REF 2021: CODE OF PRACTICE

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LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

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Part 1: Introduction

1. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) assesses the quality of the research and its impact produced within the Higher Education system in the UK. This document sets out the criteria and approach for the University in REF 2021, following the vision and values outlined in our Strategy for 2020 whilst at the same time ensuring that the University follows the guidance documentation from Research England and discharges its legal responsibilities as an employer.

2. The legislative context is summarised in the REF 2021 Guidance on Codes of Practice (paragraphs 16 – 30). The University is committed to promoting diversity and equality of opportunity for all staff, including those with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 and those employed part-time or those on fixed-term contracts.

Progress since REF 2014

3. The internal Equality Impact Assessment for REF 2014 found no actual or potential adverse or beneficial impact on staff. The key actions resulting from the REF 2014 Equality Impact Assessment related to the processes and procedures followed in developing and reviewing the REF submission. These have all been completed and are now standard practice in our approach to REF submissions.

4. Lancaster University is committed to attracting, developing and retaining the best staff. Our People Strategy 2020 (Annex 1) clearly articulates that the core strength of our University is our people. Attracting the best staff to work for Lancaster University, and within our international partnerships, will assist us in delivering our strategic priorities in research, teaching and engagement.

5. Having a balanced portfolio of activities and staff who specialise in one or more of research, teaching and engagement, thus achieving recognition in REF, TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) and KEF (Knowledge Exchange Framework), are all equally important to the University. As part of our People Strategy we have developed flexible and fair promotion pathways for academic staff that celebrate diversity and acknowledge how all staff contribute to and enhance the overall success of the University.

6. In 2016 the University published its EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) Strategic Vision 2020 (Annex 2). This document sets out the strategy aims, objectives and measures of success in making EDI business as usual. An EDI plan (2016 – 2020) to underpin this strategy was approved by Council in July 2016.

7. The EDI plan reflects the University commitment to increasing the diversity of our staff population, advancing equality for our staff and maximising their potential. The current EDI Strategic Vision 2020 is due for renewal during the course of this REF cycle, alongside the University's People Strategy and the overall University Strategic Plan.

8. In 2019, membership of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee was refreshed to ensure faculty representation. The link to faculties will be strengthened further through links between the University's EDI Committee and existing faculty-level EDI committees or forums, or plans to develop these, during the course of this REF cycle.

Policy statement

9. Final decisions regarding the University submission to the REF will lie with the Vice-Chancellor on the advice of the REF Steering Group (REFSG) following consultation with faculty REF committees (F-REF-C) and REF Management Group (REFMG). The REFMG, a subset of the REFSG membership, will meet regularly to discuss operational issues in relation to the submission preparations and provide detailed information and updates to the REFSG as necessary. In advising the Vice-Chancellor, the REFSG will:

    - Adopt consistent and transparent criteria.
    - Detail the communication channels used to convey the relevant information.
    - Ensure that our REF procedures have been assessed for equality impact to identify potential inadvertent discrimination on particular equality groups and to take necessary steps to advance equality and support staff who may be adversely affected.
    - Take account of individual's personal circumstances in accordance with the guidance set out for REF 2021 Assessment Framework.
    - Detail an appeal process that is available to relevant staff.
    - Highlight the equality impact assessment process that has been undertaken in order to assess any adverse or beneficial impact (actual or potential) on the inclusion and exclusion of eligible staff by age, disability, gender and ethnicity and highlight any actions taken to mitigate against adverse impact and maximise beneficial impact.
    - Confirm the University's commitment to equality and the REF process by reporting to the University EDI Committee on REF Equality Impact Assessment findings and for EDI Committee recommendations to influence the REF processes.

10. In this Code of Practice (CoP) the University will follow the principles of **transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity** in the decision making process of determining who is an independent researcher and on the selection of outputs for submission to the REF in the following ways:

    - **Transparency**: The identification of independent researchers and the selection of outputs for inclusion in REF submissions will be transparent and follow the processes set out in this CoP. The CoP will be accessible on the Research Services website and published to all staff through the University e-newsletter (LU Text), and through department and faculty communication routes as detailed in the Communication Programme below.

    - **Consistency**: The CoP will set out the processes of determining who is an independent researcher and on the selection of outputs. These processes will be followed consistently across all units of assessment (UOA), unless disciplinary differences need to be considered, as detailed later in this CoP.

- **Accountability**: Responsibilities of the groups and committees involved in the decision making processes in the University's preparations for REF 2021 will be clearly defined in their respective terms of reference. These groups will receive training and this information will be available as part of the CoP (Appendix 3). An appeals process for decisions on research independence is detailed in Part 3.

- **Inclusivity**: The REF submission, as a whole, will be impact assessed for equality with support from the EDI Manager and the EDI Committee, and updated throughout the REF process. Equality impact assessments will be carried out on the individual REF procedures.

11. All personal data collected for the REF submission will be treated as confidential and will be handled in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy and the Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF 2021 (Appendix 4).

No detriment statement

12. As a leading research-intensive university, Lancaster values its reputation highly, which reflects the dedication of our academic and research staff. The University review of outputs for REF and the decision on which outputs to submit to REF 2021 is based on achieving the optimum result for Lancaster. The information gathered through preparations for REF such as output ratings, the selection of individual outputs for submission, or any other information, such as 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 for REF, for probation, promotion or reward relating to a staff member's employment.

Communication Programme for the Code of Practice

13. The CoP was approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 24 May 2019 on the recommendation of the REFSG following review by the University Leadership Group, the University Research Committee and through a consultation process. Following world-wide disruptions due to the Coronavirus pandemic the CoP was updated and a revised version was approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 14 September 2020.

14. The existence and key features of the CoP was communicated to all staff through two open briefing sessions (11 and 18 March 2019), the University e-newsletter (LU Text), and on the staff intranet through the consultation phase and following final approval. The revised CoP was circulated via University e-newsletter in September 2020. A log of communications is included in Appendix 2.

15. Faculty Deans were required to include the CoP as a specific agenda item for the Policy Resources Committee and Heads of Department and Divisional Directors were required to include it as a specific agenda item in a departmental staff meeting.

16. Heads of Department must communicate the existence of the CoP, the process of determining research independence, the selection of outputs and the voluntary

declaration of individual circumstances to absent staff by the most appropriate means (e.g. post, email or telephone). The REFSG recommends that these communications should be made to staff absent from work, in June and November 2019 and the revised COP in October 2020.

17. A dedicated email account, REFCOP@lancaster.ac.uk, is available for staff to provide feedback or to ask questions about any aspect of the REF process during the consultation phase in March and April 2019 and throughout the following period of REF preparations.

18. The CoP is published on the Research Services REF page on the University intranet along with details of the procedures for the voluntary declaration of individual staff circumstance and general guidance on REF 2021.

19. The first version of the CoP was submitted to the UKRI REF Team by the 7th June 2019 deadline for verification and was approved by UKRI on 16 August 2019. The revised version will be submitted to the UKRI REF Team by the 9th October 2020 deadline for verification and publication on the REF 2021 website.

Notification of submission

20. All eligible members of Category A staff, including those staff absent from the University, will receive information from their Head of Department on a frequent basis, about whether they are likely to be entered to REF 2021 based on their eligibility as Category A staff.

REF Governance structures

21. The Governance structure and committees involved in the decision-making processes for REF 2021 are detailed in Appendix 1, together with details of their respective Terms of Reference and an organisational chart.

22. The REFSG will recommend to the Vice-Chancellor outputs and impact case studies for submission to REF 2021. The Vice-Chancellor will have the final approval of the Lancaster University REF submission prior to the formal submission in March 2021.

Part 2: Identifying eligible staff with a significant responsibility for research

23. For REF 2021 each HEI participating must return all eligible staff with significant responsibility for research. At Lancaster, all staff on 'teaching and research' contracts are identified by the core eligibility as set out below for Category A eligible staff.

Category A eligible staff

24. Each UOA will have a total pool of **'Category A eligible'** staff meeting the core criteria as defined in the REF 2021 guidance on submissions (part 3, section 1). This includes all

academic staff with a contract of employment of **0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE**) or greater, on the University **payroll on the census date of 31 July 2020**, whose primary employment function is to undertake either '**teaching and research'** or '**research only'.** Staff should have a substantive research connection to the UOA**.**

25. Category A eligible 'research only' staff include independent researchers but not research assistants (see paragraph 29 to 34). The criteria for identifying 'research only' staff as independent researchers are provided in Part 3.

Category A submitted staff

26. **'Category A submitted'** describes staff from the total Category A eligible pool identified as having **significant responsibility for research.**

27. The decision on the inclusion of a staff member as Category A submitted staff will follow the process as set out in this code of practice and will be based upon the expectation of staff as a function of employment and not upon the quality or volume of what has been delivered as a result of that employment function.

28. The University considers all **Category A eligible staff on 'teaching and research' contracts have significant responsibility for research** and therefore will be submitted to REF as Category A submitted staff. F-REF-Cs will lead the process of identifying Category A eligible staff on such contracts with input from Human Resources and HoDs as required. The final recommended staff list will be sent to REFSG for review before being sent to the VC for final approval. All such staff will be informed of their REF status by November 2020.

Part 3: Determining research independence

Policy and procedures for identifying research staff as independent researchers

29. For the purposes of REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme.

30. Academic staff employed on 'teaching and research' contracts have significant responsibility for research and are deemed independent researchers.

31. Academic staff whose primary function is 'research only' who are employed by the University to carry out another individual's research (normally called research assistants but sometimes research associates or similar) are not eligible as Category A staff.

32. Lancaster University will identify independent researchers from 'research only' staff who are employed by the University on the census date on a 'research only' contract using the following criteria:

- Employed on grade 7 or above (grade 6 roles are considered as developmental roles and staff in these roles are not yet independent researchers); *and* ***either***

- Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement, and where this is an externally funded fellowship which the individual applied for and which was awarded through open competition. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships can be found at Annex 3 and on the official REF 2021 website; ***or***

- Principal investigator on a substantial externally funded research project(s), typically of total award value of at least £250,000, on the census date; ***or***

- Named co-investigator on substantial externally funded research project(s), typically of award value attributed to the co-investigator of at least £250,000, on the census date. This indicator of independence will only apply to researchers working within disciplinary boundaries of Main Panels C and D (as noted in the panel criteria and working methods).

33. Staff employed on 'research only' contracts who believe they may meet the criteria for research independence on the census date should have an initial discussion with their HoD and complete the research independence template (Appendix 5) available on the Research Services website.

34. All staff on 'research only' contracts who are identified as independent researchers through this decision making process will have significant responsibility for research so will be returned as Category A submitted staff.

Decision making

35. All 'research only' staff will be assessed as set out in paragraphs 29 to 34 by their HoD. It is anticipated that only a small number of 'research only' staff will meet these criteria of research independence and they will be asked to complete the research independence template. The HoD will have initial discussions with those staff members to explain the grounds for their assessment. The HoD will complete the template form to record the details for this decision, including the documented evidence for that recommendation.

36. The cases for each UOA will be passed to the appropriate F-REF-C for review and calibration to ensure that decisions are consistent with the criteria and in keeping with the four principles of this CoP. The F-REF-C will reject and return any cases to HODs that it does not agree with and will provide feedback on their decision. For cases where the F-REF-C agrees with the HoD recommendation, HoDs will inform the individual who will be asked to acknowledge the decision on the template form and that will be returned to the F-REF-C for further review.

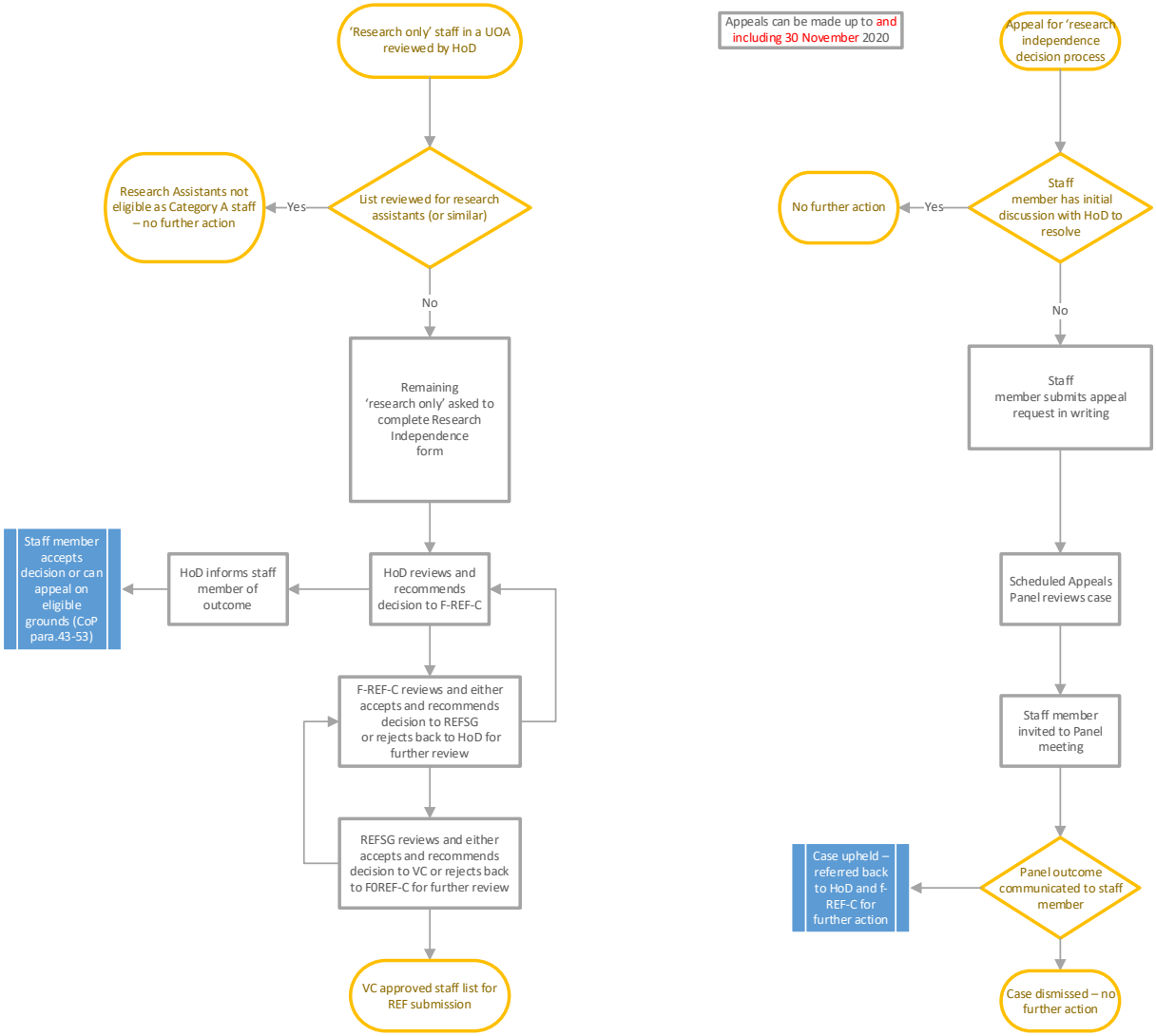
37. Requests for consideration of research independence against the criteria should be made by end of June 2020, although it is acknowledged that in exceptional cases some information could be received in July 2020 which would need to be reviewed. In this case late submission of a request could be made in July 2020.

38. F-REF-Cs will recommend the Category A submitted staff lists for each UOA to the REFSG for final decisions in October 2020. The REFSG will ensure that decisions are consistent and equitable across the University, returning any cases to the F-REF-C for further consideration, if necessary.

39. Once the Vice-Chancellor has approved the decisions, on receiving final recommendations from the REFSG, all staff will be informed of their status with regards Category A submitted staff in November 2020.

40. A flow-chart of the process is included below in Figure 1 and an appeals process is detailed in paragraphs 43 – 54

Fig. 1. Research independence and appeals process



Staff, committees and training

41. Lancaster University's REF committee structure, including their respective Terms of Reference and an organisational chart are described in Appendix 1. This sets out the reporting lines across the REF committee structures, including recommendations and decision making with regards research independence and the output selection for units across the University.

42. Training will be provided to relevant staff involved in the REF preparations according to the training schedule (Appendix 3). Tailored training, including equality, diversity and inclusivity and unconscious bias in relation to REF 2021, will be delivered face to face to members of the REFSG, F-REF-C and groups with decision making responsibilities. Targeted training for specific groups will include training on the REF guidance and how to use the REF module in Pure, alongside more general training on diversity in the workplace and unconscious bias.

Eligible Grounds for Appeal

43. The REF appeals procedure will:

- Allow members of staff to appeal after they have received feedback about the decisions pertaining to their status as an independent researcher and for the appeal to be considered and concluded before the final submission is made.

- Ensure that the individuals who manage appeals are independent of the decisions about identifying staff and who have had appropriate training.

44. An appeal may be made by the individual researcher on the following grounds:

- Where they have concerns that the procedure set out in Part 3 of this CoP to determine research independence has not been followed;

- Where they perceive there has been unfair discrimination;

- Where previously unavailable evidence becomes known.

45. The decision on the inclusion of a staff member as Category A submitted staff will follow the process as set out in this CoP and will be based upon the expectation of staff as a function of employment and not upon the quality or volume of what has been delivered as a result of that employment function. All such decisions will be communicated to the individuals by September 2020, or as soon as possible following this date for the exceptional cases as detailed in paragraph 37.

46. The appeals process has been communicated to staff as part of this CoP. Relevant independent research staff will also be sent details of the appeals process through their department communication channels.

47. Staff may submit an appeal on the decision made to determine research independence on the eligible grounds described above. The appeals process is detailed below.

Appeal Process

48. Appeals can be made at any point up to the end of November 2020. If a member of 'research only' staff believes that they have appropriate grounds for an appeal they should initially discuss this with their HoD before lodging a formal appeal.

49. If, following this initial discussion, the member of staff still feels there are grounds for appeal according to the process set out in this CoP, a request in writing laying out the nature of the concerns to be examined by an Appeals Panel should be submitted by email to the Associate Director of Research Services.

50. An Appeals Panel will be constituted with a membership as detailed in REF committees and governance in Appendix 1. The membership of the Appeals Panel will reflect diversity as far as possible and members will be required to demonstrate their independence from earlier decision processes and declare any conflicts of interest.

51. The scheduled timetable of Panel meetings will be available on the University REF webpage and the timetable will be communicated to staff via the intranet and through the University e-newsletter. There will be at least one meeting per month (as required) over the period 1 September to 31 December 2020 to ensure all appeals submitted will be reviewed at the first available meeting following submission and are concluded before the submission deadline.

52. The Appeals Panel will review the details of the original decision including the completed research independence template, the documented evidence for the recorded recommendation and any other evidence provided by the appellant for the appeal.

53. Appellants will be invited to attend the appeals panel meeting and may be accompanied to this meeting by a colleague or trade union representative.

54. Following the meeting, the outcome of the panel's decision will be communicated in writing to the appellant, HoD and F-REF-C within 7 working days of the appeal meeting.

Equality impact assessment

55. The University will undertake an initial equality impact assessment for REF equality profile – in terms of age, disability, gender and ethnicity – of staff who are Category A eligible. This will provide a base line of eligible staff.

56. Periodic Equality impact assessments and analyses will be performed on the REF processes, including the determination of research independence and the appeals process, as they progress up to the submission date. The REFSG will monitor this using anonymised data supplied from the HR database. If any prima facie imbalance is found relative to the total potential pool, then the REFSG will investigate in order to see if any actions are needed to support particular staff adversely affected or to see, where there appears to be a positive impact on particular groups, if this can be applied to other categories of staff.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

Policy and procedures for rating of research outputs in the unit output pool

57. In November 2016, the University Senate approved the adoption of an annual research enhancement review process to provide a supportive culture that promotes excellent mentoring (Annex 4). Part of the annual process would assist in the preparation for the REF exercise by producing ratings for research outputs that may be considered for submission into the REF. The timing of full departmental strategic reviews has been modified in 2020 to take account of intensified REF preparations and the impact of COVID-19.

58. Starting with the principles agreed by Senate a more detailed process was developed through a small working group with a membership of senior academic staff and a REF 2014 panellist. The process was approved by the REF Steering Group in March 2017 and endorsed by the University Research Committee in June 2017.

59. REF 2021 panels and sub-panels will assess outputs according to the published panel criteria which will be influenced by discipline and thus it is not possible to provide a suitable single University wide ratings process.

60. Individual departments/UOAs will implement a process to fit disciplinary requirements. F-REF-Cs will oversee the local delegation of these processes and will support them to ensure good practice and that the following principles feature in the operation of the process:

    - Rating processes will be underpinned by the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability, and inclusivity;
    - Only outputs will be rated – no judgement on individuals will be made as part of this process;
    - All outputs which are to be considered for submission to REF must be "proposed for REF" in Pure;
    - Ratings for the 'proposed for REF' outputs must be recorded in the Pure REF module and all information held at UOA level, including any reviewer comments that were used to form the basis of that rating, made available to the F-REF-C on request;
    - Other than possibly to provide a preliminary initial rating when an output is proposed in Pure, individuals will not be involved in rating their own outputs;
    - This process is the initial view of the University on the rating of each output;
    - The output rating will inform the University's final submission to the REF, but will be only one of a number of factors considered;
    - Output ratings estimated for the REF process will not be used in promotion, probation or reward cases for individuals, as these are approximations used to guide this

specific REF process.

61. It is acknowledged that this is not a perfect process and any review can only provide the most likely rating for an individual output but the process should be conducted in a way to be as accurate and consistent as possible. This will require iteration over the REF 2021 preparation period up to the submission as the eligible outputs are considered in more detail.

62. Departments may use a mix of internal peer review, senior staff with experience of the REF in the department or in other relevant departments, and external expert review. It is recognised that this will generate a range of opinions on each output that the University will use to form the assessment as to which outputs should be entered into the REF. Thus, the output rating process will produce a 'best approximation' of outputs to inform outputs selection for the final REF 2021 submission.

63. The University supports the use of responsible research metrics and the principles of DORA (San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment). Departments will consider a range of views on the quality of research outputs and will, where appropriate, use responsible research metrics in considering the rating of these outputs.

64. Heads of Department must ensure that appropriate mentoring and developmental support is provided to academic staff, based on the emergent outcomes of the ratings review process. Guided by the outcomes of this process, constructive feedback will be provided to individual staff in a supportive and confidential manner. In some cases, Heads of Department may identify individuals who could benefit from additional support to help their professional development and this should be picked up in the annual performance development review process.

65. Departments/UOAs will report recommended ratings for outputs in the unit pool from this process to their F-REF-C, which in turn will report them to the REFSG.

66. The F-REF-C will consider the submitted ratings to ensure that they have assurance that they represent an accurate reflection of quality. This may include bringing in external input to the process for some or all outputs, or it may ask senior academics from another department or UOA at Lancaster to provide input as a critical friend. These steps will enable the F-REF-C to be able to advise the REFSG that the ratings are likely to be as accurate as can reasonably be expected. Where necessary, the F-REF-C may revise the ratings produced at a departmental or UOA level following this process.

67. The summary results of the ratings will be examined by the REFSG and any concerns will be referred back to the F-REF-C to review and to undertake further work to improve robustness. The REF Steering Group will provide feedback to the F-REF-Cs on these ratings, and could if necessary, step in to revise output ratings produced by the F-REF-Cs, though would look to avoid doing so unless considered absolutely necessary.

68. F-REF-Cs will submit reports in line with the University REF timetable to the REF Steering Group. Periodic reports on REF preparations will also be provided to the Research Committee, UMAG and Senate.

69. Summary reports on EDI data will be considered by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. In all cases, feedback will be provided to the REF Steering Group.

Selection of research outputs

70. UOAs will ensure that their final recommendation of the selected outputs for submission are based on a consistent, fair and transparent process and will take into account the following factors:

    - The ratings produced from this internal ratings process;
    - Individual staff members contribution to the output pool based on their working arrangements e.g. part-time staff, or the impact of their individual circumstances as declared voluntarily to the university;
    - The balance of the outputs from former staff on the census date including:
        i. Eligible outputs first made publically available for staff employed as a Category A eligible member of staff who have since left Lancaster or have died;
        ii. For staff who remain employed at Lancaster but who are no longer Category A staff, any eligible outputs first made publically available at the point when the staff member was employed as Category A eligible staff;
    - Open access compliance of outputs (to ensure unit submissions stay within the 5% tolerance band);
    - Equality impact assessments, where applicable, at the unit level.

71. Outputs will not be attributed to former staff who held indefinite posts, on 'teaching and research' contracts who would have been Category A eligible independent researchers at the time of being made compulsorily redundant at Lancaster during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020. This excludes outputs that are co-authored with a current member of Lancaster staff which may be attributed to the current staff member in a unit submission.

72. Departments/UOAs will follow the eligibility of outputs criteria as set out in the Guidance on Submissions. A minimum of one eligible output will be attributed to each member of Category A submitted staff member, which has been produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by that staff member (unless individual circumstances apply to remove the minimum of one outputs as described below).

73. Further outputs will be attributed to Category A submitted staff, taking into account the factors set out in paragraph 70, until the total number of required outputs for the unit is reached. A maximum of five outputs may be attributed to an individual staff member (both Category A submitted staff, as well as former staff whose outputs are eligible for submission). The maximum attribution of outputs to a staff member will not preclude the submission of further outputs on which that staff member is a co-author, where these are attributed to other eligible staff in the unit.

74. The departments/UOAs will pay particular attention to the effect that individual circumstances may have had on a researcher's ability to contribute to the unit's overall output pool and adjust expectations accordingly in line with the tariffs set out below.

75. Departments/units will also consider the overall effect of individual circumstances at the unit level, whether these have disproportionately affected the output pool or if these effects can be accommodated in the flexibility offered by the de-coupling of staff from outputs and within the minimum and maximum outputs limits. This will depend on the overall unit size and the proportion of staff with circumstances.

76. Selection of outputs and the ratings estimated for the REF process will not be used in promotion, probation or reward cases for individuals, as these are approximations used to guide this specific REF process.

Decision making

77. The department/unit will recommend the final output selection to the F-REF-C, setting out the rationale for the selection and including notification of any output reductions requested and approved. The F-REF-Cs will recommend final output selection to the REFSG.

78. The REFSG and F-REF-Cs will consider a number of research indicators when deciding whether to recommend a member of staff's outputs for submission. The primary factor will be the rating of the research outputs and the output eligibility as defined by the published REF criteria contained in the Guidance on Submission and Panel Criteria documents. Other factors, as described in paragraph 70, will be taken into account, such as how the department/UOA has taken into account the effect of individual circumstances on a staff member's ability to produce research throughout the REF period and the overall mix of outputs from current and former staff.

79. The REFSG will make a judgement of the most advantageous overall profile for the University or for a given UOA and this will involve deciding on the most appropriate UOA for a member of staff to be submitted to and the research outputs attributed to them.

80. There will be no appeals process for members of staff on which UOA they are submitted to or the final selection of outputs selected and attributed to them in the submission. However, an EIA on the final submission will be conducted to ensure the EDI issues have been appropriately addressed in the selection process.

81. The REF Steering Group will recommend to the Vice-Chancellor outputs for submission to REF 2021 in February 2021. The Vice-Chancellor will have the final say on which outputs are selected for submission to the REF.

Staff, committees and training

82. The REF organisational structure, REF committees and training schedule are detailed in Part 3 paragraphs 41 to 42 and in Appendix 1.

Declaration of circumstances

83. The University will consider voluntarily declared individual circumstances to the extent that they have had a material impact on the individual's ability to research productively and contribute to the UOAs output pool in the assessment period and in line with the REF Guidance on Submissions.

84. Applicable staff circumstances include:

a) Qualifying as an early career researcher (ECR). These are individuals of any age who first entered the academic profession on employment terms that qualified them for submission to REF 2021 as Category A eligible staff on or after 1 August 2016;

b) Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside of the HE sector,;

c) Qualifying periods of family related leave (e.g. statutory maternity, paternity, parental or adoption leave);

d) Other circumstances for staff in Health and Medicine who are junior clinical academics;

e) Circumstances equivalent to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction:

i. Disability (including chronic conditions)
ii. Ill health or injury or mental health conditions
iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances set out below
iv. Caring responsibilities
v. Gender reassignment
vi. COVID-19 impact (applicable only where requests are being made for the removal of the minimum of one output requirement)
vii. Other circumstances related to the protected characteristics or activities protected by employment legislation.

85. Other circumstances comparable with the examples above will be considered, as long as an explanation is provided as to the way in which they have impacted on the individual's ability to contribute research outputs to the UOAs output pool.

86. A dedicated Staff Circumstances Panel (SCP) will oversee this process in order to ensure a fair and consistent approach. The SCP will ensure that circumstances voluntarily declared by staff members are treated in a confidential manner and used only for the purposes of determining output reductions for REF. Details of panel membership and the terms of reference are included in Appendix 1.

87. The SCP will meet periodically through this period to consider requests submitted. The SCP will evaluate the information in order to make a determination of the total effect of the circumstances. It may be necessary to request further information or clarification

from an individual. This may be through correspondence or by invitation to meet with the SCP, in which case individuals may be accompanied by a friend or colleague. The disclosure of further information will be on a voluntary basis and at no time will individual staff be under pressure to discuss their circumstances if they do not wish to do so.

88. The SCP will provide recommendations to the F-REF-Cs on requests to reduce an individual's minimum of one output to zero, where circumstances warrant this, in line with the Guidance on Submissions and where an individual does not have an eligible output. To preserve confidentiality, information declared by the individual to the SCP on the specific circumstances will not be shared with the F-REF-Cs, only the panel's recommendation for reduction of outputs based on the applicable circumstances in paragraph 84.

89. The SCP will also consider the impact on UOAs where the total number of individuals with declared circumstances is deemed to have had a significant impact at the level of the unit's output pool. This information in summary form will then be passed back to UOA coordinators, F-REF-Cs and the REFSG.

90. The information gathered through voluntary 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.

Invitation to declare circumstances

91. Staff members will be invited to voluntarily declare applicable circumstances, as described in paragraph 84, using a template form (Individual Staff Circumstances Declaration - Appendix 6) which should be submitted to the dedicated email account (REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk) accessibly only to SCP panel members in HR and the Head of Research Policy and Quality.

92. Staff members will be asked to voluntarily declare circumstances that have either:

    - Affected their ability to contribute to the output pool even if they have been able to produce at least one eligible output (see unit circumstances);

    - Affected their ability so significantly that they have been unable to produce one eligible output in the assessment period (see individual circumstances).

93. Invitations to staff to voluntarily declare circumstances will be made through a variety of routes, including through the University staff intranet and through departmental email lists following final approval of the CoP by the Vice-Chancellor and prior to the REF deadline for submitting requests in March 2020. Declarations will also be accepted following March 2020 as outlined in paragraph 96.

94. Any Category A eligible staff member wishing to bring any of the above circumstances to the attention of the University should use the Individual Staff Circumstances Declaration form to provide:

a. An indication of the nature of the circumstances according to the above list;

b. The timing and duration of the circumstances;

c. For circumstances other than qualifying period of family-related leave, the extent of the impact of the circumstances on the individual's ability to carry out research activities (e.g., impossible to carry out research at all, roughly 50% reduction in time available).

95. Declaration forms may be submitted at any time up to 28 February 2020 to allow time for review before the deadline for submitted requests to REF in March 2020.

96. Following the initial collection and submission of individual and unit-level reduction requests to REF, staff may continue to submit declaration forms at any time before 4 December 2020. Any additional declarations will be assessed by the SCP for eligibility against the criteria and any additional individual or unit-level requests/adjustments not previously approved by REF to be included in the final submission will be approved by the REFSG.

97. Only voluntarily declared circumstances can be used in considering the effect on the contribution to the UOA's output pool and any subsequent request to Research England for output reductions for individual staff.

98. The SCP will meet to consider the voluntarily declared circumstances at regular intervals.

99. The Head of Research Quality and Policy will communicate with individuals who have voluntarily declared circumstances via email to inform them of SCP discussions and any recommended related reduction of outputs in order to adjust the UOA output pool or to remove the minimum of one output requirement for that member of staff.

Unit Circumstances

100. The University may request a reduction in the number of outputs required by a UOA. However, F-REF-C and UOAs will first consider the cumulative effect of staff circumstances on the overall unit output pool and whether a request should be made for a reduction or if the total effect can be managed within the minimum and maximum output limits. If a request is made and approved this means the unit may be returned with fewer than 2.5 outputs per FTE. Where reductions are applied, UOAs will adjust their expectations about staff contributions to the output pool and apply any outputs reductions, if appropriate, to the individual(s) whose circumstances contributed to the output reduction.

101. Individual members of staff will be asked to voluntarily declare circumstances, using the template form, that have affected their ability to contribute to the output pool even if they have been able to produce at least one eligible output.

102. Only voluntarily declared circumstances can be used in considering the effect on the contributions to the UOAs output pool.

103. Tariffs on output reductions can be applied to specific circumstances such as early career status, secondments/careers breaks and qualifying periods of family leave as detailed in the tables below.

Unit Circumstances output pool reduction limits.

Date at which the individual first met the REF definition of an ECR	Output pool may be reduced by up to:
On or before 31July 2016	0
Between 1 August 2016 and 31 July 2017 inclusive	0.5
Between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018 inclusive	1
On or after 1 August 2018	1.5

Total months absent between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020 due to secondment/career break	Output pool may be reduced by up to:
0–11.99	0
12–27.99	0.5
28–45.99	1
46 or more	1.5

Qualifying periods of family-related leave	Output pool may be reduced for each discreet period by:
Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.	0.5
Additional paternity or adoption leave, or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020	0.5

Individual Circumstances

104. All Category A submitted staff must be returned with a minimum of one output attributed to them in the UOA submission, including staff with circumstances. However, where an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020), so that the individual **has not been able to produce an eligible output,** a request may be made for the minimum of one output to be removed. Where the request is accepted, an individual may be returned with no outputs attributed to them in the submission, and the total number of outputs required by the unit will be reduced by one.

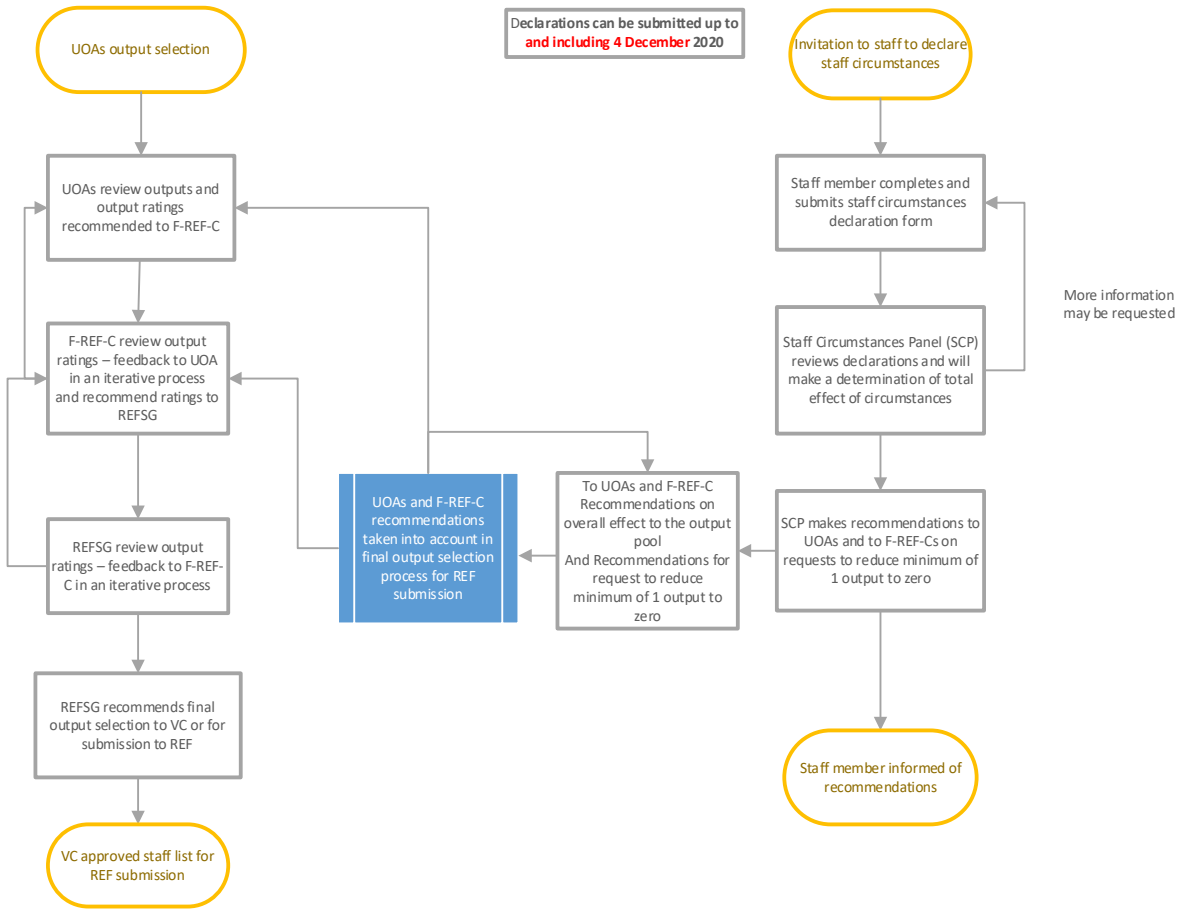
105. Requests, using the template form, may be made where the individual has the following circumstances:

a) Two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave as defined in the REF Guidance on Submissions, Annex L,

b) An overall period of absence of 46 months or more due to circumstances detailed above and including ECRs who have only been employed as an eligible staff member from 1 November 2017.

106. Only voluntarily declared circumstances can be used in considering the effect on the contribution to the UOA's output pool and any requests to reduce the minimum of one output for individual staff.

Fig.2 Output selection and individual circumstances



Support for Staff

107. Any staff with circumstances requiring support may contact their HR partner or use the University's employee assistance programme (EAP). Details can be found on the staff intranet.

108. Support for staff with mental health issues is available through HR partners or through the EAP.

Equality impact assessment

109. At specific points through the REF preparation period, equality impact assessments (EIA) will be undertaken on the spread of outputs across staff groups in relation to the protected characteristics of gender, age and ethnicity and the career stage. The results of the EIA will be evaluated for each UOA and for the University overall. The EIA points are included in the timetable in Appendix 8.

110. In reaching their recommendations for outputs to be submitted UOAs will reflect on the EIA, the balance of outputs from former staff, the expectation on the contribution to the output pool by staff with declared individual circumstances and other factors to ensure a fair, transparent and inclusive process.

111. The EIA will be reviewed at each stage of the final selection by the F-REF-Cs and the REFSG before the final output selection recommendation is made to the Vice-Chancellor.

Institutional contact for further information:
Yvonne Fox, Associate Director of Research Services
Lancaster University

y.fox@lancaster.ac.uk

Appendices and Annexes

Appendix 1: REF governance structure and organisational chart

Appendix 2: Log of consultation events and REF meetings (Feb 2018 to May 2019)

Appendix 3: Training Schedule

Appendix 4: Data collection statement

Appendix 5: Research independence template

Appendix 6: Declaration of staff circumstances template

Appendix 7: Academic and research staff equality profile/Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 8: Timetable

Appendix 9: Glossary of terms

Annex 1: Lancaster University People Strategy 2020 – available on Lancaster University website

Annex 2: Lancaster University EDI Strategic Vision – available on Lancaster University website

Annex 3: List of Research Fellowships

Annex 4: Lancaster University Research Enhancement Review

Appendix 1. REF Governance Structure (Advisory and decision making Committees and organisational chart)

Name of Committee/Group	Established	Membership	Role/Terms of Reference
REF Steering Group (REFSG)	Established under the delegated authority of the Vice-Chancellor to oversee Lancaster University's REF 2021 preparations	Pro-Vice-Chancellor - Research and Enterprise (Chair), Deans (4), Director of Strategic projects and Chief of Staff, Associate Deans - Research (5), Research Enhancement Directors (3), Professors with experience of REF (4), Director of Research, Enterprise and Innovation, Associate Director of Research Services. *In attendance* HR Representative, Library Representative, REF Preparation Manager, Research Enhancement Manager (LUMS), Head of Research Quality and Policy REF Support Officer (secretary)	• Recommend the units of assessment and the content of each unit's submission, including the outputs and impact case studies selected, to the Vice-Chancellor for final confirmation of the REF submission. • Consider guidance from the Funding Councils' (or UKRI) REF Team and ensure it is promulgated and implemented throughout the units of assessment. • Receive regular reports on behalf of the faculties and consider action arising at institutional level. • Ensure that the University complies with the code of practice on equal opportunities in relation to REF 2021 and any other relevant legislative requirements. • To take all such other actions as are necessary to optimise Lancaster's submission to REF 2021. Meeting minuted.
REF Management Group (REFMG)	Established by the REFSG as sub-set of the REFSG	Pro-Vice-Chancellor - Research and Enterprise (Chair), Associate Deans - Research (5), Research Enhancement Directors (3), Associate Director of Research Services. *In attendance* Library Representative HR Representative Head of Research Quality and Policy REF Support Officer (secretary)	• Oversight and routine management of REF processes • Undertakes small day to day decisions required for REF preparations • Acts in an advisory capacity to the REFSG on more significant issues Meeting minuted.
Faculty REF Committees: • arts and social science, • health and medicine,	Appointed by the Deans. ToR agreed by REFSG	Associate Dean for Research and/or Faculty Director for Research Enhancement (when this position exists), one of whom will chair and will also attend meetings of the REF Steering Group At least three Professors from the Faculty, nominated by the Dean or by the Dean's	• Receive information from the REFSG about the University's preparations for REF for implementation and further dissemination to departments and units of assessment. • Oversee the preparation for REF 2021 for one or more units of assessment as agreed by the REFSG. • Receive reports from departments/units on output/impact case ratings.

Name of Committee/Group	Established	Membership	Role/Terms of Reference
• management school • science and technology		representative, who have experience of sitting on REF panels or preparing previous REF exercises REF Preparation Manager (Minutes)	• Ensure guidance from the Funding Councils' REF Team is promulgated and implemented by the unit(s) of assessment, seeking advice from the REFSG if necessary on any areas of ambiguity. • Submit reports for each unit of assessment to the REFSG for consideration at agreed milestones of the REF preparations. • Ensure that the preparations for each UoA comply with the University REF code of practice and on equal opportunities in relation to REF 2021 and any other relevant policy and legislative requirements. • To take all such other actions as are necessary to optimise Lancaster's submission to REF 2021. Meeting minuted.
Impact Sub Group	Established as a sub-committee of the REFSG. ToR agreed by REFSG	Cross-Faculty Associate Dean for Research (Chair) PVC - Research and Enterprise Faculty Research Enhancement Director (3) Associate Dean for Research (4) Director of Research, Enterprise and Innovation Business Development Manager representative Research Director (1) Director Representative for the University Research Institutes (1) Impact Managers (3) (Alternating minutes)	• Have responsibility for ensuring that there is effective communication across the University on issues relating to impact; • Coordinate, monitor and evaluate faculty activities to generate impact case studies for the REF, including running impact writing workshops, coordinating cross-faculty activities and providing a forum to share good practice on the generation and development of impact case studies. This includes internal and external intelligence gathering, through channels such as professional networks or memberships; • Make recommendations to the REF Steering Group on the selection of impact case studies to be submitted to REF 2021; • Provide strategic support and independent oversight to departmental Research Directors, Impact Champions/Directors and faculty Impact Managers in promoting impact and engagement activities for REF; • Evaluate case studies that could potentially cross unit of assessment boundaries and identify to faculties for further review; • Review internal and external sources of funding for such activities, ensuring that the support is directed for the most benefit in developing ICS and collecting evidence of impact; • Receive reports from the Research Committee Impact Fund and other funding sources designed to enhance research impact, and evaluate the success of this in generating impact, specifically for the REF;

Name of Committee/Group	Established	Membership	Role/Terms of Reference
			• Contribute to the development and review of the impact section of the Environment Statement; • Report on its responsibilities to REF Steering Group after each meeting. Meeting minuted
Environment Sub Group	Established as a sub-committee of the REFSG. ToR agreed by REFSG.	Cross-Faculty Associate Dean for Research (Chair) PVC Research and Enterprise FST Deputy Dean Faculty Research Enhancement Director (3) Associate Dean for Research (FHM) Director Representative for the University Research Institutes Director (1) Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Research Associate Director of Enterprise and Innovation Assistant Director: Digital Innovation and Research Services Deputy Director of HR Head of Research Policy and Quality Head of Planning and Analytics REF Preparation Manager (Minutes)	• Have responsibility for ensuring that there is effective communication across the university on issues relating to research environment; • Coordinate, monitor and evaluate faculty activities to contribute to the research environment statements for the REF, including running environment writing workshops, coordinating cross-faculty activities and providing a forum to share good practice on the generation and development of environment statements; • Provide strategic support and independent oversight to departmental Research Directors and faculty REF Leads in promoting research environment activities for REF; • Provide strategic support for the collection and sharing of data needed for environment statements; • Evaluate the institutional environment statement and identify activities and content to showcase the university research environment to the best advantage for REF; • Review internal and external sources of funding for activities in this area, ensuring that the support is directed for the most benefit in developing environment statements and collecting evidence for audit; • Make recommendations to the REF Steering Group on the content of the institutional and unit level environment statements to be included in the final submission to REF 2021; • Report on its responsibilities to REF Steering Group after each meeting. Meeting minuted.

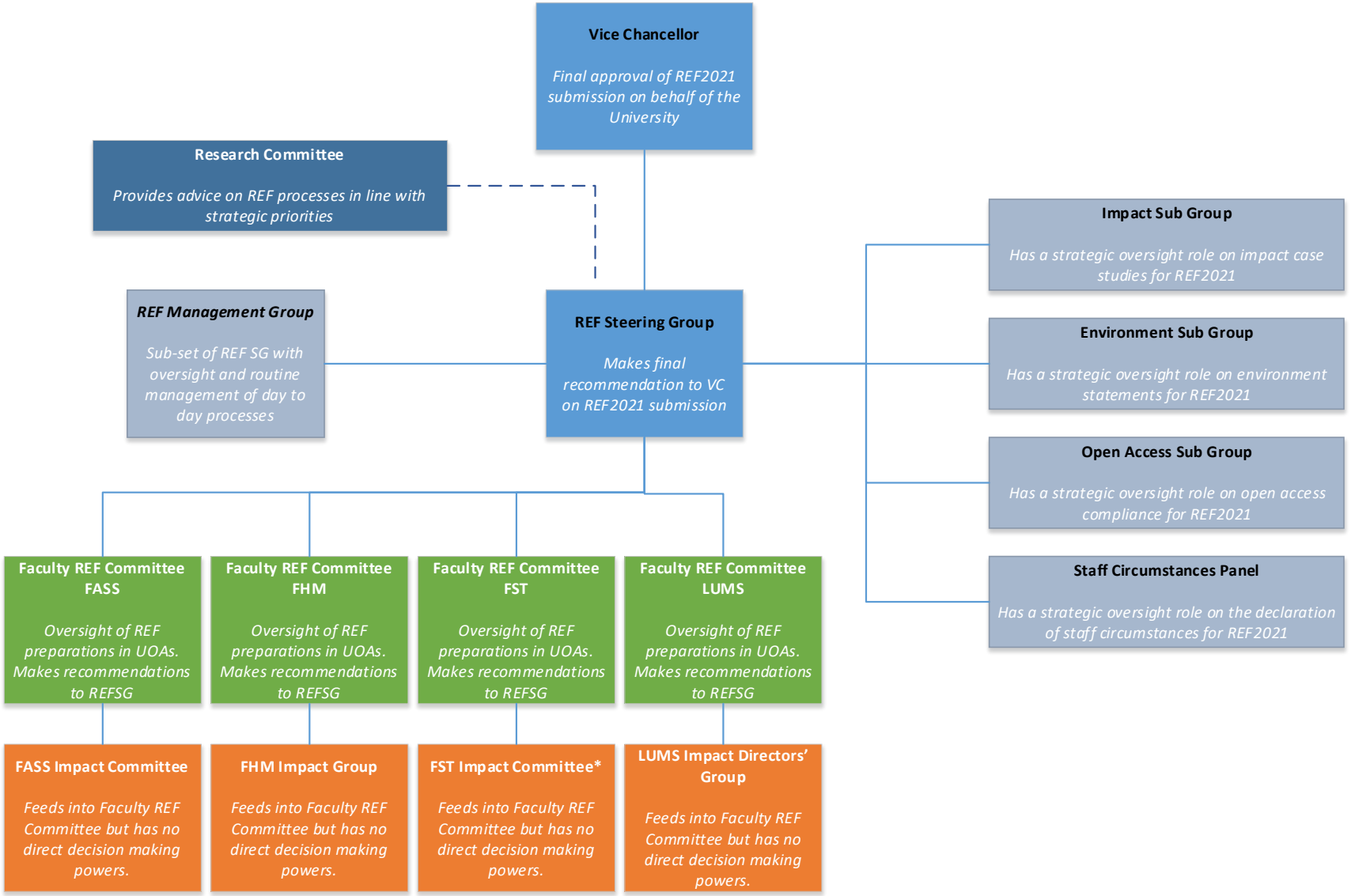
Name of Committee/Group	Established	Membership	Role/Terms of Reference
Open Access Sub Group	Established as a sub-committee of the REFSG. ToR agreed by REFSG	Associate Director of Research Services (chair) Assistant Director of Digital Innovation and Research Services Open Access Manager REF Preparation Manager (minutes)	• Oversee the review of open access criteria for outputs proposed for consideration for selection and submission to REF 2021 and which are within the scope of OA requirements; • Consider guidance from the REF Team on open access criteria and exceptions and ensure it is being implemented consistently; • Review OA compliance reports and report to the REFSG and recommend any necessary actions; • Review options for REF extra credit, along with relevant metrics where applicable, and report to REFSG and recommend any necessary actions; Meeting minuted.
Equality, diversity and inclusion Committee	A joint standing committee of the Senate and the Council	*ex officio* - Pro-Chancellor Vice-Chancellor Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development Chair of the Athena SWAN Committee Vice-President, Welfare and Community, Students' Union *Appointed-* Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education and EDI (chair) 4 Faculty representatives, one from each Faculty, 1 representative from Professional Services, 2 co-opted external members, Director of Students, Education and Academic Services, 1 representative from Facilities, up to 2 representatives from the trade unions	• To develop and recommend to Senate and Council as appropriate the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in accordance with the University's Strategic Plan and provide advice and recommend to Senate and Council on all aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion activities. • To monitor progress and report annually on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to Senate and Council. • To monitor relevant internal and external developments to inform future Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and policies, making recommendations as appropriate to Senate and Council. • In accordance with delegated authority, approve on behalf of Senate and Council policies relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. • To create sub-committees and/or initiate working groups as required; to receive and consider reports from these; and to delegate to these aspects of the above in line with agreed delegated authority. • To receive equality, and diversity and inclusion related matters for consideration from networks and interest groups at Lancaster University. • To advise and consult with other governance bodies, in keeping with its own governance responsibilities, on matters related to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Name of Committee/Group	Established	Membership	Role/Terms of Reference
			Meeting minuted.
Staff Circumstances Panel (SCP)	Established by HR to report to HR and REFSG	HR faculty partner (chair) EDI Manager Assistant Director: Digital Innovation and Research Services Head of Research Quality and Policy HR Faculty Partner (secretary)	• To review disclosures of individual staff circumstances; • To assess the impact of the circumstances on an individual's ability to contribute to the unit output pool; • To report to departments on total proportion of staff with circumstances in the unit and applicable unit reductions; • To recommend to the faculty REF committees output reductions for the unit and the removal of minimum of one output for individuals (if applicable). Meeting minuted.
Appeals Panel	Established HR and to report to HR and the REFSG.	Deputy Director of HR (chair) Associate Dean from another faculty to the appellant and not involved on a REF committee ECR representative HR representative with E&D responsibility Associate Director of Research Services (to act as secretary and REF guidance adviser to the panel)	• To hear formal appeals on decisions regarding identification of staff as independent researchers; • To decide if the original decision should be upheld or reopened. Meeting minuted.

Role	Details
Vice-Chancellor	The VC will confirm the REF 2021 submission on the recommendation of the REF Steering Group.
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)	The PVC (R&E) chairs the REFSG and is the University lead for the REF submission.
Cross-Faculty Associate Dean for Research	The Cross-Faculty Associate Dean for Research deputises for PVC (R&E) when necessary and oversees the impact and environment aspects of the REF submission.
Associate Deans for Research/ Research Enhancement Directors	The Faculty REF leads (either the associate dean for research or the research enhancements director) coordinate work at the faculty level and chair the faculty REF committee.
Head of department	Work with Research Director/UOA coordinator to ensure all eligible staff are considered for submission and to make recommendation to faculty REF committees on content of unit submission including staff eligibility, outputs, environment and impact submission.

Name of Committee/Group	Established	Membership	Role/Terms of Reference
Research Directors/UOA coordinators	Validate data in Pure REF module. Coordinate the UOA submission. Coordinate the drafting the unit environment statement. In liaison with head of department make recommendation to faculty REF committees on content of unit submission including staff eligibility, outputs, environment and impact submission.		
Associate Director of Research Services	Overall professional lead for REF submission and professional support and member of the REFSG. Responsible for drafting Code of Practice.		
Head of Research Quality and Policy	Lead on the operationalisation of the university's REF preparations and project manage REF submission.		
REF Preparation Manager/ Research Enhancement Manager	To assist and support preparations for REF submissions across faculties. Provide training on REF module in Pure.		

REF Organisational Chart



** A sub-committee of Faculty Research Committee but with a reporting line to Faculty REF Committee*

Appendix 2: Log of Communications on REF Code of Practice

Date	Meeting or Group Consulted	Details
14/02/2018	Open REF meeting	Open to all staff and covered timetable for consultation and publishing of REF guidance and development of REF code of practice (CoP)
11/04/2018	Open REF meeting	Open to all staff and covered timetable for consultation and publishing of REF guidance and development of CoP
25/04/2018	Open REF meeting	Open to all staff and covered timetable for consultation and publishing of REF guidance and development of CoP
26/07/2018	Research Directors Group	CoP and draft REF guidance highlighted to Research Directors and faculty Associate Deans/REF leads
25/09/2018	Faculty of science and technology (FST) leadership	Consultation with heads of department, dean and research directors on draft criteria
18/10/2018	University and College Union (UCU)	Consultation meeting to consider first draft of CoP
17/01/2019	University and College Union (UCU)	Follow up meeting for CoP to consider revised draft
21/01/2019	REF Management Group (REFMG)	Reviewed and provided feedback on the development of the draft
29/01/2019	University Leadership Group (ULG)	ULG was consulted on the draft definitions of category A submitted staff and independent researchers
01/02/2019	University Research Committee	Members received the final published REF documents for information and the draft CoP for discussion
06/02/2019	REF Steering Group (REFSG)	Members received the final published REF documents for information and the draft CoP for discussion
25/02/2019	University Leadership Group (ULG)	ULG was consulted on the revised draft CoP included updated definitions of category A submitted staff and independent researchers
27/02/2019	REF Management Group (REFMG)	Members discussed feedback received and an updated draft CoP
05/03/2019	University Management and Advisory Group (UMAG)	Members discussed feedback received and an updated draft CoP
w/c 04/04/2019	Draft code of practice published on staff intranet and all staff informed through news pages and in weekly news email	
11/03/2019	Open REF meeting (CoP)	Open to all staff and concentrating in development of CoP and process for determining independent researchers

14/03/2009	University and College Union (UCU)	Follow up meeting for CoP to consider revised draft and receive feedback
18/03/2019	Open REF meeting (CoP)	Open to all staff and concentrating in development of CoP and process for determining independent researchers
01/04/2019	LGBT Network, Women's Network and Disability Network	Email send to staff networks to raise awareness of the draft Code of Practice and consultation exercise.
02/04/2019	REF Steering Group (REFSG)	Members discussed feedback received and an updated draft CoP
03/04/2019	University Senate	Senate received an update on REF and the principles of the CoP
02/05/2019	University Research Committee	Members received a near final draft CoP for comment before
17/05/2019	University Council	Council received an update on REF and the approved CoP
24/05/2019	VC approved CoP	CoP formally approved for submission to UKRI
DATE	Revised CoP circulated	All staff informed through weekly news email

Appendix 3: Training Schedule

Dates/period	Training delivered	Groups
June 2019	Advance HE Workshop: EDI and unconscious bias in relations to REF 2021 Face to face training specifically tailored for REF delivered in a half-day workshop	REF Steering Group Faculty REF Committees
Jul – Dec 2019	Lancaster OED Workshop: EDI and unconscious bias in relations to REF 2021): Face to face training specifically tailored for REF delivered in a workshop	REF Steering Group Faculty REF Committees UoA Coordinators Other REF sub-groups
Jun – Dec 2019	Code of Practice workshops	HoDs UoA Coordinators
On-going	Online 'Diversity in Workplace' module Mandatory training for all staff	All staff
Throughout REF period	Training on REF module on PURE Face to face training and user-guides	UoA Coordinators
By 31 Dec 2019	Training on REF guidance and individual circumstances tariffs Face to face training	Staff circumstances panel

Appendix 4: Data collection statement

Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021

The purpose of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) 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 Lancaster University submission to the REF 2021, in 2021 we will send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI for the purpose of the REF2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name and details such as your date of birth, Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) 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 REF2021. 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 April 2022. The published results will not be based on individual performance nor identify individuals. UKRI will delete all the personal data that we hold about you within one month of publication of the results of the assessment exercise, other than information in impact case studies and environment statements (see below).

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 and environment statements in which you may be referenced.** Your name, job title and periods of employment may be included in this textual information.

Textual parts of Lancaster submission e.g. impact case studies, environment statements and other textual information will not normally be submitted with personal information (other than names and job titles). Any personal information (other than names and job titles) will be removed in the redacted version(s) of such documents that are submitted.

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 your employer 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 disclose personal circumstances to REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk Information submitted will be treated confidentially in accordance with our Code of Practice [link] (further guidance on submitting circumstances is available online). The information declared could permit us to submit your information to the REF without the 'minimum of one' requirement (without penalty), or to submit a reduced number of outputs for the overall unit 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 REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase, which will be no later than one month after publication of the results of the assessment exercise.

We will send the REF team 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.

The lawful basis for processing your personal data is 'legal obligation' and 'task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority'. Where data about your individual circumstances are special category data (as defined in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR), the specific condition for processing is that 'processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes'.

Accessing your personal data

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, you have the right to see and receive a copy of any personal information that UKRI holds about you. Further information about the Act and GRPR, and guidance on making a subject access request, can be found on the Research England website.

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

Lancaster University Privacy Notices can be found on our website along with information about how to exercise your GDPR rights.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

Information Governance Team

Email: Information-governance@lancaster.ac.uk

Appendix 5: Research independence form

Independence Template

Record of details for identifying 'research only' staff **as independent researchers**.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS - 30 JUNE 2020*

Following the process set out in the Lancaster University REF 2021 Code of Practice, Part 3, this form should be used by 'research only' staff who consider they meet the definition of independent researchers on the REF census date 31.07.20.

Department and UOA	
Individual	

Details considered as per the definition of an independent researcher

To be completed by the individual: Provide details for consideration as to why you meet the Lancaster University definition of an independent researcher (refer to Lancaster University Code of Practice (Part 3) before completing this form.

Conclusion

To be completed by the HoD: Provide a statement and reasoning confirming either (delete as appropriate): 1. The individual named above **does meet** the definition of an independent research, or: 2. Following consideration of the information provided, the individual **does not meet** the definition for an independent researcher as set out in our Code of Practice.

Name	
Signature of HoD	
Date	

Following completion by the HoD this form should be sent to the Faculty REF Committee (F-REF-C) for review and calibration to ensure that decisions are consistent with the criteria and in keeping with the four principles of the CoP. The F-REF-C will reject and return any cases to HODs that it does not agree with and will provide feedback on this decision.
For cases where the F-REF-C agrees with the HoD recommendation, HoDs will inform the individual who will be asked to acknowledge the decision on this template form below and then the completed form will be returned to the F-REF-C for further review.

Acknowledgment of staff member

I acknowledge that for the reasons stated above (delete as appropriate): 1. I currently do meet the definition of an independent researcher and will be returned as Category A submitted staff for REF2021, or 2. I currently do not meet the definition of an independent researcher and therefore do not meet the eligibility criteria for REF 2021.	
Name	
Signature of individual	
Date	

Faculty REF Committee

Faculty REF Committee recommendation to REFSG	
Date	

Following F-REF-C review the final completed form should be returned to Allie Clifton, Research Services (a.k.clifton@lancaster.ac.uk) for referral to the REFSG and as a record of the decision as it may be required in case of appeal by the individual or audit by the Research England REF team.

***In some exceptional cases the deadline will be extended to 31 July 2020**

Appendix 6: Declaration of staff circumstances form

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', 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' 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) 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 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.*	

Circumstance	Time period affected
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.*	
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*	

Circumstance	Time period affected
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 ☐

Print 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

Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

REF 2021 Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

This is Lancaster University's Equality Analysis of the REF 2021 process and eventual submission. It has been prepared by the University's REF team with input from the EDI team in Human Resources. This document is updated at regular intervals throughout the REF 2021 development process at key stages and will be finalised following the University's final submission. It is reviewed by the University's REF Steering Group and is provided to the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee. **This is version 1, completed 24.05.19.**

Lancaster University is committed to following the REF principle of inclusivity when conducting research and preparing for REF 2021. We are committed to supporting and promoting the equality and diversity in research careers and when representing the excellent work of our staff with significant responsibility for research in our REF submission, in line with our University Strategy 2020. Equality, diversity and inclusion will be integrated into all aspects of REF preparations through the work of the REF Steering Group and REF Management Group.

This equality impact assessment covers:

1. **Background**: Overview of measures to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in REF 2021
2. **Analysis of Staff**: Quantitative analysis of the profile of staff submitted compared to the profile of the University's research and academic staff at different stages of the equality impact assessment. This will be updated as the work on the REF submission progresses.
3. **Identified Actions**: Actions taken to prevent discrimination or advance equality and their outcomes. This will be updated as the work on the REF submission progresses.
4. **Forward Plan**: Different stages of this equality impact assessment, including the format for the final equality impact assessment. This will be updated as the work on the REF submission progresses.

Background

The following measures will be taken to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in REF 2021 preparations at Lancaster:

- **Training**: Tailored training, including equality, diversity and inclusivity and unconscious bias in relation to REF 2021, will be delivered face to face to members of the REF Steering Group (REFSG), Faculty REF Committees (F-REF-C) and groups with decision-making responsibilities. Targeted training for specific groups will include training on the REF guidance and how to use the REF module in Pure, alongside more general training on diversity in the workplace and unconscious bias.
- **Accessible Materials**: All documents relating to the REF 2021 will be produced in an accessible format, including all forms, and will be available on the University's intranet. Summaries and web guidance will be also be produced.
- **Consultation**: Staff across the institution were consulted while developing the REF Code of Practice (COP). The draft COP was available on the University's intranet during the

consultation, this was communicated through the University's all staff weekly e-newsletter. Open sessions were held for all staff as part of the consultation with slides published online for those unable to attend. A dedicated email was set up to allow all staff to comment on the COP and ask questions throughout the REF preparations. Information about the COP consultation was circulated to EDI stakeholder groups and staff networks.

- **Decision Making**: A hierarchical committee-based decision making process has been developed to reduce the potential for unconscious bias and so that EDI considerations can be raised and discussed at all levels.
- **Committee Diversity**: The membership of REF committees will reflect diversity as far as possible, taking account of the knowledge and expertise needed for each group. All meetings will be held on different days of the week and times to accommodate those working flexibly.
- **Research Enhancement Process**: Support and development is available for academic staff following emergent outcomes of the internal output review process.
- **Panels**: The University's EDI Manager is a member of the Staff Circumstances Panel and an HR representative with Equality and Diversity responsibility is a member of the Appeals Panel. All panel meetings will be held on different days of the week and times to accommodate those working flexibly.
- **Output Selection**: The selection of outputs for REF 2021 will be made solely of the basis on academic quality. Although EDI characteristics will not be a consideration, they will be analysed through the equality impact assessment process and the University is committed to actions to promote good practice and address issues raised in this area.
- **EDI Committee**: The equality impact assessment findings will be presented to the University's EDI Committee to allow this group to make recommendations to influence the REF processes.
- **Equality Impact Assessment**: Periodic equality impact assessments and analyses will be performed on the REF processes, including the determination of research independence and the appeals process, as they progress up to the submission date. The REF Steering Group (REF SG) will monitor this using anonymised data supplied from the HR database. If any prima facie imbalance is found relative to the total potential pool, then the REF SG will investigate in order to see if any actions are needed to support particular staff adversely affected. Where there appears to be a positive impact on particular groups, the REF SG will assess whether this can be applied to other categories of staff.

Analysis of staff

There will be periodic analysis of data carried out as part of this equality impact assessment in respect of all protected characteristics for which data are available:

1. For policy and procedures related to the identification of independent researchers: staff determined to meet the definition compared to an appropriate comparator pool of 'research only' staff.
2. For policy and procedures related to output selection: the distribution of selected outputs assigned to staff within the submitted pool.
3. For processes related to independent researchers identification appeals: staff appealing compared to the submitted staff pool.

4. For policy and procedure related to staff circumstances: the breakdown of circumstances declared (using the categories in the Guidance on submissions Annex L) and the number of requests output reduction to inform the Staff Circumstances Report (due following REF submission deadline in November 2020).

5. Category A submitted staff compared to all academic staff.

At each stage, any differences will be considered by the REF Steering Group, including percentage improvements in overall representation compared to wider pool. Where data are sufficient, the analysis outlined above will be conducted at UOA level.

Baseline data

Baseline data is provided below for gender, race, disability and age, as well as intersectional data on race/ nationality, gender/ race and gender/ disability. This presents university level data[1] from May 2019 and HESA data for 2017-18[2]. Further data, including additional intersectional analysis, by Unit of Assessment, by indefinite/ fixed term and by contract status, will be carried out as part of equality impact assessments during the REF preparations with analysis and actions identified as appropriate.
Data from REF 2014 is provided in Appendix 2.

[1] Eligible staff data is taken from the University's central research information system, Pure, where staff have been added to the REF administration module and assigned as Category A eligible. Pending data is also taken from this module; staff here may or may not be Category A eligible, assignment is pending within the system.
[2] All Academic Staff comparator data included in the tables is taken from HESA 2017-18.

Gender

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage	All Academic Staff: Number	All Academic Staff: Percentage
Female	348	33.33%	24	39.34%	1005	43.23%
Male	696	66.67%	37	60.66%	1320	56.77%
Total	1044		61		2325	

Race

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage	All Academic Staff: Number	All Academic Staff: Percentage
BAME	156	14.94%	11	18.03%	380	16.34%
White	807	77.30%	41	67.21%	1775	76.34%
Unknown	81	7.76%	9	14.75%	175	7.53%
Total	1044		61		2325	

Disability

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage	All Academic Staff: Number	All Academic Staff: Percentage
Disabled	54	5.17%	<5	4.92%	100	4.30%
Non-Disabled	933	89.37%	55	90.16%	2150	92.47%
Unknown	57	5.46%	<5	4.92%	75	3.23%
Total	1044		61		2325	

Age

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage	All Academic Staff: Number	All Academic Staff: Percentage
25 and under	<5	0.10%	<5	0.00%	315	13.61%
26-30	15	1.44%	<5	1.64%	325	14.04%
31-35	135	12.93%	8	13.11%	390	16.85%
36-40	206	19.73%	13	21.31%	315	13.61%
41-45	154	14.75%	6	9.84%	200	8.64%
46-50	150	14.37%	<5	6.56%	230	9.94%
51-55	138	13.22%	7	11.48%	210	9.07%
56-60	109	10.44%	6	9.84%	150	6.48%
61-65	76	7.28%	<5	4.92%	95	4.10%
66 and over	75	7.18%	13	21.31%	90	3.89%
Total	1044	0.10%	61		2325	

Race and Nationality

EU Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
BAME (EU)	6	2.87%	0	0.00%
White (EU)	184	88.04%	10	83.33%
Unknown (EU)	19	9.09%	<5	16.67%

International Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
BAME (International)	101	56.11%	8	44.44%
White (International)	67	37.22%	7	38.89%
Unknown (International)	12	6.67%	<5	16.67%

UK Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
BAME (UK)	49	7.48 %	<5	9.68%
White (UK)	556	84.89%	24	77.42%
Unknown (UK)	50	7.63%	<5	12.90%

Gender and Race

Female Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
BAME (Female)	49	14.08%	<5	12.50%
White (Female)	291	83.62%	17	70.83%
Unknown (Female)	8	2.30%%	<5	16.67%

Male Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
BAME (Male)	107	15.37%	8	21.62%
White (Male)	516	74.14%	24	64.89%
Unknown (Male)	73	10.15%	5	13.51%

Gender and Disability

Female Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
Disabled (Female)	23	6.61%	<5	4.17%
Non-Disabled (Female)	315	90.52%	23	95.83%
Unknown (Female)	10	2.87%	0	0.00%

Male Staff

Subcategory	Eligible staff: Number	Eligible staff: Percentage	Pending staff: Number	Pending staff: Percentage
Disabled (Male)	31	4.45%	<5	5.41%
Non-Disabled (Male)	618	88.79%	32	86.49%
Unknown (Male)	47	6.75%	<5	8.11%

Identified Actions

To be updated as work on the REF submission progresses and equality impact assessments are completed:

- Actions identified and taken to prevent discrimination during the submission process and the outcomes of these actions.
- Actions identified and taken to advance equality during the submission process and the outcomes of these actions.
- Justification for and/ or actions taken to address any differential impact that staff identification and output selection processes may have had on particular groups.
- Information about any policies or practices that had a positive impact on equality during the submission process.

Equality Impact Assessment Timeline

A new version of this document will be available following the key stages below:

- **May 2019:** Collection of baseline data
- **June 2019:** First equality impact assessment following the research enhancement review
- **December 2019:** Update following the next research enhancement review
- **March 2020:** Update following the end of the staff circumstance declaration process
- **September 2020**: Update following the end of the independent researcher identification appeals process
- **November 2020:** Final submission equality impact assessment

The final version of this document will include a summary of the key outcomes of the equality impact assessment and any conclusions to be drawn. It will also identify future actions for the further development of the diverse and inclusive research culture at Lancaster and any lessons learned in advance of future REF submissions (and for TEF and KEF submissions).

Appendix 1: REF 2014 Equality Impact Assessment – Summary of Actions

1. The Equality Impact Assessment on 'REF 2014 Code of Practice and associated processes' found no actual or potential adverse or beneficial impact on staff. The following actions were identified, as part of that equality impact assessment:

    - **Widen training provided to those involved in the decision making (members of REF Steering Group) to Research Directors/ Heads of Department – by October 2012 (EDI Manager)**

        i. Briefings on the Equalities Act 2010 are now included in the Legal Responsibilities training provided to Heads of Department (introduced in 2017).
        ii. REF module training has been carried out with Research Directors.
        iii. All new staff are required to complete and pass the online 'Diversity in the Workplace' module within three months of starting employment at Lancaster University.

    - **Undertake further analysis of classifications of staff in each Faculty from the mock exercise – by October 2012 (Head of RSO and EDI Manager)**
    - **Ensure that all of the main REF communications sent to staff are also sent to staff who are absent (via Heads of Department) – ongoing throughout the REF (PVR Research)**
    - **Proper verification of Personal Circumstances information prior to assessment by Panel – January 2013 (Head of RES and EDI Manager)**
    - **Panel assesses personal circumstances and makes recommendations to REF Steering Group – January 2013 (PVC Research)**
    - **REF Steering Group decides submissions - April 2013 (PVC Research)**
    - **Close monitoring of draft submission decisions of people in equality groups against eligible pool – January - April 2013 (PVC Research)**
    - **Review and appeals prior to final submission, including analysis of equality groups - October 2013 (PVC Research)**

All of the actions were completed and have been embedded within the REF 2021 process. The quantitative analysis of the profile of staff submitted as part of REF 2014 is provided in appendix 2.

Appendix 2: REF 2014 Equality Impact Assessment – Summary of Quantitative Analysis

Age

Sub-category	Number Returned	Percentage Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Number Not-Returned	Percentage Not-Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Percentage Returned (as % of sub-category)
25 to 34	104	16.6%	18	10.5%	85.2%
35 to 44	189	30.2%	55	32.2%	77.5%
45 to 54	184	29.4%	55	32.2%	77.0%
55 to 64	113	18.1%	38	22.2%	74.8%
65 & over	36	5.8%	5	2.9%	87.8%
Total eligible staff	626	100.0%	171	100.0%	78.5%

Disability

Sub-category	Number Returned	Percentage Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Number Not-Returned	Percentage Not-Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Percentage Returned (as % of sub-category)
No disability or impairment	540	86.3%	152	88.9%	78.0%
Disabled or impairment	28	4.5%	13	7.6%	68.3%
Not known	58	9.3%	6	3.5%	90.6%
Total eligible staff	626	100.0%	171	100.0%	78.5%

Ethnicity

Sub-category	Number Returned	Percentage Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Number Not-Returned	Percentage Not-Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Percentage Returned (as % of sub-category)
White	494	78.9%	140	81.9%	77.9%
Black & minority ethnic	64	10.2%	18	10.5%	78.0%
Not known	68	10.9%	13	7.6%	84.0%

Sub-category	Number Returned	Percentage Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Number Not-Returned	Percentage Not-Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Percentage Returned (as % of sub-category)
Total eligible staff	626	100.0%	171	100.0%	78.5%

Gender

Sub-category	Number Returned	Percentage Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Number Not-Returned	Percentage Not-Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Percentage Returned (as % of sub-category)
Female	193	30.8%	60	35.1%	76.3%
Male	433	69.2%	111	64.9%	79.6%
Total eligible staff	626	100.0%	171	100.0%	78.5%

Full/ Part-time

Sub-category	Number Returned	Percentage Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Number Not-Returned	Percentage Not-Returned (as % of eligible staff)	Percentage Returned (as % of sub-category)
Full-time	553	88.3%	152	88.9%	78.4%
Part-time	73	11.7%	19	11.1%	79.3%
Total eligible staff	626	100.0%	171	100.0%	78.5%

Appendix 8: Timetable

Year/Month	Actions and deadlines
2019	
January	REFMG meeting (21 Jan)
	UKRI REF - Publish final guidance and panel criteria (31 January)
February	REFSG meeting (2 Feb)
	REFMG meeting (27 Feb)
March	Lancaster's Code of Practice consultation period begins - information events for Code of Practice and consultation with staff groups e.g. UCU
	Open sessions for staff on CoP consultation (11th and 18th March)
April	REFSG meeting (2 Apr)
	UKRI REF - Invitation to institutions to make special submission requests
May	REFMG meeting (28 May)
	Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken by HR
	Lancaster's Code of Practice formally approved by VC for submission to EDAP (deadline 7 June)
June	Faculty REF Committees provide report on preparations for REF to REFSG
	UKRI REF Deadline - Submission of the Code of Practice for approval by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (7 June)
	Request permission to submit impact case studies requiring security clearance
September	REFSG meeting (12 Sep)
	**UKRI REF - HEIs invited to make submissions through survey on submission intentions for the REF 2021 and launch of the pilot REF submission system, proposed date for reduction of output requests (Autumn 2019)*
October	Environment writing workshop (for first week of Oct)
	REFMG meeting (16 Oct)
	Research income and PhD data (for FY 18-19) provided to UOAs.
	**UKRI REF - HESA data provided to institutions*
November	Faculty REF Committees provide report on preparations for REF to REFSG (including the latest output rating exercise and the first draft of each unit environment statement)
	REFSG meeting (27 Nov)

	Individual circumstances - deadline for voluntary disclosure
December	Faculty - output reviews updated report submitted (1 December)
	Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken by HR
	Meeting with Lancaster REF panel members
	UKRI REF - Final deadline for multiple submission requests, case studies requiring security clearance and exceptions to submission for small UOAs. Institutional Codes of Practice published by REF Team.
2020	
January	REFSG meeting
	UOAs to review draft output submission taking into account staff circumstances and preparing request for reduction of outputs at unit or individual levels as appropriate
	Meetings to review draft submission with UOA coordinators and HoDs
February	REFSG meeting
	Meetings to review draft submission with UOA coordinators and HoDs
March	REFSG meeting
	UKRI REF - deadline for submitting staff circumstances reduction requests - March 2020
	Meetings to review draft submission with UOA coordinators and HoDs
April	REFSG meeting
	Meetings to review draft submission with UOA coordinators and HoDs
	Faculty REF Committees provide report on preparations for REFSG
May	REFSG meeting
	Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken by HR
June	REFSG meeting

Revised timetable from July 2020

Jul-20	31 July - Internal deadline for requests for consideration of research independence
	31 July - Internal deadline: draft institutional level environment statement to circulate to UOAs

	31 July - Staff census date and closure of REF assessment period for research environment, research income and research students
Aug-20	Finalise staff lists following census date
	3 August - PURE REF1a/b (staff) module closed to UOA edits
	REF Management Group meeting (4 August)
	Final staff list sent to the REF Steering Group and the Vice Chancellor for final approval
	Equality impact assessment undertaken on draft submission and REF processes
	PURE update
Sep-20	**3 Sep - Internal deadline: draft submission of all environment statements and impact case studies**
	REF Management Group meeting (9 September)
	Citation contextual data (based on journal category) available from Research England for 2014-2019
	Review of environment statement and impact case studies
	w/c 14 Sept - Research England feedback on staff circumstances reduction requests
	Research income figures for 2019-20 shared with UOAs
	Decisions for research independence communicated by departments to relevant staff
	Updated Code of Practice circulated to all staff
	25 Sept - Internal deadline: final submission of staff and attributed outputs *
	29 Sept - PURE REF2 (outputs) module closed to UOA edits
Oct-20	**REF Management Group meeting (7 October)**
	RES checking of staff and outputs and begin transfer to REF submission system for validation
	Start of process to deliver hard copy outputs to the Library
	Individual UOA meetings with the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise
	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor to review final staff and output submission
	Final staff list sent to the REF Steering Group and the Vice Chancellor for final approval
	REF Steering Group meeting (21 October)
Nov-20	**REF Management Group meeting (3 November)**
	REF Steering Group meeting (17 November)
	All staff informed of final status with regards submission to REF

	30 November - Internal deadline: appeals to determining research independence process
	30 November - Internal deadline for final submission of environment statements and impact case studies
Dec-20	**REF Management Group meeting (4 December)**
	4 December - Internal deadline: final submission of staff circumstances declaration forms
	The Vice Chancellor to review all environment statements and impact case studies
	REF Steering Group meeting (17 December)
	CHRISTMAS BREAK
	31 Dec - End of the REF assessment period for research outputs (including research outputs underpinning impact case studies) and impact cases
Jan-21	**REF Management Group meeting (14 January)**
	20 January - Internal (exceptional) deadline: final submission for C-19 effected Impact Cases
	REF Steering Group meeting (25 January)
	Further release of contextual citation data
	Transfer of data from Pure to REF submission system continues and validation of submission
Feb-21	1 Feb - Internal final deadline for any changes in PURE by RES
	REF Management Group meeting (9 February)
	Final transfer of data from PURE to REF submission system
	Thorough checking of data in REF submission system
	REF Steering Group meeting (22 February)
	26 February - Internal deadline: finalise data in REF submission system
Mar-21	Finalising data within REF submission system
	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor for final submission review
	12 March - Agreed University submission date
	Preparations for staff audit
	Finalisation of hard copy outputs
	Equality impact assessment of the final submission and completed REF processes
	31 Mar 21 - Closing date for submissions (noon)

** a small number of attributed outputs may change depending on likely publication status by 31 Dec 2020 but no further staff changes*

POST-SUBMISSION (estimated timings in italics)

Apr-21	Submission of hard copy outputs to Research England
	Continue equality impact assessment of the final submission and completed REF processes
	Provide a hard copy of submission for University Archive
	Audit: Staff sample begins (until May)
May-21	Finalisation of equality impact assessment of the final submission and completed REF processes
	Audit: Staff sample **ends**
	Audit: Staff circumstances begins (until October)
Jun-21	*1 June 21 - Deadline for providing corroborating evidence for impact case studies and redacted versions of REF3 and REF5a/b templates.*
	Audit: Output eligibility and further verification of staff eligibility begins (until July)
Jul-21	*REF impact sample audit begins*
	by 30 July 21 (exact date tbc) - Deadline for providing final versions of codes of practice, equality impact assessments and staff circumstances reports.
	Audit: Output eligibility and further verification of staff eligibility **ends**
Sep-21	Audit: Audit of open access processes (if selected), REF4 data, impact case studies and random sample of unit-level environment statements begins (until November)
Oct-21	Audit: Staff circumstances **ends**
Nov-21	Audit: Audit of open access processes (if selected), REF4 data, impact case studies and random sample of unit-level environment statements **ends**
Apr-22	Publication of outcomes
Summer 22	Publication of submissions, panel overview reports and sub-profiles

Appendix 9: Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation/Acronym	Full description
CoP	Code of practice
DORA	San Francisco declaration on research assessment
EPA	Employee assistance programme
EIA	Equality impact assessment
ECR	Early career researcher
EDI	Equality, diversity and inclusion
F-REF-C	Faculty REF Committees
FTE	Full time equivalent
HOD	Head of Department
KEF	Knowledge exchange framework
PVC	Pro-Vice-Chancellor
REF	Research excellence framework
REFSG	REF Steering Group
SCP	Staff circumstances panel
TEF	Teaching excellence framework
UKRI	United Kingdom Research and Innovation
UOA	Unit of assessment

Annex 3: List of Independent Research Fellowships

Research Fellowships

1. Table 1 provides a list of competitive research fellowships, presented in alphabetical order by funder, that have been confirmed by the funder to require research independence. This list is intended to guide institutions when developing their criteria to identify independent researchers. **It should not be taken to be exhaustive** and the funding bodies recognise that many relevant fellowship schemes are not captured, including research fellowships funded by HEIs, which may require research independence.

Table 1

Funder	**Fellowship scheme**
AHRC	AHRC Leadership Fellowships - Early Career Researchers
AHRC	AHRC Leadership Fellowships
BBSRC	BBSRC David Phillips Fellowships
BBSRC	BBSRC Future Leader Fellowships (from 2018 known as BBSRC Discovery Fellowships)
British Academy	BA/Leverhulme Senior Research Fellowships
British Academy	British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowships
British Academy	JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships
British Academy	Mid-Career Fellowships
British Academy	Newton Advanced Fellowships
British Academy	Newton International Fellowships
British Academy	Wolfson Research Professorships
British Heart Foundation	Career Re-entry Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Clinical Research Leave Fellowships

British Heart Foundation	BHF-Fulbright Commission Scholar Awards
British Heart Foundation	Intermediate Basic Science Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Intermediate Clinical Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Senior Basic Science Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Senior Clinical Research Fellowships
British Heart Foundation	Springboard Award for Biomedical Researchers
British Heart Foundation	Starter Grants for Clinical Lecturers
Cancer Research UK	Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship
Cancer Research UK	Career Development Fellowship
Cancer Research UK	Career Establishment Award
Cancer Research UK	Senior Cancer Research Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Early Career Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Established Career Fellowship
EPSRC	EPSRC Postdoctoral Fellowship*[1]
ESRC	ESRC Future Cities Catapult Fellowship
ESRC	ESRC Future Leaders Grant
ESRC	ESRC/Turing Fellowships
ESRC/URKI	Early Career Researcher Innovation Fellowships
European Research Council	ERC Advanced Grants
European Research Council	ERC Consolidator Grants
European Research Council	ERC Starting Grants
Health Education England	ICA Clinical Lectureship
Health Education England	ICA Senior Clinical Lectureship
Leverhulme Trust	Early Career Fellowship

Leverhulme Trust	Research Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Emeritus Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	Major Research Fellowship
Leverhulme Trust	International Academic Fellowship
MRC	MRC Career Development Awards*
MRC	MRC New Investigator Research Grants (Non-clinical)*
MRC	MRC New Investigator Research Grants (Clinical)*
MRC	MRC Clinician Scientist Fellowships*
MRC	Senior Non-Clinical Fellowships
MRC	Senior Clinical Fellowships
NC3R	David Sainsbury Fellowship
NC3R	Training fellowship
NERC	Independent Research Fellowships
NERC/UKRI	Industrial Innovation Fellowships
NERC/UKRI	Industrial Mobility Fellowships
NIHR	Advanced Fellowship
NIHR	Career Development Fellowship
NIHR	Clinical Lectureships
NIHR	Clinical Trials Fellowship
NIHR	Clinician Scientist
NIHR	Development and Skills Enhancement Award
NIHR	Knowledge Mobilisation Research Fellowship
NIHR	Post-Doctoral Fellowship

[1] Those asterisked support the transition to independence. Applicants should demonstrate readiness to become independent and the award enables them to become so. It could be argued those at the start of an award are not 'independent' yet, but those well in the award may be.

NIHR	Research Professorship
NIHR	School for Primary Care Post-Doctoral Fellowships
NIHR	Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Engineering for Development Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	Industrial Fellowships
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	RAEng Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Academy of Engineering	UK Intelligence Community (IC) Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
Royal Society	Royal Society Wolfson Fellowship
Royal Society	Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship*
Royal Society	JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship
Royal Society	Newton Advanced Fellowship
Royal Society	Royal Society/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowship
Royal Society	University Research Fellowship*
Royal Society and Wellcome Trust	Sir Henry Dale Fellowship*
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Arts & Humanities Awards (for permanent staff)
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Personal Research Fellowship
Royal Society of Edinburgh	RSE Sabbatical Research Grants (for permanent staff)
Sêr Cymru	Research Chairs
Sêr Cymru	Rising Stars
Sêr Cymru	Recapturing Talent*

Sêr Cymru	Research fellowships for 3 -5 year postdocs
STFC	CERN Fellowships
STFC	Ernest Rutherford Fellowship
STFC	ESA Fellowships
STFC	Innovations Partnership Scheme Fellowships
STFC	Returner Fellowships
STFC	RSE/STFC Enterprise Fellowships
STFC	Rutherford International Fellowship Programme
UKRI	UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships
UKRI	UKRI Innovation Fellowships
Wellcome Trust	Intermediate Fellowship in Public Health and Tropical Medicine
Wellcome Trust	Principal Research Fellowships
Wellcome Trust	Research Award for Health Professionals
Wellcome Trust	Research Career Development Fellowship
Wellcome Trust	Research Fellowship in Humanities and Social Science
Wellcome Trust	Senior Research Fellowship

Annex 4: Lancaster University Research Enhancements Review

Ratings of research outputs

The university is committed to developing and mentoring its staff, and ensuring its collective performance across research and education is consistent with its top 10 UK status. The previous REF exercise required the selection of which research outputs were entered into the REF submission, and this involved departments taking a view as to the likely rating (4*, 3*, 2*, 1* etc.) of individual research outputs in order to inform the output selection process. The Stern review of the REF has recommended that academic staff are not selected for the REF, but we are anticipating that we will need to select which outputs are to be entered into the next REF, and in order to do this we need to have an estimate of the likely ratings of outputs that we will consider for submission into the REF.

It is recognised that this can sometimes be difficult for individuals and for departments, and this short document aims to encapsulate some university wide principles that will frame the processes for the ratings of research outputs within the university. Our university wishes to ensure that the rating of selected outputs is carried out within a mentoring and developmental framework, consistent with the Research Enhancement paper presented to Senate in 2016.

This paper does not deal with the selection of outputs for the REF, but only the ratings of outputs. The principles for the selection of outputs for the REF will be developed later on, once we know more about the next REF exercise, but as soon as possible thereafter in order to ensure that departments can develop appropriate approaches. This paper only deals with the principles for the ratings of outputs, which will inform the future selection of outputs.

The rating of outputs is not an exact science – any process put in place is an approximation, and we endeavour to ensure that this is as reliable as could be reasonably expected. Given the non-exact nature of the process, how the information is used internally is important to consider.

This paper also recognises that this can be a difficult process for both the individuals whose outputs are being rated and for those involved in the ratings process, and aims to put in the necessary support for all concerned.

If the Stern Review is implemented, then the identification of which outputs are most likely to be rated at 4* will become especially important in our REF preparation processes.

Also Research Committee has emphasised the need to make good progress during 2016-17 with the ratings of outputs so that we can support and mentor our academic colleagues as we prepare for the coming REF.

Principles

- The aim is to ensure we are well prepared for the coming REF, with academics receiving feedback.
- All research outputs that are considered for submission into the REF need to be rated.
- There will be an on-going process for the ratings of outputs with summary information initially reported annually to Research Committee.

- Individuals should not be involved in the rating of their own outputs, though departments may (or may not) choose to start with a self-evaluation by individuals of their own outputs at the beginning of any process.

- Departments should have procedures in place for the ratings of research outputs, which may or may not incorporate external input dependent upon local needs.

- Departments should not put the responsibility for carrying out all the ratings onto a single person, and are likely to want to involve a small group in carrying out the ratings.

- It is not necessary to rate more outputs than necessary for REF preparation, although in order to select the strongest items for inclusion into the REF it will often be necessary to have more than the required number of outputs to be read and rated.

- The department's procedures are to be agreed between the Head of Department and the Faculty Dean, with these procedures communicated to Research Committee. Faculties may (or may not) wish to have a uniform process across the Faculty.

- It is recognised that a small budget will often be necessary when departments need external input into this process.

- Once Units of Assessment (UoA) are known, then procedures will be brought together across a UoA rather than a department, though Heads of Department will remain central to the leadership of these processes. Given that we can anticipate some of the likely departmental combinations that will align with UoAs, then we will work with some combinations of departments to try and align processes from the beginning in line with anticipated UoAs.

- Research Committee will disseminate good practice.

- Equality and Diversity Committee will have oversight of summary statistics for the ratings related to protected characteristics, and will raise any concerns with the REF steering group.

- Ratings from departments and UoAs will be recommendations only. They will formally go to panel based or faculty based committees for ratification, and then to a REF steering group. The REF steering group will take an overview of summary statistics for UoAs/departments and check whether they appear reasonable and ask the faculty/panel based committees to intervene if the REF Steering Group has any concerns. Ratification of individual ratings of outputs will occur at the faculty or panel based level rather than the university level REF Steering Group.

- Decisions will be transparent to the individual author(s) of the outputs at Lancaster and will be communicated to individuals within a mentoring framework (consistent with the Research Enhancement procedures).

- These internal ratings will be used to inform decisions on the selection of outputs for the REF. Other factors will also be considered (e.g. some outputs were not selected for the REF in 2014 for other reasons than the rating, and most commonly because the work did not fit well into any of the UoAs that Lancaster chose to submit into.)

- Internal ratings will help inform the university's final submission to the REF, but will be only one of a number of factors taken into consideration in deciding what is included in that submission.

It is recognised that there might be a desire for a university appeals process to be formed in light of the above processes, and this should be considered. However, wherever possible appeals should be attempted to be resolved within a department/UoA rather than via some wider process.

Research Enhancement – Annual Strategic Process

Management information

The annual strategic process will be informed as much as is possible by quantitative management information provided to Heads of Department.

The University is currently working on an on-line research dashboard system which will ultimately be available to Heads of Department, where this information will be updated on a regular and frequent basis. Until this is developed, research information where available will be circulated via management packs sent out to Heads of Department e.g. as is currently being done on a monthly basis for research grant applications and awards, and as occurs in the packs as part of the planning process. Until a dashboard system is available, the management packs will gradually evolve, though the challenges associated with our university's data architecture present significant barriers in the short term and the development of the dashboard system is looking to resolve these.

The aim is that the dashboard system will ultimately have research information on various items. Various data is being looked at in this context to see if it could be included, such as:

- research grant applications, awards and income;
- citations;
- PhD student numbers, completions, destinations and funding;
- outputs in Pure;
- progress towards preparation for the next REF (e.g. proportion of academic staff in the Department who are expected to be able to have their outputs submitted into the REF; indicative scoring of research outputs as they become available; impact case studies being developed). This information is going to be limited until more details on the forthcoming REF are known, and until then a less detailed set of summary information will be maintained describing REF preparation;
- benchmarking information from HESA (and other sources where available) that provide information for Heads of Department of national and international research disciplinary norms (e.g. HESA information on grant income and PhD student numbers; citations norms for the discipline compared to international competitors from SciVal).

These above information sets will evolve to include information at the level of the individual academic in the Department as well as at the level of the whole Department, and will expand as more information becomes available, providing as rich a set of reliable information to Heads of Department as can be achieved.

Narrative strategy document produced by the Head of Department

The Head of Department will be required to submit a short (usually one to two pages of A4) document describing the Department's strategic plan for research development. (This will be required from Institute Directors and Directors of University Research Centres too.) Heads may choose to delegate the production of this strategy document to their Department's Director of Research. This will be a 'living document', updated as frequently as the Head of Department sees necessary. Heads may choose to make a longer submission if there is an element of their strategy that they particularly want to highlight. The document will describe plans for the strategic development of research in the Department/ Institute/Centre, including mentoring, research environment, and how the pipeline for impact, research grants and outputs is being supported.

The management information will be used by the Department to reflect on current performance, shaping the strategic plan described in the document. The strategy document is not expected to provide a full and detailed discussion of the management information, as the purpose of the document is to outline the Department's/Institute's plans for improvement and development.

The document could incorporate a mix of the summary of the strategy and practical implementation of plans.

The document will be an opportunity to highlight opportunities and barriers e.g. including areas identified for expansion in the Department, along with a description of how this would result in growth of income and reputation.

Good practice identified will be highlighted across the University.

Process

The strategic documents will be submitted on an annual basis, timed for the spring, so that reflections on these documents can inform the planning submissions made later in the year.

The documents will be considered at Research Committee, with feedback provided to Departments, Centres and Institutes.

Faculties are also likely to consider the information and discuss with Departments.

Where Departments are asked to produce a research strategy for their Faculty, they are actively encouraged to use the same document for both purposes to ensure that there is not unnecessary duplication of effort. As such, the format of what is expected from Departments in this process for the narrative strategy document will be flexible, to ensure that documents can also be used for any Faculty wide processes.