

University of Birmingham

Code of Practice for REF2021

Amended May 2020 to include an appeals process for staff circumstances processes

Amended September 2020 to reflect changes in the timeline for processes caused by the revised REF Guidance required by the Covid-19 pandemic

Part 1

This document specifies the University of Birmingham's Code of Practice for its submission to REF 2021.

As required by Research England, it sets out the University's policy and practice on some of the key decisions that we will need to make: the fair and transparent identification of staff with 'significant responsibility for research'; the determination of who is classified for these purposes as an 'independent researcher'; and the process and principles for the selection of outputs, including approaches to supporting staff with circumstances. It follows the framework and template specified in document REF2019/03, January 2019 'Guidance on codes of practice'.

As one of the leading research intensive universities in the UK, the University of Birmingham is seeking to make a submission to REF 2021 that leads to an outcome reflecting the substantial progress we have made since the last REF submission in 2014. In so doing however, the University recognises that its decisions and selections can have an impact on individuals, and therefore it seeks to apply these with the appropriate level of transparency and fairness.

The University was founded in 1900 on an anti-discrimination ethos accepting men and women on an equal basis. Today, that commitment to equality is at the heart of our vision and mission to promote the growth and spread of knowledge, unlock potential and develop intellectual capital that impacts on our city, region, nation, and the world. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment in which all members of our community can thrive and reach their full potential, where equality is promoted and diversity valued across the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender identity,

marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and their intersections. The four REF principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity are critically important in ensuring fair treatment, and we have indicated through this Code of Practice how those principles are applied in the case of this University. We are also committed to the Principles of the Athena SWAN Charter <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/about-athena-swan/> and have ensured that this code is consistent with that commitment.

I believe it is very important for all academic staff to understand how our processes for REF2021 will work, and we have tried to make this clear within the Code. However, if you have any queries, you may raise these through your local REF lead¹, your College Director of R&KT, or with the project manager for the REF, Elizabeth Westlake (e.westlake@bham.ac.uk).

I hope you will find the Code of Practice helpful.

Tim Softley

Pro Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer)

¹ If you are unsure who your REF lead is please contact Elizabeth Goodyear in the Planning Office

Introduction

Equality and Diversity: relation to broader institutional policies and progress since 2014

The REF Code of Practice is underpinned by the University's ongoing commitment to promoting equality, increasing diversity and inclusion and addressing barriers to progression. The period since REF 2014 has seen a marked culture change within the University, with equality and diversity now firmly embedded in University structures and decision-making. The final REF2014 EIA was one piece of evidence which helped inform our thinking about actions required.

Since REF 2014, we have implemented a new Equality Scheme for 2016-2020 'Advancing Equality, Valuing Diversity', focusing on the themes of:

- Inclusion: we provide an environment that is accessible and welcoming
- Attainment: everyone can flourish and succeed to the best of their abilities
- Flexibility: we support different ways of working and learning
- Embedding: the active promotion of equality informs our culture and behaviour

We have created a DPVC Equalities role to provide leadership and drive forward progress on these issues, and a network of College Equality Leads to support and embed change in a way that is local and subject-specific. We have also expanded our staff networks under the Equality Scheme, and have thriving LGBT, BAME, disability, women's and parents' and carers' networks, to help ensure that all staff feel supported and their voices heard.

Central to our Equality Scheme is the need to increase diversity in senior academic roles. Since REF 2014, we have particularly focused on actions to address the under-representation of women in senior academic roles and to address barriers to career progression. As part of this drive, we have made equality and diversity training mandatory for all staff, with staff involved in recruitment and promotions decisions also undertaking a further module on unconscious bias. We run regular

promotions workshops across all Colleges, and we offer staff returning from maternity and other extended forms of parental leave a term's respite from one "leg" of their teaching, research or administrative duties to enable them to focus on their research. Our Senior Leadership Programme is supporting academic staff with leadership ambitions, with 35% of women and 19% of men attending the course since 2014 achieving promotion at the University.

To further accelerate the pace of change, we have introduced institutional targets for female representation, with initial targets of 30% senior female academic staff. Since 2014, our proportion of female Professors has increased from 20% to 28% and Readers from 26% to 34%. As an institution and at subject-level, we also have a strong commitment to Athena SWAN, with all but 2 of our STEM Schools holding Athena awards (2 held at Silver level) and all of our non-STEM Schools actively engaged in achieving awards, with one achieved to date. It is hoped these actions will have helped address issues identified in 2014 in our EIAs relating to the representation of women at different career stages in our submission.

Our focus on addressing female under-representation and our learning around this is being extended to other areas. The University is currently examining issues around BAME under-representation and progression with our staff and students, as part of our work towards Race Equality Charter accreditation, which we hope to achieve in 2019-2020. We recognise that nationally the inclusion of black staff in REF2014 was identified as a particular issue, and although this was not identified as a specific issue at Birmingham, we will pay particular attention to how BAME staff are represented in our REF2021 submission as part of our EIA process.

Transparency, Consistency, Accountability and Inclusivity

In determining which of our staff meet the requirements for significant responsibility for research, which are independent researchers, which outputs should be included in the output portfolio for each UOA, and how to ensure individual staff circumstances are appropriately handled, the University will adhere to the following key principles:

Transparency

- All relevant processes are transparent; they are documented fully in this Code of Practice.
- This Code of Practice is being made available and publicised to all academic staff via a wide range of mechanisms such as email, staff newsletters, local intranets and the University's intranet and Buzz.
- The Code of Practice will be discussed with staff as a part of school meetings.
- We will publish this Code of Practice once approved on the University's website.
- The Code will be available in accessible pdf format, or in other accessible formats on request from the Planning Office.
- We will make sure those absent from work (on sick leave, maternity, paternity or adoption leave, on secondment or leave of absence, or absent for any other reason) are also aware of this Code. This is likely to be in writing, from the Head of College or School/Institute, as appropriate to the circumstances.
- Our communications programme to disseminate the Code of Practice and explain associated activities is provided as Appendix 6.
- The draft Code of Practice was discussed with the REF UOA leads, University REF Board, The University Research Committee, the five College Boards and BUCU, as well as being subject to a University-wide consultation, prior to approval by University Executive Board (UEB). Specific provisions relating to Significant Responsibility for Research were raised directly with the affected staff on the Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway.

Consistency

The principles outlined in this Code of Practice will be applied across the institution, but there may be some differences in application where disciplinary context necessitates this. This means that:

- The same principles will apply with respect to the specific cohort of staff to be reviewed (those on the *Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway*) to determine whether they have significant responsibility for research (part 2 below);
- Allowing for disciplinary differences as reflected in the national Panel Criteria and Working Methods, the same principles will apply across the institution with respect to the identification of independent researchers;
- The same principles will apply to all UOAs with respect to output selection and disclosure of staff circumstances;
- These principles and processes are laid out below in Section 2 (Significant Responsibility for Research), Section 3 (Independent Researchers) and Section 4 (Selection of Outputs).

Accountability

- We have clearly defined the responsibilities of both individuals and bodies involved in decision-making in sections 2, 3 and 4 below and the relevant appendices.
- The terms of reference and operating criteria for both individuals and bodies involved in the process are laid out below in Appendix 1. We have stated what training these individuals and bodies will receive with respect to Equalities Legislation in Appendix 5.
- We have identified a process by which staff can appeal against significant responsibility for research or independent researcher decisions (Sections 2 and 3 below and Appendix 3 which covers Appeals).
- We have also identified a process by which staff can raise more general concerns about the proper operation of these processes (see Part 5).

Inclusivity

In line with the Funding Councils' expectations, the University will submit all eligible staff who meet its interpretation of the definitions of significant responsibility for research and/or research independence, as outlined below in sections 2 and 3. In the case of significant responsibility for research, with the exceptions of UOAs 1 and 3 we intend to submit all our staff on teaching and research (that is, three-legged²) contracts. We recognise that there will be members of staff with individual circumstances (as outlined below in Section 4) that may have reduced their ability to generate the normal volume of outputs expected. For staff members who chose to disclose such circumstances, we will ensure that there will be an appropriate adjustment to the University's expectation with respect to the number of outputs to be put forward by each individual for internal review and for potential inclusion in UoA output portfolios (see 4.1.2), and that these staff also receive appropriate support where this is needed. As described in Section 4.1.4, we will review the output portfolio for each UOA to ensure that as far as possible it is representative of both disciplinary spread and protected staff characteristics for that UOA, without unduly compromising our desire to submit our strongest portfolio of outputs for each UOA that appropriately reflects its research strengths and breadth.

² At the University of Birmingham, the term "three-legged" is commonly used for staff who are contracted to do both teaching and research since it explicitly acknowledges the associated administrative duties that teaching and research imply."

Part 2: identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

2.1 Policies and Procedures

This section applies only to staff on three-legged (teaching and research) contracts, not to those on research-only contracts.

2.1.1 The formal definition of significant responsibility for research is given in the Guidance on Submissions (REF2019/01), paragraphs 138-143. In brief, such staff are those where explicit time and resources are made available for them to engage actively in independent research and that is an expectation of their job role. As stated in paragraph 119, these staff are also expected to be independent researchers.

2.1.2 On the basis of this definition, and given the stated intention of the Stern Review that institutions should return all their eligible researchers to REF2021, the University takes the view that all of its staff on teaching and research (that is, three-legged) contracts have a significant responsibility for research, with the following exception:

- a) Staff in the College of Medical and Dental Sciences on the *Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway*, prior to the award of their Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT). Staff on this pathway are on three-legged (teaching and research) contracts. However, this is a developmental training route for clinical staff, part of which involves training in research skills, and in most cases those individuals following this pathway are not yet independent researchers (ie they are not undertaking self-directed research), and therefore do not have significant responsibility for research. This is particularly, but not exclusively, the case for those who do not yet have a PhD, or are registered for one as part of this programme, in line with the general rule that the outputs of PhD students are not included in the REF submission. Staff on later stages of the programme may

be independent researchers, so in order to ensure fair and appropriate treatment of all such staff, all of them will be reviewed against the University's criteria for research independence.

2.1.3 The process for identifying such staff will be as follows:

- a) The relevant cohort of staff will be identified from the staff record and/or records maintained by Health Education England. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be conducted on this data to establish the characteristics of this cohort so that appropriate E&D monitoring may be carried out.
- b) All such staff will be reviewed by the Professional Services staff identified in paragraph 2.3.2 in consultation with the relevant UoA REF Leads to identify whether they meet the criteria for independent researchers as outlined in section 3 below. It will be assumed as part of this review that any of this cohort of staff who do not have a PhD, or who are currently registered for a PhD, will not meet the independent researcher criteria. Otherwise, the criteria to assess whether staff on the Integrated Clinical Academic Pathway are independent will be as outlined in section 3 below.
- c) A Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher (SigRes/IR) Panel (see Appendix 1 for membership and terms of reference) will be established to make decisions with respect both to significant responsibility for research and research independence. This panel will review the information provided as a result of the process described in (b) above and confirm which individuals may be deemed to be independent researchers.
- d) In order to ensure the transparency of the process, all relevant staff will be notified in writing and via email of the decision about their status within two weeks of the relevant meeting of the SigRes/IR panel. They will be offered a full explanation of the basis and relevance of the decision and offered the opportunity to request a review of the outcome with the SigRes/IR Panel, should they consider it to be incorrect, using the pro forma in Appendix 2.

- e) The SigRes/IR Panel will consider such requests, seeking further information from the institute concerned as appropriate, and communicate the outcomes to both the individual concerned and the institute. Should the individual still consider the outcome to be incorrect, they may access the Appeals process outlined in Appendix 3.
- f) Further EIAs will be conducted as the process progresses and appropriate action taken, in line with the provisions in paragraph 2.5.1 below.

2.1.4 The process will commence in June 2019 with a review of existing staff; and then run every other month as new staff join the institution, and as staff progress through the clinical pathway.

2.2 Development of the process

2.2.1 The process was proposed in outline and agreed in principle at REF Board in September 2018. The detailed process was reviewed by REF Board and approved for consultation with the relevant staff cohort in March 2019. All staff on the Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway were consulted directly about this specific process during April 2019 and their comments and approval requested. Separately, all academic staff were consulted on all proposals in the Code of Practice in April 2019, and amendments made to the Code as a consequence. UEB approved the process in June 2019.

2.3 Staff, committees and training

2.3.1 Staff involved in the making decisions about significant responsibility for research are those appointed to the Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher Panel (see Appendix 1) and the Appeals Committee (see Appendix 3).

2.3.2 In addition, staff from Professional Services with appropriate professional expertise and whose roles require them to be involved (that is: the HR Business Partner for the College of Medical and Dental Sciences (MDS), the College Head of R&KT in MDS, the Clinical Academic Training Manager, the Head of Research Planning and members of Research Planning Team) will play a key role running the process and advising the panel above.

2.3.3 All staff involved in making decisions about staff with significant responsibility for research will undertake REF-tailored E&D training, including unconscious bias training, to minimise the risk of decisions that do not fulfil inclusivity requirements. This training will be mandatory and delivered before the panel starts meeting. A summary of the training package is provided as Appendix 5. Should staff fail to attend the training, they will not be able to participate in this process. Professional Services staff involved in the process will also be required to attend.

2.4 Appeals

2.4.1 Members of staff following the Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway (ICAT) who consider that they are independent researchers and have significant responsibility for research but have not been so identified, or vice versa, will as a first step be invited to request a review of their case by the SigRes/IR panel, using the pro forma in Appendix 2.

2.4.2 Should the SigRes/IR panel not agree with the case submitted, and the individual still not be satisfied, they will be able to submit an appeal to the REF Appeals Committee. Appeals processes are laid out in Appendix 3.

2.5 Equality Impact Assessments

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a process designed to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people.

2.5.1 In order to monitor any issues with respect to inclusivity, an EIA will be conducted at the beginning of the process as noted above, and periodically throughout the process of reviewing the status of this cohort of staff. We anticipate that this will be quarterly, but this may vary if the numbers of staff under consideration suggest this is too frequent or too infrequent. The University's REF EDAP will review these data and advise on any key characteristics or trends identified bearing in mind the small numbers³ involved in the relevant staff cohort being reviewed for Significant Responsibility for

³ Numbers on the ICAT programme vary over time, but at the point of drafting the CoP stood at just over 50.

Research . Where there is evidence that any particular cohort of protected characteristics or combinations of protected characteristics are being disadvantaged by the application of the processes and policies set out in this document, further investigations will be made to establish why this may be the case and what remedial action should be undertaken, recognising that the reasons identified could be complex and various, and may in some instances require action over a long period of time to address. Heads of College working with Heads of schools/departments/institutes and staff with designated responsibility for E&D issues in their college will have responsibility for ensuring that any potential underlying issues identified are investigated and addressed, whether this is in the short term or longer term. They will be expected to report back to REF Board via the University's REF EDAP periodically through the process and finally in Spring 2021, outlining their proposed plans of action, which may include, for example, asking that decisions on a group of staff are re-considered.

2.5.2 Where evidence is uncovered that there are issues with respect to specific protected characteristics which apply more broadly across the University, the DPVC (Equalities) will take the lead on investigating and addressing these, working with the relevant Heads of College and reporting back to REF Board via the University's REF EDAP in Spring 2021, outlining the proposed plans of action, which may include, for example, addressing issues of inadequate access to specific support or research opportunities for staff with specific characteristics or combinations of characteristics.

Part 3: Determining research independence

3.1 Policies and procedures

Part 3 applies to all staff on Research-only contracts, and also to those staff on the ICAT pathway who are on three-legged (teaching and research) contracts (as discussed in Part 2).

3.1.1 The University will submit all staff on 'Research-only contracts' (as of the census date 31 July 2020) who are deemed to be Independent Researchers. The formal definitions concerning research independence are in the Guidance on Submissions (REF2019/01), paragraphs 128-134. Paragraphs 130-133 explicitly exclude 'research assistants' and read as follows:

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

121. 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.

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

- leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project
- holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships can be found at www.ref.ac.uk, under Guidance
- leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

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

3.1.2 Taking these paragraphs as a starting point, the University’s approach to research independence for the purposes of REF2021 is as follows:

- a) Research-only staff on grades 6 and 7 are not normally considered to be independent researchers; these grades are normally used to appoint staff to assist in the delivery of research projects which have been conceived and are being led by PIs. Colleges will be invited to check the lists of such staff and identify if any might meet any of the criteria for research independence specified below (including holding a fellowship on the list provided by Research Funders as indicated in paragraph 3.1.2 (b) iii below).
- b) Research-only staff on grades 8 and above may be – but are not always – independent researchers. In these instances, the following criteria, drawn in part from the Guidance on Submissions and in part from the Panel Criteria and Working Methods (REF2019/02, paragraphs 187-189, which outline panel-specific indicators of independence), will apply:

For all submissions

- i. Research-only staff on G10 (mostly Professorial Research Fellows) will be deemed to be independent researchers.

- ii. Research-only staff who are PIs on major external grants⁴ on the census date, or who have been PIs for at least 3 years of the REF period will be deemed to be independent researchers;
- iii. Research-only staff who hold a fellowship from the list provided by Research funders (and included as Appendix 7) will be deemed to be independent researchers, subject to written confirmation from their departments/schools/institutes, supported by relevant evidence that may draw on the additional indicators below, that they are undertaking self-directed research; any Birmingham Fellows appointed on Research-only contracts will also be deemed to be independent researchers;
- iv. Research-only staff who are leading a research group or a substantial or specialised research package (including those who are the academic lead for key enabling technologies) will be deemed to be independent researchers, subject to written confirmation from their departments/schools/institutes, supported by relevant evidence that may draw on the additional indicators below, that they are undertaking self-directed research.

In line with the published Panel Criteria, for submissions to Panels C and D, the following indicators may indicate research independence, but would not be considered to be sufficient evidence of independence taken on their own:

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

⁴ Where “major” will be interpreted as appropriate to the discipline; eg for STEM subjects, this would be expected to be sufficient to employ an RA.

For all Submissions, the following additional indicators will also be taken into account, in combination with other evidence, although none taken alone, or even a number taken together, would automatically be considered to be sufficient evidence of independence:

- vii. Being a lead supervisor of one or more PhD students
- viii. Being the sole author of (a) research output(s) which evidence(s) independent research
- ix. Leadership of a research laboratory, or being allocated formal responsibility for an area of research laboratory space in which they carry out or lead self-directed research
- x. A formal reporting line directly to a Head of School, Head of Institute or Head of Department that is the same as that for permanent T&R academic staff.

3.1.3 The process to determine research independence will be as follows:

- a) The total cohort of research-only staff will be identified from the staff system and an EIA will be conducted to identify the profile of protected characteristics associated with this cohort.
- b) Colleges will be asked to confirm that staff on grades 6 and 7 are not independent; data about research grants and contracts will be checked to identify any PIs, and where possible staff in this cohort holding fellowships (as listed in Appendix 7) will also be identified (noting that this data is not currently recorded systematically on University systems) to assist in this process.
- c) Staff on grades 8 and above who meet the criteria listed above under 3.1.2(b), i-iii (that is, that are on G10, and/or are PIs on major external grants, and/or have been appointed to one of the fellowships on the list issued by Research England included as Appendix 7 and where their department/school/institute has confirmed their independence) will be identified as independent, noting that the identification of all staff who hold eligible fellowships will require assistance from Colleges.
- d) Colleges will be asked to check the lists of all their research staff on G8 and above and confirm that those highlighted as independent researchers (derived by step (c) above) have been correctly identified.

- e) Colleges should review the cases for all additional staff on these lists who do not meet the criteria of being G10s, PIs and/or being on named fellowships, and identify those who they deem to be independent, bearing in mind the key definition of “undertaking self-directed research”, and the criteria (iv) to (x) above. Colleges will be invited to work with these individuals to submit a case in each such instance using the relevant pro forma in Appendix 2. For other individuals whom the Colleges deem to be not independent, the proforma should also be completed. These cases will be reviewed by the Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher (SigRes/IR) panel (the membership and terms of reference for which are outlined in Appendix 1) and decisions confirmed. It is expected that staff will normally meet sufficient of the criteria above, and at minimum at least two, so as to clearly demonstrate that they are undertaking independent self-directed research.
- f) The SigRes/IR panel will review cases for independence submitted by Colleges, and based on the criteria above determine which should be approved. These decisions will be reported to REF Board. Colleges will be informed of outcomes via the College Director of Research and their Research Planning Partner.
- g) In order to ensure the transparency of the process, all relevant staff will be notified in writing and by email within two weeks of the meeting of the SigRes/IR panel of the decision about their status; they will be offered a full explanation of the relevance of the decision. Should they consider the decision to be incorrect (whether because they consider themselves to be independent researchers, or not to be independent researchers) they will have an initial option to contact the SigRes/IR panel and ask for a review of their case, using the relevant pro forma in Appendix 2.
- h) The SigRes/IR panel will review such cases, requesting further information from the department/school/institute concerned as appropriate, and communicate the outcomes to both the individual concerned and the department/school/institute. Should the researcher still

consider the outcome to be incorrect, they may access the appeals process outlined in Appendix 3.

- i) In order to monitor any issues with respect to inclusivity, further EIAs will be conducted and appropriate action undertaken as the process progresses in line with paragraph 3.5.1 below.

3.1.4 The process will commence in June 2019 with a review of existing staff; and then run every other month as new staff join the institution until Summer 2020, after the staff census date.

3.2 Development of processes

3.2.1 The process was proposed in outline and agreed in principle at REF Board in September 2018.

The detailed process was reviewed by REF Board and approved for consultation with the relevant staff cohort in March 2019. All academic staff were consulted on all the proposals in this Code of Practice in April 2019, and amendments made to the Code as appropriate. UEB approved the process in May 2019.

3.3 Staff, committees and training

3.3.1 Staff involved in the making decisions about significant responsibility for research are those appointed to the Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher Panel (see Appendix 1) and the Appeals Committee (see Appendix 3).

3.3.2 In addition, staff from Professional Services with appropriate professional expertise and whose roles require them to be involved (HR Business Partners, the Head of Research Planning and members of the Research Planning Team) will play a key role running the process and advising the panel above.

3.3.3 All staff involved in making decisions about which staff are independent researchers will undertake REF-tailored E&D training, as specified in paragraph 2.3.3.

3.4 Appeals

3.4.1 Members of staff on research-only contracts who consider that they are independent researchers but have not been so identified, or vice versa, will as a first step be invited to submit a case to the SigRes/IR panel, using the relevant pro forma at in Appendix 2.

3.4.2 Should the SigRes/IR panel not agree with the case submitted, and the individual still not be satisfied, they will be able to submit an appeal to the REF Appeals Committee. Appeals processes are laid out in Appendix 3.

3.5 Equality Impact Assessments

3.5.1 An EIA will be conducted at the beginning of the process as noted above, and periodically throughout. The University's REF EDAP will review these data and advise on any key trends identified. Where there is evidence that any particular cohort of protected characteristics or combinations of protected characteristics are being disadvantaged by these proposals further investigations will be made to establish why this may be the case and what remedial action should be undertaken. Heads of College working with staff with designated responsibility for E&D issues in their college will have responsibility for ensuring that any potential underlying issues identified are investigated and addressed. They will be expected to report back to REF Board via the University's EDAP in periodically through the process and finally in Spring 2021, outlining their proposed plans of action.

3.5.2 Where there is evidence that there are issues with respect to specific protected characteristics which apply more broadly across the University, the DPVC (Equalities) will take the lead on investigating and addressing these, working with the relevant Heads of College and reporting back to REF Board via the University's EDAP in Spring 2021, outlining the proposed plans of action.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

4.1 Principles and process

4.1.1 The University wishes to submit its strongest portfolio of outputs for each UOA that appropriately reflects its research strengths, taking into account the spread of sub-disciplines within each submitting unit, and equality and diversity issues including the protected characteristics associated with the submitted staff cohort. For the avoidance of doubt, the principles that will be applied when determining the output portfolio to be submitted for each UOA will be the selection of outputs on the basis of quality first, and representativeness thereafter.

4.1.2 In accordance with the University's output reading and grading process in 2017, and in subsequent years, for which colleges were asked to review at least 3 outputs per person, it is expected that every member of staff submitted for REF will normally be able to propose a minimum of 3 outputs (or equivalent to 3 if one is double weighted) via the PURE system for internal review with respect to possible inclusion in the REF portfolio for the relevant UOA. This 'normal expectation' is in line with the need for the University to be able to submit the required 2.5 outputs per FTE on average, including a minimum of 1 output per person. These outputs must meet the open access requirements for REF outputs where these apply (see Guidance on Submissions, paragraphs 223-255). In the case of individuals declaring special circumstances, the University will reduce its expectation of the minimum number of outputs provided for review by the amount determined by the Tariff given in the Guidance on Submissions Annex L and reproduced as Appendix 4 to this document. There may be other applicable circumstances, not covered by those defined or declared for REF purposes (for example an individual having a relatively high teaching or administrative workload allocation), whereby the relevant Head of School or Director of Institute exercises their discretion to agree with an individual that a number of outputs lower than 3 should be submitted for review.

4.1.3 The following process has been undertaken (and will continue to be undertaken) to identify the pool of outputs from which each UOA's output portfolio will be selected:

- a) Each output that is under consideration to be selected for the REF should be reviewed by at least 2 individuals at UoA level. On the basis of a final score derived either arithmetically (a mean) or via negotiation between readers, expressed on a 13 point scale (4+, 4, 4-, 3+, 3, 3-, 2+, 2, 2-, 1+, 1, 1-, 0) a preliminary quality rank order of outputs will be derived for each UoA, independent of the submitting author, including outputs from eligible individuals who have left the institution. Supporting information will be recorded on Pure as specified by the REF Board. An EIA will be conducted of the relevant staff cohort, noting how many outputs have been reviewed for each member of staff. For outputs with multiple authors, but only one UoB author, UoA level readers will ensure that only outputs for which that author made a substantial contribution (justifiable under audit) are included in the ranking list. Where appropriate, attention will be given to the author's contributions recorded in the output itself.
- b) For those disciplines that will use citation data in the REF2021, citation data (from SciVal, to which the University has a subscription) will be used as a *guide* to identifying potential high quality outputs, and at an aggregate level will help inform moderation processes, but will not be used as the primary means of assessing quality, which will remain peer review.
- c) All Colleges will run College moderation and calibration exercises to ensure that they have confidence in the grades and rank order being derived. These should all involve:
- i. The sampling of outputs and the grades awarded across all UOAs within the College's purview, especially grades at the grade boundaries or where there are questions about the eligibility of the outputs or the research
 - ii. A pool of readers appointed for this purpose by the college including those with previous REF experience where possible, who will review this sample of output, working in pairs or larger groups as appropriate
 - iii. If appropriate, and subject to the agreement of the Head of College, readers external to the University may be consulted as part of the grading process,

typically where appropriate expertise is not available within the University, or to assist in checking borderline grades.

- d) In order to minimise unconscious bias (which is already explicitly covered as part of the required E&D training) and to ensure robust decisions are made, and to reduce individual risk in the case of staff complaints, no single individual should make final decisions about output grades.
- e) During the University's annual REF Review in 2019, checks will be carried out with respect to all of the following:
- Open Access compliance
 - Co-authoring (including the provision of written cases where these are required)
 - Double-weighting cases and reserves
 - Practice research cases
 - 100 word statements for Panel B
 - Items not yet published and reserves
 - Any other requirements for statements

The intention will be to ensure both compliance with output rules and that all necessary information is in place to run the output selection process smoothly.

4.1.4. The process to select outputs for each UOA's output portfolio will be as follows:

- a) For each UOA, an Output Review Group, comprising the Head of School and REF lead responsible for the outputs, supported by the relevant Research Planning Partner, and assisted by such senior staff as this group deems necessary to understand the output portfolio, will be established with Terms of reference as outlined in Appendix 1. These groups will review the pool of graded outputs to select outputs for submission as outlined below. In the case of UOAs 1, 2 and 3 (where the UOAs do not map well to UoB structures), the review group will consist of the College DoR, the UOA output leads, including in the case of UOA1 the two designated co-ordinating output leads, and when necessary the Directors of the relevant Institutes and/or such other senior staff as deemed necessary to understand the output portfolio. This group will be supported by the MDS Research Planning Partner (RPP) and the Head of the MDS RKT

- Office. In the case of UOA12, the review group will consist of the overall UOA co-ordinator, and the Heads & output leads of the constituent schools and such other senior staff as deemed necessary to understand the output portfolio. This group will be supported by the EPS RPP.
- b) The group of staff supporting the selection process for each UOA will be proposed to, and approved by, the REF Board in advance of the selection process. In order to ensure transparency, staff in each UOA will be informed of the membership of the output review group for their UOA. In any discussions about inclusion of outputs in the portfolio, individuals should recuse themselves from the discussion if it concerns a question about the inclusion of one their own outputs, or an output for which they are a co-author.
- c) In the first stage of the output selection process, the highest ranked output for each individual who is Category A submittable will be selected. Except in the case of Main Panel D UOAs (for which different rules on co-authoring apply), where two or more persons are both authors on a given output, and each of these authors has made a significant contribution to the output, then the normal decision will be to attribute that output to the person who otherwise has the fewest high quality outputs. Co-authored outputs selected in this way must take account of the provisions relating to numbers of co-authors outlined in the Panel Criteria and Working Methods paragraphs 221-225 (Panel A sub-panels); paragraphs 226-230 (Panel B sub-panels) and paragraphs 231-232 (Panel C sub-panels).
- d) In UOAs 25-33, there is provision for the limited selection of co-authored outputs twice in the same submission (see paragraphs 233-235 of the Panel Criteria and Working Methods). Such outputs are expected to be exceptional and should not account for more than five per cent of the outputs, or one output (whichever is the greater) within a submission. These provisions must be taken into account when selecting outputs for these UOAs, with the highest graded co-authored outputs selected twice up to the limit, following which the process will revert to that described in paragraph 4 above.

- e) Further outputs will then be selected to complete the UoA portfolio up to the required number (2.5 x FTE), adjusted⁵ where appropriate if individual staff circumstances have led to an approved request for a unit level reduction in the number of outputs required. The selection will be made on the basis of the position of the output in the UoA outputs rank order, but eliminating outputs that exceed the limit of 5 per individual (unless these are attributable to other authors). This process will take account of which outputs have been double-weighted (in these cases reserves must also be identified). It will also include the eligible outputs in the rank order from former members of academic staff who left the institution in the REF period. The University does not expect to include any outputs from staff who were made redundant during the REF period, except where such staff were at the end of fixed term contracts.
- f) Where outputs are not published by 31 December 2020 as a consequence of delays clearly attributable to Covid-19, and there is clear evidence of a planned publication date before the end of the 2020 calendar year, a process is available to submit such outputs as outlined in Guidance on Revisions to REF2021, July 2020, paragraphs 28-40. In such instances, a case should be submitted with supporting evidence via . the UOA Outputs review group, the College challenge group and the University Outputs Review Group as described in paragraphs l and m below.
- g) The portfolio will then be reviewed (through the application of an EIA to the provisional selected output pool) with respect to (i) balance of subject areas (ii) gender balance and other protected characteristics (iii) early career researchers (iv) fixed term status and (v) part-time status.
- h) Further adjustments will continue be made between outputs that have and have not been included in the portfolio with equal rankings or near-equal rankings to ensure that the portfolio

⁵ Depending upon when decisions are received from RE's REF EDAP, adjustment to the number of outputs required may be made fairly late in the process of determining the output portfolio. Until such decisions are received, it will be assumed that the requirement remains 2.5 x fte.

reflects the diversity profile of the submitted staff of the UoA without lowering overall quality unduly.

- i) A further EIA will be conducted to ensure that adjustments have as far as possible resulted in UOA portfolios that more closely reflect the diversity profile of the submitted staff of each UoA.
- j) It should be noted that in practice a substantial proportion of this process may be facilitated by the University's CRIS system, Pure.
- k) The UOA Output review groups will also be responsible for drafting cases for Research England where it appears a reduction in the number of outputs to be submitted by the Unit is appropriate following the disclosure of staff circumstances, as outlined in section 4.4.8-4.4.10 below.
- l) College-level challenge meetings led by the Head of College and College Director of Research will then be held with each UOA to review and confirm the output selection to put forward to the University Outputs Review Group.
- m) The proposed selection of outputs for each UoA will be discussed at a meeting of the University Outputs Review Group, which will consist of the PVC (R&KT), the DPVC (Equalities) and the Head of Research Planning with the relevant Head(s) and DoR(s) of College (ie the relevant ones for that UoA), and one HoC from a college not involved with that UoA in attendance (see Appendix 1 for ToR), and a final selection agreed. Any issues will be referred to REF Board and/or UEB. This meeting will have access to all relevant EIA data available at this point.
- n) A final round of EIAs will then be conducted on the final agreed output portfolios. In the case of all EIAs conducted as a part of the output selection process, the University's EDAP will be asked to review and advise the relevant UOA via REF Board on any issues identified and possible actions needed.

4.1.5 The selection of outputs for REF will take place in Spring 2020, after the conclusion of the REF Annual Review in Autumn 2019, drawing on the output grades agreed through that process. The

challenge and approval meetings outlined in paragraphs l and m above will be scheduled for the period May-October 2020.

4.1.6 Any late adjustments that need to be made to the output portfolio will be handled via recommendations from the UOA output review groups to a final meeting of the University Output Review Group which will be scheduled for November/December 2020. It is expected that such adjustments will be minimal, and the University output review group reserve the right to refuse to approve further changes if the accompanying rationale is not sufficiently compelling, or if the changes negatively affect the overall balance and/or quality of the submitted output portfolio.

4.1.7 To be consistent with the intended approach of the Funding Bodies to the publication of REF data after the assessment process, and with the shift in approach to the submission of a portfolio of outputs rather than individual output entries, each submitted member of staff will receive a list of outputs that have been submitted for their UoA.

4.1.8 It is recognised that some individuals will only be associated with 1 submitted output, although the majority will be associated with at least 2. It is important to note that if internal grades are used subsequently as part of the consideration of the research portfolio of individuals applying for Promotions and Rewards, the number of papers submitted for the REF portfolio associated with an individual will not be a consideration, even though the individual internal grades of submitted and non-submitted papers may be. Guidance on this point will be included as part of the Promotions and Rewards processes.

4.2 Policies and procedures

4.2.1 This process was proposed at the University Executive Board (UEB) Awayday in January 2018, further discussed at REF Board in September 2018, and approved by REF Board on 26 March 2019 & UEB on 3 June 2019.

4.3 Staff, committees and training

4.3.1 Staff involved in decision making with respect to selecting outputs for submission are:

- REF Board – For membership and ToR see Appendix 1
- UOA Output review groups – For membership and ToR see Appendix 1
- College Challenge groups – For membership and ToR see Appendix 1
- University Output review group – For membership and ToR see above and Appendix 1

4.3.2 All staff involved in the selection of the final output portfolios will undertake REF-tailored E&D training, including unconscious bias training, to minimise the risk of decisions that do not fulfil inclusivity requirements. This will be mandatory and delivered on multiple occasions during Autumn 2019 – Spring 2020. Professional Services staff supporting this process will also attend this training. A summary of the training package is provided as Appendix 5. Should staff fail to attend the training, they will not be able to participate in the output selection process. All other staff involved in the preliminary reading of outputs (as opposed to determining which outputs from those which have been reviewed should be submitted) will have completed mandatory online E&D training and should be mindful of and apply its principles when grading outputs. UoA leads will be asked to check that all readers have completed this online training.

4.4 Disclosure of circumstances

4.4.1 The University is committed to supporting all its staff in their research careers, regardless of their age, disability, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief and/or sexual orientation. It is also recognised that an individual's capacity to undertake research may be affected by: career stage; caring responsibilities; illness (mental or physical); whether an individual is on a fixed term or permanent contract; works part-time; and/or has other individual circumstances.

4.4.2 It is important to note that there are differences in the nature of provisions to support individual members of staff who may have experienced difficulties in researching productively during the REF period for REF2021 relative to REF2014. In particular, there is a distinction between staff disclosing circumstances and allowances being made for the number of outputs they should be expected to submit for REF review, and the process of reducing the number of outputs for a specific unit. In the former case, the emphasis is upon appropriate support for staff in their careers and ensuring that undue pressure is not placed upon them with respect to their output contribution. In the latter case, the emphasis is upon the aggregate of individual cases which might cumulatively affect the output pool available for selection for a specific UOA.

4.4.3 The University's approach to the number of outputs expected of a member of staff to be submitted for internal review with respect to possible inclusion in a UoA portfolio is outlined in paragraph 4.1.2 above.

Disclosure of circumstances

4.4.4 Members of staff eligible to be included in the submission will be invited voluntarily to disclose individual circumstances in accordance with those described in Guidance on Submissions (see paragraphs 156-201 and Appendix L) and reproduced in Appendix 4 of this document. The purpose of this disclosure is to ensure that expectations on these staff are appropriate to their circumstances, and appropriate support provided. An additional provision for the removal of the "minimum of one" requirement for reasons associated with the Covid-19 pandemic was announced by Research England in July 2020. The details are provided in Appendix 4 of this document.

4.4.5 It is recognised that whilst Appendix 4 lays out the formal conditions under which staff circumstances applications can be made, the lived experiences of staff will not always fit neatly into such categories. In particular, the intersections between characteristics may lead to challenges for individuals, and experiences such as miscarriage or stillbirth may not appear to fit the criteria but still have had considerable impact. **Any member of staff who believes they may have a case is**

encouraged to submit an application for review, noting that the process is both voluntary and confidential.

4.4.6 Given the confidential nature of the information in question, those involved in the disclosure process will be kept to a minimum and associated data will be stored securely in line with GDPR legislation. A privacy notice will accompany the request for information stressing that:

- Only the minimum data required for the process is being requested.
- Data will not be disclosed without the permission of the data subject (see 4.4.7(d) below)
- Unless issues relating to the institution's duty of care are identified, data will only be used for the purposes of the REF process ie to ensure that expectations on the individual with respect to the number of outputs to be submitted for review are appropriate (including instances where an individual should be submitted with no outputs) and the individual is appropriately supported in their research career.
- Where requests for reduction in the number of outputs required to be submitted by a unit are made to Research England's REF EDAP, the individuals concerned will need to be identified in the case to be submitted to RE, together with minimal other data as outlined in paragraph 193 of the Guidance on Submissions. This data is not made available to REF sub-panels.
- Similarly, where requests are made for a reduction to zero of the number of outputs required of an individual, that individual will be identified in the application to RE and data provided about the circumstances in question, as outlined in paragraph 192 in Guidance on Submissions, but the relevant sub-panel will not receive this information.
- Following the REF assessment process – that is, at the end of REF2021 - the data on staff circumstances will be securely destroyed. It will be kept during 2021/2 in case of audit queries, but will not be used for any non-REF purposes.

4.4.7 The disclosure process will be as follows:

- a) All Category A submitted staff will be contacted with information about the range of eligible circumstances and the potential reduction in number of outputs required as a consequence of these, as outlined in Guidance on Submissions and reproduced in Appendix 4. A variety of different media will be used to disseminate this message, including direct emails, and the message will be repeated on a number of occasions.
- b) Staff will be offered the opportunity to disclose voluntarily whether they wish any circumstances pertaining to them be taken into account in order to modify the expectations upon them with respect to their output contribution and to ensure that where they feel it would be helpful they receive appropriate support from their department/school/institute.
- c) Disclosures will be made via a pro forma to a central contact in the Research Planning Team, and all applications will be reviewed and checked by a Staff Circumstances Group consisting of the HR Business Partners (HRBPs), the Head of Research Planning and one member of the Research Planning Team who will be responsible for running the process. Where complex circumstances are involved (that is, where the tariffs outlined in Appendix 4 cannot be applied in a straightforward way), REF EDAP will be consulted for advice. In these instances, applications will be anonymised.
- d) Staff will be asked as part of the disclosure process to indicate whether they are comfortable either with their circumstances being raised with the relevant Head of Department/School/Institute, or research group lead, or another senior member of staff as appropriate, so that the adjustment to expectations can be made and if appropriate and necessary support provided, or, if they do not wish the details of the circumstances to be raised, for the department/school/institute to be informed of the effect of these circumstances upon the individual's research activity (that is, so that adjustments are made to the expected number of outputs to be proposed by the individual in question). Should the member of staff not feel comfortable with either of these options, it will not be possible to take the disclosure

any further. In these cases, where appropriate (eg where a duty of care issue is identified), HRBPs may follow up directly with the member of staff concerned.

- e) Where a member of staff has indicated that they are comfortable with either their circumstances or the effect of these being disclosed to their school, and where additional support for that member of staff might be appropriate, a meeting will be arranged involving the member of staff, the relevant HRBP and the Head of Department/School/Institute in question, at which the reduction in expectations to which the individual is entitled will be confirmed, and an approach agreed about appropriate support for the member of staff. Such meetings would not be expected to be the norm where disclosures are made, and would only take place with the agreement of the member of staff concerned.
- f) There may be a small number of instances where the circumstances disclosed suggest an individual should be submitted with no selected outputs. In these cases, in consultation with the member of staff concerned, the relevant HRBP and Head of Research Planning will prepare a case, using the pro forma to be provided by Research England, for consideration by UoB REF EDAP, who will recommend (to REF Board) whether the case should be submitted to RE. Should any such cases be approved by RE, this outcome will also be communicated to the member of staff in question and to the UOA REF lead and relevant RPP (neither of whom will not receive the details of the case), in order to ensure that the relevant submission is appropriately managed.
- g) If an individual feels that despite the above process, pressure is being brought to bear upon them to produce more outputs for review than has been agreed under (e) above, they may bring this to the attention of the Special Circumstances group, who will raise it with the PVC (R&KT) and DPVC Equalities.
- h) Such cases will be discussed by the PVC (R&KT) and the DPVC Equalities with the relevant Head of College, and a course of action agreed.

- i) The process will be run at least three times between June and December 2019 (that is, members of staff will be invited to apply three times during this period), and then there will be up to three further invitations during the period from January 2020 to March 2021, to identify whether any new members of staff are also eligible for reductions and support, and whether this affects the number of outputs required for particular submissions.
- j) Declarations will be aggregated by UOA to identify where there may be implications for the number of outputs to be submitted for the UOA; in these instances, the process below will be followed.

Paragraphs (k)-(n) were added to the Code of Practice in March 2020 following feedback from Internal Audit and BUCU.

- k) Staff will be informed, when EDAP makes decisions about their cases, that if they disagree with the decision of EDAP, or their circumstances change such that the agreed reduction is no longer appropriate, they may re-submit a case to EDAP for further review. Such a re-submission should include evidence that demonstrates why the initial decision requires changing. EDAP will review re-submissions and make decisions about outcomes based on the standard reduction tariff laid out in this Code of Practice, taking into account any relevant precedent established through review of other cases (eg agreed approaches to dealing with specific types of illness).
- l) Similarly, individuals whose cases have been heard by the Staff Circumstances Group will be made aware of the opportunity to re-submit their case if their circumstances change such that the agreed reduction is no longer appropriate, or if they disagree with the outcome. Such a re-submission should include evidence that demonstrates why the initial decision requires changing. The Staff Circumstances Group will review re-submissions and make decisions about outcomes based on the standard reduction tariff laid out in this Code of Practice.

- m) Should a member of staff still be unhappy with the outcome following such a re-submission, they may submit an Appeal to the Special Circumstances Appeals Panel. This will comprise three members of staff appointed by the PVC (R&KT) and DPVC (Equalities). Where possible, Appeals cases will be anonymised, and the normal Appeals process, outlined below, will be followed.
- n) If cases are not anonymised, any member of the panel who has a conflict of interest with the case will recuse themselves, and an alternative panel member will be identified by the PVC(R&KT) and DPVC (Equalities), drawing on the membership of the main Appeals panel.

Unit reductions

4.4.8 When considering whether the University should submit an application to Research England for a unit to reduce the required number of outputs, it will normally be expected that a combination of the following characteristics will apply, noting the University's expectation that all individuals will normally be able to submit a minimum of 3 outputs for review:

- The summed reduction for the UoA calculated through the Tariff amounts to at least 10% of the total outputs required to be submitted for the unit.
- No significant pool of research from former staff to be drawn on
- A high proportion of co-authored outputs, where co-authors are within the UOA, reducing flexibility in the output pool

In addition, the University will take into account paragraphs 15 and 16 of the Interim Report of Research England's EDAP, published in September 2020, and in particular the observations regarding the percentage of staff declaring eligible circumstances, and will make a considered judgement based on a combination of the available evidence.

4.4.9 We consider that disciplinary differences – in particular patterns of publishing (in terms of both volume and nature of outputs) – may mean that different units may be differently affected by the same combination of circumstances, and this will be taken into account when assessing cases.

4.4.10 The process will be as follows:

- a) As noted above, data about individual staff circumstances will be aggregated at unit level to determine whether there might be a case to make a submission to RE to reduce the required number of outputs for a submission.
- b) These data (not including details of individuals concerned) will be shared with the Head of Department/school/institute and REF lead and the relevant RPP as part of the outputs selection process (paragraph 4.1.4(k)). Where it appears that the conditions described in 4.4.8 above apply, the College Director of Research, supported by the UOA level output selection group, will develop a draft case (using the pro forma to be supplied by Research England) for submission to the University Outputs Review Group.
- c) The University Outputs Review Group will review all unit level cases to ensure an equitable approach is applied (taking account of disciplinary differences where appropriate) and will recommend to REF Board which cases should be submitted to Research England by their specified deadline. In cases of dispute, REF Board will refer the matter to UEB.

4.4.11 We will submit a report to Research England following submission in Spring 2021, reflecting our experience of this process and including aggregate data of the number of staff requesting reductions and how this fed through into requests for unit reductions. We will also take this opportunity to work with the cohort of staff who requested reductions and with their departments/schools/institute to assess how successful the process was from their perspective.

4.5 Equality Impact Assessments

4.5.1 EIAs with respect to the selection of the output portfolios for each UOA will be undertaken as outlined above in paragraphs 4.1.3 and 4.1.4. Comparisons will be made between the output pool prior to selection, and at key points during the selection process, and when the final output portfolio for each UOA is agreed. The University's REF EDAP will review these data and advise on any key characteristics or trends identified. Where there is evidence that any particular cohort of protected

characteristics or combinations of protected characteristics are being disadvantaged by these proposals further investigations will be made to establish why this may be the case and what remedial action should be undertaken. Heads of College working with heads of school/departments/institutes and staff with designated responsibility for E&D issues in their college will have responsibility for ensuring that any potential underlying issues identified are investigated and addressed. They will be expected to report back to REF Board via the University's REF EDAP periodically through the process and finally in Spring 2021, outlining their proposed plans of action.

4.5.2 Where it becomes obvious that there are issues with respect to specific protected characteristics which apply more broadly across the University, the DPVC (Equalities) will take the lead on investigating and addressing these, working with the relevant Heads of College and reporting back to REF Board via the University's EDAP in Spring 2021, outlining the proposed plans of action.

Part 5

5.1 Where individuals wish to raise general issues concerning the application of this Code of Practice, they may do so in confidence to the Head of Research Planning.

5.2 Specific concerns about how the application of the Code of Practice has affected an individual's inclusion in the submitted staff pool should be raised through the appeals processes described above.

5.3 In addition, the Funding Councils are putting in place a mechanism to enable individuals to make a formal complaint, where it is believed that agreed processes are not being followed. Individual complaints will not be able to challenge the adequacy of the approved code itself.

5.4 It is expected that complaints regarding the implementation of this Code of Practice will be resolved through the appeals process outlined in Appendix 3. There may however be instances where such complaints cannot be satisfactorily resolved in this way. For such circumstances, the UK Funding Bodies process will offer a robust and independent process to consider such complaints and identify appropriate action.

Code of Practice

Appendices

Appendix 1a: Terms of Reference and Membership for relevant Committees

REF Board

University REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel

Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher Panel

UOA Output Selection Groups

College challenge groups

University Output Selection Group

Appendix 1b: Appointment processes for key staff

Appendix 2: Pro Formas

Research Independence assessments (includes SigRes cases)

Research Independence and Significant Responsibility for Research appeals

Appendix 3: Appeals

Appendix 4: Individual Staff Circumstances

Appendix 5: E&D Training

Appendix 6: Communications Plan

Appendix 7: List of Research Fellowships

Appendix 8: E&D focussed risk analysis of the Code of Practice

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference and Membership for relevant committees

REF Board

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership:

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (R&KT) (In the chair)
The Five Heads of College
The Five College Directors of R&KT
The DPVC (Research Impact)
The Head of Research Planning & chair of the REF Management Committee
The Director of HR or her nominee
The Director of Finance or her nominee
The Director of Strategic Planning
Secretary: the Deputy Head of the Research Planning Team

(Membership is ex officio)

Terms of Reference

The REF Board will:

1. Oversee and monitor progress in the delivery of the REF2021 strategy.
2. Respond to national changes in the REF process and criteria and, if appropriate, propose changes in the REF2021 strategy to adapt to the new requirements.
3. Oversee the process for compiling the REF2021 return (with advice from the REF Management Committee).
4. Determine the final shape and content of the return (including reviewing late drafts of textual components of the submissions).
5. Oversee the provision of support for the REF as managed by the REF Management Committee.
6. Determine the submission strategy and tactics where individuals or groups could be submitted to more than one UOA.
7. Make periodic reports to the VC and Council on REF progress, including overseeing the REF KPTs.
8. Determine how cases of difficulty or disagreement should be handled, except in those cases where named members of staff are involved (where a separate Appeals process may be invoked).
9. Develop and have responsibility for the University's Code of Practice on Submissions, including having oversight (with the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel) of E&D issues and EIAs.

Reporting Relationships:

Reports to: UEB, Research Committee

Reporting into: REF Management Committee
Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher Panel
REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel
REF Appeals Committee

REF Board was established in 2012 to have formal responsibility for overseeing preparation for REF2014, and has continued in place with the same constitution but updated terms of reference for REF2021.

University REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership

DPVC (Equalities), in the chair

At least ten representatives, normally two from each College (comprising a mix of professorial and early career staff)

If appropriate nominations are received, up to three additional members who may be external or drawn from Professional Services

The University's Equality and Diversity Advisor

Secretary: A member of the Research Planning Team

The Panel will be deemed quorate with one attendee present from each College.

Terms of Reference

Individual Staff Circumstances

1. To review and advise on individual staff circumstance cases where reductions to zero are under consideration;
2. To review and advise on individual staff circumstances requiring a judgement about the applicable reduction;
3. To advise UOAs on best practice in supporting staff with individual circumstances;
4. To review and advise on the outcomes of Equality Impact Assessments and appropriate next steps.

REF Environment

By reviewing and critiquing draft templates:

1. To advise on E&D aspects of the institutional environment template
2. To advise on E&D aspects of the unit level environment templates, including how these relate to support for staff with individual staff circumstances

Reporting Relationship:

Reports to:

REF Board

Appointments to the Panel

- The chair of the panel and the University's E&D adviser are ex officio
- Appointments to the remaining places on the panel were made through open application. A set of characteristics were identified against which applicants were screened by the PVC (R&KT) and DPVC (Equalities)
- Where insufficient applications meeting the criteria were received, the PVC (R&KT) and DPVC (Equalities) worked with senior staff in Colleges to identify other possible applicants
- Gender balance, a spread of staff from different career stages and representation from ethnic minorities were key criteria in determining the overall balance of the panel

Characteristics & criteria

- Demonstrable interest in E&D issues, including how these apply to the research environment, evidenced either through the applicant's research or through an existing role within UoB or a suitable role outside the University
- A good understanding of REF E&D requirements, including how these might be evidenced in REF Environment templates
- Availability/commitment to attend University EDAP meetings which will be held regularly during the second half of 2018/19 and through 2019/2020 and early 2020/2021

Significant Responsibility for Research/Independent Researcher Panel

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership

The PVC(R&KT) (in the chair)

A College DoR (deputy chair), to be identified by the Chair

One representative from each of the Colleges with REF knowledge, typically a senior member of staff with PI experience, nominated by the relevant Head of College and College DoR. One of these representatives will be identified as E&D champion for the process.

The Head of the Clinical Academic Training Programme (to advise on any issues associated with Significant Responsibility for Research)

In attendance:

The Head or Deputy Head of Research Planning

The Head of the R&KT Office, MDS and the Clinical Academic Training Manager may be invited to attend for SigRes cases

Secretary: a representative of the Research Planning team

Terms of Reference

1. Having due regard to the University's Code of Practice, to identify which staff undertaking the Integrated Academic Clinical Pathway have Significant Responsibility for Research.
2. Having due regard to the University's Code of Practice, to determine which members of staff on research only contracts meet the definition of independent researchers.

Reporting relationship:

Reports to:

REF Board

Establishment:

This group was established in line with the University's CoP to enable decisions to be taken about significant responsibility for research and independent researchers in 2019 in an open and transparent manner. Membership is either ex officio or by nomination by Heads of College. Criteria for appointment where nominations are concerned is that the individual is a senior member of staff with PI experience and hence with a good understanding of research independence within their discipline area.

Modus Operandi:

It is expected that the SigRes/IR panel will conduct substantial amounts of business electronically (with due regard being paid to confidentiality). Meetings will be held periodically where discussion of complex cases (including requests for reviews of cases) is required.

UOA Output Selection Groups

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership

The usual configuration of each UOA output selection group is as follows:

- The Head of School (in the chair)
- The REF Output lead
- Such senior staff as this group deem necessary to understand the output portfolio

The group will be supported by the relevant Research Planning Partner

In the case of UOAs1, 2 and 3, the groups will be constituted as follows:

- The College DoR (in the chair)
- The UOA output leads, including in the case of UOA1 the two designated coordinating output leads
- The Directors of the relevant Institutes and/or Such other senior staff as deemed necessary to understand the output portfolio.

This group will be supported by the MDS Research Planning Partner and the Head of RKT, MDS.

In the case of UOA12, the group will be constituted as follows:

- The overall UOA coordinator (in the chair)
- The Heads (unless otherwise present on the group) & output leads of the constituent schools
- Such other senior staff as deemed necessary to understand the output portfolio.

This group will be supported by the EPS Research Planning Partner.

Terms of reference

Having regard to the University's principles in constructing its REF submission (quality first and then representativeness thereafter):

1. To make selections from the pool of graded outputs which will comprise the submitted output portfolio for the UOA, following the process laid out in the University's Code of Practice (paragraphs 4.1.1 – 4.3.2) for recommendation to the University Output Selection Group
2. In so doing, to have due regard to equalities and diversity issues as laid out in the University's Code of Practice, including taking into account agreed contribution levels from researchers with individual circumstances
3. Where appropriate, to support the College Director of Research to prepare cases for unit reductions in the number of outputs to be submitted, for recommendation to the University Output Selection Group and REF Board and subsequently to Research England. To confirm appropriate documentation is in place (and copies held by the relevant RPP) to confirm that

outputs due to be published after the submission date but before the 31 December 2020 will be published by within that window

4. To review all additional information (100/300 word cases, reserve outputs) associated with outputs against the relevant panel criteria, ensure re-drafting takes place where required, and confirm final drafts to go forward with the output portfolio to the University Output Review Group.

Appointment Process

The College DoR will oversee discussions at UOA level to identify the correct group of staff to be involved in the process, consulting with the Head of College as necessary.

The proposed membership of each UOA output selection groups will be put forward to REF Board for approval in September 2019. UOAs will be expected to explain their proposed appointments in terms of the spread of disciplines to be covered in the submission. Ideally consideration should be given to ensuring appropriate representation from those with protected characteristics, especially with respect to gender balance.

Should it be necessary subsequently to amend the membership of any of the groups, consultation should take place with the College DoR and HoC and proposals should be put forward to the Chair of REF Board, who will consult further as necessary.

Members of each UOA will be informed of the membership of the UOA output selection groups after membership has been approved by REF Board.

College Challenge Groups

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership

The usual configuration of each College challenge group is as follows:

- The Head of College (in the chair)
- The College Director of Research

The groups will be supported by the Deputy Head of Research Planning.

Terms of reference

Having regard to the University's principles in constructing its REF submission (quality first and then representativeness thereafter):

To review and challenge proposals from the UOA Output Selection Groups within the relevant College with a view to ensuring that high quality submissions have been developed with appropriate regard to E&D issues

Appointment Process

Membership is *ex officio*.

University Output Selection Group

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership

PVC (R&KT) (in the chair) – ex officio

DPVC (Equalities) – ex officio

Head of Research Planning – ex officio

Secretary: the Deputy Head, Research Planning

For the principal discussion of a particular College, the HoC and DoR for that College will attend, and a further Head of College or DoR will also be in attendance, as determined by the PVC. For any final amendment meetings, one HoC or DoR will be invited to attend, as determined by the PVC.

Terms of Reference

1. Having regard to the University's principles in constructing its REF submission (quality first and then representativeness thereafter), to approve the UOA level output portfolio selections
2. To confirm that all necessary additional information (100/300 word statements and reserve outputs) are in place and of an appropriate standard
3. In order to ensure consistent practice across the institution, to advise on whether UOAs should apply for unit reductions and to review and make recommendations to REF Board on unit reduction cases prior to submission to Research England.

Appendix 1b:

Key staff participating in the procedures outlined in the Code of Practice

Key designated staff participating *ex officio* in the REF decision-making processes outlined in the Code of Practice are:

- PVC (R&KT)
- DPVC Equalities
- Heads of College
- College Directors of Research
- Heads of schools/departments/institutes
- REF leads/REF output leads

All staff participating *ex officio* in this process have REF responsibilities formally documented as part of their roles; these are summarised in *REF2021 Actions and Responsibilities* which was approved by UEB on 5 March 2018. The DPVC Equalities is involved in this process by virtue of their oversight of E&D matters across the University and in particular in relation to the academy.

Professional Services staff advising on process and procedures include:

- Head and Deputy Head of Research Planning and other members of Research Planning
- HR Business Partners
- Head of R&KT in MDS
- Clinical Academic Training Manager
- E&D advisers

All such staff are participating in the process on the basis of their roles and draw on their professional expertise in so doing.

Appointments to all the above posts are by standard University procedures; in the case of REF leads/REF output leads (and other REF roles in Schools/Institutes), appointments are made by Heads of Schools/Institutes. Appointments to REF-related committees are approved by REF Board and/or UEB.

Appendix 2: Pro formas

Research Independence assessment

(The same form should be used for assessments related to staff on the Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway, where claims relate to Significant Responsibility for Research).

Research Independence assessment form	
Full name of researcher:	
University ID:	
School/Department/Institute:	
UOA:	
Is this assessment related to an individual on the Integrated Academic Clinical Pathway, and hence linked to Significant Responsibility for Research? (See Part 2 of the CoP).	Yes/No
<p>Rationale: <i>This must address the criteria for research independence laid out in the University's Code of Practice (paragraph 3.1.2). Where appropriate, evidence should be provided (eg, grant details where the claim is based on an individual being a PI). Additional supporting information/evidence may be appended where this would be helpful.</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation: This researcher should/should not (delete as appropriate) be treated as independent for the purposes of eligibility for submission to REF 2021.</p>	
Name of Head of School/Department/Institute	
Signature of Head of School/Department/Institute	
Date	

Research Independence: Appeals

This form should be used where an individual wishes to request that the SigRes/IR Group reviews their decision.

Appeals may be submitted both to indicate you consider you should be classed as an independent researcher, or to indicate you consider you should not be so classed.

Research Independence appeals form	
Full name of researcher:	
University ID:	
School/Department/Institute:	
UOA:	
Is this application related to an individual on the Integrated Academic Clinical Pathway, and hence linked to Significant Responsibility for Research? (See Part 2 of the CoP).	Yes/No
Original decision of the SigRes/IR Group (<i>please include the date you were notified of this decision</i>):	
Please explain why you disagree with this decision: <i>You should address the criteria for research independence laid out in the University's Code of Practice (paragraph 3.1.2). Where appropriate, evidence should be provided (eg, grant details where the claim is based on being a PI). Additional supporting information/evidence may be appended where this would be helpful.</i>	
Name of Head of School/Department/Institute	
Signature of Head of School/Department/Institute	
Date	

University of Birmingham Staff Circumstances application form

This form has been adapted from the standard pro forma supplied by Research England's REF team.

Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see '[Guidance on submissions](#)', paragraphs 117-122). As part of the university's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

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

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an 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 (see Appendix 4 of the University's Code of Practice, Summary of relevant reductions for staff circumstances, paragraph 6 for the definition of qualifying period of family-related leave)
- Junior clinical academics (those who have been deemed by the University to have Significant Responsibility for Research) who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020)
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment
- COVID-19 related circumstances (REF6a only)⁶

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form. Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01).

⁶ As well as effects due to applicable circumstances (such as ill health, caring responsibilities), this includes other personal circumstances related to COVID-19 (such as furloughed staff, health-related or clinical staff diverted to frontline services, staff resource diverted to other priority areas within the HEI in response to COVID-19); and / or external factors related to COVID-19 (for example, restricted access to research facilities).

Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

Ensuring Confidentiality

- Only the minimum data required for the process is being requested.
- The submitted forms will be reviewed by the Staff Circumstances Group, which consists of the HR Business Partners, the Head of Research Planning and those members of the Research Planning Team responsible for running the process. Where the tariffs outlined in Appendix 4 of the Code of Practice (CoP)- cannot be applied in a straightforward way the University’s REF EDAP will be consulted for advice. In these instances, data will be anonymised.
- Data will not be disclosed without the permission of the individual submitting the application (see CoP paragraphs 4.4.6(d))
- Unless issues relating to the institution’s duty of care are identified, data will only be used for the purposes of the REF process, that is, to ensure that expectations on the individual with respect to the number of outputs to be submitted for review are appropriate (including instances where an individual should be submitted with no outputs) and the individual is appropriately supported in their research career.
- Where requests for reduction in the number of outputs required to be submitted by a unit are made to Research England’s REF EDAP, the individuals concerned will need to be identified in the case to be submitted to RE, together with minimal other data as outlined in paragraph 193 of the Guidance on Submissions, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. This data is not made available to REF sub-panels.
- Similarly, where requests are made for a reduction to zero of the number of outputs required of an individual, that individual will be identified in the application to RE and data provided about the circumstances in question, as outlined in paragraph 192 in GoS, but the relevant sub-panel will not receive this information.
- Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals’ circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.
- Following the REF assessment process – that is, at the end of REF2021 - the data will be securely destroyed. It will be kept during 2021 in case of audit queries.

Changes in circumstances

The university recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2021). If this is the case, then staff should contact their HR partner to provide the updated information.

HR Business Partners for each College are as follows:

College of Arts and Law	Karen Martin	k.a.martin@bham.ac.uk
College of Social Science	Lora Morris	l.c.morris@bham.ac.uk
College of Engineering and Physical Science	Emma Stanway	e.stanway@bham.ac.uk

College of Life and Environmental Science	Helen Barlow	h.l.barlow@bham.ac.uk
College of Medical and Dental Science	Sally Steele	s.l.steele@bham.ac.uk

To submit this form please send by email to: REF-Confidential@contacts.bham.ac.uk

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

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

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

Yes

No

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

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

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

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by the Staff Circumstances Group and associated support staff; where I give permission, (see below) relevant contacts within my school, and in some circumstances the University's REF EDAP
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree

Name: Print name here

Signed: Sign or initial here

Date: Insert date here

I agree to the details of my circumstances being shared with my Head of School/Department/Institute or Head of Research Group, so that a discussion can be had about my support needs to research productively and so that there can be agreement with respect to the appropriate number of outputs I should propose for the output pool for my UOA

I do not wish the details of my circumstances to be shared, but I do wish the effect of these to be shared with my Head of School/Department/Institute or Head of Research Group, so that a discussion can be had about my support needs to research productively and so that there can be agreement with respect to the appropriate number of outputs I should propose for the output pool for my UOA

I would like to be contacted by:

Email Insert email address

Phone Insert contact telephone number

Staff circumstances

Research England forms for unit reductions/individuals going down to zero as available in the REF submission system.

Appendix 3:

Appeals

Appeals Panel

Terms of Reference and Membership

Membership

The Vice-Principal or the PVC (Education), depending upon availability, in the chair

Deputy Chair, a senior member of academic staff at the University (eg one of the DPVCs), as identified by the Chairs

Three members of staff selected from a panel nominated by Colleges, and not including a representative from the appellant's college; panel members must not have been involved in REF decision making processes

The panel will be supported by a panel of secretaries drawn from Professional Services offices.

Terms of Reference

To review and make recommendations on appeals submitted by members of academic staff.

Appeals Process

The following principles and procedures will be observed by the University when dealing with appeals from members of academic staff on decisions made with respect to significant responsibility for research or research independence.

1. Principles

In considering requests for appeal, the University will observe the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness, namely that whoever takes decisions should be impartial, that each party must be given reasonable notice of the case, and that each party has access to all the information in good time before a review hearing takes place.

2. Grounds for Review

The University will consider requests for appeal from members of academic staff against decisions with respect to:

- (i) Whether an individual on the Integrated Academic Training Pathway has, or has not, significant responsibility for research as evidenced by whether they meet the criteria for research independence
- (ii) Whether an individual on a research only contract is, or is not, an independent researcher.

In any case, evidence must be provided that:

- (i) due process was not followed OR
- (ii) that the criteria relating to research independence laid out in the University's Code of Practice (paragraph 3.1.2) were not appropriately applied.

3. REF Staff Selection Appeal Panel

The membership of an REF Staff Selection Appeal Panel shall consist of a chair (either the Vice-Principal or the PVC (Education), depending upon availability, a deputy Chair (as identified by the Chairs) and three persons drawn from a panel nominated by the Colleges. The Panel will not include any representative from the individual's College.

Secretarial support will be drawn from a panel comprising members of the Professional Services not otherwise involved supporting the process of compiling the REF submission.

4. Submissions

Relevant members of academic staff will be notified of the guidelines for the appeals process, including the deadline by which applications must be submitted and the person to whom such submissions should be made. This information will be on the University's REF website, and all relevant members of staff will be informed of the appeals mechanism when they are provided with feedback about whether they have been deemed to have significant responsibility for research (staff on the Integrated Academic Training Pathway) or be independent researchers (staff on research only contracts).

A written summary (not more than two sides of A4) is required of facts which the individual wishes the Panel to take into account, together with evidence that these were not appropriately considered by the SigRes/IR Panel. The original submission(s) to the SigRes/IR panel should also be included.

The Head of School/Department/Institute concerned (where appropriate) and the Chair of the SigRes/IR Panel will be asked to provide written comments on the member of staff's submission.

The Head of School/Department/Institute's and the Chair of the SigRes/IR Panel's responses (and that of the Head of College where appropriate) will be copied to the member of staff for any further comment.

5. Process

In the first instance, the Deputy Chair will undertake an initial review of the appeal to identify whether it can be dealt with informally. Should this not be the case, the formal procedure outlined below will be followed.

The Appeals Panel will normally conduct the appeal on the basis of the submitted paperwork, and may, exceptionally, convene a meeting with the individual if this is deemed necessary, for example where further discussion and clarification of the case is clearly essential. In cases where a meeting with the individual is convened, the Chair or Deputy Chair of the SigRes/IR Panel, and where appropriate the relevant Head of School/Department/Institute will be present at the meeting.

The meeting will follow the following procedure:

- The individual, the Head of School/Department/Institute (or representative), the Chair/Deputy Chair of the SigRes/IR Panel and the Head of College (or representative) will each have the opportunity to make a statement
- Members of the Appeals Panel will have the opportunity to question the individual and the Head of School/Department/Institute (or representative) and the Chair of the SigRes/IR panel
- The individual, the Head of School/Department/Institute (or representative) and the Chair of the SigRes/IR Group) may each, through the Chairperson, question the other

- The Appeals Panel may request any final clarification of issues raised and the Chairperson shall request the individual to indicate whether s/he has any further points s/he wishes to clarify

The members of the Appeals Panel will, in the absence of all other persons except the Secretary to the Appeals Panel, determine what advice to give to the Chair of the SigRes/IR Panel and identify a recommended course of action which is appropriate, taking into consideration the University's Code of Practice.

A written record of the proceedings shall be kept by the Secretary to the Appeals Panel.

The final decision on whether a particular individual should be considered to have Significant Responsibility for Research or be deemed to be an independent researcher will be taken in the light of the advice from the Appeals Panel by the SigRes/IR Panel, and then be reported to the individual.

Appendix 3b Staff Circumstances Appeals Process

B. Appeals Process

The following principles and procedures will be observed by the University when dealing with appeals from members of academic staff on decisions made with respect to decisions about reductions in the number of outputs required to be put forward for review in Pure related to individual staff circumstances.

1. Principles

In considering requests for appeal, the University will observe the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness, namely that whoever takes decisions should be impartial, that each party must be given reasonable notice of the case, and that each party has access to all the information in good time before a review hearing takes place.

2. Grounds for Review

The University will consider requests for appeal from members of academic staff with respect to whether any reduction proposed following a review of an individual's circumstances is appropriate (that is, in line with the required tariffs).

In any case, evidence must be provided that:

- (iii) due process was not followed OR
- (iv) that the tariffs relating to staff circumstances laid out in the University's Code of Practice (Appendix 4) were not appropriately applied.

3. REF Staff Selection Appeal Panel

The membership of a REF Staff Selection Appeal Panel shall consist of three persons identified by the PVC (Research & Knowledge Transfer) and DPVC (Equalities) (see point A3 above).

Secretarial support will be drawn from a panel comprising members of the Professional Services not otherwise involved with supporting the process of compiling the REF submission.

4. Submissions

Relevant members of academic staff will be notified of the guidelines for the appeals process, including the deadline by which applications must be submitted and the person to whom such submissions should be made.

As this process has been introduced following the approval of the University's Code of Practice, individuals about whom decisions have already been made by EDAP or the Staff Circumstances Group will be informed about the introduction of this process directly. These amendments will be on the University's REF website, and all relevant members of staff applying for reductions will be informed of the appeals mechanism when they are provided with feedback about their case.

A written summary (not more than two sides of A4) is required of the facts that the individual wishes the Panel to take into account, together with evidence that these were not appropriately considered

by the Special Circumstances Group or EDAP. The original submission(s) to the Special Circumstances Group/EDAP should also be included.

The Chair of the Special Circumstances Group/EDAP will be asked to provide written comments on the member of staff's submission.

This response will be copied to the member of staff for any further comment.

5. Process

The Appeals Panel will normally conduct the appeal on the basis of the submitted paperwork, and may, exceptionally, convene a meeting with the individual if this is deemed necessary, for example where further discussion and clarification of the case is clearly essential. In cases where a meeting with the individual is convened, the Chair or Deputy Chair of EDAP or the Chair of the Special Circumstances Group will be present at the meeting.

The meeting will follow the following procedure:

- The individual, the Chair/Deputy Chair of EDAP or the Special Circumstances Group will each have the opportunity to make a statement
- Members of the Appeals Panel will have the opportunity to question the individual and the Chair of EDAP/the Special Circumstances Group
- The individual and the Chair of EDAP/the Special Circumstances Group may each, through the Chairperson, question the other
- The Appeals Panel may request any final clarification of issues raised and the Chairperson shall request the individual to indicate whether s/he has any further points s/he wishes to clarify

The members of the Appeals Panel will, in the absence of all other persons except the Secretary to the Appeals Panel, determine what advice to give to the Chair of EDAP or the Special Circumstances Group and identify a recommended course of action which is appropriate, taking into consideration the University's Code of Practice.

A written record of the proceedings shall be kept by the Secretary to the Appeals Panel.

The final decision on what tariff reduction should be applied will be taken in the light of the advice from the Appeals Panel by EDAP or the Special Circumstances Group, and then be reported to the individual.

Appendix 4: Individual Staff Circumstances

Summary of all applicable circumstances

Reproduced below are paragraphs 160 to 163 of the Guidance on submissions, which outline the range of applicable circumstances. Annex L, referred to in the text below, follows. Also provided is Table 1 from the Guidance on the Code of Practice, which outlines and defines all protected characteristics and indicates the associated legislation.

Summary of applicable circumstances

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

- a. Qualifying as an ECR (on the basis set out in paragraphs 148 and 149 and Annex L).
- b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- d. Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6, as defined in paragraphs 162 to 163.
- e. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Disability: this is defined in the ‘Guidance on codes of practice’, Table 1⁷ under ‘Disability’.
 - ii. Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.
 - iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances set out in Annex L.
 - iv. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - v. Gender reassignment.
 - vi. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in the ‘Guidance on codes of practice’, Table 1, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

125. 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.

126. 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

⁷ Table 1 follows at the end of the extracts from the Guidance on Submissions

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.

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

Summary of relevant reductions for staff circumstances

Reproduced below is Annex L from the Guidance on Submissions, which outlines reductions for staff circumstances.

Annex L: Reductions for staff circumstances

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

Early career researchers

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

Table L1: Early career researchers: Permitted reduction in outputs

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

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks

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

Table L2: Secondments or career breaks: Permitted reduction in outputs

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

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

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

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:

- a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
- b. Additional paternity or adoption leave⁸, or shared parental leave⁹ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.

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

⁸ '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'.

⁹ '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.

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

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

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

Combining circumstances

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

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

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

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

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

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

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

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

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

Below is an extract from the Guidance on Codes of Practice which summarises characteristics protected by equalities legislation (“Table 1”).

Table 1: Summary of equality legislation

<p>Age</p>	<p>All employees within the HE sector are protected from unlawful age discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment under the Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or if they are associated with a person of a particular age group.</p> <p>Age discrimination can occur when people of a particular age group are treated less favourably than people in other age groups. An age group could be, for example, people of the same age, the under 30s or people aged 45-50. A person can belong to a number of different age groups.</p> <p>Age discrimination will not be unlawful if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. However, in the context of the REF, the view of the funding bodies is that if a researcher produces excellent research an HEI will not be able to justify not selecting their outputs because of their age group.</p> <p>It is important to note that early career researchers (ECRs) are likely to come from a range of age groups. The definition of ECR used in the REF (see ‘Guidance on submissions’, paragraphs 148 to 149) is not limited to young people.</p> <p>HEIs should also note that, given developments in equalities law in the UK and Europe, the default retirement age has been abolished from 1 October 2011 in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>The Equality Act 2010, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (Northern Ireland only) and the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 prevent unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment relating to disability.</p> <p>Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to have a disability or if they are associated with a person who has a disability (for example, if they are responsible for caring for a family member with a disability).</p>

	<p>A person is considered to have a disability if they have or have had a physical and/or mental impairment which has 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Long-term impairments include those that last or are likely to last for at least 12 months.</p> <p>Cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis and progressive/degenerative conditions are disabilities too, even if they do not currently have an adverse effect on the carrying out of day-to-day activities. An impairment which is managed by medication or medical treatment, but which would have had a substantial and long-term adverse effect if not so managed, is also a disability.</p> <p>The definition of disability is different in Northern Ireland in that a list of day-to-day activities is referred to.</p> <p>There is no list of day-to-day activities for England, Scotland and Wales but day-to-day activities are taken to mean activities that people generally, not a specific individual, carry out on a daily or frequent basis.</p> <p>While there is no definitive list of what is considered a disability, it covers a wide range of impairments including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sensory impairments • impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, depression and epilepsy • progressive impairments, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, HIV and cancer • organ specific impairments, including respiratory conditions and cardiovascular diseases • developmental impairments, such as autistic spectrum disorders and dyslexia • mental health conditions such as depression and eating disorders • impairments caused by injury to the body or brain. <p>It is important for HEIs to note that people who have had a past disability are also protected from discrimination, victimisation and harassment because of disability.</p> <p>Equality law requires HEIs to anticipate the needs of people with disabilities and make reasonable adjustments for them. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment constitutes discrimination. If a researcher's impairment has affected the quantity of their research outputs, the submitting unit may return a reduced number of outputs (see 'Guidance on submissions', Part 3, Section 1, 'Staff circumstances').</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>The Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 protect from discrimination, harassment and victimisation of trans people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex. Staff in HE do not have to be under medical supervision to be afforded protection because they are trans and staff are protected if they are perceived to be undergoing or have undergone related procedures. They are also protected if they are associated with someone who has proposed, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.</p>

	<p>Trans people who undergo gender reassignment will need to take time off for appointments and, in some cases, for medical assistance. The transition process is lengthy, often taking several years, and it is likely to be a difficult period for the trans person as they seek recognition of their new gender from their family, friends, employer and society as a whole.</p> <p>The Gender Recognition Act 2004 gave enhanced privacy rights to trans people who undergo gender reassignment. A person acting in an official capacity who acquires information about a person's status as a transsexual may commit a criminal offence if they pass the information to a third party without consent.</p> <p>Consequently, staff within HEIs with responsibility for REF submissions must ensure that the information they receive about gender reassignment is treated with particular care.</p> <p>If a staff member's ability to work productively throughout the REF assessment period has been constrained due to gender reassignment, the unit may return a reduced number of research outputs (see 'Guidance on submissions', Part 3, Section 1, 'Staff circumstances'). Information about the member of staff will be kept confidential as described in 'Guidance on submissions', paragraph 195.</p> <p>HEIs should note that the Scottish government recently consulted on, and the UK government is currently consulting on, reform of the Gender Recognition Act 2004, which may include streamlining the procedure to legally change gender.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 as amended, individuals are protected from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership status. The protection from discrimination is to ensure that people who are married or in a civil partnership receive the same benefits and treatment in employment. The protection from discrimination does not apply to single people.</p> <p>HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not inadvertently discriminate against staff who are married or in civil partnerships.</p>
Political opinion	<p>The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protects staff from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of political opinion.</p> <p>HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not inadvertently discriminate against staff based on their political opinion.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 women are protected from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Consequently, where researchers have taken time out of work, or their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period has been affected, because of pregnancy and/or maternity, the submitting unit may return a reduced number of research outputs, as set out in 'Guidance on submissions', paragraphs 169 to 172.</p>

	<p>In addition, HEIs should ensure that female researchers who are pregnant or on maternity leave are kept informed about and included in their submissions process.</p> <p>For the purposes of this summary it is important to note that primary adopters have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave.</p>
Race	<p>The Equality Act 2010 and the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation connected to race. The definition of race includes colour, ethnic or national origins or nationality. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular race.</p> <p>HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not discriminate against staff based on their race or assumed race (for example, based on their name).</p>
Religion and belief including non-belief	<p>The Equality Act 2010 and the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to religion or belief. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular religion or belief.</p> <p>HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not discriminate against staff based on their actual or perceived religion or belief, including non-belief. 'Belief' includes any structured philosophical belief with clear values that has an effect on how its adherents conduct their lives.</p>
Sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave)	<p>The Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to sex. Employees are also protected because of their perceived sex or because of their association with someone of a particular sex.</p> <p>The sex discrimination provisions of the Equality Act explicitly protect women from less favourable treatment because they are breastfeeding. Consequently, the impact of breastfeeding on a woman's ability to work productively will be taken into account, as set out in 'Guidance on submissions', Part 3, Section 1, 'Staff circumstances'.</p> <p>If a mother who meets the continuity of employment test wishes to return to work early or shorten her maternity leave/pay, she will be entitled to shared parental leave with the father or her partner within the first year of the baby's birth. Partners may also be eligible for shared parental leave or pay. Fathers/partners who take additional paternity or adoption leave will have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave and barriers that exist to taking the leave, or as a result of having taken it, could constitute unlawful sex discrimination. Consequently, where researchers have taken additional paternity and adoption leave, the submitting unit may return a reduced number of outputs, as set out in 'Guidance on submissions', Annex L.</p> <p>HEIs need to be wary of implementing procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 that would be easier for men to comply with than women, or vice versa. There are many cases where a requirement to work full-time (or less</p>

	<p>favourable treatment of people working part-time or flexibly) has been held to discriminate unlawfully against women.</p> <p>HEIs should note that there are now requirements under UK and Scottish legislation for public authorities (including HEIs) to report information on the percentage difference amongst employees between men and women’s average hourly pay (excluding overtime).</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>The Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to sexual orientation. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person who is of a particular sexual orientation.</p> <p>HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not discriminate against staff based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.</p>
Welsh language	<p>The Welsh Language Act 1993 places a duty on public bodies in Wales to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis. This is reinforced by the provisions of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards (No 6) Regulations 2017.</p> <p>The arrangements for the assessment of outputs in the medium of Welsh by the REF panels are set out in ‘Guidance on submissions’, paragraphs 284 and 285.</p>

Removing the minimum of one requirement – amendments announced by Research England in July 2020

(the text below is drawn from Guidance on Revisions to REF2021, REF2020/02, published July 2020, paragraph 21)

In addition to the existing guidance for REF6a reductions, the minimum of one output requirement may be removed for a Category A submitted staff member that has not been able to produce an eligible output¹, where the following circumstances apply:

- a) Output(s) in the process of being produced have been affected by COVID-19 during the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020). This includes effects due to applicable circumstances (such as ill health, caring responsibilities); other personal circumstances related to COVID-19 (such as furloughed staff, health-related or clinical staff diverted to frontline services, staff resource diverted to other priority areas within the HEI in response to COVID-19); and/or external factors related to COVID-19 (for example, restricted access to research facilities); **and**
- b) The overall impact of the COVID-19 effects, combined with other applicable circumstances affecting the staff member’s ability to research productively during the assessment period, is deemed similar to the impact of the circumstances cases set out at paragraph 179a. to c. of the ‘Guidance on submissions’. For example, where a staff member is an early career researcher, or has held a fractional contract for a significant

proportion of the assessment period, and has experienced COVID-19 related disruption to the production of an eligible output².

¹ In line with existing guidance, this means there is no output attributable to the staff member by 31 July 2020 that is eligible either within the pre-existing guidance on output eligibility or under the provision for delayed outputs – see paragraph 29. Where an output is made publicly available, or is eligible under the delayed outputs provision, after 31 July 2020, an institution may optionally submit it and remove the REF6a form for the staff member to whom the output is attributed.

² As a reminder, REF6a reductions may be made on the basis of absence from work due to working part-time, where this has had an exceptional effect on ability to work productively throughout the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020. See paragraph 179.a., footnote 10, of the 'Guidance on submissions'.

Appendix 5: E&D training

Equality training to be undertaken

1. All staff involved in reviewing outputs must have undertaken the University's mandatory Diversity training
2. In addition, all staff involved in the processes described in the University's CoP must undertake REF-tailored E&D training sessions, which will be face-to-face, not on-line. This will include relevant Professional Services staff as indicated in throughout the CoP.
3. The training will run as follows:

In June 2019: Training of REF EDAP, SigRes/IR panels and Professional Services staff

From Sept 2019 – January 2020: training of members of UOA and University output selection groups (this period will be extended if required)

4. The aim of the training is to ensure that all staff involved in REF2021 understand the equality and diversity requirements of REF and their role in ensuring a fair and unbiased process. The specific learning objectives for individuals attending are:
 - To understand the University's and individual's responsibilities with regards to treating staff fairly in relation to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and equality-related issues (e.g. part-time and fixed term working)
 - To understand the potential impacts that protected characteristics and related issues can have on academic careers and outputs
 - To understand and take action, as necessary, to prevent any unfair impact of those issues in relation to REF2021
 - To understand the potential impact of unconscious bias in decision-making processes
 - To be aware of their own potential unconscious biases and how to implement strategies to minimise the impact of such biases

Appendix 6: Communications Plan

When	What	Message	How
March 2019	REF Board approval of draft CoP Invite nominations for UoB REF EDAP Invite nominations for other posts	Nominations information will cover: Who is eligible for nomination/self-nomination; What evidence of 'suitability' is required; likely time commitment and keys dates where the candidate must be available.	REF Board approval – via EW Callout for EDAP Nominations: A general callout via E&D Lead, issued as an All Staff mailshot – however we will specifically target Wellbeing Services, BAME Network, Women's Network Leads and Rainbow Network (LGBTQ), to request they put the call out through their communication channels as well. Convene a mini comms groups comprised of members from these networks to align messaging/plan social media – meet every 2 months/as needed.
April 2019	All staff consultation – web-based Buzz and Buzz on-line articles Discussions at College Boards Written consultation with colleagues on secondment/research leave/mat leave etc	This will include: 'common reasons' why staff might want to feed in e.g. SigRes/IR etc. consultation deadlines We will offer opportunities to feed in and/or raise questions directly through drop-ins during April. For colleagues about to go on leave/secondment/mat etc. clarify deadlines and need to input in time..	Host consultation page on/alongside REF/Research Planning pages (helps draw traffic to these pages and raises awareness of other activity the team run e.g. drop-ins, Research Conference etc.). Advertise consultation alongside drop-ins or specific Forum opportunity to raise questions face-to-face. Colleagues on leave/secondment/mat leave – email and written correspondence in the first instance. Attempt telephone contact as last resort.
June 2019	UEB approval CoP posted on intranet	CoP document posted on REF/Research Planning pages. Statement about the need for 'opt in' approval. Statement about the accessible formats available e.g. Braille, audio etc.	All Staff mailshot – however Wellbeing Services, BAME Network, Women's Network Leads and Rainbow Network (LGBTQ) may also wish to issue a small statement of their 'support/approval' to sit alongside the CoP posted online e.g. list of signatories who have approved the document.

	<p>SigRes/IR processes begin</p> <p>Submission to Research England</p> <p>Invitation to all staff to disclose circumstances – all staff email; Buzz on-line; Buzz Also College newsletters...</p>	<p>SigRes/IR – email to explain process and how decisions will be made. Information about deadlines/decisions and right to appeal.</p> <p>Information about outputs required and under what circumstances these can be reduced, making clear this includes previous/historic episodes over the relevant eligible REF period i.e. you don't have to be pregnant/unwell 'now' to raise circumstances.</p> <p>Notify of Forum event with relevant leads as part of Research Conference (15-30 minute slot lead by DPVC Equalities (if available)). Questions to be submitted anonymously ahead of time; post-event info disseminated by a blog post/FAQ webpage]</p> <p>Provide information about what the disclosure process consists of as well as make clear confidentiality policy and alleviate concerns regarding other potential repercussions.</p>	<p>Email to specific cohorts of staff</p> <p>A general callout via E&D Lead, issued as an All Staff mailshot – however specifically target Wellbeing Services, BAME Network, Women's Network Leads and Rainbow Network (LGBTQ), to request they use their channels to put the information on support available and the process for raising circumstances out.</p> <p>Specific targeted comms to the various ECR networks will also be undertaken.</p>
July 2019			General social media – Impact Team & special mini comms group
August 2019		Anonymous submission of Questions for FAQ for session at Research Committee	Twitter to promote (via BAME/Impact/Women's Network, Wellbeing Services etc), questions anonymously collected via Bristol Online Survey

September 2019		Research Conference – FAQ slot on E&D – to raise awareness of staff circumstances and the process for raising this	Advertised as part of Research Conference programme
October 2019	Notify staff of approval of CoP; Post CoP on web Repeat invitation to staff to disclose circs (beg of month)	As previously	As previously ie note in Buzz on-line and Buzz All staff email; letter to staff on secondment, research leave, mat leave etc;
November 2019	Repeat invitation to staff to disclose circs (end of month)	Include FAQ answers/blog as link within comms Consider presenting 3 common case studies e.g. example mat leave case / example mental health case / example secondment case? Re-issue information as before on what will be considered as staff circs and the process for raising these	Include FAQ answers/blog as link within comms – from any submitted as well as general common queries RPT/E&D are dealing with
December 2019		Invitation reminder & deadlines	General social media – Impact Team & special mini comms group
January 2020	Further Buzz/Buzz online article on REF/CoP – updating on actions so far	Update on actions and deadlines within Buzz and short online blog posts from different leads	Buzz, Twitter, University Impact Blog
February 2020		Invitation reminder & deadlines	General social media – Impact Team & special mini comms group
March 2020		Invitation reminder & deadlines	General social media – Impact Team & special mini comms group
April 2020	Repeat invitation to staff to disclose circs: last opportunity before deadline	As previously Emphasize deadlines/ final opportunity to raise circumstances	As previously.

Comms paused after this point during lockdown. There will be no Research Conference in 2020.			
October 2020	Recommence Comms with summary of progress with submission so far, and notification of new staff circs provision		Buzz on-line General social media & staff networks
March 2021	Further Buzz/Buzz online article on REF/CoP – confirming submission in line with CoP and reporting on relevant information		

Appendix 7: List of Research Fellowships

The table below, which may also be found on the REF2021 website (<https://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance/additional-guidance/>) provides a list of competitive research fellowships, presented in alphabetical order by funder, that have been confirmed by the funder to require research independence. This list has been provided by Research England to guide institutions when developing their criteria to identify independent researchers. It should not be taken to be exhaustive and the funding bodies recognise that many relevant fellowship schemes are not captured, including research fellowships funded by HEIs, which may require research independence.

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

EPSRC	EPSRC Early Career Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Established Career Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Postdoctoral Fellowship* ¹
ESRC	ESRC Future Cities Catapult Fellowship
ESRC	ESRC Future Leaders Grant
ESRC	ESRC/Turing Fellowships
ESRC/URKI	Early Career Researcher Innovation Fellowships
European Research Council	ERC Advanced Grants
European Research Council	ERC Consolidator Grants
European Research Council	ERC Starting Grants
Health Education England	ICA Clinical Lectureship
Health Education England	ICA Senior Clinical Lectureship
Leverhulme Trust	Early Career Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Research Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Emeritus Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Major Research Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	International Academic Fellowship
MRC	MRC Career Development Awards*
MRC	MRC New Investigator Research Grants (Non-clinical)*
MRC	MRC New Investigator Research Grants (Clinical)*
MRC	MRC Clinician Scientist Fellowships*
MRC	Senior Non-Clinical Fellowships
MRC	Senior Clinical Fellowships
NC3R	David Sainsbury Fellowship
NC3R	Training fellowship
NERC	Independent Research Fellowships
NERC/UKRI	Industrial Innovation Fellowships
NERC/UKRI	Industrial Mobility Fellowships
NIHR	Advanced Fellowship
NIHR	Career Development Fellowship
NIHR	Clinical Lectureships
NIHR	Clinical Trials Fellowship
NIHR	Clinician Scientist
NIHR	Development and Skills Enhancement Award
NIHR	Knowledge Mobilisation Research Fellowship
NIHR	Post-Doctoral Fellowship

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

NIHR	Research Professorship
NIHR	School for Primary Care Post-Doctoral Fellowships
NIHR	Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Engineering for Development Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	Industrial Fellowships
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	UK Intelligence Community (IC) Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
Royal Society	Royal Society Wolfson Fellowship
Royal Society	Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship*
Royal Society	JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship
Royal Society	Newton Advanced Fellowship
Royal Society	Royal Society/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Society	University Research Fellowship*
Royal Society and Wellcome Trust	Sir Henry Dale Fellowship*
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Arts & Humanities Awards (for permanent staff)
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Personal Research Fellowship
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Sabbatical Research Grants (for permanent staff)
Sêr Cymru	Research Chairs
Sêr Cymru	Rising Stars
Sêr Cymru	Recapturing Talent*
Sêr Cymru	Research fellowships for 3 -5 year postdocs
STFC	CERN Fellowships
STFC	Ernest Rutherford Fellowship
STFC	ESA Fellowships
STFC	Innovations Partnership Scheme Fellowships
STFC	Returner Fellowships
STFC	RSE/STFC Enterprise Fellowships
STFC	Rutherford International Fellowship Programme
UKRI	UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships
UKRI	UKRI Innovation Fellowships
Wellcome Trust	Intermediate Fellowship in Public Health and Tropical Medicine
Wellcome Trust	Principal Research Fellowships

Wellcome Trust	Research Award for Health Professionals
Wellcome Trust	Research Career Development Fellowship
Wellcome Trust	Research Fellowship in Humanities and Social Science
Wellcome Trust	Senior Research Fellowship

Appendix 8: E&D focussed risk analysis of the Code of Practice

The University is not in a position to undertake a quantitative EIA of the Code of Practice as we have not yet commenced work on any of the key areas. In lieu of this, we have undertaken a E&D focussed risk analysis of the Code, with the aim of ensuring we are in a position to address obvious issues that might arise.

	Challenges and Risks	Mitigating Actions
Significant Responsibility for Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basis for exceptions to the general rule of entering all T&R staff (as applied to certain clinical lecturers in MPA) might not be sufficiently clearly defined to allow purely objective assessment of research independence. Hence risk of subjective bias. • In determining significant responsibility for research, discussions on, and in particular appeals to subsequent changes to contract/workload are likely to be gendered – men will argue more strongly their case and women will argue less forcefully, potentially reinforcing the structural inequalities in the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and agreement of relevant section of CoP with potentially affected staff. EIA carried out regularly in process. The criteria for defining research independence have been extended compared to those in the CoP guidelines. Clear appeals process well defined in CoP. • Engaging in structured processes so that we have limited the scope for personal preference to distort the outcome (process to determine research independence). • Ensuring that an E&D champion is present at the SigRes/IR Group.
Independent Researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above, criteria for research independence may not be sufficiently clearly defined to allow purely objective assessment in all cases. • If cases for independence are developed by researchers themselves, there may be a gendered approach to the strength of the cases, with men arguing more forcefully and women less so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and agreement of relevant section of CoP with potentially affected staff. EIA carried out regularly in process. The criteria for defining research independence have been extended compared to those in the CoP guidelines. Clear appeals process well defined in CoP. • Clear, objective and evidence based cases required; two stage appeals process defined in the CoP; development of cases to be supported by Colleges, so not dependent upon a single author • Ensuring that an E&D champion is present at the SigRes/IR group

<p>Output portfolio selection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the initial self-review of outputs, men are more likely to rate their research more highly than women, meaning that more outputs from men go forward to the next stage and are more likely to be included in the submission (this is similar to recruitment/promotion where the evidence is that if you can keep women in the pool at the early stages, they eventually have an equal chance of being appointed/promoted). • Areas of known risk identified nationally or locally in REF2014 (eg black staff, women within particular age ranges) will still show lower levels of contribution to the submitted output portfolio compared with other groups • Possibility of unconscious bias creeping into the internal output grading and selection process, in particular as the task of selecting outputs to create the output portfolio is potentially complex and must be done within a time-limited period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring proportions of outputs by gender and adjustment of the output portfolios where possible to ensure appropriate representation of each gender • Engaging in structured processes so that we have limited the scope for personal preference to distort the outcome. • Coming back to decisions after a break and reviewing what we have done when refreshed. • Output review groups to include E&D on their agendas; College review groups to be specifically tasked to consider E&D issues as part of their review of UOA level decisions • Monitor via regular EIAs and investigate where appropriate; work with staff networks to encourage take-up of staff circs provisions where appropriate (and monitor effect of this on contribution rates) • Being self aware – what are our personal triggers? • Specific E&D/unconscious bias training for all involved in final output select • Ensure meetings are organised in a timely way, with a reduction in triggers to unconscious bias (eg provision of food and drink, well-planned agendas, sufficient time to do the task, opportunity to re-visit outcomes etc)
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<p>Staff circumstances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk that individuals who should put themselves forward for consideration of staff circumstances will not do so. • Risk that support is not put in place by Head of School or their deputy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for declaring is well defined in the CoP and will be well publicised to all staff. • A central mechanism is in place to ensure confidentiality. • Heads of Schools will be given clear advice from UEB about what they should do.
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