

City, University of London's Code of Practice for REF2021

Section 1: Introduction

This Code of Practice ("Code") sets out City, University of London's ("City") approach to ensuring equality of opportunity for eligible staff for submission to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF 2021).

The Code is based upon the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity, and it is intended to ensure that City meets its responsibilities and obligations to its staff in respect of all equal opportunities legislation current on the submission date for REF 2021 and to demonstrate that it has put in place a fair and transparent process for:

1. The identification of staff with a significant responsibility for research,
2. Determining who is an independent researcher, and
3. The selection of research outputs

The general framework for assessment in REF 2021 and guidance to UK higher education institutions about making submissions are published in the [Guidance on Submissions](#), with the assessment criteria and working methods of the main and sub-panels detailed in the [Panel criteria and working methods](#)¹.

1.1 The development of this Code of Practice

The Code of Practice was drafted by City's Research & Enterprise Office between (February-April 2019) for the REF Strategy Group where it was reviewed twice. It then went onward for consideration by: School Research & Enterprise Committees and School Executive Committees, University Research & Enterprise Committee; REF Strategy Group; the Executive Team; Senate; Equality Committee; and finally, the Executive Committee, the senior management body advising the President. UCU as the recognised trade union for Academic Staff has been consulted on the draft Code before the President approved it.

The starting point for writing this Code was City's Code of Practice for REF 2014, which enabled City to make a successful submission. We also incorporated lessons from the Equality Impact Assessment we carried out post-REF2014, the new institutional strategy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), as well as the key changes since REF 2014 most notably that the REF submission requires that all staff with significant responsibility for research be included.

We are encouraged by Research England to use a draft version of the Code of Practice in our REF Rehearsal before a final version is submitted to them. As such, we encouraged Schools to use this draft Code of Practice for the 2019 REF Rehearsal / Annual Research Quality Monitoring Exercise.

The deadline for submitting Codes of Practice to Research England is 7th June 2019. The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) will then examine the Codes and advise Research England on their adherence to the guidance, prior to approval and publication. If it

does not meet with Research England's approval then it will need to be revised and resubmitted. The revised version will be considered through the same internal committees and re-endorsed by the President before resubmission to Research England.

1.2 City's policies and strategies that promote and support equality, diversity and inclusion.

City is committed to creating a strong, global and sustainable student body and workforce. 'Diverse & Inclusive' is one of the five values shared at City and which underpins the institutional Vision & Strategy 2026. As a result, EDI is promoted in its policies, processes, and organizational change activities.

We promote equality and diversity, irrespective of any protected characteristic, working pattern, family circumstance, socio-economic background, political belief or other irrelevant distinction. Where relevant to the policy, decision-making panels will ensure a reasonable gender balance (with at least one man and one woman) and will actively consider representation of other protected groups.

This Code is consistent with and is underpinned by the institutional strategy and policy that promotes and supports EDI at City. Like the REF Code, the EDI policy, as well as City's Staff Harassment and Dignity at Work Guidelines, assists City in delivering the commitment to equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion, and to minimise instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination.

The institutional policies have the weight of the President, Senate, and School Deans behind them, which provides greater assurance of the institution honouring its commitments set out below.

1.3 An update on any relevant actions taken since REF 2014.

As part of its commitment to equality and diversity, City submitted an Athena SWAN application and was successful in achieving a Bronze award in November 2016. Gaining this award is a powerful statement about the commitment to gender equality and the commitment to advance equality and diversity for all staff and students. The Athena SWAN Charter provides a framework on which to build on current good practice and some positive changes have already been realised.

City has commenced work on an action plan led by the Athena SWAN Implementation Group (ASIG). The ASIG regularly report on progress against plan to the University Equality Committee, as well as University Executive Committee. All five academic Schools of City are on their own Athena SWAN journeys, and the School of Health Sciences was the first School to receive a Bronze award in November 2017.

In addition to the ongoing Athena SWAN activity, each School has an Equality and Diversity Lead, who reports to the Equality Committee. The Equality and Diversity Leads are responsible for leading and promoting activities that create a diverse and inclusive culture in the Schools. In particular, School Leads work with the School Executive

Committees to ensure that equality and diversity considerations are appropriately considered in decision-making processes, including promotions panels.

Good progress is being made across the Athena SWAN action plan, including against the two Performance Indicators (PIs).

PI 1. Moving towards equal numbers of men and women in senior roles:

- The proportion (of base population) of academic Professorial staff will be ~30% women by 2020/21
- Maintaining the proportion (of base population) of Grade 9 Professional Services staff at ~50% women by 2020/21

PI 2. Moving towards equal numbers of men and women on management committees:

- We expect diverse membership on senior internal committees, with a minimum of 30% women and 30% men on each. Currently, 24.8% of City's professors are women, and 43.6% of Grade 9 staff are women. 93.3% of executive/ institutional committees have at least 30% women members.

A number of new policies have been introduced in relation to EDI, these include: a Trans, Intersex and Gender Non-Conforming Staff and Student policy, a new Flexible Working policy and an enhanced Maternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave provision. In addition to the enhanced family leave provisions, we are also implementing a new entitlement for our research excellent staff. Staff whose academic contribution indicates a trajectory of producing internationally excellent and world-leading research outputs will be offered the opportunity of taking an additional period of leave for one term (or equivalent) in order to focus on research.

We have also implemented a range of staff development and leadership development programmes, which include; dignity and respect in the workplace, inclusive leadership (which incorporates unconscious bias training), future leaders programme, and the Advance HE Aurora leadership development programme. Since 2014, the majority of academic and professional staff with line management responsibility within their roles have now taken inclusive leadership training. The number of people who have taken part in Dignity at Work from the beginning of 2014 is 537 while 67 staff have attended the Aurora leadership development programme.

In 2018, City appointed a new Vice-President (Strategy & Planning) with Equality & Diversity as a significant element of that role. The new post holder brings extensive experience in the development of EDI policy and the implementation of EDI initiatives.

Annually we publish data under the Public Sector Equality Duty, which consider staff and student data for age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, and gender pay gap. This year we will be publishing our fourth equal pay audit and refreshing our EDI strategy, which will shape the vision and key EDI priorities for the coming years. City will also be embarking on the Race Equality Charter self-assessment and application process with plans to submit for an award in 2021.

1.4 The legislative context

Throughout all stages of the planning and selection processes of REF 2021, City must meet key legislative requirements. 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.

In each of these areas City has a legal responsibility to advance equality of opportunity, to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not. In addition, pursuant to the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 and the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, City should not treat those employed on fixed-term contracts and those staff working part-time less favourably than a comparable permanent full-time employee.

1.5 City's Code of Practice is underpinned by the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity

As it prepares for REF2021 City's preparations will be characterized at all stages by the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability, and inclusivity.

Transparency: The criteria and processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence, and selecting outputs for inclusion in REF submissions are set out below and will be used across the institution. The Code will be circulated to all staff in scope of the REF and decisions relating individual inclusion or exclusion will be communicated to staff with support and courtesy.

Consistency: The Code of Practice is applicable to all 'Category A Eligible' staff (as defined below in section 1.6: Definitions) and will be applied consistently across all Units of Assessment ("UOAs") for which City makes a submission. Consistency of application will be ensured by the central co-ordinating REF Strategy Group which comprises senior representatives from all Schools to agree decisions and lead implementation back in their respective academic structures. This work will be supported by colleagues in HR.

Accountability: this Code of Practice describes in detail the roles and responsibilities of individuals and committees involved in i) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, ii) determining research independence and iii) selecting outputs, are clearly set out below. Decisions will be based on evidence, will be in line with this Code of Practice, and will be made by academic managers with relevant knowledge and expertise and who have had training in equality legislation.

Inclusivity: The processes described in the Code promote an inclusive environment, enabling City to identify all staff who have significant responsibility for research, all staff who are independent researchers, and the excellent research produced by staff across all protected groups. It also ensures equality and diversity are promoted in the REF preparation processes in order to comply with legislation and to avoid discrimination.

1.6 Definitions

This section makes clear to staff what the definitions are according to the REF2021 Guidance:

Research

- a. For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.

- b. It includes 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.

- c. It includes research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports.

Significant Responsibility for Research:

Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom:

- a. 'Explicit time and resources are made available'.
- b. 'To engage actively in independent research'.
- c. 'And that is an expectation of their job role'.

Independent Researcher

For the purposes of the REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out research under another individual's research programme. Research Assistants are excluded if they are assisting with another individual's research programme.

REF Census date for staff

The census date for staff (REF1 submission category) in REF 2021 is **31st July 2020**.

Former staff

Outputs in the submitted output pool may be attributed to former staff who were previously employed as Category A eligible in the assessment period from 1st August 2013 to 31st July 2020. Only outputs that first entered the public domain and which comply with REF2021 open access requirements, where required, while they were employed at City are eligible.

Category A eligible staff

Category A eligible staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date, whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'. Staff should have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit. Staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher.

Category A submitted staff

Category A submitted staff are defined as Category A eligible staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date (31st July 2019).

Early Career Researcher (ECR)

ECRs 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 1st 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 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas; and
- b. they first met the definition of an independent researcher.

1.7 How the Code of Practice is communicated to staff across the institution

Once approved by the President, the Code of Practice will be:

- Available on the City's staff intranet
- Disseminated to all academic and research staff using the standard dissemination routes – by email from the School Deans or Heads of Department.
- Presented by Associate Deans of Research or UOA Leaders at School Executive Committees, academic department meetings, and meetings of School Research Committees.

Steps will be taken to identify eligible staff who are absent from the University for an extended period, for example on sabbatical, secondment or on maternity/family-related leave, and to communicate the information on requirements and processes for considering inclusion to them. This will be achieved via HR who retain personal contact details or with Heads of Department who know the keep-in-touch arrangements for staff who are on long-term leave from the institution.

New members of academic staff who join City after the Code has been published will be sent an introductory email introducing it and including a link to the City's REF website and contact details for the UOA Leaders.

1.8 EDI Training and guidance for staff and committees

The staff and committees involved in all decision-making processes covered by this Code of Practice are detailed in Appendix A. City will draw upon existing structures, together with REF-specific committees and individuals with senior-level responsibility for REF matters. All of the decision-making bodies comprise staff who have appropriate knowledge and experience, and committees are permitted to exercise their professional judgement in choosing to seek advice from others, both internal and external to City.

Staff who are involved in the identification of staff with significant responsibility for research (or discussions with staff over their academic role type), determining who is an independent researcher, and the selection of research outputs will receive tailored guidance and training on equality and diversity principles and how these relate to the selection of staff for the REF.

The objectives of the guidance and training are to ensure that staff have:

- A clear awareness of the legislative context and REF2021 guidance;
- An understanding of relevant institutional policies for equality and diversity and the REF; and
- Confidence in their ability to make fair and transparent decisions and know where to seek additional support and advice as necessary.
- Understand the concepts of conscious and unconscious bias and how these can play out in any decision-making around REF 2021
- How to create a culture and process in which individuals are able, but not compelled, to disclose circumstances that may entitle them to a reduction in research outputs.

Training workshops on Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and the REF2021 will be provided to those involved in REF2021 decision making at City and these will take place between October – December 2019. This is led by HR and the Research & Enterprise Office and provided in classroom format, with Q&A sessions. Completion of the training is mandatory for all members of the groups detailed in Appendix A and is monitored by HR.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training workshops for those involved in REF planning and decision making will take place October – December 2019. Attendees will include Heads of Department, UOA Leaders, and members of the REF Panels listed in Appendix.

Section 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

Staff groups eligible for submission to REF 2021 are described in Part 3 of the [Guidance on Submissions](#). School REF Teams (In two Schools assisted by UOA/Department Teams) are responsible for ensuring that all REF-eligible staff within their unit are considered for submission to REF 2021.

2.1 Academic Role Types at City, University of London

In 2014, City introduced two academic role types – ‘Education’ and ‘Education & Research’. The role profiles for each career level under these types (e.g., role profile for Lecturer, role profile for Senior Lecturer) link to clear career paths and opportunities for academic promotion. The profiles, supported by an agreed set of illustrative performance metrics, set out broad expectations for all members of academic staff, irrespective of the particular nature of their academic activity.

For existing academic staff the process starts with the Head of Department discussing the role type with the individual member of staff. This discussion is informed by criteria and indicators for Research as well as those related to Education. This discussion provides an opportunity for both parties to clarify expectations. Following the discussion with the Head of Department, individuals receive a letter from HR, together with a copy of the relevant role profile (e.g., Senior Lecturer holding a role type of Education & Research).

Staff who joined since 2014 were appointed to a specified role type and role profile. These are determined when the post is established and/or approval to recruit to a vacant academic post is given.

Staff can change role types over the course of their career. City is currently in the process of agreeing the details for moving from one role type to another.

2.2 Category A Eligible

In REF2021 Guidance ‘Category A Eligible’ describes staff meeting the core eligibility criteria who will form the total pool of eligible staff. These are academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of City on the census date (31st July 2020), and whose primary employment function is to undertake either ‘research-only’ or ‘teaching and research’. For staff on ‘research-only’ contracts, the eligible pool should only include those who are independent researchers (Section 3 below).

In line with the [Guidance on Submissions](#), teaching specialists are ineligible for REF. Such staff at City are employed on ‘Education’ contracts, and are employed specifically to provide education.

2.3 Category A Submitted

‘Category A Submitted’ describes ‘Category A Eligible’ staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date (31st July 2020), and therefore must be submitted to REF 2021. This differs from REF 2014 wherein institutions were free to select which eligible staff to submit. Staff with significant responsibility for research are defined by the funding bodies as those “*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”.

The funding bodies recognise that in many institutions the core eligibility criteria set out in 2.1 above will accurately identify staff with significant responsibility for research, and in which case 100 per cent of ‘Category A Eligible’ staff should be submitted. City considers that, as a research intensive institution, the core eligibility criteria accurately identifies all staff with a significant responsibility for research. The ‘Education & Research’ academic role type clearly identifies the undertaking of high quality and independent research as a core criterion for staff at all grades from Lecturer through to Professor. As such, City will submit 100 per cent of ‘Category A Eligible’ staff holding an Education & Research role type.

Section 3: Determining researcher independence

The REF2021 Guidance states that staff on 'research-only' contracts must be independent researchers to meet the definition of 'Category A Eligible'. Provided that they meet the other core eligibility criteria (see Section 2 above as well as Section 1, Definitions), then all independent researchers must be submitted to REF 2021.

For the purposes of the REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out research under another individual's research programme. Research assistants are excluded if they are assisting with another individual's research programme.

3.1 Research Assistants

The REF2021 'Guidance on Submissions' defines 'research assistants' as academic staff whose primary employment function is 'research-only', and are employed to carry out another individual's research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right. They are usually funded from research grants or contracts, but they may also be funded internally. Research Assistants are not eligible to be returned to the REF unless exceptionally they meet both the definition of an independent researcher and the core eligibility criteria on the census date.

At City, staff who fit this REF2021 definition of a 'research assistant' may have other job titles such as Research Officer, Research Associate and Research Fellow. Whilst these job titles may reflect the skill level required, salary grading or years of service, it is not necessarily a direct indicator of research independence. However, for research-only staff on Grade 6 and below, City's Grade Profiles are clear that staff at these grades are not expected to be independent researchers and most likely meet the definition of a research assistant.

3.2 Independent researchers

An independent researcher is defined in paragraphs 131-133 of the '[Guidance on Submissions](#)' as **"an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme"**. The funding bodies have provided several possible indicators of research independence, which City has used as the basis for the criteria below. It is important to note that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence, and where appropriate several factors may need to be considered.

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

3.3 Criteria for determining research independence

An evaluation of research independence will be conducted for all staff on "research only" contracts. However there is an assumption that research-only staff are not independent researchers but the door is open for them to make the case. Indicators used for determining staff who meet the definition of an independent researcher include one or more of the following:

- They are leading or acting as principal investigator on an externally funded research project.
- Recruited to an internally-funded fellowship where independent research is a requirement of the role.
- They are holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship or funding where research independence is a requirement.
- Leading a discrete and substantial work package of a large externally funded research project, which is equivalent to a principal investigator role on a responsive mode grant or fellowship

The indicators above are not intended to be exhaustive, but should provide an illustration to help inform decision making. Staff meeting only one of the indicators may still be deemed as not carrying out independent research. However, if a researcher meets two or more of indicators then they would meet the definition of independent researcher.

UOA Leaders and academic managers involved in subjects falling under REF Main Panels C and D (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) also consider that the following attributes may generally indicate research independence in their disciplines, although the core criteria of undertaking self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme, still applies:

- Being named as a co-investigator or researcher co-investigator on an externally funded research project.
- Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.

The work that is being submitted to REF has to be the work of staff who are independent researchers so PhD students would not be eligible. However, there are exceptions if the staff member is a current PhD student but they meet the definition of independent researcher as per the criteria outlined above. Staff who are reading for a PhD are given time to do independent research.

Under the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002, an employee on a fixed-term contract has the right not to be treated by his or her employer less favourably than the employer treats a comparable permanent employee. Therefore, determination of research independence should be made irrespective of an individual's fixed-term contractual status.

Table 1: Determining researcher independence – worked examples

Example 1: I'm not a principal investigator on a research grant, although I am responsible for the intellectual leadership of a large work package on a multi-institution social science programme sponsored by the European Commissions.

Decision: this staff member is an independent researcher as they are leading a discrete and substantial work package of a large externally funded research project.

Example 2: I am employed on someone else's research grant. I undertake my research tasks independently, but following the programme of the project lead, reporting my findings to them.

Decision: this individual is a research assistant and not an independent researcher. They are employed to carry out someone else's research programme.

Example 3: I am employed on someone else's research grant but prior to this job, in 2015-17 I held a two year fellowship at another university where I was expected to lead my own research.

Decision: this individual is a research assistant and not an independent researcher. The decision of independence is taken on the REF census date (31st July 2020) not based on the expectation in previous employment contracts.

Example 4: I contribute to research projects by collecting data and independently interpreting it by applying existing models to answer questions provided by funders.

Decision: this individual is not an independent researcher as the work undertaken does not meet the REF definition of research.

Example 5: I am a research assistant but carry out my own research in my spare time which I have published. Can I be included in the institution's REF 2021 submission?

Decision: This individual is not eligible for inclusion as carrying out independent research is not an expectation of their employment.

3.4 Procedure for determining research independence

The following procedures have been developed to ensure that the research independence of 'research-only' staff is fairly and transparently determined, and must be used by all UOAs. In recognition that the independence status of staff may change over time and because of staff turn-over due to the fixed-term contract status of many research-only staff, this process will be undertaken twice, once in 2019 and then in 2020.

For research-only staff on Grade 6 and below, City's Grade Profiles are clear that staff at these grades are not expected to be independent researchers and most likely meet the definition of a research assistant. The research independence of these staff will therefore not be routinely considered. Staff at these grades who feel that, exceptionally, they meet both the definition of an independent researcher and the core eligibility criteria, can provide evidence together with a request that their independence be considered by their UOA. Clear timescales and procedures for making these requests will be provided to enable them to do so.

Research-only staff on Grade 7 and above: City's Grade Profiles are clear that this is the career grade equivalent to academic staff. Staff employed on these grades would be expected to have the knowledge and skills to produce high quality research outputs as a main author and winning external funding to support independent research is an expectation of their job

role. However, it is recognised that not all research-only staff at this grade will meet the definition of an independent researcher as defined by the funding bodies for the purposes of the REF. The research independence of all 'research-only' staff at grade 7 and above will therefore be systematically determined by their unit.

Communication: before each review period, the centrally-based REF Team will communicate the process and timescales to all 'research-only' staff.

Grade 6 and below: staff at these grades who feel that, exceptionally, they meet both the definition of an independent researcher and the core eligibility criteria, can request that their independence be considered by their unit. They will need to complete a standard template and provide evidence detailing the case for researcher independence.

Review of independence led by the Schools: City considers that decisions on research independence are best made by the School where the researcher is deployed and that this review is best led by the School REF Team who understand the context of the discipline. The Research & Enterprise Office will provide them with a list of all 'research-only' staff within their UOA, and they will consistently apply the criteria in section 3.3 to all listed staff at Grade 7 and above, and to staff at other grades that have submitted a case for researcher independence requesting to be considered.

Oversight of researcher independence decisions: after each review period, the School REF Team submit their decisions to the Secretary of City's REF Strategy Group. This group will scrutinise the application of the process used by each unit to ensure consistency of interpretation, and will also consider an EIA undertaken on the decisions (see Section 6 below). They will approve the recommended decisions where this Code of Practice has been adhered to. If the REF Strategy Group is not satisfied then they will declare the decisions void. The relevant UOA Leader will be asked to work with the School Associate Dean for Research and the Chair of the REF Strategy Group (Vice-President for Research & Enterprise) to apply the process and criteria as described above.

Outcome and communication to researcher: following approval from the REF Strategy Group, units will notify staff of the decision on their research independence within the timescales set out below. They will be further notified if their status is deemed to have changed in subsequent reviews. This notification will include a rationale for the decision in accordance with the established criteria. Individuals will also be informed of their right to appeal the decision, as outlined in 3.5 below.

Decisions on independence will also be recorded in our HR system for the HESA return.

Appeals against decisions about researcher independence: staff can appeal the decision of their School REF Team where this Code of Practice has not been followed, as outlined below.

3.5 Appeals

Following each review of researcher independence staff can appeal the decision of their School REF Team.

3.5.1 Eligible grounds for appeal

The appeals process documented here relates to a discrete procedure pertaining solely to the determination of research independence for REF 2021. The potential grounds for appeal under this procedure are limited to the following:

1. The individual can evidence that the criteria for determining research independence have not been appropriately applied. Staff for example cannot appeal against the amount of time they are allocated for research in the workload allocation model. For the avoidance of doubt, individuals can appeal both against and for being deemed to be an independent researcher.
2. The UOA has not adhered to the procedures detailed in this Code of Practice with relation to determining research independence.

3.5.2 Appeals process

1. Staff members wishing to make an appeal under points (1) or (2) in Section 3.5.1 should complete the online form available at <https://staffhub.city.ac.uk/research/research-and-enterprise-information/research-excellence-framework> in advance of the deadline for the relevant appeals period, as outlined in the timetable for determining researcher independence in section 3.7 below. This form requires a rationale for the appeal in accordance with the established criteria, and a copy of the individual's current CV. For Academic Staff this will be the Standard Academic CV.
2. The appeal will be reviewed by the dedicated REF Appeals Panel (as set out in Appendix A) within one month of the appeals deadline. All appeals will be considered in advance of the final submission. It is expected that most matters will be considered by written representation, although an appeal can be heard in person if preferred by the individual. In such cases the individual may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. The panel will review the appeal, alongside standard information provided by Research & Enterprise Office (such as a list of current grants and fellowships held by each individual) and the School REF Team original rationale for the decision. The panel will come to an agreed decision on the research independence of the staff member. The decision of the REF Appeals Panel is final.
3. The outcome of the appeals process will be communicated to the staff member and the relevant UOA Leader by the Research & Enterprise Office staff as soon as possible following the panel meeting, and certainly by the start of the next review period (or final submission in the case of the final appeals period).

3.6 Note on School REF Teams

In three Schools, Cass Business School, The School of Health Sciences and City Law School there is one REF Team In the other two Schools - the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) and the School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering

(SMCSE) – some activities of the School REF Team are devolved to departmental / UOA REF Teams. More information on School REF Teams is given in Appendix A.

3.7 Timescales for determining research independence

Pre-planning stage: Schools carry out the Annual Research Quality Monitoring Exercise	Late 2019 Initial Review of Researcher Independence	Final Review of Researcher Independence
School REF Teams determine initial staff pool and identify potential independent researchers from current HR staff list.	<p>August 2019: School REF Teams determine the interim eligible staff pool and identify independent researchers</p> <p>December 2019: EIA undertaken. REF Strategy Group meets to review the processes to arrive at decisions alongside EIA</p> <p>March 2020: Units inform staff of decisions by 15th March. Deadline for appeals is 10th April.</p> <p>April/May 2020: REF Appeals Panel considers appeals by the end of April.</p>	<p>August-September 2020: School REF Teams determine the final eligible staff pool and identify independent researchers. REF Manager informed researchers about the final decision in September. The deadline for appeals was extended by the second week of October.</p> <p>October 2020: The REF Appeals Panel considers appeals during third first week in October.</p> <p>November 2020: The REF Strategy Group meets to review the processes used to arrive at decisions alongside the final EIA in November.</p>

REF Manager informed researchers about the final decision in September. The deadline for appeals was extended by the second week of October. The REF Appeals Panel will take place in October as planned. The REF Strategy Group meets to review the processes used to arrive at decisions, alongside the EIA done on the final selection of independent researchers in November.

Section 4. Selection of research outputs

REF Submissions must include a set number of items of research output, equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for submission. This set number of outputs must comprise of a minimum of one output attributed to each staff member returned, and no more than five attributed to any staff member (including former staff).

This number will be adjusted, as appropriate, to take account of successful requests for staff circumstances as follows: a unit reduction - a reduction in the number of outputs needed to be submitted by the UOA, and/or the removal of the requirement of the minimum of one output from each staff member is being.

The submitted research outputs must, as defined by the Guidance on submissions, comply with open access policy where appropriate. The compliancy of research outputs with the open access policy is monitored and evaluated by the institutional repository team. Robust and documented processes are in place to ensure correct and consistent identification of outputs in scope of the open access policy and eligibility and compliancy of the selected research outputs with the policy.

4.1 The University's expectations to generate research outputs

City's expectations on staff to produce high quality peer-reviewed publications are clearly stated in the 'Teaching and Research' role type. This is that staff publish regularly, and this is reviewed at appraisal using a rolling four-year period for high quality publication or output (in the form of peer reviewed articles, performances, portfolios etc. as appropriate to the discipline) that is judged through peer review as being internationally excellent or better in terms of originality, significance and rigour. Where appropriate, a substantive monograph or equivalent large-scale work may be double weighted. The translation of the role type expectations into defined objectives for outputs is undertaken by the senior management teams in Schools and academic departments.

City appreciates that there are many reasons why an excellent researcher may contribute fewer or more outputs to the pool available for selection than the average during the REF publication period. It therefore does not expect that staff members make a uniform contribution of research outputs to the output pool. Further, City does not expect or require staff to be submitted with the same number of outputs attributed to them. The output selection process, as described in Section 4.4: Selecting outputs for submissions, is designed to fairly and transparently select the strongest outputs available, regardless of attribution, within the limits of between one and five outputs per person.

No individual member of staff is disadvantaged as a result of having their work not included in City's REF 2021 submission. The same applies to staff whose work is submitted in fewer numbers than others. All academic staff, whether or not included in the REF 2021 submission, benefit from the same conditions of service and are equally entitled to apply for such things as promotion, study leave and conference funding. Inclusion in City's REF 2021 submission will not be used to inform the results of such applications.

For the avoidance of doubt data from the institution's Annual Research Quality Monitoring Exercise may be linked to appraisals but REF inclusion is not linked to appraisals.

4.2. Measures to support staff with equality-related circumstances

Submission of a pool of outputs rather than a fixed number per person is intended to provide increased flexibility in selecting outputs for submission. However, as a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, the funding bodies have put in place additional measures to recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances may have on research productivity:

1. Ensure that institutions recognise the effect circumstances can have upon individual researcher productivity, and reflect these in their expectations of individual staff contribution to the research output pool.
2. Enable the 'minimum of one output' requirement to be removed where exceptional circumstances have prevented staff from producing an eligible output.
3. Allow units to request a reduction in the total number of outputs required for submission where the cumulative effect of equality-related circumstances has had a disproportionate effect on the available output pool.

4.2.1 Eligible circumstances

The funding bodies have identified the following equality-related circumstances that, in isolation or together, may significantly constrain the ability of eligible staff to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. Further details are provided in Annex L of the [Guidance on Submissions](#). Many of these are the same as in REF2014.

Eligible circumstances	Details
Qualifying as an early career researcher (ECR)	Category A eligible staff who started their research careers as independent researcher on or after 1st August 2016.
Secondments or career breaks	Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside of the HE sector that lasted at least 12 months.
Family-related leave	Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1st January 2014 to 31st July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave. Additional paternity or adoption leave, or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more, taken substantially between 1st January 2014 to 31st July 2020.
Junior clinical academics	Clinically qualified academics still completing clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or equivalent prior to 31st July 2020.

Circumstances equivalent to absence

Usually require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, including:

- Disability
- Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or child care that fall outside of, or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to, the allowances made above,
- Other caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment
- Other circumstances relating to the characteristics protected by employment legislation.

4.2.2 Criteria for removing the 'minimum of one' requirement

All 'Category A Submitted' staff must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the submission, including staff with equality-related circumstances. However, where an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period, **so that they have been unable to produce an eligible output**, a request may be made for the 'minimum of one' requirement to be removed. Where the request is accepted, an individual may be returned with no outputs attributed to them in the submission, and the total outputs required by the unit will be reduced by one. Paragraphs 179-180 of the [Guidance on Submissions](#) detail the applicable circumstances, which are summarised below:

- An overall period of 46 months or more absence from research, or circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research, within the period 1st January 2014 to 31st July 2020, due to one of more of the circumstances set out in section 4.2.1 above.
- Two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.

Where the above does not apply, but the individual's circumstances are deemed to have resulted in a similar impact (including where there are a combination of circumstances that would not individually meet the thresholds set out), a request may still be made.

4.2.3 Process for disclosure and review of equality-related circumstances

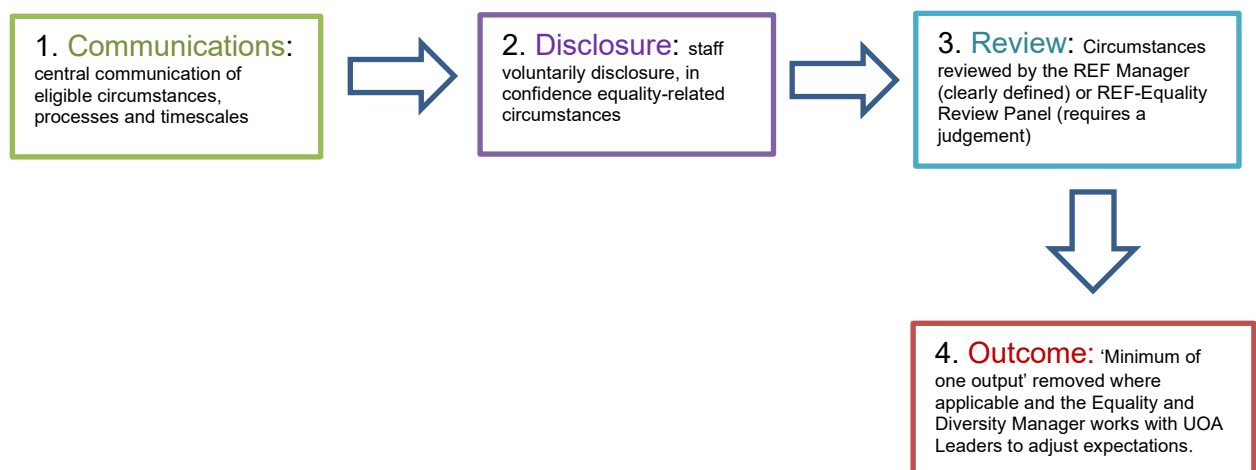
City agrees with the funding bodies' view that individual staff are best placed to consider whether circumstances have affected their productivity over the REF assessment period, and that they should not feel under any pressure to declare their circumstances where they do not wish to do so.

City has put in place a supportive process to enable staff to declare voluntarily their equality-related circumstances and to recognise the effect of those circumstances on their ability to contribute to the output pool at the same rate as other staff.

To enable individuals to disclose circumstances in confidence, the process will be administered centrally, ensuring that decisions are consistent, transparent and robust, and taken by specifically-trained staff with relevant knowledge, expertise and awareness of equality legislation.

Further, Faculties, Departments, Schools and UOAs must not put in place any separate policies, data collection processes, or in any other way encourage or pressure staff into declaring circumstances. This will be a key part of the equality and diversity training provided to them. If a staff member feels that they have been put under undue pressure to disclose a circumstance, then they should discuss this confidentially with the Equality and Diversity Manager in the first instance.

Diagram 1: Equality-related circumstance – simplified process



The procedure for declaring equality-related circumstances is:

1. Communication: the Chair of the REF Strategy Group will write to all potential eligible staff detailing the equality-related circumstances, process for disclosure, and relevant timescales. It will be made very clear that staff are not required to provide this information where they do not wish to do so.

2. Self-disclosure: individual staff voluntarily disclose, in confidence, any equality-related circumstances that they feel have constrained their ability to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period, and/or has exceptionally resulted in them not being able to produce an eligible output. Staff who wish to disclose circumstances and are willing to provide the associated information should complete the online form available at: <https://staffhub.city.ac.uk/research> and submit it before one of the three deadlines of 30th June 2019, 30th October 2019 or 17th January 2020. The individual will be asked for details about which circumstances apply, and where a judgement is required, a brief statement describing how the circumstances have affected their productivity or ability to produce an eligible output in the period. The information provided must be based on verifiable evidence (although, for the avoidance of doubt, the REF and City typically will accept individuals' self-descriptions of their circumstances). However, Occupational Health services will be

consulted where necessary. To ensure that processes are applied equally to all applicable circumstances, City will only consider circumstances that have been voluntarily disclosed by the staff concerned via this route. It will not take into consideration any other data, whether held centrally or locally, or any data provided by units on the behalf of researchers.

Outcomes:

a. In all cases, the REF Manager will inform the Equality and Diversity Manager that a self-disclosure of equality-related circumstances has been made and reviewed. They will be provided with the nature of the circumstances, the approved unit reduction, and whether a request to remove the 'minimum of one' requirement has been approved.

b. *Recognising the effect of circumstances:* in all cases, the Equality and Diversity Manager will work with the individual and their Head of Department to set a realistic expectation of their contribution to the overall output pool, bearing in mind that City's published expectation of producing high quality outputs on a rolling four-year period in the 'Research & Teaching' role type. They will be guided in this by the approved unit reduction as determined above, and whether the 'minimum of one' requirement has been removed.

c. *Removing the 'minimum of one output':* where a request to remove the 'minimum of one output' requirement has been approved, then the REF Manager will inform the unit that the requirement has been removed on the basis of equality-related circumstances, and that this must be reflected in the output selection process. The unit will not have access to further information about the circumstances. Requests to remove the 'minimum of one' requirement must be submitted to the funding bodies for approval by March 2020. The REF Manager will prepare the request (REF6a) based on the information provided. This decision is provisional until approved by the funding bodies.

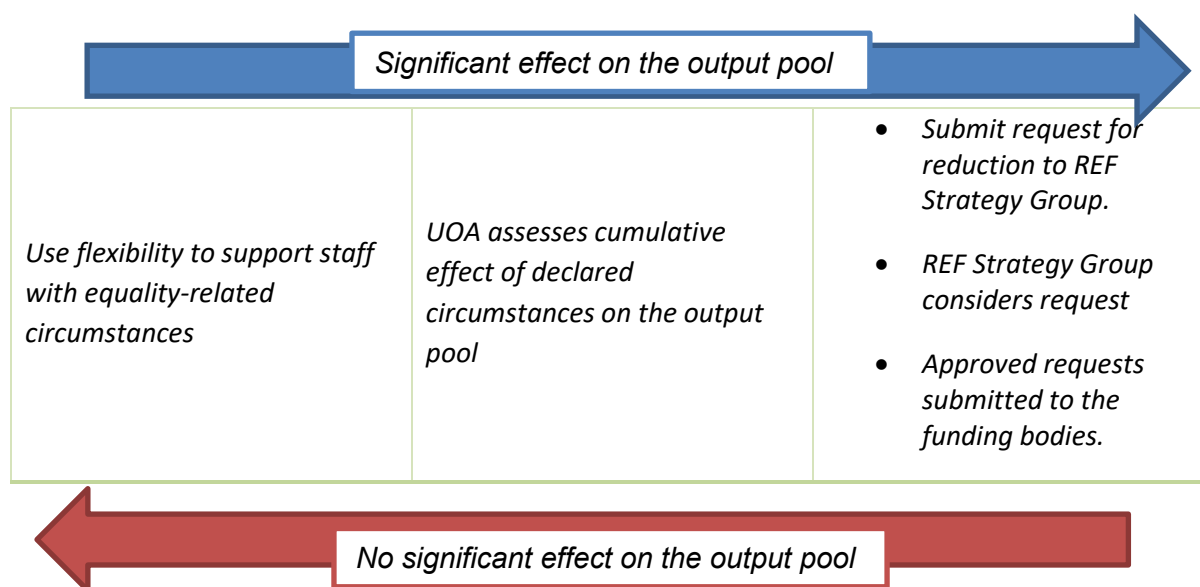
d. *Unit reduction of outputs:* units may request a reduction in the total number of outputs required for submission where the cumulative effect of the approved circumstances has had a disproportionate effect on the available output pool. The process for this is outlined in 4.2.4 below.

4.2.4 Requesting Unit Reduction in Outputs

A UOA may, without penalty, request a reduction in the total number of outputs required for submission due to the cumulative effect of equality-related circumstances on their overall output pool. However, in view of the flexibility offered by the ability to allocate between 1-5 outputs per submitted staff member, and the reduction in output requirement since the previous exercise (from four outputs per person in REF 2014 to an average of 2.5 per FTE in REF 2021), the funding bodies do not expect units to routinely need to request reductions.

It is appropriate to seek a reduction where the cumulative effect of the approved equality-related circumstances has had a disproportionate effect on the available output pool. This will typically be in small units where there are very high proportions of staff whose circumstances have affected their productivity over the REF publication period, or in disciplines where fewer outputs are traditionally published.

Diagram 2: Responses to Equality-related circumstance disclosure



The procedure for requesting a reduction in the total number of outputs required is:

1. The REF Manager will calculate the total number of approved individual reductions arising from self-disclosures within each unit (see section 4.2.3), including a reduction of one for each case where the 'minimum of one output' requirement has been removed. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for reduction. This will be provided to units during August 2019 and February 2020.
2. UOA Leaders consider whether, in the context of the overall output pool (defined as those outputs that have been peer reviewed and considered for submission), equality-related circumstances have had a disproportionate effect. If the School REF Team collectively agrees that a unit reduction is warranted, then a case is submitted to the REF Strategy Group outlining the rationale in accordance with this Code of Practice, in particular comparing the scale of the approved reductions with the size of the available output pool and the total number of outputs required (max. 300 words).
3. The REF Strategy Group will review the submitted units cases with the input of HR, EDI and Occupational Health (as applicable) in order to determine whether the request should be supported.
4. Where unit reductions are supported, the REF Manager will work with those units (whilst maintaining confidentiality) to produce the case to be submitted to the funding bodies by their deadline of March 2020.
5. Upon confirmation from the funding bodies that the request has been approved, then the unit output pool will be reduced as appropriate.

For the avoidance of doubt, requests to remove the ‘minimum of one’ fall outside of this process. Where such a request has been approved under 4.2.3 then the case will be made to the funding bodies by the REF Manager, without any need to consider the impact on the overall output pool.

Diagram 3: Worked examples of unit reductions:

	Example 1	Example 2
Starting position	Unit of 32 staff that total 24.3 FTE No. of outputs required = $24.3 \times 2.5 = 60.75$ Rounding applied 61 outputs required	Unit of 18 staff that total 15.5 FTE No. of outputs required = $14.5 \times 2.5 = 36.25$ Rounding applied 36 outputs required
Minimum of one (Pool A)	3 x staff with 46+ months absence and no eligible outputs Request minimum of one removed for each Reduction of 3	1 x staff with 46+ months absence and no eligible outputs Request minimum of one removed for each Reduction of 1
Unit reduction (Pool B)	3 x staff with 46+ months absence 2 x staff with periods of family leave 2 x ECRs Potential unit of reduction of 7 Has had a disproportionate effect on output pool = <u>unit reduction requested</u>	1 x staff with 46+ months absence 3 x ECRs Potential unit of reduction of 3 Has had a disproportionate effect on output pool = <u>unit reduction NOT requested</u>
Submission	Minimum of one + unit reduction = total reduction of 10 51 outputs required 29 x staff with minimum of one (Pool A) 22 x further outputs (Pool B)	Total reduction of 1 due to minimum of one Unit reduction not requested 35 outputs required 17 x staff with minimum of one (Pool A) 18 x further outputs (Pool B)

4.2.5 Use of equality-related circumstances information

Voluntarily disclosed equality-related circumstance information will be used only for the respective purposes of (a) determining whether the circumstances are eligible and the scale of the applicable reduction, (b) ensuring that units have realistic expectations of a staff member’s contribution to the overall output pool, (c) considering whether it is appropriate to seek a unit reduction, and (d) seeking to remove the ‘minimum of one’ requirement.

Information will not be used for any other purpose, unless the individual explicitly asks for a member of HR to contact them to discuss their circumstances and the support that City may provide. Information disclosed during this process will be seen only by the REF Team in Research & Enterprise Office and the REF-Equality-Related Circumstances Panel. These individuals will observe confidentiality and information will be stored securely in compliance with current data protection legislation – General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and the Data Protection Act 2018. This information will not be used for any other purpose and will be destroyed on completion of the REF in December 2021.

School REF Teams will know where the ‘minimum of one’ requirement has been removed on the basis of equality-related circumstances, but will not have access to further information about the circumstances.

4.3. Outputs of former staff

Paragraphs 211-216 of the [Guidance on Submissions](#) sets out that the outputs of former staff that were first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by the institution as ‘Category A Eligible’ and which comply with the open access policy for REF2021, where appropriate, can be submitted to REF 2021. This includes:

1. Staff who have left the employment of the institution before the census date.
2. Staff who remain employed at the institution, but no longer meet the core eligibility criteria (see Part 2). This includes staff that have moved onto an ineligible role type or employment contract type, such as an administrative contract, or have dropped below the 0.2 FTE threshold.
3. Staff who were on a period of unpaid leave of absence or secondment that was no greater than two years.

City considers it appropriate to submit without consultation outputs from former staff whose employment has ended on the grounds of resignation or retirement. City will secure the consent of the individual to include the outputs of those staff whose contract of employment ended for other reasons (including redundancy).

All eligible outputs of former staff, except those staff excluded above, will be considered equally with the outputs of current staff members during the review and selection process (see Section 4.4). Outputs co-authored jointly by current staff and staff that were made redundant remain eligible for submission by the current staff member.

4.4 Note on School REF Teams

In three Schools, Cass Business School, The School of Health Sciences and City Law School there is one REF Team. In the other two Schools - the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) and the School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering (SMCSE) – some activities of the School REF Team are devolved to departmental / UOA REF Teams. More information on School REF Teams is given in Appendix A.

4.5 Selecting outputs for submissions

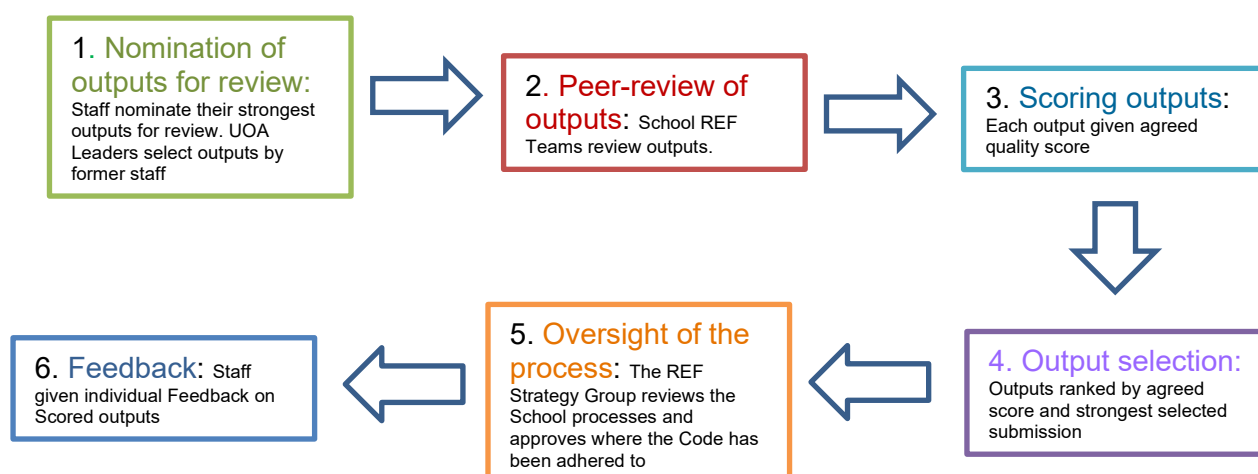
4.5.1 Policies and procedures for the selection of outputs

City will seek to maximise the quality of the outputs profile in each submission it makes. It will do this by selecting the strongest outputs available within each UOA.

The following procedures have been developed to ensure the fair and transparent selection of research outputs. They have been developed incrementally using experience from the institutional *Annual Research Quality Monitoring* (ARQM) exercise which has been in operation since 2012. This process is iterative and will be repeated during several review periods as described in Section 4.4.2, thus enabling newly published outputs to be reviewed and selected fairly against older outputs.

It is the collective responsibility of the School REF Team to put in place a calibrated and rigorous peer review process in order to assess the quality of eligible outputs, and then to select the outputs for submission.

Diagram 4: Selecting research outputs: – simplified process



1. Nomination of outputs for review: given differing publishing volumes between disciplines it will not always be possible to peer review every eligible output. As a first step, each unit will invite their eligible staff to nominate via the institutional Current Research Information system (CRIS) what they consider to be their strongest outputs for review, whilst providing clear timescales and information on the process to be followed. It is expected that each staff member will nominate at least one output for review, except where they have had approval for the ‘minimum of one output’ requirement to be removed (see 4.2). School REF Teams may also select additional outputs for review from the total pool of eligible outputs to ensure that all potentially strong publications have been identified and considered. This will include the outputs of former staff. Only outputs compliant with open access policy, where appropriate, will be nominated.

Staff members can ask for outputs to be double-weighted. A request should be made to the internal panel or sub-panel in a supporting statement explaining in what ways the output is of sufficiently extended scale and scope to justify the claim (maximum 100 words).

2. Peer-reviewing process: each output will be reviewed by School-based evaluation panels (and sub-panels, as appropriate) with senior colleagues from research-intensive institutions invited to act as external assessors. Outputs will be graded based on originality, significance and rigour as understood from the REF Guidance. Reviewers will not score their own outputs and School REF Teams will be responsible for ensuring that there are no conflicts of interest. In line with the Athena SWAN Award, senior management in Schools deciding on panel or sub-panel membership will consider matters of equality and diversity within their panels.

- **Calibration:** Internal panels or sub-panels will make use of external assessors as a mechanism for calibration of the internal judgement. In some exceptional cases where staff are being considered in new disciplinary areas (e.g., English or History), external assessors will be used to form part of the panel but at least one internal member of senior academic staff will be included. External assessors are not appointed to grade individual outputs. Internal panels or sub-panels decide final assessments after considering the internal reviews and external calibration.
- **Author contribution:** outputs will only be reviewed where the staff member satisfies the author contribution criteria as outlined in the '[Panel criteria and working methods](#)', paragraphs 216-236. Once this determination has been made, then outputs will be assessed based on the quality of the research content alone and not the contribution of the author. Where the same output has been nominated by more than one individual, then it will be given the same score.
- **Use of research metrics:** all outputs must be read in detail by the reviewers, but where the School-based evaluation panels deems it appropriate for the discipline then bibliometrics may be used to help inform the peer review assessment.
- **Scoring scale:** outputs will be scored with reference to the published criteria in the '[Guidance on Submissions](#)', but using a more granular version, 3* band outputs will be scored as high-3, medium-3 and low-3. This will enable the strongest outputs to be fairly identified and submitted.
- **Former staff:** The Research & Enterprise Office will provide each unit with a list of outputs published by former staff within the census period, ensuring that potentially high quality outputs can be fairly and consistency identified.

3. Scoring process: each output will be given a single agreed score on the internal scoring scale (see above). Where the scores of the reviewers differ, then an agreed score will be determined through discussion. If they cannot agree, then the School REF Teams will collectively agree a score.

4. Output selection: within each UOA, the outputs will be ranked by their agreed score. The UOA Leader and the REF Strategy Group will collectively review the list and agree whether the ranking is fair and appropriate. They will then select the strongest outputs available and allocate them to eligible staff using the following methodology:

- *Research Outputs in Pool A:* the strongest available output will be selected for each eligible staff member as their 'minimum of one', except where this requirement has been removed on the basis of equality-related circumstances. Where two co-authors in the same unit share an output*, and each has no other output of equal strength available, then it will be assigned to the author who has the weaker next available output (e.g. if the shared output has been scored High 3* and Author X has another output scored Low 3*, while the next best available output for Author Y is scored 2*, then it will be assigned Author Y).

In exceptional cases, co-authored outputs may be submitted up to two times within a submission. This applies only to submissions made to Main Panel D. Such cases will be decided by the UOA Leader in discussion with the School REF Team.

- *Research Outputs in Pool B:* additional outputs will be selected in rank order to arrive at the number required for submission. The eligible outputs of former staff will be considered equally with those of current staff. The identity of the staff member will not be taken into consideration, other than to ensure that the maximum of five outputs is not exceeded for any one individual, and that the submitted author meets the author contribution criteria. Where an output can be attributed to more than one co-author within the unit, then it will be allocated to the individual who has the weaker next available output. In situations where there are a number of outputs at similar rating that could be selected to create the pool these will be referred back to the UOA Leaders and the School REF Team to place outputs in rank order. This may involve refining the 3* ratings even further.

5. Oversight of the process: after each review period, the REF Strategy Group will scrutinise the process used by the School REF Teams to review the outputs, and to select and allocate them to staff members. Approval will be given where the group is satisfied that this Code of Practice has been adhered to and that the process has been rigorous, fair and transparent, and that the outcome is the strongest selection of outputs without bias to any individual. The REF Strategy Group will in turn report to the University Research & Enterprise Committee, who will provide oversight of processes and of the Equality Impact Assessment.

6. Feedback: City is committed to supporting and developing its researchers and to ensuring that each member of staff reaches his/her potential in this regard. It is recognised that clear and timely feedback is key to providing this support. Therefore, after each stage of review and selection, all eligible staff will be notified of the agreed score for all of their reviewed outputs (regardless of whether they are eventually selected for submission or allocated to them). The final selection of outputs will not be disclosed to staff before the REF census date. UOA Leaders are responsible for communicating to staff, and will do so individually and promptly within the timescales outlined below.

4.5.2: Timetable for the selection of Research Outputs



Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM) 2019	Initial Review Period	Final Review Period
<p>Jan-July 2019: Schools identify and peer-review eligible outputs, including those of former staff, make interim outputs selection, and nominate these for REF outputs selection model.</p>	<p>January-May 2020: School REF Teams identify and peer review eligible outputs, including those of former staff, make interim output selections, and allocate them to staff.</p>	<p>August-September 2020: School REF Teams identify and peer review eligible outputs, including those of former staff, make final output selections, and allocate them to staff.</p> <p>March 2021: UOA Leaders inform staff of final output scores.</p>

We replaced the process described in the Code with the existing Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM) exercise. Because of Covid and uncertainties caused by delayed REF and extension of the outputs submission until the end of December 2020, and because we don't know which outputs will make it into the final selection, instead of undertaking EIA on distribution and assessment of outputs across staff, we decided to use EIA carried out after each ARQM period – EIA (2019) and EIA (2020) respectively. Any outputs that are published very late in the REF cycle will be included in the final EIA, which will be carried out after the REF submission date.

Section 5: Equality impact assessment

Equality impact assessments (EIA) are a tool to help ensure that policies, practices and decisions are fair, meet the needs of their staff, and are not inadvertently discriminating against any protected group. City will produce an EIA on the policy and processes outlined in this Code of Practice for (a) determining research independence, and (b) selecting outputs. This will be a living document that is reviewed and updated at key stages in the selection process.

The objective of the EIA is to identify:

- Where discrimination may inadvertently occur within the processes.
- Where a particular policy or practice has a positive impact on the advancement of equality.
- Where there is an opportunity to take a step that will have a positive impact.

This will be a meaningful assessment of the impact of the policies and processes from an equality perspective, involving a systematic analysis of whether they may have had a differential impact on particular groups by reference to the protected characteristics for which data is available, and to identify where discrimination may have inadvertently occurred. Analysis will be undertaken at University and UOA-level, and we will be mindful of instances where the analysis involves small numbers that can heavily influence percentages. Additionally, disclosure rates for some protected characteristics are too low to undertake meaningful analysis.

The assessment will consider data on:

- The characteristics of staff determined to meet the definition of an independent researcher in the context of all 'research-only' staff at Grade 7 and above.
- The distribution (i.e., quantity) and assessment (i.e., quality) of selected outputs across staff, in relation to the protected characteristics of the unit.

The EIA will be conducted by staff in HR and Research & Enterprise Office, who together have knowledge and understanding of equality and of the policies to be assessed. The process will be:

1. The EIA will be reviewed and updated at key stages in the selection process, including after each review period. This may include seeking feedback from staff from protected groups on their experiences of any mock exercises that are conducted.
2. After each update, the EIA will be considered by the REF Strategy Group. Where differential impact is identified, the policy or practice will be investigated with the support of the Equality and Diversity Manager (which may include in-depth analysis at unit level). REF Strategy Group will then decide whether the policy or practice operates within the constraints of the law, or what action is required to change the policy or practice.
3. This Code of Practice will be reviewed after each EIA to ensure that any necessary changes identified by REF Strategy Group are implemented prior to the submission deadline. Affected groups will be engaged to ensure that the proposed changes are fit for purpose.

4. Information about the findings of each EIA review will be clearly set out together with a description of how it has informed the final policy and procedures. This section will also include information of where a particular policy or practice is found to have had a positive impact on equality.

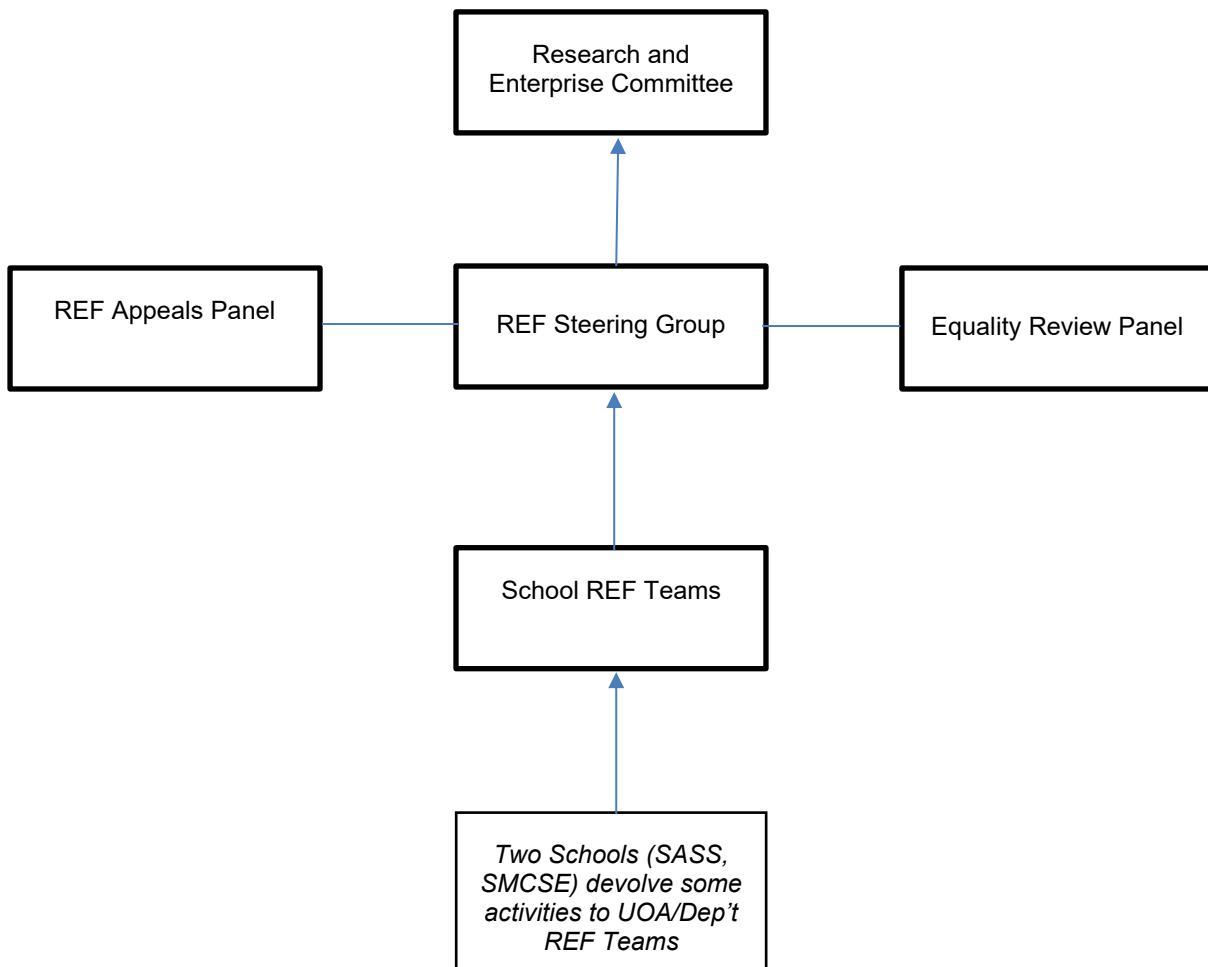
The results of the EIA and any ongoing investigations and actions will be reported to the University Equality Committee through existing structures. Where an opportunity to advance equality is identified, we will give due consideration to implementing it.

The final EIA will be undertaken and published on City's website after the REF 2021 submission has been made.

Appendix A: REF Committees and decision making bodies

City will draw upon existing committee structures, together with REF-specific committees and individuals with senior-level responsibility for REF matters. All of the decision-making bodies comprise staff who have appropriate knowledge and experience, and committees are permitted to exercise their professional judgment in choosing to seek advice from others, both internal and external to the University.

Diagram 5: REF2021 Decision making bodies



Remit and Terms of Reference of REF2021 Decision making bodies

Research Excellence Framework 2021 Strategy Group

- **Terms of Reference**
- To oversee the strategic management of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 submission across City
- To maximise the benefit of the REF to City
- To interpret the published guidance on REF2021 and translate these into practice
- To ensure that agreed procedures are followed consistently across the selected Units of Assessment, consistent with HEFCE's equal opportunities guidance and equal opportunities legislation
- To address strategic issues and matters of policy regarding the approach to submissions both at University and at UOA-level, including the determination of the minimum quality threshold to be applied for an individual UOA.
- To consider requests from Schools for any resources needed to support REF preparations and to make recommendations on these to ET/ExCo
- To oversee communications to the wider community on REF preparations.
- To receive reports from the REF Technical Operations Group which meets periodically
- To receive advice from the REF Impact Advisory Panel to be established in January 2018
- To consider any issues which arise relating to the inclusion or non-inclusion of individual members of staff in the submission, including any appeals from staff, ensuring that all relevant information is obtained to inform decisions and taking account of the criteria set out in the Code of Practice
- To monitor progress within Schools against the agreed submission schedule, to address any difficulties and to ensure that the submission is made in good time
- To address any issues that cannot be resolved at School level, including in particular any matters relating to Units of Assessment which involve staff from more than one School
- To hold final editorial control over submissions as required
- To make regular reports to the University Research & Enterprise Committee/University Executive Team/Executive Committee
- To comply with all equal opportunities legislation in REF submission preparations and decision making and develop any Code of Practice as required by the REF guidance
- To request information that will identify strengths and weaknesses in the submission and having identified weaknesses to provide solutions to improve the School's submission in the areas identified
- To seek guidance from relevant individuals/institutions to ensure that the committee remains informed – to the best of its ability – of REF guidance, criteria and initiatives
- To oversee and guide School submissions of data to the Funding Bodies, which will involve interaction with multiple professional services directorates including: Research & Enterprise, Human Resources, Finance, Student & Academic Services, the Web support team and Library Services.

Purpose: The REF Strategy Group is a sub-committee of Research & Enterprise Committee. It is responsible for overseeing City's strategy for, and submission to, the Research Excellence Framework 2021 exercise.

Research & Enterprise Committee advises the Vice-President (Research and Enterprise) on the achievement of City's strategic aims relating to matters of research and enterprise.

Decision-making responsibilities: The REF Strategy Group reviews School REF Teams' recommendations on research independence and output selection, giving approval where this Code of Practice has been adhered to. They will also review requests to make a unit reduction in the number of outputs required due to equality-related circumstances, determining whether there has been a disproportionate impact on the overall output pool. The REF Strategy Group reviews the Equality Impact Assessments and decides when further action is required. They also make recommendations to the Research & Enterprise Committee on policy relating to REF.

Membership: Chaired by the Vice-President (Research & Enterprise), Professor Andrew Jones, its membership includes five School Associate Deans (Research & Enterprise); REF Manager, Head of Strategy and Compliance (Research & Enterprise); Director of the Research & Enterprise Office,

The REF2021 Strategy Group may also co-opt additional members from amongst the expected new academic appointments where these are identified as having valuable relevant strategic experience.

REF 2021 Unit of Assessment Leaders

Main duties and responsibilities

- Lead individual UOA preparations for REF 2021, working in partnership with relevant colleagues across the School.
- Lead the UOA/Department REF Teams in two Schools (SASS and SMCSE)
- Identify any resources needed to support REF preparations and to make recommendations on these to the REF Strategy Group.
- Ensure that all relevant data in each UOA is accurate, identifying changes where necessary.
- Use evidence to advise on the selection of Outputs within each UOA.
- Support the development, preparation, and collation of evidence for Impact Case Studies.
- Work with UOA colleagues in drafting and refining the Environment Template.
- Oversee effective communications between the UOA and the School in preparation for REF.
- Monitor progress against the agreed submission schedule, address any difficulties and ensure that the submission is made in good time.
- Advise the Dean and Associate Dean (Research and Enterprise) in the preparation of all aspects of the REF2021 submission in relation to the UOA.

Key Working Relationships and Contacts

- Dean, Associate Dean (Research and Enterprise), Deputy Dean, Chief Operating Officer, School Research Services Support Manager and Research Services Support Officer, Business Development Manager, Heads of Department, Research Centres, Academic Staff.
- Committees: School Executive Committee, School Research and Enterprise Committee, University REF Strategy Group.

REF2021 UOA	UOA Leader
Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy	Professor Chris Hull
Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	Dr Kielan Yarrow
Mathematical Sciences	Professor Andreas Fring
Computer Science and Informatics	Dr Alex Taylor
Engineering	Professor Manolis Gavaises
Economics and Econometrics	Dr Fabrice Defever
Business and Management Studies	Professor Bobby Banerjee
Law	Dr Tawhida Ahmed
Politics and International Studies	Professor Ronen Palan
Sociology	Dr Emmeline Taylor
Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies	Professor Stephen Cottrell
Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management	Professor Jane Singer
English Language and Literature	Dr Minna Vuohelainen
Education	Professor Susannah Quinsee

The REF Equality Review Panel

Role description: the REF Equality Review Panel will consider those self-disclosures of equality-related circumstances where a judgement is required, and will agree the appropriate reduction. This will help to ensure that decisions are consistent, transparent and robust, and taken by those with relevant knowledge, expertise and awareness of equality legislation. It is fully independent of all other decision-making bodies.

Decision-making responsibilities: the REF Equality Review Panel will make the final decision on the appropriate reduction in relation to self-disclosures of equality-related circumstances that require a judgement.

Membership: REF Equality Review Panel is constituted of three academic staff members identified by the REF Strategy Group as having appropriate experience of promoting and supporting equality, diversity and inclusion and who together represent a fair cross-section of the research community. They will be supported by the REF Manager and the Equality and Diversity Manager. Where the equality issue under consideration relates to an individual's disability or health related condition, guidance will be secured from City's Occupational Health specialist

Record-keeping procedures: The REF Equality Review Panel will be formally minuted, but to maintain confidentiality these will not be publicly available. They will be provided to the REF Strategy Group for information (while protecting confidentiality).

The REF Appeals Panel

Role description: the REF Appeals Panel has been convened for the sole purpose of reviewing appeals against decisions on research independence. It is fully independent of all other decision-making bodies, but will report decisions to the REF Strategy Group for information (while protecting confidentiality).

Decision-making responsibilities: the REF Appeals Panel will make the final determination on research independence following an appeal.

To increase representation of BAME on the REF Appeals Panel we have changed the membership:

Membership: REF Appeals Panel is constituted of two former Heads of Department identified by the REF Strategy Group as having appropriate experience of working with independent research staff and **one BAME representative with appropriate experience**. A third position on the group is reserved for an academic representative of the campus trade unions. Together they represent a fair cross-section of the research community and are independent of the original decision-making process. They will be supported by the REF Manager and the Equality and Diversity Manager.

Record-keeping procedures: the REF Appeals Panel will be formally minuted, but to maintain confidentiality Minutes of REF appeals will not be publicly available.

School REF Teams

Role description: there is in place a School REF Teams* for each of the five Schools at City. Collectively they help prepare the 14 UOAs City intends to submit.

* In three Schools, Cass Business School, The School of Health Sciences and City Law School there is one REF Team In the other two Schools - the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) and the School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering (SMCSE) – some activities of the School REF Team are devolved to departmental / UOA REF Teams.

The remit of the School REF Team (or in SASS and SMCSE Departmental/UOA REF Teams) is to:

- Coordinate the preparation of the UOA REF submission, including the staff (REF1), outputs (REF2), impact (REF3) and environment (REF4/5) elements.
- Oversee timely submissions to the internal REF review periods, with a focus on the quality of information provided.
- Lead on REF communications within the departments represented in the unit.
- Work with the Head(s) of Department and Associate Dean (Research & Enterprise) to ensure that all 'Category A Eligible' and 'Category A Submitted' staff are identified.
- Determine the independence of research staff, ensuring adherence to the procedures outlined in this Code of Practice, and that decisions are clearly communicated to those staff members.
- Develop and oversee a rigorous and calibrated peer review process in order to assess output quality, and then to select the outputs for submission, ensuring adherence to the procedures outlined in this Code of Practice.
- Where applicable, determine whether outputs should be double-weighted and ensure the quality of any additional information required.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the REF Open Access requirements, and that appropriate mechanisms are in place for the deposit of newly accepted outputs.
- Work with the School Impact Officer to facilitate the preparation of high quality impact case studies, ensuring that authors have the necessary support and resources required.
- Lead the preparation of the UOA-level Environment Template, liaising within the constituent departments as appropriate, and working with Research & Enterprise Office on the provision of supporting data.

Decision-making responsibilities: the School REF Teams make recommendations to the REF Strategy Group on research independence and output selection, following the policies and procedures in this Code of Practice. All decisions are collective and agreed by consensus.

Membership: each School REF Teams is chaired by an Associate Dean (Research & Enterprise), who is an experienced member of academic staff and reports directly to School Dean. Group members include UOA Leaders as well as other experienced academic staff and have an appropriate range of research expertise across the unit. The membership of the School

REF Teams will be reviewed via an Equality Impact Assessment, which will be considered by the REF Strategy Group.

Record-keeping procedures: School REF Teams are encouraged to be open and transparent, and are required to regularly report at School Research Committee meetings. In addition, they are required to use mandatory centrally administered systems to collect staff and output data. This ensures consistency, transparency and accountability in identifying eligible staff and in the scoring, selection and attribution of outputs.

ⁱ Available at <https://www.ref.ac.uk/>