REF 2021 Code of Practice

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 University Strategy for REF 2021 and this Code of Practice

The University's objective is to maximise the quality of its submissions to the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021) to achieve an improvement in performance over the outcomes in REF 2014. We aim to realise this by supporting researchers to publish high quality outputs, by maximising the number of staff returned, and by working collectively to produce high quality submissions.

This Code of Practice frames our decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 in the context of the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion, and all relevant legislation. It describes how we will determine who is an independent researcher and the process for selecting outputs. As all staff on a balanced (Teaching & Research) contract will be submitted to REF 2021, we are not required to identify staff with significant responsibility for research within this category of staff.

In developing this document we are aware of our responsibility, both as an employer and public body, to ensure that our REF procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against, or otherwise have the effect of harassing or victimising individuals because of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth.

We will conduct equality impact assessments (EIAs) on the policy and procedures for including independent researchers and selecting outputs for REF 2021. The EIAs will help to identify where discrimination may inadvertently occur, differential impact on particular groups, and where a particular policy or practice has a positive impact on the advancement of equality.

The outcome of annual benchmarking exercises and final decisions on the inclusion of staff or their outputs will not be used as the basis for decisions in relation to the extension of contracts, progression, promotion or performance management procedures. Staff made compulsorily redundant or who have accepted voluntary redundancy will not form part of the University's submission to REF 2021.

The University seeks at all times to protect data on individuals and will ensure confidentiality, as appropriate, in relation to REF processes.

1.2 Relationship of Code of Practice to broader institutional policies and strategies for EDI

The University of Southampton is an exceptional place whose people achieve remarkable things. We are a world-leading, research-intensive university with a strong educational offering, and renowned for our interdisciplinary research, innovation and enterprise. Our world standing and reputation depend upon the contributions made by staff to teaching, research, enterprise, leadership and administration which are all vital to our continued success. We have a strong commitment to equality and diversity and believe that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual.

REF 2021 will be used to assess the research performance of UK Universities and will be the single, most important measure of our success in research. The University of Southampton has adopted this Code of Practice for REF 2021 to comply with relevant legislation and ensure fair processes to determine who is an independent researcher and the selection of outputs for all staff who are eligible to be included in the exercise. The Code of Practice is based on the principles of transparency, consistency, inclusivity and accountability and forms part of the University's key documentation on equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) which is available on the University's Diversity website.

1.3 Actions taken since 2014

The University has continued to invest in the EDI infrastructure as evidenced by the following activities and awards:

- University Council agrees annual equality objectives for the University and annually reviews progress against these objectives. The Vice-President Research & Enterprise is the University's EDI Champion and chairs the University EDI Committee, reporting on the delivery of these objectives to the University Executive Board (section 3.1 provides more details).

- Following a restructuring of the faculties, effective 1st August 2018, a new governance structure was implemented in 2019 to provide clearer lines of accountability and responsibility, standardised decision-making, and more effective reporting and cascading of information. Each Faculty has its own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to devise objectives for their area, commission reports, implement projects to further equality and diversity, and report progress to the University's EDI Committee which includes all UEB members and key EDI representatives. The Professional Services Leadership Team, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, is the EDI Committee for Professional Services.

- All University staff must complete an online *Equality and Diversity Briefing* which covers: current legislation and our policies; awareness of minority groups and the issues they face; stereotyping, prejudice and unconscious bias; and promoting an inclusive workplace culture. Also mandatory is the *Safe and Supported* course on safeguarding while *Managing Diversity* is available for anyone with managerial responsibility.

- In 2014, the University became a signatory to two key pledges: Time to Change, a national campaign to end mental health discrimination through better information and resources, both for people with a mental health condition and their friends and colleagues; and the Mindful Employer Charter through which we demonstrate our commitment to create a supportive and open culture for employees with mental health issues and through our recruitment and selection processes.

- The University was awarded a Silver Athena SWAN award in October 2016 following ten years of work at bronze-level. In addition, eleven Schools and Faculties have obtained silver and bronze departmental awards, recognising their work to implement University policies and widen awareness of gender equality in their local area. The aim is for all Schools to gain an award of bronze or better by 2020.

- In 2017 the University joined Inclusive Employers, the UK's leading membership organization for employers looking to build inclusive workplaces.

- In December 2017, we became the first UK university to achieve Disability Confident Leader status, the highest level accreditation for employers committed to ensuring recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible. As a champion within our local and business communities, we promote vacancies, offer an interview to all applicants with a disability, anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments, and support existing employees who acquire a disability or long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work. The University also works in partnership with AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo), one of the UK's largest disability information providers on the internet, to encourage greater use of our facilities by disabled students, staff and members of the public.

- In January 2018 the University signed the Race Equality Charter with the aim of improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic groups of staff and students. In March 2019 we conducted a University-wide equality survey to obtain the views of staff on their experiences of working at the University in relation to their gender and race, and an action plan is in place to achieve a bronze award by 2021.

- Our long-term commitment to the career development of researchers has been demonstrated by retaining the European Commission HR Excellence in Research award in 2018, which was originally awarded in 2012.

- Staff and students have continued to develop networks and societies to represent, support and engage members who share a similar background, characteristic or common cause, for example: *Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Staff Network; Parents' and Carers' Network; Women in Science; Engineering and Technology group (WiSET); Theano; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans (LGBT) Network; Student Union Feminist Society; Religious Students' Union (RSU)* and many international societies. While these groups are autonomous with their own terms of reference and aims, the University supports an annual programme of network events and consults with them when developing new policies or amending existing ones.

- Our Equal Pay Action Plan was revised in 2018 with updated actions to continue to ensure equitable access to promotion.

- The University has achieved its 2020 target to have 30% female representation on all University Committees and is aiming for 40% by 2025.

- In 2015 we invested in a centralised research information system (Pure) enabling the collection, management and presentation of information to a consistent standard, and improving the accuracy and completeness of staff records and outputs used in preparing the REF 2021 submission.

- Outputs benchmarking exercises have been held annually since 2016 to ensure consistency of approach across the University and to provide Faculties with an early indication of any issues to be addressed. The exercise is followed by Faculty review meetings to identify staff who could improve the quality of their outputs with appropriate support and encouragement.

- Processes have been introduced to improve the accuracy and completeness of staff records to ensure all eligible staff are included in the benchmarking exercises including: weekly reviews of UOA staff reports for correct coding of contracts; feedback from senior faculty staff on individual staff records with intervention by HR Business Partners where necessary; and annual scrutiny by each Faculty REF Review Committee of key elements of staff records for staff on Teaching & Research and Research-only contracts.

1.4 Principles of Transparency, Consistency, Accountability and Inclusivity in demonstrating fairness

The University has adopted the following equality and diversity statement which provides a foundation for all REF-related processes and procedures:

The University of Southampton is committed to creating and sustaining a positive and supportive working environment for our staff, and an excellent teaching and learning experience for our students. We aspire that staff are valued and respected equally, and students are encouraged to thrive academically. As a provider of employment and education, we value the diversity of our staff and students. We are committed to providing a fair, equitable and mutually supportive learning and working environment for our students and staff.

This is reflected in the core values of the University Strategy which state the importance of:

- valuing, respecting and promoting the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals within all our professional activities and relationships
- equality of educational opportunity based on merit, irrespective of background, beliefs and socio-economic context

The equality and diversity statement enables coordination and implementation at a strategic level and is supported by additional policies that provide for an integrated approach to equality and diversity University-wide. We have a strong commitment to equality and diversity and believe that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. We aim to create an environment that respects the diversity of staff and students, enabling them to achieve their full potential, contribute fully and derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University. To this end, we acknowledge the following basic rights for all members and prospective members of our community:

- to be treated with respect and dignity
- to be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- to be encouraged to reach one's full potential

These rights carry responsibilities and we require all members of our community to recognise these rights and act in accordance with them. In addition, we will comply with all relevant legislation and good practice and no individual will be unjustly discriminated against. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All staff involved in selection decisions for REF 2021 will receive REF-specific equality and diversity training, including briefings on how to adhere to this Code of Practice and relevant legislation, and are expected to behave in ways that are consistent with the University's equality and diversity statement and this Code. All members of staff are able to seek advice on equality legislation in relation to REF 2021 from the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team.

1.5 Communication of the Code of Practice to Staff

The University is committed to ensuring the Code of Practice is promoted to all academic staff eligible or potentially eligible for submission to REF 2021, and that it is readily available for reference. The Communications Plan below provides details of the pathways through which the Code and the Equality Impact Assessments will be disseminated to staff, including those absent from work.

Complete by	Activity	Responsibility
30 April 2019	Invitations for EDI training (workshops and on-line modules).	Diversity Manager
31 May 2019	Draft Code of Practice presented to REF EDI Committee for sign-off.	Head of Research Performance
7 June 2019	Code of Practice submitted to Research England.	Head of Research Performance
30 June 2019	Code of Practice published on REF 2021 intranet site accessible to all staff.	Head of Research Performance
30 June 2019	Code of Practice published on University website accessible to the public.	Diversity Manager
30 June 2019	Communicate submission of Code of Practice and its availability on the University's intranet and website via SUSSED (University's information portal for staff and students), staff briefing sheets, e-news, email, Faculty/departmental EDI Committees and by post for absent staff. Accessible formats will be available on request.	Diversity Manager REF EDI Committee members
31 July 2019	EDI training workshops delivered by an external expert.	Diversity Manager
31 July 2019	Include link to Code of Practice in covering note for staff circumstances disclosure form, to be sent (email or post) to all academic staff including those absent from work.	Head of Research Performance Diversity Manager
31 August 2019	Publish Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and disseminate through SUSSED, e-news, Research Administrators' Network and EDI networks.	Head of Research Performance
31 January 2020	Review EIA and communicate any changes to academic staff through SUSSED, Faculties, Research Administrators' Network and EDI networks (as appropriate).	Head of Research Performance
31 August 2020	Review EIA and communicate any changes to academic staff through SUSSED, Faculties, Research Administrators' Network and EDI networks (as appropriate).	Head of Research Performance
31 July 2021	Publish final Equality Impact Assessment on the intranet and website and disseminate through SUSSED, Research Administrators' Network, EDI networks, UoA Champions and Deputy Heads of School Research.	Head of Research Performance

Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

As set out in the *Guidance on Submissions* (para 117), REF-eligible staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date, whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research-only' or 'teaching and research'. Staff should have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit. Staff on 'research-only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher. Staff on 'teaching-only', 'enterprise' and 'non-academic' contracts are not eligible for submission.

The University has developed a comprehensive approach for career development and progression for all staff as illustrated in the *Career Pathways Map* at Appendix 5.1. Introduced in 2014, the ERE (Education, Research and Enterprise) pathways are built around four key areas of contribution: *Education, Research, Enterprise*, and *Leadership, Management and Engagement*. The extent of an individual's role in each of these four areas of contribution is the main determinant of which ERE Pathway they are placed on. The expectation is that all ERE staff**,** regardless of their role, level or pathway, will contribute in the area of *Leadership, Management and Engagement***.**

Staff assigned to the Balanced Pathway (Teaching & Research contracts) are all deemed to have *significant responsibility for research*. All such staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater on the census date and a substantive research connection with the submitting unit are expected to be returned in REF2021. As we intend to submit 100% of such staff in all Units of Assessment (UOAs), a separate process for identifying staff is not required. Separate procedures apply for staff holding Research-only contracts as described in Part 3.

Part 3: Determining research independence

### 3.1 Designated staff, committees and training

This section sets out the procedures for identifying designated staff and committees responsible for determining research independence, beginning with an explanation of the University's governance structure, and details of training provided to individuals and committees involved in identifying staff.

The University is led by the President and Vice-Chancellor who is advised on day-to-day management and decision-making by an Executive board comprising:

- Vice-Presidents for Education, International and Research & Enterprise
- Chief Operating Officer
- Deans of Faculty
- Executive Directors of Human Resources and Finance & Planning
- Pro Vice-Chancellor Internal Partnerships.

Over 40 academic schools and departments are grouped into five faculties which are supported by Professional Services departments led by the Chief Operating Officer. Each Faculty is led by a Dean who is supported by Associate Deans, Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments. Responsibility for the University's submission to REF 2021 rests with the Vice-Chancellor on the advice of the University Executive.

Council has the highest level of accountability for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, ensuring the University is compliant with the legal and regulatory requirement placed on it in relation to EDI; that it understands the equality and diversity challenges in the sector; and that the University is making progress against its key EDI objectives. The Executive board, with others, meets three times annually as the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee and produces an annual report to Council, normally in November of each year.

University Governance
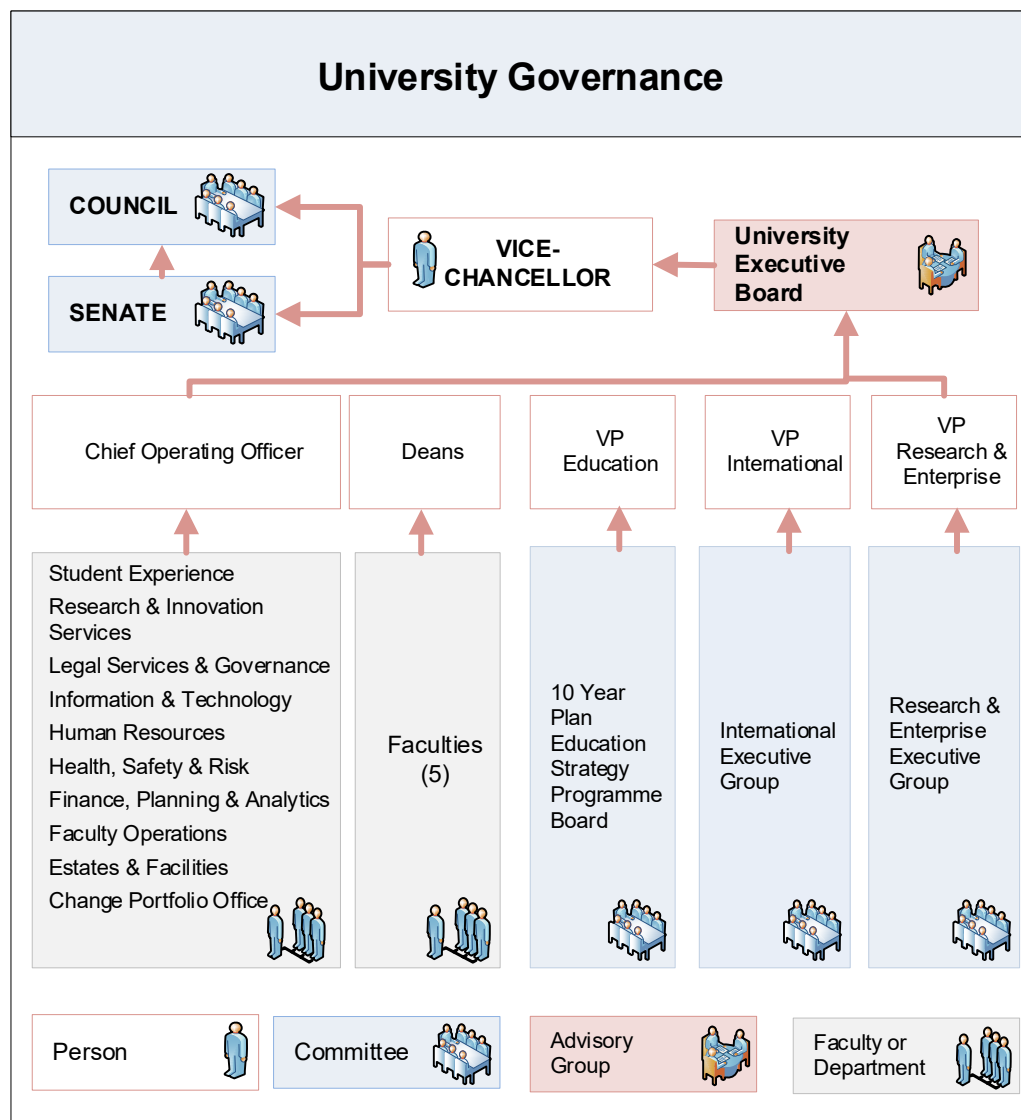
Under the new governance arrangements introduced in2019, Faculty and Professional Services EDI Committees mirror the University Executive model, with each Dean and the Chief Operating Officer accountable for promoting a culture of equality, inclusion and respect, and for appointing an EDI Lead with responsibility for promoting a cohesive approach to EDI. The role of the EDI Committees includes:

- providing leadership on EDI and ensuring local priorities are aligned to University objectives
- developing and implementing programmes to ensure sustained progress against EDI objectives
- reporting on progress and issues arising from analysis of data and consultation, including any policy or resource implications
- receiving progress reports on local Equalities Charter action plans
- reporting progress against objectives and issues to the University EDI Committee to help identify strategic concerns and priorities for the future.

The governance for REF2021 is illustrated in the chart below. The criteria that each group applies in undertaking its functions are consistent with the University's values and operating principles, including:

- compliance with relevant legislation
- excellence in education and research
- fairness, openness, consistency and inclusivity.

REF 2021 Governance
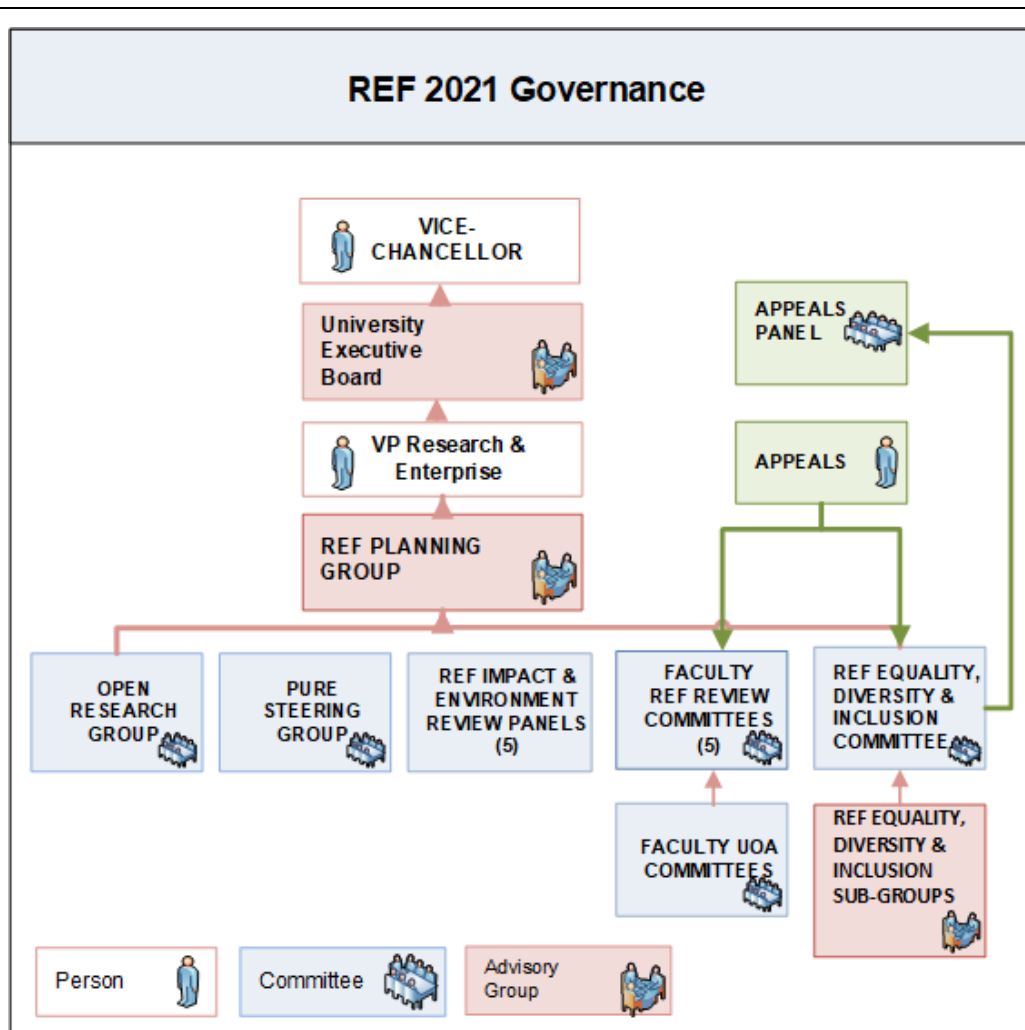
The role and membership of each group is detailed in Appendix 5.3 with role descriptions for key staff at Appendix 5.4. Group and committee members have been selected by virtue of their position, authority and responsibility. In some cases, such as REF/UOA Champions, expertise in a particular discipline and experience of the research assessment exercise are also taken into account. Membership of the REF EDI Committee includes UCU (University and College Union) representation and colleagues selected through an open invitation to all University staff.

An important role of the REF EDI Committee is to advise on the equality and diversity training required for all members of committees involved in preparations for REF 2021. Minimum training comprises completion of the mandatory online course *Equality and Diversity Briefing* which covers: current legislation and our policies; awareness of minority groups and the issues they face; stereotyping, prejudice and unconscious bias; and promoting an inclusive workplace culture. Staff on key committees are also encouraged to complete the online course *Managing Diversity* designed for anyone with managerial responsibility, and to attend REF-specific workshops covering EDI and unconscious bias commissioned by the University's Diversity Team and delivered by an external expert. Training materials will be made available to staff unable to attend the workshops and one-to-one or group training provided on request. The timetable for training is as follows:

Complete by	Details
31 July 2019	REF 2021 Workshops on EDI and unconscious bias for staff with REF decision-making responsibilities (~200 staff invited to attend) delivered by external expert.
31 October 2019	On-line *Equality and Diversity briefing* completed by all REF committee members
Ongoing	One-to-one, group training or online materials for staff unable to attend workshops and for new joiners.

Monitoring by Human Resources will ensure committee members have received or undertaken the requisite training. Membership of these committees is summarised in the table below.

Committee Members	Committee								
	Open Research Group	Pure Steering Group	REF Impact & Environment Review Panels	UOA Committees	Faculty REF Review Committee	REF Planning Group	REF EDI Committee	Appeals Panel	UEB
Vice-Chancellor									✓
VP Research & Enterprise	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
VP Education /International								✓	✓
Dean			✓		✓		✓		✓
Associate Dean Research	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
DHoS Research			✓	✓	✓				
REF/UOA Champion			✓	✓	✓				
Other Academic staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Professional Services staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3.2 Policies and Procedures

This section addresses the criteria used for determining staff who meet the definition of an independent researcher, details of the approvals and appeals processes, and how decisions are made and communicated to staff.

3.2.1 Eligibility Criteria

Research and scholarship, and the knowledge they create, underpin everything we do at Southampton, from our innovative teaching methods to our growing portfolio of spin-out companies. The University has developed a comprehensive approach for career development and progression for all staff as described in Part 2 and illustrated in the *Career Pathways Map* at Appendix 5.1.

The Research Pathway is for ERE staff that contribute predominantly through research activities. They may also make contributions in the areas of Education, Enterprise or both, although these are unlikely to be a major feature of the role and will often be purely to inform or underpin research activities. The emphasis is on developing and delivering research outputs which tackle the most pressing challenges facing society today and encompasses knowledge creation and dissemination at all levels, from individual research projects through to world-leading multi-disciplinary research centres.

A contribution matrix has been developed for each level of the ERE Pathway and Appendix 5.2 provides an example. These matrices are not a prescriptive checklist of achievements or an exhaustive list to be ticked-off for staff to succeed or progress. Rather, they are used alongside job descriptions, appraisal forms and other key documents (such as promotions criteria) to inform other processes.

Each career pathway comprises four or more levels. For research staff, the indicators of contributions for each level are listed in the table below. For staff at levels 5, 6 and 7, there is an expectation of research independence.

Level	Role	Indicators of contributions
4	Research Fellow	• Able to organise research activities and progress a personal research plan and/or plan. • Develop and carry out a plan to open up an area of personal research and expertise, and/or undertake research under supervision in accordance with a specified project and as a research team member. • Provide guidance to other staff and students on own specialist area. • Plan and develop independent, original contributions to an allocated subject area or project, using methodologies, critical evaluations, interpretations, analyses and other techniques appropriate to this type of research, e.g. Investigations leading to the discovery of new knowledge; analysing and illuminating data, interpreting reports, evaluating and criticising texts and bringing new insights; the application of knowledge out of which new intellectual understanding emerges. • Investigate models and approaches to test and develop them. • Regularly publish research work in refereed journals, disseminate findings at conferences, or exhibit work at other appropriate events. • May contribute to writing bids for research grants. • May supervise the work of research assistants and postgraduate students. • May work/collaborate on original research with colleagues in other institutions. • May contribute to education, enterprise, impact, engagement, management and administration areas described above.
5	Senior Research Fellow	• Able to plan and develop a range of high quality research activities, ensuring plans complement broader research strategy. • Sustain a personal research plan, possibly as part of a team. • Establish a national reputation for research. • Plan and develop innovative research proposals and externally funded projects as self-contained items or as part of a broader programme. • Identify sources of research funding and contribute to the process of securing funds through bids and growing reputation. • Manage the application of a range of methodologies, approaches and techniques appropriate to the type of research personally being pursued. • Provide expert advice and support to other staff and students. • Plan and deliver high quality research, project managing the research activity, supervising and taking responsibility for the research team. • Sustain the dissemination of research findings through leading publications, conferences, exhibitions etc. • Develop and engage in research methodologies that add to knowledge/understanding appropriate to the discipline. • Collaborate on, and develop, original research with colleagues in other institutions.
6	Principal Research Fellow	• Contribute to the development of research strategies in the academic unit. • Act as principal investigator on major externally funded projects, taking responsibility for defining original research objectives and questions. • Lead research programmes and teams, setting up and managing the resources needed to deliver the plan. • Devise new research methods, developing an international reputation as a research leader in a major subject area. • Lead major funding bids and research activity in an area of recognised excellence for the University. • Develop and oversee the application of innovative and creative methodologies and techniques appropriate to the type of research being pursued.

		• Disseminate and explain research findings through leading peer reviewed national and international publications, conferences and exhibitions.
		• Provide expert advice and subject leadership, including research supervision.
		• Develop and sustain major research activity of high reputation in the UK and internationally through original research work.
		• Interpret findings from research projects and develop new insights, expanding, refining and testing hypotheses and ideas.
		• May contribute to education, enterprise, impact, management and administration areas described above.
7	Professorial Fellow	• Leading the management and generation of research grants, projects and contracts, and evidence of exploiting research initiatives and opportunities.
		• Sustain and enhance a significant national and international reputation for academic excellence in their field.
		• The management of significant staff teams and resource management processes necessary to deliver Faculty/University strategic research plans. This could include the direct management of post-doctoral and other research staff.
		• Act as advisor to national research funding bodies including the relevant disciplinary research councils or other government funding bodies.
		• Developing major research partnerships with external organisations.
		• Influencing and shaping national and international research agendas and directions.
		• Involvement in development activities in connection with research.
		• Generating significant new income streams, profits and reputation from enterprise activities; leading major commercial projects for clients, developing spin out companies.

In 2014/15 when career pathways were introduced, staff were assigned to the various pathways according to their roles or contract at that time. As might be expected, the coherence between contracts and the relevant contribution matrix varies across the research population and while this has improved over time, it cannot yet be assumed that individual researchers absolutely conform to the pathway. Accordingly, while the intention is for staff at ERE-Research level 5 and above to be independent, it is not currently possible to categorise all staff as "independent researchers" based solely on the level of the post, and each researcher must be individually considered according to the criteria described below.

All staff on a Research-only contract (HESA Academic Employment Function 2) with an FTE of 0.2 or greater on the census date (31 July 2020) can be nominated by their Faculty as a "candidate for independent researcher". To qualify for submission to REF2021, the individual must also satisfy one or more of the indicators of independence listed below. It should be noted that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and, where appropriate, multiple factors may need to be considered.

Across all main panels, the following indicators would normally identify research independence:

- 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 https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1030/c-users-daislha-desktop-list-of-research-fellowships-updated-22032019.pdf
- Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

In addition, Main Panels C and D also consider that the following attributes may generally indicate research independence in their disciplines:

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

Generally, the following groups of staff do not satisfy these criteria:

- Level 4 posts: other than a small number of qualifying fellowship holders (about 1% of the total), postdoctoral research assistants undertake research under the supervision of the award holder and are not independent researchers.
- Marie Sklodowska-Curie ITN Fellows: these Innovative Training Network, level 4 posts, are for early-stage researchers in the first 4 years of their career who have not been awarded a PhD at the time of their recruitment. These posts should not be confused with Marie Sklodowska-Curie Research Fellows who normally qualify as independent researchers.
- Clinical Research Training Fellows: these awards support clinicians (predominantly at level 5) to undertake a PhD or other higher research degree, or to reacquire research skills.
- IT Innovation Senior Research Engineers: these level 5 posts in the School of Electronics and Computer Science, are involved in applied research and software development for deployment in industry and commerce. Their work does not generally lead to the dissemination of research findings through publications.
- Specialist staff such as computer programmers and software engineers.

3.2.2 Inclusion of Independent Researchers and Appeals

The process for the inclusion of independent researchers and for appeals is set out in the diagram below. During the period before Research England published the final REF guidance on submissions, Faculties (through their UOA Committees) identified candidates for submission as independent researchers and their outputs assessed as part of the annual benchmarking process. With the availability of the final guidance, staff lists were reviewed to confirm REF-eligibility and to identify additional staff who might be eligible. These lists are now reviewed weekly to monitor leavers and joiners and, where necessary, Associate Deans Research are asked to advise on any changes identified. Staff lists and the UOA for submission will be confirmed at each of the *Faculty REF Review Committees* (scheduled in November 2019, and June and October 2020).

As detailed in 3.2.1 above, staff on Research-only contracts who meet the criteria for independent researchers are automatically eligible for submission to REF2021. If any researcher feels they are eligible to be returned, they can raise this with their Deputy Head of School Research for consideration by the Associate Dean Research. Researchers may also contact their union representative or the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion team for support and advice. In the case of non-inclusion, the appeal mechanism is a letter in the first instance as described below:

a) Criteria for Independent Researcher

Where the reason for the appeal is based solely on whether the staff member meets the criteria for submission as an independent researcher, the appellant should set out their qualifying circumstances, identifying any new information or evidence that may not have been taken into account. The letter should be sent to the Chair of the relevant *Faculty REF Review Committee* who, in consultation with members of the Committee, will give due consideration to the appellant's case. At the Chair's discretion, this may involve convening a meeting of the committee, a meeting with the appellant (who may bring a supporter if they wish) or both. The decision of the Chair is final and feedback will be provided to the appellant in writing within 5 working days.

b) Relates to a protected characteristic

Where the reason for appeal relates to one or more protected characteristics, these should be clearly identified in the appellant's letter which should be sent to the Chair of the *REF Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee*. The Chair, in consultation with members of the committee, may uphold the appeal if a majority of members determine that non-selection is based upon a case of discrimination against a relevant protected characteristic; in the absence of an absolute majority, the Chair holds the deciding vote. Where the committee determines the case does not fit the qualifying criteria, the Chair will inform the individual in writing stating the reasons and the appellant may refer the case to the Appeals Panels.

REF 2021 - Selection & Appeals Process

Annual Benchmarking Exercise	Annual Review	Selection Process

Annual Benchmarking Exercise

Annual Outputs Benchmarking exercises have been undertaken since 2016 as part of the University's preparations for REF 2021. The exercises support the identification of staff eligible for submission and their outputs, and help surface any anomalies in staff records.

OUTPUTS SELECTION

Individual staff select and rank up to 5 of their best outputs.

UOA COMMITTEES

Comprises Deputy Head of School Research, UOA Champion and other senior academics for each UOA (Unit of Assessment).

Responsible for assessing outputs, providing feedback to staff on the resulting quality profile and preparing action plans to support the delivery of high-quality outputs.

EXTERNAL REVIEW

Selected outputs are subjected to independent review by external assessors to validate internal assessments. Such outputs are selected by UOA Champions/DHoS Research in consultation with the Associate Dean Research.

ASSOCIATE DEAN RESEARCH

Responsible for ensuring consistency of assessments across the Schools and UOAs in their Faculty.

Annual Review

REF PLANNING GROUP

Advisory group to VP Research & Enterprise (Chair) comprising Associate Deans Research (5) and key Professional Services staff with REF responsibilities.

Meets at least three times/year to review the REF strategy and performance across all UOAs, and to ensure consistent implementation of policies across Faculties.

REF IMPACT & ENVIRONMENT REVIEW PANELS

Each Faculty panel comprises the VP Research & Enterprise (Chair), Dean, Associate Dean Research, senior academics nominated by each Faculty and key Professional Services staff.

Reviews the Impact Case Studies and Environment Templates produced in each UOA and produces action plans to ensure high-quality submissions.

FACULTY REF REVIEW COMMITTEES

Comprises VP Research & Enterprise (Chair), Dean, Associate Dean Research, UOA Champions, Deputy Heads of School Research and key Professional Services staff with REF responsibilities.

Responsible for reviewing performance across UOAs in the Faculty and supporting any improvements required.

Selection Process

UOA COMMITTEES

Each Committee assesses the quality of outputs selected by staff and identifies candidates for submission as independent researchers.

FACULTY REF REVIEW COMMITTEES

Reviews performance across UOAs in the Faculty and signs-off the submission for approval by UEB. Each Faculty Committee will make final decisions (subject to leavers, joiners and appeals) on the inclusion of independent researchers for recommendation to the University Executive Board.

REF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Comprises Dean of Social Sciences (Chair), Associate Deans Research (5), Diversity Manager and other senior staff from the academic and administrative communities with equality and diversity responsibilities and interests.

Responsible for driving participation in and support for EDI initiatives that lead to a positive impact on the University's submission, managing training, briefings and communication of the Code of Practice and considering appeals against non-selection of staff.

APPEALS PANEL

Comprises VP International or VP Education (Chair), Executive Director Human Resources, nominated Associate Dean Research and Diversity Manager (as advisor). Responsible for hearing appeals referred by the REF Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Exhausts the informal part of the grievance procedures.

UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Takes final decisions on the submission for recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor.

Appeals Panel

The *Appeals Panel* comprises the Vice-President International or Vice-President Education as an independent Chair, Executive Director Human Resources, an Associate Dean Research who is not conflicted, and the Diversity Manager as advisor. The *Appeals Panel* will meet with the appellant (who may bring a supporter if they wish) and the Chair of the relevant *Faculty REF Review Committee* or their delegate. The *Appeals Panel* may also seek external advice where appropriate. After the hearing, the *Appeals Panel* will determine whether the appellant is to be included in the submission or is unsuccessful in their appeal. The panel's decision is binding and will be notified to the appellant and the Chair of the *Faculty REF Review Committee* in writing. This appeals process is deemed to exhaust the Informal Resolution Stage of the grievance procedures.

3.3 Equality impact assessment

The University will conduct equality impact assessments (EIAs) on the policy and procedures for including independent researchers and selecting outputs for REF 2021. The EIAs will help to identify where discrimination may inadvertently occur, differential impact on particular groups, and where a particular policy or practice has a positive impact on the advancement of equality. Confidentiality of data is addressed in the EIA section of the Privacy Notice at Appendix 5.6.

For independent researchers, the EIAs will compare the population of *staff identified as candidates for selection* with that of *staff who do not meet the published criteria* at a given census date, for example, the start and/or end of a benchmarking exercise. The EIA will focus on staff at levels 5, 6 and 7 as almost all staff at level 4 are research assistants and not eligible for REF 2021. The analyses will address all the protected characteristics for which data are sufficient. The University recognises that a full dataset is required and that any missing data will reduce the significance of any subsequent analysis. Individuals will therefore be encouraged to complete or update the Equal Opportunities details form available on the online HR self-service portal (MyView) if they have not already done so.

The EIAs for the selection of outputs are described at section 4.5.

The *REF Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee* is responsible for ensuring the completion of EIAs and making the information available to relevant groups involved in the REF submission. The first EIA is scheduled for publication by 31 August 2019 with reviews undertaken by 31 January and 31 August 2020 as detailed in the Communications Plan (see 1.5). The final Equality Impact Assessment produced following the REF 2021 submission (31 March 2021) will be published by 31 July 2021.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

4.1 Staff, committees and training
See section 3.1 for details. Key groups involved in the REF submission are listed at Appendix 5.3.

4.2 Policies and procedures
This section details the procedures developed for the fair and transparent selection of outputs which apply across all departments. As described in Parts 2 and 3, the University will be returning the outputs of all staff meeting the REF-eligibility requirements who hold a Teaching & Research contract and those on Research-only contracts satisfying the criteria for independent researchers.

Information about staff and their outputs is held in the University's research information system, Pure. Outputs of former staff will be returned where their inclusion is expected to improve the quality of the submission. Staff made compulsorily redundant or who have accepted voluntary redundancy will not form part of the University's submission to REF 2021.

The schematic "*REF 2021 – Selection and Appeals Process*" in part 3 above summarises the key stages in the selection of outputs which have been developed through annual benchmarking exercises held since 2016. The detailed stages are listed here and described in the table below:

1. Identification of REF-eligible staff
2. Staff propose high-quality outputs
3. Open Access compliance checks
4. Assessment of outputs
5. External calibration of outputs
6. Allocation of outputs to authors and co-authors
7. Selection of outputs

Key stage for selection of outputs	Details
Identification of REF-eligible staff	All staff expected to have significant responsibility for research on the census date (see parts 2 and 3 above) are assigned to the appropriate UOA in the REF module within Pure, the University's research information system.
Staff propose high-quality outputs	Each year, within a specified period of 4 months, staff propose and rank their highest quality research outputs, selecting from the repository of publications stored in the Pure system.
	Only outputs meeting REF2021 eligibility criteria can be proposed. Outputs proposed in previous years can be retained or replaced where stronger outputs are available. In a forthcoming system upgrade, a research output proposed by one author will automatically be proposed for all REF-eligible co-authors.
	A minimum of three outputs is required but there is no upper limit to the number that can be proposed. Staff on part-time contracts or with individual circumstances may propose a reduced number of outputs as follows:
	• Part-time contract averaging 0.7 FTE or less - two outputs
	• Part-time contract averaging 0.5 FTE or less - one output
	• Early Career Researcher with less than 24 months in post at 31 July 2019 - one output
	For staff with significant periods of absence, the number of outputs required is determined by the Associate Dean Research.
	Eligible outputs produced by former staff are entered into Pure by REF administrators as directed by the Associate Dean Research, Deputy Head of School Research or UOA Champion.
Open Access compliance checks	During the 4 months' period, library staff undertake checks to confirm that the proposed outputs are eligible for submission. If necessary, a REF Exceptions Panel (Associate Director Research Engagement (Chair), Head of Research Performance and an Associate Dean Research) convenes to consider whether an exception can be applied. Researchers and Faculty REF administrators are informed where an output is not compliant and, if required, an alternative output can be proposed.
Assessment of outputs	Members of UOA Committees, supplemented with additional senior academic staff where necessary, are responsible for assessing the proposed outputs. Normally, up to five of the highest ranked outputs for each researcher will be assessed by a minimum of two assessors. Assessors are selected on the basis of relevant research expertise, seniority in the field and being representative of the cohort of eligible staff (as far as possible). Importantly, assessors work independently of one another and return their scores to the Faculty REF administrator to upload the average scores to Pure. Where the administrator identifies a significant difference in scores for a particular output, the assessors may be asked to review their assessment and/or confer. Outputs rated as *Unclassified* by any assessor must be separately reviewed by the Associate Dean Research or their delegate to confirm the rating.

External calibration of outputs	In some UOAs, external assessors are used to help calibrate the assessment exercise or to provide their expert opinion for selected outputs.
Allocation of outputs to authors and co-authors	The REF guidelines require a minimum of one and no more than five outputs to be attributed to each staff member returned (there is no minimum for the outputs of former staff). This decoupling of staff and outputs is intended to provide increased flexibility to institutions in building the portfolio of outputs for submission. As noted in the Guidance on Submission, "…..there are many reasons why an excellent researcher may have fewer or more outputs attributable to them in an assessment period. It is therefore not expected that all staff members would be returned with the same number of outputs attributed to them in the submission".

For all but the smallest submissions, manually allocating outputs to staff in accordance with the guidelines can be challenging given that many outputs will have one or more University co-authors. A software tool has been developed to undertake this process for all UOA submissions. The model takes the outputs proposed by staff, average scores and author/co-author staff IDs, and produces a ranked list of outputs according to the parameters listed below. Staff identifiers are randomised before processing to avoid any systematic bias that might arise from outputs being ordered by employee start date.

- total number of outputs per UoA is bounded by 2.5 times the FTE of staff assigned to the UoA. Former staff have an FTE = 0
- minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5 outputs per staff assigned to the UOA
- inclusion of former staff outputs is optional
- outputs with multiple co-authors are only submitted once in a UoA
- flags members of staff with no outputs.
- maximises the score (GPA) for each UoA.

An important feature of the tool is that it is "blind" to the protected characteristics of staff and their outputs. |
| Selection of outputs | Each UOA Committee reviews the ranked list of outputs produced by the allocation tool to ensure:
- the allocation of outputs to authors is rational
- the allocation of outputs to former staff is not excessive
- the total number of outputs allocated (including those from former staff) is correct

The final selection of outputs will be made by the Associate Dean Research on the advice of the UOA Committee which can refer any disagreement to the Dean of Faculty whose decision is final. |

4.3 Staff circumstances

4.3.1 Expectations of contributions to outputs pool

The outputs benchmarking exercises held since 2016 recognise that staff circumstances can affect an individual's ability to research productively and allowances are therefore made for part-time researchers, early career researchers and staff with significant periods of absence (see table at 4.2). The contribution of each researcher is formally reviewed at annual Faculty REF Review Committee meetings and an action assigned to the Deputy Head of School Research or Associate Dean Research where it is agreed that staff would benefit from additional support or mentoring; where appropriate, a personal development plan is agreed between the individual researcher and their line manager.

4.3.2 Voluntary declaration of staff circumstances

The _Guidance on Submissions_ REF 2019/01 (paras 151-201) sets out measures introduced by the UK funding bodies to recognise the effect that individuals' circumstances may have on research productivity, including requests for a reduction in outputs and the criteria for removing the "minimum of one" output requirement. There may be other circumstances comparable with the examples given which REF 2021 panels may consider as long as an explanation is provided as to the way in which these are said to have impacted on the individual's ability to produce the expected volume of research outputs.

As part of the University's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, safe and supportive structures have been developed for staff to voluntarily declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 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:

1) 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.

2) 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.

3) 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 reduction in the number of outputs to be submitted.

Applicable circumstances are of two types: "*defined reduction*" and "*circumstances requiring a judgement*".

Defined reduction

- Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (ECRs are staff who started their career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020.
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave.

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

- Disability (including chronic conditions).
- Ill heath, injury or mental health conditions.
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances (may include but are not limited to: medical issues associated with pregnancy or maternity; health and safety restrictions in laboratory or field work during pregnancy or breastfeeding; constraints on the ability to travel to undertake fieldwork due to pregnancy or breast-feeding).
- Childcare and other caring responsibilities.
- Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics or relating to activities protected by employment legislation (see Appendix 5.5).

To ensure a standard approach across the University, the collection and analysis of staff circumstances information is managed centrally by Research & Information Services. A questionnaire has been developed with secure storage of, and controlled access to, completed forms. Access and analysis of information is restricted to the Research Information Analyst with contingency/support provided by direct line managers.

All potentially REF-eligible staff will be invited to voluntarily disclose individual staff circumstance through the questionnaire which will be accompanied by a covering letter explaining the purpose of the exercise with links to supporting information and guidance, including the Privacy Notice (reproduced at Appendix 5.6). Any member of staff who requires support, guidance or advice in relation to their personal circumstances or to complete the questionnaire may contact the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team.

The timetable for voluntary disclosure of circumstances is shown below.

Date	Activity	Comments
17 June 2019	Questionnaire and covering letter sent to potentially REF-eligible staff.	
31 July 2019	Initial deadline for return of questionnaire.	Staff returning the form by this date will receive feedback by 29 November 2019.
29 November 2019	Questionnaire and covering letter sent to potentially REF-eligible staff.	
13 January 2020	Deadline for return of questionnaire for inclusion in the March 2020 return to the funding body.	New or revised circumstances received after this date would need to be submitted as part of the UOA submission on 31 March 2021.
28 August 2020	Final deadline for return of questionnaire.	

Where staff have reported circumstances *requiring a judgement* about the reduction in the number of outputs submitted, a dedicated process within the University will be followed. This information will be held confidentially and presented anonymously to the Staff Circumstances Sub-group for review (see Appendix 5.3 for membership). This group will consider all cases of circumstances *requiring a judgement* in line with official guidance and determine the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs to request. External advice may be sought where necessary. The Research Performance Analyst will provide feedback to the individuals concerned. Where an individual considers the decision to be incorrect, they should inform the Research Performance Analyst in writing stating clearly the grounds for requesting a reassessment. At the Chair's discretion, this may involve convening a meeting of the committee, a meeting with the appellant (who may bring a supporter if they wish) or both. The decision of the Chair is final and feedback will be provided to the appellant in writing within 5 working days.

4.3.3 Approach to determining whether a reduction in outputs should be sought

The funding bodies expect that requests will only be made where the cumulative effect of circumstances has disproportionately affected the UOA's potential output pool. Analysis of the 2018 outputs benchmarking exercise indicates that the number of high quality outputs available for submission is likely to meet the total required by most UOAs. However, until staff have declared their circumstances, including staff joining the University before the census date (31 July 2020), the actual requirements are uncertain. Accordingly, the University may request a reduction in the number of outputs in any UoA where a significant proportion of staff have voluntarily declared individual circumstances. Responsibility for requesting a reduction in outputs rests with the REF EDI Committee which will take all factors into account including the assessed quality of outputs available and outputs produced by former staff. Where an application is made for a particular UOA, in the interests of fairness, all staff circumstances received for that UOA will be included. The tariffs used to determine the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty in the assessment is reproduced from Annex L of the Guidance on Submissions at Appendix 5.7.

4.4 Part-Time and Fixed Term Work

The University's staff policies apply to both full-time and part-time staff except in relation to certain benefits which may apply pro-rata to their hours. Specific policies which facilitate part-time working include flexible working, job sharing, career breaks and voluntary reduced hours. All staff policies conform to equality and diversity legislation and form an integral part of the University's wider equality and diversity agenda.

In respect of fixed-term staff, the University is a signatory to The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and is implementing the Concordat's seven key principles through our Concordat Implementation Plan which includes Principle 6 that "*Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers*".

4.5 Equality impact assessments

The equality impact assessments (EIAs) described at section 3.3 will include a qualitative analysis of the policies and procedures for the selection of outputs, and a quantitative analysis of the protected characteristics of staff with significant responsibility for research who have contributed to the outputs pool. Each of the key stages in the selection of outputs (see 4.2) will be considered and the findings of the EIAs used to inform the final selection of outputs for submission.

5.1 Career Pathways Map

Career Pathways are designed to help staff map out their career trajectory during their time at the University, allowing them to plan their personal development and work activities to enable them to achieve their full potential. Each Career Pathway has its own levels, representative work activities and skills and capability standards which together define the contributions expected of staff at each level and within each pathway.

Career Pathways Map

Education, Research and Enterprise (ERE)				Technical and Experimental (TAE)	Management, Specialist and Administrative (MSA)	Community and Operational (CAO)
Balanced Pathway	Education Pathway	Research Pathway	Enterprise Pathway			
Professor	Professorial Fellow (Education)	Professorial Fellow (Research)	Professorial Fellow (Enterprise)		MSA Level 7	
Band C	Band C	Band C	Band C			
Band B	Band B	Band B	Band B			
Band A	Band A	Band A	Band A			
Associate Professor	Principal Teaching Fellow	Principal Research Fellow	Principal Enterprise Fellow		MSA Level 6	
Lecturer B	Senior Teaching Fellow	Senior Research Fellow	Senior Enterprise Fellow	TAE Level 5	MSA Level 5	
Lecturer A	Teaching Fellow	Research Fellow	Enterprise Fellow	TAE Level 4	MSA Level 4	CAO Level 4
				TAE Level 3	MSA Level 3	CAO Level 3
				TAE Level 2b	MSA Level 2b	CAO Level 2b
				TAE Level 2a	MSA Level 2a	CAO Level 2a
				TAE Level 1b	MSA Level 1b	CAO Level 1b
						CAO Level 1a

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5.2 Example of a Contribution Matrix

The Contribution Matrix below is for level 5 staff on the Research Pathway, highlighting the focus on *research* and *leadership, management & engagement* with *education* and *enterprise* shown less prominently to reflect these are unlikely to be a major feature of the role.

ERE LEVEL 5 | RESEARCH PATHWAY | CONTRIBUTION MATRIX

This document is a matrix of indicators of contributions for staff at Level 5, which will be building on those at Level 4. The contribution in each area will vary depending on the role and personal experience over time. On this pathway staff will be expected to contribute predominantly through Research and Leadership, Management and Engagement activities. Staff may also make contributions in the areas of Education and/or Enterprise, but these are unlikely to be a major feature of the role; these areas are therefore shaded in grey.

This matrix is not a prescriptive checklist of achievements or an exhaustive list to be ticked off in order for staff to succeed or progress. The information in this matrix, together with other ERE Career pathways information should be used alongside job descriptions, appraisal forms and other key documents (such as promotions criteria) to inform other processes.

RESEARCH	LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT
- Able to plan and develop a range of high quality research activities, ensuring plans complement broader research strategy. - Sustain a personal research plan, possibly as part of a team. - Establish a national reputation for research. - Plan and develop innovative research proposals and externally funded projects as self-contained items or as part of a broader programme. - Identify sources of research funding and contribute to the process of securing funds through bids and growing reputation. - Manage the application of a range of methodologies, approaches and techniques appropriate to the type of research personally being pursued. - Provide expert advice and support to other staff and students - Plan and deliver high quality research, project managing the research activity, supervising and taking responsibility for the research team. - Sustain the dissemination of research findings through leading publications, conferences, exhibitions etc. - Develop and engage in research methodologies that add to knowledge/understanding appropriate to the discipline. - Collaborate on, and develop, original research with colleagues in other institutions.	- Able to manage team dynamics, ensuring any potential for conflict is managed effectively. - Able to formulate development plans for own staff to meet current and future skill needs. - Able to provide expert guidance and advice to colleagues within the university and outside to resolve complex problems. - In addition to Level 4, able to persuade and influence in order to foster and maintain relationships. - Able to resolve tensions and difficulties as they arise. - Able to represent the unit/faculty/university on national projects or at national events. - Take on co-ordinating roles, such as running the process of admissions, examinations, the REF or teaching quality assessment, or in the case of consulting or specialist services, project timetabling or broader service development. - Monitor and ensure effective management of assets and budgets allocated as part of the role. - May involve managerial responsibility for staff. - May contribute to University-wide projects or working groups, or be a member of a Faculty board or committee. - Consultant roles would involve leading and managing specific project-related activities. - Support the training and development of junior colleagues.
EDUCATION	ENTERPRISE
- Able to plan and develop a range of high quality teaching activities, ensuring plans complement broader education strategy. - Manage a range of contributions to the learning and teaching strategy of the academic unit, including providing teaching of the highest quality across a range of modules and to all levels. - Monitoring and evaluate course design to ensure excellence and coherence. - Promote the use of appropriate media to support student learning. - Identify areas where current provision is in need of revision or improvement, planning and developing innovative learning, teaching and assessment methods and techniques in the Academic Unit as appropriate. - Act as an internal examiner for postgraduate students.	- Able to plan and develop a range of high quality enterprise activities, ensuring plans complement broader enterprise strategy. - May develop and manage specific enterprise activities. - May contribute to learned societies/ professional institutions through committee membership. - May organise programmes of public outreach and engagement, building a track record of public engagement. - May develop programmes of teaching and/or research that involve knowledge transfer with the public and private sectors, and with civil society. - May provide advice to public bodies at local, regional, national and international levels, as appropriate.

5.3 Key Groups Involved in REF 2021 Preparations

For most committees, terms of reference and membership are reviewed annually. Minutes are normally published on the intranet except in the case of UEB (blog produced) and where information is confidential, such as the Appeals Panel. Below, academic staff are shown in black and Professional Services staff in blue.

Group	Terms of Reference, Objectives or Responsibilities	Membership
(1) University Executive Board Existing group providing advice to the Vice-Chancellor. Meetings are held fortnightly.	• The University Executive advises the Vice-Chancellor on day-to-day management and decision-making at the University and comprises the senior executives responsible for all academic and non-academic staff. • UEB (with EDI representation) also serves as the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. • Responsible for approving and sign-off of the REF submission.	President & Vice-Chancellor (Chair) Vice Presidents (3) Deans of Faculty (5) PVC Internal Partnerships Chief Operating Officer Executive Director of Finance & Planning Executive Director of Human Resources
(2) REF Planning Group Formed in 2015 to advise the VP Research & Enterprise on all aspects of the University's preparations for REF 2021. Meetings are held every 4 months and more frequently as necessary.	• Advises the Vice-President Research & Enterprise on changes required, both strategic and operational, to ensure the University maintains its premier position in securing government funding for quality-related research. • Assesses and responds to changes proposed by Research England (RE) for the REF2021 exercise. • Develops and implements policies and processes in response to decisions taken by RE for the REF2021 exercise.	VP Research & Enterprise (Chair) Associate Deans Research (5) Director Research & Innovation Services Head of Research Performance Associate Director Research Engagement Open Research Development Manager Senior Marketing Manager Impact Framework Manager Research Information Manager Research Information Analyst
(3) Open Research Group Existing Group (formerly Open Access Group). REF-specific functions include advising the REF Planning Group on open-access (OA) and open research issues. A sub-group meets as required to consider and rule on exceptions to the REF OA policy. Meetings are held every 4 months and more frequently as necessary.	• Reports to the REF Planning Group on issues relating to REF policy development, implementation and compliance. • Ensures external and institutional requirements are identified and evaluated. • Provides oversight of the overall framework of policy and service developments. • Co-ordinates lobbying activity to maximise research impact and value for money e.g. through consultation responses • Supports cross-disciplinary engagement with best practice exemplars.	Associate Director Research Engagement (Chair) VP Research & Enterprise Associate Deans Research (5) or nominees Early Career Researcher Postgraduate Researcher Undergraduate Student Open Research Manager Head of Research Performance Finance representative
(4) Pure Steering Group Existing group that approves upgrades to Pure, the information system used to aggregate research information and to prepare and collate the University's submission	• Represents the business and user interests for the system. • Provides overall guidance and direction for the development of the system. • Authorises system updates and changes to processes, and ensures timely	Head of Research Performance (Chair) Associate Deans Research (5) or nominees Research Information Manager Associate Director Research Engagement Open Research Development Manager Research Information Analyst

to REF 2021. REF-specific functions include the management of outputs selected for REF 2021 and the assignment of REF-eligible staff to Units of Assessment. Meetings are held every 4 months.	communication with stakeholders and users. • Ensures that risks are tracked and managed. • Makes decisions on escalated issues.	
(5) Faculty REF Review Committees Formed in 2017 to advise the VP Research & Enterprise on all aspects of each Faculty's preparations for REF 2021. Separate meetings for each Faculty are held annually and more frequently if necessary.	• Advise the Vice-President Research & Enterprise on the submission strategy for each UOA. • Oversee the implementation at UOA level, of policies and processes agreed by the REF Planning Group in response to decisions taken by Research England for the REF2021 exercise. • Makes final decisions (subject to leavers, joiners and appeals) on the inclusion of independent researchers, reviews performance in the Faculty and signs-off the draft UOA submissions for UEB approval. • First stage of appeals for non-selection of staff aspiring for inclusion as an independent researcher.	VP Research & Enterprise (Chair) Deans of Faculty Associate Dean Research Deputy Heads of School (Research) UOA/REF/Impact Champions Director Research & Innovation Services Head of Research Performance Associate Director Research Engagement Impact Framework Manager Research Information Manager Research Information Analyst Faculty REF Administrator
(6) REF Impact & Environment Review Panels Advisory groups formed in April 2019 to review draft Environment statements and Impact Case Studies submitted for expert review. Separate meetings arranged for each Faculty in April 2019 and January 2020.	• Review the assessment of Impact Case Studies and Environment templates for UOAs in each Faculty. • Advise Vice-President Research & Enterprise on any issues relating to policy, process or resources that would enhance the quality of Impact Case Studies or Environment templates.	VP Research & Enterprise (Chair) Dean of Faculty Associate Dean Research Senior academics (nominated by each Faculty) Head of Research Performance Associate Director Research Engagement Impact Framework Manager Research Information Analyst
(7) REF Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Formed in February 2019 to prepare, implement and communicate the Code of Practice and associated Equality Impact Assessments. Reports to REF Planning Group. The Committee promotes equality, diversity and inclusion within all aspects of the REF submission and ensures that policies and processes are inclusive and free from discrimination, inequality and unconscious bias. The Committee also drives participation and support for EDI initiatives that lead to a positive impact on the University's submission to REF 2021.	• Prepares the University's Code of Practice and oversees the production and reviews of the Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) for the REF 2021 submission. • Connects with existing equality and diversity networks within the University to help strengthen and accredit existing policies and procedures. • Drives participation in and support for equality and diversity initiatives that lead to a positive impact on the REF 2021 submission. • Advises on training, briefings and communication of the Code. • First stage of appeals where this relates to one or more protected characteristics.	Dean of Social Sciences (Chair) Associate Deans Research (5) President of University and College Union (UCU) or nominee Professor of Law* Professor of Clinical Neuroanatomy* EPSRC Research Fellow in Medicine* Teaching Fellow in Digital Media Practice* Head of Research Performance Associate Director (Research Engagement) Diversity Manager or nominee *appointed through open call to all staff*

(8) REF Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-groups Three sub-groups were formed in February 2019 to support the preparation and communication of the Code of Practice and to advise the REF EDI Committee on changes to policies and procedures: • Training & Communications • Equality Impact Assessment • Staff Circumstances Sub-groups convene as required. Members were drawn from the REF Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee and from nominations by Associate Dean Research.	• Prepare and implement training and communication plans (T&C Sub-group). • Prepare Equality Impact Assessments (EIA Sub-group). • Manage the staff circumstances process (SC Sub-group). • Prepare and implement action plans to revise policies and procedures (all sub-groups) on approval of REF EDI Committee.	**Training & Communications Sub-group**: Diversity Manager or nominee (Chair) Head of Research Performance Teaching Fellow in Digital Media Practice Professor of Clinical Neuroanatomy Professor of English Professor of Criminal Law Professor of Physical Geography UCU President Equality Officer UCU **EIA Sub-group** Head of Research Performance (Chair) Associate Director Research Engagement Diversity Manager or nominee Research Performance Analyst Professor of Education Professor of Nursing EPSRC Research Fellow in Medicine Lecturer in Medieval History **Staff Circumstances Sub-group** Associate Dean Research, Environmental and Life Sciences (Chair) Associate Dean Research, Social Sciences Professor of Law Diversity Manager or nominee Head of Research Performance Research Performance Analyst
(9) Appeals Panel Formed specifically to support the REF 2021 exercise. Chaired by a Vice-President who is independent of the REF submission. Convenes as required.	Hears appeals where these relate to one or more protected characteristics. Exhausts the informal part of the grievance procedures. The date at which appeals can be made is no later than 1 August 2020. The appeal mechanism is a letter in the first instance to the Chair of the REF EDI Committee stating the reasons. If the appeal is not upheld, the Appeals Panel will be constituted.	VP International or VP Education (Chair) Associate Dean Research (not conflicted) Executive Director Human Resources Diversity Manager (as advisor)
(10) Faculty UOA Committees Advisory to the Associate Dean Research and Faculty REF Review Committees. Formed specifically to support the REF 2021 exercise. Convene as required.	Responsibilities may vary across Faculties but generally include: • Supporting EDI initiatives within the discipline. • Identifying candidates for independent researcher. • Providing justification for the inclusion of independent researchers. • Feedback to authors on the suitability of proposed outputs. • Assessing proposed outputs. • Reviewing the selection of outputs produced by the allocation tool and making any necessary adjustments.	DHoS Research REF/UOA Champions Other senior academic staff REF administrator

5.4 Role Descriptions for Key Staff

President & Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor's role is to lead the University, and to help to direct and achieve the University's strategic goals. The Vice-Chancellor also attends the University Senate, sits on the University Council, is responsible for securing sufficient funding, and represents the University externally.

Vice-President Research & Enterprise

VP Research & Enterprise has University-wide oversight of all research and enterprise activities including the research and enterprise strategy and funding, research governance, research quality, the Concordat for Early Career Researchers, engagement with external parties, intellectual property and 'spin-out' companies. Chairs the University EDI Committee, works closely with the Vice-President (Education) on overseeing doctoral student development and has lead-responsibility for the University's REF 2021 submission.

Dean of Faculty

The Dean of Faculty is responsible for delivering the research, teaching and enterprise activities across their faculty, as well as national and international engagement. They also help lead the strategic development of the University as a whole. Two of the five Deans are serving REF panel members and have received EDI training in these roles. Specific EDI responsibilities include:

- Ensuring staff involved in the selection of independent researchers and outputs for submission have a good understanding of the REF processes and, in particular, potential areas for discrimination or unconscious bias.
- Ensuring relevant staff within the Faculty receive the required EDI training.

The Dean of Social Sciences chairs the University's REF EDI Committee with the following responsibilities:

- Overall responsibility to ensure that REF processes are applied fairly across the University and without discrimination.
- Providing final sign off for the Code of Practice (ahead of ratification by UEB).
- Ensuring Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are produced on-schedule and actions implemented.
- Identifying, through the Committee, relevant EDI training required for staff involved in selection processes.
- Ensuring the Code of Practice is widely communicated and that relevant staff are aware of their obligations under the Code.

Associate Dean Research

With previous management experience of the research assessment exercise, the Associate Dean Research (ADR) is the lead-academic in each Faculty responsible for delivering a high-quality submission for their UOAs (Units of Assessment). With support from their Deputy Heads of School Research and REF Champions, responsibilities include:

- Championing EDI across their Faculty in relation to REF processes and providing advice and guidance around key EDI initiatives.
- Supporting the dissemination and communication of the Code of Practice across their Faculty.
- Supporting the delivery of Equality Impact Assessments and the implementation of changes required to policies and procedures.

The ADR for the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences chairs the Staff Circumstances Sub-group.

Deputy Head of Schools Research

DHoS Research has oversight of the REF submission in their School. With detailed knowledge of the staff, outputs and research undertaken in their discipline, they are responsible for ensuring that staff involved in assessment and selection are aware of potential areas for discrimination or unconscious bias. DHoS Research are supported by REF Champions.

REF Champions

One or more UoA Champions and Impact Champions, typically senior academic staff, have been appointed to each Unit of Assessment in which the University is making a submission to REF2021. UoA Champions are responsible for supporting EDI in their Unit of Assessment and work closely with DHoS Research in assessing outputs and in the identification of independent researchers. Impact Champions manage the production of impact case studies within their UOA and will be involved in selecting case studies for submission.

The following Professional Services staff have key roles in the REF submission:

Head of Research Performance

A senior manager in Research & Innovation Services with the following responsibilities:

- Plans, coordinates and manages the University's submission to REF2021.
- Provides expert advice on the REF process.
- As Chair of the REF EDI Equality Impact Assessment Sub-group, designs and conducts the REF Equality Impact Assessment in collaboration with members of the REF EDI Committee.
- Member of REF EDI Staff Circumstances Sub-group and REF Planning Group.

Associate Director Research Engagement

A senior manager in the Library with the following responsibilities:

- Responsible for the University's repository of research outputs and data.
- Chairs the Open Research Group and REF Exceptions Panel and provides expert advice in relation to the selection of research outputs, open access and open research.
- Member of the REF EDI Equality Impact Assessment Sub-group and REF Planning Group.

HR Business Partner and Diversity Advisor

- Provides expert advice in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, liaising with the Diversity Team as required.
- As Chair of the REF EDI Training & Communications Sub-group, coordinates relevant EDI training for colleagues involved in selection processes and ensures key staff are aware of their obligations under the Code of Practice.
- Monitors take-up of training by key staff.
- Ensures staff absent from work receive or have access to REF communications/notifications available to workplace colleagues.

5.5 Summary of equality legislation

Age	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. 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. 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. 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. 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.
Disability	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. 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). 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. 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. The definition of disability is different in Northern Ireland in that a list of day-to-day activities is referred to. 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. While there is no definitive list of what is considered a disability, it covers a wide range of impairments including: - 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. 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. 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').

Gender reassignment	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.
	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.
	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.
	Consequently, staff within HEIs with responsibility for REF submissions must ensure that the information they receive about gender reassignment is treated with particular care.
	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.
	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.
Marriage and civil partnership	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.
	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.
Political opinion	The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protects staff from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of political opinion.
	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.
Pregnancy and maternity	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.
	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.
	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.
	For the purposes of this summary it is important to note that primary adopters have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave.
Race	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.
	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).

Religion and belief including non-belief	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. 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.
Sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave)	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. 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'. 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. 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 favourable treatment of people working part-time or flexibly) has been held to discriminate unlawfully against women. 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).
Sexual orientation	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. 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.

5.6 REF 2021 Privacy Notice

Introduction

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

If you are a researcher who has been included as part of our REF2021 submission, in 2020 we will send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI for the purpose of REF2021 using UKRI's secure REF submission system. The information provided, which will not be in coded or encrypted form, will include your name, date of birth and contract dates along with details of your research. For more details on the data fields to be sent to UKRI for REF2021, please refer to the Guidance on import/export file formats document. If you are submitted with individual circumstances that allow a reduction in the number of outputs submitted, without penalty, some details of your personal circumstances will also be provided. You can find further information about what data are being collected at www.ref.ac.uk, in particular, the 'Guidance on submissions (2019/01)'.

The University of Southampton (University) collates REF2021-related data of research staff and students for the purposes of managing, analysing and communicating our REF2021 submission to Research England. The University is a "data controller". This means we are responsible for deciding how we hold and use personal information about you.

We have prepared this Privacy Notice to make you aware of how and why your personal data will be used for REF2021 in compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Data processing for REF2021 is undertaken in the fulfilment of our public task for purposes that include:
- Annual, internal REF-benchmarking exercises
- Analyses of benchmarking data to identify our readiness and/or areas for improvement
- Optimisation of our REF2021 submission
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Submission of REF2021 data to Research England

Data Protection Principles

We will comply with data protection law and principles as set out in our Data Protection Policy.

Processing for limited purposes

We will process your data for the purposes of REF2021 (preparation, optimisation of the REF2021 submission, equality impact assessments and our REF2021 submission to Research England), or if specifically permitted by the Data Protection Act 2018 (depending on which is in force at the relevant time).

Data about personal circumstances

You may voluntarily disclose personal circumstances which could permit us to submit your information to the REF without the 'minimum of one' requirement (without penalty), or to submit a reduced number of outputs without penalty. If (and only if) we apply either form of reduction of outputs, we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the 'Guidance on submissions (2019/01)' (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Where you have given us permission to do so, information about Early Career Researcher status collected for REF purposes may also be sent to HESA as part of the Staff Record 2019/20 for subsequent analysis by the funding bodies.

Data will be collected for these purposes through a dedicated generic email account secured with 2-factor authentication and Office 365's in-built encryption. Access to the account will be restricted to three members of the University's central REF team. We will also be storing raw and analysed data on a secure University file-store with access similarly restricted.

Data submitted via UKRI's secure submission system for REF2021 will be kept confidential to the Research England REF team, the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. Information on staff circumstances that we pass to Research England (in REF 6a/b) will include the minimum information required for the REF team to identify the individual concerned, such as their HESA identifier code and date of birth (as used in the annual individualised staff return to HESA). The REF Team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

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

Equality Impact Assessments

As part of the preparations for REF2021 all Higher Education Institutions are required to conduct equality impact assessments (EIAs) on their policy and procedures for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research (where applicable), determining research independence and for selecting outputs for the REF. An EIA can help to identify where the institution's processes may have a differential impact on particular groups by reference to one or more protected characteristics which comprise age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Information on protected characteristics held by the University will be used for the equality impact assessment with data aggregated so that no individual will be directly identifiable. Data will be stored securely with access limited to the central REF team.

Automated decision making and profiling

As part of our preparations for our submission to REF2021 we are using an automated tool to inform the allocation of research outputs to staff assigned to each Unit of Assessment (UoA) in line with the criteria for the minimum and maximum number of outputs per researcher. The output from the allocation tool will be checked by each UoA Committee to ensure:

- the allocation of outputs to authors is rational
- the allocation of outputs to former staff is not excessive
- the total number of outputs allocated (including those from former staff) is correct

The final selection of outputs will be made by the Associate Dean Research on the advice of the UOA Committee which can refer any disagreement to the Dean of Faculty whose decision is final.

How your personal data will be secured

We have put in place procedures to deal with any suspected data security breach and will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected breach where we are legally required to do so. In addition, we limit access to your personal data to those employees of the University who have a business need-to-know. They will only process your personal data on our instructions and they are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

Holding and retaining your data

We will retain the data collected for REF2021 for a period of two REF cycles from the originally proposed date of submission (27 November 2020), at which time the need for an extension will be considered.

How UKRI will manage your data

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

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

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

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

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

Parts of your data will be passed to the REF expert panels and the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (whose members are independent of UKRI) for the purpose of conducting a systematic evaluation of submissions, in accordance with predetermined criteria and methods. Panels will make judgments about the material contained in submissions and will not form quality judgments about individuals. All panel members are bound by confidentiality arrangements.

Data that UKRI will make publicly visible

The results of the assessment exercise will be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, in December 2021. The published results will not be based on individual performance nor identify individuals.

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, and will be made available online. Published information is likely to include textual information including impact case studies in which you may be referenced. Your name and job title may be included in this textual information. Other personal and contractual details, including your date of birth and all information about individual staff circumstances will be removed. UKRI will also publish a list of the outputs submitted by us in each UOA. This list will not be listed by author name.

Your rights

You have a number of rights. You can:

- access and obtain a copy of your REF2021-related data on request.
- change incorrect or incomplete data that has been entered into Pure (our research information system used for submission to REF2021), or submitted as part of an impact case study or environment statement.
- ask us to stop processing your data for a period if the data is inaccurate or there is a dispute about whether or not your interests override the organisation's legitimate grounds for processing data.

For information stored for the purposes of REF2021 please contact us at ref2021@soton.ac.uk. For other data held by the University please write to:

The Data Protection Officer
Legal Services
University of Southampton,
Highfield,
Southampton, SO171BJ
Email: data.protection@soton.ac.uk

Accessing personal data held by UKRI

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

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

Data Protection Officer
UK Research and Innovation
Polaris House
Swindon, SN2 1FL
Email: dataprotection@ukri.org

Further information

If you have any questions about this document please contact us at ref2021@soton.ac.uk.

If you believe you have a case for your details remaining confidential, for example, due to concerns about possible harassment, you should contact diversity@soton.ac.uk

We also have additional policies and guidelines concerning particular activities. If you would like further information please see our Publication Scheme.

For more details relating to GDPR at the University of Southampton, including its policies, please visit https://intranet.soton.ac.uk/sites/gdpr/Pages/Home.aspx.

For information on how the University uses employee-related data please consult the University's Employee Privacy Notice.

if you are unhappy with the way that we have handled your data please contact us at ref2021@soton.ac.uk or you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office; see their website at: https://ico.org.uk/. Our registration number with the Information Commissioner's Office is Z6801020.

5.7 Reductions for Staff Circumstances

Reproduced from Annex L of [REF 2019/01 Guidance on Submissions](#)

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 leave[1], or shared parental leave[2] lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.

[1] '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'.

[2] '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.

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.

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 the '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.