2021 framework

Overall quality

Outputs
- FTE x 2.5 = number of outputs required

Impact
- Impact case studies

Environment
- Environment data and template

60%
25%
15%
Key changes since REF 2014

• Submission of all staff with significant responsibility for research
• Transitional approach to non-portability of outputs
• Decoupling of staff from outputs
• Additional measures to support interdisciplinary research
• Broadening and deepening definitions of impact
• Open access requirements
• More structured environment statement with additional sections
• Weightings
Expert panels

- 34 sub-panels working under the guidance of four main panels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main panel responsibilities</th>
<th>Sub-panel responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Developing the panel criteria and working methods</td>
<td>• Contributing to the main panel criteria and working methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ensuring adherence to the criteria/procedures and consistent application of the overall assessment standards</td>
<td>• Assessing submissions and recommending the outcomes</td>
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<td>• Signing off the outcomes</td>
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- Consultation feedback – maintain consistency with UOA structure in 2014, except in couple of key areas
Submissions – summary

• Each submission in a UOA provides evidence about the activity and achievements of a ‘submitted unit’
• Responsibility for mapping staff into UOAs with institutions – guided by UOA descriptors
• Institutions will normally make one submission in each UOA they elect to submit in
• Joint submissions are encouraged where this is an appropriate way of describing collaborative research
• Consistency with 2014 process for multiple submissions – only by exception and with permission from the REF manager
Submissions – staff

• All staff with significant responsibility for research should be returned to the REF

- ‘Teaching and Research’ or ‘Research only’
- Independent researcher
- Minimum of 0.2 FTE
- Substantive connection

Accurately identifies staff with significant responsibility for research

Some T&R staff do not have significant responsibility for research

100 per cent returned

Staff with significant responsibility returned, following process developed, consulted on and documented

• Approach may vary by UOA where employment practices vary at this level
Significant responsibility for research

• ‘those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role.’

• No clear consensus in consultation on generic criteria – variations across disciplines and institutions

• Guidance will set out a ‘menu’ of what we consider may be appropriate indicators of significant responsibility.

Independent research

• Variation in key attributes also identified in the consultation

• Guidance will build on generic definition used in REF 2014 (undertaking ‘independent research, leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work’.)
Submissions – staff

Category C

• Contribution of ‘Category C’ staff should be captured in environment element
• Definition will follow 2014

Individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit on the census date.
Submissions – small units

• Fewer than 5 FTE
• Concerns about burden of meeting submission requirements
• Request an exclusion in exceptional circumstances:
  • One or a very small number of staff
  • Usually in UOA in which institution has not previously submitted
Submissions – decoupling

- Number of outputs per submission

- Output pool to include

FTE of Cat A submitted

Number of outputs

2.5

Min of 1 per Cat A submitted

Max of 5 attributed to individuals

Submitted outputs

May include outputs of staff that have left
Submissions - outputs

- Transitional approach to non-portability

- Outputs may be submitted by:
  - the institution employing eligible staff member when the output was demonstrably generated; and
  - the institution employing the staff member on the census date

- ‘Demonstrably generated’ – date when the output was first made publicly available

- Full eligibility criteria to be defined by panels
**Submissions – circumstances**

- Funding bodies’ aim to promote measures to support equality and diversity
- Informed by consultation feedback

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<th>Individual circumstances</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Exceptional individual circumstances</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Staff may be returned without min of one output</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Unit’s output requirement reduced by one</td>
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<tr>
<th>Unit circumstances</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Measures to account for units with higher proportions of staff not able to research productively due to individual circumstances</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Optional reduction in unit’s output requirement, in relation to proportion of staff meeting set criteria</td>
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</table>
Submissions – codes of practice

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code of practice to cover:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process for ensuring a fair approach to selecting outputs</td>
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- Guidance and template will be developed with EDAP and provided to institutions mid-2018.
- Provisional timetable for submission is spring 2019.
- Publication intended by end of 2019.
Submissions – interdisciplinary research

- Developed with advice from the Interdisciplinary Research Advisory Panel

**Interdisciplinary advisers**
- Oversee and participate in the assessment of IDR

**Interdisciplinary identifier**
- Identify IDR outputs, clearer guidance on use

**Section in environment**
- Unit’s structures in support of IDR
Outputs – open access

Policy update

• Outputs deposited as soon after the point of acceptance as possible, and **no later than three months** after this date from 1 April 2018.

• Deposit exception from 1 April 2018 – outputs remain compliant if they are deposited up to three months after the date of publication.

• Full survey report published early in 2018.
Quantitative data may be used to inform the assessment of outputs, where panels consider this appropriate for the discipline.
Impact – definitions and guidance

• UK funding bodies will work with Research Councils to align definitions of ‘academic’ and ‘wider’ impact

• Additional guidance on:
  • Criteria of ‘reach and significance’
  • Impact arising from public engagement

• Impact on teaching will be widened to include impact within, as well as beyond, the submitting institution

• Number of case studies
  • one case study + one further case study per up to 15 FTE returned, for the first 105 FTE. After 105 FTE, one further case study per up to 50 FTE returned.
Impact – consistency with REF 2014

• Impact remains eligible for submission by institution(s) where research was generated

• Impact must be underpinned by excellent research of minimum 2* quality

• Timeframe:
  • 1 January 2000 - 31 December 2020 for underpinning research
  • 1 August 2013 - 31 July 2020 for impacts
Impact – refinements to the assessment process

• Impact template (REF3a in 2014) to be included as explicit section in environment element
• Case study template (REF3b in 2014) will contain mandatory fields
• Will require routine provision of audit evidence:
  • Will not be routinely provided to sub-panels
Environment template

• More structured template
• Sections will include:
  • equality and diversity
  • approach to enabling impact
  • approach to supporting collaboration
  • structures to support interdisciplinary research
  • section on open research
Environment data

• Research income, degrees awarded and income-in-kind
• Use of more quantitative data – advice from working group of Forum for Responsible Research Metrics
Institutional level assessment of environment

- Institutional-level information will be included in the UOA-level environment template and will be assessed by the relevant sub-panel in REF 2021.

- Pilot of the standalone assessment of the institutional-level environment will draw on this submitted information.

- Outcomes from the separate pilot exercise will not be included in REF 2021.
Next steps (Jan-March 2018)

- Exploratory workshops on impact to discuss issues around:
  - submission of case studies continued from 2014
  - broadening of underpinning research to include research activities and bodies of work
  - developing further guidelines on impact through public engagement
- Working group of Forum for Responsible Research Metrics looking into use of quantitative indicators in environment template
- Commissioned report on standardisation of quantitative data in impact case studies
- Work on coverage of bibliographic data to inform panels’ decisions on whether to request citation data
Expert panels

• February: appoint sufficient members to ensure each sub-panel has appropriate expertise for this task, including interdisciplinary research and the wider use of research.

• March-June 2018: panels meet to discuss panel criteria and working methods

• Summer 2018: draft panel criteria published for consultation

• Autumn-Winter 2018: develop and publish final panel criteria

• REF team draft Guidance on Submissions in parallel with panels’ development of criteria
Further engagement

• Establish Data Collection Steering Group to advise on and oversee development of submissions system

• Establish institutional contacts:
  • A REF contact: main conduit between the REF team and the institution for detailed information relating to REF policies, procedures and guidance about submissions.
  • A REF technical contact: main contact with the REF team concerning the technical aspects of data collection. We would usually expect this to be the person in the institution with responsibility for processing data relating to REF submissions.

• HEIs requested to complete the online form at http://survey.hefce.ac.uk/s/DX2SU/ by Friday 12th January 2018.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2017-18</td>
<td>Appoint panels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>Panels meet to develop criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer to Autumn 2018</td>
<td>Publish draft guidance, and consultation on panel criteria</td>
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<td>Publish guidance on Codes of Practice</td>
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<td>Winter 2018-19</td>
<td>Publish final guidance and criteria</td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>Complete preparation of submission systems</td>
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<td>Submission of Codes of Practice (tbc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Submission phase</td>
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<td>2021</td>
<td>Assessment phase</td>
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Further information

- [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) (includes all relevant documents and FAQs)

- Enquiries from staff at HEIs should be directed to their nominated institutional contact (will make available on [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk))

- Other enquiries to [info@ref.ac.uk](mailto:info@ref.ac.uk)