



Royal Northern College of Music
REF2021 Code of Practice
Responsibility: Director of Research
Approval Committee: Academic Board Reported to Executive Committee and Board of Governors
Approved: March 2019

RNCM REF2021 Code of Practice

Part 1: Introduction

The Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and encouraging diversity as an employer, higher education provider and as an arts centre. RNCM's aim is that where possible the organisation will be truly representative of all sections of society and each will feel respected and able to give their best.

The RNCM's Institutional Strategic Plan, *RNCM 2020*, makes the following commitment to E&D:

RNCM 2020 will be an inclusive environment that embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity across all of its activities. It will be a working, learning, teaching, performing and research environment ensuring dignity and respect and free from discrimination and unfair treatment.

The RNCM believes in allowing everyone an opportunity to fulfil their potential. The College's framework of equality, diversity, dignity, respect and fairness extends to all of the community; staff, students, partners, visitors and the wider community. It recognises that continuing to draw on the widest and most diverse range of talent for staff and students is essential to the continuing success of the College.

The RNCM expects that all staff and students will contribute to and actively support the College in working towards the elimination of discrimination and harassment, promoting equality of opportunity in terms of access to the College's services, employment opportunities and support for students in their welfare and education.

RNCM is committed to treating all people with dignity and respect equally irrespective of the protected characteristics:

- Age,
- Sex,
- Disability,
- Race,
- Gender reassignment,
- Marriage / Civil partnership,
- Religion or belief,
- Sexual orientation or re-orientation,
- Pregnancy and maternity

Annual Report

The RNCM publishes an annual Equality and Diversity Report that details information on all staff and students at the College. The report responds to the RNCM's duties and obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Duty, it also supports the College's equality and diversity objectives. The Annual Report for 2017-18 promises not simply to ensure 'that the RNCM is compliant with current legislation but that our practices help us to go beyond our

legal obligations'. (ED Report, 2017-18 p. 3). The report shows the ways in which the College has made progress on EDI issues from the previous year:

Significant progress has been made towards meeting the objectives identified in last year's report as a priority over the past academic year. During 2017-18 a series of training events and interventions have been facilitated and/or provided by the College. Examples include mental health awareness training, and unconscious bias and values training for senior managers. A series of staff briefings were delivered to all professional services departments reminding staff of their responsibilities as set out in the Dignity at Work policy. It was an opportune and timely reminder of how the College expects staff to behave and to highlight their responsibilities for treating colleagues with dignity and respect. (p. 4)

The College has set the following new Equality Objectives in 2018-19, which have been approved by the Executive Committee.

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

It has set specific objectives and targets in relation to staff, students and community.

The RNCM has subsequently published its EDI report for 2018-19 and is currently approving an Equality Action Plan. The 2020 RNCM Staff Conference was devoted to EDI training to reflect its crucial status.

Other initiatives include: Gender pay gap analysis in line with statutory requirements and publish data; Launch of Care First Zest; Regularly monitoring and analysing of staff and student data; enhancing the College's intranet and website to better communicate information about its equality and diversity learning and development, and mental health awareness programme. Raise awareness of the RNCM's status as a Dementia Friendly organisation and recruit volunteers within the College to act as Dementia Friends Champions. The RNCM is working towards becoming a dementia friendly employer. Two Dementia Champions were recruited, and it will progress an awareness raising campaign in 2018/19 academic year. The College is also developing mental health training for staff. It has implemented a new Human Resources and payroll system to improve communication channels with staff towards filling the current gaps in equality monitoring data.

Disability Confident

The Disability Confident Scheme aims to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people. It is voluntary and has been developed by employers and disabled people's representatives. The Disability Confident scheme has three levels that have been designed to support organisations.

The College is currently at Level 2 Disability Confident Employer. As an internal or external applicant, the College commit to:

- Interviewing all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria on a person specification and consider them on their abilities;

- Providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process;
- Ensuring employees have sufficient disability awareness;
- Making workplace adjustments (also known as reasonable adjustments), as required.

An update of actions taken since REF 2014

The RNCM produces an annual Equality and Diversity report, which outlines progress made on previous years. The Equality and Diversity Policy was updated and approved in May 2018 for a 3-year period. The new Equality Objectives (2018-19) also demonstrate the progress the college is taking. All the College's E&D documentation is available on the College's website and intranet.

Code of Practice Consultation Process See Diagram 1 below outlining the consultation, which demonstrates how the Code has been shaped and communicated to a range of committees and groups within the RNCM.



Code of Practice Communication

The draft Code of Practice has been available on Moodle so that colleagues throughout the College have had the opportunity to comment on it before Academic Board. Colleagues have been contacted to alert them to this invitation to comment. Once the Code of Practice is approved, it will be made available on the RNCM website and the intranet pages. In addition, all staff will receive an email from the Principal and will be notified at the Annual Staff Conference. Any member of academic staff who is absent from the RNCM will be sent a hard copy of the Code of Practice to their home address.

Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

The vast majority of RNCM academic staff are on teaching and research contracts that permit colleagues to engage in teaching, research/scholarship and administration /leadership activities. The precise balance and mix of these activities vary depending on the nature of their role and their expertise. As a small specialist institution, the primary focus of the majority of staff is on teaching the next generation of professional performers and composers. All members of staff have the opportunity to engage in research or scholarship and professional activity. This opportunity is designed to be as inclusive as possible in order to enable as many academic staff as possible to develop their professional activities and expertise into scholarship and research, with the support of line managers, mentors and the Director of Research or designated research-active colleagues.

Category A eligible staff who have a contract of 0.2 FTE or above (or equivalent) and who have been identified as having **significant responsibility for research** on the census date (31 July 2020) will be submitted to the REF. Staff on research only contracts will be submitted if they meet the definition of research independence. These definitions of eligible staff may also include staff who have had a significant responsibility for research for some, but not all of the REF period, or staff who have left the RNCM. While the latter will not contribute to the FTE of the output pool, their outputs may be included with one exception: the Research Committee (08/02/19) decided that outputs by members of staff who have been made redundant will not be included in the submission. We will identify all Category A submitted staff in post on the census date, staff on unpaid leave of absence, as well as information about former staff whose outputs are eligible to be included in the output pool in Staff details REF 1a/b.

Staff with significant responsibility for research are given explicit time and resources to engage in independent research and this is an expectation of their role. The RNCM has developed processes for determining **significant responsibility for research**. The main tool is the Workload Allocation Tool, which outlines the responsibilities of all FTE and hourly paid staff. All academic staff with research in their contract have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have significant responsibility for research. The Director of Research consults and discusses individual cases with the Vice Principal (Academic)/Director of Programmes, individual Heads of School and line managers.¹ The Director of Research makes recommendations based on research activities and plans; meetings with individuals during the year; more formal Research Activity Reviews and in consultation with the Vice

¹ The role of the Vice-Principal (Academic) will be replaced by the Director of Programmes from January 2020.

Principal (Academic)/Director of Programmes and the Principal. FTE colleagues are given either 0%, 10% or 20% of time for research. Staff who have been given 10% of their workload for research may have an emerging research profile or be completing a PhD. Members of staff who are given an allocation of 20% are considered to have 'significant responsibility for research'.²

The RNCM has also put in place processes for determining hourly paid staff who have a **significant responsibility for research**. Based on research activities and plans, and in discussion with Heads of Schools and line managers, Vice Principal (Academic)/Director of Programmes and the Principal, the Director of Research assigns eligible staff research hours based on 20% (pro rata) of their teaching hours. This is reviewed annually by Director of Research and Vice Principal (Academic)/Director of Programmes.

Research activity and the potential for research are identified during annual PDRs, which are carried out by line managers. Line managers inform the Director of Research. In addition, the Research Committee requires Schools reps to report on research activity in each School of Study (since 2017).

Furthermore, the Director of Research carries out annual review of research activity with colleagues who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research. More informal meetings take place throughout the year between the Director of Research and those who express an interest in engaging in research.

Development of process(es)

The processes for the identification of staff with significant responsibility for research, research independence and selection of outputs have been developed in consultation with a wide range staff throughout the RNCM in order to be as transparent and inclusive as possible. Initial proposals were put forward by the REF Advisory Group and discussed with staff at the annual Staff Conference (Sept. 2018), Research Committee meetings, Academic Management Group (with Heads of Schools), Academic Board, Board of Governors, Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Forum and the Joint Consultative Committee. See the Diagram 1 for the development, discussion and communication of the Code of Practice. The Introduction outlines how the agreed processes are being communicated to staff.

Staff, committees and training

The Director of Research will be responsible for:

- Providing leadership in preparation for the REF 2021
- Chairing the REF Advisory Panel
- Overseeing the selection of staff for inclusion and advising the REF Advisory Group and the Principal on recommendations made in this regard
- Providing feedback to staff not included in the submission

² In addition, colleagues with significant responsibility for research are periodically invited to apply for Research Activity Time (RAT) leave allocation in order to complete a significant body of research. The scheme is supported financially by the Research Department and is authorised by the Director of Research, Vice Principal (Academic)/Director of Programmes and the Principal.

The REF Advisory Group is made up of the following:

Director of Research (Chair)
Principal
Director of Programmes
Associate Director of Research
Research Manager
Practice-Research REF lead
Senior representative from School of Composition (Head of the Graduate School)
Senior representative of Academic staff (Head of Education)
Head of HR (when required)
Invited external with REF experience³

The make-up of the committee ensures representation of all the main research areas in the Institution. It also ensures that the Principal is involved in the decision-making process, and that HR can feed into the process on matters of staff contracts and Equality and Diversity. The Research Manager keeps minutes of this group; the Terms of Reference for this group are agreed annually by the Research Committee. The composition of the groups will be reviewed at their meetings and consideration will be given to co-opting additional members where expertise is needed or to improve gender balance.

The REF Advisory Group receives and considers the initial recommendations from the Director of Research about selection of staff, research independence and selection of outputs based on the processes described above and on peer and external review of outputs.

The REF Advisory Group reports progress and decisions to Research Committee. The Research Committee, in turn, reports to Academic Board. The Director of Research will keep the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors informed. **The REF Advisory Group** makes certain decisions on processes. It will make recommendations on the following:

- a. Approve the suitability of each REF eligible member of staff for the Music UoA
- b. Determine if each REF eligible member of staff has significant responsibility for research based on the criteria above
- c. Determine if each REF eligible member of staff is an independent researcher, according to the REF criteria.
- d. Make recommendations about the selection of outputs (based on the processes described above)

The REF Advisory Group will consider the Equality Analysis undertaken by the Director or Research with the support of the Head of HR. See below for details of the Equality Analyses that will be undertaken.

The REF Advisory Group will report to the RNCM Research Committee (RC). Research Committee will endorse the REF submission prior to final sign-off by the Principal.

The Principal will confirm the final decisions on matters relating to the REF submission, based on the processes outlined here and the recommendations of the REF Advisory Group and the Research Committee.

Colleagues involved in the peer assessment of outputs underwent training from an

³ See Annex 1 for the RNCM REF Advisory Group Membership and Statement of Purpose.

external senior REF 2014 sub-committee member in 2017. Further training for this group will be delivered throughout 2018/19. The REF advisory Group is undergoing EDI training in winter 2018/19 to ensure that they are up to date on Equality and Diversity legislation and unconscious bias training. This has been arranged through HR and tailored to the requirements of the REF.

Appeals

RNCM academic staff on teaching and research and research only contracts will be given feedback and notified of the decision of whether or not they have been considered to have significant responsibility for research and/or research independence. Staff will be informed about the appeals process when they receive this notification; they will also have been aware of the appeals process with the publication of the Code of Practice (December 2019). This will be reviewed in early 2020, with the final decision being made before the census date. They will be kept informed about which of their outputs have been nominated for inclusion in the REF. Initial decisions will be communicated by June 2020 with final decisions made three months before submission date.

There are two possible grounds for appeal: procedural irregularity e.g. criteria not applied fairly, or that there was key information that would inform decision making about inclusion which was not available to the REF Advisory Group at the time. Staff will have at least two weeks to consider and submit any appeal from the date of their letter/email.

The appeals process, which is outlined within the Code of Practice, will be widely communicated to staff when the document is published on the RNCM intranet and publicised within the College. Moreover, the appeals process will be referred to in the letter that will be sent to staff to inform them of whether or not they are considered to have significant responsibility for research or research independence.

There will be two possible grounds of appeal:

1. Discrimination/criteria not applied fairly;
2. Information that was not available to the committee.

Every eligible member of staff will be advised about whether or not they have been deemed to have significant responsibility for research and will receive feedback, including the ground(s) upon which the provisional judgement has been reached, as follows:

- an initial indication by December 2019;
- a firm indication by July 2020.

The final list of members of staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research and who will therefore be included in REF 2021 will be confirmed by the Director of Research by the date of the third meeting of the Research Committee of AY 2019-20. Where the initial indication communicated by December 2019 has changed, this final change will be communicated by the Director of Research to the individual member(s) of staff involved.

At the initial and firm stages, each staff member will have the opportunity to provide additional information to the REF Advisory Panel within 10 working days about their own circumstances and research profile. Following full consideration of any new information provided by the member of staff, the outcome in respect to whether or not they are

considered to have significant responsibility for research or research independence will be confirmed by Director of Research.

If the original decision is confirmed and the staff member believes that there is evidence of discrimination, he/she may decide to pursue the matter further under the REF Appeals Procedure detailed below. There is no other complaint or appeal procedure open to staff members regarding decisions made about the identification of eligible staff.

Appeals Process RNCM will adopt a two-stage appeals process for REF 2021 (Diagram 2).

Stage 1

An individual who wishes to have the decision reviewed must write to the Director of Academic Quality/Clerk to the Board of Governors in the first instance clearly stating the reasons for requesting a review. This written appeal should be submitted within 10 working days of being informed of the decision against which they are appealing. The written appeal should contain details of the grounds for the appeal, referring to the criteria for staff selection in this code of practice and any supporting evidence. The request will be considered by Director of Academic Quality within 15 working days.

Stage 2

Where resolution has not been possible under Stage 1, an individual may then formally appeal to the RNCM REF Appeal Panel comprising: Senior external academic advisor from the Board of Governors, Vice Principal (Operations) (Chair), Chair of the RNCM Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Forum.

The individual can appeal the decision reached at Stage One by writing to the Vice Principal (Operations) within 10 working days. The individual making the appeal will be invited to appear in person before the Panel and may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.

The RNCM REF Appeals Panel may uphold an appeal, in which case the REF Advisory Panel will be directed to review their original recommendation, or may dismiss an appeal, in which case the original recommendation will stand. The individual making the appeal will receive a decision within 15 working days of the appearance before the Panel. There will be no further right of appeal under this REF Appeals Process.

Equality impact assessment

The REF Advisory Group will consider the Equality Analysis undertaken by the Director of Research with the support of the Head of HR. This analysis will review the profile of those identified as having significant responsibility for research against all academic staff by protected characteristics. An Equality Analysis will also be undertaken of those identified as independent researchers, although the pool of potential colleagues in this category is very

small. Finally, the RNCM will carry out an Equality Analysis on selected outputs by protected characteristics (as outlined above). This will be considered by the REF Advisory Group before the final selection of outputs is made. These analyses will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusivity have been considered at every part of the decision-making process.

Part 3: Determining research independence

Policies and procedures

The RNCM has very few members of staff on Research-only contracts. In the very few cases of staff being on Research-only contracts, the RNCM will apply the REF definition of an independent researcher.

- leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project
- holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. This would include staff on British Academy Fellowships, Marie Curie Fellowships or Leverhulme Fellowships.
- acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project
- leading a research group or a substantial work package
- significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.

Since staff on Research-only contracts are often Early Career Researchers, great attention will be paid to Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity issues.

The process of identifying research independence is outlined in Part 2. Decisions will be communicated to staff on the same timetable as outlined for determining staff with significant responsibility for research (see Part 2).

Staff, committees and training

Staff, committees and training are the same as those outlined in Part 2.

Appeals

Appeals follow the same process as those outlined in Part 2.

Equality impact assessment

How an equality impact assessment has been used to inform the identification of staff and make final decisions.

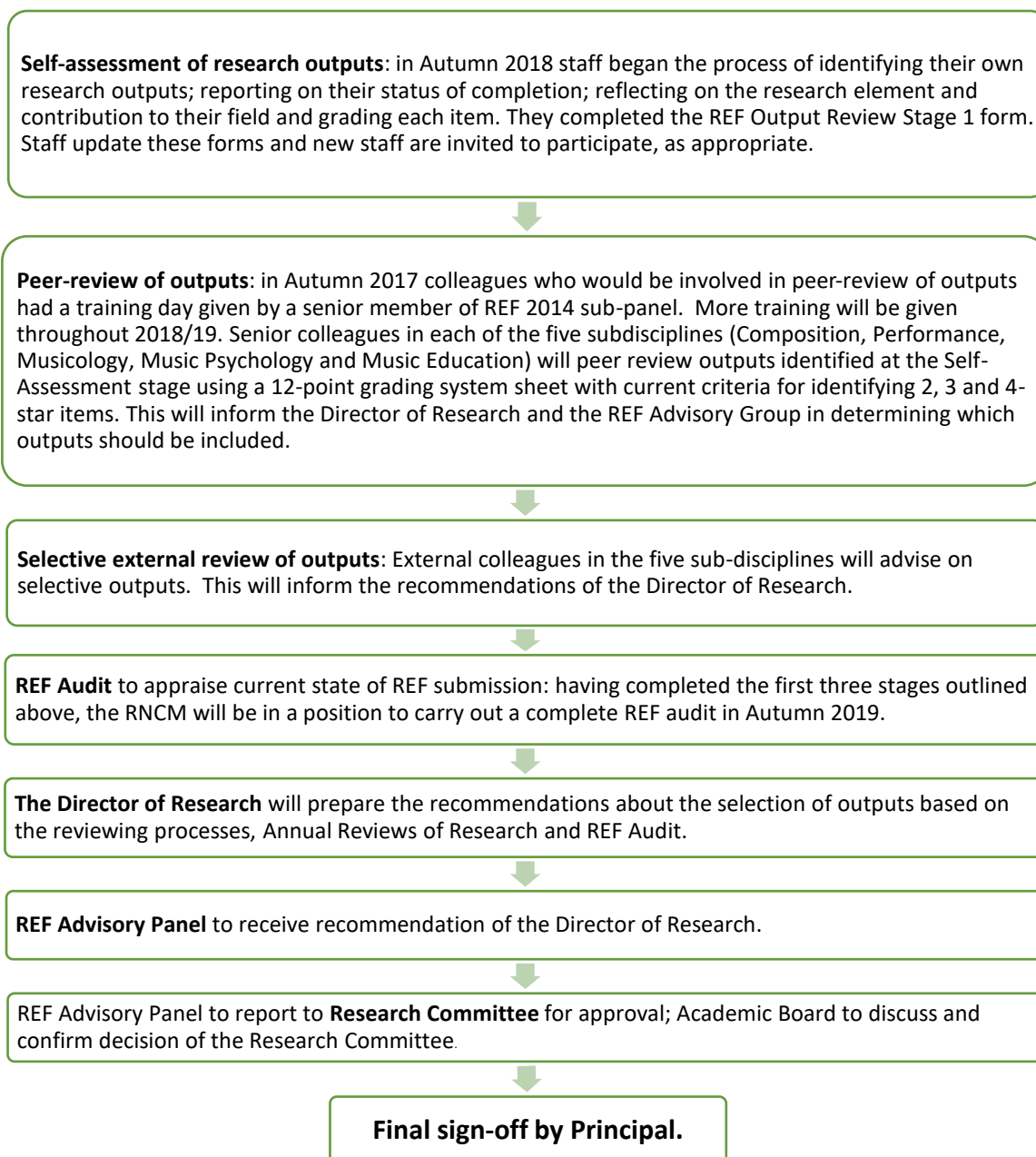
An Equality Analysis will be carried out to compare the inclusion of staff on Research-only contracts with staff on Research and Teaching contracts (in relation to their protected characteristics) to ensure fairness and equality of treatment. See Part 2 for a fuller discussion of Equality Analysis.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

Policies and procedures

The RNCM has put in place the following processes for selecting outputs to ensure a fair and transparent process:

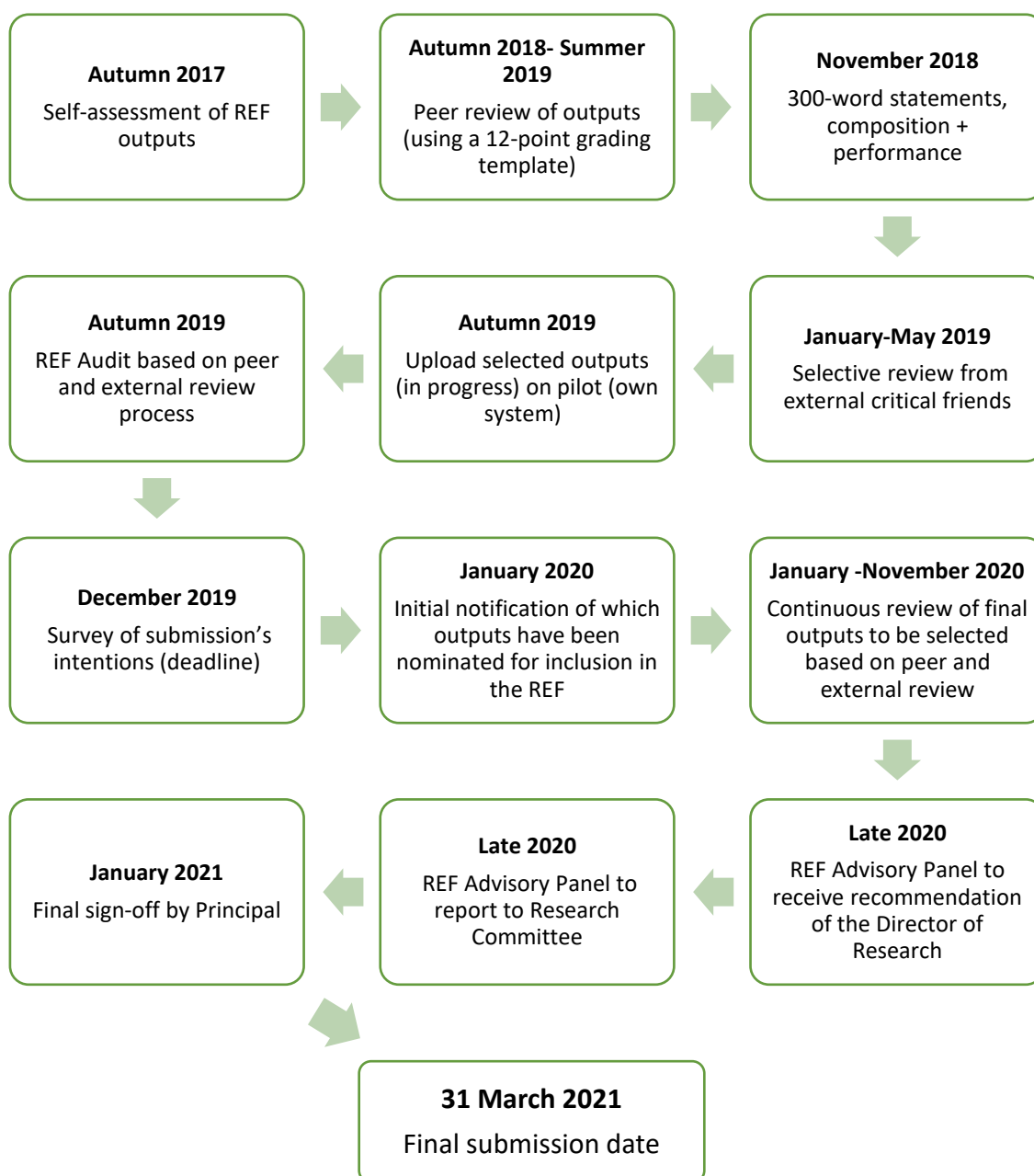
Processes for selecting outputs (Diagram 3)



All potential REF outputs are identified by members of staff using the REF Output Review Stage 1 form. This information is transferred onto a database of all outputs, which is organised into the five sub-disciplines within the Music UoA (Composition, Musicology, Music Psychology, Performance and Music Education). Initially, the higher ranked outputs (from the self-assessment) are selected for review. The Director of Research and Research Manager arrange for the outputs to be reviewed by at least two reviewers. The reviewers will be senior colleagues within the particular sub-discipline. Where two appropriate reviewers

are not available (due to the small numbers within the sub-discipline), selective external reviewers will be asked to review alongside the internal reviewer. Reviewers are given a 12-point scoring system (see Annex 2) and grade according to originality, significance and rigour of the particular output, using the REF scoring of 4* to unclassified. Additional outputs may be reviewed as a result of new outputs being identified or becoming available. All outputs are decoupled from the individual authors and sorted according to their score. This provides the basis of the selection of the required number of outputs. The REF Advisory Panel reviews the outputs and makes recommendations, which will be confirmed by the Principal. It will ensure that a consistent and transparent process has been followed and will consider an Equality Analysis of the output selection. A significant number of colleagues with significant responsibility for research are on fractional contracts because of the nature of their roles within a small specialist institution. As a result, the selection of outputs will reflect greater inclusivity than many other HEI institutions, because the RNCM, after selecting one item from each eligible member of staff, will be limited by the overall FTE in the selection of further outputs.

Schedule for the selection of outputs (Diagram 4)



Staff, committees and training

Staff, committees and training are the same as those outlined in Part 2 above.

Disclosure of circumstances

The RNCM will invite colleagues to declare special circumstances that have affected an individual's contribution to the unit's output pool. They will be invited to self-declare in Spring 2019, in Autumn 2019 and in late 2020 in an email from a single point of contact, the Research Manager, which will be sent to all staff who are considered to have significant responsibility for research and independent researchers. By mid-December 2020, the Individual Circumstances Panel will have received and considered all self-reported circumstances.

The College will follow the REF's 'Guidance on submissions', as set out in Part 3, Section 1: 'Staff circumstances'.

- Qualifying as an ECR (on the basis set out in paragraphs 148 and 149 and Annex L).
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6, as defined in paragraphs 161 to 163.
- Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Disability: this is defined in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1 under 'Disability'.
 - ii. Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.
 - iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances set out in Annex L.
 - iv. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - v. Gender reassignment.
 - vi. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

Adjusting expectations of an individual's contribution to the unit's output pool

The general expectation is that staff should be able to produce a minimum of one output during the REF assessment period. This minimum recognises the flexibility within the REF Guidance and that other staff can contribute up to 5 outputs, to enable the average of 2.5 outputs per submitted FTE. In the case where a combination of staff circumstances will exceptionally affect a unit's output pool, the College will ask EDAP for a reduction to the overall output pool. See 'Guidance on Submissions', paragraphs 178 to 183.

Members of staff who declare circumstances are asked to complete a form requesting more information, which will be kept confidential. A copy of the form is available in Annex 3 of this document.

Anonymised forms are then put before the Individual Circumstances Panel. The panel members will be given all necessary REF guidance in order to make informed decisions about whether to adjust the expectations of an individual's contribution to the unit's output pool. All members of the panel will have had E&D training. The forms will be considered using the criteria as set out in paragraphs 160 to 163 and Appendix L of the 'Guidance on Submissions' document. The RNCM will consider all self-disclosed special circumstances confidentially through the Individual Circumstances Panel. The membership is as follows:

Director of Research
Vice Principal (Academic)/Director of Programmes
Head of Human Resources
Director of Academic Quality

The Individual Circumstances Panel will advise the REF Advisory Group on the total reduction in number of outputs without disclosing any details of the individual circumstances to ensure confidentiality. The REF Advisory Group will consider the impact of the recommended reduction in each case and whether a reduction in the total output pool will be necessary. The latter would only apply if an individual were unable to produce the required minimum of one output. The College would then make a formal reduction request for the total output pool from EDAP. The College will then wait for the decision of EDAP and adjust its submission accordingly if instructed that the submitted staff member should be returned with zero outputs. The REF Advisory Group will also consider the accumulative impact of individual circumstances on the whole UoA. If they have disproportionately affected the unit's potential output pool, a request for a reduction in the total number of outputs will be made to EDAP.

The Research Manager will communicate the decision and adjusted expectations back to the staff member after the Individual Circumstances Panel and REF Advisory Group have met.

Equality impact assessment

The RNCM will carry out an Equality Analysis on selected outputs by protected characteristics (as outlined above). This will be considered by the REF Advisory Group before the final selection of outputs is made.

Part 5: Annexes

RNCM REF: Code of Practice - Annex 1

RNCM REF Advisory Group – Membership & Statement of Purpose

Date: October 2018

Revised Membership:

Chair: Professor Barbara Kelly	Director of Research (DR)
Professor Jane Ginsborg	Associate Director of Research (ADR)
Dr John Habron	Head of Music Education (HME)
Dr Jennie Henley	Director of Programmes (DoP)
Dr David Horne	Deputy Head of Graduate School (DHGS)
Paul Hynes	Head of Human Resources (HHR)
Professor Linda Merrick	Principal (P)
Dr Larry Goves	Senior Lecturer in Composition and Practice-Research lead
Secretary: Tom Wise	Research Manager (RM)

Invitations to join the group will be made as appropriate.

Statement of Purpose:

RNCM REF Advisory Group will advise and coordinate the RNCM's submission to the Research Excellence Framework 2021. The RNCM performed very well in the previous REF exercise, achieving 100% for Research Impact and the highest overall quality score for outputs out of all music conservatoires in the UK. The group's purpose is to steer the submission for REF2021 to ensure that the best possible result is achieved, representing the high-quality research that is carried out at the College.

The group will advise on the following specific tasks to be carried out by nominated staff, in adherence to REF guidelines:

- Interpretation of REF Guidelines
- Creation of the Code of Practice document
- Identification of staff with 'significant responsibility for research'
- Selection of Research Outputs
- Selection and creation of Impact Case Studies in collaboration with the principal academic staff in each case
- Creation of the Environment Statement

Frequency of meetings:

Four meetings per year, one in the Autumn term, two in the Spring term, one in the Summer term.

Normally one meeting per term with more scheduled in the lead-up to the REF submission date.

Reporting Lines:

RNCM REF Advisory Group reports to the Research Committee and Executive Committee

RNCM REF: Code of Practice - Annex 2 (page 1/2)

RNCM REF 2021

Guide for scoring research outputs.

Please give each research output a mark out of four in each of the following elements: originality, significance and rigour. The total score out of 12 can then be matched to the 4* REF grading system, using the lower table.

Reviewer Name:

Output ID number:

Element		Score 0-4
Originality:	how original is the research?	<input type="text"/>
Significance:	what is the global significance of the research?	<input type="text"/>
Rigour:	what was the quality of the research process?	<input type="text"/>
Total score :		<input type="text"/> / 12

REF Score	Band	Score /12
4*	high	12
	medium	11
	low	10
3*	high	9
	medium	8
	low	7
2*	high	6
	medium	5
	low	4
1*	high	3
	medium	2
	low	1
	ungraded	0

Comments:

RNCM REF: Code of Practice - Annex 2 (page 2/2)

Guidance to the Rating (based on REF 2014 Criteria for sub-panels).

Four star (quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics across and possibly beyond its area/field:

- a primary or essential point of reference
- of profound influence
- instrumental in developing new thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- a major expansion of the range and the depth of research and its application
- outstandingly novel, innovative and/or creative.

Three star (quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics across and possibly beyond its area/field:

- an important point of reference
- of lasting influence
- a catalyst for, or important contribution to, new thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- a significant expansion of the range and the depth of research and its application
- significantly novel or innovative or creative.

Two star (quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics across and possibly beyond its area/field:

- a recognised point of reference
- of some influence
- an incremental and cumulative advance on thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- a useful contribution to the range or depth of research and its application.

One star (quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of the following characteristics within its area/field:

- based on existing traditions of thinking, methodology and/or creative practice
- a useful contribution of minor influence.

A research output will be graded '**unclassified**' if it is either:

- below the quality threshold for one star; **or**

does not meet the definition of research used for the REF.

RNCM REF: Code of Practice - Annex 3

Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances template

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

- To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be submitted to REF without the minimum requirement of one output where they have;
 - circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
 - circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
 - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual's ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs.

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment

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

Ensuring Confidentiality

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

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

Changes in circumstances

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

Please complete the form below and email it to thomas.wise@ncm.ac.uk.

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

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

Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2020?

Yes

No

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

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>
<p>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</p> <p><i>Dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</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 for four months or more. <p><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>
<p>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 research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</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>Click here to enter text.</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>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

<p><i>To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	
<p>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>Click here to enter text.</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>Click here to enter text.</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>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree

Name: Print name here

Signed: Sign or initial here

Date: Insert date here

I give my permission for a member of the HR team, Research Manager or Director of Research to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

I would like to be contacted by:

Email Insert email address

Phone Insert contact telephone number