REF2021 CODE OF PRACTICE

Opening Statement from the Pro Vice-Chancellor – Research and Enterprise

This Code of Practice is a vital part of our REF2021 submission as it promotes an inclusive approach that recognises the diversity of our staff through highlighting how personal circumstances can influence publication rates. The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF2021 provides increased flexibility when building our portfolio of outputs for our submission and recognises that there are many reasons why an excellent researcher may have fewer or more outputs attributable to them during the assessment period. We have made firm commitments to support Diversity and Inclusion in our University strategy and to be recognised as a sector leader in our approach to deliver this key priority: this Code contributes towards our concerted actions to make this a truly inclusive and supporting environment for all.

Having informed the creation of the original UK Concordat to support the career development of researchers (2008) we were one of the first universities in the UK to sign it, and to secure and hold the related HR Excellence in Research Award (2010). Since that time, we have regularly served on the national awarding panel, and as an external reviewing body for other applicants. Most recently, we worked with colleagues from other research-intensive universities to drive national policy; successfully calling for and informing the review of the Concordat. A Concordat implementation action plan directs our work in this area and is regularly reviewed via a programme of internal and external evaluation, and through collaboration between a Concordat Implementation Group and our Research Staff networks. We also launched Bristol Clear, a virtual development centre for our post-doctoral and early career researchers, building an integrated and inclusive community across the University. In addition to a mentoring scheme, it offers peer to peer support networks and comprehensive professional skills development.

We remain committed to building an inclusive working environment where opportunities are open to all and where diversity is supported and valued. A diverse workforce and an inclusive environment are essential to maintaining our position as a high-performing organisation that encourages our staff to share their own diversity of thought, background and experience. As a knowledge-based organisation that prides itself on the quality of our research we recognise how vital different perspectives are to contribute towards innovative solutions to global challenges.

If you require this Code of Practice in an accessible format, please email

diversity-inclusion@bristol.ac.uk

1: Introduction

The University of Bristol's Code of Practice for the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) promotes an inclusive approach that recognises the diversity of our staff when preparing our submission to the REF, as well as taking steps to ensure compliance with equality and employment legislation and avoiding discrimination. The Code applies to all staff, including those on fixed-term or part-time contracts. In applying the Code to contract research staff we will be mindful of the principles enshrined in the Concordat to facilitate the career development of researchers.

This Code documents our fair and transparent approach to determining who is an independent researcher, the selection of outputs for submission and how we are supporting staff with circumstances. Since we are submitting 100 per cent of our Category A eligible staff, our Code does not include policies and procedures for the identification of staff with significant responsibility for research.

One of the key findings of the equality impact assessment that we undertook for REF2014 was a lack of female representation at senior research levels. Since then we have established a Gender Equality Group; increased our leadership development opportunities to progress women's careers; established a fund to cover caring costs incurred by staff attending conferences; relaunched our Returning Carers' Scheme; launched a programme of 'HerStories' career seminars (subsequently renamed 'TheirStories' in the interests of inclusivity); established Faculty-level equality groups to implement discipline-specific interventions; and actively engaged with external initiatives such as Athena SWAN, Stonewall and Project JUNO. Over the last five years, we have increased our female professorial population by 8% and now have more female professors than ever before. A healthy pipeline of female talent at all academic career grades will ensure that we continue to build on this in future years.

All staff responsible for making decisions under our REF processes are required to adhere to this Code. The Code ensures that the values set out in our University Strategy and the Equality Act 2010 are embedded in our processes as well as taking steps to ensure compliance with equality and employment legislation and avoiding discrimination (Annex A – legislation and our policy framework). We are committed to ensuring that our policies and procedures for developing our submissions do not discriminate unlawfully against any of our staff due to age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, because they are pregnant or have recently given birth or because they are employed part-time or on fixed-term contracts.

Our Code demonstrates fairness to our staff by addressing the following principles:

Transparency – our processes for determining research independence and for selecting outputs for inclusion in our submission will be available to all academic staff across the institution and drawn to the attention of those absent from work (Annex B – communication strategy).

Consistency – we will strive to ensure that the principles enshrined in the Code are applied consistently to relevant decision-making across the institution.

Accountability – our Code clearly defines the responsibilities of individuals and groups that are involved in the decision-making processes underpinning REF2021 (Annex C – REF individuals, committees and teams).

Inclusivity – this Code promotes a fair and inclusive framework for decision-making and for recognising the excellent research produced by staff across all protected groups. All individuals involved in decision-making will receive equality, diversity and inclusion training that is relevant and appropriate to REF2021 and enhances understanding of how unconscious bias can be mitigated.

Training will be provided to those staff directly involved in the decision-making processes to enhance their understanding of how equality should be considered in their REF roles, to promote an inclusive approach to identifying excellent research and to facilitate a consistent approach to dealing with a range of individual circumstances that may have affected research productivity. This training will be mandatory: those who do not attend will be unable to be part of the REF decision-making processes.

Timescales that are relevant to the development of the Code are included below.

Table 1: Timescales for development of the Code of Practice

31 January 2019	*Research England publishes the final Guidance on Codes of Practice, Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria and Working Methods*
February – March 2019	*Develop draft Code of Practice*
1 April 2019	*University Research Committee receives the draft Code of Practice for approval, subject to consultation with staff groups*
3 April – 31 May 2019	*Consultation on the draft Code of Practice with staff groups, including the UOA Coordinators, Faculty EDI Committees (or equivalent), Gender Equality Group, Research Staff Working Party, BAME Staff Network, Disabled Staff Forum, LGBT+ Staff Network, Parents & Carers Network, Joint Trades Unions Committee*
15 April 2019	*University Research Committee formally consults on the draft Code of Practice with Senate*
By 5 June 2019	*University Research Committee receives the final Code of Practice for approval*
By 7 June 2019	*University of Bristol submits Code of Practice to Research England for review by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP)*
From 10 June 2019	*Publish submitted Code of Practice to all staff, via a variety of communication channels including the University of Bristol website, all-staff bulletin, email and hardcopy*

Our finalised Code of Practice will be approved by University Research Committee (see Annex D for terms of reference). It will be shared with all academic staff – including those who may be absent from work - through a variety of platforms in June 2019 in line with our Communications Strategy set out in Annex B. In all our communications, we will invite any members of staff requiring the Code in accessible formats to contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team directly.

2: Determining Research Independence

2.1 Policies and procedures

For the purposes of the REF2021, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme. We will actively seek to identify **all** staff on research-only contracts who undertake self-directed research and who therefore meet the funding bodies' definition of independent researchers.

We automatically consider all staff employed on Senior Research Fellow, Reader and Professor grades on research-only contracts to have significant responsibility for independent research, as stated in their role descriptors. Staff on research-only contracts at Research Fellow, Senior Research Associate or Research Associate level will only be considered independent researchers if they meet one or more of the criteria below on the census date.

We will consistently apply the following criteria across all our submissions:

Competitively awarded fellowships

Any member of staff on a research-only contract who holds a competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement, will be Category A eligible and included in our submissions.

We will seek assurance about the nature of the fellowship through the following mechanisms. We will cross-reference the funding bodies' list of competitive research fellowships, that have been confirmed by the funder to require research independence (included at Annex E for reference). Since the funding bodies recognise that many relevant fellowship schemes are not captured in the list, for those not included we will attempt to find publicly available information about the fellowship. If no further information is publicly available, we will seek the advice of senior members of our academic community to aid our interpretation.

Leading a research group or a substantial work package

We will consider on a case-by-case basis, whether any member of staff on a research-only contract is demonstrating research independence through the leadership of a research group or a substantial or specialized work package and is therefore Category A eligible and included in our submission.

Evidence of leadership of a research group or a substantial or specialized work package may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Acting as a principal investigator on an externally funded grant;
- Having delegated authority to line manage research assistants and/or coordinate the work of research and support staff;
- Leading a workstream of a large grant.

In making decisions we will consider all evidence as a whole and seek to verify it. Where verification is not available in a corporate or external publicly-available system, we will contact the member of staff's line manager to discuss the specific role expectations.

For our submissions to Units of Assessment (UOA) in Main Panels C and D only, we will additionally consider the following indicators:

- Acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research grant;
- Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.

All research-only staff employed at Research Fellow, Senior Research Associate or Research Associate level who may be able to demonstrate independence according to the above criteria will be requested to complete the pro-forma at Annex F and return it to the Research and Enterprise Policy Team in Research and Enterprise Development.

All research-only staff who submit a pro-forma will receive, in writing and within seven working days of the decision being taken, notification of the decision by University Research Committee regarding their research independence for the REF2021. The relevant academic UOA Coordinator will be copied into the correspondence. The notification will also contain details of the procedure to appeal the decision as set out in Annex G and the process for declaring staff circumstances.

All information provided in relation to research independence will be collected and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Processes will adhere to the principles set out in the University Information Security Policy.

2.2 Staff, committees and training

The **Research and Enterprise Policy Team** has designated responsibility for the project-management of our submissions to the REF2021, and the provision of expert advice on the interpretation of the REF2021 guidance. This Team will be responsible for the initial checking of evidence and the initial determination of research independence according to the above criteria.

As the body designated with responsibility for the preparation our submissions to REF2021, the **University Research Committee** will make the final decision regarding the research independence of our research-only staff. Members of the **Research and Enterprise Policy Team** will brief members of University Research Committee on how determinations are made relating to independence. Annex C provides more information on the respective responsibilities of these roles.

2.3 Appeals

Any member of research-only staff who has completed a research independence pro-forma may appeal the decision made by the **University Research Committee** that was communicated to them in writing. Details of our appeals procedure will be included in the notification of the final decision and will also be available via our internal web site. Our appeals process follows a two-stage model, informal resolution followed by formal appeal. Members of the **Research and Enterprise Policy Team** will brief members of the appeals panel on how determinations are made relating to independence. Please refer to Annex G for the appeals process.

All requests for reviews of decisions made and any subsequent formal appeal will be dealt with expeditiously in recognition of the deadline required by the University's REF2021 submission timetable.

2.4 Equality impact assessment

An equality impact assessment of our approach to REF2021 will continue throughout the assessment period. Equality monitoring will be considered where sufficient data are available and any implications for equality will be reviewed with relevant stakeholders and reported to University Research Committee for consideration as appropriate. In relation to research independence we will review data on the characteristics of staff determined to meet the definition, in the context of an appropriate comparator pool. We will review our data by protected group at key points during our internal mock REF2021 preparations – Autumn 2019 and Summer 2020 – and undertake an assessment on our final submission.

3: Selection of outputs

3.1 Policies and procedures

The partial decoupling of staff and outputs in REF2021 provides increased flexibility in building our portfolio of outputs for submission. We recognise that there are many reasons why our staff publish at different rates and there is no expectation that all our eligible staff will contribute equally to our submissions in terms of the number of outputs attributed to them. All our eligible staff are given equal opportunity to propose their strongest outputs for consideration and fair and rigorous internal output review processes will inform our selection of outputs for submission.

Our internal outputs review exercises, in Autumn 2018, Autumn 2019 and Summer 2020, will be overseen by the **University Research Committee** and supported by the **Research and Enterprise Policy Team**. The exercises operate according to a two-stage model whereby each UOA completes its own internal data collection and review process, following which the University Research Committee appraises and approves the outcome of the review.

As a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), we are committed to the critical role that peer review and expert judgement plays in the assessment of outputs. We recognise the value that quantitative metrics can play in complementing and supporting our decision-making, but we will not use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors (JIFs), as surrogate measures of the quality of individual outputs.

The **UOA Coordinators** formally appointed by the University Research Committee are responsible for engaging appropriate senior members of staff in the UOA, and occasionally external academics with specific expertise, in the process of peer review. Prior to commencing the exercise, all reviewers undertake a calibration exercise. Across all our submissions, outputs will be reviewed independently by at least two internal reviewers, according to the funding bodies' published criteria of originality, significance and rigour. The UOA Coordinators are required to convene a **UOA Committee** to agree the starred level for the quality for each proposed output, informed by the predicted starred levels for quality of the two or more reviewers. Further detail on UOA Committees is given at Annex C.

In selecting the outputs for our final submissions to REF2021, our main criterion will be our predicted starred level for quality of outputs, according to the criteria of originality, significance and rigour. Having satisfied the minimum requirement that one output is allocated to each member of Category A eligible staff, the remaining outputs will be selected on the basis of our internal predicted starred levels for quality as ratified by the University Research Committee. When selecting between and allocating outputs of equal starred level for quality, we will be cognisant of the spread of outputs across individual members of staff and their protected characteristics. In line with the funding bodies' final Guidance on Submissions, outputs solely authored or co-authored by former members of staff, including staff who have been made redundant, may be included in our submissions where our predicted starred level for quality exceeds that of outputs from current members of staff. Our UOA Committees will advise the University Research Committee of the final selection and allocation of outputs, and the University Research Committee will approve all our final submissions.

3.2 Staff, committees and training

The **Research and Enterprise Policy Team** has designated responsibility for the project-management of our submissions to the REF2021, and the provision of expert advice on the interpretation of the REF2021 guidance. This Team will be responsible for briefing **UOA Coordinators** on processes relevant

to the selection of outputs. **UOA Committees** will adopt an advisory role in selecting outputs with final decision-making responsibility designated to **University Research Committee**. Annex C provides more information on the respective responsibilities of these roles/groups.

To uphold the principles of inclusivity and consistency, all individuals involved in decision-making will receive equality, diversity and inclusion training that is relevant and appropriate to REF2021. This training will also enhance an understanding of how unconscious bias can be mitigated during the decision-making process. Face-to-face briefing sessions will be co-delivered by members of the **Research and Enterprise Policy Team** and the **Diversity and Inclusion Team**. All staff directly involved in REF-related decision-making processes will be required to attend. The training will:

- Enhance their understanding of how equality should be considered in their REF2021 roles;
- Provide a deeper understanding of the processes outlined in the Code of Practice;
- Promote an inclusive approach to identifying excellent research;
- Facilitate a consistent approach to dealing with a range of individual circumstances that may have affected research productivity;
- Raise awareness of how unconscious bias may influence decisions.

In addition, the Chair of each UOA Committee will be responsible for highlighting points on the decision-making cycle where unconscious bias may occur.

Table 2: REF2021 Training Schedule

REF2021 Responsibility	Training	Planned delivery timescale
University Research Committee	Workshop	By end of July 2019
Staff Circumstances Panel	Workshop	By end of July 2019
Research and Enterprise Policy Team	Workshop	By end of July 2019
UOA Coordinators	Workshop	By end of September 2019
UOA Committee	Online Course	Available from August 2019

All members of UOA Committees will be required to undertake the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion online training module that:

- Gives an overview of current UK legislation on equality;
- Explores diversity and inclusion in the workplace;
- Provides a greater understanding of how unacceptable behaviour in the workplace should be challenged;
- Helps staff recognise and overcome their own personal biases.

3.3 Staff circumstances

Our academic staff contribute to the excellence of the University in many ways: submission of outputs to REF2021 is only one of these. We recognise that there may be reasons why individuals publish at different rates and there is no formal expectation that all eligible staff will contribute equally to the volume of outputs submitted. Our expectation is that all Category A eligible staff will have a minimum of one output to contribute to the output pool.

To support our inclusive approach to identifying excellent research, we have convened a **REF2021 Staff Circumstances Panel**. This Panel will determine when our expectation may be adjusted from one to zero where an individual's equality-related circumstances are equivalent to 46 months or more absence and have had an exceptional effect on the individual's ability to produce an eligible output. Membership of this Panel will comprise staff who are not directly involved in other REF-related decisions and the Panel will operate independently.

It is within this context that we encourage all eligible staff to disclose any of the following equality-related circumstances that, in isolation or together, may have affected research productivity during the assessment period:

a. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher;
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 for junior clinical academics;
e. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
    i. 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 the publication REF2021: Guidance on Submissions: Reductions for Staff Circumstances;
    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 covered by the Equality Act 2010 – namely age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief – or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

Disclosures must be made voluntarily by the member of staff concerned and colleagues should not feel under pressure to declare their circumstances where they do not wish to do so. To ensure a consistent approach to disclosures, an online form has been developed and is available as Annex H. Alternative formats are available on request.

This Panel will also consider disclosures of circumstances that may not result in any reduction in outputs on an individual basis but may result in a disproportionate and cumulative effect on a unit's output pool. The Staff Circumstances Panel will collate agreed reductions by unit and provide these to University Research Committee for a decision on whether a reduction should be sought to the total number of outputs required for submitting units. University Research Committee will be ultimately accountable for approving reduction requests across all UOAs. Membership and Terms of Reference for the Staff Circumstances Panel are included in Annex C.

To mitigate the risks of bias (conscious or unconscious) influencing decisions, each case will be considered anonymously by the Staff Circumstances Panel and will be considered in accordance with the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions – Reductions for Staff Circumstances (see Annex I). All information provided in relation to staff circumstances will be collected and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Processes will adhere to the principles set out in the University Information Security Policy.

All eligible staff will be invited to submit an online form disclosing equality-related circumstances. Those who do, will receive, in writing and following the relevant meeting of the Staff Circumstances Panel, notification of the Panel's determination of the reduction in outputs due their declared equality-related circumstances. Where equality-related circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence have had an exceptional effect such that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output, the individual will be informed that the expectation to contribute a minimum of one output to the output pool will be removed. The relevant academic UOA Coordinator will be informed only that the individual is not required to contribute a minimum of one output to the pool.

We recognise that the equality-related circumstances that an individual voluntarily declares for REF2021 may impact more broadly in the workplace. All individuals who submit an online disclosure will therefore be offered, in writing, the opportunity to discuss the broader impact of their equality-related circumstances with a member of their HR Team. At the request of the individual, a confidential meeting between the individual and their HR Team will be arranged to explore the provision of support and other adjustments that might be available. In advance of such meetings, the HR Team will be given information only about the impact of circumstances on the individual's productivity and not about the specific nature of the circumstances. Where an individual does not wish to discuss the broader impact of the equality-related circumstances that they voluntarily declare for REF2021 with their HR Team, there will be no obligation to do so.

3.4 Equality impact assessment

An equality impact assessment of our approach to REF2021 will continue throughout the assessment period. Equality monitoring will be considered where sufficient data are available and any implications for equality will be reviewed with relevant stakeholders and reported to University Research Committee for consideration as appropriate. As part of our assessment of output selection processes we may consider the distribution of selected outputs across staff, by protected characteristic, in the context of the characteristics of the submitted staff pool.

The Staff Circumstances Panel will review the outcomes of equality impact assessment and advise University Research Committee accordingly on appropriate next steps.

4: Appendices

Annex A **Relevant legislation and policy framework**

Annex B **Communications Strategy for REF2021 Code of Practice**

Annex C **REF2021 responsibilities: individuals, committees and groups**

Annex D **University Research Committee: Terms of Reference**

Annex E **Research Fellowships**

Annex F **Research Independence proforma**

Annex G **Appeals on research independence**

Annex H **Disclosure of Staff Circumstances proforma**

Annex I **REF2021 Guidance on Submissions – Reductions for Staff Circumstances**

ANNEX A RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

When developing our REF2021 procedures, the University of Bristol has sought to avoid any discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of a protected characteristic as specified in the Equality Act 2010 as:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion and belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation.

The Code of Practice was developed within the context of the public sector equality duty that requires us to have due regard to the need to:

a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When developing our REF2021 procedures, we are mindful that under fixed-term employee and part-time workers regulations, fixed-term employees and part-time workers have the right not to be treated by an employer any less favourably than the employer treats comparable employees on open contracts or full-time workers. The relevant regulations are:

- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002

The Code supports our institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion as articulated in our University Strategy:

We aspire to a fully inclusive culture. We value the diversity of thought, belief and background in our community that enables the University to be effective at challenging accepted norms and resilient in the face of continual change. We are therefore determined to attract and retain a more diverse workforce than ever before.

It also reflects the following policy statements:

Equality and Diversity: *The University believes that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. We aim to create an inclusive environment that respects the diversity of our staff and students and enables them to achieve their full potential, to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University.*

Acceptable Behaviours: *We are fully committed to creating and sustaining a positive and mutually supportive working environment where staff can work collaboratively and productively together, and where staff are equally valued and respected.*

ANNEX B COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR REF2021 CODE OF PRACTICE

The finalised Code of Practice will be widely shared with all academic staff through a variety of methods as set out below:

a. The Code will be made available on our staff intranet in Microsoft Word and pdf format. A dedicated web page will be developed that will include the Code, links to relevant REF2021 guidance and the Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form.

b. A message will be included in the University's all-staff bulletin - a fortnightly email digest that is sent to all staff at the University - to raise awareness of the Code of Practice and encouraging all staff to disclose any circumstances.

c. All academic staff will receive an email from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise providing the web link and inviting staff to disclose any individual circumstances that, in isolation or together, may have affected research productivity during the assessment period.

d. We will seek to identify all academic staff who are absent from the University, for example due to illness or parental leave and ensure that they receive a copy of the Code at their home address in hardcopy (unless there are other 'keeping in touch' methods already established in their absence).

e. In all our communications, we will invite any members of staff requiring the Code in accessible formats due to a disability to contact the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Team directly.

ANNEX C REF2021 RESPONSIBILITIES: INDIVIDUALS, COMMITTEES AND TEAMS

Statutory University Committees

Under our Charter, **the Board of Trustees** is the governing body of the University. **Senate** is the academic decision-making body, responsible to the Board of Trustees for teaching and learning, examinations and research and enterprise. It has more than 100 members, including deans, heads of department and student representatives, and is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.

The **University Research Committee** was established by Senate as the overarching quality assurance committee for research and enterprise. In appointing members to the University Research Committee, Senate is mindful of the balance of skills and experience across the Committee, the gender balance on the Committee and other equality and diversity matters as appropriate. The University Research Committee has designated responsibility from Senate as the project board for the preparation of institutional assessments of research and enterprise, including REF2021. Within this remit, the Committee has specific delegated authority to make strategic and operational decisions on the allocation of staff and outputs for REF2021.

The University Research Committee is chaired by the **Pro Vice-Chancellor – Research and Enterprise**, who is responsible for the leadership of the Committee, and to Senate for the Committee's effectiveness, including accountability. It is within the Committee's remit to consider any implications linked to equality, diversity and inclusion when conducting its business, making decisions and agreeing actions. The full Terms of Reference for the University Research Committee are included as Annex D.

Research and Enterprise Policy Team

The **Research and Enterprise Policy Team** in the Division of Research and Enterprise Development provides project management for the development of the submission. The Team offers expert advice to the University Research Committee and all other staff on the interpretation of REF2021 guidance. The Team also has responsibility for systems to support and manage data collection.

Diversity and Inclusion Team

The **Diversity and Inclusion Team** based in Human Resources will assist with the development of the Code of Practice, co-deliver training to staff directly involved in REF-related decision-making processes and advise on associated equality impact assessments.

REF2021 UOA Coordinators and Committees

For each of our submissions, a **UOA Coordinator** is nominated by the relevant Head(s) of School and approved by the University Research Committee. UOA Coordinators are senior, research-active members of the academic community who are chosen on the basis of their research expertise in the relevant subject area(s) as local leads for our submission to a particular UOA.

For each submission, a **UOA Committee** is formed, comprising at least:

- The UOA Coordinator (Chair);
- The UOA Impact Lead(s);
- At least one other academic staff member from the School(s) contributing significant numbers of staff to the UOA submission;
- The Faculty Research Director(s) with disciplinary expertise appropriate the UOA;
- The Head(s) of School contributing significant numbers of staff to the UOA.

The size of a Committee may vary according to the subject scope of the UOA and the number of staff allocated to the UOA, but it must be sufficient to adequately represent the research expertise required. The academic members of each Committee are nominated by the relevant UOA Coordinator, who acts as chair to the Committee. Membership of each UOA Committee is reviewed by the University Research Committee to ensure that it reflects the diversity of the research community.

REF2021 Staff Circumstances Panel

The **REF2021 Staff Circumstances Panel** will review cases relating to those members of staff whose personal circumstances have constrained their ability to work productively during the course of the assessment period, advising accordingly on any subsequent possible reductions in research outputs. The Staff Circumstances Panel will support the REF's aim of promoting equality and diversity in research careers and ensure that decision-making processes take account of relevant equality and employment legislation. In particular, it will:

i. Consider staff circumstances for the REF2021 submission and (a) determine individual reductions and (b) monitor and advise on unit output pool reductions, in line with the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions.
ii. Review and advise on the outcomes of equality impact assessment and appropriate next steps.

Reporting Lines
The Panel will report directly to University Research Committee.

Membership
Director of People and Organisational Development (Chair)
Six academic representatives – one from each Faculty
Diversity and Inclusion Manager or representative
Senior Research and Enterprise Policy Manager or representative
Secretary – a member of the Research and Enterprise Policy Team

Working Methods

- The Panel will consider requests for reduction in outputs within the framework and set tariffs for defined reductions set out in the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions document.
- Members will be trained accordingly as part of the REF2021 training schedule.
- Forms will be received electronically by the Research and Enterprise Policy Team and considered by the Panel on an anonymous basis.
- Decisions will be communicated to staff by the Secretary as appropriate.
- The Panel will collate agreed reductions by unit and provide these to University Research Committee for a decision on whether a reduction should be sought to the total number of outputs required for submitting units.
- All information provided in relation to staff circumstances will be collected and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Processes will adhere to the principles set out in the University Information Security Policy.

ANNEX D UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

This Committee was established by University Senate. Subject to the provisions made in the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances, and Regulations, the Committee shall operate within the remit and authorities as stipulated by Senate in these Terms of Reference.

1. Remit and Authority

1.1. The Committee's remit is to:

- Identify and recommend strategic research priorities to Senate, in line with the University Research Strategy and the Vision and Strategy for Research, Innovation and Partnerships.
- Monitor progress in implementing the University Research Strategy and the Vision and Strategy for Research, Innovation and Partnerships, ensuring that aims and objectives are achieved.
- Advise Senate on strategic and policy issues relating to research and enterprise, and make recommendations for associated necessary actions, including (i) research integrity, and (ii) information systems for research and enterprise.
- Act as the University's research planning Committee. Review Faculty and University Research Institute annual research plans and targets, ensuring coherence and alignment with University Research Strategy.
- Identify strategic and/or resource issues, and propose necessary actions, for recommendation to the University Management Team.
- Identify and facilitate collaborative research and enterprise activities at a strategic level and against the background of University Research Strategy.
- Assist the Faculty Research Directors in identifying and supporting the most appropriate portfolio of research activities for each Faculty, within the strategic and operational parameters set by the University.
- Provide advice to Faculty Research Directors on managing fair and appropriate investments in research across the faculties.
- Carry out horizon scanning for major new research challenges and opportunities.
- Maintain oversight of, and steer, University Research Institutes and Specialist Research Institutes.
- Act as the project board providing strategic management for the preparation for institutional assessments of research and enterprise.

1.2. Within this remit, Senate has delegated authority to the Committee to:

- Oversee and approve allocations from University pump-priming budgets, including the University's Strategic Research Fund and other schemes and initiatives under the auspices of the Committee. Monitor performance against conditions of budget allocation/monitor prudent use of budget.
- Oversee the Vice-Chancellor's Fellowships scheme, including making final decisions on the selection of new Vice-Chancellor's Fellows, in line with agreed selection criteria and processes.
- Conduct the selection process for Specialist Research Institutes, in line with agreed selection criteria and processes.
- Lead the preparations for the University's submission to research assessment exercises, including making strategic and operational decisions on the allocation of staff and outputs.
- Approve decisions that relate to University Research Information Systems

1.3 It is within the Committee's remit, and the Committee's responsibility, to consider any implications linked to equality, diversity and inclusion when conducting its business, making decisions and agreeing actions.

2. Membership

Composition of the Committee

2.1. The Committee will normally comprise twelve members, as follows:

- Pro Vice-Chancellor – Research and Enterprise (Chair)
- Vice-Chancellor
- Pro Vice-Chancellor - Health
- The Research Directors of each Faculty
- One of the University Research Institute Directors
- The Corporate Finance Director
- The Director of Research and Enterprise Development

2.2. The following individuals are 'in attendance' at meetings of the Committee (that is, they have the right to attend Committee meetings, and to receive Committee papers, but cannot vote):

- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost
- Head of Research and Enterprise Policy

The Chair

2.3. The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the Committee, and to Senate for the Committee's effectiveness. This includes:

- ensuring that the Committee acts fully within the responsibilities and authorities as set out in these Terms of Reference;
- promoting the Committee's efficient operation and ensuring the smooth running of Committee meetings;
- ensuring that the members work effectively, individually and together as a Committee;
- ensuring accountability for decisions made and actions taken.

3. Quorum

3.1. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business is four members of the Committee, of whom at least two must be Faculty Research Directors.

3.2. For the avoidance of doubt, members attending by telephone or video call or any other electronic means will form part of the quorum for the meeting.

4. Appointment and reappointment of members

4.1. Members of the Committee, other than *ex officio* members, are appointed by Senate. Appointments are for a three-year term, renewable by one three-year term.

4.2. The term of any member serving on the Committee will automatically end when that member ceases to be in the category of membership in which they were appointed to the Committee.

4.3. In considering the appointment and reappointment of Committee members, Senate will be mindful of:

- the balance of skills and experience across the Committee, including any areas where greater depth or breadth would be desirable;
- the gender balance on the Committee;
- other equality and diversity matters as appropriate;
- the principle that there should be a student representative on the Committee if the Committee's remit directly relates to the education/the student experience.

4.4. Upon the expiry of a co-opted member's term of office, the Committee will consider whether it is still necessary to co-opt a member. If the Committee considers that further co-option is required, it will make a recommendation to Senate and outline the reason why co-option is considered necessary.

4.5. For the avoidance of doubt, reappointment to the Committee, for any category of member, at the end of a member's term of office is not automatic.

5. Frequency of meetings

5.1 The Committee will normally meet eight times per academic year, but no fewer than once per academic year.

6. Secretary

6.1. The Research Analyst & Project Manager in the Research & Enterprise Policy team is the Secretary of the Committee.

7. Reporting requirements

7.1. The parent committee of the Committee is Senate. The Committee will report to Senate as soon as is practicable after each of its meetings and in the manner specified by Senate, on its proceedings at that meeting and otherwise on any matters within its remit and responsibilities.

7.2. The Committee's reporting will include due consideration of any implications linked to equality, diversity and inclusion when conducting its business, making decisions and agreeing actions.

7.3. Where authority has been delegated to the Committee by Senate to perform a particular action or take a particular decision, that action or decision will be reported to Senate as soon as practical after the action/decision has been taken.

7.4. The Committee may make recommendations to Senate on any matter within its remit, authority and responsibilities.

7.5. The Committee receives regular reports from the following, in the manner it specifies:

- Engaged University Steering Group
- Strategic Alliances Review Board
- Open Access Steering Group
- Specialist Research Institutes

7.6. The Committee will also report to the following:

- The University Management Team (UMT), with regard to developments with University-wide strategic importance and/or resource implications

The Committee will report to these bodies in the manner they specify.

7.7. The Committee will consider risk, as it relates to its area of activities and Terms of Reference, on at least an annual basis and report to Senate regarding the same.

8. Conduct of the Committee

Meetings

8.1. A meeting is constituted when:

- members, including the Chair, meet face-to-face, by telephone, by video-conference, by any other electronic means, or a combination of the above; and
- there is a quorum.

8.2. If the Chair of the Committee is not present – in person, by telephone, video-conference or other electronic means – within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time of the meeting, the Committee members shall nominate one of their midst to chair this meeting. For the duration of this meeting, the Committee member acting as Chair may exercise any of the powers, duties and responsibilities normally held by the Chair of the Committee. The meeting minutes shall record this arrangement.

8.3. Members of the Committee may attend by way of telephone or video call, or otherwise by electronic means, and if necessary will give their apologies as much in advance of a meeting as possible.

8.4. Members who are unable to attend a meeting may send a suitably qualified nominee, at the discretion of the Chair. Nominees shall count towards the quorum as though they were the member of the Committee by whom they were nominated and shall be entitled to vote.

8.5. The Chair may invite others to attend a Committee meeting for particular agenda items, or issue a standing invitation, if their presence will assist the business of the Committee. Individuals who are so invited will not normally receive any meeting papers, and they cannot participate in any voting.

Conflicts of interest

8.6. Members and attendees must declare any conflict of interest relating to the business of the Committee and may be asked to withdraw from a meeting during discussion of items for which there is a conflict.

8.7. The University's Conflict of Interest Regulations apply.

Meeting documents

8.8. The agenda and papers for a meeting will, as a matter of good practice, normally be sent to all those who are entitled to receive them seven days before each meeting. At a minimum, papers should be circulated three working days before a meeting.

8.9. Papers submitted to the Committee should not be longer than ten pages (including annexes and appendices), unless the Chair gives prior approval otherwise.

8.10. Matters/papers 'for information' should not be discussed at meetings, unless specifically requested and agreed by the Chair. Papers submitted 'for information' should be kept to a minimum, and if circulated to the Committee at all, should be no longer than two pages.

8.11. Presentations to the Committee should not be more than ten minutes long (excluding time for questions and discussion), unless the Chair gives prior approval otherwise.

8.12. Time for questions and discussion of any issue will be at the discretion of the Chair.

Voting

8.13. Only Committee members have the right to vote at Committee meetings. Attendees who are not members of the Committee may speak at Committee meetings to provide guidance, advice and opinion to the Committee, but shall not be entitled to vote.

8.14. Voting on any issue will be by a show of hands, and decisions are taken by simple majority. The Chair may vote and has the right to exercise a casting vote if a vote is tied.

Transaction of business and decision-making between meetings

8.15. Where decisions or discussions are required between meetings of the Committee, business may be conducted by correspondence (including by email) where deemed appropriate by the

Chair. A decision taken by correspondence shall be valid as though taken at a meeting of the Committee, provided that:

- 100% return of responses from members with the right to vote is received, so that knowledge of the matter under consideration can be assumed for all members of the Committee, and quoracy is achieved; and
- a majority of the Committee members who are entitled to vote confirm that they are in favour of the decision in question.

8.16. Any such proceedings and decisions or actions taken between meetings of the Committee shall be recorded, reported to the next meeting of that Committee, and reported to any body or individual to which the Committee would normally report its proceedings and decisions.

8.17. Where decisions or discussions are required between meetings of the Committee, and

- it is impractical to convene a Committee meeting (including by telephone, video-conferencing and other electronic means) due to the urgency of the matter; or
- the Chair considers that it would not be appropriate for business to be conducted by correspondence,

the Chair may take decisions or actions on behalf of the Committee.

8.18. Any such Chair's actions taken between meetings of the Committee shall be recorded, reported to the next meeting of that Committee, and reported to any body or individual to which the Committee would normally report its proceedings and decisions.

9. Annual review

9.1 To ensure its continued efficiency, including the currency of:

- its remit, authorities and powers as stipulated in its Terms of Reference, and of
- its membership,

the Committee reviews its effectiveness normally once a year. The Chair of the Committee leads this review and evaluates its outcomes in consultation with Senate, as applicable.

Effective date:	10 December 2018 [the date on which the ToR were approved by Senate and so became effective]
Review date:	10 December 2019 [the date when the ToR are due for review, normally one year after last approval]
Contact:	Matt Fitzgerald, Research Analyst & Project Manager, matt.fitzgerald@bristol.ac.uk, x40713

ANNEX E RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

The table below provides a list of competitive research fellowships, presented in alphabetical order by funder, that have been confirmed by the funder to require research independence. 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

[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.

European Research Council	ERC Advanced Grants
European Research Council	ERC Consolidator Grants
European Research Council	ERC Starting Grants
Health Education England	Integrated Clinical Academic Programme Clinical Lectureship*
Health Education England	Integrated Clinical Academic Programme 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	Clinician Scientist*
NIHR	Post-Doctoral Fellowship*
NIHR	Research Professorships
NIHR	School for Primary Care Post-Doctoral Fellowships*
NIHR	Senior Research Fellowships
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

ANNEX F RESEARCH INDEPENDENCE PROFORMA

REF2021 Research independence checking form

For REF2021 we must return all independent Category A eligible staff with significant responsibility for research.

Category A eligible staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on our payroll on the census date (31 July 2020) whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'.

'Research assistants' are not eligible to be returned to the REF unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher **and** satisfy the definition of Category A eligible staff above.

Who does Research England class as 'research assistants'?

For the purposes of the REF2021, a 'research assistant' is defined as any individual who is on a research-only contract, employed to carry out another individual's research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right.

This may include individuals at the University of Bristol who are known as Research Associates, Senior Research Associates or Research Fellows employed on a Pathway 2, profile levels a, b or c (grades I, J, K) or equivalent.

Who does Research England class as independent?

An **independent researcher** is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme.

Why is this form necessary?

The evidence collected in this form will be used to determine the independence and therefore eligibility of each individual to be included in the REF2021. While we are not required to return any evidence in our submission, we fully expect that the Research England formal REF2021 audit process will include checks on the eligibility of 'research assistants' for inclusion in the submission. We therefore need to maintain a full internal audit trail of all the information on which decisions are made.

When will I hear whether I am eligible for the REF2021?

All research-only staff who submit this form will receive, in writing and within seven working days of the decision being taken, notification of the decision by University Research Committee regarding their research independence for the REF2021.

All information provided in relation to research independence will be collected and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Processes will adhere to the principles set out in the University Information Security Policy.

If you have any queries about any aspect of this form, please contact: **ref-help@bristol.ac.uk**

Please complete this form only if you are employed on Pathway 2 (profile level a/b/c or equivalent) and you believe that you satisfy the requirements outlined above.

Name:	
Job title and school/department:	
Possible indicators of independence are listed below. Please tick Yes/No against those which apply and provide further detail in the box at the end:	
a) You hold a competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. *If yes, please give details e.g. title of fellowship and funder, dates, grant reference if applicable.*	**Yes ☐ No ☐**
b) You are leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package. Evidence of leadership of a research group or a substantial or specialised work package may include, but is not limited to, the following: • Acting as a principal investigator on an externally funded grant; • Having delegated authority to line manage research assistants and/or coordinate the work of research and support staff; • Leading a workstream of a large grant. **Main Panels C and D only** (social sciences, humanities and arts) may also consider the following attributes as evidence of research independence in their disciplines: • Acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research grant; • Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research. *If yes, please give details e.g. project title, funder, dates, grant reference if applicable*	**Yes ☐ No ☐**

Please return this form, ALONG WITH AN UP TO DATE CV, to ref-help@bristol.ac.uk

To be completed by the Research and Enterprise Policy Team	
Does individual meet Research England's independence criteria?	Yes ☐ No ☐
If no, please give justification:	
Date of independence:	
Date of approval by URC	

ANNEX G APPEALS ON RESEARCH INDEPENDENCE

The funding bodies expect all institutions that are implementing processes to determine research independence to have in place an appeals mechanism. If a member of staff believes that their case for research independence has been judged unfairly according to our published criteria, the following appeals process should be followed.

1. Informal Review

If a member of staff believes that their case for research independence has been judged unfairly according to our published criteria, they should raise this initially with the Research and Enterprise Policy Team. This should be done at the earliest opportunity and normally within seven working days of the communication of the decision made. Supplementary information or clarification may then be submitted to the Research and Enterprise Policy Team for further consideration if necessary. The Team will re-review the evidence for research independence against our published criteria, taking into account any supplementary information as appropriate. The University Research Committee will then re-review the initial decision. The outcome of the informal resolution process will be communicated to the member of staff raising the appeal by the Research and Enterprise Policy Team within seven working days of the decision by the University Research Committee being taken.

2. Formal Appeal

If the member of staff remains dissatisfied with the decision made by the University Research Committee the member of staff has the right to invoke a formal appeal where their case will be independently reviewed. The appeal must be notified, in writing, to the Research and Enterprise Policy Team normally within seven working days of communication of the decision against which the appeal is to be launched. To lodge the appeal the member of staff must set out clearly in writing:

- The basis of the appeal;
- The information on which the appeal is based;
- Details of any attempted informal resolution;
- The remedy sought.

An Appeals Panel will be convened with membership comprising:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor, New Campus Development (Chair);
- A Dean;
- A member of academic staff.

Membership will not include representation from the appellant's Faculty or include any staff with any previous involvement in decisions related to research independence. 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.

The members of the Appeals Panel will, in the absence of all other persons except the Secretary to the Appeals Panel, who will be a member of the Research and Enterprise Policy Team, identify a recommended course of action to the University Research Committee which is appropriate, taking into consideration the University's Code of Practice and the Guidance on Submissions (REF 02/2011).

ANNEX H DISCLOSURE OF STAFF CIRCUMSTANCES PROFORMA (ONLINE FORM)

REF 2021 - Disclosure of staff circumstances

Please complete this form if you have one or more applicable staff circumstances outlined in the University's Code of Practice. Disclosure of circumstances is voluntary. Applications will be anonymised prior to consideration by the Staff Circumstances Panel. If you would like more information, please contact ref-help@bristol.ac.uk.

1. Name

2. Email address

3. School/Department

4. Unit of Assessment (if known)

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

- Yes
- No

Circumstance

Please complete the sections that apply to you

6. Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
Date you became an early career researcher.
Your early career researcher status and start date will need to be established by the RED REF team, if you have not received confirmation, please contact ref-help@bristol.ac.uk

7. Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2020

- Yes

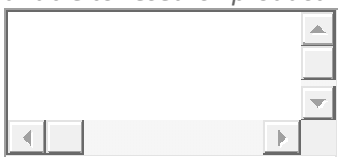
8. Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector
Dates and the durations in months

9. Family-related leave; - statutory maternity leave - statutory adoption leave - additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more

For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months

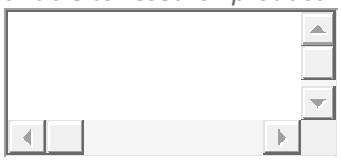
10. Disability (including chronic conditions)

To include: Nature/name of condition, periods of absence from work, and period at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.



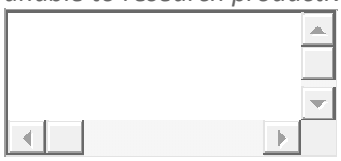
11. Mental health condition

To include: Nature/name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months



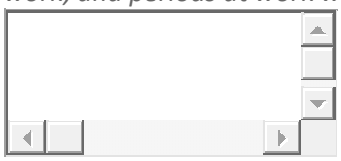
12. Ill health or injury

To include: Nature/name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months



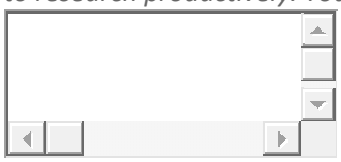
13. Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance

To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, period of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.



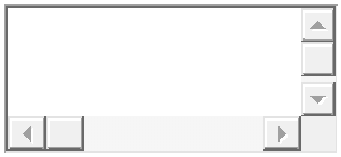
14. Caring responsibilities

To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.



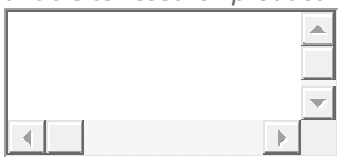
15. Gender reassignment

To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.



16. Any other exceptional reason e.g. bereavement

To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.



17. 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 this form is submitted*
- *I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only*
- *I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the UK funding bodies' REF team, Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) and appointed REF2021 main panel chairs*

I agree

If you would like to explore support in the workplace that may be available to you due to the circumstances that you have disclosed, please contact your HR Team.

All information provided in relation to staff circumstances will be collated and processed in accordance with the requirements of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

ANNEX I REF2021 GUIDANCE ON SUBMISSIONS: REDUCTIONS FOR STAFF CIRCUMSTANCES[2]

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,

[2] Please see https://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/ for the full guidance on submissions document.

where the FTE of a staff member late in the assessment period does not reflect their average FTE over the period as a whole.

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:
    a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
    b. Additional paternity or adoption leave[3], or shared parental leave[4] lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.

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

8. While the above reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months, shorter periods of such leave could be taken into account as follows:
    a. By applying a reduction in outputs where there are additional circumstances, for example where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities.
    b. By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other circumstances, according to Table L2.

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

Combining circumstances

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

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.

[3] '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'.

[4] '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.

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

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

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

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

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

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