# Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see [‘Guidance on submissions’](http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/), paragraphs 117-122). As part of Lancaster 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 July 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 production of research outputs.
* To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment (UoA) 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 for the UoA.

## Applicable circumstances

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form.

* Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016). See definition in the REF Guidance on Submissions paragraph 148.
* 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 heath, injury or mental health conditions
* Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
* Caring responsibilities
* Gender reassignment

Further information can be found in paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01) and in our Code of Practice.

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;. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

## Ensuring Confidentiality

If Lancaster decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of ‘minimum of one’ requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the [‘Guidance on submissions’](http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/) document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Information declared through the process described in our Code of Practice will be submitted to a dedicated email account ([REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk)) which is accessible only to the Staff Circumstances Panel (SCP). The SCP will see the detailed information in order to review and make a judgement on output reductions. The SCP will share only high-level summary data on staff with circumstances with UoAs. UoAs will be expected to take into account the output contributions to the unit pool by such individuals in the output selection process.

The information gathered through declarations of individual staff circumstances will be used for this purpose only. The University will not use this information or any subsequent decision about outputs or individuals in the REF submission for probation, promotion or reward relating to a staff member’s employment or any other Human Resources (HR) process.

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

## 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 email [REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk) to provide the updated information.

# Individual Staff Circumstances Form

| **Name** | **Department** |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

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

Yes

No

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).**  *Date you became an early career researcher.* |  |
| **Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2020.** | Tick here |
| **Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.**  *Dates and durations in months.* |  |
| **Family-related leave;**   * statutory maternity leave * statutory adoption leave * Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more.   *For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.* |  |
|  | |
| **Disability (including chronic conditions)**  *Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* |  |
| **Mental health condition**  *Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* |  |
| **Ill health or injury**  *Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* |  |
| **Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance**  *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.* |  |
| **Caring responsibilities**  *Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* |  |
| **Gender reassignment**  *Periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* |  |
| **COVID-19** (Applicable only where requests are being made for the removal of the minimum of one requirement)  *To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*  *The overall impact of the COVID-19 effects should be considered in combination with other applicable circumstances affecting the staff member’s ability to research productively throughout the period.* | Click here to enter text. |
| **Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement, substantial changes in part-time hours**  *Brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* |  |

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 Staff Circumstances Panel.
* I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the UK REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. This information will be submitted through the Pure REF module and will be visible to the Pure System Administrator.

I agree

| **Name** | **Signed** |
| --- | --- |
|  | *Not necessary when emailing a digital copy* |

I give my permission for an HR partner to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the relevant contact within my department/faculty/centre. (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

**Submit this form to** [**REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk**](mailto:REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk)