

Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance

Research Excellence Framework 2021

Code of Practice

Part 1: Introduction

1.1. This Code of Practice details Rose Bruford College's approach to ensuring equality of opportunity for eligible staff for submission to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF 2021). All decisions relating to REF 2021 will conform to the principles outlined within this Code of Practice, to ensure transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity in demonstrating fairness.

1.2. The eligibility criteria for REF 2021, as defined by Research England, are key to this Code of Practice. However, it also builds upon the College's own policies and practices that promote and support equality and diversity within the institution, including our Dignity at Work policy.

1.3. In accordance with the Equality Act, and as part of the College's continuing commitment to inclusion and diversity, the institution treats all members of its community with dignity and respect, irrespective of their protected characteristics in order to enable all to reach their potential.

1.4. The College's Equal Opportunities Policy outlines its commitments noting that:

1.5. 'The College is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment. This policy is intended to assist the College to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.'

1.6. Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment. The College has a separate dignity at work policy, which deals with these issues.

1.7. Associated with the Equal Opportunities Policy, the College has a range of associated policies, many of which have been updated since REF 2014. These include policies relating to: dignity at work; fertility treatment; flexible working; maternity rights; parental leave; and transgender.

1.8. All staff are required to undertake on an annual basis an online training package relating to equality and diversity issues. In recent years, staff development days, to which all staff are required to attend, have included sessions on the public sector equality duty (15 July 2014) mental health (11 July 2016 and 12 September 2016), diversity in the performing arts – with a particular emphasis upon race and ethnicity - (12 September 2017) and disability (11 September 2018).

1.9. Throughout the REF 2021 planning and selection processes the College is aware of the requirement to meet the needs of all of the relevant legislation. The Equality Act 2010 provides legal protection to nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and

maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The College has a legal responsibility to advance equality of opportunity to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination and to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Under the terms of the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment Regulations 2002, the College should not treat less favourably those employed on part-time and fixed-term contracts less favourably than those on comparable full-time contracts. In addition, throughout the REF 2021 planning and selection processes, the College will also be mindful of staff members with caring responsibilities and colleagues who have required to take periods of family leave.

1.10. Throughout the REF 2021 preparatory processes, the following principles of equality and fairness will be implemented consistently:

1.11. Transparency: the College is committed to being transparent and open regarding its REF 2021 decision-making processes. The implementation of the Code of Practice and the communication process associated with this will be the principal means by which this will be achieved.

1.12. Consistency: the Code of Practice will be implemented consistently across the College. The REF Steering Group will ensure that this is undertaken.

1.13. Accountability: the Code of Practice outlines the processes by which decisions are made with regard to REF 2021. Decisions will be made informed by evidence and will be undertaken by staff with relevant expertise and knowledge of the equality legislation.

1.14. Inclusivity: the College promotes an inclusive environment across all of its activities. The implementation of the Code of Practice will allow the College to identify all eligible staff, which includes those who are independent researchers and those with protected characteristics. REF 2021 definitions will inform eligibility for submission.

1.15. The staff and committees participating in all of the processes of decision-making referred to in the Code of Practice are detailed in Appendix A. Where appropriate, the College will employ existing structures and committees for REF-related issues. A REF Steering Group reports as appropriate to the College's Research Committee.

1.16. All staff involved in these processes will be required to undertake tailored training on this Code of Practice. This will be led by the College's Human Resources department. Completion of this training will be mandatory. This is training in addition to the mandatory equal opportunities training that the College requires all of its employees to undertake.

Communication process

1.17. The College's potentially eligible staff are informed of this Code of Practice by the following means:

- by the document being available on the College's intranet;
- the Chair of the College's Research Committee will email all potential Category A eligible staff to inform them of the Code of Practice;
- the document will also be featured in the College Principal's regular email newsletter to all staff;
- all potential Category A eligible staff absent from the College at the time that the Code of Practice is published will receive a print copy delivered to their home address. Human Resources will identify all relevant absent staff and will retain a central record of print copies sent;
- following publication of the Code of Practice, any new academic staff will be sent an email introducing them to the document;
- when asked to nominate outputs for review, all eligible staff will be provided with a link to the Code of Practice.

Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

2.1. The College ensures that all eligible staff who are maintaining a substantial role in undertaking research on an independent basis, and those staff who have less well-developed research profiles are supported and have access to opportunities that facilitate academic progression.

Policies and procedures

2.2. Under REF 2021 criteria, 'Category A eligible' academic staff have a contract of employment of 0.2FTE or greater on the census date (31 July 2020) and have as their principal employment function either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'.

2.3. 'Category A Submitted' staff are defined under REF 2021 criteria as those with significant responsibility for research on the census date for whom 'explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that this is an expectation of their job role.' (*REF Guidance on Submissions*, January 2019, para. 138, p. 34.) The REF guidance also states that staff inclusion in REF2021 should be based on: 'the expectations of staff as a function of employment, and not upon the quality or volume of what has been delivered as a result of that employment function.' (*REF Guidance on Submissions*, January 2019, para. 139, p. 34.)

2.4. As outlined in the *REF Guidance on Submissions*, January 2019, para. 141, p. 34.): staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom:

'a. *'Explicit time and resources are made available'*. Indicators of this could include:

- a specific proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the context of the institution's practices and applied in a consistent way
- research allocation in a workload model or equivalent.

b. *'To engage actively in independent research'*. Indicators of this could include (HEIs are also advised to refer to the indicators of independence, paragraph 132, as additional guidance on this aspect):

- eligibility to apply for research funding as the lead or co-applicant
- access to research leave or sabbaticals
- membership of research centres or institutes within the HEI.

c. *'And that is an expectation of their job role'*. Indicators of this could include:

- current research responsibilities as indicated in, for example, career pathways or stated objectives
- expectations of research by role as indicated in, for example, job descriptions and appraisals.'

2.5. The College will institute a self-selection process whereby all academic staff will be able to advance a case for consideration as staff with significant responsibility for research, informed by the criteria outlined above. Within the context of Rose Bruford College the key criteria used in determining significant responsibility for research will include the following:

a. *'Explicit time and resources are made available.'*

- a specific proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the annual workload model.

b. *To engage actively in independent research.*

- See part 3 below.

c. *'And that is an expectation of their job role.'*

- Reference is made to expected research activities within an individual's job description;
- Research-related outcomes are considered within appraisals.

2.6. It is expected that a proportion of staff who do not meet the criteria for having significant responsibility for conducting independent research will do so with appropriate support and development within the institution, facilitated both at School and central level.

Development of the process

2.7. Formal consultation with staff on the process to define staff with significant responsibility for independent research began in May 2019.

Staff, committees and training

2.8. The identification of staff with significant responsibility for independent research is undertaken at College level by the REF Steering Group, which is chaired by the Vice Principal. This reports directly to the College's Research Committee.

2.9. All REF Steering Group members will receive REF 2021 equality training by October 2020. The training will be delivered under the auspices of the College's Human Resources department with the Vice Principal. The content will include:

- an explanation of why, within the context of REF 2021, equality and diversity are important;
- an outline of the legislative background;
- details of the circumstances in which equality issues can be taken into account when considering individual staff research outputs;
- highlighting to staff where further information about equality and diversity in the REF process can be located;
- unconscious/conscious bias vis-à-vis REF 2021.

Appeals

2.10. The appeals process was first communicated to staff during May 2019.

2.11. Eligible academic staff not identified by the REF Steering Group as having significant responsibility for research will be able to appeal against the decision. Feedback will be given to staff by the REF Steering Group should such a decision be reached.

2.12. Appeals will only be considered in situations where account has not been taken of a staff member's individual circumstances or protected characteristics. Consideration will also be given where a staff member is able to demonstrate that due process as detailed in this Code of Practice has not been applied.

2.13. Appeals will not be considered on the grounds of professional judgement, including the assessment of the quality of the research outputs.

2.14. Appeals must be made in writing, detailing the grounds for appeal. These must be submitted within four weeks of the academic staff member receiving the communication relating to their status. This will not apply in circumstances where an academic staff member has been absent from the College owing to individual circumstances and returns after the four-week period has elapsed. In such circumstances, normally the deadline will apply four weeks after the return to work of the academic staff member.

2.15. The appeal outcome will be communicated to the staff member concerned within four weeks of its submission.

2.16. The appeals process is undertaken by the Principal and Chief Executive and the Head of Human Resources. Both are fully independent of the decisions about identifying staff with significant responsibility for research and will have received the REF 2021 equality training. Any appeals should be directed to the Head of Human Resources

Equality impact assessment

2.17. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted by December 2020. The analysis will consider the characteristics of staff with significant responsibility for

independent research in comparison to characteristics of all academic staff. The EIA will be reported to the College's Research Committee, Equality and Diversity Committee and the Senior Management Committee. The EIA report will outline positive or negative impacts and detail recommended actions.

2.18. The Code of Practice will be reviewed after the Equality Impact Assessment has taken place so as to ensure that any necessary changes identified are implemented prior to the submission deadline. Affected groups will be involved to ensure that the proposed changes are appropriate.

Part 3: Determining research independence

Policies and procedures

3.1. For context, at present the College does not employ any staff on research-only contracts.

3.2. An independent researcher in *The REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions* is defined as: 'an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme'. Research assistants usually conduct programmes of research for other academic staff and so are not eligible to be returned to REF 2021.

3.3. According to *The REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions*, independent research-only staff must 'demonstrate proven research capability to (on a consistent and independent basis) conduct and disseminate original and rigorous research that clearly advances knowledge in their field/sub-field.'

3.4. Should the College employ any research-only staff prior to the census date of 31 July 2020 it will, by 30 June 2020, conduct a formal process to determine the research independence of such staff members.

3.5. All research-only staff on contracts of 0.2FTE or above will be contacted by email and requested to complete a survey in June 2020 in order to report upon their research independence.

3.6. At present, however, the College does not envisage that research-only staff will be employed during the census period.

Staff, committees and training

3.7. Final decisions regarding research independence will be made by the REF Steering Group.

3.8. The survey responses and records of meetings at which decisions were taken regarding research independence will be retained for audit purposes throughout 2021. They will then be deleted.

3.9. All REF Steering Group members will receive REF 2021 equality training by October 2019.

Appeals

3.10. The appeals process was first communicated to staff during May 2019.

3.11. Research-only staff not judged to have met the definition of independent researchers will be able to appeal against the decision. Feedback will be given to staff by the REF Steering Group should such a decision be reached.

3.12. Appeals will only be considered in situations where account has not been taken of a staff member's individual circumstances or protected characteristics. Consideration will also be given where a staff member is able to demonstrate that due process as detailed in this Code of Practice has not been applied.

3.13. Appeals will not be considered on the grounds of professional judgement, including the assessment of the quality of the research outputs.

3.14. Appeals must be made in writing, detailing the grounds for appeal. These must be submitted within four weeks of the academic staff member receiving the communication relating to their status. This will not apply in circumstances where an academic staff member has been absent from the College owing to individual circumstances and returns after the four-week period has elapsed. In such circumstances, normally the deadline will apply four weeks after the return to work of the academic staff member.

3.15. The appeal outcome will be communicated to the staff member concerned within four weeks of its submission.

3.16. The appeals process is undertaken by the Principal and Chief Executive and the Head of Human Resources. Both are fully independent of the decisions about identifying independent research-only staff research and will have received the REF 2021 equality training. Any appeals should be directed to the Head of Human Resources

Equality impact assessment

3.17. An equality impact assessment will be conducted in relation to the process for identifying research-only staff who are independent researchers and eligible to be submitted to REF 2021. The data analysis will consider the characteristics of staff who meet the criteria for research independence compared to those who do not. The EIA will be reported to the College's Research Committee, Equality and Diversity Committee and the Senior Management Committee. The Equality Impact Assessment report will outline positive or negative impacts and detail recommended actions.

3.18. The Code of Practice will be reviewed after the Equality Impact Assessment has taken place so as to ensure that any necessary changes identified are implemented prior to the submission deadline. Affected groups will be involved to ensure that the proposed changes are appropriate.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

Policies and procedures

4.1. As a specialist provider, the College anticipates only submitting to one unit of assessment (33 - Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies). The total number of outputs to be submitted to the unit of assessment must equal 2.5 times the total FTE of the unit's submitted staff. According to the REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions, a minimum of one output per person must be returned and a maximum of five. Consideration will be given to personal circumstances that may have affected an individual's ability to work productively over the REF 2021 census period.

4.2. The College's REF Steering Group will have responsibility for evaluating the quality of the research outputs of the eligible staff in an ongoing, inclusive and consultative manner. This may also include the outputs of former staff employed at the institution during the census period.

4.3. All proposed outputs will be considered by at least one external subject expert. External reviewers will be identified on the basis of having relevant research expertise and esteem in the field. Their work will also include, where necessary, the provision of advice to the REF Steering Group on output eligibility for double-weighting.

4.4. The publication of outputs in journals, conference proceedings, books etc. that demonstrate high levels of rigour vis-à-vis peer review will be considered as a quality indicator. In other cases, members of staff may be required to provide information that can demonstrate the quality of the cited output with regard to the main REF 2021 assessment criteria – originality, significance and rigour.

4.5. In terms of selection of outputs, each member of staff included in the submission will have the output deemed their best quality attached in the first instance. The remainder of the output pool will be distributed to staff who made a significant contribution to an output. Other outputs of diminishing levels of perceived quality will be added until the requisite number of outputs for the unit of assessment is achieved. This process will also take into account the open access status of outputs.

4.6. Attention will be paid to distributing outputs so as to represent as broad a range of constituent staff groups within the unit of assessment as possible. This will be taken into account especially when judging outputs deemed of comparable quality. The outputs selection process will continue into November 2020 and early decisions may change so as to optimise the submission's quality.

Staff, committees and training

4.7. The REF Steering Group, chaired by the Vice Principal, will make recommendations on the output selection and attribution of staff. The ultimate decision relating to the submission is made by the College's Principal and Chief Executive.

4.8. All REF Steering Group members and the Principal and Chief Executive will receive REF 2021 equality training by October 2020~~19~~.

Staff circumstances

4.9. It is recognised that individual staff circumstances may compromise the ability of an academic staff member to work productively over the REF assessment period. Under the auspices of REF 2021 it is possible that staff circumstances can be taken into account and can as consequence lead to the following:

- an individual may be returned without the required minimum of one output;
- at unit of assessment level, the total number of outputs may be reduced where the aggregate consequence of staff circumstances within the unit have adversely affected its pool of potential outputs.

4.10. The equality-related circumstances are as follows:

- i. Qualifying as an early career researcher (with a first appointment as an independent academic meeting the eligibility criteria on or after 1 August 2016).
- ii. Absence from work owing to secondments or career breaks outside the higher education sector.
- iii. Qualifying periods of family leave.
- iv. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs. These include:
 - a. Disability: a physical and/or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on the ability to undertake normal day-to-day activities.
 - b. Ill health, injury or mental health conditions.
 - c. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare.
 - d. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - e. Gender reassignment.
 - f. Other circumstances associated with the protected characteristics.

4.11. Appendix B outlines the permitted reduction in outputs associated with specific circumstances.

Voluntary process of declaring circumstances

4.12. A voluntary process will be implemented in September 2019 whereby staff will be able to declare circumstances in a confidential way via the College's Human Resources Department. The template will contain associated contextual information and will detail how the declaration process will operate. (See Appendix C).

4.13. This process will be communicated to staff by email, the Principal's newsletter and on the College intranet. All staff who are absent from the College at this time will be sent a letter by Human Resources to their home address outlining this process., and indicating that the template will be available to download or complete online should a member of staff wish to declare circumstances.

4.14. Where staff do voluntarily declare circumstances, only the Head of Human Resources will have access to the complete declaration template.

4.15. The Head of Human Resources and the Vice Principal, as Chair of the REF Steering Group, will meet to discuss anonymised information. The way in which each declaration is evaluated will depend on the nature of each case. Where circumstances are clearly defined it is possible that the output reduction tariff can be applied straightforwardly. However, where a combination of circumstances is reported, including exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible to reach an initial conclusion concerning any possible reduction at an individual level.

4.16. Staff can expect to receive an initial acknowledgement that the template submission has been received in the Human Resources Department within five working days. This communication will also detail the process to be followed and the next steps to be taken in the consideration of this information.

4.17. The REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions outlines expectations from Research England that higher education providers will not routinely need to request reductions to the number of outputs required. This expectation is linked to the flexibility provided by an output requirement of an average of 2.5 with a minimum number of one. Since part-time working is factored into the calculation of the total number of outputs required, Research England anticipates that reduction requests on the basis of part-time work hours will also be relatively rare.

4.18. Where staff voluntarily declare circumstances, they will be given the opportunity to discuss this with the Head of Human Resources and also, if they wish, the Vice Principal. The aim of the meeting would be to explain how the information has been evaluated and to discuss the implications of a reduction request, and whether an associated reduction request is to be formally presented to Research England.

4.19. Correspondence will be sent to individual staff who have completed the template detailing the outcome of the internal evaluation. Given the complexity of this process it is not possible to specify a definitive timescale within which individual cases will be fully evaluated.

4.20. Anonymised outcome reports will be reviewed by the REF Steering Group on a monthly basis from October 2019. The preparation of these reports will ensure that the Head of Human Resources and the Vice Principal will reflect on the consistency of their judgements.

4.21. In cases where the outcome of the internal evaluation is that a reduction should apply then the College will submit a formal request to Research England. The deadline for such requests is March 2020.

Equality impact assessment

4.22. In January 2020 an analysis of staff disclosure will take place. This will explore the range of circumstances being disclosed by staff. This may inform the content of this Code of Practice where it can potentially provide further guidance or enhanced clarity. The College will include the comments and findings of this equality impact

assessment in its Staff Circumstances Report to be submitted to Research England in November 2020.

4.23. The College's experiences of supporting staff with circumstances will be reported. An anonymised analysis of the declared circumstances will be included. The report will reflect upon how the declared circumstances informed the decisions regarding requests to reduce the number of outputs at unit level.

4.24. Ahead of the final submission to REF 2021, the distribution of outputs by the characteristics of staff within the pool of outputs will be the subject of an equality impact assessment. The analysis of data will consider the volume of outputs assigned to individual members of staff with an interrogation of all protected characteristics. This process may influence the final selection of outputs (where there is parity of output quality) where the distribution of outputs is orientated towards a particular equality group or groups.

4.25. The Code of Practice will be reviewed after the Equality Impact Assessment has taken place so as to ensure that any necessary changes identified are implemented prior to the submission deadline. Affected groups will be involved to ensure that the proposed changes are appropriate.

4.26. An overarching equality impact assessment will take place for all three elements following submission after REF 2021 – i.e. identifying staff with significant responsibility for independent research, determining whether academic staff are engaged in independent research, and the fair and transparent selection of outputs. This will inform a report to be submitted to Research England in 2021.

Part 5: Appendices

Appendix A – Staff and committees involved in all decision-making processes covered by the Code of Practice

REF Steering Group:

Terms of reference: The Steering Group will be responsible for recommending the College's submission strategy for approving the final submission to the Research Excellence Framework.

The Steering Group's terms of reference are to:

- Interpret the REF Working Methods and Criteria for Assessment and the Guidance on Submissions and any other guidance published in relation to the REF;
- Prepare the College's submission strategy, informed by the published guidance and criteria;
- Oversee communication with staff regarding the REF;
- Recommend the submission prior to final sign-off by the Principal and Chief Executive;
- Promote and monitor ethical practice and ensure that the REF Code of Practice is implemented.

Membership:

Chair (Vice Principal)

Head of School of Design, Management and Technical Arts

Head of School of Performance

One senior members of academic staff of professorial standing

Human Resources representative (by invitation).

Research Administrator

College Research Committee:

Purpose:

To foster the development of a research culture throughout the College, and to promote, review and monitor research projects, opportunities and resources, including the College's special collections, both within the College and collaboratively with external research partners. To advise on matters relating to the learning opportunities of postgraduate research students.

Parent committee:

Academic Board

Reporting to:

Academic Board

Terms of Reference:

- i. To develop actively a research culture in the College;
- ii. To promote, review and monitor research within the College and between the College and other collaborating research partners;
- iii. To develop, review and revise the College's research strategy;
- iv. To monitor the College's preparations for the Research Excellence Framework;
- v. To formulate policy, as appropriate, on matters relating to research activity within the College;
- vi. To identify and disseminate information regarding relevant sources of research funding;
- vii. To advise the Principal and Senior Management Committee on the distribution of research funding within the College;
- viii. To identify staff development issues relating to research and relay these to Staff Development Committee, as appropriate.
- ix. To receive and monitor regular reports on the postgraduate research student application process;
- x. To receive and monitor annual reports on postgraduate research student performance*
- xi. To advise on, and approve applications to external funding bodies, including all research grant applications;
- xii. To gather, disseminate and oversee information relating to research activities within the College;
- xiii. To review and update the College's Code of Practice on Research;
- xiv. To advise on the appointment of Visiting Professorships and Visiting Research Fellows;
- xv. To monitor and assure, on an annual basis, the College's compliance with appropriate national legislation and published good practice, especially the relevant section(s) of the QAA Revised Quality Code for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education in consultation with the Head of Quality;
- xvi. To monitor compliance with the College's Research Ethics Code of Practice to ensure that due regard is paid to ethical issues; throughout all aspects of the research activities undertaken within the College;
- xvii. To oversee the College's special collections of archival resources;
- xviii. To monitor and review the operation of the College's Centres with regard to research;
- xix. To monitor and review the operation of the College's annual Symposium;

*This will comprise a closed item of business to be considered without the presence of the postgraduate research student representative.

Membership:

Ex officio

- Vice Principal (Chair)
- Head of School of Performance
- Head of School of Design, Management and Technical Arts
- Head of Development and Alumni Relations
- College Librarian
- Elected by and from the specified constituency:

- Two members of academic staff from each School
- One postgraduate or research degree student representative

Nominated

- One member of the Governing Body (by correspondence)

Appendix B - The permitted reduction in outputs associated with specific circumstances.

(Extracted from Annex L, 'Reductions for circumstances', REF 2019/01 Guidance on Submissions, pp. 114-6, https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf)

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

Early career researchers

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

Table L1: Early career researchers: Permitted reduction in outputs

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

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks

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

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

| Total months absent between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020 due to a staff member's secondment or career break: | Output pool may be reduced by up to: |
|--|---|
| | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Fewer than 12 calendar months | 0 |
| At least 12 calendar months but less than 28 | 0.5 |
| At least 28 calendar months but less than 46 | 1 |
| 46 calendar months or more | 1.5 |

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

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

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:
- a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
 - b. Additional paternity or adoption leave²², or shared parental leave²³ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.

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

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

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

Combining circumstances

10. Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances that have a defined reduction in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of 1.5

outputs. For each circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.

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

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

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

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

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

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

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

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

Appendix C – Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances

Introduction

This document is being sent to all Category A staff members whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF 2021. (See REF Guidance on Submission, paras. 117-122; https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf). The College has implemented structures by which staff members are able to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may

have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by such circumstances. The purpose of gathering this data is as follows:

- To enable staff who have not been able to produce REF-eligible outputs 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 owing to equality-related circumstances;
 - Circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research owing to equality-related circumstances;
 - Two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances have on an individual's ability to research productively and to adjust expectations in terms of expected production of research outputs.

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an early career researcher;
- Absence from work owing to secondments or career breaks outside the higher education sector;
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave;
- Disability (including chronic conditions);
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions;
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside the standard allowances;
- Caring responsibilities;
- Gender reassignment.

If your ability to research productively during the REF assessment period has been constrained owing to one or more of the circumstances listed above you are asked to complete the form below. Further information can be found in paragraph 160 in the REF Guidance on Submissions - https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf).

Completion of this form is voluntary. It is, however, the only means by which the College will be gathering this information. If you feel that there are relevant circumstances the College needs to be taking into account on this matter completion of this form is the only means by which to do so.

The forms and supporting evidence are requested to be submitted to Human Resources, marked 'Confidential: Individual Staff Circumstances (REF)'

It is acknowledged that there may be declarations for the purposes of REF 2021 that may not be disclosed within the context of an employment relationship of an individual within the College. This information will only be held for the purposes of the REF 2021 exercise and will be confidentially destroyed once the exercise is completed, all audit periods have been completed and the results are published.

If the College decides to apply to the funding bodies to reduce the number of assigned outputs it will need to provide UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, in order to demonstrate that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs.

Please complete the form below to declare any individual staff circumstances and submit with all appropriate evidence to the Head of Human Resources, marked 'Confidential: Individual Staff Circumstances (REF)'.

| | | | |
|---|-----|----|--|
| Name: | | | |
| School | | | |
| Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2020? (Delete as applicable) | Yes | No | |

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

| Circumstance | Time period |
|--|-------------|
| <p>Early career researcher (began career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)</p> <p><i>(Provide date you became an independent researcher.)</i></p> | |
| <p>Career break or secondment outside the higher education sector.</p> <p><i>(Dates and duration in months)</i></p> | |
| <p>Family-related leave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory maternity leave • Statutory adoption leave • Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave, lasting four months or more. <p><i>(For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and duration in months.)</i></p> | |
| <p>Disability (including chronic conditions)</p> <p><i>(To include: nature.name of condition, periods of absence from work and periods at work when unable to</i></p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>research productively. Total duration in months.)</p> | |
| <p>Mental health condition</p> <p><i>(To include: nature.name of condition, periods of absence from work and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.)</i></p> | |
| <p>Ill health or injury</p> <p><i>(To include: nature.name of condition, periods of absence from work and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.)</i></p> | |
| <p>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside standard allowance</p> <p><u><i>(To include: type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods oat work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.)</i></u></p> | |
| <p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p><i>(To include: nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.)</i></p> | |
| <p>Gender reassignment</p> <p><i>(To include: periods of absence from work and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.)</i></p> | |
| <p>Any other exceptional reasons (e.g. bereavement)</p> <p><i>(To include brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.)</i></p> | |

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.

| | |
|---------|--------------------------|
| I agree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------|--------------------------|

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Name | |
| Signature | |
| Date | |

Please tick as appropriate:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| I give my permission for the Head of Human Resources to contact me to discuss my circumstances and my requirements In relation to these. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the Vice Principal. (Please note if you do not give permission it may not be possible to adjust expectations and put in place appropriate support for you.) | <input type="checkbox"/> |