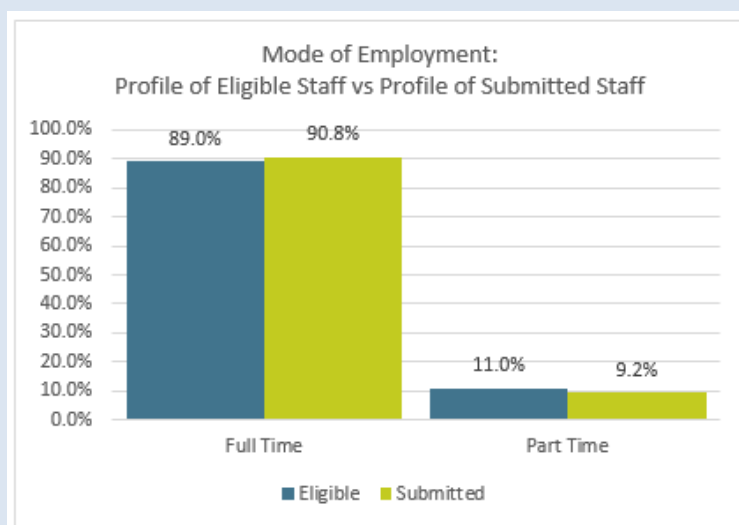


When we factor in all family leave, we can see that 1 of the 4 people who will be submitted has taken this. However, the figures are too low to draw any real inference. The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Mode of employment
 (Part-time or Full-Time)

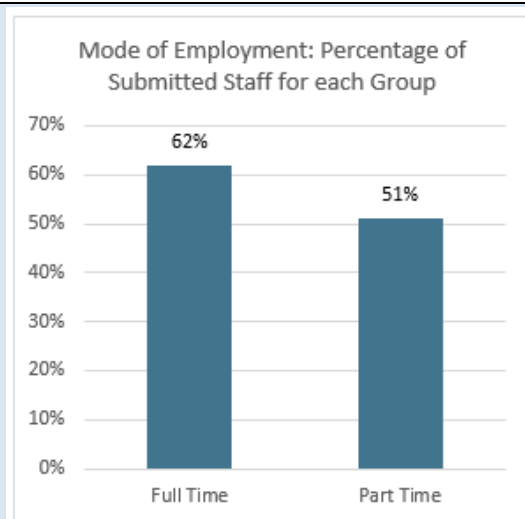
Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only

Mode of Employment	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Full Time	1,144	89.0%	708	90.8%
Part Time	141	11.0%	72	9.2%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%



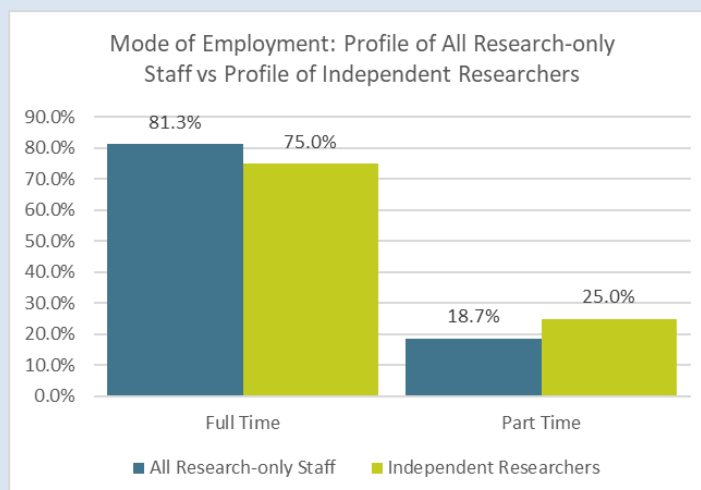
Based on workload allocation data, 89% of the category A eligible staff work full time and 11% part time. The submitted staff profile shows a differential and indicates that staff who work full time are slightly more likely to be submitted than those staff that work part time.

62% of Category A eligible staff who work full time would be submitted
 51% of Category A eligible staff who work part time would be submitted



Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Mode of Employment	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of All Research-only Staff	Headcount	% of Independent Staff
Full Time	74	81.3%	3	75.0%
Part Time	17	18.7%	1	25.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%



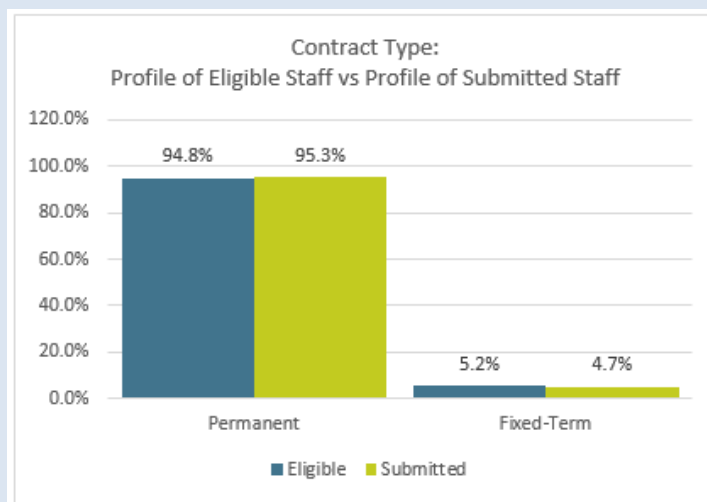
The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted. The data suggest that there is no discernible negative impact on those that are work part-time, however the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Occupancy / Contract Type
 (Permanent / Temporary contract)

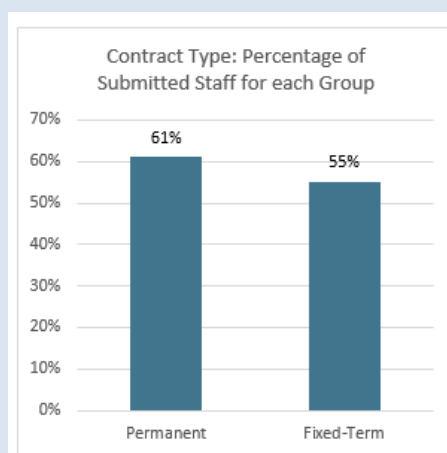
Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only

Contract Type	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
Permanent	1,218	94.8%	743	95.3%
Fixed-Term	67	5.2%	37	4.7%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%



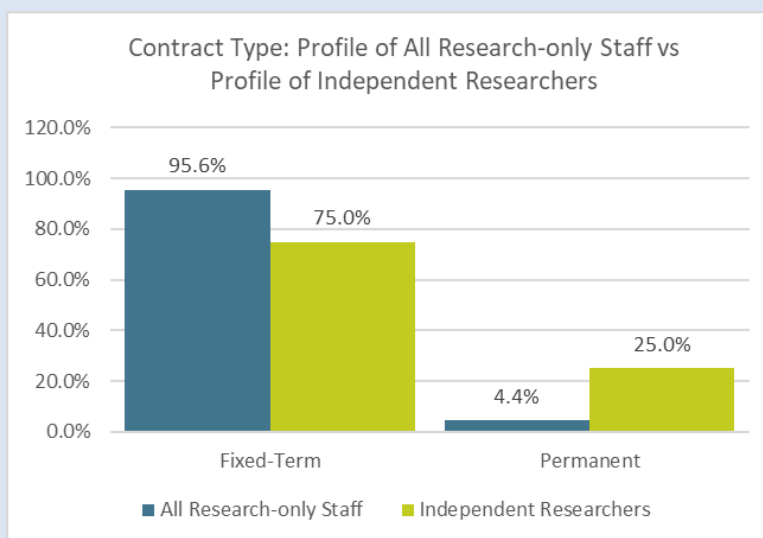
Based on workload allocation data, 94.8% of the category A eligible staff are employed on permanent contracts and 5.2% are on fixed term contracts. There appears to no discernible impact on those individuals who are on fixed term contracts.

61% of Category A eligible staff on permanent contracts would be submitted
 55% of Category A eligible staff who are on fixed term contracts would be submitted



Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Contract Type	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of All Research-only Staff	Headcount	% of Independent Staff
Fixed-Term	87	95.6%	3	75.0%
Permanent	4	4.4%	1	25.0%
Total	91	100%	4	100%



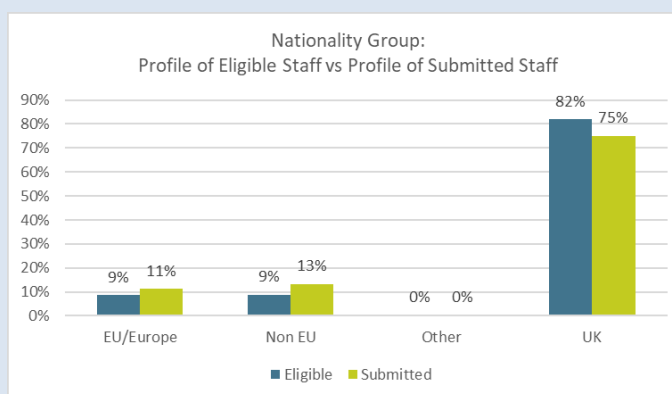
The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted, the data suggests that you are less likely to be submitted if you are on a fixed term contract, however the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Nationality

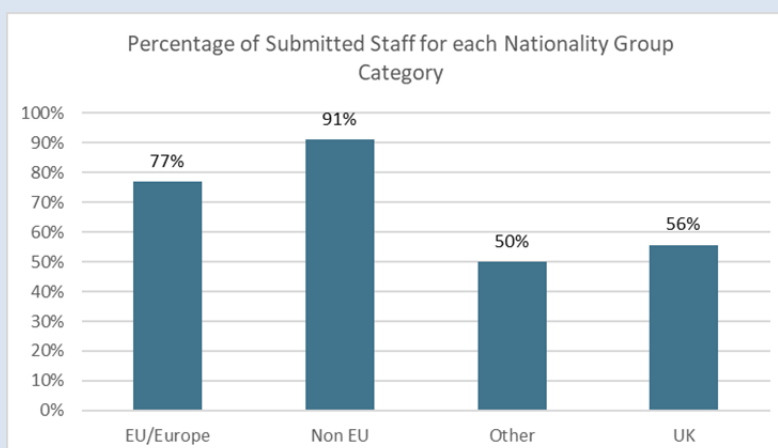
Significant Responsibility for Research - Anticipated submitted staff based on workload data only

Nationality Group	Eligible		Submitted	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
EU/Europe	113	9%	87	11%
Non EU	114	9%	104	13%
Other	6	0%	3	0%
UK	1052	82%	586	75%
Total	1285	100%	780	100%



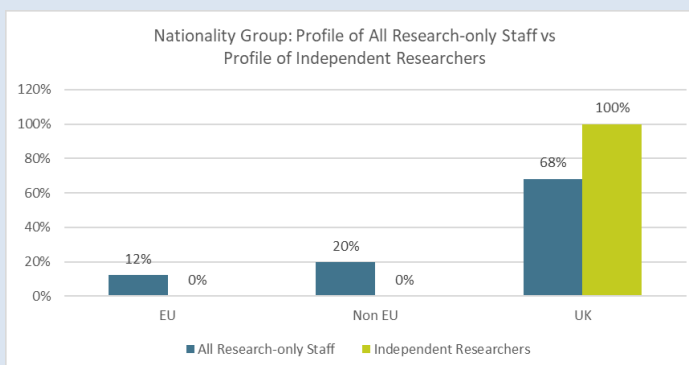
Based on Workload Allocation data, non-EU and EU nationality have a greater likelihood of being submitted than those with a UK Nationality.

56% of Category A eligible staff who are of UK nationality would be submitted
 91% of Category A eligible staff who are Non-EU nationality would be submitted
 77% of Category A eligible staff who are EU nationality would be submitted



Independence for staff on Research only contracts - Anticipated staff submitted as Independent Researchers (data showing the effect of applying the proposal to define only staff at Grade 7 as independent)

Nationality Group	All Research-only Staff		Independent Researchers	
	Headcount	% of Total Eligible	Headcount	% of Total Submitted
EU	11	12%	0	0%
Non EU	18	20%	0	0%
UK	62	68%	4	100%
Total	91	88%	4	100%



The impact of applying the criteria is that only 4 staff would be submitted, the data suggests that you are less likely to be submitted if you are not a UK National however the figures are too low to draw any real inference.

The proposal indicates that grade below 7 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and this may increase the numbers submitted.

Is there enough data for an accurate judgement to be made? **No - Not all data is currently available**

If YES, please go to Section 3. If NO, please explain:

Where do the gaps exist?	Data on PDA Objectives linked to REF are not currently available.
An interim Analysis can be undertaken. In this case, what further data do you intend to collect and in what time-scale?	If the proposal for establishing 'Significant Responsibility for research' is agreed, the data on PDA Objectives will be need to be included in any modelling.

Please continue to Section 3 and complete as fully as possible.

Assess the likely impact on Equality Groups and consider alternatives if necessary

Based on your findings above, please tick ✓ the appropriate boxes below and summarise your reasons where appropriate.

Equality Group	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	No Impact	Unknown	Reasons
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Age				✓	Whilst this data appear to indicate an adverse impact on staff groups aged 45-64 (and to a lesser extent age group 65+) it is not possible to confirm whether or not this is genuinely the case as this EIA does not include PDA data. If an adverse impact is found when the full EIA is undertaken then this will be reviewed by REF Strategy Group and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
Disability				✓	Whilst this data appear to indicate a positive impact it is not possible to confirm whether this is genuinely the case as this EIA does not include PDA data.
Gender Reassignment				✓	Data is not held on gender reassignment.
Marriage and civil partnership				✓	Data is not held on marriage and civil partnership.
Pregnancy and Maternity				✓	Data appear to indicate that colleagues who have taken family leave are not adversely impacted by the policy. This will be reviewed when a full EAI including PDA data is undertaken.
Race				✓	Whilst this data appear to indicate a positive impact it is not possible to confirm whether this is genuinely the case as this EIA does not include PDA data
Religion or belief				✓	Data on religion or belief is not held.
Sex				✓	Whilst this data appears to indicate an adverse impact on women it is not possible to confirm whether or not this is genuinely the case as this EIA does not include PDA data. If an adverse impact is found when the full EIA is undertaken then this will be reviewed by REF Strategy Group and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
Sexual Orientation				✓	Data on sexual orientation is not held.

If you have indicated there is a negative or positive impact on any group(s), is that impact:

	YES/NO	Please provide details
Legal/Lawful – is the function/policy directly or indirectly discriminatory and permitted under UK legislation?	N/A	This EIA has not identified any positive or negative impact on any group as it does not include a complete dataset. No direct evidence has been found or provided that suggest the proposed code of practice fails to respond to the needs of a particular group, nor have any groups, so far, been identified that face increased difficulty/discrimination as a result of this policy.

Intended – can it be justified under the Act(s)?	N/A	
Could you make changes to the function/policy or its implementation to prevent or minimise any adverse impact or unlawful discrimination, while still achieving the aims?	Yes	<p>If an adverse impact on any group is found, this will be investigated and we will review whether the processes underpinning the allocation of Significant Responsibility for Research require adjustment.</p> <p>Advance HE are delivering Unconscious Bias training (specific to REF), is being delivered to all colleagues that are involved in making REF decisions. This will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> REF Strategy Group REF Planning Group REF Operation Group Unit of Assessment leads Heads of Department <p>The EIA will be updated once further data is available and will be used to assist us to investigate where any imbalance occurs in staff submitted and/or inform decision making. It is proposed that EIAs will be carried out in stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial stage – April 19 - Following the 2019/20 workload setting and PDA round in Autumn 2019 - Following the census date - Prior to submission when selecting outputs - Following submission
Could you consider alternative processes/policies that might provide equality better?	Yes	Alternative proposals may be submitted through the consultation process.
If the impact is positive how will this be safeguarded?		We will continue to monitor any impact of changes.

Recommendations

Please indicate your findings on the basis of your analysis.

No recommendation can be made at this time as this EIA is based on an incomplete dataset. Recommendations will be reviewed following the next EIA.

No major change: the policy is robust in relation to equality and can progress as planned.	
Adjustment required: there are some barriers or potential for adverse impact and the policy should be adjusted accordingly.	
Continue as planned: there is the potential for adverse effect. However, the adverse impact can be objectively justified and there is no risk of unlawful discrimination. Please indicate the objective justification for this and how the decision was reached.	
Stop and remove the policy: there is the potential for adverse impact which cannot be justified or mitigated and / or there is a risk of unlawful discrimination.	

Developing an Action Plan

As a result of this analysis, consultation, research and available evidence collected please state whether there will need to be any changes made/planned to the policy. Please specify what practical actions need to be taken to either reduce or remove any identified negative impact.

Action Required to Address the issue(s)	Timescales	Responsible Lead
TBC – there is insufficient data at this stage		
TBC – there is insufficient data at this stage		

NB: it is important that these objectives and the actions are incorporated into School or Service operational or work plans as appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

Is this a Full or Interim Analysis?	Interim
Planned date of Analysis?	Late Autumn 2019
Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of changes to the function/ policy?	Not presently, as no changes proposed.
Please explain how this will be done?	i) “

Equality Analysis completed by:

Name:	Mark Harland Sharon Stewart	Date:	26 March 2019
Job Title:	Senior Business Analyst (REF), Strategic Planning and Performance Organisational Development Manager (EDI)		

Nominated person: I confirm that I have been briefed and agree with the results of this Equality Analysis.

Name:	Professor George Marston	Date:	2 May 2019
Job Title:	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)		

Annexe 8 - Notes of a Meeting with UCU on Monday 3rd June 2019 to discuss Code of Practice

Attendees:

Prof George Marston, PVC R&I

Jennifer Stergiou, Director of Research & Innovation Services

Rachel Lawlor, Deputy Director of Research & Innovation Services

Jackie Rose, Human Resources Manager

Adam Hansen, UCU

Notes: Christine Downes, RIS

Updates and comments relating to Particular Sections:

Introduction on page 4: AH commented on the improved amendment to the second paragraph which now read 'even if they do not have significant responsibility for research **at the point of identifying this** for REF2021'.

2.5 Workflow diagram for determining significant responsibility via workload or independent PDA objective has been amended to revert to workload being positioned ahead of PDA objective

2.7 RL advised of minimal amendments as requested from previous meeting.

2.8 Equality Impact Assessments: Build into the plan the list of what the University does to mitigate the lack of data on 2018/19 PDA objectives – this is better than having an incomplete dataset.

2.9 Certain parts have been move around, and spelling corrections made.

2.12 Appeals: AH advised improved clarification provided a good explanation of appeals process

4. Selection of Outputs:

4.3 Rewording around reviewing of outputs has been included; some additional input has been received around referencing the possibility of some outputs scores being amended dependent upon 100 word supporting statements, expansion of practice based outputs, and citations.

Unconscious bias training is mandatory for those making decisions on the selection of outputs. JS advised that JA advised that it would have been impossible for all staff reviewing outputs to have undertaken this since much reviewing had been completed ahead of the Code of Practice preparation, there were so many staff involved in reviewing and some reviews had been undertaken by external assessors.

4.7. The paragraph on Former staff had yet to be expanded to include a more detailed explanation around supporting former staff while employed and that both former and current institutions can submit the outputs. UCU were keen that these facts are promoted

Annex 4

Correct and updated Terms of Reference have now been included.

AH noted that LGBTQ* Terms of Reference were incorrect – there is no UCU 'LGBTQ*Branch Representative'

AH requested that all references to **LGBTQ*** be corrected

JS therefore recapped the points raised by AH as additional feedback on the EIA from the Equality Officers to ensure clarification:

1. EIA – still to be expanded to reiterate that this will continue to be conducted at various points
2. EDI SIG – Will relook at this in the document and ask Sharon Stewart to speak with Vicki Murray
3. Workload and part-time staff references, particularly for fractional staff – this will be picked up at the further points of the EIA; examples of criteria for comparisons will be referenced
4. Selection of outputs – now to read that a subset of REFPG will be responsible for the selection of outputs
5. EIA Appendix 7 – All Cat A eligible staff are considered
6. EIA Appendix 7 – reason the ‘negative impact’ box has not been ticked for any of the specific groups mentioned is simply that at this point in time it is unknown as to whether there will be a negative impact or not

It was noted that following the discussions on the University’s proposed definition for assessing significant responsibility for research, UCU were in agreement with that definition of significant responsibility for research and in broad agreement with the Code of Practice.

GM recorded appreciation of the input by UCU to the discussions in the finalisation of the Code of Practice.