

**REF 2021** Research  
Excellence  
Framework

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR  
GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY**

**17<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

# Executive Summary

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) aims to provide accountability for public investment in research by establishing "reputational yardsticks" that will allow the Government to distribute funding to universities appropriately (in the form of the Research Excellence Grant; currently worth around £2.7m per annum to Glasgow Caledonian University). It is based on three measurements reflecting the **Outputs, Impact and Environment** of the research at universities throughout the UK.

In the previous REF, in 2014, Glasgow Caledonian emerged as the top Modern University in Scotland by research power (i.e. based on quality and volume of submissions). The University was ranked in the top 20 in the UK for health research at world-leading and internationally excellent standards and in the top 10 for social policy research impact, while research in the built environment also performed strongly overall in the UK, with impact in this area rated as top 20. Much of this was thanks to the enthusiastic cooperation of the research community and the open approach adopted by the Unit of Assessment teams and REF Management Group.

The next REF will take place in 2021, and it is important for us to develop a system that showcases the best research produced as an institution. The new REF2021 assessment is structured slightly differently from 2014 in that it makes a distinction between the identification of staff members with 'significant responsibility for research' and the selection of outputs to be submitted. Institutions have been asked to devise the processes to carry out their identification and selection in a fair and equitable way, according to the general guidelines established by REF2021. These processes have been set out in this document as the **REF2021 Code of Practice for Glasgow Caledonian University**.

In it, we set out processes for:

1. Identifying staff members with **significant responsibility for research**: Although many staff members are on teaching/research contracts, it is important to distinguish who is actively involved in carrying out research to a quality defined and recognised as such by REF2021. This will be carried out by Schools and Centres, working with Unit of Assessment teams and data from our research repository (PURE), and referring to REF definitions for 'substantive connection' and 'research independence'.
2. Allocating staff to relevant Units of Assessment: In conjunction with this, the University must also ensure that the staff submitted have a significant relationship to our Units of Assessment, as reflected in the outputs of such staff. Stages 1 and 2 will determine our **'Category A submitted' staff**.
3. Outputs: Finally, each Unit of Assessment will have to select the outputs which maximise the quality of each Unit of Assessment submission whilst abiding by the stipulation of REF2021 that no more than 5 outputs should be ascribed to one staff member, with a minimum of 1 and an overall average of 2.5 outputs per person submitted.

The above stages will be overseen by the University's REF Management Group, working iteratively with Schools and Unit of Assessment teams.

It is important to underline that various members of staff contribute in various ways to the achievement of our research strategy and overall vision. These criteria are applied exclusively for the purposes of REF evaluation and do not reflect the overall performance of a staff member or the contribution they make to the University. On the other hand, where a staff member would like to develop elements of their activities, the University provides an extensive suite of career development resources and support to help them achieve their goals.

Above all, every stage will comply with principles of **Transparency, Consistency, Accountability and Inclusiveness**, with measures put in place to ensure that these qualities are adhered to throughout the process with a clear governance structure and routes for appeals and exemptions.

## Part 1: Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the Code of Practice to be applied to Glasgow Caledonian University's submission to the Research Excellence Framework in 2021 (REF2021) in accordance with the [Guidance on Submissions](#) published in January 2019.
- 1.2 This Code will define the processes established for the fair and transparent identification of staff with significant responsibility for research and for determining who is an independent researcher and for the selection of outputs.
- 1.3 It adheres to the University's Vision for Equality and Diversity, which aims to create "A culture and environment which is inclusive of all sections of society and responsive to the needs of individuals. Resulting in staff, students and other stakeholders who are free from any form of discrimination in respect of all their dealings with Glasgow Caledonian University, enabling them to participate fully in all aspects of University life and make a valuable contribution to the success of the institution."
- 1.4 More specifically, the Code has been written taking into account the University's Dignity at Work & Study Policy for Staff and Students, Equality Outcomes 2017-2021.
- 1.5 The Code of Practice is underpinned by four principles to ensure fairness:
  - 1.5.1 **Transparency:** All processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, identifying staff who are independent researchers, and selecting outputs for inclusion in REF submissions will be transparent, with provisions made in order to communicate with staff who are without regular access and to those with particular communications needs.

A PDF version of this Code of Practice will be distributed to all academic staff across the institution (including those absent from work) via email, and a downloadable version will also be made available on the staff intranet.

In addition, a series of Information Sessions are being held across the University in order to promote the Code of Practice. At these Sessions representatives of the relevant REF Groups will explain the processes related to: i) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research; ii) determining who is an independent researcher iii) selecting outputs for submission.

- 1.5.2 **Consistency:** All the principles governing this Code of Practice will be consistent across the University and within each Unit of Assessment. There will be no variance in the definition of staff with significant responsibility for research or for determining who is an independent researcher between each of the Units of Assessment and any variance in processes for the selection of outputs shall be related to the different guidelines of the relevant REF2021 Main panels A,B,C,D or their sub-Panels.
- 1.5.3 **Accountability:** The roles and responsibilities of staff members involved in the management of REF2021 and oversight of submissions are described in detail in Part 2, below, including operating criteria and terms of reference, available in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5.4 **Inclusivity:** In line with the University's Equality Outcomes 2017-2021, this Code of Practice will promote an inclusive environment, ensuring the consideration of any staff from protected groups who have significant responsibility for research, whether or not they are

independent researchers, and that the excellence of their research is fully reflected. This approach is consistent with our University-wide approach to equality and diversity, and complements a wide range of actions that support an inclusive environment, which are informed and supported by external agencies such as Advance HE and SFC, and internal stakeholders such as staff, students, trade unions, committees and working groups. These include:

- the continued implementation of our Athena SWAN action plans at institutional level and within the School of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment;
- our continued support for the Aurora programme (over 70 alumni and currently 15 participants during 2018/19);
- promotion of our Preventing Gender Based Violence work through our working group, policy and action plan, forming part of our wider work on gender equality;
- a commitment to enhance the support for staff with disabilities through becoming a 'Disability Confident' employer;
- in terms of mental health, staff engagement activities, together with the input of our Mental Health at Work Task Force, which will shape a staff mental health action plan during 2019.
- a focus on race equality being developed to respond to areas of national focus such as racial harassment, equal pay for staff and the attainment gap between 'white' and 'black and minority ethnic' students.

A full description of Equality Impact Assessment and Training is presented in section 2.5 below.

## Part 2: Identifying Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research and 'Category A Submitted' Staff

### 2.1 Processes for identifying staff with Significant Responsibility for Research and 'Category A Submitted' staff

- 2.1.1 Glasgow Caledonian University will not include 100 per cent of Category A eligible staff. The REF2021 Guidance recognises that many staff in universities on Teaching & Research (T&R) contracts will have little or no responsibility for research. Hence, a distinction is to be made between 'Category A eligible' and 'Category A submitted' staff.
- 2.1.2 Figure 1 shows our process for determining Significant Responsibility for Research and for moving from that to Category A submitted staff.

#### Significant Responsibility for Research

- 2.1.3 A preliminary **Identification of staff with Significant Responsibility for Research** shall be made by Schools and associated Research Centres, working with each Unit of Assessment team and based on data from our research repository. This will form the basis of a review of all staff employed at Glasgow Caledonian University on T&R and Research-Only (R-O) contracts and with a minimum 0.2FTE appointment. Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research are identified according to the following criteria<sup>1</sup>:
- They are allocated significant time and resources for research activity that is explicitly recognised and supported by their line manager.
  - They are actively engaged with research centres, research groups or themes.
  - They supervise research staff and/or postgraduate research students.
- 2.1.4 **Independent researchers**<sup>2</sup>: To further aid identification of staff as having Significant Responsibility for Research, Schools, Centres and Unit of Assessment teams will assess the extent to which the researchers are independent, according to the criteria laid out in Part 3 of this Code of Practice.
- 2.1.5 The data produced from activities outlined in 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 will be matched against central records of all academic and research staff employed at Glasgow Caledonian University. In order to ensure that principals of **Transparency, Consistency, Accountability and Inclusivity** have been adhered to, the REF Management Group, aided by the REF Data Management Group, shall use the criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research and independent researchers in order to both approve the staff identified by Schools, Centres and Units of Assessment and determine whether there are additional staff identified as having Significant Responsibility for Research who have not been accounted for.

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<sup>1</sup> Note these criteria have been adapted in part from REF guidance around 'substantive connection' reflecting the guidance which states that 'a substantive research connection remains an eligibility requirement for all staff'.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'Independent researchers' is used in REF2021 Guidance to apply to staff on research-only contracts. We have used the terminology to ensure that our determination of 'significant responsibility for research' is as robust and inclusive as possible, ensuring that researchers undertake 'self-directed research rather than carrying out another individual's research programme'.

2.1.6 The process outlined in 2.1.3-2.1.5 will allow us to identify staff across the institution as having Significant Responsibility for Research and to be flagged as such in our HESA returns.

2.1.7 **Exceptional circumstances** Identification of staff will also be informed by a recognition that some staff members' research contributions are significantly affected by their personal circumstances such as:

- 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).

Where a staff member feels these circumstances have not been taken into account during the identification process, s/he will have the right to appeal (see 2.4 below).

2.1.8 **Early Career Researchers.** ECRs to be included within REF2021 are defined as members of staff who meet the definition of "Category A eligible" on the census date, and who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016. For the purposes of the REF, an individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which:

- a) they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of T&R or R-O, with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, and
- b) they first met the definition of an independent researcher (Part 3, below).

The following do not meet the definition of an ECR (this list is not exhaustive):

- a) Staff who first acted as an independent researcher while at a previous employer – whether another HEI, business or other organisation in the UK or elsewhere – before 1 August 2016, with a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater.
- b) Staff who first acted as an independent researcher before 1 August 2016 and have since had a career outside of research or an extended break from their research career, before returning to research work. Career breaks are included in the types of circumstances where requests for output reductions may be made (see paragraph 167).
- c) Research assistants who would not normally meet the definition of an independent researcher, as described in Part 3, below.

### Identifying 'Category A Submitted' staff and associated outputs

2.1.9 A final review of '**Category A submitted**' staff will then take place, whereby Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research will be allocated to Glasgow Caledonian's Units of Assessment, based on their connection with the research environments comprising those Units of Assessment (**Appendix 2**). In some instances, this process will reveal additional potential Units of Assessment for submission. However, it may also reveal small Units (fewer than 5 FTE) which are not eligible for submission (paragraph 68 of REF2021 Guidance). In these instances, the University will need to make a request for the exception of the Unit from submission. In this instance alone, Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research will be excluded from our REF2021 submission. At this stage, we will have defined

our 'Category A Submitted' group of staff but will consider the creation of additional Unit of Assessments to match staff who do not fit within an existing Unit.

2.1.10 Details of output selection are provided in Part 4. In short, outputs will then be selected which, upon assessment (internal and, if deemed suitable, external) to maximise the quality of the submission, recognising that such quality may vary across Units of Assessment, and the requirement to meet the REF criterion of the average number of such outputs per submitted member of staff equating to 2.5 (minimum 1; maximum 5). Ensuring the highest-quality return will be an iterative process between Units of Assessment and the REF Management Group, over which the REF Management Group will have final approval.

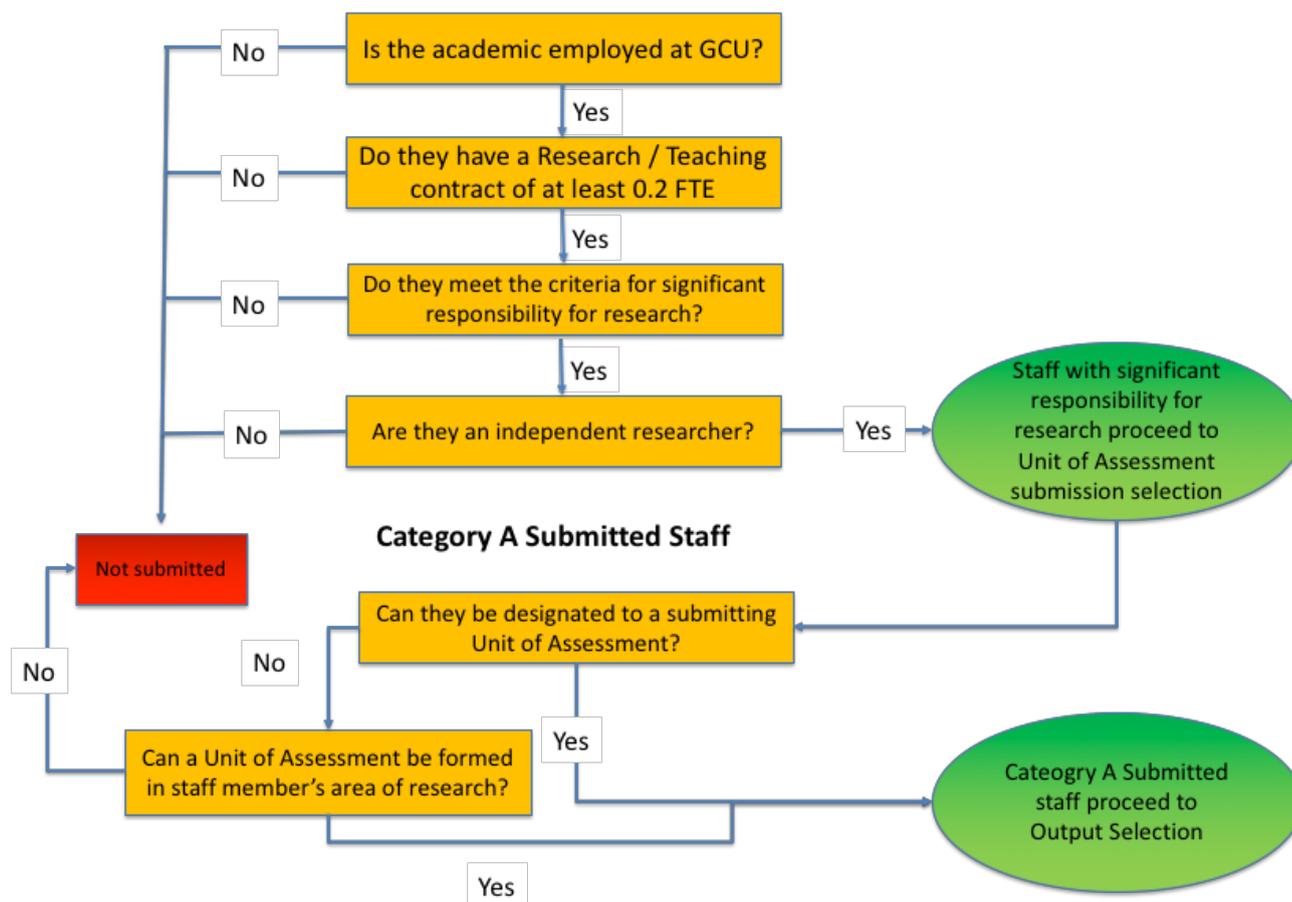


FIGURE 1. Process for Identifying Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research and 'Category A Submitted' staff

## 2.2 Development of processes

2.2.1 **Approval of Code of Practice.** Following approval by the REF Management Group, the University Research Committee and Executive Board (January 2019), a draft of this Code of Practice was distributed to all members of staff via email and intranet and a 14-day consultation period was instigated (15/02/19 -01/03/19) during which any member of staff could raise concerns or suggest modifications. It was also sent to staff representative groups, including all Union bodies connected to staff. Modifications requested by the funders and the Code of Practice in its current form have been endorsed by University staff representatives, as indicated in the letters provided in **Appendix 3.**

- 2.2.2 Concerns or suggestions made during the consultation period were duly considered by the REF Management Group and changes made accordingly, if considered appropriate.
- 2.2.3 Further review was made by the University Research Committee, as a sub-committee of Senate, which will be informed of the progress throughout the REF process.
- 2.2.4 During March 2019, the reviewed Code of Practice was submitted to Senate (full version) and Court (summary, with link to full version) for comment and endorsement, before then being re-submitted to Executive Board for final sign-off before submission to funders in April 2019. Such endorsement and sign-off were successfully achieved.
- 2.2.5 **Preliminary selection of staff.** Between October 2018 and June 2019, the REF Management Group will continually liaise with People Services regarding HESA data/staff with Significant Responsibility for Research through the REF Data Management Group (See **Appendix 1.4** below).
- 2.2.6 **Publication of results of preliminary selection.** All staff on a T&R or R-O contract of 0.2 FTE and above will be informed by email indicating whether or not they have been identified as having Significant Responsibility for Research directly by PVC Research. This will be carried out in Autumn 2019, prior to the mock REF exercise.
- 2.2.7 This communication will include details of the Appeals Process (see 2.4, below).

### **2.3 Staff, committees and training**

- 2.3.1 **Terms of Reference of REF Groups** including their membership are provided in **Appendix 1** of this paper. All Committees and Groups will maintain records of their activities, including minutes of all meetings which will be held on the REF web portal. The relationship between REF-related and other University groups, boards and committees is illustrated in Figure 2 below.
- 2.3.2 **The University Research Committee of Senate** has primary responsibility for the oversight of the preparation of the REF2021 submission. The Committee is chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) who carries the responsibility for the research portfolio at the University Executive Board and will make formal University decisions/recommendations prior to institutional sign off by the Principal. Terms of Reference are included in **Appendix 1.1**.
- 2.3.3 **The REF Management Group** was established following approval by the University Research Committee on 27 January 2017 and Executive Board on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017. The REF Management Group has been tasked with overseeing the REF2021 Submission process in order to ensure that the staff with significant responsibility for research, outputs and impact case studies are appropriately selected and submitted in accordance with the University's REF2021 Code of Practice. This will be conducted in an iterative and continuous process with Unit of Assessment Leads (see 2.3.6). The Group is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research). The other members of the group are the Director of the Research and Innovation Office, Director of the Graduate School, two Assistant Vice Principals and Associate Deans (Research), who play a decision-making role with full voting rights. The other participants of the Group play an advisory role: Research and REF Manager, the Research Impact and Knowledge Exchange Officers, Equality and Diversity Advisor, University Library representative, Head of Business Support, representative of People

Services/Workforce Systems, representative of Strategy and Planning, and the Secretary to the University Research Committee. Terms of Reference are included in **Appendix 1.2**.

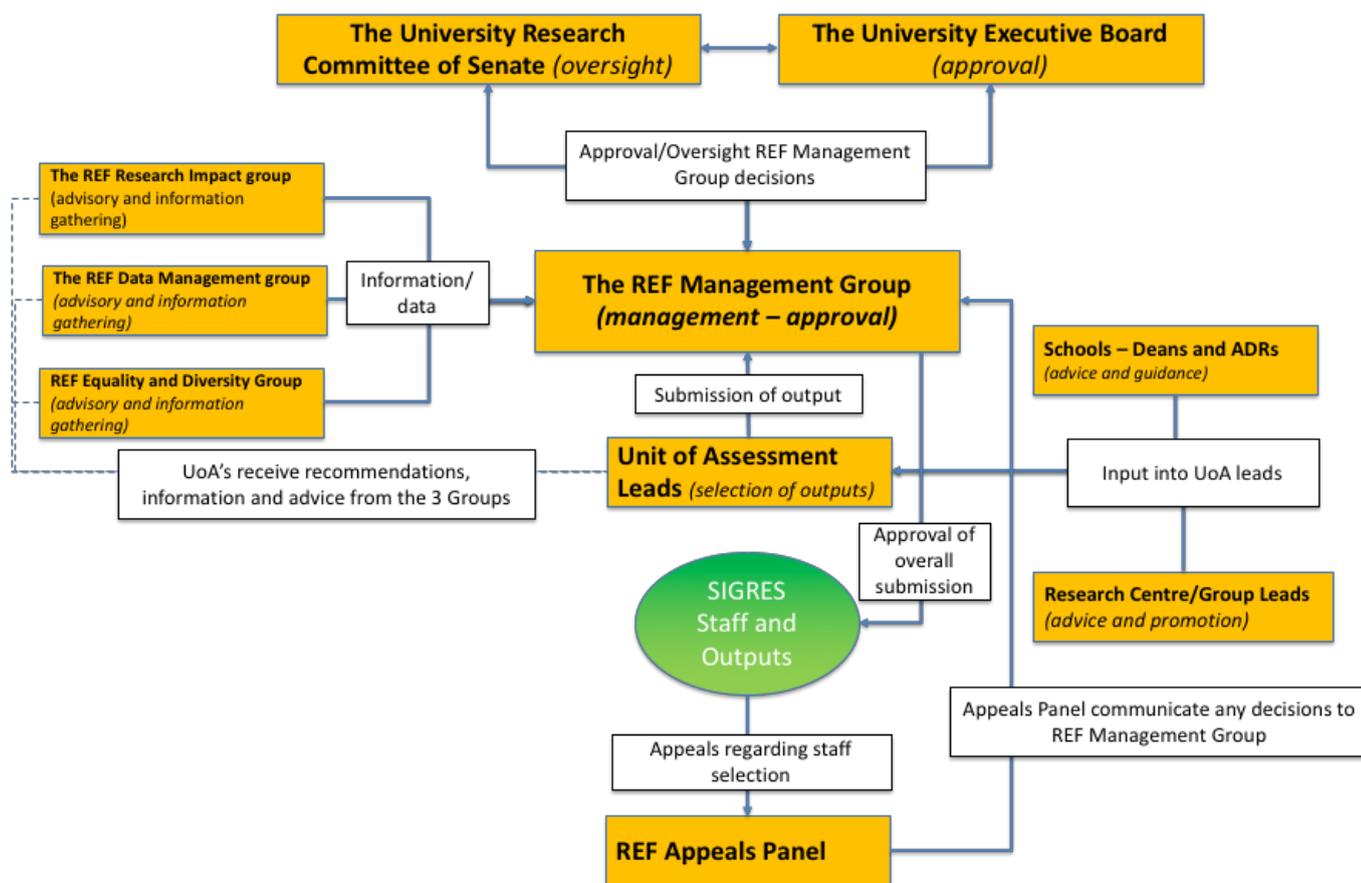


FIGURE 2: Relationship between REF Committees and Groups

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2.3.4 **The REF Impact Group** will be responsible for reviewing and revising the Impact aspects of GCU's REF2021, the selection process and development of impact case studies leading up to submission. It will advise the REF Management Group. The REF Impact Group will be chaired by the Director of the Research and Innovation Office and will be comprised of the following members: Research Impact and Knowledge Transfer Officers, Research & REF Manager, Knowledge Transfer Manager, Unit of Assessment leads (or a delegated representative of the School); representative of Communications and Public Affairs. Terms of Reference are included in **Appendix 1.3**.

2.3.5 **The REF Data Management Group** is responsible for providing research information to support the activities of the University Research Committee, the REF Management Group and Schools/Departments and Units of Assessment Leads in the preparation of the REF submission. The REF Data Group is chaired by the Director, Research and Innovation, with input from the Library, People Services, Finance, Research and Innovation Office, School Business support, Strategy and Planning and the Graduate School. The group will oversee the use of the PURE current research information system in capturing data relevant to REF and the population of the PURE REF module. The group will have no input into decisions relating to selection of staff and will be charged purely with the provision of accurate and auditable information eligible for inclusion in the REF submission in compliance with REF guidelines. The REF Data Management Group will advise the REF Management Group through the Director, Research and Innovation. Terms of Reference are included in **Appendix 1.4**.

2.3.6 **Unit of Assessment Leads**. Criteria for recruitment of Unit of Assessment Leads have been defined by Deans and Associate Deans of Research and approved by the Executive Board of the University and Senate, as follows.

- Academic level (Professor, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise).
- Demonstrable leadership in their area of research.
- Contribution to the corresponding Unit of Assessment submission.
- Ability to work across disciplinary boundaries relevant to their Unit of Assessment.
- Evidence of people management skills.
- Previous experience of working with REF processes and knowledge of the REF2021 HEFCE submission guidelines.
- Familiarity with University processes and systems that would inform a REF submission.

The Unit of Assessment Leads will be responsible for the Co-ordination of individual submissions and further expertise and support will be co-opted where required (see below). They will take the lead in drafting the Unit of Assessment submission and provide progress reports to the REF Management Group, and a final report (see Section 4, below, for description of the process for selection of outputs).

**GCU REF Units of Assessment and associated leads** are listed in **Appendix 2**.

2.3.7 **REF Appeals Panel** will be chaired by the Principal of the University who is not a member of any of the Groups described in 2.3.2-2.3.5 above. The Panel will be assisted by appropriate independent members of the University Research Committee and senior academic staff with specific discipline expertise who do not have responsibility for REF processes. This Panel will consider appeals with respect to Significant Responsibility for Research and Category A Submitted Staff and Research Independence but not selection of Outputs. Terms of Reference are included in **Appendix 1.5**.

2.3.8 **REF Equality and Diversity Group** will independently ensure that the University in developing its submission adheres to the REF guidance in relation to Equality and Diversity provisions. This group shall comprise the University Equality and Diversity Advisor, a member of the University People Committee and an academic with expertise in the field of Equality & Diversity. The group shall carry out an advisory role, reporting into the REF Management Group through the chair, a designated member of the University People Committee. Terms of Reference are included in **Appendix 1.6**.

2.3.9 **Additional support.** Unit of Assessment Leads will receive support from other academic colleagues:

- Oversight by the REF Management Group.
- Advice and guidance from Schools through Deans and Associate Deans of Research.
- Input from REF Impact and REF Data Management Groups and Library.
- Support from School-based Professional Services (Business Support) and Impact and Knowledge Exchange Officers.

#### 2.3.10 **Selection and training of designated staff responsible for University REF processes**

A list identifying the names and roles of all individuals carrying responsibilities in groups and committees for the selection of outputs to be returned in the REF submission and in decision making will be drawn up by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research), Deans, and Associate Deans (Research) and presented to the REF Management Group.

Once approved by the REF Management Group, these lists (provided here as **Appendix 1**) will be formally approved by the University Research Committee and distributed to the University community via email and on the intranet.

The REF Management Group will be notified of any changes made to this list with formal justification for the decision made, and the changes will be communicated to the University community.

All staff responsible for defining the Units of Assessment must adhere to the requirements set out in this Code of Practice as well as to the published REF guidance materials, both of which will be available in hardcopy as well as via links on the University REF website.

University Assessment Forms and Guidance will also be made available to all staff involved in making selections, and will also be published on the University REF website.

#### 2.3.11 **Equalities Training**

All staff involved in the selection process for REF2021 will be required to receive equalities training tailored to the REF processes. The training will consist of two elements:

**Online Course.** Firstly, staff will receive generic equality and diversity training, through an online course. This will help participants understand concepts, definitions and responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010 in the context of Higher Education.

**Interactive sessions.** Secondly, participants will be involved in an interactive session that will discuss and consider some potential scenarios that may arise in the REF2021 process. The session will use case studies to enable participants to practice implementing the Code

of Practice, and help to facilitate a common understanding of how to deal with personal circumstances.

**Training records.** The equality training that those staff received to enable them to carry out their role will be documented and retained by the University as part of the REF Management record.

## **2.4. Appeals**

2.4.1 Any queries or concerns regarding identification of staff with Significant Responsibility for Research should, in the first instance, be made to Unit of Assessment Leads and the Dean and Associate Dean (Research) of the corresponding School, who should respond by email within a week of the query being made.

2.4.2 If the concerned party is not satisfied by the response received, they should inform the Appeals Panel via a REF Appeals Mailbox. The Panel will convene and the appeal considered within two weeks of the appeal being made. The Panel shall be provided with all of the evidence that the REF Management Group used in reaching a decision about selection of the individual making the appeal.

2.4.4 A decision will be made and communicated at a meeting with the member of staff making the appeal within 2 weeks of the decision being made.

2.4.5 The decision of the Appeals Panel in respect of any appeal concerning the REF submission shall be final.

## **2.5. Equality Impact Assessment**

2.5.1 Both the University and the UK HE funding bodies are committed to supporting and promoting equality and diversity in research careers, and strongly encourage transparency and fairness in decisions to represent the work of all our staff with significant responsibility for research. Compliance with equality legislation is an obligation for HEIs.

2.5.2 The University will conduct equality impact assessments on policies and processes for selecting staff in REF2021. Such equality impact assessments will be used to inform the development of this code of practice as the submission is prepared. Special attention will be paid to compliance with equality guidelines when:

- identifying staff with a significant responsibility for research.
- determining research independence.
- selecting outputs for submission.
- considering appeals against identification of staff who do not have significant responsibility for research.
- preparing the final submission.

2.5.3 The University will carry out an initial “mock REF” exercise in Autumn 2019. The purpose of this exercise will be to establish a “direction of travel” in selecting Units of Assessment for development. During this process, an assessment of the procedures used in this initial mock REF exercise will be carried out by the REF Equality and Diversity Group, including a full Equality Impact Assessment.

- 2.5.4 Specifically, the REF Equality and Diversity Group shall, independent of the REF Management Group, on behalf of the University:
- Carry out an Equality of Impact Assessment (EIA) on the processes for selecting staff.
  - Ensure that the EIA will be informed by an analysis of the data available on all eligible staff in respect of all the protected characteristics on which data is available.
  - Ensure that EIA will be reviewed at key stages of the selection procedure.
  - Ensure that the EIA will be published after submissions have been made.
- 2.5.5 The REF Equality and Diversity Group will, by conducting an EIA, identify any potential discrimination that may have occurred during the REF process. If any such examples are identified, the Equality and Diversity Advisor shall report such instances on behalf of the Group to the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) who shall initiate a formal investigation. If any actions are necessary as a result of this investigation, the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) shall instruct that the selection of staff is revisited in a manner appropriate to removing the cause of the discrimination. The Equality and Diversity Group shall then carry out a further assessment to verify that the action taken was effective.
- 2.5.6 In order to ensure full independence from the REF Management Process, the Chair of the REF Equality and Diversity Group shall report its findings in relation to the proposed REF submission by July 2020 to the University Research Committee of Senate, and highlight any matters not resolved by the EIA process set out in this section. Following resolution of any unresolved matters, the formal presentation of this report shall be made to the University Executive Board that will allow the Principal, as Head of the Institution to confirm adherence to the code of practice when making the submission.
- 2.5.7 The REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Group will also monitor and improve the representativeness of the appointed Groups and Committees associated with REF, as described in 2.3.1-2.3.5 above. This includes reviewing the new requirements on nominating bodies to provide information on how equality and diversity was taken into account during selection, quality assessments of outputs and case studies decisions.
- 2.5.8 The Equality Impact Assessment for GCU has been undertaken in consultation with REF guidance, available at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk), under Equality and Diversity.
- 2.5.9 **Equality Act: Protected Groups.** The Equality Act (2010) places requirements on the funding bodies as public sector organisations and on HEIs as public sector organisations and employers. Under the public sector equality duty the higher education funding bodies and HEIs in England Scotland and Wales in carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

In the context of REF a “relevant” protected characteristic is one other than marriage and civil partnership.

The UK Equality Act (2010) covers the protected characteristics of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (not relevant for REF)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The University shall conduct equality impact assessments appropriate to the evaluation of policy and processes in relation to these groups of staff.

## Part 3: Determining Research Independence

### 3.1 Criteria for Research Independence

3.1.1 **Definition.** 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.

3.1.2. Staff will not necessarily qualify as independent researchers purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.

3.1.3 **Criteria for inclusion as independent researcher.** Reflecting REF principles of inclusivity and consistency in particular, in order for the staff member to be classed as an independent researcher, at least one of the following conditions should be met:

- I. The staff member should be leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.
- II. They should hold an independently won, competitively-awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement (see **Annex 8** of REF2021 Guidelines for non-exhaustive list of independent fellowships).
- III. They act as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project and/or have had significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.
- IV. They lead a research group or a substantial work package within a body of research.

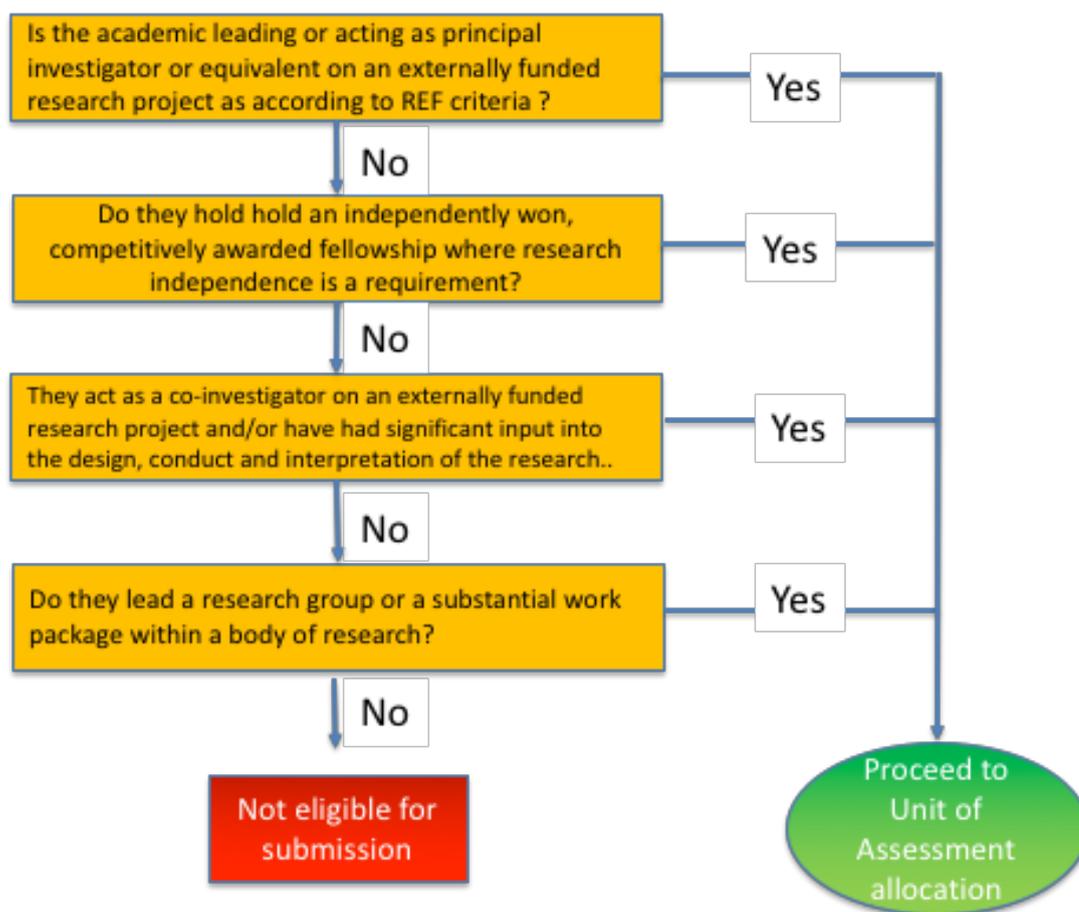


FIGURE 3: Determination of Research Independence

## **3.2. Appeals with respect to Research Independence**

- 3.2.1 Appeals for the determination of Research Independence will be heard by the REF Appeals Panel (see 2.3.7) and will follow the same process as appeals for determination of Significant Responsibility for Research - see below:
- 3.2.2 Any queries or concerns regarding identification of staff with Research Independence should, in the first instance, be made to Unit of Assessment Leads and the Dean and Associate Dean (Research) of the corresponding School, who should respond by email within a week of the query being made.
- 3.2.2 If the concerned party is not satisfied by the response received, they should inform the Appeals Panel via a REF Appeals Mailbox. The Panel will convene and the appeal considered within two weeks of the appeal being made. The Panel shall be provided with all of the evidence that the REF Management Group used in reaching a decision about selection of the individual making the appeal.
- 3.2.4 A decision will be made and communicated at a meeting with the member of staff making the appeal within 2 weeks of the decision being made.
- 3.2.5 The decision of the Appeals Panel in respect of any appeal concerning the REF submission shall be final.

## Part 4: Outputs

### 4.1 Policies and Procedures

- 4.1.1 **De-coupling of staff and outputs.** In accordance with the guidelines for REF2021, the selection of outputs is de-coupled from the selection of eligible staff. As such, some members of staff may have more or fewer outputs than expected attributable to them during the assessment period.
- 4.1.2 **Numbers of outputs per member of staff.** Each Unit of Assessment should submit at least one output for each member of staff included. No more than five outputs may be attributed to any individual staff member (including former staff).
- 4.1.3 **Total number of outputs.** Submissions must include a set number of research outputs equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission per Unit of Assessment. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for submission. This number may be adjusted, if appropriate, in order to take account of successful requests for staff circumstances.
- 4.1.4 **Exceptional staff circumstances.** In all Units of Assessment, an individual may be returned without the required minimum of one output without penalty in the assessment, where the nature of the individual's circumstances has had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the period, so that the staff member has not been able to produce the required minimum of one output. Institutions will be invited to submit a request for staff circumstances exceptions in Autumn 2019, with a deadline of March 2020. For submitting requests.
- 4.1.5 **Applicable circumstances** may include the following:
- Qualifying as an early career researcher.
  - Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks.
  - Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
  - Other circumstances that apply in UoAs 1-6, as defined at paragraphs 177-185 of the REF2021 Guidance.
  - Circumstances equivalent to absence, (requiring a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs):
    - Disability (including association with a person with disabilities, as defined in REF 2018/03).
    - Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.
    - 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 made in paragraph 169 below.
    - Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
    - Gender reassignment.
    - Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in REF 2018/03, Table 1, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.
- 4.1.6 The process adopted by each Unit of Assessment for selecting outputs must document and apply fair and transparent processes and must be approved by the REF Management Group.

As such, Unit of Assessment leads must demonstrate how they have taken into account equality and diversity considerations, and any equality-related circumstances affecting staff ability to research productively during the period.

4.1.7 **Attribution.** Outputs must be 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 current member of staff with significant responsibility for research (as defined in section 2, above), 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 member of staff employed at GCU with significant responsibility for research (as defined in section 2, above), when the output was first made publicly available.

4.1.8 **Definition of research.** Any outputs to be considered must be the product of research, as defined by REF2021 Guidance: a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.

4.1.9 **Types of outputs.** Outputs may include: work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, culture, society, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship, the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research. A full glossary of outputs and collection formats is included in **Annex K of the REF2021 Guidance**.

Outputs will also include **impact case studies**. Case studies for each Unit of Assessment will be considered by each Unit of Assessment Team including Impact Officers, with a sample subject to external review arranged by Impact Officers and Associate Deans Research. Case Studies will also be reviewed by external stakeholders for reasons of commercial confidentiality and public interest.

4.1.10 **Period of Eligibility.** Outputs considered eligible must have been first brought into the public domain during the publication period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 or, in the case of a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period.

4.1.11 **Former Staff members made redundant.** Having not made any member of staff compulsorily redundant, the issue of inclusion of outputs in this regard does not arise. As a courtesy, we will approach any staff member whose outputs we intend to use as part of the submission, but who have left during the REF period.

4.1.12 **Open Access.** Outputs must be available in an open-access form, where the output is within scope of the REF2021 Open Access Policy.

4.1.13 **Confidential Reports.** In addition to research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, outputs may include

confidential reports. Confidential reports include any item produced for and lodged, in the publication period, with a company, government body or other research sponsor(s), but which has not been published because of its commercial or other sensitivity. A confidential report may only be submitted if GCU has prior permission from the sponsoring organization that the output may be made available for assessment. In this event, the responsible Unit of Assessment Lead must secure prior permission from the REF Management Committee in order to prepare a confidential report for assessment. In the event that the Unit of Assessment Lead believes that a main or sub-panel member may have a commercial conflict of interest in assessing confidential reports, this should be brought to the attention of the REF Management Group as soon as possible.

4.1.14 **Procedure for selecting Outputs.** Each Unit of Assessment team (see Appendix 2) will be responsible for selecting eligible Outputs that best reflect Research Excellence being carried out within the University. The process adopted by each Unit of Assessment will be reviewed and approved by the REF Management Group. However, all Unit of Assessment outputs must be selected based on the following five criteria:

1. Eligibility of Outputs (See Fig 4).
2. Research excellence in terms of originality, significance and rigour, which may vary from one Unit of Assessment to another.
3. Representation and distribution of eligible members of staff with Significant Responsibility for Research.
4. Relationship to selected impact case studies.
5. Strategic fit to the Unit of Assessment being submitted.

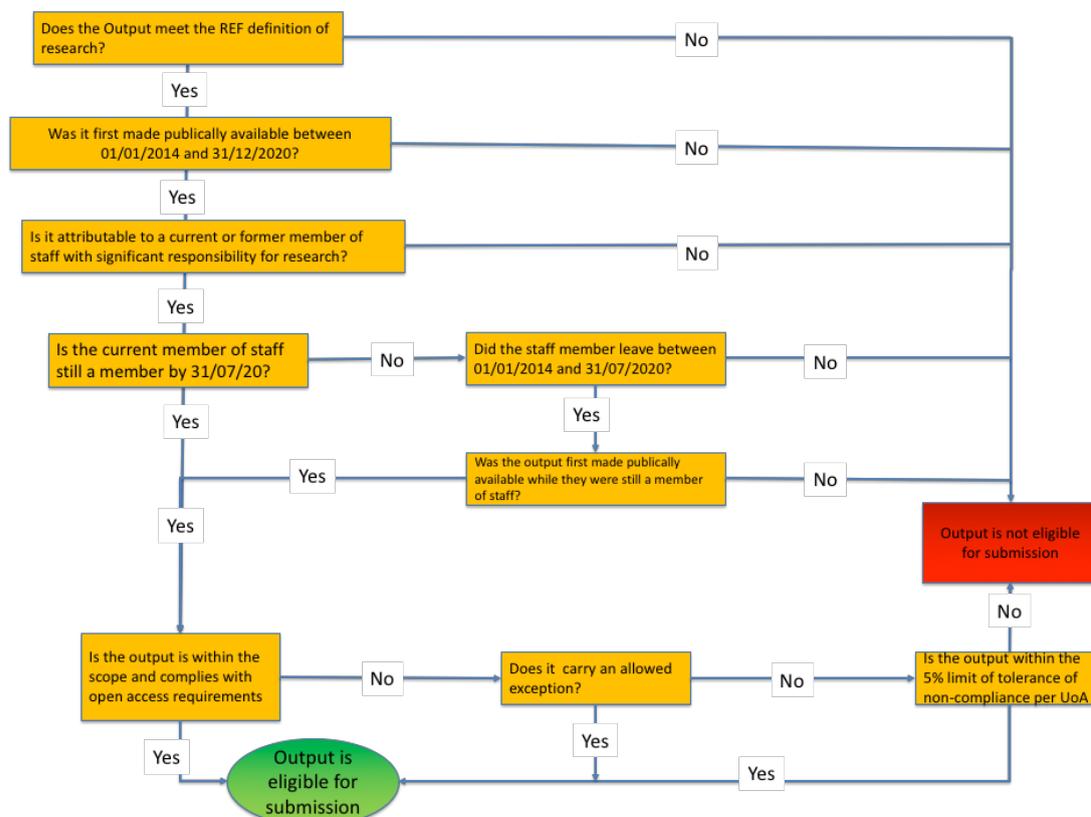


FIGURE 4: Determination of Research Outputs

4.1.15 **Review Process.** Each research output will be independently reviewed against the REF output rating scale by two internal reviewers. These reviewers will reach an agreement on the quality of an output. In the absence of an agreement, a third reviewer from the Unit of Assessment team will also review the paper.

All reviews will then be presented to the Unit of Assessment Team.

4.1.16 **External Reviewers** will not be generally used unless the Unit of Assessment team in question feel it is appropriate to do so.

## 4.2 Staff Committees, support and Training

4.2.1 The selection of outputs will be carried out by the Unit of Assessment leads and approved by the REF Management Group, as described in Section 2.3, above.

4.2.2 **Support.** Unit of Assessment Leads will receive additional training from the various REF Groups as described in Section 2.3, above.

## 4.3 Disclosure of Individual Staff Circumstances and Data Sharing

4.3.1 The University will establish robust procedures that enable staff to disclose, on a confidential basis, any individual circumstances that may have constrained their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period. This will be done using the Equality Challenge Unit Template form for the disclosure of Individual Staff Circumstances which has been designed for the REF exercise. This template form is provided as **Appendix 4** to this document.

The form should be returned by individual staff to the University Equality and Diversity Advisor.

4.3.2 The University will be proactive in ensuring that staff are aware of these processes for disclosure and the Equality and Diversity Advisor will formally monitor the process for identifying individuals whose circumstances might need special consideration and evidence decisions and actions. The process to allow staff to submit individual circumstances in relation to REF for consideration by the University will open in October 2019 and will run until final decisions are made concerning the REF submission.

4.3.3 The information contained on the form shall be evaluated by the Equality and Diversity Advisor to ensure that the individual circumstances disclosed fall within the definitions provided by REF. The Equality and Diversity Advisor shall then formally inform the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research). No other staff shall be allowed access to this information.

4.3.4 Decisions on the reduction of the numbers of outputs appropriate to these circumstances shall be taken by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) based on the tariffs outlined in Annex L (Reductions for staff circumstances) of the REF Guidance on Submissions. The relevant team for each Unit of Assessment will then be informed and the member of staff disclosing such individual circumstances shall be formally notified in writing of the decision made and the rationale on which it was based.

4.3.5 Also included in **Appendix 4**, are model data sharing statements for staff and non-staff, providing assurance that data used by HESA and UKRI for purposes of the REF shall be used for such purposes only and treated confidentially.

4.3.6 Even where a case for output reduction is not submitted, after consultation with and approval by the staff member, the appropriate line manager will be involved, without disclosure of circumstances, in planning that appropriate support is put in place. This will be informed by existing University policies and guidance on supporting staff including Dignity at Work & Study Policy, Supporting Families Policy, Guidance on Family Leave, Flexible Working and Reasonable Adjustments

## Part 5: Timetable

- 5.1 Activities leading up to Glasgow Caledonian University's REF2021 submission are listed in the timetable presented in **Appendix 5**.

# Part 6: Appendices

## List of Appendices

1. List and composition of Groups and Committees involved in REF2021:
  - 1.1 The University Research Committee of Senate Terms of Reference
  - 1.2 REF Management Group Terms of Reference
  - 1.3 REF Impact Group Terms of Reference
  - 1.4 REF Data Management Group Terms of Reference
  - 1.5 Reference REF Appeals Committee Terms of Reference
  - 1.6 REF Equality and Diversity Group Terms of
2. GCU REF Units of Assessment and associated leads
3. Letters indicating agreement of staff representatives
4. Individual staff circumstances and disclosure form and REF Data Collection Statements
5. Proposed timetable leading up to REF2021 Submission

## Appendix 1: List and composition of Groups and Committees involved in REF 2021

### Appendix 1.1: University Research Committee Terms of Reference

1. To advise Senate on research governance, development, policy and strategy in line with the University's mission, vision, principles and strategic goals towards 2020.
2. Taking account of regional, national and international research needs, policies and regulations, to advise University Executive Board with respect to: criteria for the assessment of research performance; assessment of new research initiatives in the University and support required for research.
3. To develop policies and lead initiatives in the University that will nurture and develop the research skills of existing staff and support an inclusive, collaborative and outward looking research culture.
4. To advise on and support the research community in establishing partnerships in areas of innovation and community engagement.
5. To advise on research strategy and monitor research performance with respect to strategy as well as requirements with respect to research ethics and research integrity and of external assessments of research quality, researcher development opportunities and the research environment.
6. To oversee research degrees policies, mechanisms for ongoing postgraduate research supervisor training and development and the postgraduate research environment through delegated authority to Research Degrees Committee.
7. To receive regular reports from School Research Committees, Research Centres and Research Degrees Committee.
8. To submit to Senate an annually-updated report for research.

## GCU University Research Committee composition (2018-19)

### *Ex officio Members*

Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise (Chair)  
(Professor Cam Donaldson)  
Associate Dean Research, Glasgow School for Business & Society  
(Professor John Harris)  
Associate Dean Research, School of Health and Life Sciences  
(Professor Kay Currie)  
Associate Dean School of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment  
(Professor Ole Pahl)  
Assistant Vice Principal Research Excellence  
(Professor Jim Woodburn)  
GCU London Research Lead  
(Dr Dane Lukic)  
GCNYC Research Lead  
(Professor Robert Clougherty)  
Director of Research and Innovation  
(Mr Mark Anderson)  
Director of the Graduate School  
(Professor Bonnie Steves)  
Chair of the Research Ethics Subcommittee  
(Professor Bill Hughes)  
Chair of Research Degrees Committee  
(Dr Lyle Gray)  
Student President (or nominee)  
(Yetunde Ogedengbe)

### *Non ex officio members*

Members of academic research staff to be *nominated by the School SMG*  
Glasgow School for Business and Society  
(Dr Julie Thomson)  
School of Health and Life Sciences  
(Professor Lawrie Elliott)  
School of Engineering and Built Environment  
(Professor Rohinton Emmanuel)  
Postgraduate Student Representative nominated by GCUSA  
(Research Student Leads by rotation)

### *Non-voting advisors – by invitation*

Director of Strategy and Planning or nominee, Director of Financial Planning or nominee, Director of Library Services or nominee, Director of Business Support or nominee.

Quorum = 50% of membership

Non-ex-officio members term of office is 3 academic sessions *with the option to extend for 1 academic year*

## Appendix 1.2: REF Management Group Terms of Reference

1. **Definition of the Group:** The REF Management Group shall oversee the REF2021 Submission process in order to ensure that the staff with significant responsibility for research, outputs and impact case studies are appropriately selected and submitted in accordance with the University's REF2021 Code of Practice.
2. **Composition:** The group is chaired by the Pro- Vice Chancellor (Research). The members of the group are the Director of Research and Innovation, Assistant Principals, and Associate Deans (Research). Together with the Chair, they will play a decision-making role with full voting rights. The other participants of the Group play an advisory role: Research and REF Manager, the Associate Deans (Research) for each School, the Research Impact and Knowledge Exchange Officers, Equality and Diversity Advisor, University Library representative, Head of Business Support, representative of People Services/Workforce Systems, representative of Strategy and Planning, and the Secretary to the University Research Committee.
3. **Function:** The Group is tasked with making strategic decision on the submission process in accordance with the Code of Practice, defining the timetable for submission, the format of the Mock REF and confirming the selection of Research Area and Unit of Assessment Leads. They will consider advisory input from representatives from the Research Impact and Equality and Diversity Groups where appropriate. The Group Chair will report its activities to the University Research Committee.
4. **Meetings:** The Group will meet once every month.
5. **Recordkeeping:** Minutes will be recorded at every meeting, including a list of action points, which will be made available via the University's intranet.
6. **Objectives:** The Group will aim to achieve the following:
  - Ensure the successful submission of REF2021.
  - Oversee the design of the Code of Practice and ensure that it is adhered to throughout the process.
  - Ensure that the processes for selecting staff with significant responsibility for research are transparent and abide to the guidelines of the Code of Practice.
  - Ensure that the processes for selecting Outputs and Impact Case Studies are in accordance with REF2021 and abide to the guidelines of the Code of Practice.
  - Ensure that a timeline is defined and adhered to as closely as possible during the lead up to submission.
7. **Group Governance:** The Group will be governed by these Terms of Reference, as approved by the Pro Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Research and agreed upon by the Research Management Committee.

## Appendix 1.3: REF Impact Group Terms of Reference

1. **Definition of the Group:** The Group will be responsible for reviewing and revising the Impact aspects of GCU's REF2021, the selection process and development of impact case studies leading up to submission.
2. **Composition:** The Committee will be chaired by the Director of Research and Innovation and will be comprised of the following members: Research Impact and Knowledge Transfer Officers, Research & REF Manager, Knowledge Transfer Manager, Unit of Assessment Leads (or a delegated representative of the School); representative of Communications and Public Affairs.
3. **Function:** Its role will be limited to an advisory capacity, making recommendations where appropriate for the selection of the most appropriate outputs according to the relative extent of their impact. The Group Chair will report its activities to the REF Management Group.
4. **Meetings:** During the REF2021 submission process the Group will meet once every month.
5. **Recordkeeping:** Actions will be recorded at every meeting, which will be made available via the University's intranet.
6. **Objectives:** The Group will aim to achieve the following:
  - Support the REF2021 submission by advising on the most appropriate outputs in light of the impact they might have made.
  - Provide good practice guidance for case study preparation and resources to assist with finding supporting data.
  - Revise and review impact case studies in order to optimise their narrative.
  - In the longer term, to develop and reflect a strategic approach to promoting and disseminating the research emanating from the University in order to maximise its socioeconomic impact leading up to REF2021.
  - Identify and develop pipelines for propagating GCU research effectively.
  - Enhance the University's research environment by taking a more proactive approach to the promotion of its research.
7. **Group Governance:** The Group will be governed by these Terms of Reference, as approved by the Pro Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Research and the REF Management Group.

## Appendix 1.4: REF Data Management Group Terms of Reference

1. **Definition of the Group:** The Group will be responsible for reviewing and revising the data input for REF2021 ensuring that data accurately reflects the personnel, outputs and environment associated with research within the University.
2. **Composition:** The Committee will be chaired by the Director of Research and Innovation and will be comprised of the following members: Research & REF Manager, Research Information Systems Manager, Resource Librarian (Research), one representative from Finance, People Services, Strategy and Planning, Research Advisors, Graduate School, and Registry.
3. **Function:** Its role will be to advise on all data requirements for REF2021, such as income and PGRS numbers, and to supply the relevant data associated with selecting staff with significant responsibility for research and the most suitable research Outputs as well as defining the status of staff members who may have special circumstances that affect the submission. The data will be accessed from a variety of sources, including the PURE system, HESA data, finance data, School records and other systems not covered by PURE such as Artemis. The Group Chair will report its activities to the REF Management Group.
4. **Meetings:** During the REF2021 submission process the Group will meet once every month unless more or less regular meetings are deemed more appropriate.
5. **Recordkeeping:** Actions will be recorded at every meeting, which will be made available via the University's intranet.
6. **Objectives:** The Group will aim to achieve the following:
  - Support the REF2021 submission by making the most up to date and comprehensive data available to the Unit of Assessment leads and the REF Management Group.
  - Ensure that the data available accurately identifies personnel with significant responsibility for research.
  - Ensure accurate data is held for outputs submitted to Pure.
  - Ensure that open access policy is complied with according to the Guidelines of REF2021.
  - Provide publication data in order to ensure that the Units of Assessment teams are able to recognise and select the most suitable outputs.
  - Ensure that the data is correctly submitted onto the REF2021 system.
7. **Group Governance:** The Group will be governed by these Terms of Reference, as approved by the Pro Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Research and the REF Management Group.

## Appendix 1.5: REF Code of Practice Appeals Committee Terms of Reference and Process

1. The University will put in place a process for informing staff that are not identified as having Significant Responsibility for Research or Research Independence of the reasons behind the decisions.
2. The University will use the following process (see points 3-9 below) to consider in a timely manner appeals made by staff in relation to decisions made in relation to the REF submission.
3. The University REF Appeals Panel will be chaired by the Vice Chancellor (or her nominee who has not been involved in the REF decision making process).
4. The Chair of the REF Appeals Panel will be assisted by appropriate independent members of the University Research Committee and senior academic staff with specific discipline expertise not named in this document as having responsibility for REF selection processes.
5. Decisions on REF selection will be made at least two months before the University REF submission is made.
6. All staff will be informed of these decisions by the member of the REF Management Group responsible for their Unit of Assessment.
7. Staff will be given a two-week period to give notice of their intentions to appeal decisions.
8. In the event of any appeals for the reconsideration of decisions related to selection of staff, the Appeals Panel will be convened and the appeal considered. The Panel shall be provided with all of the evidence that the REF Management Group used in reaching a decision about the individual making the appeal. A decision will be made and communicated to the member of staff making the appeal within 2 weeks of the convening of the Panel.
9. The decision of the Appeals Panel in respect of any appeal concerning selection for the REF submission shall be final.

## Appendix 1.6: REF Equality and Diversity Group Terms of Reference

1. **Definition of the Group:** The REF Equality and Diversity Group shall ensure that the University in developing its submission for REF2021, adheres to the REF guidance in relation to equality and diversity provisions.
2. **Composition:** This group is comprised of the University Equality and Diversity Advisor, a member of the University People Committee and an academic with expertise in the field of Equality Impact Assessment.
3. **Function:** The group shall carry out an advisory role, reporting into the REF Management Group through the chair, a designated member of the University People Committee.
4. **Meetings:** The Group will meet once per month during the REF process.
5. **Recordkeeping:** Minutes will be recorded at every meeting, including a list of action points, which will be made available via the University's intranet.
6. **Objectives:** The Group will aim to achieve the following:
  - Ensure that the actions and decisions made by the University in relation to the submission of REF2021 adheres to the REF guidance on equality and diversity and the University's Code of Practice
  - Support the equality impact assessment of the University's policy and procedures for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence and for selecting outputs for the REF.
  - Make recommendations to the REF Management Group on the development and implementation of the University's Code of Practice.
7. **Group Governance:** The Group will be governed by these Terms of Reference, as approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Enterprise and Vice-Principal and agreed upon by the Research Management Committee.

## Appendix 2: Proposed GCU REF Units of Assessment and associated leads

Unit of assessment	Proposed leads (and assistants)
UoA3: Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy <sup>a</sup>	Professor Martijn Steultjens Dr Lesley Price (assisted by Research Group leads)
UoA 11: Computer Science & Informatics <sup>b</sup>	Professor Huaglory Tianfield (with Professor Gianna Cassidy and Professor Hadi Larjani)
UoA 12: Engineering <sup>b</sup>	Professor Don McGlinchey (with Professor Sheila Smith and Professor Chengke Zhou)
UoA 13: Architecture, Built Environment & Planning <sup>b</sup>	Professor Rohinton Emmanuel (with Professor Agnieszka Klemm and Professor Billy Hare)
UoA 17: Business & Management Studies <sup>c</sup>	Dr Geoff Whittam + 1 (tbc)
UoA 20: Social Work & Social Policy <sup>c</sup>	Professor Stephen Sinclair Professor Stephen Webb
UoA 23: Education <sup>c</sup>	Case currently in progress
UoA 28: History <sup>c</sup>	Professor Oonagh Walsh
UoA 34: Communication, Culture and Media Studies, Library and Information Management <sup>c</sup>	Professor John Cook + 1 (tbc)

### Notes

<sup>a</sup> Coordinating oversight provided by Centre for Living Director and Professor Kay Currie (ADR)

<sup>b</sup> Coordinating oversight provided by Professor Mike Mannion and Professor Ole Pahl (ADR)

<sup>c</sup> Coordinating oversight provided by Professor Simon Teasdale and Professor John Harris (ADR)

Responsibilities and roles of Unit of Assessment Leads shall cease to apply from 31/01/21. However, Leads may be required to contribute to REF2021 audits if requested by the funders.

## Appendix 3:

### Letters indicating agreement of staff representatives



Cam Donaldson  
Vice Principal & Pro Vice Chancellor Research  
Glasgow Caledonian University

#### **Glasgow Caledonian University: Code of Practice for REF2021**

As staff representatives on the Court of Glasgow Caledonian University, we write to confirm that we are in agreement with Glasgow Caledonian University's REF2021 Code of Practice in its current format, and, in particular, that we agree with the processes established to identify Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research.

The opportunity for Court staff representatives to comment upon and endorse the Code of Practice was provided at the University Court meeting in March 2019. We support Court's endorsement and would also like to commend the Code of Practice authors for their engagement efforts with the University community here at Glasgow Caledonian, in particular:

- The all staff email and communication through the University's intranet to signal the consultation period from 15<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, during which any member of staff could raise concerns or suggest modifications.
- The open question-and-answer event held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and attended by 52 delegates.

We are reassured by the University's Equality & Diversity Advisor being a member of GCU's REF Management Group which will ensure the conduct of Equality Impact Assessments of 'policies' within the Code of Practice; these policies being 'identifying staff with significant responsibility for research', 'determining research independence', and 'output selection'.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Morag Ferguson (Elected Representative of Senate on Court)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'M Ferguson'.

Dr Douglas Chalmers (Academic Staff representative on Court)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Douglas Chalmers'.

University for the Common Good

20<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Scottish Funding Council  
Apex 2  
97 Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5HD

Dear Sir/Madam

**Glasgow Caledonian University: Code of Practice for REF2021**

I write to confirm our University's endorsement of our REF2021 Code of Practice in its current format, and, in particular, agreement with the processes established to identify Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research.

In particular, I would commend our REF team for the efforts that they have taken during February and March 2019 to engage with our Court and Senate, but especially their wider engagement efforts as exemplified by:

- The all-staff email and communication through the University's intranet to signal the consultation period for the Code of Practice from 15<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, during which any member of staff could raise concerns or suggest modifications.
- The open question-and-answer event held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and attended by 52 delegates.

I, personally, am reassured by the University's Equality & Diversity Advisor being a member of GCU's REF Management Group and will ensure the conduct of Equality Impact Assessments of 'policies' within the Code of Practice; these policies being 'identifying staff with significant responsibility for research', 'determining research independence', and 'output selection'. Given recent communications around taking account of the effects of equality-related circumstances on researchers' productivity, I also wish to take this opportunity to fully endorse your guidance and, again, am confident of the corresponding processes outlined in our Code of Practice.

Yours faithfully,



**Professor Pamela Gillies CBE, FRSE**  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor

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BSc PGCE MEd MMedSci PhD FRSA FFPH FAcSS Hon FRCPS(Glasg)  
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Glasgow Caledonian University is a registered Scottish charity, number SC021474.

Cam Donaldson  
Vice Principal & Pro Vice Chancellor Research  
Glasgow Caledonian University

**Glasgow Caledonian University: Code of Practice for REF2021**

As representatives of trades unions at Glasgow Caledonian University's, including University and College Union (UCU), EIS, UNISON and UNITE, we confirm the following:

- There has been all staff communication and consultation on the REF2021 Code of Practice, with opportunities for staff to raise concerns or suggest modifications;
- Unions on campus were consulted via the appropriate channels of communication, which led to feedback. The issue was raised at the Joint Consultative Committee in February 2019 and led to Code of Practice amendment;
- Issues related to REF can be raised and discussed with line management and/or union(s), with an Appeals process outlined in the Code of Practice

We hope to be reassured by our continued involvement in REF as it unfolds, particularly in relation to Equality Impact Assessment being performed in relation to 'identifying staff with significant responsibility for research', 'determining research independence', and 'output selection', and done in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely,

**N McKerrell**

Dr Nick McKerrell, Branch Convenor at GCU EIS/University Lecturers' Association



Dr Karen Lorimer, on behalf of GCU UCU

## Appendix 4 Individual Staff Circumstances and disclosure form and REF Data Collection Statements

### Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances template

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

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

#### Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2021
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the above circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form. Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01). Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

### **Ensuring Confidentiality**

As stated in paragraphs 4.3.4 and 4.3.5 of the Code of Practice, information contained on this form shall be evaluated by the Equality and Diversity Advisor to ensure that the individual circumstances disclosed fall within the definitions provided by REF. The Equality and Diversity Advisor shall then formally inform the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research). No other staff shall be allowed access to this information. Decisions on the reduction of the numbers of outputs appropriate to these circumstances shall be taken by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) who will then inform the relevant team for each Unit of Assessment. The member of staff disclosing such individual circumstances shall be formally notified in writing of the decision made.

If the University decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the ['Guidance on submissions'](#) document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

### **Changes in circumstances**

The university recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should contact their HR partner to provide the updated information.

To submit this form you should directly email it to the University Equality and Diversity Advisor.

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

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

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

Yes

No

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

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p><b>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</b></p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>
<p><b>Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2021.</b></p>	<p>Tick here <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</b></p> <p><i>Dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</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><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>
<p><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>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 University Equality and Diversity Advisor and Pro Vice Chancellor of Research.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree

**Name:** Print name here

**Signed:** Sign or initial here

**Date:** Insert date here

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

I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the relevant contact within my department/faculty/centre. (Please note, if you do not give permission your department may be unable to adjust expectations and put in place appropriate support for you).

I would like to be contacted by:

Email  Insert email address

Phone  Insert contact telephone number

# Model REF Data Collection Statements for HEIs

## Model Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021

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

If you are a researcher who has been included as part of our submission to the REF 2021, in 2020 we will send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI for the purpose of the REF2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name and details such as your date of birth, research groups, and contract dates will be provided along with details of your research. If you are submitted with individual circumstances that allow a reduction in the number of outputs submitted, without penalty, some details of your personal circumstances will be provided.

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) in particular publication 2019/01, ‘Guidance on submissions’.

### Sharing information about you

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Publishing information about your part in our submission

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

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, and will be made available online. Published information is likely to include **textual information including impact case studies in which you may be referenced**. Your name and job title may be included in this textual information. Other personal and contractual

details, including your date of birth and all information about individual staff circumstances will be removed. *[Guidance to HEIs: Note that impact case studies, environment statements and other textual information should not normally be submitted with personal information (other than names and job titles), and that usually any personal information (other than names and job titles) should be removed in the redacted version(s) that are submitted. You should include here any further clarifications based on your redaction process.]*

UKRI will also publish a list of the outputs submitted by us in each UOA. This list will not be listed by author name.

### **Data about personal circumstances**

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

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. *[Guidance to HEIs: You should include here confirmation / clarification about how you will be anonymising data on circumstances provided in REF6].* The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

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

### **Accessing your personal data**

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

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

Data Protection Officer  
UK Research and Innovation  
Polaris House  
Swindon, SN2 1FL

Email: [dataprotection@ukri.org](mailto:dataprotection@ukri.org)

**For more information on the Data Protection Policy at GCU, please refer to <https://www.gcu.ac.uk/dataprotection/>**

# Model Data Collection Statement for the REF2021 – Non-Staff

## About the REF

The purpose of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) is to assess the quality of UK research and to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research by the four UK higher education funding bodies. The REF outcomes are used to calculate about £2 billion per year of public funding for universities' research, and affect their international reputations. The results also inform strategic decisions about national research priorities. The next REF will be undertaken in 2021.

The REF was first carried out in 2014, replacing the previous Research Assessment Exercise. It included for the first time an assessment of the broader impact of universities' research beyond academia: on the economy, society, culture, public policy and services, health, the environment and quality of life – within the UK and internationally.

Impact is assessed through the submission of case studies, which describe the changes or benefits brought about by research undertaken by researchers at the institution. Impressive impacts were found across all disciplines, with 44 per cent of submissions judged to be outstanding. A database of case studies submitted in 2014 can be found here: <https://impact.ref.ac.uk/>.

## Data collection

The REF is managed by the REF team, based at Research England (RE), on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies. RE is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and under this arrangement UKRI has the role of 'data controller' for personal data submitted by us to the REF.

You may have provided information for one or more impact case studies or environment statements as part of our submission to the REF 2021. In 2020 we will send information about impact case studies and environment statements to UKRI for the purpose of the REF2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name - and details such as your job title and organisational affiliation - may be provided in these narrative statements. We refer to this information about you as 'your data'.

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) in particular publication 2019/01, 'Guidance on submissions'. Annex G of that document sets out the data that we will be required to share with UKRI.

## Sharing information about you

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

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

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

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

Parts of your data will be passed to the REF expert panels and the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (whose members are independent of UKRI) for the purpose of conducting a systematic evaluation of submissions, in accordance with predetermined criteria and methods. All panel members are bound by confidentiality arrangements.

### **Publishing information about your part in our submission**

The results of the assessment exercise will be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, in December 2021.

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, and will be made available online. Published information is likely to include **textual information including impact case studies in which you may be referenced**. Your name and job title may be included in this textual information. Other personal details will normally be removed. *[Guidance to HEIs: Note that impact case studies, environment statements and other textual information should not normally be submitted with personal information (other than names and job titles), and that usually any personal information (other than names and job titles) should be removed in the redacted version(s) that are submitted. You should include here any further clarifications based on your redaction process.]*

### **Accessing your personal data**

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

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

Data Protection Officer  
UK Research and Innovation  
Polaris House  
Swindon, SN2 1FL

Email: [dataprotection@ukri.org](mailto:dataprotection@ukri.org)

**For more information on the Data Protection Policy at GCU, please refer to <https://www.gcu.ac.uk/dataprotection/>**

## Appendix 5: Proposed timetable leading up to REF2021 Submission

Date/time period	Actions
<b>2018</b>	
Ongoing throughout preparations	REF Management, REF Impact and REF Data Management meetings with outcomes/actions applied as appropriate.
Summer 2018	School and Yunus Centre stocktakes complete
Summer 2018	Guidance issued on Codes of Practice for REF 2021
Sept-Oct 2018	Prepare response to consultation document
October 2018	Agree appointment of Unit of Assessment Leads with Deans and Executive Board
15 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Deadline for response to Guidance consultation document
October 2018 – April 2019	Prepare draft Code of Practice/Equality Impact Assessment for REF Management Group, University Research Committee and Executive Board approval.
October 2018 – May 2019	Liaise with People Services regarding HESA data/staff eligibility for submission.
October 2018-May 2019	Internal scoping of Significant Responsibility for Research, research independence and outputs, working towards initial estimates to be submitted and size of submission for each UoA
<b>2019</b>	
January 2019	Publication of final Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria.
January 2019	Issue draft Code of Practice for approval by REF Management Group, University Research Committee and Executive Board as well as for University-wide consultation, including Senate and Court.
April 2019	Send Code of Practice to funders for feedback.
Spring 2019	Issue Code of Practice to staff once approved.
Spring 2019	Prepare for Mock REF.
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	Deadline for Code of Practice submission.  (intention is to submit as early as possible prior to this date as Code of Practice is not implemented until approved by REF team).
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	Flagging of HESA data for those with ‘Significant Responsibility for Research’.
Summer 2019	Beta versions of submission system (test and live) for institutions to use.
Autumn 2019	Pilot of the REF submission system available (opportunity for HEIs to put themselves forward to be involved in pilot).
Autumn 2019	GCU Mock REF.
October-December 2019	Survey of intentions to submit opens (which UoAs GCU will submit to and overall size of
Autumn 2019	Reduction requests invited – based on GCU selection criteria, prepare request for reductions.
December 2019	Publication of approved Codes of Practice by REF team.
December 2019	Deadline for requests for multiple submissions.
December 2019	Deadline for requests for case studies requiring security clearance.
<b>2020</b>	
Early 2020	Release of submission system and technical guidance.
Early 2020	Invitation to make submission.
Summer 2020	Final flagging of HESA data (including ECRs).
31 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	Census date for staff.
31 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	End of assessment period for research environment, research income data and research doctoral degrees awarded.
27 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Closing date for submissions.
31 <sup>st</sup> December 2020	End of publication period (research outputs and outputs underpinning impact case studies).
<b>2021</b>	Assessment phase and publication of results (Dec 2021).