

University of Northampton

Code of practice

REF 2021

“Transforming Lives – Inspiring Change”

This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the REF team at REF@Northampton.ac.uk if required.

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Part 1: Introduction

1. This document outlines the University of Northampton's (hereafter UoN) code of practice for REF2021. This code of practice is required to ensure that the selection process for submission of staff and outputs to REF2021 is fair and transparent.
2. This document is written in accordance with the following publications by UKRI in relation to the Research Excellence Framework (REF):
 - Guidance on submissions (2019/01)
 - Panel criteria and working methods (2019/02)
 - Guidance on codes of practice (2019/03)
3. This document outlines our procedures in relation to three keys areas:
 - identifying those who have significant responsibility for research;
 - identifying staff who are independent researchers; and
 - the selection of outputs to be submitted to REF2021

As an institution we will not be submitting 100% of Category A staff. The UoN does not consider all Category A staff to have significant responsibility for research or to be independent researchers. While we use a standard teaching and research contract for most academic staff, they are not all research active. The academic portfolio of UoN means a significant proportion of academic staff are employed for their professional expertise. This includes subject areas such as teacher training, nursing, policing, fashion and journalism where staff have not been previously required to undertake academic research. UoN's commitment to research means that many of these staff are currently undertaking doctoral level studies supported financially and in terms of workload by the University. Since REF2014 43 Category A staff have registered for doctoral level study at UoN (as part-time students) and a further 19 staff have been awarded their doctorates. We have also supported staff to complete doctoral level study at other HEIs. In this context, we do not consider it appropriate to give staff currently undertaking doctoral level study significant responsibility for research (hereafter SRR) nor do we consider them to be independent researchers.

All staff identified as having SRR and considered independent researchers will be submitted to REF2021. This code of practice, therefore, sets out the procedures used by our institution to determine Category A staff who are eligible to be submitted to REF2021.

4. In line with the REF2021 guidance on codes of practice, UoN's code of practice has been designed to uphold all relevant equality legislation and to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination, directly or indirectly, against any individual with protected characteristics as outlined in the [Equality Act 2010](#). This code of practice has also been developed in response to the public-sector equality duty which came into force in April 2011 and UoN's institutional policy on equality and diversity ([Appendix 1](#)). An important part of our code of practice is to engage and support all staff, including those with special circumstances.

5. All universities making a submission to REF2021 will submit their codes of practice to Research England by 7 June 2019 for approval. Each code of practice will be reviewed by Research England's REF2021 Equality and Diversity Panel (EDAP) to ensure that they adhere to REF2021's guidance on submission. If a code of practice is not approved, there will be two more opportunities to revise and resubmit. The third and final submission allowed, must be submitted by 15 November 2019. If this submission is not approved, then that institution will not be able to submit to REF2021.
6. UoN's code of practice for REF2021 has substantially built on the code of practice submitted to REF2014. Increased emphasis has been placed on the key principles of transparency, consistency, accountability, inclusivity, communication and accessibility. This policy has been designed as part of an iterative process and at each stage it will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment. To ensure greater transparency, inclusivity and improved communication [Figure 1](#) outlines our committee structure and information flow. This is designed to ensure that the code of practice has been discussed in a variety of forums across the University, enabling maximum reach and dissemination. Focus has been placed on a much more detailed consultation and feedback process and engaging staff with the core principles that underpin this code of practice as outlined below.

Availability of code of practice to Staff for consultation, feedback and agreement

7. The code of practice will be made available in a range of formats (large print, brail, electronic, hardcopy) to enable all staff to be engaged in, consulted on, and informed about our REF2021 submission. The draft code of practice is currently available on our [staff intranet web site](#), our [Research Staff Development page](#) and the [Yammer Research Support Group](#) and will be updated within three working days of receiving the approved code of practice.
8. All staff have received personalised emails about REF2021 and our preparation for submission. Presentations and workshops have been held for all Faculties (including forming part of faculty staff development days) and have been open to all University staff. Staff have been invited to feedback through email, consultative meetings and faculty and university-wide research and enterprise committees. Updates on REF2021 preparation have been posted in our staff e-newsletter (Unify). We have set up an intranet staff group for all staff at UoN using the "Yammer" platform for information and as a forum to discuss REF preparation and selection processes.
9. A dedicated email account has been set up for staff who want to submit individual responses about the code of practice and any questions in relation to the REF. Staff can also feedback in confidence through representatives on the REF Steering Group. We have ensured that the composition of our REF steering and working groups encompass and give opportunity for a wide of range of institutional voices to be included in the policies and decision-making process. In addition, we have set up a REF Appeals Panel and a REF Individual Circumstances Panel to give careful consideration to those individuals with concerns or circumstances applicable to our REF selection process. We have ensured that the membership of these panels guarantees confidentiality, independence and impartiality in support of our commitment to transparency, fairness, equity and inclusivity.
10. It was made clear at every stage of the consultative process on the draft code of practice that any feedback received and responded to was part of the staff agreement process. Staff were encouraged to feedback on all aspects of the code of practice. The assumption was made that where no feedback had been received that staff agreed with the code of practice and the principles underlying it. In addition, and to further ensure staff agreement,

dedicated meetings were held with the UCU executive team and its members, and with the staff equality and inclusion group, to ensure that these groups were supportive of this code of practice.

Principles Underlying the Code of practice

11. In line with REF2021 Guidance on Codes of Practice the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity have been adhered to in the following ways:

- Transparency

All processes for identifying eligible staff who have significant responsibility for research and are considered independent researchers will continue to be communicated to all staff throughout the REF period via individual emails, one to one meetings with individual staff and staff groups by request, online Yammer Research Support Group, and through meetings with UCU and other staff representative bodies such as the Readers and Associate Professors group, the central University Research and Enterprise Committee (REC) and Faculty Research and Enterprise Committees (FREC).

- Consistency

UoN's selection processes will follow the principles set out in this code of practice and this is clearly outlined in the decision-making flow diagrams for both staff and outputs to be submitted. The decision-making process will be applied consistently and uniformly across the University and with due consideration to staff with a range of circumstances. At all stages of the selection process staff will be communicated with and have the opportunity for one to one support and guidance, and the opportunity to appeal.

- Accountability

All responsibilities for individuals and groups involved in the selection of staff and outputs for UoN's REF submission are clearly defined and all staff with selection/decision-making responsibilities have been trained in issues related to equality and diversity and unconscious bias with an emphasis on REF2021. The membership and terms of reference for the REF Steering Group and the REF panel sub-groups can be found in [Appendix 2](#). An appeals process ([Appendix 3](#)) has been implemented since the code of practice has been drafted to ensure that all appeals are responded to in a timely fashion. The appeals panel will meet on a monthly basis and will respond to all appeals within five working days.

- Inclusivity

This code of practice will promote an inclusive environment by establishing, maintaining and updating an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) from its draft to approval. Equality and diversity analysis is being undertaken at all key stages of the REF preparation and submission process. This includes on-going equality analysis of data on staff during our mock REF exercises and at each stage of the selection process up to and after final submission in November 2020. These processes are designed to foster an inclusive environment that enables us to fairly identify those staff who have significant responsibility for research and who are independent researchers. It is also important to monitor the implications of these processes for those groups with protected characteristics.

Equality and Diversity

12. The University of Northampton is committed to the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion. It seeks through all its policies and actions to promote an inclusive environment and to integrate the principles of the Equality Act 2010 into all its HR policies and practices ([Appendix 1](#)).

The Legislative Context

13. The Equality Act (2010) prohibits direct and indirect discrimination and covers the protected characteristics of:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion and belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
14. In 2011 the public-sector duty of the Act came into effect and requires all universities in England, Scotland and Wales to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
15. UoN's equality work is overseen by an Equality and Diversity Staff Forum and an Inclusive Student Experience Group that are overseen by the Head of HR and the Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation respectively. Both these groups report regularly to Senate and the Governors. Annual action plans are produced to monitor the workflow and priorities of these groups. All selection procedures for REF2021 will be analysed in terms of equality and diversity and all findings reported and monitored by the Equality and Diversity staff group.
16. All Universities need to ensure that their REF2021 procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against, or otherwise have the effect of harassing or victimising individuals because of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth. In addition, we have a responsibility to ensure that fixed-term and part-time employees have the right to be treated equally with comparable employees on open contracts or full-time contracts. In this respect it is important to note that fixed-term and part-time colleagues have equal access to UoN's policies, services and support mechanisms.
17. All UoN staff involved in decision-making for UoN's REF2021 submission will receive mandatory training on equality and diversity and unconscious bias in the context of the REF2021.
18. All external advisors will follow the principles underlying UoN's code of practice. They will be required to undertake assessments in a transparent, consistent, accountable and inclusive manner. External advice may inform decisions on the selection of material for inclusion in the submission. External advisors will not, however, be involved in the processes to identify those with SRR or to determine research independence.

Equality Impact Assessment

19. An initial equality impact assessment (EIA – Appendix 4) undertaken at UoN informs the drafting of this code of practice as a baseline to consider and understand the implications for equality and diversity in the processes for selection of staff and outputs for inclusion in the REF2021 submission.
20. The EIA reviewed the draft code of practice in terms of protected characteristics for:
 - identifying staff who have SRR
 - identifying staff who are independent researchers
 - selection of outputs for submission
 - preparing for the final REF2021 submission
21. UoN will give careful consideration to the impact of the REF2021 selection processes for all staff. This includes those with protected characteristics, those on full, part-time and fixed-term contracts and those who may have special circumstances. The results of EIAs along key stages of the development of the code of practice will be mapped out to illustrate where mitigation is indicated by their findings.

Determining Eligible Staff

22. Research England requires HEIs to determine eligibility for submission to REF2021 where 100% of Category A staff are not being submitted.
23. Category A eligible staff must:
 - be employed on a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater
 - on the payroll of UoN on 31 July 2020 (REF census date)
 - have a primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'
 - have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit
 - staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher
24. Category A staff must have a significant responsibility for research, that is "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." [Guidance on Submissions paragraph 138]
25. Category A staff must be independent researchers, that is "an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme." [Guidance on Submissions paragraph 131]
26. Where the above stipulations do not cover 100% of staff within a unit of assessment (hereafter UoA), we are required to define how staff are identified as having SRR and as being independent researchers. This process is outlined below.

Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

27. Significant responsibility for research as defined by the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions ([p. 34](#)) includes three key criteria:
1. 'Explicit time and resources are made available'. Indicators of this could include a specific proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the context of the institution's practices and applied in a consistent way, research allocation in a workload model or equivalent.
 2. 'To engage actively in independent research'. Indicators of this could include eligibility to apply for research funding as the lead or co-applicant, access to research leave or sabbaticals, membership of research centres or institutes within the HEI.
 3. 'And that is an expectation of their job role'. Indicators of this could include: current research responsibilities as indicated in, for example, career pathways or stated objectives, expectations of research by role as indicated in, for example, job descriptions and appraisal.
28. Some Category A staff at UoN do not have SRR and/or may not have achieved independence as researchers as defined above ([paragraph 16](#)). These staff will not be included in UoN's submission to REF2021.
29. UoN uses a combination of all three criteria listed above to determine those staff who have SRR and are therefore eligible to be submitted to REF2021.
30. UoN has a three-stage process to identify SRR. Stage 1 will determine if research is an expectation of an individual's role. The University of Northampton has designated roles/posts (e.g., Professor, Reader, Associate Professor, Research leader) where research is an expectation. All Professors, Associate Professors, Readers and Research Leaders will be included in our REF2021 submission (information provided to Head of Research Support by HR). Equally, if staff have completed a doctoral level qualification or have equivalent experience and have research objectives identified as part of their annual Performance and Development Review (PDR) scheme, then they are considered to have SRR (information provided to Head of Research Support by HR). The PDR process must be completed by the end of August each year in anticipation of the following academic year (new members of staff meet with their line managers in the first week of employment at UoN to agree objectives). For any staff members who are long-term absent from work, the PDR process is initiated as part of the return to work meeting which is held in the first week that they return to work with their line manager. The PDR process is a consultative one where objectives are agreed between a staff member and their line manager. Staff members who do not meet these criteria will not be considered to have SRR and therefore they would not be eligible for submission to the REF. These objectives are reviewed in three stages (initial, interim and final) across the academic year. PDRs are conducted for all UoN staff but the objectives will vary according to an individual's role and can include research objectives if appropriate but equally might focus on enterprise or professional training objectives, teaching objectives, PhD study and/or other types of scholarly activity. This is to accommodate the range of staff experience, career pathways and expertise at UoN (information provided to Head of Research Support by HR).
31. Stage 2 then determines whether time and resources have been made available for research activity if that is a PDR objective. The University of Northampton uses its annual TRAC (Transparent Approach to Costing) returns to monitor the allocation of time to a range of activities. TRAC covers teaching, administration, scholarly activity and research (pro rata for part-time staff). The TRAC applies to all academic staff including full-time, part-time and

those on fixed-term contracts. To be identified as having significant responsibility for research a staff member must have a minimum of 20% of their TRAC allocation dedicated to research and this will also be reflected in their annual workload planning. This will be recorded as Institution Own Funded Research and can also be supplemented by internal and external research funding. The annual workload planning consultation (between staff member and line manager) is conducted in the summer of each academic year and confirmed by September. If there has been no allocation of time or resources for research then a staff member would not have SRR, and therefore would not be eligible for submission to the REF.

32. The decisions made at stage 1 and 2 of the process for determining SRR are agreed between each staff member and their line manager. PRD objectives and time/resource allocation are then reviewed by the Deputy Dean/Dean of each Faculty to ensure equity and transparency.
33. Finally, stage 3 of the process is to identify those staff on teaching and research contracts who can be considered as independent researchers undertaking self-directed research for the purposes of REF2021. The indicators of research independence that will be used include:
 - A doctoral level qualification or equivalent experience. Staff will not normally be considered as independent researchers while undertaking research for a doctoral qualification (i.e., conducting research under supervision). However, academic staff who are undertaking “PhD by publication” would fall outside this definition as the degree is awarded based on previously published research undertaken independently. The university further recognises that in some discipline areas, gaining doctoral qualifications has not been a traditional path in academic development (e.g., creative arts/policing/fashion/nursing/journalism). Exceptions will be considered for all staff on a case-by-case basis using evidence from our CRIS (Current Research Information System – updated by all academics). The evidence considered is not based on evaluations of quality or volume but on that staff member demonstrating self-directed research within their particular field.
 - Leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.
 - 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.
 - Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships has been provided by the funding bodies and can be found at www.ref.ac.uk.
 - Acting as a co-investigator on an externally-funded research project
 - Leading a research group/centre/institute
 - Significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research
 - Recruited to an internally-funded fellowship where independent research is a requirement of the role.
34. It is recognised that each indicator does not in and of itself demonstrate independence and that there are instances where more than one factor may need to be considered.
35. The decisions made at stage 3 of the process for determining Research will be determined by the Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation and the Head of Research Support based on

evidence from the UoN's CRIS and meeting with individual staff where further clarification is required.

36. All staff who have met Stage 1 and 2 will then be assessed in relation to Stage 3. This will be done initially within two weeks of the code of practice being approved by UKRI. The outcome will be communicated to all staff thereafter alongside the opportunity to appeal any decision made. All appeals will be reviewed by the REF Appeals Panel (consisting of a member of HR and an independent reviewer). If staff request a meeting, this will be arranged and the staff can be accompanied by a fellow staff member or union representative for support. The appeals process will be conducted monthly following the approval of the code of practice. The last month for appeals to be received is August 2020. Receipt of appeals will be acknowledged within one working day and the outcomes of the appeals process will be communicated to staff within five working days.
37. In accordance with the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity, line managers are expected to exercise appropriate consideration in setting PDR objectives and in the allocation of TRAC time and workload planning to support a range of staff circumstances. These can include consideration of members of staff who are new to the University and need to complete their probationary year, early career researchers, those returning from a break for family/caring responsibilities or other long-term absences (e.g. illness or maternity/paternity leave) and or disabilities, learning differences or long-term conditions that may impact on the objectives an individual can achieve in any given period. All annual workload planning processes are conducted in consultation with individual members of staff and individuals can query their annual workload allocation. Annual workload plans include teaching, research, professional and scholarly activities. They are developed and recorded for all academic staff at subject/disciplinary level and then submitted to Deans and Deputy Deans to ensure equity, transparency and fairness across different disciplinary groups and in accordance with expectations for individual staff members.
38. All staff on a research-only contract (i.e., 100 percent of FTE is committed to research and/or a workload is deemed to be considered 100 per cent research) will be returned to RE2021 provided they meet the definition of an independent researcher as outlined in the section on independent researcher below.
39. [Figure 1](#) outlines the decision-making process for those staff considered to fill the criteria of having SRR and who can be considered independent researchers.

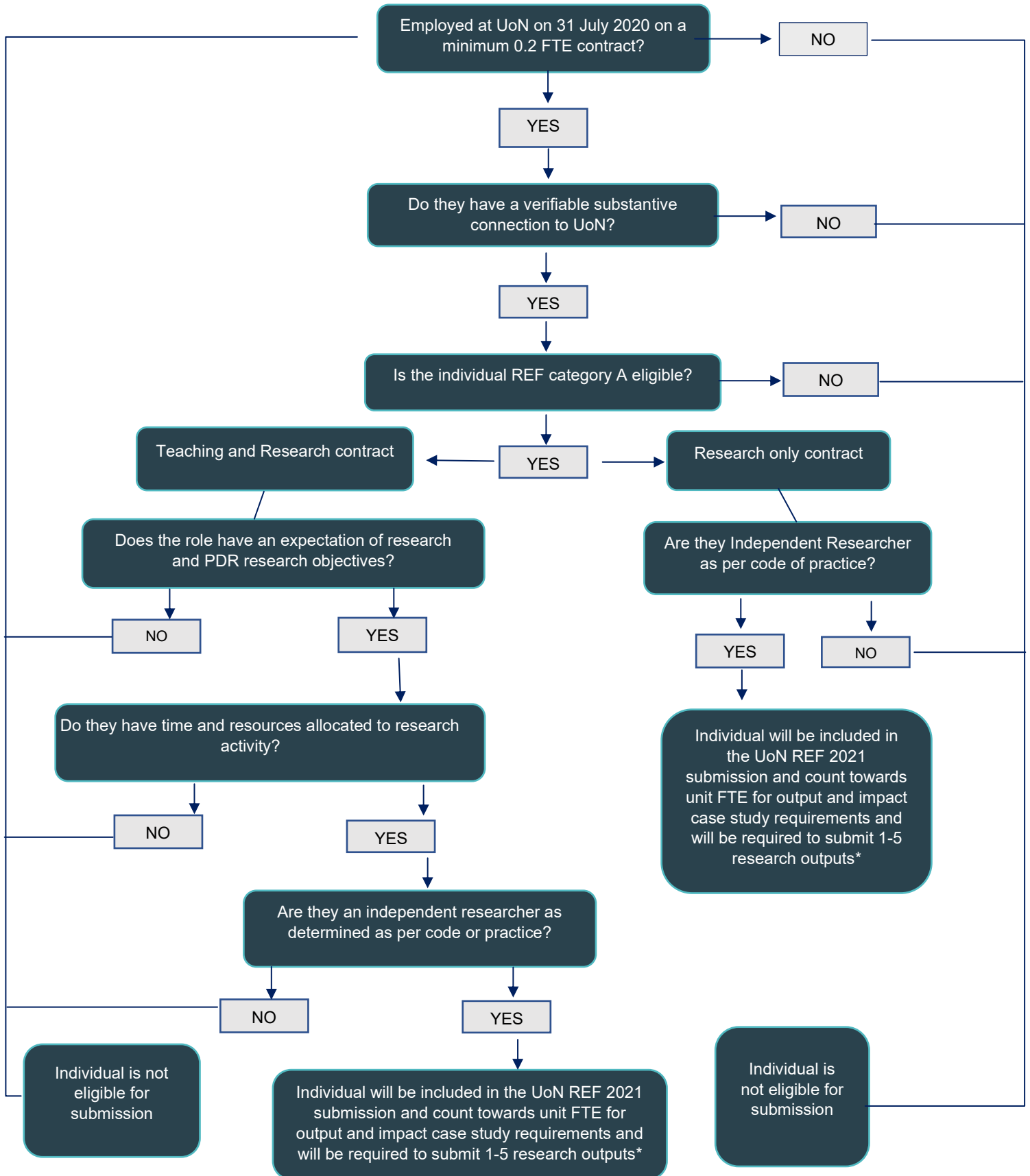
Independent Researcher – Research Only Contracts

40. Category A staff on research only contracts are not necessarily considered to be independent researchers. An independent researcher is defined by the REF 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". Possible indicators of independence are listed below. Each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and where appropriate multiple factors may need to be considered:
- Leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.

- 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.
- Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships has been provided by the funding bodies and can be found at www.ref.ac.uk.
- Acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project
- Leading a research group/centre/institute
- Significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research
- Recruited to an internally-funded fellowship where independent research is a requirement of the role.

41. UoN recognises that attaining research independence is a continuous process, reflecting an individual's development in their role. To enable the most inclusive REF2021 selection process as possible, if circumstances change at any point of the REF cycle up to 31 October 2020, cases for submission to the REF can be revisited on a case by case basis.

Figure 1 UoN Decision-Making Diagram for Determining Staff Eligibility to REF2021

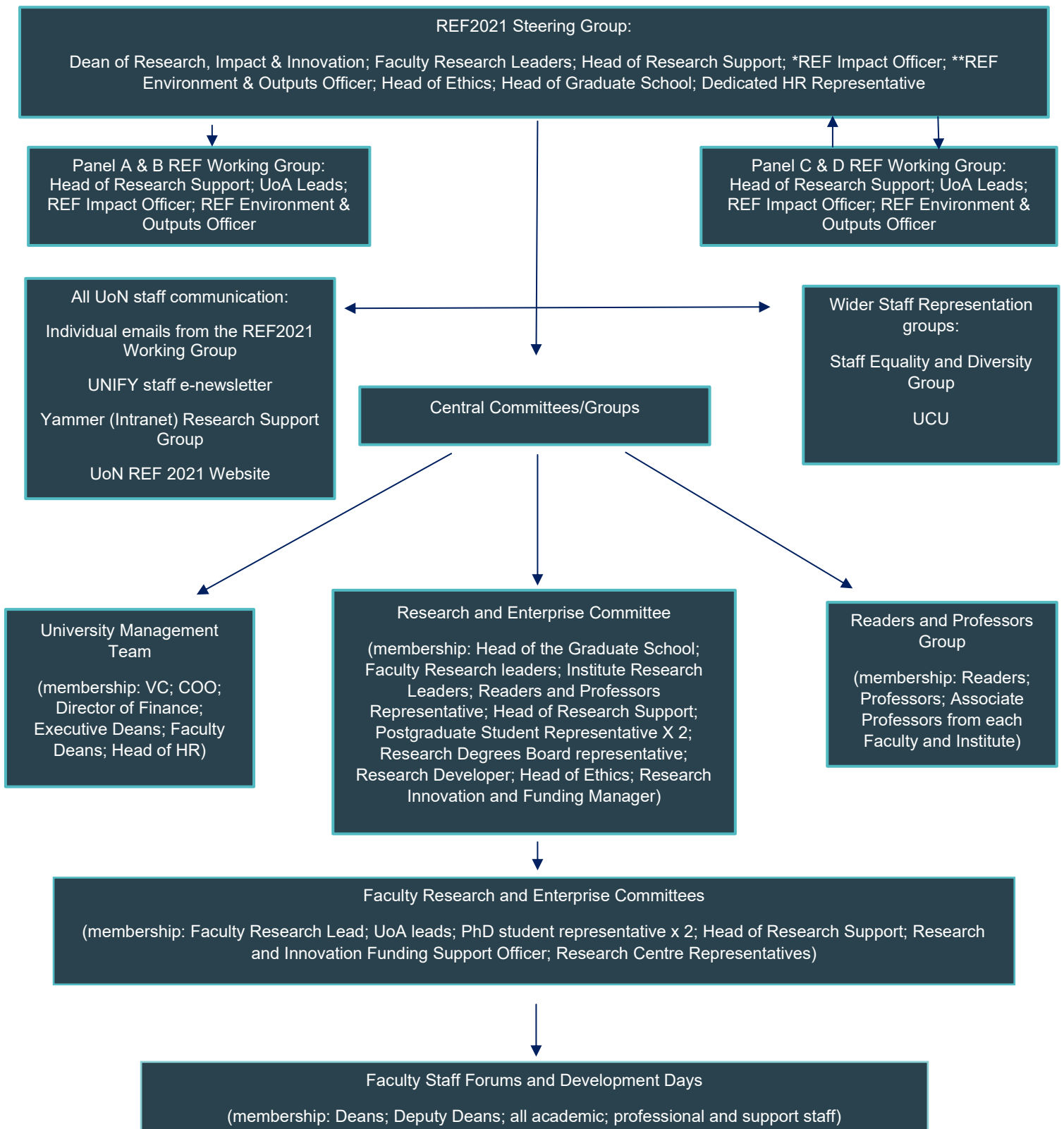


*Where staff meet the eligibility requirements set out in paragraphs 117 to 122 of the 'Guidance on submissions' and on the census date are on furlough under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, they remain eligible for submission. The FTE of the staff member's qualifying contract will be returned.

Part 3: Communication Plan

42. Following the publication of the initial decisions on REF2021 in September 2017, a series of workshops were held at faculty and university level to inform staff of the changes in the requirements for submission to REF2021. This information was further communicated at all relevant committees and staff development days. (as per [Figure 1](#)). Staff were also alerted to these changes through the staff intranet, a quarterly research newsletter and personalised emails to all staff on teaching and research contracts, and research only contracts.
43. The REF steering group was formed in 2017 to lead the Universities REF submission and to ensure that all decisions in relation to the REF were handled in a consistent, fair and transparent manner. The REF steering group approved a programme of communication and consultation with staff which is outlined in [Figure 1](#). This programme combined working with the existing University committees alongside staff development and faculty forum days.
44. The opportunity to feedback on the code of practice, including raising any concerns or requiring further information, was presented at all events and meetings.
45. The code of practice was circulated to the UCU Branch Executive for further dissemination and a follow up meeting was held on 14 May 2019 with UCU members. At this meeting it was confirmed and later recorded in the minutes that “the Code document has been circulated through UCU Branch Exec and there was no feedback and all were happy with the content”.
46. Appendix 5 outlines a more detailed communications strategy with timelines for REF2021.

Figure 2 Committee Structure and Communication Flow



* Impact Officer in post until 2/12/2020

* Environment & Outputs Officer in post until 31/12/2020

Part 4: Staff, Committees and Training

47. The procedures for appointing staff and committees/panels responsible for overseeing the REF2021 submission has been based on designated research roles, research experience, leadership roles and representation from HR, all research-related committees and groups.
48. All UoN staff involved in decision-making for the University's REF2021 submission will receive role-specific training, mandatory training on Equality and Diversity, unconscious bias training and a dedicated training session to ensure understanding of the code of practice. Any other relevant University policies will be used as appropriate (for example, conducting processes for appeal).
49. The Vice-Chancellor has formal institutional responsibility for the REF2021 submission and Chairs the UMT (University Management Team) which the REF Steering Group reports to.
50. The REF Steering Group is chaired by the Dean for Research, Impact and Innovation and leads on the policies and processes adopted in preparation for the REF2021 submission. This group also consists of Faculty Research Leaders, Institute Research Leaders, the Head of Research Support, the REF Impact Officer, the REF Environment and Outputs Officer, an HR representative, the Head of the Ethics Committee and Head of the Graduate School. This group reports via representation to all research committees including the Research and Enterprise Committee (REC) which oversees all research and enterprise activity across the University and reports to Senate. Members of the REF Steering Group are on Faculty Research and Enterprise Groups (FREC) to ensure wider dissemination and consistency of practice down to subject level.
51. Faculty research leads manage research processes at Faculty level on a day-to-day basis and in terms of REF2021 are responsible for ensuring that:
 - All communications from the REF Steering Group are communicated clearly and comprehensively to Faculty and Institute staff
 - During the REF submission, all relevant staff will have the opportunity to submit outputs for consideration by the REF Panel Groups
 - Final recommendations to the Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation for the REF2021 submission have been made in consultation with their staff and done in a timely, transparent, equitable and consistent way
52. UoA leads oversee the submission and selection of outputs for each UoA and are responsible for communicating any decisions made to the relevant staff. They work to support the Faculty research leads and the Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation.
53. Subject Leaders are responsible for working with UoA leads in the fair and equitable allocation of annual workloads and for ensuring special circumstances are accounted for.
54. REF Panel Working Groups (A & B, C & D) are responsible for overseeing the work of the UoA leads in terms of the panel criteria and in ensuring the review of outputs for REF submission is fair and transparent and based on the quality of the research. They will act as a form of peer review in the selection process. They also ensure consistency across UoAs submitting to the same panel and that all processes adhere to the principles outlined in the

code of practice. All outputs will be read internally and given a rating according to the review and these will be further moderated by external review processes.

55. External assessment will provide another layer of evidence and ensure that the selection process has been conducted fairly and transparently. External assessment will be particularly important where the UoA has not been previously submitted to a research exercise and to judge outputs where internal assessments have not been clear-cut. External assessors will only be asked to comment on the quality of outputs (not on the individuals) and they will not be given any information in relation to individual circumstances.

Appeals Process

56. The appeals process will be communicated to staff via individual emails at each stage of the selection process (in terms of staff with SRR and those who can be considered as independent researchers).

57. Appeals can be submitted via email (REFAppeals@northampton.ac.uk), which is managed by HR, using the REF2021 Appeals Form ([Appendix 3](#)). All appeals will be reviewed by the REF Appeals Panel (consisting of a member of HR and an independent reviewer). If staff request a meeting, this will be arranged and the staff can be accompanied by a fellow staff member or union representative for support.

58. The appeals process will be conducted monthly following the approval of the code of practice. Receipt of appeals will be acknowledged within one working day and the outcomes of the appeals process will be communicated to staff within five working days.

59. Eligible grounds for appeal include the determination of having SRR or being an independent researcher.

60. The independence of those involved in hearing appeals is guaranteed by the fact that they will not be involved in any REF decision-making processes. Each panel member will have training in handling grievances and appeals. All staff will be trained in equality and diversity and unconscious bias for REF2021 purposes. All appeal cases will be heard by more than one individual.

61. Outcomes of successful appeals will be disclosed to the REF Steering Group but the details surrounding the appeal will remain confidential.

Part 5: Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 2)

62. The REF Steering Group will carry out EIAs at each stage of the code of practice being approved – prior to the first draft being published, after the first consultation and then after any revisions are required by UKRI. Further detailed equality and diversity analysis will be undertaken post-submission to:

- Evaluate the representation of eligible staff against our academic staff profile
- Understand how the selection of outputs for submission represent the diversity of eligible staff
- Identify where further progress on diversity issues is needed and can be incorporated into the delivery of the University's Research Strategy

63. Analysis of equality and diversity will draw on internal employment data and will be used with due regard to all GDPR regulations. Any information published will be at aggregated levels and no individual will be identified in this process.

64. The final EIA will be submitted to research funding bodies after submission and will be published on the UoN website.

Part 6: Selection of Outputs

65. This code of practice details the processes that will be used to ensure a fair and transparent selection of outputs, without bias to any staff.

66. Each UoA submission will comprise the number of outputs that equates to 2.5 times the combined FTE of staff submitted to the UoA.

67. A minimum of one output is required for each submitted staff member (unless reduced due to approved special circumstances), with no more than five attributed to any individual (including former staff).

68. The REF guidelines allow for the submission of outputs from former staff where the output was first made available in the public domain while the staff member was employed as an eligible staff member. These outputs will only be selected based on quality. This is to ensure a fair representation of the research undertaken at UoN since 2014.

69. Final decisions on what outputs are included in the REF submission is the responsibility of the REF Steering Group, informed by the advice of REF Panel Working Groups and UoA leads. Decisions will be based on the quality of the outputs as the key criterion for delivering the best UoN submission for REF2021.

70. Eligible research outputs are defined by the REF Guidance on Submissions as per the assessment criteria paragraphs [166](#) - [282](#). These outputs will have been entered into the University's current research information system (Pure).

71. Items for review will in the first instance be proposed by members of staff but may also be proposed by UoA leads or members of the REF Steering Group.

Number of Outputs per Staff Member

72. The number of outputs required will be made up as per the REF Guidelines illustrated in [Figure 3](#) below. In addition, we will take into consideration any reductions per unit of assessment due to special circumstances, as per the guidance in [Annex L](#) of the REF Guidelines.

73. A minimum of one output per category A staff who has SRR and is an independent researcher will be submitted providing they have a contract of 0.2 FTE or above and has a substantive connection to the University on the REF census date of 31 July 2020. The

remaining outputs to be submitted may be made up of outputs from any staff member, including former staff members who are assigned to that unit of assessment to bring the total number of submitted items to the required number. This may also include staff within the REF period who formerly met the REF requirements for SRR and independent researcher, but who have now changed contract or role during the REF period and are therefore ineligible on the census date (31 July 2020) where it can be demonstrated that the output/s were generated while they were eligible for submission. For example, a staff member who has changed from a 1.0 FTE to a 0.1 FTE, but met the eligibility criteria before the change of contract, but within the REF period. This enables the submission from the UoN to be as inclusive as possible.

74. There are many reasons why a researcher may have fewer or more outputs attributed to them in an assessment period. It is not expected that all staff members will be returned with the same number of outputs.

Double-weighting

75. Where there are substantial pieces of co-authored work, reflecting large-scale or intensive collaborative research within the same submitting unit (e.g., monograph), and a double-weighting request has been submitted for the output, institutions may attribute the output to a maximum of two members of staff returned within the same submission. Requests for double-weighting must be accompanied by a statement of up to 100 words explaining how the scale and scope of the output satisfies the relevant Panel criteria.

76. Covid 19

77. Delayed outputs

78. The funding bodies recognise that COVID-19 has had effects on the dissemination of research, and that this has been more marked for some output types, including those produced from practice research and longer-form outputs such as monographs. To take account of such delays to the dissemination of outputs that were previously expected to be in public domain by the end of the REF 2021 publication period (31 December 2020), we have set out a provision for submitting delayed outputs. This provision is intended for use on an exceptional basis, where there was a reasonable expectation that an output would be in the public domain by 31 December 2020.

79. Where the final version of an output is not in the public domain by the end of the publication period, 31 December 2020, an output will remain eligible for submission where:

a. There is clear evidence that the final version of the output was expected in the public domain by 31 December 2020 (for example, the output was accepted for publication and publication was scheduled or expected by a particular date, or a performance or exhibition had been scheduled).

b. The appearance of the final version in the public domain has been delayed due to the effects of COVID-19 (such as staff circumstances, and/or external factors, such as cancelled performances or publisher delays).

c. All other eligibility criteria for outputs are met (see 'Guidance on submissions', paragraphs 205 to 222).

80. This provision does not apply to outputs that are not in the public domain due to delays to completing the research itself, unless there is clear evidence that the expected date of appearance in the public domain was within the publication period.

81. Where submitted, an affected output statement will provide contextual information to the assessing sub-panel, which will be used to support the assessment of the submitted output in accordance with the criteria of originality, significance and rigour. Where submitted in their UOAs, the main and sub-panels will incorporate examples of the affected output statement in the calibration exercise to ensure consistency in the assessment approach.
82. In accordance with the principle of transparency, the REF intends to publish affected output statements in summer 2022, along with the wider publication of those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity.

Open access

83. Where it has not been possible for an output that is in scope (as defined at paragraph 223 of the 'Guidance on submissions') of the open access requirements to meet these requirements due to COVID-19, the institution may apply the 'other exception'. This exception is described at paragraph 255.a. of the 'Guidance on submissions'. This includes effects due to individual circumstances (such as ill health, caring responsibilities); other personal circumstances related to COVID-19 (such as furloughed staff, health-related or clinical staff diverted to frontline services, staff resource diverted to other priority areas within the HEI in response to COVID-19); and/or external factors related to COVID-19.

Pending outputs

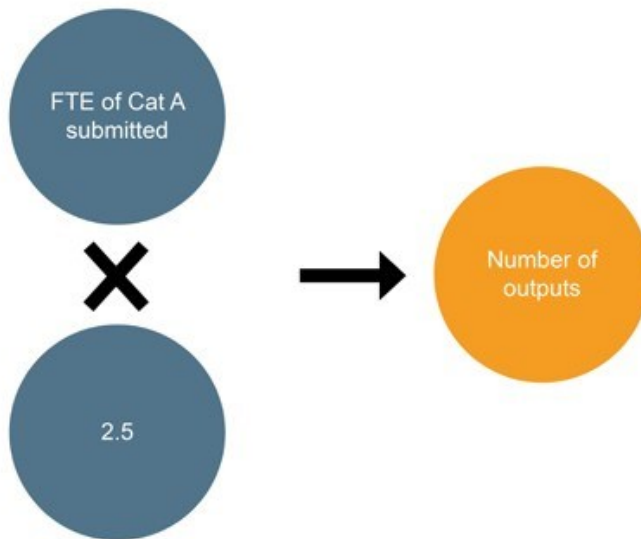
84. The original guidance made provision for the submission of outputs due for publication between the submission deadline (previously 27 November 2020) and the end of the publication period (31 December 2020).
85. The revised submission deadline of 31 March 2021 falls after the end of the publication period, which remains 31 December 2020 (with an exception for delayed outputs as outlined above, paragraphs 28 to 34). Therefore, this provision is no longer required and the associated guidance for pending outputs no longer applies.

Figure 3 Determining the output pool for REF2021 for UoAs

Determining the output pool in REF 2021



How many outputs will the unit require?



What is the output pool?

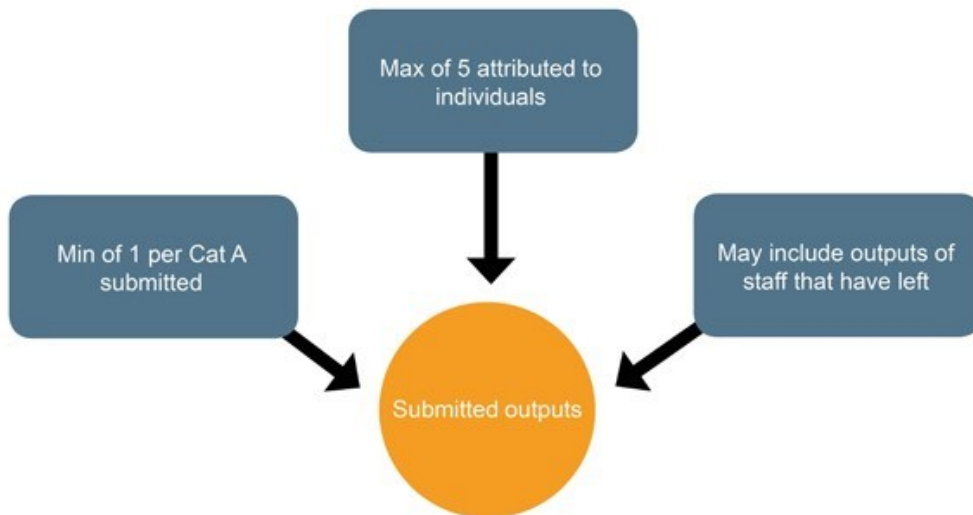
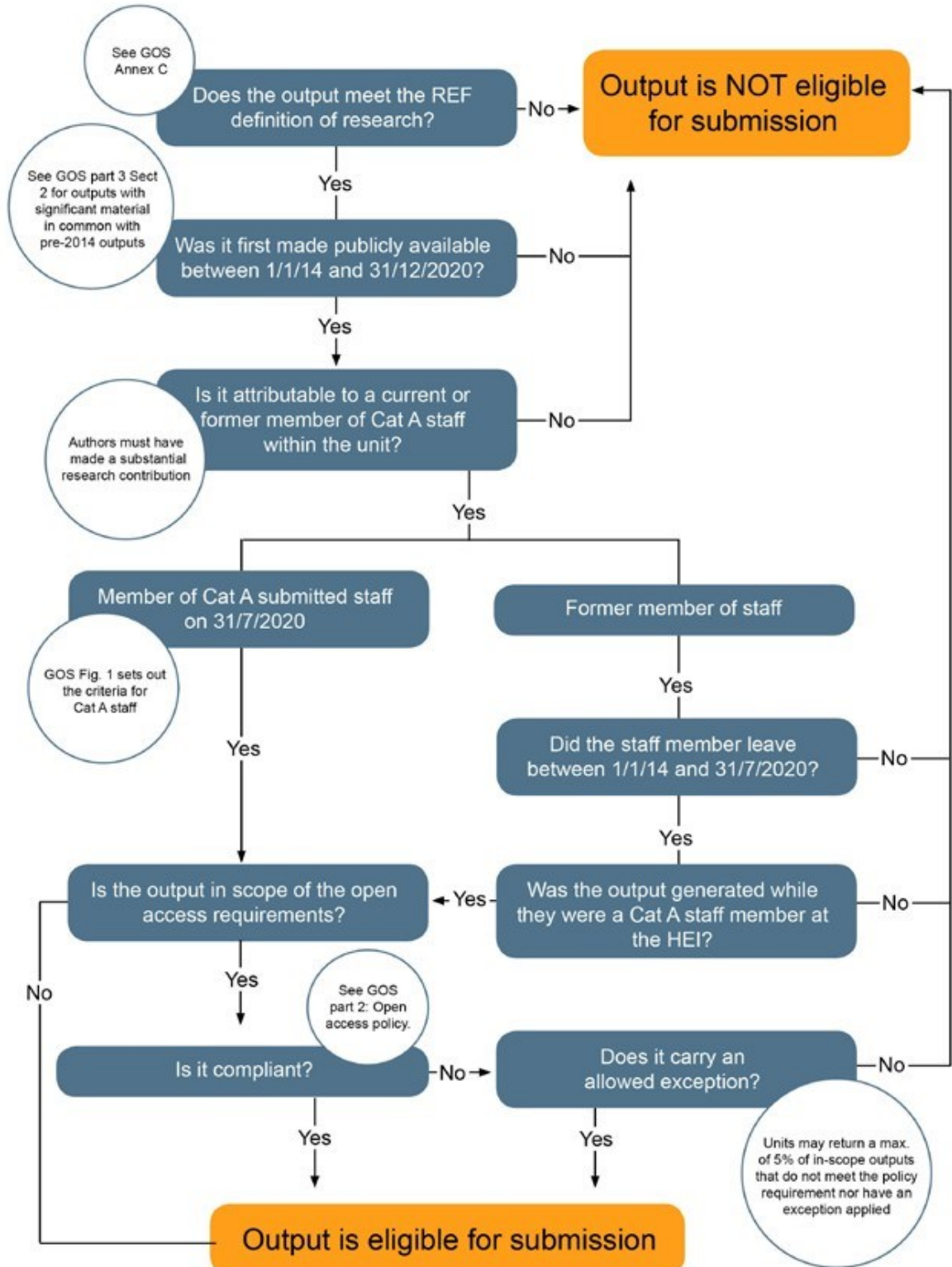


Figure 4 Output Eligibility for REF2021

Output eligibility for REF 2021



Open Access

86. Where a UoA has one or more than 5% of in-scope outputs that are non-compliant with the open access requirements for the REF, the following will apply to determine which output is included:

- Does the staff member have any other eligible outputs that can be submitted?
- If only one staff member with no other eligible outputs – then include
- If multiple staff members with no eligible outputs – include output of highest quality

87. The Open Access policy for the REF submission is as follows:

- The output type is a journal article with an ISSN or the output is a conference contribution in conference proceedings with an ISSN and
- The date of acceptance of the output for publication is on or after 1 April 2016.

Further information on the open access policy is available in [Appendix 5](#).

Multiple Authors Submitting Same Output

88. Where an output has more than one author eligible for submission to the same UoA, in the allocation of the output to one individual for the purposes of the REF submission, the following will apply:

- Do the staff members have any other eligible outputs that can be submitted?
- What is the overall effect on the UoA?

Reduction of Outputs Due to Special Circumstances

89. There are two options for reductions within REF 2021:

- a. Request to remove the 'minimum of one' output.
- b. In exceptional circumstances, a member of staff may be submitted without the minimum of one output attributed to them. These are circumstances where there has been an exceptional effect on the individual's ability to work productively throughout the assessment period (1 January 2014-31 August 2020), so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output. Where the request to remove the minimum of one is accepted, the individual may be returned with no outputs attributed to them, and the total output pool will be reduced by one.

90. It is possible to request a reduction in the total number of outputs required of the UoA for submission where the UoA contains individuals with staff circumstances.

91. If a reduction in outputs is granted, the reduction is applied to the output pool as a whole, for example, if the total reductions for a unit of assessment is 7.5 then this would be rounded up to 8. This would then be subtracted from the total number of required outputs.
92. All staff identified as eligible for submission will be invited to voluntarily make disclosures of their individual circumstances which may have limited their productivity during the assessment period.
93. A clear emphasis will be placed on declarations being voluntary; ensuring that the invitation explains what the applicable circumstances are and the adjustments that are available for approved circumstances.
94. Clarification of the processes and adjustments can be sought from the Head of Research Support and/or the REF Environment and Outputs Officer.

Special Circumstances

UoN will follow all REF guidelines in relation to special circumstances, these will be considered on a case to case basis.

As per the Guidance on Submissions paragraph:

- a. Qualifying as an ECR (on the basis set out in the Guidance on Submissions).
95. An ECR is defined by the REF Guidance on Submissions as a Category A staff member who began their career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016.
96. Reductions for ECRs, as per [Annex L](#) in the REF2021 Guidance are listed below:

Date at which staff first met REF definitions of an early career researcher	Outputs for the UoA may be reduced by
On or before 31 July 2016	No Reduction
Between 1 August 2016 & 31 July 2017	0.5 Reduction
On or After 1 August 2018	1.5 Reduction

- b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- d. Part-time working in exceptional cases, e.g. where the FTE late in the assessment period does not reflect the average FTE over the whole REF period.
- e. Reductions of up to one output for junior clinical academics (as defined in Guidance on Submissions paragraphs 162 to 163).
- f. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:

- a. Disability: this is defined in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1 under 'Disability'.
- b. Health, injury, or mental health conditions.
- c. 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](#) of the Guidance on Submissions).
- d. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
- e. Gender reassignment.
- f. 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
- g. Covid-19 related circumstances

It is not expected that all staff members would be returned with the same number of outputs attributed to them in the REF submission.

Procedure for Disclosure and Consideration of Individual Circumstances

97. Where staff have voluntarily declared that they have special circumstances, and it is felt by the UoA lead that this could affect the overall output pool for their UoA, then the pre-determined reductions allowed by the REF may be applied for.
98. Following formal approval of the code of practice, the Head of Research Support will write to all staff members who are eligible for submission to the REF via e-mail to invite them to voluntarily and confidentially declare any circumstances ([Appendix 6](#)) that have affected their ability to research productively throughout the REF period. The communication will make it clear that this option is voluntary, and the individual member of staff may choose whether or not to declare any circumstances.
99. Declarations will be made on a standard "Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances" form ([Appendix 6](#)) via a dedicated, central, confidential email: REFEquality@northampton.ac.uk that is managed by the HR REF Representative. This form covers all of the circumstances listed in [Annex L](#) of the Guidelines.
100. As part of this process, staff will be offered the opportunity of a face to face confidential discussion(s) with the Head of Research Support to assist them in deciding to formally declare circumstance(s), and to discuss what evidence would be helpful in cases requiring judgement.
101. Where circumstances are clearly defined, they will be validated by reference to relevant HR records and the appropriate reduction in outputs calculated using the tariffs set out in the REF Guidance on Submissions [Annex L](#).
102. Where circumstances require judgement, a HR representative and the Head of Research Support will review cases in advance of formal consideration to ensure that the information provided is sufficient for the panel to make a fair assessment. If necessary, further information may be requested before a case is considered.

103. The outcomes of requests for special circumstances where successful will be made available to REF UoA leads and the REF Steering Group. Unsuccessful requests will be kept confidential. The information will be stored in encrypted files, on encrypted drives, in line with GDPR requirements. The information will be securely held until the audit functions of the REF2021 have been completed, and the results of REF2021 are published. (December 2021). The data will then be securely destroyed, using BC-Wipe or similar software to ensure complete erasure of any personal data.
104. Any new staff commencing employment up to and including February 2020 will receive information regarding special circumstances within one month of commencing employment. Staff commencing employment after February 2020 will not be expected to submit more than one output to the pool of outputs for their assigned UoA.
105. Any staff who have had reductions approved at previous UK HEI's will have these reductions honoured, staff will not be asked to resubmit information relating to their special circumstances, but will need to provide evidence that a reduction was agreed.

Process for Determining when a Reduction to the Output Pool will be Applied for

Paragraphs 176-177 of The Guidance on Submissions state that:

“The funding bodies consider that the size of the available output pool (from which selection will be made) in terms of its proximity to the total number of outputs required would be one useful indicator for determining whether a reduction request should be made”.

“Where making requests, submitting units should apply the tariffs set out in Annex L. Requests must be accompanied by a supporting statement that includes information on the context of the unit (for example, size, proportion of those with declared circumstances), how the circumstances affected the unit's output pool and why this was determined to be disproportionate, and how this complies with the process set out in the institution's code of practice”.

The University will collect and process special circumstance requests to establish the potential effect this may have had on the number of outputs required by each UoA being submitted to.

Support Measures for Staff with Special Circumstances

The University has three primary means of providing support to staff with special circumstances:

Occupational Health and Counselling - staff can be referred to Occupational Health for support and advice on any health concerns. Our Occupational Health provider also provides a confidential counselling service.

Employee Assistance Programme - A confidential telephone counselling service is available for all University employees and relatives who live with them on a permanent basis.

Mental Health First Aiders – A selection of staff throughout the University, across all Faculties and areas of Professional Services have been trained in basic mental health first aid. These staff members are a first point of contact for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. This interaction could range from having an initial conversation through to providing support for the person to get appropriate help.

In addition, the following services are also available:

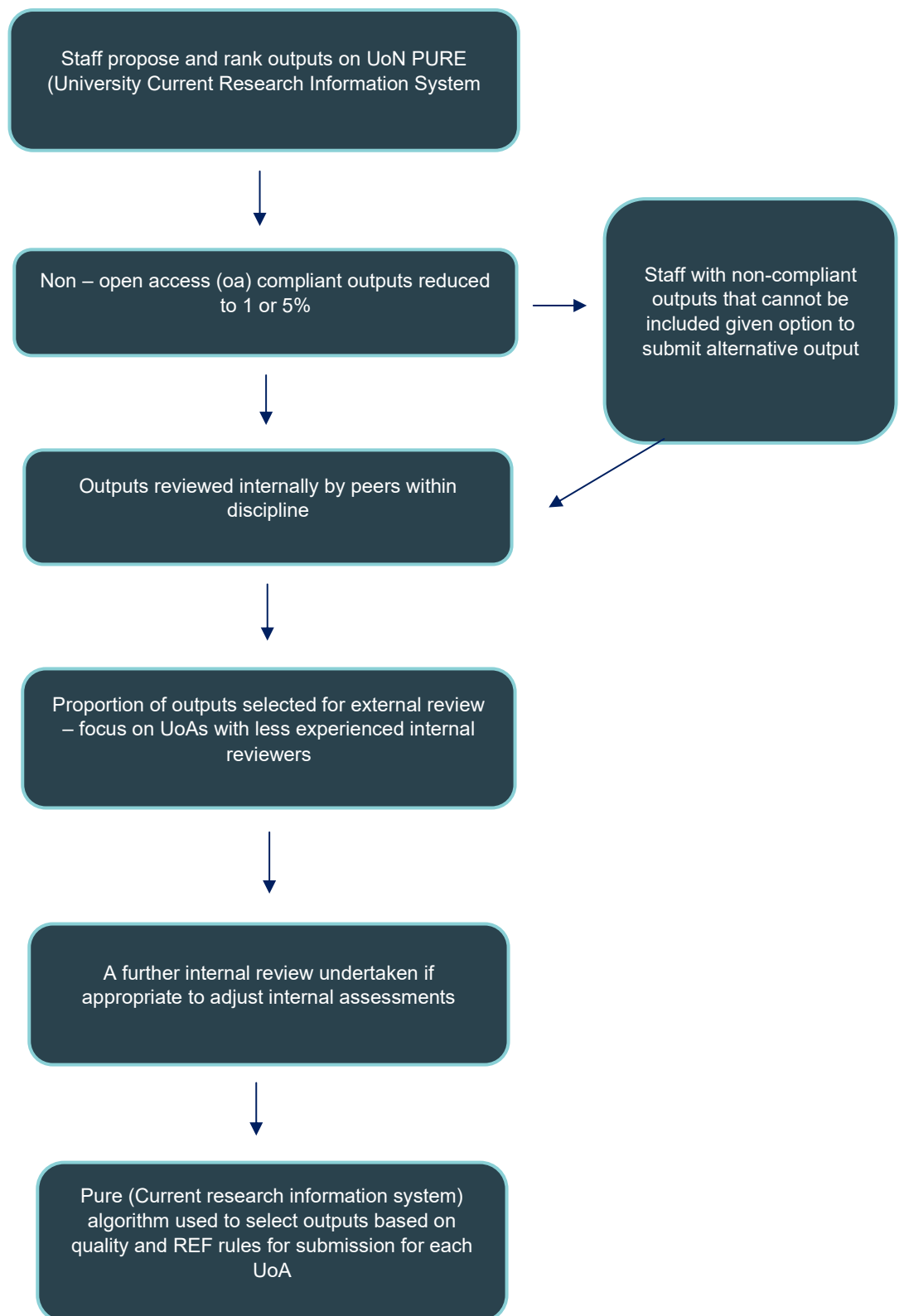
- Changing Minds IAPT Service that offers low intensity psychological therapy - available Monday and Tuesday of each week in the Learning Hub. This service specialises in offering treatment for people experiencing mild to moderate anxiety and depression.
- 'The Listening Post' – Yellow booth in the Learning Hub. Two members of the Changing Minds Peer Support working fortnightly on Wednesdays from 11 am -1pm. They are available to offer informal peer support for staff and students who are managing mental health difficulties and would appreciate peer support from someone with a lived experience.

Staff will be reminded of the availability of these services and encouraged to seek help where appropriate. Information relating to these services is available on our staff intranet.

Determining Allocation of Outputs to be Submitted

106. As per [Figure 5](#) below, our determination for outputs to be submitted is based on the quality of the research outputs. This is to showcase our best research.
107. Where a UoA has fewer than five FTE aligned to it (based on staff choice and best fit in terms of the UoA descriptor), the University will seek to realign staff to a cognate UoA and mark the output(s) as cross-disciplinary if appropriate. This process will be undertaken in consultation with all staff affected. The process of realignment will be undertaken to ensure inclusion of the largest number of Category A eligible staff to REF2021.
108. If a UoA has fewer than five FTE aligned to it and the research does not fit into a different UoA based on the UoA descriptors, the University will apply for a small UoA exception. Staff aligned to any such units will be kept informed of the application for, and outcome of, the small unit exception application.

Figure 5 Determination of Outputs to be Submitted for REF2021



Appendices

- Appendix 1 [UoN's Institutional Policy on Equality and Diversity](#)
- Appendix 2 [Equality and Diversity Impact Statement](#)
- Appendix 3 [Staff Data Collection Statement for REF 2021](#)
- Appendix 4 [Membership and Terms of Reference for the REF Steering Group
Panel Sub-Groups](#)
- Appendix 5 [Appeals Form – Eligibility for Submission to REF2021](#)
- Appendix 6 [Communication Strategy and Timelines](#)
- Appendix 7 [Open Access and the REF](#)
- Appendix 8 [Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances Form](#)

Equality & Inclusion Policy



1 Introduction

This policy is discretionary in nature. Whilst the University expects its employees, staff and Students to comply with this policy, it does not confer contractual rights or form part of any contract of employment and may be amended by the University or replaced at any time following appropriate consultation and negotiation with recognised trade unions.

Breach of this policy may be addressed via the University's disciplinary and code of conduct policies.

This policy will be reviewed by the Human Resources department and Student and Academic Services through the Inclusive Student Experience Group (ISEG) on a 3 year basis or amended in response to changes in future legislation and/or case law.

2 Ownership

The Human Resources department and Student Academic Services own and manage this policy on behalf of The University of Northampton.

3 Organisational Scope

This Equality & Inclusion policy is a corporate policy and applies to all students, potential students, former, current and potential employees (and workers, as applicable), contractors, visitors and associates of The University of Northampton and any wholly owned subsidiaries.

4 Definitions

Bullying is the demeaning and humiliation of others through action or physical, emotional, or verbal conduct that erodes an individual's self-confidence and or undermines their self-esteem.

Direct Discrimination - This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than someone else for reason of their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion or belief.

Equality Analysis - This refers to a detailed and systematic analysis of the actual or potential effects of a formal or informal policy, proposed policy, practice, criterion or service to determine whether it has a differential impact upon identifiable groups of people.

Frivolous – complaints that any reasonable person would regard as trivial e.g. focussing on a trivial matter to an extent which is out of all proportion to its significance and continuing to focus on this point; or making a formal complaint that, even if true, is so trivial that no reasonable person would think it worth pursuing formally; and if it had been raised informally could probably have been resolved.

General Duties – a broad outline of what is required to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Harassment is broadly speaking, unwanted conduct which may violate a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Indirect Discrimination - This occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone but the provision, criterion or practice puts, or would put, members of one group with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage as compared to a group with another protected characteristic and is not a justifiable means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Malicious - where the complainant knows there are no reasonable grounds for the complaint e.g. deliberately intending to deceive or mislead the investigation of a complaint or making the complaint for an ulterior motive.

Positive Action - This refers to a variety of measures designed to counteract the effects of discrimination and encourage members of underrepresented groups to take advantage of opportunities. Unlike positive discrimination, which is unlawful in the UK, positive action is lawful. Examples include the provision of facilities to meet the special needs of people from particular groups in relation to their training, education or welfare; and the encouragement of applications from particular groups that are under-represented in particular areas of work.

Specific Duties - specific actions which need to be taken to enable compliance with the General Duties and thereby the Legislation.

Vexatious - complaints that are instituted without sufficient grounds, or serving only to cause annoyance.

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they have brought proceedings under equality legislation, have alleged that someone has contravened such legislation or they are giving evidence or information in connection with any such proceedings

Zero Tolerance - This refers to a principle whereby behaviour, attitudes and language which may be deemed to be offensive, derogatory or discriminatory is not overlooked but challenged - with the aim of effecting change or redress.

Behaviour deemed to be in violation of this policy may be dealt with through the University Disciplinary procedures.

5 Policy Statement

The University will comply with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The University of Northampton is committed to positively promoting equality of opportunity for all former, current and potential students, alumni, staff and its other stakeholders. The University will not discriminate unfairly on the basis of sex, pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption, gender, gender identity, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, age, sexual orientation, socio economic background, religion and belief, political beliefs, family circumstances including marriage and civil partnership and trade union or professional association membership.

In fulfilling its commitment the University will:

- 5.1 Ensure that no requirements or conditions are imposed that could disadvantage individuals on any of the above grounds unless justifiable by means of achieving a legitimate aim. The University aims to create an environment that enables everyone to fulfil their potential without unnecessary barriers.
- 5.2 Be proactive in promoting equality by embracing, valuing and recognising difference; for example, through the implementation of a wide ranging equality action plan that tackles all facets of inequality and discrimination, creating genuine equality of opportunity and outcomes, and promoting good relations between people of different groups and a commitment to paying equal pay for work of equal value.
- 5.3 Involve different groups, including the Recognised Trade Unions and Students Union, in the development and delivery of the action plans, staff and student Equality forums and in promoting adherence to the policy.
- 5.4 Commit to providing a learning, working and living environment where everyone feels valued and is treated with dignity and respect – an environment that is free from harassment, bullying, victimisation and discrimination.
- 5.5 Commit to a wide ranging Equalities Action Plan. In realising these

commitments, The University expresses its opposition to all forms of discrimination and adopts a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying.

5.6 Require all students, employees, and other stakeholders to behave in a manner compliant with the policy and equality legislation at all times. Training will be provided to ensure a full understanding of their obligations under the Equality Act and University Equality and Inclusion policy.

5.7 Will take Positive Action including seeking, allocating and delivering adequate resources. In addition, The University will review the equality implications of its policies and procedures monitoring their outcomes and ensure continuous improvements are made.

6 Key Principles

6.1 Legislative overview

Discrimination, whether direct or indirect, that is based on a protected characteristic is unlawful and unjust.

An individual may experience discrimination:

- If they are covered by a protected characteristic
- If they are incorrectly perceived to have a protected characteristic
- If they are associated with someone with a protected characteristic
- If it is known they do not have a protected characteristic for which they have been treated less favourably or
- If decisions are made based on stereotype, assumptions or perceptions.

6.2 Respect at the University

Every individual is entitled to participate in University life without fear of intimidation, victimisation or bullying behaviour. Respect is about harnessing an environment where every individual is valued, supported by others and where harassment of any kind is known to be unacceptable.

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated less favourably because:

- They have brought proceedings under equality legislation
- They have alleged that someone has contravened such legislation
- They are giving evidence or information in connection with any such proceedings

Harassment is broadly speaking, unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which may violate a person's dignity or creates an intimidating,

hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may be persistent or an isolated case and there is no need for the 'harasser' to intend to offend by their conduct.

Conduct which contravenes this policy includes:

Physical Conduct – unwarranted physical conduct including deliberate touching, patting, stroking.

Verbal conduct – unwelcome advances, propositions, or pressure for sexual activity, flirtations, innuendo, lewd comments, or abusive language which ridicules a person, insults which are discriminatory in nature, mimicking accents, speech or mannerisms, offensive comments about dress or religious dress or customs, or speculation about a person's private life/ sexual activities.

Non verbal conduct – the display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, including pin ups, offensive or sexual objects or written materials, the making of abusive or offensive gestures including leering and whistling, the display or creation or transmission of offensive written or verbal material or non verbal conduct that denigrates a person for any other reason.

Bullying is the demeaning and humiliation of others through action or physical, emotional, or verbal conduct that erodes an individual's self-confidence and or undermines their self-esteem. Bullying behaviour is often persistent or repeated however can also be an isolated incident. It might include banter, unjustified criticism of performance, unjustified reassignment of a person to a different set of responsibilities, failing to extend opportunities that have been made available to others, refusing to work with a person, unjustified exclusion of a person from normal work and/or social activities, refusing to engage in appropriate conversation, encouraging others to exclude, ignore, ridicule, or otherwise demean or humiliate a person.

Bullying does not normally include:

- Reasonable performance assessment
- Reasonable instructions and advice
- Discipline for cause
- Responding in good faith to a complaint made under this policy.

6.3 Frivolous, Vexatious or Malicious Claims

Allegations or complaints of harassment, bullying or victimisation that are subsequently shown to have been frivolous, vexatious, malicious, otherwise unreasonable or not made in good faith, will be treated very seriously. Such a complaint may amount to a form of harassment itself

and/or an abuse/misuse of this policy. If such an allegation is proven it may be subject to disciplinary action.

6.4 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

All individuals have a right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect. Since

collective group affiliations are often central to people's identities, fair treatment entails acknowledging cultural diversity and respecting cultural differences. The University values the unique perspectives and opportunities a diverse community can bring.

The University will strive to ensure that equality of opportunity is maintained in all areas of the University including:

- Job and study recruitment and selection – all applicants will be assessed on their own merit and in a fair and objective manner, all processes will be carried out in a non-discriminatory way, all processes will be fair and transparent, records of interviews and appointments will be retained, and reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure no disadvantage is suffered.
- Learning and teaching, training, and personal development – assessment criteria, performance reviews, and development will be applied in a non-discriminatory manner and to actively promote equality; reasonable adjustment will be made where required to enable participation, to promote inclusion and diversity, and overcome barriers to inclusion.
- Terms of employment and study, benefits, facilities and services – will be free from discrimination and comply with legislation; all students regardless of mode of study and all employees regardless of employment will be treated equitably.
- Termination of contractual relationships– will be conducted in a non-discriminatory way and in accordance with the relevant University policies and procedures.

6.5 Public Sector Equality Duty

In addition to The Equality Act 2010, public authorities, including Higher Education Institutions, are subject to general duties which in the exercise of their functions have to give due regard to the need to:

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

Further regulations detail specific duties required by the University:

- To publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty at least annually to include information relating to employees and students who share a protected characteristic

- To prepare and publish one or more objectives that it thinks it needs to achieve to further any of the aims of the general equality duty
- Equality information must be published in a manner accessible to the public via the University website.

7 Responsibilities

- 7.1. The Governors have responsibility for:
 - Ensuring compliance with legislation
 - Ensuring the implementation and review of the policy, objectives and action plan

- 7.2. The Vice Chancellor has responsibility for:
 - Ensuring the implementation and review of the policy, objectives and action plan
 - Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities
 - Ensuring any breaches of the policy are dealt with in line with appropriate procedures

- 7.3. The Faculty Deans, Executive Deans, and Directors of Professional Services have responsibility for:
 - Promoting equality and good relations between different groups
 - Ensuring issues of discrimination and/or breaches of policy are dealt with through appropriate procedures
 - Staff are provided with development and training in relation to diversity and equality
 - The inclusion within annual reviews and development plans of specific objectives relating to equality

- 7.4. The Inclusive Student Experience Group (ISEG)
 - To review and monitor the University Equality and Diversity Action Plan on behalf of the Student Experience Committee (SEC) to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010
 - To oversee the audit of published information to ensure that the University demonstrates, at least on an annual basis, compliance with the specific duties of the public sector equality duty (PSED)
 - To audit that the University sets and publishes equality objectives on a regular basis but at least every four years
 - To review and monitor diversity information, analysed wherever possible across all the protected characteristics, on University, Faculty and Departmental performance and refer matters of concern and good practice to SEC
 - To review and monitor the implementation of Equality and Diversity priority projects approved by SEC

- To review and monitor processes in relation to the development and implementation of University Access Agreements and to refer issues, themes and good practice to SEC
- To undertake Equality Analysis on all policies to evaluate the impact on equality and diversity in relation to student experience
- To produce an annual report to SEC of the main issues which have arisen during the relevant academic year

7.5. Staff Equality Forum

- To review and monitor the Staff Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- To oversee the audit of published information to ensure that the University demonstrates, at least on an annual basis, compliance with the specific duties of the public sector equality duty (PSED)
- To audit that the University sets and publishes equality objectives on a regular basis but at least every four years
- To review and monitor staff diversity information, analysed wherever possible across all the protected characteristics

7.6. HR have responsibility for:

- Reviewing HR owned policies and procedures on a regular basis and at times of legislative change
- Ensure completion of an Equality Analysis for all policies and procedures owned by the HR department
- Providing training for all managers in equality and respect at work, and completion of Equality Analysis
- Supporting managers in the application of the policy and procedures
- Monitoring equality data and retaining it in a secure manner
- Conducting equal pay audits
- Ensuring all other HR policies and procedures comply with the Equality Act 2010 and this policy
- Ensure equality action plan for staff related matters is completed

7.7. Managers have responsibility for:

- Actively participating in proactive measures in relation to equality utilising a variety of tools including the Equality Analysis process
- Ensuring that discrimination, bullying and harassment are not tolerated and all claims are thoroughly investigated, and the disciplinary and grievance processes are effectively implemented where relevant
- Ensuring that they are not carrying out or requesting to be carried out tasks which may be deemed to be discriminatory
- Facilitating effective communications between management and staff
- Ensuring staff are fully trained to perform their jobs in line with the Equality and Diversity policy
- Leading by example and ensuring that all procedures are carried out in a non-

discriminatory manner, including but not limited to recruitment and selection, selection for training, performance management, dealing with applications for flexible working

7.8. Individuals have a responsibility for:

- Co-operating in ensuring that the aims and objectives of the policy statement are achieved
- Attending any training provided in equality and diversity
- Taking reasonable steps to ensure they encourage equality and diversity within the University and to ensure their actions do not contribute to unfair or discriminatory treatment of others
- Supporting colleagues and students who may be experiencing unfair or discriminatory treatment through bringing this to the attention of the perpetrator and/or by encouraging the recipient to take action through the appropriate procedures
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure learning and teaching materials, methods and tools encourage equality and diversity.

8 Associated Documents

Employees

Equality and Inclusion Procedures

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policy and Procedure Equality
Analysis Guidelines

Recruitment Guide for Managers

Staff Learning and Development Policy

Students

Student Complaints Policy Student

Bullying and Harassment Student

Disciplinary Policy

9 Equality Analysis

An Equality Analysis available.

10 Version Control

Version Control		Approval record	
Author:	HR/SAS	Approval:	TU Liaison ISEG SEC UMT JCNC Governors
Date written:	October 2016	Updates:	
Current status:	Approved March 2017		
Record of Amendments			
Date	Details of Change	Approval	
Oct 2016	Expanded to include all students and visitors to campus	March 2017	
	Procedure removed	March 2017	
	Inserted responsibilities for ISEG and Staff Equality Forum	March 2017	
	Minor changes for clarity of wording	March 2017	

Appendix 2 - Equality and Diversity Impact Statement

REF Code of practice
#CoP1

Business Area	Person Responsible
Research, Impact and Enterprise Innovation)	Cathy Smith (Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation)
Created	Last Review
15 April 2019	15 April 2019
Status	Next Review
Assessed	15 April 2020

Impact Assessment Data

Does the Policy, Procedure, Practice or Activity have a positive or negative impact on eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to any of the protected characteristics?

Age Disability Gender
Gender Reassignment Pregnancy/Maternity

As detailed in the EA there are potential positive and negative implications for a number of the groups outlined above. Possible or potential positive impacts affecting all groups and groups with protected characteristics are outlined below and divided in to the three keys areas that inform UoN's Code of practice. These key areas are identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence and the selection of outputs for REF2021. The positive or potential positive impacts are assessed in each of these areas below:

1. Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

i) The changes made to REF2021 are intended to make the submissions more inclusive by including all staff with significant responsibility for research and who are considered independent researchers. The partial decoupling of outputs from individuals will also support an increased number of staff who can be submitted.

Actions arising: UoN's Code of practice is governed by the principles of fairness and transparency as outlined in the REF2021 Guidance on submissions. All UoN staff involved in the REF2021 decision making processes will receive mandatory online training in Equality and Diversity and Unconscious Bias. UoN's Code of practice will undergo a wide consultation

process with all staff and research-related committees ahead of submission to the REF's Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) on 7 June 2019.

ii) The University will be required to submit 2.5 outputs for the total FTE of staff who are being submitted but each member of staff may contribute between 1 and 5 outputs. There is no expectation on staff to produce more than one research output as per REF requirements. This supports an increased number of staff to be enabled to be submitted to the REF.

iii) Staff who have individual circumstances that have impacted on their ability to generate research outputs over the assessment period can have this taken into consideration as per the special circumstances form in the code of practice ([Appendix 8](#)). This includes staff with leave periods for pregnancy and/or on maternity/paternity leave, including adoption, disability (including mental health and non-visible disabilities) and trans and non-binary people who may have had extended periods of absence and thus have a reduced number of outputs than can be submitted.

Through the REF selection process all staff have the opportunity to declare, voluntarily, any circumstances which may have affected their ability to work productively during the assessment period and have this considered.

2) Determining research independence

i) All staff on teaching and research and research only contracts who are considered independent researchers will be submitted to REF2021. This will be make it more inclusive than previous exercises and will increase the number of staff included.

Actions arising: Ensure a fair and transparent approach to determining research independence based on clear criteria set out in the Code of practice.

Staff will have the opportunity to appeal if they believe that the process for determining research independence has been incorrectly applied or is based on inaccurate information.

All staff will be provided with details of the appeals procedure as part of the process of informing staff of their eligibility for submission to REF2021.

Provisional designation as Category A eligible and Category A submitted.

3) Selection of outputs

i) Outputs will be chosen for submission based on quality to best represent research excellence by each Unit of Assessment lead over the assessment period. There will be no expectation of staff to submit more than one research output (as per REF's minimal requirements). Staff who meet the eligibility criteria for the REF and who do not have a suitable research output to submit, will be submitted to the REF, and will return an output with a score of 0 (unclassified).

Actions arising: Training will be given to Unit of Assessment Leads (mandatory) and reviewers (by invitation) on equality and diversity in the context of the REF. Equalities data will be reviewed as part of the mock exercise in summer 2019 and reported to the REF Steering Group for consideration.

A new Current Research Information System (PURE) includes a REF module that supports the process of selecting outputs for submission based on review scores.

ii) All staff considered to have significant responsibility for research and who are independent researchers will be involved in the initial process of nominating their outputs to be submitted and providing a rationale. These nominations will then be peer reviewed and all staff will be given an opportunity to appeal any decisions made.

iii) Staff will be given feedback on the overall score for their outputs and can request anonymous feedback on the reviewers' comments, for developmental purposes.

Actions arising: Unit of Assessment leads to provide overall scores for outputs to individual authors. Staff to be offered opportunity for further feedback. In terms of evaluating possible or potential positive impacts affecting any specific groups with protected characteristics (such as age, gender, marriage and/or civil partnership, race, religion and/or belief, sexual orientation and any other specific group (e.g. International)) are not known at this present time. Detailed analysis will be undertaken once the mock REF has been completed (summer 2019) and the REF steering Group will act to mitigate where possible.

Does the Policy, Procedure, Practice or Activity have a positive or negative impact on advancing equality of opportunity in relation to any of the protected characteristics?

- Age Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Maternity/Paternity

The policy will have a positive effect on advancing equality of opportunity. Once the mock REF and final REF submission have been completed we will have the staff profile data to analyse and to see if there are issues on inequality emerging and then the policy will be adapted to address these issues and another EA will be submitted.

We have developed the policy to be as inclusive as possible and the REF Guidance on Submission incorporates consideration of special circumstances which will potentially allow some groups (as identified in the EA) to be submitted.

Does the Policy, Procedure, Practice or Activity have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations and addressing prejudice in relation to any of the protected characteristics?

- Age Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Maternity/Paternity

Possible or potential negative impacts affecting all groups and groups with protected characteristics are outlined below and divided in to the three key areas that inform UoN's Code of practice. These key areas are identifying staff with significant responsibility for

research, determining research independence and the selection of outputs for REF2021. The negative or potential negative impacts are assessed in each of these areas below:

1. Significant responsibility for research

i) Staff could feel their career progression may be affected by not having significant responsibility for research Actions arising: The funding bodies have confirmed that the names of submitted staff will not be published.

Staff will need to be reassured that submission is based on status (with respect to REF2021) and not on the quality of their outputs. All staff will be provided with details of the appeals procedure as part of the process of informing staff of their provisional designation as Category A eligible and Category A submitted.

ii) Uncertainty over status based on research workload allowance (rather than role) may be stressful for staff

Action(s) arising: Need to be clear on the criteria for submission and the timescale for advising people of their status, including the opportunity to make an appeal in relevant circumstances. Reinforce that submitted status is based on a 'snapshot' on the census date, not on their workload or roles over the assessment period (or in future).

iii) Some groups may be more likely to be identified as having a 'submitted' status to REF than others

Action(s) arising: This will be assessed from the data produced following the mock exercise in spring/summer 2019 and a report produced for the REF Steering Group. If specific instances of potential discrimination are identified, we will seek to explore these and make any necessary amendments to the Code of practice before the final submission is made in November 2020 (subject to agreement by the Funding Bodies).

A similar EA will be undertaken on the final submission in November 2020 to inform the University's consideration of equality, diversity and research, including any disparities of access to opportunities for research progression by protected characteristic. A post-REF 2021 EA document will set out actions to address any disparities identified.

In relation to specific groups with protected characteristics:

iv) Age - Younger staff and staff who have recently attained their PhD qualification may not have had sufficient opportunity to undertake research and produce outputs that would allow them to be submitted to the REF Action(s): The REF provides clear guidance on the treatment of Early Career Researchers which will be applied through our Code of practice.

v) Disabled staff may have had multiple or extended periods of absence due to attendance at medical appointments etc. which may have slowed their career trajectory such that they are not in a position to be submitted to the REF Action(s): Staff have the opportunity to declare, voluntarily, any circumstances which may have affected their ability to work productively during the assessment period, including whether the requirement for a minimum of one output for each staff member submitted can be waived.

vi) Trans and non-binary people may have had extended periods of absence due to transition which may have slowed their career trajectory such that they are not able to gain submitted status to the REF.

Action(s): Staff have the opportunity to declare, voluntarily, any circumstances which may have affected their ability to work productively during the assessment period, including whether the requirement for a minimum of one output for each staff member submitted can be waived.

In terms of evaluating possible or potential negative impacts affecting any specific groups with protected characteristics (such as age, gender, marriage and/or civil partnership, race, religion and/or belief, sexual orientation and any other specific group (e.g. International)) not highlighted above, are not known at this present time. Detailed analysis will be undertaken once the mock REF has been completed (summer 2019) and the REF steering Group will act where necessary to amend the Code before the final submission is made in November 2020 (subject to agreement by the Funding Bodies).

Determining Research Independence

i) All staff without PhDs may feel this will impact on their career progression

Action(s): UoN has a strong history of supporting staff in gaining a PhD. We will need to reiterate the opportunities available to staff in terms of professional development. It is also the case, as stated in the Code of practice, that UoN recognises the wide-ranging contribution its staff make to the University and research is only one of those areas of contribution.

ii) Trans and non-binary people, including gender reassignment - Some trans staff may have had extended periods of absence due to transition and may have faced significant difficulties in meeting the criteria for research independence, e.g. not able to make significant bids, lead on sections of projects.

Action(s): Equality data will be reviewed as part of the mock exercise in summer 2019.

Selection of Outputs

i) The outputs for inclusion may not represent the diversity of submitted staff

Action(s): Equality data will be reviewed as part of the mock exercise in summer 2019 and reported to the REF Steering Group.

All staff involved in REF decision-making will have had mandatory Equality and Diversity with specific reference to REF and unconscious bias training.

ii) The process of reviewing and scoring outputs may rely on the input of only two assessors.

Action(s): All reviewers will have been given guidance on the definitions of the star ratings (scoring) and score separately on the criteria of significance, originality and rigour. Internal and external reviewers are chosen based on their research expertise, and in the case of external reviewers, often based on their knowledge of the REF process.

iii) In terms of the attribution of co-authored outputs, there may be concerns about how this will be carried out fairly and transparently in the selection process.

Action(s): Co-authored outputs will be notionally allocated to one member of staff but will be reviewed if that member of staff reaches the maximum of 5 outputs or if one author has no other outputs. They will be assigned based on inclusion to ensure submission of a greater number of staff and selected based on quality.

iv) UoN will apply for exemptions for UoAs with fewer than 5 FTEs. Staff in these UoAs may feel their research is not valued and that this may affect their career progression.

Action(s): This decision has been taken to prevent small UoAs having the pressure of producing impact case studies. Where possible these staff will be allocated to another Unit of Assessment. We are committed to growing the research strength of the University and thus we will look to support the development of small Units of Assessment post REF2021.

v) Staff who have had more than one period of family leave and/or extended leave to care for families may not have had sufficient time to produce an output for the REF.

Action(s): Staff have the opportunity to declare, voluntarily, any circumstances which may have affected their ability to work productively during the assessment period.

Conclusions:

The REF2021 Code of practice has been informed by careful consideration of the impact it might have on Equality and Diversity in line with the recommendation of the REF2021 Guidance for Submission. While we have identified those areas where there may be both a positive and negative impact on Equality and Diversity we have outlined actions to mitigate this impact. It is also important to note that the Code of practice will be revised at the end of the consultation period and a further EA will be undertaken. In the process of selecting staff and outputs submitted to REF2021, we will be monitoring any potential impact alongside staff profile data and if any significant differences according to protected characteristics emerge we will adapt our Code of practice accordingly.

Outcome of analysis:

Implement/continue with Policy, Procedure, Practice or Activity

Appendix 3 - Staff Data Collection Statement for REF 2021

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

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

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at www.ref.ac.uk in particular publication 2019/01, 'Guidance on submissions'.

Sharing information about you

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

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

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

UKRI and the organisations listed above will use the information to analyse and monitor the REF 2021. This may result in information being released to other users including academic researchers or consultants (commissioned by the funding bodies), to carry out research or analysis, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679). Where information not previously published is released to third parties, this will be anonymised where practicable.

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

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

Publishing information about your part in our submission

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

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

Unless redacted, the information to be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, will include a single list of all the outputs submitted by us in each Unit of assessment. The list of outputs will include standard bibliographic data for each output, but will not be listed by author name.

Data about personal circumstances

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

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The outcomes of requests for special circumstances where successful will be made available to REF UoA Leads and the REF Steering Group. Unsuccessful requests will be kept confidential. The information provided to apply for special circumstances will be stored in encrypted files, on encrypted drives, in line with GDPR requirements. The information will be securely held by the University until the audit functions of the REF2021 have been completed, and the results of REF2021 are published. (March 2022). The data will then be securely destroyed, using BC-Wipe or similar software to ensure complete erasure of any personal data.

We will send to Research England a report that will include a summary of all voluntarily declared personal circumstances, whether or not they were used to reduce the output requirements. This report will only contain data in aggregated form and will not contain information that will identify individual members of staff.

Accessing your personal data

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

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

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

Email: dataprotection@ukri.org

All data will be kept in accordance with the University of Northampton's privacy notice:
<https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/privacy-policy/>

Any queries or concerns about privacy should be sent by email
to recordsmanager@northampton.ac.uk or addressed to the Records Management Office,
University of Northampton, University Drive, Northampton NN1 5PH.

Appendix 4 - Membership and terms of reference for the REF steering group and the REF panel sub groups

REF STEERING GROUP

The REF steering group (REFSG) is responsible, under the Dean of Research, Impact and Innovation for preparing the University for the REF. The terms of reference for the REFSG are listed below:

- To have strategic oversight of the university's submission to the Research Excellence Framework.
- To receive regular reports from the main panel groups and the Impact Officer & Environment and Outputs Officer regarding the progress made towards the development of the submission.
- To ensure that progress is made and deadlines are met in accordance with the university strategy and REF timetable.
- To receive advice on and oversee arrangements for ensuring that matters relating to diversity and inclusion are fully implemented and monitored.
- Discuss and make recommendations to the UMT (University Management Team) on policy relating to REF, acting as a conduit back to faculties for dissemination and implementation of agreed policies.
- Keeping the University fully informed on the way in which the REF will operate across the various disciplines. This will include regular updates to the senior academic leaders across the University (UMT, Deans/Deputy Deans, Readers and Professors Group).
- Ensure adherence to UoN's REF2021 Code of practice.
- Deciding which Units of Assessment (UoAs) will be submitted to the REF based on quantitative data (research income, outputs and case studies) and qualitative data (internal and external peer review on the quality of the UoA). Final approval in this regard rests with the REF Steering Group.
- Coordinate, monitor and evaluate activities to generate impact case studies for the REF, making recommendations on areas of strategic importance to UMT on UoN's readiness for REF.
- Encourage the sharing of good practice across faculties.
- Act as a conduit of communication for addressing staff concerns.
- Reading and approving any documentation that is prepared as part of the REF process e.g. the Equality and Diversity Code of practice, Equality Impact Assessments and, institutional REF narrative.
- Monitor and report on issues concerning Open Access publishing for REF2021.

Membership of the REF Steering Group

- Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation: Dr Cathy Smith
- Head of Research Support: Ms Dawn Hibbert
- Faculty Research Leaders:
 - Dr Ali Al-Sherbaz, Senior Lecturer Computing
 - Dr Kathleen Mortimer, Senior Lecturer in Business
 - Dr Tony Kay; Professor of Biomechanics
- Senior Management Team & Chair of Ethics Committee Professor John Horton
- HR Representative, Ms Claire Cross: HR Business Partner, Human Resources - Business Partnering.
- Professor Matthew McCormack, Head of Graduate School & Professor of History

REF PANEL GROUPS

The responsibility of the Ref Panel Groups is:

- To determine the internal policy for submissions across all the Units of Assessment related to that panel.
- Oversee the peer review process for impact case studies, selection of outputs and environment templates

Panel A & B:

Dr Cathy Smith, Dean of Research, Impact and Innovation
Professor Chris Roe, Professor of Psychology
Dr Jacqueline Parkes, Professor in Applied Mental Health
Dr Lee Machado, Senior Lecturer in Biochemistry
Professor Tony Kay, Professor of Biomechanics
Professor Stefan Kaczmarczyk, Professor of Applied Mechanics
Dr Will Wise, Senior Lecturer in Leather Technology
Dr Blake Morris, Impact Officer
Mr James Barrett-Evans, Environment and Outputs Officer
Ms Dawn Hibbert, Head of Research Support

Panel C and D:

Dr Cathy Smith, Dean of Research, Impact and Innovation
Dr David Preece, Senior Lecturer in Education
Dr Jane Murray, Senior Lecturer in Education
Professor Jeff Ollerton, Professor of Biodiversity
Dr Kathleen Mortimer, Senior Lecturer in Business
Dr Andrew Hewitt, Senior Lecturer in Art and the Public Sphere
Professor Matthew McCormack, Professor of History
Dr Suraj Ajit, Senior Lecturer, Computing
Dr Blake Morris, Impact Officer
Mr James Barrett-Evans, Environment and Outputs Officer
Ms Dawn Hibbert, Head of Research Support

Appendix 5 - Appeals Form – Eligibility for Submission to REF2021

1. Individual details

Name	
Position	

Faculty/Institute	
Date	

2. Grounds for appeal

In completing this form, I hereby formally appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

The criteria for determining research independence has not been appropriately applied. For the avoidance of doubt, individuals can appeal both against and for being deemed to be an independent researcher.	
The criteria for determining significant responsibility for research has not been appropriately applied. For the avoidance of doubt, individuals can appeal both against and for being deemed to have a significant responsibility for research.	
There was an error in the data used by the REF Steering Group in applying the criteria to determine my eligibility for inclusion in the REF submission.	

3. Detail of grounds for appeal

Please provide information below to support this appeal. Please continue on a separate sheet if required and append supporting documentation as appropriate.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Please email the completed form to REFAppeals@northampton.ac.uk. You will receive confirmation of your appeal being received within one working day. The outcome of your appeal will be communicated to you within five working days from the date of the monthly appeals panel meeting. If you would prefer to meet face to face to discuss your appeal please indicate this in your email.

Appendix 6 - Communication Strategy and Timelines

Code of practice Initial Feedback re REF Guidelines and Requirements – September 2018

Staff Groups Involved:

REF Steering Group and Panel Groups - Meetings

Faculty Research Enterprise Committee - Meetings

University wide Research and Enterprise Committee - Meetings

All Staff – Quarterly Research Newsletter, Intranet – Research Support Group, Subject and Faculty meetings with presentations

Initial Email Correspondence to all Staff regarding alignment to Unit of Assessment and “initial” eligibility for submission in the REF – 18th October 2018

All staff emailed with unit descriptors, aligned based on department/subject area – and asked to check whether this was best unit of assessment for them to be aligned to – and to email if incorrect – at this stage – staff were changed to whichever unit of assessment that they felt best fitted their research.

All staff emailed in relation to “initially” eligibility for submission to the REF at this stage of our processes.

Staff groups Involved

REF Steering Group and Panel Groups - Meetings

Faculty Research Enterprise Committee - Meetings

University wide Research and Enterprise Committee - Meetings

All Staff – Quarterly Research Newsletter, Intranet – Research Support Group, Subject and Faculty meetings with presentations

Developing and Writing Draft Code of practice

The code of practice was initially drafted by Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation, Head of Research Support and Deputy Dean Faculty of Health and Society based upon the guidelines provided by UKRI to provide a fair and transparent approach to submission to the REF.

Draft Code of practice

5th April 2019

Sent by email to all Faculty Deans and Human Resources

Personalised email to all Category A and B staff sent out

Staff intranet, staff research support group, staff face-book page and the staff quarterly research newsletter were updated with information regarding code of practice and link to the code of practice.

5th April 2019 to 1st of May 2019 – Draft code of practice available for consultation

9th April to 2019 – Staff on long term leave posted Draft Code of practice from HR

25th April 2019 – University Research Enterprise Committee

14th May 2019 – Meeting with Trade Union Liaison

16th May 2019 – Discussed at Staff Equality Forum

21st May 2019 – Staff meeting to discuss code of practice and allow further feedback

29th May 2019 – Staff meeting to discuss code of practice and allow further feedback

Approved Code of practice – Dates to be Confirmed

12th November 2019 – Staff Notified by personalised email, code of practice published on staff intranet, online yammer research support group, staff face-book page and highlighted in weekly staff news update (Unify).

All staff on long-term absence notified by mail by HR department.

Appeals – Eligibility for Submission to the REF

15th November 2019 – Staff Notified by personalised email of the unit of assessment that they are aligned to, and if they will be submitted to the REF, and expectations of a minimum of one research output, average of 2.5 outputs and a maximum of 5 outputs per FTE.

15th of November 2019 – Staff notified of declaration of voluntary personal circumstances letter, and timeframes relating to this.

Week Commencing 9th December 2019 – Appeals Panel Meets

Week Commencing 16th December 2019 – Decisions relating to appeals communicated to staff

Appendix 7 - Open Access and the REF

REF Open access Policy

1. The guidance on open access set out in this document supersedes the previously published open access policy, circular letter(s) regarding the policy, and the FAQs. This section sets out the policy intent. The detailed definitions and requirements are set out in paragraphs [223-255](#).
2. The four UK HE funding bodies believe that the outputs of publicly funded research should be freely accessible and widely available. Open access research brings benefits to researchers, students, institutions, governments, public bodies, professionals and practitioners, citizen scientists and many others. Open access has the potential to make research more efficient and impactful. In view of these benefits, and to embed open access as an intrinsic part of the research process, the funding bodies have introduced a policy requirement on open access in REF 2021.
3. The intent of the REF open access policy is to provide a set of minimum requirements for open access, while encouraging an environment where researchers and HEIs move beyond the minimum requirements. HEIs can demonstrate where they have gone beyond the requirements in the environment template (REF5b) in the research and impact strategy section (see the 'Panel criteria', [paragraph 346](#)). The funding bodies encourage institutions to take a proportionate view of the costs and benefits of making other types of outputs (including monographs) available as open access.
4. The open access policy applies to journal articles and conference contributions (with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)) which are accepted for publication from 1 April 2016 and published on or before 31 December 2020. It requires these research outputs to be made open access for those outputs to be eligible for submission in REF 2021. The outputs should be deposited, discoverable, and free to read, download and search within, by anyone with an internet connection. The funding bodies recommend that institutions fully consider the extent to which authors currently retain or transfer the copyright of works published by their researchers, as part of creating a healthy research environment.
5. Authors and institutions can meet the policy requirement without necessarily incurring any additional open access publication costs (such as through payment of an article processing charge).
6. Evidence gathered in 2017 indicates good progress is being made by the sector in implementing the policy, and a range of systems and tools are being developed to assist authors and institutions in making their outputs open. However, the funding bodies recognise that the current structures and software solutions are still at an early stage, and that it will take time to fully establish open access as an intrinsic part of the research process. The funding bodies expect the sector and service providers to continue the momentum to develop new tools to implement the policy, particularly relating to the deposit requirements. In view of this, there

are measures and exceptions which have been developed to provide a degree of tolerance of non-compliance.

7. The funding bodies recognise that information on deposit permissions, licences and embargoes can sometimes be unclear, complex, or hard to find. Until significant progress has been made to address this issue (including developing machine-readable licences and permissions), it is reasonable for the sector to rely on shared services, including those offered by SHERPA (Securing a Hybrid Environment for Research Preservation and Access). Authors and institutions should feel comfortable acting on the information provided by SHERPA in meeting REF 2021 open access requirements, and should not undertake additional work to verify this information.
8. Institutions are not expected to correspond with previous institutions to evidence that outputs published while a staff member was previously employed elsewhere fulfilled the requirements of the policy. This is the case even if the new employer intends to submit the output to REF 2021. For example, when a researcher moves from the institution where the output was published (X), to another institution (Y), the REF does not expect that institution Y corresponds with institution X to seek and retain evidence of the output's compliance. Where an institution is unable to ascertain themselves if an output is compliant with the policy, a policy exception can be applied (see paragraph [254.a](#)).
9. The intent of this policy is for the output to be made freely available. The policy encourages outputs which are submitted with a deposit, technical, or other exception to be made open access as soon as possible. However, this is not a requirement of the policy.
10. The REF 2021 audit process will seek assurance that the information and data submitted regarding compliance are accurate and reliable.

Appendix 8 - Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances

Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Individual Circumstances Form

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). Category A refers to staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research or are independent researchers.

As part of the university's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 August 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances.

The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

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

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE Sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020
- 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

In addition – Covid-19 Related Circumstances

The minimum of one output requirement may be removed for a Category A submitted staff member that has not been able to produce an eligible output¹, where the following circumstances apply:

- a. Output(s) in the process of being produced have been affected by COVID-19 during

the assessment period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020). This includes effects due to applicable circumstances (such as ill health, caring responsibilities); other personal circumstances related to COVID-19 (such as furloughed staff, health-related or clinical staff diverted to frontline services, staff resource diverted to other priority areas within the HEI in response to COVID-19); and/or external factors related to COVID-19 (for example, restricted access to research facilities); **and**

- b. The overall impact of the COVID-19 effects, combined with other applicable circumstances affecting the staff member's ability to research productively during the assessment period, is deemed similar to the impact of the circumstances cases set out at paragraph 179a. to c. of the 'Guidance on submissions'. For example, where a staff member is an early career researcher, or has held a fractional contract for a significant proportion of the assessment period, and has experienced COVID-19 related disruption to the production of an eligible output².

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, and you would like this to be taken into consideration in relation to the number of outputs required for submission, could you please complete the attached form.

Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the '[Guidance on submissions](#)' (REF 2019/01). Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so.

This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

Ensuring Confidentiality

Individual circumstances forms should be returned to the Claire Cross; HR Business Partner, Human Resources (claire.cross@northampton.ac.uk) by **31st December 2020**. All submitted information will be placed within a secure folder, remain confidential, and will only be reviewed by HR and the Dean of Research, Impact & Innovation/Head of Research Support.

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

If the University of Northampton applies for a reduction of outputs, information will be submitted to UKRI via the REF submission system by 12 noon on 31 March 2021. Where an individual is being submitted with the request for a reduction of the minimum output of one to be submitted, this will be communicated to the staff by the Head of Research Support by 31st January 2021.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team and University of Northampton will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment and audit phase (March 2022).

Changes in circumstances

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

Individual Circumstances Form

To submit this form you should complete in as much detail as possible and return this to claire.cross@northampton.ac.uk by **31st December 2020**.

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

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

Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 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
Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016). <i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i>	Click here to enter a date.
Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2020.	Tick here <input type="checkbox"/>
Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector. <i>Dates and durations in months.</i>	Click here to enter dates and durations.
Family-related leave; <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. <i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i>	Click here to enter dates and durations.
Disability (including chronic conditions) <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>	Click here to enter text.
Mental health condition	Click here to enter text.

<p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	
<p>Ill health or injury</p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</p> <p><i>To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>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>
<p>COVID 19</p> <p><i>To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text</p>

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

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

I agree

Name: Print name here

Signed: Sign or initial here

Date: Insert date here

I give my permission for an HR designated staff member to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation to this.

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

I would like to be contacted by:

Email Insert email address

Phone Insert contact telephone number