

# Code of Practice

On the compilation of the ICR's submission for  
the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

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## Executive Summary

- The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs). The first REF was in 2014, replacing the previous Research Assessment Exercise. It is important for both the reputation and funding of the Institute of Cancer Research (ICR).
- There are some important differences between REF 2021 and REF 2014 (see 1.3): the REF criteria for an independent researcher have become more stringent but all researchers who meet the REF criteria must be returned; the overall number of publications or other research outputs per eligible researcher has decreased from 4 to an average of 2.5, and the linkage between individual researchers and the returned outputs has been weakened. The minimum research output for each submitted researcher is one. The ICR's strategy for REF 2021 will be to maximise the volume of excellent research submitted. The ICR will therefore take a systematic and strategic approach to all aspects of the submission. Appendix B sets out the timelines for the ICR preparations. This timetable was updated in August 2020 following the postponement of the REF 2021 submission deadline as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure that the ICR meets its legal obligations under equality legislation during the processes underpinning the submission to the REF. This Code of Practice sets out the steps being taken to ensure that decisions surrounding which staff are defined as independent researchers, and which research outputs are selected, are transparent, consistent, accountable and inclusive. The ICR is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the whole organisation and our approach for this is outlined in 1.2.
- In REF 2021, HEIs will return all staff that are employed on the census date of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 and meet the REF definition for significant responsibility for independent research. At the ICR we will submit all research Team Leaders and all other staff on 'research only' contracts that meet the REF definition of an independent researcher (see Part 2).
- This Code outlines the process the ICR will put in place for determining research independence as defined by REF (see Part 3). There will be multiple routes for someone to be nominated or put themselves forward to ensure fairness, transparency and inclusivity.
- Part 4 outlines the procedure the ICR will follow for output selection. In REF an output is defined as the product of research, briefly defined as 'a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared'. For the ICR's submission, outputs are usually publications, but can also include software, patents, etc. In REF 2021, the ICR has to return on average 2.5 outputs per FTE of eligible members of staff, with a minimum of 1 output per individual (but see below) and a maximum of 5. Eligible researchers will be asked to nominate their most significant publications since January 2014 in Symplectic Elements and these will be reviewed by the Research Leadership Board, who will determine which outputs will be returned.
- All eligible ICR staff must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the submission, unless an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020) so that the individual has not been able to produce a REF eligible output. Part 4.4 describes the voluntary process that the ICR has put in place to allow staff to declare personal circumstances that have affected their ability to work productively. All eligible ICR staff will have the option to complete an Individual Circumstances Disclosure form (see Appendix G) about their individual circumstances, and will be provided with clear information about the applicable circumstances and how the declaration process will operate (see Part 4.5).
- All those with a role in the processes for the composition of the ICR's REF 2021 submission will be given training on the legislative framework, REF guidance and this Code (see Part 5). The Code also outlines the Equality Impact Assessments that will be carried out and these are detailed in 3.6, 4.6, and 5.2.

## **Part 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose and Aim**

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) assessment was first carried out in 2014, replacing the previous Research Assessment Exercise. The REF is undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies: Research England, the Scottish Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, and the Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland. The purpose of the REF is: to provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment; to provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks, for use within the higher education sector and for public information; and to inform the selective allocation of funding for research. The ICR is a higher education institution (HEI) and a college of the University of London and therefore submits to the REF.

The REF is a process of peer review, carried out by expert panels for each of the 34 subject-based units of assessment (UOAs), under the guidance of four main panels. Panels are made up of senior academics, international members, and research users. For each submission, three distinct elements are assessed: the quality of outputs<sup>1</sup>, their impact beyond academia, and the environment that supports research.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure that the ICR meets its legal obligations under equality legislation during the processes underpinning the submission to the REF and the requirements of the REF 'Guidance on submissions (2019/01)'<sup>2</sup> for REF 2021. This Code of Practice sets out the processes by which this will be achieved to ensure that decisions are transparent, consistent, accountable and inclusive.

The ICR is a leading research institute; its research strategy sets out its vision and goals for research excellence leading to patient benefit. The REF is important to the ICR for both reputation and funding. The REF outcome will influence our external profile and may affect our ability to win external grants, develop commercial interactions and intellectual property, and attract, develop and retain the best researchers. The outcome will directly impact the quality-related research funding that the ICR receives from Research England, currently about £4.4M per annum.

The ICR's strategy for submission to the REF will be to maximise the volume of excellent research submitted. The ICR will therefore take a systematic and strategic approach to all aspects of the submission.

This Code confirms that the ICR will be submitting 100% of Category A eligible staff (see Part 2) and sets out the processes for determining whether individuals on research only contracts meet the REF definition for independence (see Part 3), for selecting research outputs (at the ICR outputs are usually publications), taking account of the legislative context and the REF guidance (see Part 4). It does not cover the other aspects of the REF.

### **1.2 The ICR's approach to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion**

The ICR's commitment to promoting equality and providing a fully inclusive environment for all staff and students underpins our aim to be the employer of choice for those working and training in cancer research. The ICR was awarded institutional Silver Athena Swan status in 2016 and again for 2019-2023 in recognition of the significant impact of our work to enhance the careers and experiences of women at the ICR. The ICR is also a Stonewall Equality Champion, working to

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<sup>1</sup> In REF an output is defined as the product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/>

ensure a supportive workplace for all – regardless of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. ICR leaders work alongside staff and student representatives on our Equality Steering Group and Athena SWAN Steering Groups to ensure an inclusive environment where differences are appreciated and valued. The ICR and our hospital partner, the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, run the LGBT+ network, the Black and Minority Ethnic Staff Forum and the Network for Staff with Disabilities and Health Conditions. These groups provide support, publicity and resources for their members and are consulted on policies, training and initiatives.

Our research strategy commits us to developing an open, equal and collaborative culture. The ICR recently launched its ‘Six Values’ project<sup>3</sup>. Our values stress excellence and innovation, our commitment to working together as ‘one ICR’, and the importance of valuing all our staff. The treatment of all ICR employees under the existing equality legislation<sup>4</sup> is covered by institutional policies<sup>5</sup>. The ICR also recognises that, under the fixed-term employee and part-time workers regulations<sup>6</sup>, these employees have the right not to be treated any less favourably than comparable ‘permanent’ and/or full-time employees.

Since REF 2014 we have initiated a range of projects aiming to equip our researchers as robustly as possible for the scientific challenges of the future – including extensive career development training, leadership programmes for all staff groups, mentoring programmes, flexible working options and improved support for new parents and those with families. We ensure that in all promotion and recruitment forms we provide the opportunity for individuals to declare any circumstances that may have affected productivity, so these can be taken into account in any decision-making. Recruitment training, including addressing implicit biases, is mandatory for recruiting managers. We revised our academic promotions processes. Decision-making by committees is supported through Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on committee papers and reminders of implicit biases.

In 2018, we significantly revised our policy on bullying and harassment to make it easier to respond to anonymous complaints, commissioned a new independent hotline service to allow staff and students to raise issues in confidence, rolled out Active Bystander training for all staff, trained and introduced Wellbeing Advisors and introduced new systems for exchanging information between HR and the Postgraduate Student Advisors team. We have also completely revised the ICR’s equality training to include an annual refresher and emphasis on addressing issues through practical case studies.

The ICR will seek to submit to the REF 2021 the excellent research of all staff with significant responsibility for leading research programmes. We will put in place a fair and transparent process to identify independent researchers, as defined by REF, as outlined in Part 3. This Code also covers the procedures that have been developed to ensure the fair and transparent selection of outputs (Part 4). Finally, we will put in place safe and robust processes to enable individuals to voluntarily declare their individual circumstances and have the impact of those circumstances reflected in our expectations of their contribution to the pool of submitted outputs, as documented in Part 4.4 and 4.5.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.icr.ac.uk/about-us/icr-strategy/our-values>

<sup>4</sup> The Equality Act 2010

<sup>5</sup> <https://nexus.icr.ac.uk/ouricr/Pages/Equality.aspx>. A hard copy of the information will be made available in situations where this electronic link will not work and can be requested from [ref2021@icr.ac.uk](mailto:ref2021@icr.ac.uk).

<sup>6</sup> Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002

### **1.3 Key changes for REF 2021 compared to REF 2014**

There are several key differences between REF 2021 and REF 2014 concerning both the overall assessment framework and the detailed data requirements and definitions. In particular, research intensive HEIs, such as the ICR, will return all staff that are employed on the census date of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 and meet the REF definition for significant responsibility for independent research, in the relevant UOA.

#### **1.3.1 Category A eligible staff**

In REF 2021, Category A eligible staff are academic staff on either a 'research only' or a 'teaching and research' contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater (see Appendix C, paragraph 117). Category A eligible staff also have to be on the ICR payroll and have a substantive research connection with the relevant ICR UOA. The ICR will return 100% of Category A eligible staff. In other words the ICR will return all Team Leaders (see glossary) and all staff on 'research only' contracts that meet the REF definition of an independent researcher (see Appendix D). The ICR has put in place a process to determine whether staff on 'research only' contracts meet the REF definition of independence (see Part 3).

#### **1.3.2 Returning Outputs (usually Publications)**

The ICR expects to submit to two UOAs: Clinical Medicine (UOA1) and Biological Sciences (UOA5), although the final decision on this will be made closer to the submission deadline by the Research Leadership Board. For each UOA the ICR submit to, the ICR will be required to return a set number of outputs determined by the FTE of eligible staff (which is Category A submitted in REF terms). The total number of outputs must equal 2.5 times the total FTE of the UOA's submitted staff. This set number of outputs must comprise of a minimum of one output attributed to each eligible staff member, and no more than five attributed to any staff member. HEIs may return the outputs of former staff as long as the output was published when the individual was employed as Category A eligible staff. In REF 2021, outputs from Category C staff members (at the ICR this means Honorary Faculty and Associate Honorary Faculty) are not eligible for return, which is a change from REF 2014.

### **1.4 Process for developing and disseminating the REF Code of Practice**

This REF Code of Practice will be submitted to the national REF team for approval by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP). Approved Codes will be published by the REF team by the end of 2019.

The ICR Code was developed in consultation with the Head of Organisational Development and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, the ICR managers with oversight of equality and diversity matters at the ICR. The Code was reviewed by a sub-group of the Equality Steering Group as well as members of the ICR Research Leadership Board (RLB) before approval by the ICR Executive Board.

Following approval by the ICR Executive Board, the Code will be disseminated as set out below. At this stage it will still be subject to approval by the REF EDAP and will be identified as draft. The ICR will be advised of any amendments required by the REF EDAP in autumn 2019 and, if required, the updated final version will be disseminated.

- Electronic copies will be emailed to all Team Leaders (see Part 2) via their ICR email accounts.
- Hard copies will be sent out to any Team Leaders and 'research only' staff absent from work.

- We will send a specific email about the Code to all scientific staff; this will highlight the eligibility criteria and highlight the opportunity for research staff to nominate themselves for consideration as meeting the REF eligibility criteria for independence.
- The Code will be further publicised on the staff intranet (Nexus) and in the 'all staff' weekly newsletter.
- We will provide the opportunity to request the Code in accessible format as required (please contact [ref2021@icr.ac.uk](mailto:ref2021@icr.ac.uk) with any requests).
- The Code will be published on the ICR external website once approved by the REF EDAP.

The draft timetable for the preparation of ICR's REF 2021 submission is set out in Appendix B. This timetable was updated in August 2020 following the postponement of the REF 2021 submission deadline as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

For REF 2021, in all UOAs it submits to, the ICR will submit 100% of staff that meet the definition of Category A eligible (see 1.3.1). Therefore, at the ICR all Team Leaders will be included in the ICR's REF submission as well as those on 'research only' contracts that are shown to meet the REF definition of independence through the process outlined in Part 3.

## **Part 3: Determining research independence as defined by REF**

### **3.1 Policies**

The REF guidance states that "*All staff on 'research only' contracts who are independent researchers will have significant responsibility for research so should be returned*". The ICR will identify all researchers that meet the REF definition of independence: "*for the purposes of the REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme*". All these individuals will be included in the ICR's REF 2021 submission. For those on "research only" contracts, possible indicators of independence as defined by REF are listed below:

- 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 <http://www.ref.ac.uk>, under Guidance
- leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

Each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and multiple factors may need to be considered. Importantly, it should be noted that a member of staff is not deemed to have undertaken independent research, as defined by REF, purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs (publications).

At ICR, it is anticipated that:

- Individuals receiving competitively awarded fellowships to lead independent research projects will be part of the ICR return. This includes National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Academic Clinical Lecturers (as per the REF guidance).

- A number of Staff Scientists and Senior Staff Scientists may meet the REF definition of research independence and be part of the ICR return. However, research independence is not a necessary criterion for all in these grades and whether or not these role holders are included in the return will have no consequences for their continued employment at ICR.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, Senior Scientific Officers, Higher Scientific Officers, Scientific Officers, Post-Doctoral Training Fellows and equivalents will not meet the definition of research independence as defined by REF.
- There are other research roles, e.g. analytical scientists, where some individuals may meet the definition of independence.

The decision as to whether someone meets this REF definition is purely for REF purposes and will be independent of any criterion/decision for the promotion or career progression of that individual.

### **3.2 Procedure**

In order to identify staff members on 'research only' contracts that meet the REF definition of independence and to ensure fairness, transparency and inclusivity, the ICR will have multiple routes for someone to be nominated or put themselves forward (see below). The REF admin team will first promote these routes and the REF indicators for independence in June 2019 and invite nominations and evidence to be received by a deadline in July. There will be a second process in early 2020 with a deadline of 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 for providing the required evidence. The routes an individual can be nominated or nominate themselves forward are as follows:

1. The REF admin team will identify an initial pool of potential independent researchers as defined by REF on 'research only' contracts from internal data, including those on fellowships that require research independence, individuals that are listed as principle investigators on external grants and those returned to the previous REF exercise.
2. Heads of Division (HoDs) will be invited to identify individuals they believe meet the REF definition of independence and will ask the individuals they identify to provide the required information (see below). Team leaders and line managers are encouraged to discuss with their HoD any individuals they believe may meet the definition of REF eligibility.
3. Research staff who have not been identified as eligible via route 1 or 2 but who consider that they might meet the REF independence eligibility criteria, will be invited to nominate themselves directly. Team leaders and line managers are encouraged to discuss this process with any individuals they believe may meet the definition of REF eligibility.

For an individual to be returned, the ICR will need clear, auditable evidence on how that individual meets the REF criteria of independence. The individuals identified through any of these mechanisms as having the potential for meeting the REF definition of research independence will be requested to submit evidence to show how they meet the definition, in advance of the deadline. This will include a maximum of five pieces of evidence with a short description providing context of the evidence. Examples of the type of evidence we would expect to see include: an acknowledgement on a publication that the individual led a particular work stream and/or a grant application that named the individual as a (joint) principal investigator.

All the evidence and submissions will be reviewed and decided on by the REF Independence Review Panel (RIRP) to determine whether they meet the definition as set out in Part 3.1. It is expected the RIRP will meet in July/August 2019 and April 2020 to review the submitted evidence. Due to disruptions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure all individuals that meet

the REF definition of independence are identified, a third round of this process will be held in August 2020 with a panel meeting in September.

### **3.3 Feedback Process**

The conclusions of the RIRP, following their assessment of whether individuals meet the REF definition of independence will be communicated to individuals, by an email sent to their ICR email address. A copy will be provided to their Head(s) of Division and, if different, their line manager. The feedback email will also detail that there is an appeals process that will take place in 2020 (see Part 3.5).

This decision may indicate either that an individual:

- 1) meets the REF definition of independence;
- 2) has the potential to meet the REF criteria for independence by the time of submission. We expect there to be a few individuals who have pending evidence of independence for example those awaiting acceptance of a publication or award of a grant application. These individuals will be kept under review, and may be asked to provide further evidence when it becomes available, until such time as they are confirmed as eligible or not this is expected to be complete by the end of September 2020 (see above);
- 3) does not meet the REF criteria for independence.

### **3.4 Staff, committees and training**

In this process of determining independence, all Heads of Division have an advisory role as they can nominate individuals that they think meet the REF definition of independence. The RIRP has the decision making role. Both these groupings will be required to undertake the REF specific training (as outlined in Part 5.1) in summer 2019. The Appeals panel (see Part 3.5) will have received the training by early autumn 2020 as the appeals process will happen after the latest possible time anyone can be considered for meeting the REF definition of independence.

The RIRP will be an academic panel that makes an evidence-based assessment as to whether an individual meets the REF criteria for independence. This panel will be responsible for the process for identifying independent researchers for REF in a fair and transparent manner and for ensuring the process is carried out in line with this Code and that actions are taken, as required, in relation to findings from any Equality Impact Assessment (EIA, see 3.6). The RIRP will also be responsible for ensuring that the REF independence criteria are applied consistently across the ICR.

**Members of the RIRP:** The RIRP will include three senior Team Leaders; one working in discovery/fundamental science, another in translational research and third working in a clinical area so that the panel contains individuals familiar with expected career paths/independence for discovery science, for translational/drug discovery work, and for clinician scientists. The RIRP will also have expertise and experience that covers the different research fields relevant to the ICR and we will aim to be as representative as possible. The membership will be approved by the RLB. The RIRP panel members will not be members of the RLB and therefore will not be involved in the selection of outputs. This, therefore, acts to minimise any potential influence of output quality on the decision making process as to whether someone meets the REF definition of independence. The RIRP will be supported by the Director of Academic Services and members of the HE Planning and Research Support team.

The RIRP reports to the RLB. The terms of reference and membership for both the RLB and the RIRP can be found in Appendix A. The RLB will be informed of individuals that the RIRP determine meet the REF definition of independence for the selection of outputs (see Part 4). Together these individuals will have responsibility for the dissemination and coordination of the review process for researchers that could potentially meet the REF definition of independence.

### **3.5 Appeals**

Following feedback, should any member of staff on a 'research only' contract wish to appeal the decision that they do not meet the REF definition of independence, the member of staff has the right of appeal to an independent panel which will meet in autumn 2020. Appeals cannot be requested on the basis that the individual disagrees with the REF criteria for independence.

This panel will be independent of the RIRP and will be chaired by a scientific member of the Board of Trustees and include an ICR Emeritus Professor, neither of whom will have been involved in any other aspects of the compilation of the ICR's REF submission. As the membership of the panel will be small, we will ensure the members have different disciplinary backgrounds. The appeals panel will investigate and, if necessary, seek information on the REF process and clarification on points of fact from the RIRP and ICR REF support staff. The panel may request a meeting with the individual and, if a meeting is convened, the individual will have the right to be accompanied.

The outcome of an appeal will either be i) to disallow the appeal or ii) to support the appeal.

1. The secretariat for handling appeals will be the Deputy Registrar, Academic Services who will not have been involved in any of the REF processes described in this Code.
2. The deadline for any appeals to be lodged was originally 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020, allowing sufficient time for an appeal to be considered and any outcomes implemented. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this deadline has been revised to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Appeals must be emailed to the [Deputy Registrar, Academic Services](#).
3. The outcome of an appeal will be communicated by email to the individual concerned by end of October 2020 at the latest. If an appeal is successful, the RLB will be informed that this individual needs to be included in the ICR submission. The individual's line manager will also be informed.

### **3.6 Equality Impact Assessment**

The Head of Organisation Development and/or the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Manager will undertake an EIA of the procedure to identify 'research only' staff that are determined to meet the REF definition of independence after all RIRP meetings. In these EIAs we will assess the protected characteristics of those 'research only' staff that are determined to meet the REF definition of independence by the RIRP versus an appropriate benchmarking group, this will be restricted to internal staff groupings where we would expect there to be researchers that meet the REF definition of independence. These are Clinician Scientists, Staff Scientists and Senior Staff Scientists, individuals on certain fellowships and analytical scientists (as outlined in Part 3.1). We will look at these protected characteristics; gender, disability, ethnic origin, age. We expect the numbers to be too small to consider intersectionality. If we find that any particular characteristic is over represented or under represented, we will review our processes to ensure that they were inclusive and take action if any issues are identified.

The EIA analysis may reveal an over or under representation of a protected characteristic, that may reflect a fundamental issue at the ICR that is beyond the scope of the REF preparation. In this

situation, the information will be provided to the ICR Equality Steering Group (ESG) for consideration. The ICR ESG may then recommend actions that should be taken by the relevant ICR team or Board to address any underlying issues at the ICR.

## **Part 4: Selection of outputs**

### **4.1 Policies**

The ICR's aim for REF 2021 is to submit a return where all elements are likely to achieve a minimum 3\* but with maximising the number of 4\* outputs in the return. 3\* is defined by the REF guidance as "*Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.*" 4\* is defined as "*Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.*"

This section details the selections of outputs for submission to REF 2021. The ICR will manage the compilation of UOA submissions through one centralised process and this will support equity in decision making. In the ICR, outputs are usually publications, but can be other forms of research output that meet the REF definition (see 1.1 and Appendix E) such as databases, software tools and patents. To be eligible the output must have been put in the public domain between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, outputs may only be attributed to individuals who made a substantial research contribution to the output. The eligibility criteria for outputs are detailed in Appendix C.

In REF 2021 an average of 2.5 outputs will be returned per FTE with a minimum of 1 output attributed to each member of staff (except where an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (see Part 4.4). Therefore, the ICR will:

1. Select the highest quality output for return for each eligible staff member; then
2. Select the remaining outputs required based on quality alone, making sure there is a maximum of 5 outputs attributed to each individual.

The decision taken about outputs to include in the ICR's REF submission will be strategic in order to maximise the quality of the ICR's submission. These decisions will not be used in relation to the promotion or career progression of individuals, which will continue to be managed through well-established procedures.

### **4.2 Procedure**

All eligible staff will be invited to nominate their most significant publications for the period and to provide a justification of its quality and explain their role in the publication. The ICR has subscribed to the bibliometric tool, InCites (Clarivate Analytics). Citation data, where available, from this tool will be used alongside expert peer review at the Research Leadership Board (as outlined below) to inform decisions about the quality of publications. The citation data that will be used will be normalised by discipline, year, and document type, and we will ensure all those given this data are provided with guidance on the responsible use of these metrics in line with the principles set out in

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<sup>7</sup> Mitigations have been put in place for any outputs that have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as outlined here <https://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-revisions-to-ref-2021/>

the Metric Tide report<sup>8</sup>. The ICR is also a signatory of San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment<sup>9</sup>.

The nominated publications, alongside relevant citation data, will be reviewed first by the relevant Deputy/HoD and given a quality rating in line with the REF criteria. RLB will then review the publications and determine the highest quality publication to allocate to each individual and then the remaining eligible outputs to return will be determined based on quality alone. This centralised process for all outputs will ensure a consistent and fair rating is applied across the ICR. Publications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and the RLB will make the final decision about the publications to return.

In REF 2021 it is possible for publications from leavers to be returned. These publications have been captured from Symplectic Elements and will be reviewed, using the same criteria, initially by the HoD of the former staff member and then by RLB alongside other publications as described above. The ICR does not expect to return any publications or other outputs attributed to staff that have been made redundant.

Once the final REF submission has been made, eligible staff will be notified as to which of their publications have been included in the ICR's submission.

#### **4.3 Staff, committees and training**

In the process of selecting outputs for submission, the RLB have a decision-making role and they will be required to undertake the REF specific training (as outlined in 5.1) in summer 2019. All involved in assessing the quality of publications will be given information on the responsible use of bibliometrics and be made aware of the potential equality implications of using citation data.

The RLB will be responsible for the fair and transparent selection of outputs for REF based on the academic quality alone. The RLB will ensure that decisions are made in accordance with this Code and that actions are taken in relation to findings from any EIA.

The scientific members of the RLB are:

- i. ICR REF lead; will lead any discussions relating to the REF
- ii. ICR Chief Executive
- iii. Heads of Division and Deputy Heads of Division
- iv. Director of Clinical Research
- v. Head of Data Science, Head of the Centre for Cancer Imaging, Director of the Centre for Evolution and Cancer, Scientific Director, CRUK Convergence Science Centre, Lead for Centre for Translational Immunotherapy

The ICR REF Lead has significant experience of REF. The ICR REF Lead co-ordinated the ICR's Biological Sciences submission for RAE 2008 and was the lead for the ICR's overall submission in REF 2014. The involvement of all scientific members of RLB means that there will be academic expertise and leadership covering all areas of research relevant to the ICR submission and ensure a consistent approach across all Divisions and Centres in the selection of outputs.

RLB business relating to REF will be supported by the Director of Academic Services, and members of the HE Planning and Research Support team. Together, these individuals will have

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<sup>8</sup> 'The Metric Tide: Report of the Independent Review of the Role of Metrics in Research Assessment and Management' (2016).

<sup>9</sup> <https://sfdora.org/>

responsibility for the data preparation and compilation of the submission. In addition, technical support will be provided from within Academic Services.

Further information about the RLB can be found in Appendix A.

#### **4.4 Staff circumstances - Removal of the ‘minimum of one’ requirement**

##### **4.4.1 Policy**

All eligible ICR staff (see Part 2) must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the submission unless an individual’s circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020) so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output. Requests to remove the minimum of one output requirement will be made to Research England with a deadline of March 2020. However, the ICR is able to make further requests for further reductions at the point of submission, for example, if there are staff changes. Where the request is accepted, an individual will be returned with no outputs attributed to them in the submission, and the total outputs required by the UOA will be reduced by one.

The REF guidance states the following (Guidance on Submissions Paragraph 179 to 180)

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

- a. *an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to one or more of the circumstances set out in paragraphs 160 to 163 (such as an Early Career Researcher (ECR) who has only been employed as an eligible staff member for part of the assessment period)<sup>10</sup>*
- b. *circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research, where circumstances set out in paragraph 160 apply (such as mental health issues, caring responsibility, long-term health conditions) or*
- c. *two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave’*

*Where the circumstances cases do not apply, but the individual’s circumstances are deemed to have resulted in a similar impact (including where there is a combination of circumstances that would not individually meet the thresholds set out), a request may still be made and the institution should clarify this within the request form. Where an individual has a combination of circumstances, all the applicable circumstances should be cited in the request and information provided about the effect of the combined circumstances on the researcher’s ability to produce an eligible output in the period.”*

##### **4.4.2 Process**

The ICR will put in place a process to allow eligible staff that do not have one REF eligible output to disclose their circumstances in an appropriate and confidential manner. This process is completely voluntary. All ICR eligible staff will be given the opportunity to complete an Individual Circumstances Disclosure form (see Appendix G) about their individual circumstances, and provided with clear information about the applicable circumstances and how the declaration

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<sup>10</sup> This may include absence from work due to working part-time, where this has had an exceptional effect on ability to work productively throughout the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output. For part-time working, the equivalent ‘total months absent’ should be calculated by multiplying the number of months worked part-time by the full-time equivalent (FTE) not worked during those months. For example, an individual worked part-time for 30 months at 0.6 FTE. The number of equivalent months absent = 30 x 0.6 = 18.

process will operate. This form will be promoted in summer 2019 alongside this Code. We will ensure that any eligible new starters are provided with this information soon after joining.

These forms will be returned via a secure process to the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager](#) who has oversight of equality and diversity matters for the ICR. If staff need to update or declare new circumstances after that date, there will be a link to the staff circumstances form on the REF pages on the intranet (Nexus) or a copy can be requested from REF Admin Team (via [ref2021@icr.ac.uk](mailto:ref2021@icr.ac.uk)). Claims will be reviewed again in February 2020 prior to the Research England deadline in March. There will be final opportunity for individuals to submit forms between August and October 2020. During this round individuals will be provided with further information about any mitigations in place as a result of COVID-19. The information will, where possible, be validated by HR upon request for specific pieces of information from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager and if necessary the individual will be required to provide documentary verification. There will be checks to confirm the individual does not have one REF eligible output.

The claims will be considered in confidence by the Deputy Dean (Biomedical Sciences), the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager and the Director of Academic Services. A member of the HE Planning and Research Support team will attend these discussions to document the outcomes and rationale for decisions. Only those involved in this consideration will see the entire form. If it is determined that an individual has had exceptional circumstances that prevented productivity across the whole REF period (1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 onwards) a request will be made to Research England to remove the requirement of a minimum of 1 output and reduce the number of outputs required by the entire UOA by 1. If this request is successful, the individual will still be included in the ICR's REF submission, but the ICR will be allowed to return them with no outputs attributed to them.

The outcomes will be communicated to the individuals concerned. RLB will also be aware that this individual has no outputs for return as this is unavoidable and RLB will also be informed if a successful request is made to Research England to remove the minimum of 1 requirement.

The information submitted on the Individual Circumstances Disclosure form will be treated in confidence, in line with GDPR regulations and in accordance with the ICR's policy on security of sensitive information. Information provided by the ICR on individual staff circumstances as part of a REF submission will be used only for the purposes of compiling the submission. This information will not be published at any time and will be destroyed by the ICR once the REF results are published, as all audit requests would have been completed. It is a requirement of submission to the REF that the ICR provides a summary of the staff circumstances reports to the REF team at Research England. This will include a breakdown of the circumstances declared, using the categories outlined in Appendix F, (ECRs, secondments or career breaks, family-related leave, junior clinical academics, and circumstances requiring a judgement), and the number of requests for the removal of the minimum of one requirement.

#### **4.5 Other staff circumstances**

The ICR will use the same procedure, outlined in Part 4.4, for taking into account circumstances of staff, who have one or more eligible output, but whose circumstances have affected their ability to research productively throughout the period. These circumstances could include qualifying as an ECR, absences from work, family-related leave and circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence (further detailed in Appendix C and G).

In REF 2021 it is possible that submitting UOA may request a reduction, without penalty, in the total number of outputs required for a submission. It is expected that requests will only be made

where the cumulative effect of circumstances (such as those described above) has disproportionately affected the UOA's potential output pool. The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2021 provides increased flexibility for the ICR to build its portfolio of outputs for submission, and the ICR considers this to be the most effective way to recognise the effect of circumstances on staff productivity (in line with the REF EDAP) and therefore does not expect to request a UOA level reduction. The final decision on this will be made by the RLB.

Staff will be able to submit the same Individual Circumstances Disclosure form (Appendix G) as described in Part 4.4. The completion of Individual Circumstances Disclosure form by those that have at least one output could inform the decisions as to whether UOA level reductions are requested. With permission, limited information will be passed onto RLB to inform them that the individual has had some circumstances during the period (but not the details of these circumstances) and the number of expected reductions associated with these circumstances as per the REF guidelines.

All ICR recruitment, promotion and progression processes have mechanisms to allow individuals to declare any circumstances that may have impacted on research productivity.

#### **4.6 Equality Impact Assessment**

The Head of Organisation Development and/or the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Manager will undertake an EIA on staff that outputs are attributed to the outputs selected for return after the Mock REF in November 2019, in near final version in November 2020 and finally for all outputs returned in March 2021 (these dates were revised due to the COVID-19 pandemic). In this EIA we will assess whether any protected characteristics (gender, age, disability and ethnicity) are under or over represented, compared to the baseline data for all eligible staff, in the eligible staff that are authors on the publications or other outputs. If we find that any particular characteristic is over represented or under represented, we will review our processes to ensure that they were inclusive and take action if any issues are identified.

The EIA analysis may reveal an over or under representation of a protected characteristic, that may reflect a fundamental issue at the institution that is beyond the scope of the REF preparation. In this situation, the information will be provided to the ICR Equality Steering Group (ESG) for consideration. The ICR ESG may then recommend actions that should be taken by the relevant ICR team or Board to address any underlying issues at the ICR.

### **Part 5: Information applicable to various parts of the Code of Practice: Training and the overall EIA**

#### **5.1 Training**

All those with a role in the processes for the composition of the ICR submission for REF 2021 will be given training on the legislative framework, REF guidance and this Code. This includes:

- All members of the RIRP and RLB (see Appendix A)
- Deputy Dean (Biomedical Sciences, see Part 4.4)
- Member of Academic Services involved in REF preparations (this includes the Director of Academic Services and all members of the Higher Education Planning and Research Support team)
- Appeals Panel and Appeals Secretariat (see Appendix A)

The training will be provided by the Head of Organisational Development and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager. The training will cover: overview of the REF, responsible use of citation analysis, unconscious bias in the assessment of research outputs, the process and criteria for determining research independence in the REF and other relevant equality issues.

The training for all except the Appeals Panel and Appeals Secretariat will take place during summer 2019. The training for the Appeals Panel and Appeals Secretariat will take place during autumn 2020. A number of new members of RLB were appointed in summer 2020 and received training in September 2020 ahead of the next meeting where REF outputs were due to be discussed.

## **5.2 Overall Equality Impact Assessment of the Code**

The Head of Organisational Development and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager have been involved in the Development of the Code to ensure that it does not discriminate against people from different equality groups. In addition, they will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on this Code once it is finalised.

All EIAs outlined in this Code will draw on the data that has already been provided to the ICR (as part of the employment relationship of an individual to the ICR). Furthermore, as the ICR expects to only submit to two UOAs, all EIAs described in this Code will be carried out at an institutional level as the data would not be sufficient for UOA level analysis. We will fully respect all GDPR regulation and will only publish the information at aggregated levels. No individuals will be identified and we will be careful to address any issues relating to low numbers.

The Code outlines EIAs that will be reviewed at key stages of the process. The ICR is required to submit a final version of our EIA to Research England and this will include: the final analysis of data comparing the characteristics of those determined to be independent researchers, with an appropriate comparator pool as described in 3.6; and analysis of the distribution of outputs across submitted ICR staff as described in 4.6. It will also include any actions taken to prevent discrimination or advance equality during the submission process and their outcomes, including the justification for and/or actions taken to address any differential impact that the processes for identifying staff that meet the REF criteria for independence and output selection may have had on particular groups, and information about any policies or practices that had a positive impact on equality during the submission process.

## **Appendix A**

### **ICR Committees Involved in REF 2021**

#### **1. REF INDEPENDENCE REVIEW PANEL (RIRP)**

##### **Remit**

The REF Independence Review Panel will be an academic panel that makes an evidence-based assessment as to whether an individual meets the REF criteria for independence (as outlined in Part 3). RIRP will be responsible for ensuring that the REF independence criteria are applied consistently across the ICR.

##### **Members**

The RIRP will include three senior Team Leaders; one working in discovery/fundamental science, another in translational research and third working in a clinical area so that the panel contains individuals familiar with expected career paths/independence for discovery science, for translational/drug discovery work, and for clinician scientists. The RIRP will also have expertise and experience that covers the different research fields relevant to the ICR and we will aim to be as representative as possible. The membership will be approved by the RLB. The RIRP panel members will not be members of the RLB and therefore will not be involved in the selection of outputs. This, therefore, acts to minimise any potential influence of output quality on the decision making process as to whether someone meets the REF definition of independence.

##### **Attendees**

The RIRP will be supported by the Director of Academic Services and members of the HE Planning and Research Support team.

#### **MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

It is expected that the RIRP will meet in July/August 2019 and April 2020 to review the submitted evidence as outlined in 3.2. The Chair may call additional meetings as deemed necessary. Due to the extension to the REF submission deadline a third and final meeting will be called in September 2020.

#### **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

The RIRP reports to the Research Leadership Board. Those identified to meet the REF definition of independence will also be communicated to the RLB. Summary of the decisions made will be kept in line with the ICR Retention Schedule for REF. The detail evidence submitted will not be published at any time and will be destroyed by the ICR once the REF results are published, as all audit requests would have been completed.

#### **2. REF APPEALS PANEL**

##### **Remit**

To consider appeals from members of staff on a 'research only' contract who wish to appeal the decision that they do not meet the REF definition of independence.

##### **Members**

A scientific member of the ICR Board of Trustees (Chair)  
An ICR Emeritus Professor

## **Attendees**

The secretariat for handling appeals will be the Deputy Registrar, Academic Services, who will not have been involved in any of the REF processes described in this Code.

## **MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The appeals panel is expected to meet once in September/October 2020; if no appeal requests are received the panel will not meet.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

The appeal panel is independent of any other ICR Board or Committee. If an appeal is successful, the RLB will be informed that this relevant individual should be included in the ICR submission.

## **3. RESEARCH LEADERSHIP BOARD**

### **Remit**

The Research Leadership Board (RLB) has been established to support the Chief Executive and the Executive Board in the delivery of the ICR's Research Strategy. The RLB is responsible for monitoring performance against key targets for delivery, identifying and monitoring risks to the organisation and ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place across the ICR to deliver the Research Strategy. The scientific members of this committee will make the decisions in terms of the selection of outputs for REF 2021.

### **Members** (Members were updated in July 2020)

Dean of Academic and Research Affairs (as Chair, also ICR REF Lead)

Chief Executive

Chief Operating Officer

Director of Clinical Research

Heads of Division

Deputy Heads of Division

Head of Data Science

Head of the Centre for Cancer Imaging

Director of the Centre for Evolution and Cancer

Scientific Director, CRUK Convergence Science Centre

Lead for Centre for Translational Immunotherapy

Director of Academic Services

Director of Enterprise

Director of Research Operations

### **Attendees**

The Research Committee Manager will minute the meetings and the Assistant Director, Research Operations will be in attendance. The Chair may invite other individuals to be in attendance as deemed necessary – when business relevant to them is to be discussed. The Assistant Director of Academic Services (HE Planning and Research Support) and the Head of Research Support may attend for issues related to the REF.

## **MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Meetings: Minimum of 3 meetings per annum - the Chair may call additional meetings as deemed necessary.

Quorum: 8 members, of whom 5 must be academic members of staff and including the Chair

Voting: In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair has the second and casting vote. Majority determines issue.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Minutes of the Research Leadership Board - to be circulated to the Executive Board for information together with an Executive Summary highlighting the key issues.

Annual Report – to be circulated to the Board of Trustees at the end of each financial year

## **BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Research Leadership Board:

- Is the forum for the Chief Executive and senior scientists to discuss matters relevant to delivery of the current Research Strategy, providing support to the Executive Board with particular emphasis on delivery of the strategy and research priorities including identifying new research initiatives or priorities
- Ensures the necessary infrastructure is in place across the ICR to deliver the current Research Strategy
- Is the forum for the Chief Executive and senior scientists to discuss the development of the next Research Strategy
- Keeps under review through regular monitoring:
  - Delivery of the strategy
  - Recruitment and succession planning
  - Research training and development
  - Opportunities for external funding
  - Grant success rates
  - Progress of ICR CDFs, Fellows and Clinician Scientists in winning grants
  - Projects under negotiation/agreements signed by the Enterprise Unit
  - Research-related risks to the ICR (both internal and external)
  - Key performance indicators/performance measures
  - The financials
- Approves research policies (except for those requiring Board of Trustees approval).
- Approves significant amendments to existing Research policies.
- Receives reports on any significant findings arising from an internal or external audit relating to research matters.
- Keeps under review – by receipt of such reports and minutes as it deems necessary – the work of its sub-committees.
- Undertakes such other specific tasks as the Chief Executive may determine from time to time.

## **Responsibilities of Members of the Research Leadership Board:**

It is the primary responsibility of members of the Research Leadership Board to support the Executive Board in the delivery of the ICR's Research Strategy.

Members of the Research Leadership Board must always act reasonably and prudently in all matters and exercise the same degree of care in dealing with the management of the ICR as a prudent businessperson would in managing his/her own affairs or those of someone else for whom he/she has responsibility.

Members, irrespective of their personal views, are bound by the collective decision of the Research Leadership Board and have a duty to support and explain those decisions to staff and, when appropriate, funding bodies and the public.

#### **4. EXECUTIVE BOARD**

##### **Remit**

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the overall direction of the ICR's research, academic and operational activities and the effective prosecution of its work. The Executive Board has been established to assist the Chief Executive in leading the ICR to achieve its strategic aims and objectives within the approved strategies and budget and is responsible for formulating strategies, plans and budgets for approval by the Board of Trustees.

The Executive Board has oversight of (1) the ICR's three key strategies – Research, Learning & Teaching, and Operational and (2) the ICR's relationships with its key partners.

##### **Members**

Chief Executive (Chair)

Chief Operating Officer (Deputy Chair)

Dean of Academic and Research Affairs

3 Heads of Divisions (appointed by the Chief Executive).

3 Corporate Service Directors (appointed by the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer).

##### **Attendees**

Director of Corporate Governance - to minute the meetings. The Chair may invite other individuals to be in attendance as deemed necessary – when business relevant to them is to be discussed.

#### **MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Monthly (except August).

#### **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

**Minutes of the Executive Board** - to be circulated to the Board of Trustees for information together with an Executive Summary highlighting the key issues.

## Appendix B

### Draft ICR Timetable for the preparations of the output submission for REF 2021<sup>11</sup>

Updates have been made this table following delays to the REF process as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

May 2019	ICR Code of Practice to be approved by Executive Board
By June 7 <sup>th</sup> 2019	ICR Code of Practice submitted to the Research England REF team
June 2019	<p>The ICR REF Code of Practice will be disseminated to staff in draft (see Part 1.4).</p> <p>This communication, will highlight the process for any researchers on 'research only' contracts to be nominated as meeting the REF definition of independence (see Part 3).</p> <p>Alongside the promotion of the Code, eligible staff who wish their individual circumstances to be taken into account will be invited to complete a staff disclosure form (see Part 4.4 and 4.5). Following this, the form will be promoted to new starters on an ongoing basis.</p>
June 2019	Individuals who may meet the REF definition of independence will be identified using internal data such as those on fellowships and those submitted to REF 2014. Head(s) of Division will be invited to nominate individuals for consideration of whether they meet the definition of independence. All individuals identified that have the potential to meet the REF criteria of research independence must provide the required evidence (see Part 3.2) by 22 <sup>nd</sup> July for review by the RIRP.
June/July 2019	All those involved in assessing independence and output selection (as outlined in Part 5.1) will be given training on the Code of Practice and the ICR's responsibilities under the relevant equalities and employment legislation.
July 2019/August /September 2019	<p><b>Mock REF exercise</b></p> <p>1. RIRP will review the information submitted by individuals as to whether it shows they meet the REF definition of independence as set out in Part 3.1. Outcomes then will be communicated to the individual and relevant HoD and, if different, their line manager.</p> <p>2. Consideration of any staff disclosure forms will be undertaken in confidence by the Deputy Dean (Biomedical Sciences), the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager and the Director Academic Services. Outcomes will be communicated as outlined in Part 3.3.</p>

<sup>11</sup> Timings may be adjusted

	3. All eligible staff (All Team Leaders plus those determined to meet the REF definition of independence) will be invited to nominate their most significant publications since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014.
August 2019	The ICR will be notified of any amendments to this Code of Practice required by the REF Equalities and Diversity Panel and, if necessary, an amended version will be disseminated. Deadline for any resubmission will be in September 2019.
September/October 2019	Each member of staff's selected research outputs will be initially assessed the relevant HoD/Deputy HoD; these initials assessments will be reviewed by the RLB in November.
October 2019	EIAs will be carried out for the process for determining independence (see Part 3.6)
November 2019	Review of outputs by RLB. EIA will then be carried out for this draft selection of outputs (see Part 4.6).
December 2019	Approved Codes of Practice will be published on the ICR website and also the Research England website.
January/February 2020	Eligible staff will also be reminded that if they wish their individual circumstances to be taken into account in relation to their number of outputs, they can complete a staff disclosure form.
February/March 2020	<p>Consideration of any staff disclosure forms (amended/confirmed or new) will be undertaken in confidence by the Deputy Dean (Biomedical Sciences), the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager and the Director Academic Services.</p> <p>The REF eligibility guidance in terms of independence will be publicised again inviting any member of staff who has not been considered or any new starters who think they might meet the eligibility criteria to put themselves forward. Head(s) of Division will also be invited to nominate staff.</p> <p>All individuals identified that have the potential to meet the REF criteria of research independence must provide the required evidence (see Part 3.2) by 20<sup>th</sup> March for review by the RIRP.</p>
April 2020	RIRP will review the individuals put forward to meet the REF definition of independence as set out in see Part 3. Outcomes then will be communicated to the individual and relevant HoD, and, if different, their line manager.
31 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	<b>Census date for staff</b>
August 2020	Promotion of the final round of the REF Independence Review Panel (RIRP) process as set out in Part 2.
August/September 2020	All eligible staff (Team Leaders and those identified as meeting the REF definition of independence), including any eligible staff who have joined the ICR since the 2019 mock exercise, will be invited to review and amend if necessary/select their publications selection using Symplectic
September 2020	Final round of the RIRP process to take place with outcomes communicated to researchers on whether they meet the REF definition of independence.

September/October 2020	<p>If a member of staff is not happy with the outcome of whether they meet the REF definition of independence will be able to submit an appeal as outlined in Part 3.5.</p> <p>Consideration of appeals will also take place as outlined in Part 3.5. The outcome of any appeals relating to whether a research has been determined to meet the definition of independence will be communicated to individuals.</p>
October/November 2020	Each member of staff's selected research outputs will be assessed the relevant HoD/Deputy HoD; the assessments will then be reviewed by the RLB in November.
December 2020	<p>Updated EIAs will be carried out for both the process for determining independence (see Part 3.6) and for the selection of outputs (see Part 4.6).</p> <p>End of the assessment period for outputs. To be eligible an output must have been first brought into public domain during the publication period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020.</p>
January/February 2021	<p>Researchers asked for any final publication updates.</p> <p>The final selection of the outputs to be submitted will be confirmed by RLB.</p>
February/March 2021	<p>The final selection of the outputs to be reported to Executive Board.</p> <p>Final EIAs will be carried out (see Part 5.2).</p>
<b>31 March 2021</b>	<b>Submission deadline</b>

## Appendix C

**Guidance on Staff Eligibility: Extract from [Guidance on submissions \(2019/01\)](#): Paragraphs 117 to 127**

Category A eligible staff

117. Category A 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 UOA (see paragraphs 123 to 127). Staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher (paragraphs 128 to 134).

118. The funding bodies are aware that there are a very small number of instances where Category A eligible staff are not returned to HESA due to internal employment structures. They are working with the affected institutions, including the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England and the University of the Highlands and Islands in Scotland, to ensure that a robust alternative is in place to ensure that eligible and submitted staff are identified in a fair and consistent manner.

119. The funding bodies recognise that staff on 'teaching and research' contracts cannot always be assumed to be independent researchers. Where this is the case, staff who are not independent researchers should be identified as part of the process for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research (see paragraphs 138 to 143).

120. Regardless of their job title, all staff who satisfy the definition in paragraph 117, are considered Category A eligible staff. By way of further guidance, please note that so long as they satisfy the criteria at paragraph 117:

- a. Staff who hold institutional/NHS joint appointments are considered Category A eligible. For clinical academics where the HEI is the primary employer (and the other contract is honorary) the staff member should be returned with the full FTE of the primary employment contract with the HEI. Where a clinical academic holds two employer contracts (for example, A+B contracts) they may be returned by the HEI for that fraction of their employment with the HEI.
- b. Pensioned staff who continue in salaried employment contracted to carry out research and meet the definition in paragraph 117 are considered Category A eligible staff.
- c. Where academic staff are on unpaid leave of absence, or on secondment to an organisation other than a UK HEI (as defined in the footnote to paragraph 9), on the census date and are contracted to return to normal duties up to two years from the start of their period of absence or secondment, either the seconded staff member or any staff recruited to cover their duties that meet the eligibility criteria should be considered Category A eligible. The FTE of the post should be included only once in the submission, and the minimum of one output required for whichever staff member is returned. Submitting units may include the outputs of both staff in the submitted output pool. Where these are attributable to the staff member who is not returned, the staff details in REF1b should be completed. 9. Individuals whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research' are staff returned to the Higher Education Statistics Agency Staff Collection with an academic employment function of either

'Academic contract that is research only' or 'Academic contract that is both teaching and research' (identified as codes '2' or '3' in the ACEMPFUN field). 30 REF 2021

d. Where a staff member is working on secondment as contracted academic staff at another UK HEI on the census date and meets the definition of Category A eligible in both HEIs, the two institutions concerned should agree how the FTE is to be apportioned to each, and the minimum of one output requirement must be met by both institutions (this could be the same or a different output for each HEI). The staff member's total FTE may not exceed their contracted FTE with their main employer. The FTE of any staff directly recruited to cover the secondment at the 'home' HEI, who meet the definition of Category A eligible staff, will also be considered eligible for return. The combined FTE of the seconded and cover staff should not exceed the total contracted FTE of the post, and must not exceed 1.0 FTE in total. The minimum of one output requirement should also be met for the cover staff.

e. Other than individuals on secondment on the terms described in sub-paragraph d., an individual will only meet the definition Category A eligible by more than one HEI if they have a contract with and receive a salary from more than one HEI. In such cases:

i. The two HEIs must ensure that the total FTE value of the individual sums to no more than the individual's total contracted FTE duties, and must not exceed 1.0 FTE in total. If any individual is returned in submissions with a contracted FTE that sums to more than 1.0, the REF team will rectify this through verification, and will apportion the FTE to each HEI pro-rata to the individual's contracted FTE at each HEI.

ii. The same research outputs may, but need not be, attributed to the staff member in each submission.

f. No individual may be returned in more than one submission, except as described in sub-paragraphs d. and e.:

i. Where an individual holds a joint appointment across two or more submitting units within the same institution, the HEI must decide on one submission in which to return the individual.

ii. Where a staff member is serving a notice period at an institution, having started employment with a different institution on the census date, if they meet the eligibility criteria, the individual will be deemed eligible for return by the first institution only.

g. Staff whose salary is calculated on an hourly or daily basis are eligible only if they meet the definition in paragraph 117 and on the census date have a contract of employment of at least 0.2 FTE per year, over the length of their contract. Institutions should calculate the mean FTE of these staff using the number of hours or days worked in the HESA reporting years that fall wholly within the REF assessment period (2014–15 to 2019–20), based on the standard hours or days of a full-time employee at that institution. REF 2021 31

h. Staff who hold more than one contract for different functions within the HEI, are eligible if one of those contracts satisfies the definition of Category A eligible staff in paragraph 117. Such staff should be returned with an FTE that is no greater than that of the qualifying contract.

- i. Where an individual holds one contract with multiple functions, the individual should be returned with the FTE of the contract that makes them eligible for submission to the REF, not the FTE specifically related to their research duties within that contract.

121. Academic staff who are employed by the submitting HEI and based in a discrete department or unit outside the UK are eligible only if the primary focus of their research activity on the census date is clearly and directly connected to the submitting unit based in the UK. In assessing this, HEIs should be guided by the indicators suggested for evidencing a substantive connection (see paragraphs 123 to 125).

122. Staff described in paragraph 121 should be returned to HESA. No additional information should be submitted; however, HEIs will need to be able to verify the connection in the event of audit. Substantive connection

123. For staff employed on minimum fractional contracts (0.20 to 0.29 FTE) on the census date, the HEI will need to provide a short statement (up to 200 words) evidencing the clear connection of the staff member with the submitting unit. A range of indicators is likely to evidence a substantive connection, including but not limited to:

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

124. Staff who do not have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit will not be eligible for inclusion, such as those who hold substantive research posts at another institution (either within or outside the UK) and whose research is not clearly connected with the submitted unit. A statement evidencing a substantive connection will not be required for staff members with a contract of employment greater than or equal to 0.3 FTE on the census date; however, a substantive research connection remains an eligibility requirement for all staff and HEIs will need to be able to verify this in the event of audit.

125. Staff whose connection cannot be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the REF director, as advised by the relevant sub-panel, will be considered ineligible and removed from the REF database (see also paragraph 137).

126. The funding bodies recognise that there are also particular personal and discipline related circumstances where the minimum fractional contract will commonly apply for staff members who have a substantive connection with the submitting unit. Therefore, in these instances, a statement evidencing a substantive connection will not be required for staff with contract of employment between 0.20 and 0.29 FTE. These instances are as follows:

- where the staff member has caring responsibilities
- where the staff member has other personal circumstances (e.g. ill health, disability)
- where the staff member has reduced their working hours on the approach to retirement

- where the fractional appointment reflects normal discipline practice (for example, where joint appointments with industry or practice are typical in the submitted unit).

127. Institutions will need to identify the applicable circumstances in lieu of providing a statement at the point of submission. This information will not be made available to panels. No additional information should be submitted; however, HEIs will need to be able to verify the circumstances in the event of audit. Where audit determines the cited circumstances are not applicable, the funding bodies will seek assurance from the HEI that the staff member(s) has a substantive connection as set out in paragraph 123.

## Appendix D

### **Guidance on Independent Researchers: Extract from Guidance on submissions (2019/01):** Paragraphs 128 to 134

#### Independent researchers

128. Staff employed on 'research only' contracts must be independent researchers (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) to meet the definition of Category A eligible. All staff on 'research only' contracts who are independent researchers will have significant responsibility for research so should be returned as Category A submitted staff.

129. Research assistants (sometimes also described as postdoctoral research assistants, research associates or assistant researchers) as defined in paragraph 130, are not eligible to be returned to the REF unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) on the census date and satisfy the definition of Category A eligible staff in paragraph 117. They must not be listed as Category A submitted staff purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.

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

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

132. Possible indicators of independence are listed below. Institutions should note that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and where appropriate multiple factors may need to be considered. The main panels have set out in the 'Panel criteria' REF 2021 33 (paragraphs 187 to 189) the indicators they consider appropriate for their disciplines. The following indicators are considered appropriate by all main panels

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

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

134. Institutions are required to develop processes for determining research independence in accordance with the guidance in paragraphs 128 to 133 and document these processes in their code of practice (see REF 2019/03).

## Appendix E

**Eligibility definitions for research outputs [Guidance on submissions \(2019/01\)](#):** Paragraphs 205 to 222

205. Submissions must include a set number of items of research output, equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for submission<sup>12</sup>. This number will be adjusted, as appropriate, to take account of successful requests for staff circumstances. Each output must be:

- a. The product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. (The full definition of research for the purposes of the REF is in Annex C.)
- b. First brought into the public domain during the publication period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 or, if a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period.
- c. Attributable to a current or former member of staff, who made a substantial research contribution to the output, which must be either:
  - i. produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a Category A submitted staff member, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time they produced that output, or
  - ii. produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a former staff member who was employed by the submitting HEI according the Category A eligible<sup>13</sup> definition when the output was first made publicly available.
- d. Available in an open access form, where the output is within scope of the open access policy (see paragraph 223).

206. A summary of output eligibility is set out in Figure 2.

207. The submitted pool of outputs should include:

- a. A minimum of one output for each Category A submitted staff member, which has been produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by that staff member (unless individual circumstances apply).
- b. Further outputs up to the total required for the submitting unit, taking into account any applicable reductions for staff circumstances. A maximum of five outputs may be attributed to an individual staff member (both Category A submitted staff, as well as any former staff whose outputs are eligible for submission). The attribution of the maximum number of outputs to a staff member will not preclude the submission of further outputs on which that staff member is a co-author, where these are attributed to other eligible staff in the unit.

208. A diagram illustrating the submitted output pool requirements is set out in Figure 3.

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<sup>12</sup> Values ending in .5 should be rounded up.

<sup>13</sup> With the exception of being employed on the census date.

209. Outputs may only be attributed to individuals who made a substantial research contribution to the output. This information will be made available to panels to enable them to establish whether a substantial research contribution has been made. The 'Panel criteria' sets out whether the panels require any additional information for co-authored outputs.

210. Outputs determined to be ineligible through audit will be removed from the submission and an unclassified score added to the profile to account for the 'missing' output. Where this involves removing the only output associated with a Category A submitted staff member, the REF team may audit the eligibility of the staff member, and review the submitted FTE accordingly.

#### **Eligibility of outputs produced or authored by former staff**

211. The introduction of a transitional approach to non-portability of outputs will allow a submitting unit to include the outputs of staff formerly employed as Category A eligible (former staff). Outputs attributable to these staff are eligible for inclusion where the output was first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by the institution as a Category A eligible member of staff. This includes:

- a. For staff who remain employed at the institution, but are no longer employed as Category A eligible staff on the census date (for example, senior administrative staff), any outputs that were first made publicly available at the point the staff member was employed as Category A eligible.
- b. Any outputs first made publicly available while a former staff member was on an unpaid leave of absence or secondment (whether to another UK HEI, or beyond HE/ overseas), where the leave or secondment period was no greater than two years.

212. The outputs of staff who continue to be employed by the institution as Category A eligible staff (i.e. meet the criteria set out in paragraph 117) but who no longer have significant responsibility for research on the census date are not eligible.

213. A former staff member may not have outputs attributed to them in more than one submission by the institution. Where an individual held a joint appointment across two or more submitting units within the same institution, the HEI will need to decide on one submission in which to return any outputs attributed to that individual.

214. Where an output is first made publicly available in the REF 2021 publication period in both pre-published (such as online first, or pre-prints) and in final form, and the author moved institution in the intervening period, the institution employing the staff member when the pre-published version of the output was made first publicly available should submit the final version, where possible. Where it is not possible to identify the final version (for example, for some practice research outputs), the institution should submit the version that was made publicly available when the member of staff was employed at the HEI.

215. Outputs of former staff are only eligible where they were first made publicly available in the period when the staff member was employed by the submitting institution as a Category A member of staff. Any outputs first made publicly available in the period preceding or following this will not be eligible for submission, except in the case set out in paragraph 214. The funding bodies may seek to verify through audit that the outputs of former staff meet the eligibility criteria, including the timeframe and staff eligibility requirements.

216. Outputs that are first made publicly available in the final months of the publication period (August to December 2020), are only eligible for submission by an HEI that employs the staff member as Category A eligible on the census date.

### **General eligibility of outputs**

217. In addition to printed academic work, research outputs may include, but are not limited to: new materials, devices, images, artefacts, products and buildings; confidential or technical reports; intellectual property, whether in patents or other forms; performances, exhibits or events; and work published in non-print media. An underpinning principle of the REF is that all forms of research output will be assessed on a fair and equal basis. Sub-panels will not regard any particular form of output as of greater or lesser quality than another per se. A glossary of output categories and collection formats is attached in Annex K.

218. Institutions that wish to submit outputs produced in the medium of Welsh are welcome to do so. Such outputs will be assessed equitably, as described in paragraphs 285 and 286.

219. Reviews, textbooks or edited works (including editions of texts and translations) may be included if they embody research as defined in Annex C. Editorships of journals and other activities associated with the dissemination of research findings should not be listed as an output on REF2.

220. Where two or more research outputs in a submission include significant material in common (for example, a journal article that also appears as a chapter in a book) the subpanels will assess each output taking account of the common material only once. Where a sub-panel judges that they do not contain sufficiently distinct material and should be treated as a single output, an unclassified score would be given to the 'missing' output.

221. Theses, dissertations or other items submitted for a research degree including doctoral theses may not be listed. Other assessable published items based on research carried out for a research degree may be listed.

222. HEIs may not submit any output produced by a research assistant or research student supervised by a Category A eligible staff member employed in the unit, unless the staff member co-authored or co-produced the output.

## Appendix F

### Summary of applicable circumstances Extract from [Guidance on submissions \(2019/01\)](#): Paragraphs 160 to 163

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

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

161. 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.

162. 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.

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

## Appendix G

### CONFIDENTIAL: ICR REF 2021 Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form

This document is being sent to all ICR staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF 2021 (see [‘Guidance on submissions’](#), paragraphs 117-122). As part of the ICR’s commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020). The ICR Code of Practice (the Code) for REF 2021 sets out the full guidance on relevant individual staff circumstances, the ICR’s process for considering them and who will see the information you provide. This form must be completed with reference to the Code, particularly Part 4.4 and 4.5. The form can be completed for individuals that do not have one REF eligible output (usually a publication) or for other circumstances, and this is detailed below.

If you need any advice on completing the form or the guidance please contact the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager](#).

#### Removal of the minimum of one requirement

All eligible ICR staff (see Part 2 of the Code) must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the submission unless an individual’s circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020) so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output. Through this form we are collecting the information to enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to declare 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 (defined 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
- circumstances that may have resulted in a similar impact into those listed above (including where there is a combination of circumstances that would not individually meet the thresholds set out),

#### Other staff circumstances

REF 2021 requires that staff are also able to declare 'other circumstances' that have affected their research productively throughout the period but not to exceptional effect that means they do have at least one output (see below). The purpose of this is two-fold:

- To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment (UOA) where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.
- To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances (defined below) can have on an individual’s ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload/ production of research outputs.

It is important to note that the decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2021 provides increased flexibility for the ICR to build its portfolio of outputs for submission, and the ICR considers this to be the most effective way to recognise the effect of circumstances on staff productivity.

Moreover, the ICR has explicitly stated in the Code of Practice that selection of outputs from individual members of staff is for REF purposes only and will be independent of any criterion/decision for the promotion or career progression of that individual.

Applicable Equality-related circumstances could include:

- Qualifying as an early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the higher education sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities, these can be wide-ranging, and includes responsibility for the care and support of a disabled, elderly or sick partner, relative or friend who is unable to care for themselves
- Gender reassignment

**This process is complete voluntary.** Individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so.

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

### **Ensuring Confidentiality**

This form will be submitted through a secure process to ensure confidentiality. Completed forms will only be seen by those involved in reviewing the circumstances. This is only the Deputy Dean (Biomedical Sciences), the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Manager and the Director of Academic Services. A member of the Higher Education Planning and Research Support team, will attend discussions of these forms to document the outcomes and rationale for decisions. If you agree at the point of submitting this form, limited information will be passed onto the ICR Research Leadership Board in writing to ensure that expectations take into account any declared circumstances.

The detail evidence submitted will not be published at any time and will be destroyed by the ICR once the REF results are published, as all audit requests would have been completed.

If the ICR decides to apply to the funding bodies for either removal of 'minimum of one' requirement and/or UOA circumstances, we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the '[Guidance on submissions](#)' document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted. Data sent externally to the relevant REF teams will be kept confidential by the REF team at Research England, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

### **Changes in circumstances**

The ICR recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If staff need to update or declare new circumstances

after that date, there will be a link to the staff circumstances form on the REF pages on the intranet (Nexus) or a copy can be requested from the Head of Research Support (via ref2021@icr.ac.uk).

There will be multiple deadlines for returning this form. These will be in August 2019, March 2020 and a final deadline in September 2020 and will be widely publicised.

### ICR REF 2021 Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form

**Completed forms should be emailed to REFStaffCircumstances@icr.ac.uk**

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

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

Do you have a REF-eligible output<sup>14</sup> published between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020?

Yes

No

Please complete this form if you have one or more applicable equality-related circumstance (see above) which you are willing to declare. Please provide requested information in relevant box(es). Please provide information required on relevant circumstance/s and expand the box or continue onto a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p><b>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</b></p> <p><i>Please state the date on which you became an early career research and attach a CV. Further details may be requested.</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a></p>
<p><b>Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 July 2020.</b> <i>(For definition see Appendix F of the Code of Practice)</i></p>	<p>Tick here <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Career break or secondment outside of the Higher Education sector.</b></p> <p><i>Please provide dates of your career break or secondment during the period 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020.</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Click here to enter dates and durations.</a></p>
<p><b>Family-related leave;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory maternity leave</li> <li>• statutory adoption leave</li> <li>• Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Click here to enter dates and durations.</a></p>

<sup>14</sup> In REF an output is defined as the product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. At the ICR this is usually a publication.

<p><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	
<p><b>Disability (including chronic conditions)</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Mental health condition</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Ill health or injury</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</b></p> <p><i>To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Caring responsibilities</b></p> <p><i>To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b></p> <p><i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>COVID-19</b> (Applicable only where requests are being made for the removal of the minimum of one requirement)</p>	

<p><i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p> <p><i>The overall impact of the COVID-19 effects should be considered in combination with other applicable circumstances affecting the staff member's ability to research productively throughout the period<sup>15</sup>.</i></p>	
<p><b>Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement.</b></p> <p><i>To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by the individuals outlined in Part 4.4 and 4.5 of the REF Code of Practice.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information outside the ICR, specifically with the UK funding bodies' REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree

**Name:** Print name here

**Signed:** Sign or initial here

**Date:** Insert date here

I give my permission for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

I give my permission for limited information from this form to be passed on to the Research Leadership Board (RLB). This information will inform the RLB that you have had some circumstances during the period (but not details of these circumstances) and the number of expected reductions associated with these circumstances as per the REF guidelines (Please note, if you do not give permission RLB may be unable to adjust expectations and put in place appropriate support for you).

I would like to be contacted by:

Email  Insert email address

Phone  Insert contact telephone number

Please send the complete form to [REFStaffCircumstances@icr.ac.uk](mailto:REFStaffCircumstances@icr.ac.uk).

<sup>15</sup> See paragraphs 20 to 26: <https://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-revisions-to-ref-2021/>

## Appendix H

### Glossary

<b>ECR</b>	Early career researcher
<b>EDAP</b>	The REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel. EDAP advises the funding bodies, the Research England REF team and REF panels on the development of the full range of measures to promote equality and diversity in the REF.
<b>EIA</b>	Equality impact assessment
<b>ESG</b>	ICR Equality Steering Group
<b>Team Leaders</b>	<p>This includes Team Leaders that are Career Faculty and Career Development Faculty as well as Team leaders supported by personal fellowships.</p> <p>In REF terms, Career Faculty and Career Development Faculty are employed on 'Teaching and Research' contracts. Individuals appointed as 'ICR Team leaders supported by personal fellowships' are on research only contracts but are judged to meet the REF criteria for independence as they have an competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement and is included on this list: <a href="https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1030/c-users-daislha-desktop-list-of-research-fellowships-updated-22032019.pdf">https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1030/c-users-daislha-desktop-list-of-research-fellowships-updated-22032019.pdf</a></p>
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent
<b>HE</b>	Higher education
<b>HEI</b>	Higher education institution, the ICR is an HEI.
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education Statistics Agency
<b>HoD</b>	Head of Division
<b>Output</b>	In REF an output is defined as the product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. Normally a publication at the ICR but other outputs such as patents are eligible.
<b>RAE</b>	Research Assessment Exercise
<b>REF</b>	Research Excellence Framework
<b>RIRP</b>	REF Independence Review Panel (see Part 3)
<b>RLB</b>	Research Leadership Board
<b>UOA</b>	Unit of assessment

## Version Control

Version 1: Circulated widely in June 2019 and uploaded to Nexus.

Version 1.1: Change in job title of the appeals secretariat and this has been updated accordingly. Removed wording about submitting to EDAP for approval as was approved by EDAP in August 2019.

Version 1.2: Updates made to the Code of Practice In August 2020 following the postponement of the REF due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes include the following:

- The ICR being awarded an Athena SWAN Charter Silver Award for 2019-23 (Part 1.2).
- Confirmation of the details and timings of the third and final round RIRP process (Part 3).
- Changes to the timelines for the appeals process (Part 3.5), output selection (Part 4) and equality impact assessment (Part 4.6).
- Additional information on a final round of considering staff circumstances in August/September 2020 (Part 4.2).
- Changes in membership to the Research Leadership Board (Part 4.3 and Appendix A).
- Changes to the overall timelines as set out in Appendix B.