REF2021 Code of Practice

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Vice-Chancellor's Introduction

Salford is an innovative and dynamic university and our vision to pioneer exceptional industry partnerships that will lead the way in real-world experience to prepare students for life, underpins everything we do as an institution. As we work towards achieving our vision, we can only do this if we nurture the talents of our colleagues to enable them to achieve their full potential. As Vice-Chancellor, my commitment is to ensure that the University of Salford is a place where talented individuals can come and be a citizen of a collaborative community that enables colleagues to achieve their aspirations. We have made great progress in enabling an equal, inclusive and diverse community to grow at Salford, and we strive to continually improve in this important area.

Our strategy for REF is embedded in the University's 2017-2027 Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) strategy. Our strategy's mission is to be recognised as a global leader of research, addressing the challenges of living in an age in which the impacts of human activity dominate our planet's climate and environment. The RKE strategy is aligned with and integral to our collaboration with industrial partners. We are actively working with industry and wider society to produce excellent research that addresses the challenges of innovation, productivity, sustainability and resilience. We harness the power of that research to solve real-world problems and deliver meaningful and lasting impact through our work with policymakers, communities and local, regional and international governments.

The values of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy were co-created by our academic community; the lead value is to empower and nurture our inclusive and diverse community of researchers to undertake excellent, rigorous and world-leading research. We therefore have a ten-year strategy for REF, leading us through REF2021 to REF2027/8. Our colleagues are at many stages of their careers, but it is their commitment to research excellence that unites them within the academy. Through the implementation of the research strategy, we will tailor the nature and intensity of support to individual researcher needs. The University considers that REF should now be regarded as business as usual; it is not an isolated process, nor an end in itself. The aim with our approach to identifying those colleagues eligible for submission to REF is therefore to take a principled, merit-based approach to decision-making that is aligned to the Academic Career Framework, which is equitable, transparent and consistent across all Schools.

Professor Helen Marshall
Vice-Chancellor, University of Salford

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose and strategic context of this Code of Practice

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to document the University of Salford's processes, procedures, and decision-making to ensure a fair and transparent approach to identifying staff for submission to the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF2021). Also detailed are the roles and responsibilities of those individuals directly involved in institutional oversight of REF and in decision-making for the determination of significant responsibility for research (SRR), identification of research independence and selection of outputs.

The University of Salford does not plan to review or introduce any changes to contracts from 'teaching and research' to 'teaching only' for colleagues who may or may not be defined as having significant responsibility for research. Academic roles are to be aligned with the relevant pathways within the Academic Career Framework, rather than to be defined by contract type.

This approach recognises that academic colleagues may want to change their primary career pathway focus and provides the flexibility to colleagues to be eligible to re-enter the research career pathway through the process outlined in Part 2. If an academic colleague is not determined at this current time to have significant responsibility and to be returned to REF2021, this decision does not prevent them from being considered for the research pathway in the future or from being eligible to be considered for submission to a future REF assessment.

This Code of Practice, and the processes for identifying those staff who will be submitted to REF have been developed in consultation with the University and College Union (UCU), and their feedback has been integrated into the University's processes for REF and into this Code of Practice. This has been a collaborative and ongoing discussion, during which the University has shown a willingness to address the concerns raised by UCU members. A statement of support has been provided by UCU Salford branch and is appended to this Code.

A list of links to further information cited in this Code is included in **appendix 1**. The Units of Assessment (UoA) to which the University of Salford will return in REF2021 is given in **appendix 2**. A list of all abbreviations used in this document is provided in **appendix 16**. A summary version of this Code of Practice, containing all key points in this document will be made available on the University's REF intranet (www.salford.ac.uk/ref), alongside the full Code.

The aim of the University's 2017-2027 Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) strategy (https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1784972/Research-and-Knowledge-Exchange-Strategy-Web.pdf) is to implement game-changing frameworks to enable our University to transform our research and knowledge exchange support and performance to deliver real-world impacts for our RKE, Industry Collaboration Zones (ICZs), Salford Curriculum+, and Inclusion and Diversity strategies.

To deliver this RKE strategy we are committed to supporting our academic colleagues to achieve their maximum potential. The University does not regard REF as an isolated process, nor as an end in itself. REF is an integral part of the 2017-2027 RKE strategy and our ICZs, and our approach to REF is driven by our wider research philosophy and strategy. Our aim is therefore to establish a merit-, principle-, and career-based approach for identifying staff to be submitted to REF (those with SRR), which is aligned to the University's Academic Career Framework (see **section 1.3.3**) and supports the career development of researchers. The process has also been designed to allow a fair, transparent and consistent approach for all academic colleagues across all Schools. Academic colleagues have

been asked to opt in to this process via the completion of a personal 3-year research plan (**section 2.1.4**), evaluation of which will define SRR and help inform decisions around allocation of resource for research.

A review of REF2014 in 2016 by Lord Stern (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-excellence-framework-review) led to a number of changes in Research England's ethos for REF2021. These included greater inclusivity, equality and diversity in staff selection and the removal of the direct link between staff and outputs. In REF2014, only those staff with four research outputs, or special circumstances allowing reduction in outputs, were eligible to be returned to REF, which led to significant issues with inclusion and diversity in staff selection. The primary difference for REF2021 is that all eligible staff with 'significant responsibility for research' (defined in **Part 2** below) must be returned. Within this Code of Practice, we outline the University's merit- and principles-based approach for defining SRR, within the context and values of our institutional RKE and inclusion and diversity strategies.

The University is committed to supporting equality and diversity, and ensuring that all our practices are transparent, robust and fair. The University takes seriously its duty as an employer and a public body to ensure that our REF procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against, or otherwise have the effect of harassing, victimising or otherwise disadvantaging individuals because of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant, have recently given birth or adopted a child, or have taken shared parental leave. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) have been conducted during the development of this Code of Practice and have informed our processes and procedures to enable us to support the development of more equal and diverse research communities and to fulfil our legal obligations. Details of EIAs are given in the relevant sections.

Development of this Code of Practice, and the University's process for determining SRR through the submission of 3-year research plans, was led by the Division of Research and Knowledge Exchange, in consultation with the Code of Practice Working group, the REF Steering Group and Associate Deans Research (see **section 2.3.1** for further details).

The deadline for submission of this Code of Practice to Research England is noon on 7th June 2019. The document will be examined by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) who will advise the UK funding bodies on approving the Codes and determine whether Codes have adhered to the REF guidance documentation. All approved Codes of Practice will be published before the REF2021 submission deadline. The deadline for the University's submission to REF2021 is noon on Friday 27th November 2020, and results will be published in December 2021.

1.1.1   *Eligibility of staff for submission to REF2021*

In line with Research England's guidance on submissions to REF2021 (see **appendix 1** for link), all academic staff employed on the census date (31st July 2020) at the University on a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater that specifies either a 'research only' or 'teaching and research' role are defined as being "Category A eligible" for submission to REF2021.

REF guidance further states that each higher education institution (HEI) participating in the REF must return all eligible staff who have 'significant responsibility for research', and who fit the description of an 'independent' researcher. Where an HEI is not submitting 100% of Category A eligible staff, it is required to develop, document and apply a Code of Practice on the fair and transparent identification of staff. Definitions and processes for defining 'significant responsibility for research' and 'independence' are outlined in **Parts 2** and **3** of this Code of Practice.

The University of Salford does not plan to introduce any changes to contracts for colleagues who may or may not be defined as having SRR. Academic colleagues at the University of Salford employed on a standard 'teaching and research' contract will continue to be employed on a 'teaching and research' contract. Academic roles are to be aligned with the relevant pathways within the Academic Career Framework (**section 1.3.3**), rather than to be defined by contract type. This approach recognises that academic colleagues may want to change their primary career pathway focus and provides the flexibility to be eligible to re-enter the research career pathway through the process outlined in **Part 2**.

To enable development of contract research staff, and succession planning/development of earlier career researchers by those due to retire before the REF census date (31st July 2020), we are inviting those colleagues to complete a 3-year research strategy for the duration of their contract with the University. The aim is to support colleagues on fixed-term research contracts to identify their 3-year research strategies and to put together a development plan which will help them in continuing to develop and grow their research careers, either at Salford or at another institution.

1.1.2   *Responsible use of research metrics*

The University of Salford values an approach to research assessment founded on integrity and transparency. We actively support the use of fair and methodologically sound methods of measuring researchers' performance that take account of the different contexts and disciplines in which our colleagues conduct their research. Our progress in this area has been driven by our Responsible Metrics Working Group, which comprises academic colleagues and representatives from the Library, RKE, Human Resources, Finance and Strategy.

As part of our institutional commitment to the responsible use of research metrics the University of Salford is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). Through this public affiliation we have committed to:

- Not use measures such as Journal Impact Factors to assess individual researcher performance (for example for hiring, promotion, Performance and Development Review, reward) or the quality of individual outputs;
- Be explicit about the criteria used in decision-making, and make clear that the content of a paper is more important than publication metrics or the journal;
- Consider the value and impact of all research outputs in addition to publications and consider a broad range of impact measures.

In addition to alignment with the principles of DORA for institutions, we have developed further values that apply to our particular focus:

1. Research will not be assessed by any single metric in isolation. Where possible, a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures should be applied.
2. We take into account variation across disciplines; no single metric or set of metrics will apply in the same way across the University.
3. In defining our principles, our primary focus is on the appropriate use of metrics for assessing individuals.
4. We clearly distinguish between different levels of assessment (e.g. output, individual, group, institution) and recognise that different measures are more appropriate for different levels.

5. We ensure that we understand the underlying calculation behind any metric we use; these must be testable and transparently derived. The data and the data source need to be transparent and available for scrutiny.

The Responsible Metrics Working Group, led by the Library, is developing guidance for adoption across our academic research community to embed the responsible use of research metrics throughout our policies, processes, and practices. This will support researcher training and development and ensure alignment with institutional priorities.

1.2 Equality and diversity in relation to REF

1.2.1 Inclusion, Equality and Diversity at the University of Salford

At the University of Salford, we are deeply committed to embedding equality and diversity in everything we do. Our approach to REF is therefore aligned fully with our institutional strategy and policy for equality, inclusion and diversity, the purpose of which is: 'to create an inspirational, inclusive learning and working environment, celebrating the diversity of our University community in our everyday conversations'. A summary of equalities legislation as provided by Research England is provided in **appendix 3**.

The focus of the University's 2016-2021 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy (https://www.salford.ac.uk/hr/equality,-diversity-and-athena-SWAN) is on embedding inclusion to better reflect the University's culture of welcoming diversity, and the action-based and dynamic nature of the strategy. A summary of the strategy is given in **appendix 4.** The Inclusion and Diversity Strategy's purpose is supported and realised by the 2018 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1641031/Equality-Diversity-Inclusion-Policy-June-2018.pdf).

In recognition of our culture and approach to equality and diversity, the University has been accredited as a 'Disability Confident' employer through a government-backed scheme, which promotes and recognises good practice in the recruitment, selection and retention of disabled job seekers. The University is also a long-standing member of Stonewall and is a Stonewall Diversity Champion (www.stonewall.org.uk). We have an active Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) community, engaging both academic colleagues and students to ensure that we are an LGBT-friendly University. We are also a member of Inclusive Employers, a leading membership organisation for employers looking to build inclusive workplaces, share best practice and learn from each other. They also provide consultancy, training and thought leadership, to help us make inclusion an everyday reality.

We signed up to the Race Equality Charter in June 2018 and have a provisional plan to apply for a Race Equality Charter Bronze Award by June 2020. The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Staff Network was relaunched in late 2018 and endeavours to provide both formal representation, informal and formal advice, support and a safe social environment for all BAME University colleagues to counter structural and day-to-day prejudice and racism at work. Alongside the other staff networks the BAME Staff Network advises University committees to have meaningful impact on institutional policies and culture through action to create a transparent and collaborative workplace. The network supports colleagues, raises issues that impact colleagues and is a voice to represent staff interests. The BAME Staff Network will host a series of activities throughout the year to raise awareness, celebrate (i.e. Black History Month), inform and support.

The University's commitment to the inclusive career development of researchers has been recognised by our retention of the Vitae HR Excellence in Research Award (https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/hr-excellence-in-research) in 2019 for a third, 4-year term. Our forward-looking process for defining SRR has been designed to support academic colleagues from all backgrounds to develop their research careers and consider their specific career development needs, as well as enabling the identification of specific support requirements of those returning from career breaks and periods of leave. As outlined in **sections 2.5, 3.4 and 4.4**, the development of our REF processes and this Code of Practice has been informed by a 'rolling' equality impact assessment (EIA), and we have supported inclusion and diversity in REF leadership with the appointment of earlier career researchers as deputy REF Unit of Assessment (UoA) leads.

You can read more about our commitments to inclusion and diversity at https://www.salford.ac.uk/hr/equality,-diversity-and-athena-SWAN.

1.2.2   Athena SWAN

Advance HE's Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) Charter encourages and recognises commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research. In May 2015 the Charter was expanded to recognise work undertaken in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL), in professional and support roles, and for trans colleagues and students. The Charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women. https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-SWAN/

The University achieved the Athena SWAN institutional Bronze award in 2016. Subsequently, the Schools of Computing Science and Engineering (CSE), Environment and Life Sciences (ELS), Health Sciences (HS) and Salford Business School (SBS) have been successful in securing Bronze departmental awards. The School of Health and Society and CSE will both submit Silver award applications in 2019 and the University aims to submit an institutional Silver award application in April 2020. By being part of Athena SWAN, the University commits to the ten key principles within our policies, practices, action plans and culture (**appendix 5** and https://blogs.salford.ac.uk/athena-SWAN/athena-SWAN-principles/).

Delivery of the Athena SWAN action plan is overseen by the Athena SWAN sub-committee of the University's Inclusion, Diversity, and Engagement Committee. The University's Inclusion and Diversity governance structure is provided in **appendix 6**. The Director of Athena SWAN is an active member of the REF Steering Group, which ensures integration of the Athena SWAN and REF strategies. The Athena SWAN Women in Research Task Group, which includes members of the Division of Research and Knowledge Exchange, has implemented a series of initiatives to support women. The University of Salford Women's Voice staff network was launched in March 2017 with the aim of researching and addressing issues affecting women in the workplace, promoting personal development opportunities for women, and influencing organisational and cultural change. Among other actions, this network has held two celebratory Women's Voice Awards ceremonies on International Women's Day 2018 and 2019 to highlight the excellent work of female academic and professional services colleagues and students in the University.

Our Athena SWAN Bronze action plan proposed eleven overarching actions specifically to analyse the processes and policies contributing to bias in our research culture. These focus on data collection and analysis through embedding regular monitoring and reporting, and staff development activities. Ten additional actions focus on understanding the career progression of our female

academics and providing more appropriate actions with the aim of supporting women to achieve professorial status.

To this end, we have seen positive developments in our promotions data for female academics. Over the 4-year period between 2015-2018 inclusive, one third of applications for professorial positions have been from women and the overall success rate for female academics was 77%. One measure which has influenced this is the introduction of professorial promotions workshops which has resulted in an increase in our proportion of female professors from 17.5% to 22% over the last two years.

In the REF2014 exercise, 32% of our submitted staff were female, and across the University submission as a whole 24% of women were submitted compared with 42% of men. Planned and implemented initiatives which are intended to provide more support to women to undertake research and increase the proportion of female researchers who may be submitted to this and future REF assessments includes supporting a cohort of staff to participate in Advance HE's Aurora programme, to provide leadership development for our female colleagues. Development of bespoke training programmes based on individuals' 3-year research plans will also enable more focused training, targeted to specific needs. Other support includes provision of a returners from maternity fund and the launch of a working parents' network, which has been set up specifically for women to support women, but which is open to all academics.

Staff development activity focuses actively on improving mentoring options for our researchers. In March 2019 we launched a new mentoring scheme for academics. Academic colleagues can access a range of mentorship opportunities, providing specific support and tailored to core development needs, including opportunities to be matched with a mentor from another university in the region.

1.3   Actions taken since 2014

1.3.1   REF readiness

Following the University's REF2014 submission, a review of the preparation for REF2014 was undertaken, and a series of recommendations and strategic priorities were identified. Key amongst these was to adopt a 'REF-ready' approach throughout the REF cycle. To support this, a REF2021 action plan was created, incorporating the recommendations and priorities from the REF2014 review. This action plan forms the basis of our REF2021 preparations and the REF2021 risk register, both of which are monitored actively by RKE and managed at each meeting of the REF Steering Group.

An internal audit of the University's process and governance arrangements to drive improvements in, and maximise the accuracy of, the University's assessment of research output quality was conducted in June 2016. Recommendations from this report were incorporated into the REF2021 action plan.

The University conducted a REF Readiness exercise during late 2017 and the first half of 2018. The aim of this was to: assess the quality of our data and systems, and the processes to capture, collate and report on these data; model staff and environment data to evaluate our progress towards REF2021; highlight areas of success or concern, particularly with regards to equality, inclusion and diversity; and to target peer review and inform selection of UoAs.

The results of the REF Readiness exercise did not lead to any changes to workload or contract status. The methodology for the 2017/18 REF Readiness exercise was circulated to Deans of School, Associate Deans Research and Innovation, research leads, School REF and impact leads, School Postgraduate Research Directors, members of the Athena SWAN Women in Research Task Group, Human Resources (including the Inclusion and Diversity team) and other relevant professional services divisions. Feedback was incorporated into the final methodology.

A further internal audit was conducted in July 2018 to assess the activities undertaken by the University in relation to the REF process. This included a review of the activities being undertaken in preparation for REF2021, including the update and reporting processes used to oversee ongoing progress towards to the completion of the University's REF submission. The key finding of this audit was that University Council could take reasonable assurance that the controls in place to manage this area are suitably designed and consistently applied.

1.3.2   Open access and open research practices

The University's academic and professional services Open Access Working Group developed and implemented an Open Access policy, aligned with the REF and Research Councils policies, in January 2015. This was reviewed and updated in February 2019. University of Salford Library staff work proactively with the academic community to ensure research outputs fully comply with REF2021 open access requirements, and to raise awareness of these requirements and the broader value of open access. In line with good practice across the sector, the Library's strategic focus is to go beyond compliance, championing a culture of "open research", which focuses not only on open access publishing, but also on mechanisms to share research data and non-journal outputs.

"Open data" is a particular priority for UKRI, and we are already demonstrating our commitment to the "Open Data Concordat" through our Research Data Management (RDM) policy and service (see the support we have available here: https://www.salford.ac.uk/research/research-data-management). The Library provides a cloud-based research data repository, Figshare, where datasets and other outputs (any file types with any supporting information or findings) can be deposited and made publicly available in order to maximise re-use and impact. This activity arose in response to research data management and sharing requirements introduced by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) as a condition of grant funding, and the Library are now in the process of expanding this open research practice to accommodate research data and outputs across all disciplines. Figshare is also used actively to support practice as research in the Arts subjects.

Currently, our compliance reporting indicates we are on track for 95% compliance with the REF2021 policy for open access outputs, as appropriate versions of these outputs have been made available in our institutional repository (USIR) within the required timelines. Library staff now regularly identify outputs stored in external databases, but not present in USIR, and send out personalised reminders to academic colleagues to deposit their outputs into USIR. In addition, the Library Team are undertaking activities to ensure the required 95%+ compliance with REF2021 regulations through liaising with Research Centres and providing training to ensure academics are aware of the Open Access requirements.

1.3.3   Academic Career Framework

We are committed to developing and supporting academic colleagues to deliver excellence across all our activities and career pathways, including teaching and learning, research, enterprise and leadership, to enable the University to be at the forefront of sector-leading innovations in teaching,

research and enterprise, providing the best student experience. The Academic Career Framework (ACF) has been developed with our academic colleagues as a key tool to support both institutional and academic performance, providing guidance for career development and progression. A key measure of success of the ACF is to enable parity of esteem across all career pathways with equal access to opportunities for development, reward and recognition for high performance, and career progression, in order that colleagues can be confident in the career path they choose. We see the ACF as an enabler for academic colleagues to develop their careers overtime and to bridge across to other career pathways to support these changing career goals. Creating our ACF will enable us to attract, develop and retain our key talent and to have colleagues working in the core pathway that plays to their strengths and their career plan.

The framework describes the breadth and depth of specialist knowledge, quality of outputs and academic impact required to be successful across all career pathways. The key aims and focus of the ACF are to: support personal development and performance; create an understanding of what is expected and how to achieve excellence; enable great career conversations; identify and build on strengths; enable career flexibility; and identify and recognise success and contribution.

The ACF currently has 3 core pathways – Research and Enterprise, Teaching and Learning and Leadership, Management and Citizenship. Each of these pathways will have parity of esteem and we want our academic colleagues to feel confident in the choices that they make regarding their core career pathway, as well as with the opportunities they are afforded to change their career pathway as their career develops. Indicating a preference for a Teaching and Learning pathway is as important as indicating a preference for Leadership or Research and transferring between these will be supported.

Following extensive consultation, the ACF is currently being piloted in the School of Arts and Media. This is to make sure that we are getting this right and that we consider the roll-out and support required to ensure that this adds value for colleagues and the University.

The current process for determining SRR is aligned with the principles of the ACF in the research pathway, and it is planned that these processes will be integrated when the ACF is finalised and fully implemented. We expect that initial implementation will be completed across the University by 2021.

1.3.4   Support for Interdisciplinary Research

Interdisciplinarity in our research is an integral part of the University's 2017-2027 RKE Strategy (https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1784972/Research-and-Knowledge-Exchange-Strategy-Web.pdf). This strategy is built around five high-level strategic questions, which seek to address global issues, and which will shape our research endeavour in the decade ahead. To deliver this strategy we are creating five interdisciplinary and cross-sector RKE Beacons, built around our world-leading and internationally excellent research strengths, aligned to our ICZs and mapped to our five key strategic questions. It is intended that Beacons will be interdisciplinary, dynamic and porous, with researchers and industry partners able to move and collaborate seamlessly across ICZs, Beacons and Schools.

To support this strategic approach, the University created an interdisciplinary Strategic Funding Committee in 2018 to enable the development of high-quality, cross-discipline research projects and bids, which combine expertise from across the University.

Greater focus on support for and recognition of interdisciplinary research will be part of the research pathway of the ACF (section 1.3.3) and will be integrated into the 3-year research plan process from 2020/2021 onwards.

1.4 Principles

At the University of Salford, we are committed to ensuring fairness to academic colleagues, as evidenced by our adherence to the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity, as outlined below.

1.4.1 Transparency

We have embedded transparency in developing our process for determining SRR, and this Code of Practice. As outlined in **section 1.5** the draft significant responsibility process was sent out to all colleagues for consultation in February 2019, and the Code of Practice in April 2019, and the comments from this consultation were incorporated into the final process. The Division of Research and Knowledge Exchange worked closely with the Associate Deans Research and Innovation (ADRIs) in each School to ensure all academics were made aware of the consultations. The Salford branch of the University and College Union was also engaged in the consultations on the process for identifying staff to be submitted to REF2021 and on the draft Code of Practice, and their feedback was incorporated into this Code. Specific staff groups and committees were also invited to give feedback and comments. In both consultations, colleagues were able to provide comments either by e-mail to the UoS REF Team, or anonymously via a feedback form on the University's REF intranet (www.salford.ac.uk/ref).

Pending approval by the REF Equality and Diversity Panel (EDAP), this draft Code of Practice is available on the REF intranet, and will be circulated through internal communications and news messages. Once approved by EDAP, the final Code of Practice will be available on the REF intranet, circulated to colleagues, and made available on the wider staff intranet, along with the EIAs which underpin the REF processes.

As outlined in **sections 2.3, 3.2 and 4.2**, membership of groups and committees, and the processes involved in REF decision-making are available on the REF intranet, including the panels and criteria for assessing SRR. Decisions taken and, where possible, feedback to support those decisions, will be made available to academic colleagues in a timely manner.

1.4.2 Consistency

The University of Salford (UoS) REF Team has worked closely with Associate Deans Research and Innovation (ADRI) and Deans of School to establish robust criteria for membership of the panels that will assess SRR to ensure that they will be applied consistently across all Schools and UoAs. Panel criteria (**section 2.3.4**) and working practices were discussed and agreed at the March 2019 ADRI forum and REF Steering Group meetings and are available on the REF intranet. Panel membership was reviewed by the REF Manager to ensure adherence to the membership criteria. The aim is to ensure that all colleagues are treated fairly and consistently, and that panels have the requisite skills, expertise and diversity to evaluate research plans.

All 3-year research plans will be assessed against the criteria for significant responsibility for research (SRR) outlined in **section 2.1.4** and available on the REF intranet. These criteria were circulated to academic colleagues as guidance in completing their 3-year research plans and have

been designed to be applicable across all disciplines. To support the process and ensure consistent application of the criteria, a member of the UoS REF Team will act as secretariat to all panels.

As outlined in **section 4.1.4**, initial attribution of outputs to staff is achieved using an automated algorithm, which adheres to the requirements and rules of REF (e.g. minimum of one output, maximum of five). This ensures that the rules can be applied consistently across all UoAs and through repeated runs of the algorithm. The results from the algorithm are then checked by the UoA leads, ADRIs and the UoS REF Team, informed by an equality impact assessment of the outputs of the algorithm.

The process for determining independence is outlined in **Part 3**. A standard checklist of criteria will be used to support identification of colleagues who may be independent (see **section 3.1.4**), which will be followed up by individual conversations with ADRIs. Preparation for conversations and an evaluation of the outcomes will be supported by the REF Manager in order to support consistent decisions making.

1.4.3   Accountability

The membership, roles and responsibilities of decision-making panels for identifying significant responsibility, determining research independence and selecting outputs for submissions are outlined in **sections 2.3 and 3.2**, and in **appendices 9 and 10**, along with the processes and panels for conducting appeals, and information on training. Members of all decision-making panels share collective responsibility for making and justifying decisions. Accountability for professional services management and support of REF rests with the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, reporting to the Dean of Research. Operational and strategic responsibility for REF sits with the Dean of Research, whilst ultimate responsibility for the conduct and outcome of the University's REF submission rests with the Vice-Chancellor.

1.4.4   Inclusivity

The University of Salford is working actively to address equality and diversity issues affecting our research community and supports an inclusive approach to REF2021. Our commitment to inclusivity is outlined in **section 1.2**, and discussions around equality, diversity and inclusion have been central to development of all processes, procedures and decision-making panels throughout the period since submission of our REF2014 return. This includes the University's approach to defining SRR, which has been designed to support a more inclusive submission for REF2021 and into the future.

Other measures have included practical actions, such as promoting greater diversity on the REF Steering Group, as well as continued discussions on matters of equality, diversity and inclusion in meetings of the Senate Research and Enterprise Committee, REF Steering Group, and the Associate Deans Research Forum. The University's Inclusion and Diversity Manager is a member of the Code of Practice Working Group, and she and the Head of Athena SWAN are members of REF Steering Group. To support development of academic colleagues, greater inclusion in REF leadership, and succession planning for the next REF, deputy UoA coordinators have been appointed to work alongside the UoA leads. This has enabled much greater representation of women on UoA teams (42% female overall; 17% of leads and 58% of deputies are female) and will build a strong foundation for future REF exercises.

The processes described in the Code have been developed iteratively, incorporating a 'rolling' EIA and in consultation with the academic community. We welcome the greater focus on equality and diversity for REF2021 and are ensuring that all committees and groups of individuals contributing to

the decision-making processes also prioritise building an inclusive REF2021 submission. Online training, including modules on inclusion and diversity and unconscious bias, has been mandatory for any member of staff participating in REF decision-making and additional, face-to-face and REF-specific training based on Advance HE materials has been provided to colleagues involved in determining SRR and research independence by the REF Manager, supported by Human Resources.

1.5   Developing the Code of Practice and communicating with colleagues

The process for developing the draft Code of Practice, specifically the criteria and processes for determining SRR and research independence, was initiated by the Code of Practice Working Group. This team drew on expertise from academic and professional services colleagues from Schools, RKE and Human Resources, including the Inclusion and Diversity Manager. Drafts of this document have been discussed at the REF Steering Group at four meetings in 2018/19 and at University Senate and have received input from School ADRIs and academic colleagues who have been appointed as REF UoA submission leads. The final draft of this Code of Practice has been signed off by the University's Research and Enterprise Committee and the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team, and will be ratified at University Senate on 12th June 2019.

During the development of our Code of Practice, we involved colleagues from various functions and committees across the University to ensure alignment with our ongoing ACF project (**section 1.3.3**) and appropriately consider equality and diversity factors within our REF activities. This two-way communication between the UoS REF Team and close working with other groups facilitated our EIA process leading to a greater awareness of areas for improvement in our research culture and REF preparations. The following groups have been involved:

- Inclusion and Diversity Team (within Human Resources)
- Athena SWAN Sub-Committee
- Athena SWAN Women in Research Task Group
- REF Steering Group
- Human Resources colleagues developing the Academic Career Framework
- Associate Deans Research and Innovation
- Senate Research and Enterprise Committee
- University Senate and University Council
- Joint Academic Committee (trade union liaison group)

In addition to the groups and committees listed above, during our staff consultation in April 2019 on our full Code of Practice we engaged with and sought feedback from the following committees and staff groups:

- University and College Union (UCU) Salford Branch
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff network
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) staff network
- Women's Voice network
- Inclusion, Diversity and Engagement Committee
- Workplace Inclusion Committee

Colleagues who were on leave or away from the University during the consultation in April 2019 were sent a letter by Human Resources to inform them of the consultation and the mechanism available to provide their feedback.

Our timeline of activity to communicate and engage with academic colleagues around REF-related issues is detailed in **Table 1**. This includes future milestones as we complete our processes to determine colleagues who have SRR and are independent researchers.

Table 1. Programme of communication to colleagues to inform of key milestones throughout this REF period.

Date	Activity	Communication channel
2014	Communication to staff to engage with open access agenda	E-mail communication organised by RKE and Library
February 2016	Staff consultation as part of HEFCE consultation on outcomes of the Stern review	E-mail communication to all Schools via ADRIs to gather staff feedback
2018 onwards	Regular updates providing background information and Research England's requirements for the REF2021 exercise	REF site on staff intranet (logon required): www.salford.ac.uk/ref
January 2019	UoA leads and deputy leads appointed	ADRI communication to their Schools
January 2019	Preliminary staff consultation regarding the proposed process for determining staff with significant responsibility for research and research independence. Included summary of the REF2021 guidance and key changes from the 2014 assessment	E-mail to all staff supported by communication by ADRIs Presentation by the Dean of Research Feedback gathered via town hall meetings (x3), anonymous webform, and e-mails directed to the UoS REF Team functional email address ref@salford.ac.uk.
February 2019	Engagement with UCU representatives and discussion of proposed SRR and independence criteria	Discussion of proposals at the Joint Academic Committee on 8th February
February 2019	Invitation to opt in to the process to determine staff with SRR (via completion of a personal 3-year research plan – see Part 2 of this Code)	All-staff internal comms e-mail
February 2019	Provision of feedback to the initial consultation and publication of initial EIA data on the criteria used as part of the decision-making for evaluation of 3-year research plans	REF intranet and e-mail to the UoS REF Team
April 2019	All-staff consultation on the full Code of Practice

Gathered feedback at in-person events and via anonymous comments to an online form | All-staff internal comms and letters from Human Resources to ensure all colleagues are informed, supported by ADRIs Internal news item on staff intranet Face to face presentations (x3); Code of Practice circulated by e-mail to committees and staff groups |

May 2019	Feedback on Code of Practice consultation discussed with UCU Branch representatives	Face to face discussion of feedback; e-mail confirmation
	Feedback on the implementation of 3-year research plans to determine SRR	Face to face discussion of feedback
June 2019	Publication of the draft Code of Practice submitted to Research England	Internal news item; internal communications email; dissemination through ADRIs
July 2019	Inform colleagues of provisional decisions regarding SRR (round 1 of SRR process), and the appeals processes (completed by September 2019)	Letter to members of staff sent from HR
October 2019	Open the second round of the SRR process and invite completions of 3-year research plans for colleagues who deferred completion in early 2019.	E-mail communication from Dean of Research to academic staff supported by ADRIs; Internal news item on staff intranet
December 2019	Inform colleagues of the opportunity to submit their circumstances information and the process by which to do this.	E-mail communication to all staff with SRR
	Colleagues on research-only contracts contacted by the UoS REF Team to invite them to complete the research independence questionnaire.	Email sent directly to each member of staff
Mid 2020	Inform colleagues of decisions regarding SRR and research independence	Letter to members of staff sent from HR

Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

2.1 Policies and Procedures

This section outlines the policies and procedures that the University will follow in identifying colleagues with 'significant responsibility for research' and preparing our REF2021 submission. This includes information on the criteria and processes by which decisions will be made, including the timescales for delivering decisions and the method and timescale in which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made.

The University of Salford does not plan to introduce any changes to contracts for colleagues who may or may not be defined as having SRR. Academic colleagues at the University of Salford employed on a standard 'teaching and research' contract will continue to be employed on a 'teaching and research' contract. Academic roles are to be aligned with the relevant pathways within the ACF (**section 1.3.3**), rather than defined by contract type.

2.1.1 Relevant REF2021 guidance

The guidance for submission to REF2021 states that each HEI participating in the REF must return all eligible staff who have 'significant responsibility for research', and who fit the description of an 'independent' researcher. The REF definition of 'significant responsibility for research'(SRR) is: "**Staff for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research and that is an expectation of their job role**".

Research England considers academic staff on 'teaching and research' contracts to be independent researchers. In exceptional instances, where this is not the case, independence is considered as part of the process of identifying staff with SRR. Therefore, a consideration of independence is included in our process to determine SRR by distinguishing between colleagues who are self-directed and leading their own research activity compared with colleagues who are on a trajectory towards, but who have not yet achieved SRR (our Next-Generation, Joining/Returning researchers cohort).

2.1.2 Rationale for our approach to determining significant responsibility for research

As outlined in **section 1.1**, the University's approach to defining significant responsibility for research sits within the context of the 2017-2027 Research and Knowledge Exchange and Industry Collaboration Zone strategies. To this end, we do not view REF as an isolated process, nor as an end in itself. The aim of the process outlined in the following sections is to establish a merit- and principles-based approach to defining SRR which is aligned to the University's ACF (section 1.3.3), and which raises the aspirations, and supports the long-term career development of academic colleagues at all levels, taking us forward to REF2027/8.

From 2021 determining SRR will be a more straightforward process as the ACF will be in place to define expectations and contributions of academics on research-focused, teaching and learning-focused, or leadership-focused pathways. The ACF provides development opportunities and parity of esteem for different pathways for progression for our academics, by outlining expected activities colleagues will undertake if focusing on teaching and learning, research, or leadership. These pathways are available to all colleagues on 'teaching and research' contracts and, when the system is fully embedded across the University, there will be the opportunity to join or re-join these three pathways to facilitate career development as appropriate to the individual academic colleague.

For the purposes of REF2021, our process for determining SRR begins with identifying those colleagues who are expected to be undertaking research. Our approach was informed by early pilot work on the use of research plans as a mechanism to support research staff in the School of Arts and Media, which was initiated in 2015. For REF2021, academic colleagues are invited to opt in to be considered for the research career pathway through completion of a personal 3-year research plan outlining their research questions, previous activity and future plans. In adopting this method as part of our SRR decision-making process we have refined the format of the personal research strategy plan so that the focus is split equally between previous achievements and future priorities. This will enable the University to support those individuals through training and mentoring who demonstrate the potential to lead and support successful research in the future.

One of the key features of our SRR process is the ability to identify and support those colleagues who are on the research career pathway and on a trajectory towards, but who have not yet reached the stage of being defined as having SRR. These colleagues may be early career researchers ('Next-Generation') or Joining/Returning Researchers. Colleagues at this stage may include: (1) earlier career researchers stepping onto the research pathway for the first time; (2) those at other career stages who are joining the University or the research pathway for the first time, for example from other University career paths or from industry; or (3) those returning to the research pathway after a substantial career break. The defining characteristic of these academic colleagues will be the expectation that they will achieve SRR within 3 years, based on their track record, trajectory and research plans.

We recognise that time and support are key factors in enabling Next-Generation and Joining/Returning Researchers to develop, establish and deliver high-quality research plans and projects. Those colleagues who are designated as being in this group will be able to access time and resources to support their research, as well as following a bespoke development programme that will help them move onto the research pathway and obtain SRR. We feel that this is a critical stage in developing a diverse and inclusive research community which allows new generations of researchers to become established in their fields and supports those who are entering from other career paths or have been away from research for an extended period of time.

2.1.3   Our definition of significant responsibility for research

Our approach for identifying academic colleagues who are defined as having SRR is outlined in **section 2.1.4** below. The Research England REF definition for 'significant responsibility for research' is tripartite, allowing institutions to adopt a range of indicators relevant to their particular organisational contexts. Our proposed process for determining SRR aligns with each part of the definition in the following way:

1. **"Staff for whom explicit time and resources are made available"**
   Each colleague determined to have SRR through the assessment of their 3-year research plan should be allocated a minimum of 20% workload for research, which will be recorded in the workload balance model (WLBM) from academic year 2020/21. This differs from an allocation of time to undertake development for colleagues designated as Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researchers. These researchers may have more or less than 20% of their time allocated for research development and will be aligned to individual circumstances and needs, as outlined in their 3-year research plans.

2. **"To engage in independent research"**
   As described in **Part 3**, academic colleagues on 'teaching and research' contracts are assumed to be independent researchers, and therefore eligibility for submission to REF2021 will be

determined by whether or not they are identified as having SRR. Academic colleagues on 'research only' contracts must be independent researchers to meet the definition of Category A eligible. Postdoctoral Research Associates and Research Assistants are not usually considered to be Category A eligible unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher.

3. "And that is an expectation of their job role"
All colleagues with either SRR, or who have been defined as being Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researchers, will have an expectation of research within their job role as defined by their 3-year research plan (completed in either early 2019 or late 2019/early 2020 for REF2021). Those colleagues will have specified objectives relating to research activity and research career development within their Performance and Development Review (PDR). Only those who can demonstrate a minimum level of research activity, defined as being at Level 1 in at least 3 areas (including 'outputs') of the Stages of Researcher Development Matrix (**section 2.1.4**, stage 3), will be defined by their School assessment panel to have SRR and will therefore be submitted to REF.

2.1.4   Process for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

The University of Salford's proposed mechanism for defining SRR sits within the wider context of the developing ACF. Through this process we are ensuring that our staff selection in REF is part of the wider activity currently occurring across the University to define and improve academic career development. Our process for identifying those academic colleagues who have SRR comprises 6 stages, outlined below.

Our SRR process was first run between March and July 2019. The full timeline for the first implementation of this process is detailed in **appendix 8**. A second exercise to determine SRR will be established in late 2019/early 2020 to review plans from newer colleagues, those who were away from the University for a substantial period of time (for example on parental or sick leave), those who have deferred completion of their 3-year research plan owing to other special circumstances, and those who feel that they now meet the criteria for SRR. We will also operate a 'fast-track' SRR process to assess newer colleagues joining the University between the second round and the census date to ensure that these individuals also have the chance to opt-in to the process and be considered for SRR. It is expected that thereafter that the process will be run on a more regular basis (for example, annually) as it is integrated into the researcher development programme and the ACF.

The University adheres to the principles of responsible research metrics as outlined in **section 1.1.2**. We will therefore work with assessment panels to ensure that our processes for reviewing 3-year research plans are in alignment with good practice to allow fairness and consistency.

The stages of the process to determine SRR are outlined below:

Stage 1: Completion of a personal 3-year research plan
In the first stage of our SRR process individual academics are invited to opt in to by undertaking a self-assessment and evaluation of their research activity and career aspirations through the production of a **personal 3-year research plan**. This process allows colleagues to determine their current level of activity and produce ambitious, yet realistic, plans for the future direction of their research and their own professional development.

Currently, 3-year research plans are completed and submitted via a template on the REF intranet (**appendix 7**). The template, supporting guidance and frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available for UoS staff members on our REF intranet at www.salford.ac.uk/ref. The technology and process for submitting is under review, informed by lessons learned from the initial process in March-April 2019, and feedback from discussions with the University and College Union.

Completion of a personal 3-year research plan is mandatory for all academic colleagues who would like to be considered for:

- the research career pathway;
- an allocation of time to undertake research;
- submission to REF2021

Completion of the personal 3-year research plan is the *gateway* to be defined as having SRR and access to related resources but *does not guarantee this outcome*.

To enable the completion of the form and to guide reflection on the expectations of Salford researchers, we have constructed a matrix outlining researcher career development stages that has been aligned with the ACF in its current form, providing descriptors for different levels of key activities related to research. This matrix sets out three levels of researcher development (from Level 1 to Level 3) plus a Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher stage which provides a supported progression step to SRR. Research activity is described under five separate areas, with indicators of expected achievement at each level:

- Income
- Partnerships and Impact
- Professional Esteem
- Outputs
- Leadership and Citizenship (People and Place)

The research activities and types of indicators contained in the stages of researcher development matrix have been informed by good practice initiatives, such as recommendations made by the UK Forum for Responsible Research Metrics[1] (see **section 1.1.2** for our approach to responsible use of research metrics). In line with good practice, metrics such as the H-index or journal impact factors are not included as an assessment measure. This recognises that such metrics are not definitive measures of research quality, and helps to ensure that earlier career researchers, or those working in disciplines where journal articles are not the predominant type of research output are not disadvantaged.

Stage 2: Verification of data on previous research activity
To support assessment panels in determining SRR and to evaluate the ambition and feasibility of future plans, data on research activity for the time period January 2014 - January 2019 are provided. For each individual academic, data held centrally by RKE and Finance are provided to panels for:

- Bidding activity for external funding
- Grant income as PI and as Co-I
- Current PhD student supervisions and PGR completions as main supervisor

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[1] https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/research-policy/open-science/The%20Forum%20for%20Responsible%20Research%20Metrics/UK%20progress%20towards%20the%20use%20of%20metrics%20responsibly%2010072018.pdf

- Number of research outputs, or metadata for non-written outputs, uploaded to the University of Salford Institutional Repository (USIR) and internal peer review scores (**section 4.2.2**)
- Impact activity as recorded in the University Impact database

During the submission period for the 3-year research plans, all colleagues on a 'teaching and research' contract will be contacted to provide them with these data and given the opportunity for comment on its accuracy and add any additional relevant information. These comments are included in the information sent to the School assessment panels evaluating the research plans.

In the March 2019 submission round we identified issues with regards to communication and understanding of the data, as well as with the accuracy of some data. Following this, the UoS REF team, working with the relevant teams in RKE, has undertaken a review in order to provide an explanation of the data supplied. The lessons learned from this exercise will be implemented to ensure that this stage in the process is focused towards individual verification and addition of context.

Given the issues with data in the initial round of 3-year research plan submission, measures were put in place to ensure that no academic colleague would be disadvantaged by any errors in data. Where a decision on Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher and/or SRR rested on data, a provisional decision was given, pending confirmation of the correct data with academic colleagues and the appropriate professional service responsible for managing the data.

Stage 3: Assessment of 3-year research plans
Following the end of the submission period, 3-year research plans are collated by the UoS REF Team and forwarded to School assessment panels, comprising research-active academics. Panel membership criteria and panel processes have been defined to ensure that this decision-making group conducts processes in alignment with the principles of this Code of Practice (accountability, transparency, consistency, and inclusivity), and is outlined in more detail in **section 2.3.4**.

Individual research plans are assessed against the criteria contained in the Stages of Researcher Development matrix for each area of activity. The criteria for Level 1, which is the minimum level at which academic colleagues are defined as having SRR, are set out in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Criteria for Level 1 in the Stages of Researcher Development Matrix.

Area of activity	Criteria for Level 1 on the Stages of Researcher Development Matrix
Income	*Bidding or preparing bids for external grants (to be assessed through peer-reviewed processes in open competition). Working in collaboration with senior academics to prepare high-quality applications.*
Partnerships & Impact	*Developed a partnership or collaboration with a non-academic entity where there is potential to use research findings to effect measurable change. Included in University Impact database. May contribute to impact activity led by other academics.*
Professional Esteem	*Developing an external researcher profile; known at national/local level for contributions to the discipline with some international exposure. Developing new collaborations with academics in other UK or international HEIs.*

Outputs	*Using current theory/concepts/methods to alter knowledge/existing practice. Raising queries regarding existing theory/concept/method/practice that have not previously been articulated (originality); findings relate to previous published work of interest to the field (significance). Engaging with relevant theory/concept/method/practice using some innovative approaches (rigour). Ongoing work is on track to produce internationally excellent research within the period covered by the 3-year plan; upward research trajectory suggests high potential for this level of output.*
Leadership & Citizenship	***People***: *Engaging in mentoring and career development/training opportunities. Supervising or co-supervising one or more PGRs. Actively contributing to equality and diversity initiatives.*
	Place: *Actively participating in Research Centre/Group activities; making improvements in the quality of the research environment e.g. by supporting the introduction of new facilities/equipment or organising/facilitating training.*

Following the review of each personal 3-year research plan, panels will recommend an outcome for individual academic colleagues from the following:

- SRR: meets level 1 in at least three areas of activity, one of which should be outputs
- Next-generation or Joining/Returning Researcher: does not currently have SRR, but is on a trajectory to reach at least level 1 in three areas of activity, including research outputs, within the time period of the 3-year plan
- Not currently meeting the criteria for the research pathway

Outcomes for each School assessment panel will be collated by the UoS REF Team and progressed to the next stage of the process.

Stage 4: Moderation and review of assessment outcomes
To ensure consistency and fairness in the assessment of 3-year research plans, and in the identification of academic colleagues as having SRR, best practice in decision-making processes will be shared across all School panels, and panels may be asked to re-review plans if there are differences in practice which may have affected outcomes at the SRR or Next-Generation, Joining/Returning Researcher stage. This process will be managed by the UoS REF Team.

An EIA will be carried out to compare the characteristics of colleagues who were allocated SRR compared with those who were determined to be Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researchers, and the group who were not deemed to have SRR. The full analysis of this data will be included in the final Code of Practice submitted as part of our REF2021 submission.

Stage 5: Notification of outcomes
Following the moderation process, colleagues will be notified of the recommended outcome of the assessment of their 3-year research plan in July 2019. At this stage colleagues will receive a provisional status of SRR, Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher, or not currently on the research pathway. These outcomes should be treated as provisional until our Code of Practice has been approved by Research England. Subsequently, colleagues will be provided with feedback from their ADRI regarding the levels that were assigned by the panel for each of the five areas of activity and comments from the panel regarding the proposals in the 3-year research plan. Research and Knowledge Exchange will work with ADRIs across all Schools to support consistency and best

practice in providing supportive and constructive feedback to academic colleagues. Final confirmation to colleagues as to whether they are defined as having SRR, and will therefore be included in our REF2021 submission, will be provided in autumn 2019, following sign-off of the process by the Research England Equality and Diversity Panel.

Colleagues will be informed of the process for appeal at the time the outcome of the SRR process is communicated to them. Details of the appeals process are given in **section 2.4**.

Stage 6: Allocation of resources for research activity
Allocation of research workload will be undertaken at School level, informed by the outcome of the 3-year research plan process. A determination of SRR should result in the provision of a minimum research workload allocation of 20% in the workload balance model. It is expected that some adjustments will be made in the 2019/2020 academic year, and the 3-year research plan process will be formally integrated with research workload planning for the 2020/21 academic year onwards.

2.1.5   *Individual staff circumstances in assessment of 3-year research plans*

To allow for individual staff circumstances to be taken into account in the assessment of 3-year research plans, and to prevent any colleague being disadvantaged by such circumstances, the template includes a question to record whether colleagues had experienced circumstances that affected their ability to conduct research within the last 5 years (within the REF assessment period). This question did not request specific information about the circumstances that colleagues may have experienced and only asked for a response of "yes", "no", or "decline to respond". This process is entirely separate from the process to collect staff circumstances information to inform requests for reductions of outputs to Research England, which is detailed in **section 4.3**.

Where an academic colleague has indicated in their 3-year research plan that they have experienced circumstances that have affected their ability to carry out research **and** their plan is assessed to be on the borderline between either the Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher stage and SRR, or between not currently on the research pathway and the Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher stage, they will be contacted by their ADRI to confirm whether they would like circumstances to be taken into consideration. Academic colleagues will be asked whether they would like to talk with their ADRI in confidence, or whether they would prefer this conversation to take place with another academic research leader or the Inclusion and Diversity Manager to outline how they felt their circumstances may have affected their ability to carry out research in any of the assessment areas. A summary of the effect on research within the five areas of activity will be agreed with the individual, and their plan will be re-assessed in confidence by a representative sub-section of the assessment panel.

The impact of circumstances will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and may be considered with reference to factors including (but not restricted to) the individual's research achievements, their future research plans, bids and outputs planned or in preparation, their ability to develop or maintain research networks and collaborations, and their opportunities for leadership.

In future 3-year research plan submission rounds academic colleagues will be invited to raise circumstances and equality considerations at the time of preparation and submission of their plan.

2.2 Development of process(es)

Our approach to defining SRR has been the subject of significant consideration and development over the past 18 months (see **sections 1.5** and **2.2** for more detail). In developing this approach, we have consulted academic and professional services colleagues internally, as well as other HEIs, to share best practice and to resolve questions. As outlined in **section 1.2**, equality and diversity has been a key influencing factor in the development of an transparent, consistent, accountable, inclusive and supportive process for defining SRR.

We believe that we have demonstrated due diligence in considering the implications of our process for defining SRR and have devised an appropriate mechanism that satisfies the requirements of Research England for REF2021, improves the way in which we support and develop our researchers over the long term, and supports greater diversity and inclusivity in our research community. Our approach has attracted external recognition as being in the spirit of the Stern Review and we were invited to contribute a blog post for Research England in late 2018 (https://re.ukri.org/blog/defining-significant-responsibility-for-research/?previewid=3943E52A-0178-4DEC-8CC66CBA8D94D4B8). The Dean of Research was invited to deliver presentations on our approach at Research England REF workshops in February 2019 (slides available at: https://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance/training-and-events-materials/) and we have been contacted subsequently by other institutions who are interested in the details of our method or are wishing to adopt it themselves.

2.2.1   Defining "staff for whom explicit time and resources are made available"

The feasibility of the use of research workload for defining eligibility for submission to REF2021 was tested during our REF Readiness process, as discussions with Pro-Vice Chancellors, Directors of Research and REF Managers from other Universities indicated that this was a likely mechanism to identify "staff for whom explicit time and resources are made available". This followed an initial 'first pass' assessment of research workload, which identified significant potential equality and diversity concerns regarding the gender distribution of research workload at and over 20%, particularly when related to whether colleagues had or had not produced research outputs that were internally assessed to be 3* or 4*. During the REF Readiness exercise, concerns also surfaced regarding the consistency and transparency of approach to research workload allocation across all Schools. Finally, the design and application of the University's points-based research workload model meant that even similar technical allocations of research workload may result in different amounts of actual time for research. It was felt that to use research workload allocation in its current form could not be guaranteed to be fair and robust and would not be in line with the principles of REF, namely transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity.

In October 2018, a Code of Practice Working Group (**section 2.3.1**) was convened to identify a principle- and merit-based approach to defining SRR and thus eligibility for submission to REF, aligned with the University's Academic Career Framework, and in line with the requirements of the (then) draft submission guidance provided by Research England (REF2018/01).

The timeline of activity for developing the process for determining SRR is given in **Table 3** below. A full timeline for implementing SRR, including equality and diversity considerations is given in **appendix 8**. This includes details of engagement activities. The draft SRR process was discussed at the REF Steering Group (**section 2.3.2)** meeting on 20th November 2018. Further to this, the draft SRR process and template for 3-year research plans was sent out by e-mail on 23rd November 2018 to the REF Steering Group for consultation and comment by 30th November 2018. The Dean of Research has had an ongoing conversation with staff representatives on our process for identifying those colleagues who have SRR via the University's Joint Academic Committee since November

2018. This continues to be constructive, and consultation with staff representative groups formed part of the review of this Code of Practice.

Table 3. Timeline for developing our approach to 'significant responsibility for research'.

Date	Activity	Communication channel
October 2018	Meetings of the Code of Practice Working Group	Face-to-face meetings
November 2018	Meeting of the Code of Practice Working Group	Face-to-face meeting
	Discussion of draft SRR process at REF Steering Group	Face-to-face meeting
December 2018	Informal presentation of proposed SRR approach to University Council	Presentation by Dean of Research, Director Research and Knowledge Exchange and REF Manager
	Report to University Senate on the proposed SRR approach	Presentation by Dean of Research
January 2019	Preliminary staff consultation regarding the proposed process for determining staff with SRR and research independence. Included summary of the REF2021 guidance and key changes from the REF2014 assessment	Presentation by the Dean of Research Feedback gathered via town hall meetings (x3), anonymous webform, and e-mails directed to the UoS REF Team via the dedicated functional email ref@salford.ac.uk
February 2019	Engagement with UCU representatives and discussion of proposed SRR and independence criteria	Discussion of proposals at the Joint Academic Committee on 8th February
	Discussion of proposed SRR process at a monthly meeting of the Professoriate	Presentation by Dean of Research
	Provision of feedback to staff on the initial consultation and publication of initial EIA data on the criteria used as part of the decision-making for SRR criteria	REF intranet
April 2019	All-staff consultation on the full Code of Practice Collected feedback via webform as for previous SRR/independence consultation	All-staff e-mail and letters from HR to staff away on leave
May 2019	Meetings with UCU representatives on the draft Code of Practice (2nd May 2019) and on the implementation of the first round of 3-year research plan submission (22nd May 2019)	Face to face meetings between UCU Branch members and the Dean of Research and Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange

2.3   Decision-making committees, individuals and training

2.3.1   Code of Practice Working Group

The Code of Practice Working Group was chaired by the Dean of Research and comprised:

- The Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange
- Members of the Division of Research and Knowledge Exchange, UoS REF Team and the Researcher Development Coordinator
- Academic representatives from each School (e.g UoA lead or impact lead)
- Members of Human Resources, including Organisational Development and the Inclusion and Diversity Manager

ADRIs in each School were contacted and asked to nominate members to sit on the Code of Practice Working Group. The group comprised 19 members, 10 of whom were women.

The purpose of the group was to devise and develop a draft of the University's process for defining SRR.

2.3.2   REF oversight and decision-making committees

Academic oversight of REF is undertaken on behalf of University Senate by the Research and Enterprise Committee, with day-to-day responsibility devolved to the REF Steering Group. Institutional oversight and sign-off is carried out by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET), of which the Deputy Vice-Chancellor is a member, and the Dean of Research sits in attendance.

Membership of the Senate Research and Enterprise Committee (REC) is managed by the University's Quality and Enhancement Office. Terms of reference for this committee are given in **appendix 9**. Academic membership comprises two members from each School (based on the 2017/18 structure of 7 Schools for the 2018/19 academic year) appointed by Deans of School, with a further two elected members. REC is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor with the Dean of Research and Director of Postgraduate Research in Ex-Officio roles, and two postgraduate research representatives nominated by the University of Salford Students Union (USSU). Secretariat is carried out by the RKE Research Governance Officer, and the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, the Director of International and Regional Development and the University Librarian sit in attendance.

Terms of Membership of the REF Steering Group are given in **appendix 10**. Membership of this group is by role, chaired by the Dean of Research and comprising ADRIs (or nominees), UoA leads (or deputies), the Director of Postgraduate Research, the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, the University Librarian, School Impact Coordinators (one representative per meeting), the UoS REF Team, and members of Human Resources, Strategy, and Student Administration.

2.3.3   REF UoA leads and deputies

In October 2018, academic colleagues in each School were invited to submit expressions of interest to be considered for the position of UoA lead and/or deputy lead for each UoA by an e-mail sent by the REF Manager to ADRIs for circulation within their Schools. The role description for the UoA lead/deputy lead post was drafted by the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange in consultation with the REF Manager and Dean of Research. The Inclusion and Diversity Manager reviewed the draft role description to ensure that the language used supported inclusion and

diversity and encouraged applications from all sections of our research community. Applications were returned to the REF Manager.

Interviews were held with each colleague who had applied for a role with an interview panel comprising the Dean of Research, Director Research and Knowledge Exchange, REF Manager, Inclusion and Diversity Manager, and ADRI for the School of Arts and Media. Interview questions asked applicants about their knowledge of REF2021 guidelines, their strategies for developing high-quality submissions for outputs, impact and environment, and their understanding of equality and diversity factors in the context of their particular unit.

Overall, the UoA submission leads and deputies comprise 42% female colleagues and 19% colleagues from a black and minority ethnic (BAME) background, which is comparable to our total female academic population of 45% and BAME academic population of 13% (based on colleagues who have declared this characteristic).

2.3.4   *School assessment panels to determine significant responsibility for research*

In consultation with colleagues, we have elected to adopt an academically-led approach to identifying which colleagues have SRR and it was the responsibility of ADRIs and Deans of School to convene panels in April 2019 to assess the 3-year plans submitted by academic colleagues within their Schools. The primary purpose of the panel assessment process is to assess the quality and breadth of the research plans to determine whether an academic colleague is defined as having SRR, as a Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher, or as not currently on the research pathway, with discussions around allocation of research workload secondary to this consideration.

As well as requiring panels and assessment processes to adhere to the four principles of accountability, transparency, consistency and inclusivity, the following criteria for composition of panels were stipulated in this e-mail to ensure sufficient diversity and academic rigour:

- Appropriate diversity in terms of gender and other protected characteristics, where relevant, and be representative of the staff population within the School;
- All panel members must have completed and passed all the online training modules under: Diversity in the Workplace; Inclusive, Cohesive and Safe HE Campuses (Prevent); GDPR; and Unconscious Bias;
- A representative must be present who can champion equality and diversity (e.g. HR Business Partner or member of RKE);
- Sufficient breadth of expertise across research areas and elements of the Researcher Development Matrix to be able to assess research plans and include the School's top award holders (peer-reviewed grants) and leaders for impact activity where appropriate.

Schools were also encouraged to include earlier career researchers where they had expertise in one or more of the assessment areas.

The REF Manager worked with Schools to inform and support the composition of the assessment panels, particularly with respect to equality and diversity considerations. At the start of each panel meeting the REF Manager briefed panels on equality, inclusion and diversity in the context of REF and research assessment, and acted as secretary to record panel outcomes, ensuring consistency in decision-making across Schools. Panels also received a written briefing from the Library on the University's position on responsible metrics to consider at the start of each panel meeting.

2.3.5 Training on equality and diversity for REF

All members of committees outlined in **sections 2.3, 3.2** and **4.2** are expected to have completed and passed the University's mandatory e-learning modules in: Diversity in the Workplace; GDPR/Information Security; Inclusive, Cohesive and Safe Higher Education Workplace – Prevent. In addition, all panel members assessing 3-year research plans were required to complete the e-learning module on unconscious bias. Completion of training by all those involved in REF was confirmed by the Human Resources (HR) Management Information Manager. Any academic or professional services colleagues who had not completed the training were followed up through appropriate managers and research leaders, with subsequent completion confirmed by HR.

Equality and diversity training relevant to REF2021 has been devised by the Inclusion and Diversity Manager and REF Manager. This is delivered in person to 3-year research plan assessment panels at the beginning of panel meetings and has covered the following aspects:

- The Equality Act 2010 and our legal obligations;
- How unconscious bias can impact decision making within the context of REF (based on material from Advance HE) and affect our assessment of others;
- A brief consideration of examples of systematic bias in research assessment affecting academic career progression for staff with equality characteristics (selected from academic literature);
- Circumstances that affect research productivity and our process for supporting colleagues with circumstances for REF2021.

2.4 Appeals

The appeals process was communicated to colleagues during April 2019 as part of the consultation on the full draft Code of Practice, and again when colleagues were notified of the outcome of the assessment of their 3-year research plans.

Following notification of the outcome of assessment of 3-year research plans, those colleagues who have been identified as not having SRR or defined as a Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher will be entitled to appeal, on the following grounds only:

- Where there is evidence to suggest that decision-making processes have not followed the procedures set out in this Code of Practice;
- Where there is evidence to suggest that decision-making processes have not taken into account individuals' personal circumstances where colleagues have highlighted these;
- Where there is evidence to suggest that decision-making processes have been discriminatory.

Where colleagues are concerned about the outcome of the assessment of their 3-year research plan, they are encouraged to approach their research group/centre lead, or their ADRI informally in the first instance to discuss their concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved at this informal stage, colleagues may then choose to appeal.

Academic colleagues will not be entitled to appeal against the outcomes of the academic assessment of the quality and breadth of research plans. This will include assessment of the quality of research outputs. Academic colleagues who have not been determined to have SRR in mid-2019

may opt into the process in late 2019/early 2020 by completing an updated 3-year research plan, where there are new activities or outputs that they wish to have taken into consideration.

All academic colleagues were contacted during March 2019 by a member of the UoS REF Team to provide them with data held centrally on their research activity with a request for comments to be provided from colleagues regarding any errors. Following feedback from colleagues, where possible, data were cleaned and corrected before forwarding to panels along with colleagues' comments on the accuracy of the data. Where a decision on SRR or Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher status was dependent on data, decisions were given as provisional and data checked with academic colleagues prior to a final decision being made.

Appeals must be submitted in writing using the form on the REF intranet (www.salford.ac.uk/ref), within 4 weeks of notification of outcome of the research plan assessment, outlining how the appeal meets the grounds listed above. Appeals will be reviewed by the Dean of Students and Director of the Doctoral School, who are completely independent of all previous decision-making processes, and colleagues will be notified of outcomes within 2 weeks of submitting their appeal.

As the process to review 3-year research plans will be completed a second time during early 2020, colleagues who are not identified as having SRR in 2019 may take the opportunity to revise their 3-year research plan to provide new evidence or outlines of additional activity. If a colleague wishes to revise their 3-year research plan and resubmit, they do not need to appeal against the decision made in 2019. Support to revise 3-year plans will be provided through ADRIs and research leads within each School. Updated plans will be assessed during 2020 and, where relevant, colleagues will be able to appeal through the same process outlined above.

2.5   Equality impact assessment

2.5.1   Criteria and processes for determining significant responsibility for research

Equality and diversity factors have been embedded throughout the development of our process for identifying staff with SRR. The Inclusion and Diversity Manager was a member of the Code of Practice working group, and at each iteration of the process, consideration was given to how individual staff groups might be impacted (either positively or negatively) by the proposals. Feedback on equality and diversity issues was collected during the consultations on our SRR process via face-to-face events and through our online form, and on this Code via our online form. Feedback was also received from the University and College Union. After the January 2019 consultation, the process to determine SRR was updated with a consideration of equality factors (**appendix 8**). This Code was also updated following the April/May 2019 all staff consultation, particularly with respect to issues affecting BAME colleagues and actions to mitigate these issues.

In February 2019, as part of the evaluation to inform development of our process for defining SRR, a detailed analysis of 25 indicators of research activity was undertaken for all academic colleagues with 'teaching and research' contracts. This analysis was mapped to the 3-year research plan categories of 'Income', 'Partnerships and Impact', 'Outputs', and 'Leadership and Citizenship', where data could be drawn from central University sources. The full list and data are presented in **appendix 11**. An EIA matched these indicators to gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, declared disability, age, and nationality. The full equality impact template is presented in **appendix 12** and is available on the REF Intranet (www.salford.ac.uk/ref).

In line with the University's commitment to the responsible use of research metrics (**section 1.1.2**), this analysis supported our view that there was no single retrospective measurement or metric, or combination of retrospective metrics which could support the identification of those academic colleagues with SRR in an equitable and inclusive manner.

Of particular concern was the use of a minimum allocation of research workload (modelled at 20%). While the data on staff allocated any amount of workload for research is within one or two percentage points of the overall representation of staff characteristics across the University, significant gender issues were identified when this was split further into those colleagues with less than 20% compared with those with greater than or equal to 20% research workload allocation, as outlined below. It was as a result of this modelling that the University confirmed our decision not to use research workload as the means to identify those staff with SRR.

Data on other indicators are shown below by characteristic, with mitigation and actions to address issues given in **section 2.5.3** below:

Gender
Academic colleagues identifying as female comprise 45% of the total academic population. Indicators around 'Income' were broadly in line with the proportion of female staff, with the only exception for bids for funding as principal investigator (PI), where 39% of staff are female. Indicators of 'Outputs' showed an area of concern whereby only 27% of staff with outputs internally assessed to be at 4* are female.

For 'Impact and Partnerships', there is an issue in that only 22% of staff that are lead/deputy on an impact case study marked as 'likely' for submission to REF2021 are female, however there is a positive indicator for the future in that 46% of staff identified as lead/deputy on impact case studies for REF2027 are female. This reflects the significant work undertaken within Schools and by RKE to raise awareness of impact, deliver training, and work with academic colleagues on an individual basis to support the preparation of impact case studies.

With regards to 'Leadership and Citizenship', only 37% of staff in research leadership positions are female, possibly reflective of the fact that female staff make up only 23% of the professoriate.

Analysis of allocated research workload highlighted a negative trend for female researchers. Based on an overall staff ratio of 45% female / 55% male the breakdown for those academic colleagues with allocated research workload was: 0.01-19.99%: 54% female / 46% male; ≤20%: 40% female / 60% male.

Nationality and Ethnicity
With regards to nationality, the data highlighted one downward trend, and one positive trend. EU/EEA staff comprise 7% of the academic population but comprise 21% of staff on fixed-term contracts. In contrast, EU/EEA staff comprise 16% of academic colleagues contributing to (not leading) impact case studies.

Black and minority ethnic staff (BAME) make up 13% of the staff population. For 'Income' all indicators are broadly in line with this proportion, with BAME staff comprising 17% of the total staff bidding for funding as PI. Similarly, for 'Outputs', BAME staff account for 18% and 16% of staff with outputs rated internally as 3* or 4* respectively, however 23% of staff who have had no outputs assessed internally identify as BAME. This matter is being addressed through prioritisation of outputs review by internal peer review panels.

With regards to 'Impact', BAME staff account for 9% of those staff who are listed in the impact database, 7% of staff listed as lead/deputy on impact case studies marked as 'likely' for REF2021 and 10% of staff listed as lead/deputy in impact case studies marked as 'REF2027'.

For 'Leadership and Citizenship' BAME staff comprise 15% of those in leadership positions, and 20% of the professoriate. Allocated research workload at ≥20% showed a positive trend, with BAME staff accounting for 19% of the total in this group, and only 8% of those staff allocated <20%.

Religion
A relatively high proportion of the staff population (26%) have chosen not to disclose their religion. No obvious patterns can therefore be identified in the data.

Sexual Orientation
As is the case for religion, 25% of the staff population have chosen not to disclose their sexual orientation. No obvious patterns can therefore be identified in the data.

Disability
Declaration rates for disability are very low (3%), and it is therefore difficult to identify any meaningful patterns using the data we have collected.

2.5.2   Considerations for the assessment of 3-year research plans

As outlined in **section 2.3.4**, equality and diversity considerations were taken into account in the composition of 3-year research plan assessment panels. Working with Human Resources, RKE checked that all panel members had completed online training in four mandatory modules relevant to equality and diversity (**section 2.3.5**) and followed up with School ADRIs to ensure that all members had completed the training before the panel meeting. At the beginning of each panel meeting, the REF manager gave an equality and diversity briefing specifically tailored around REF. During the panel meetings it was ensured that a representative was present to champion equality and diversity and provide an external and objective viewpoint to check the reasoning for decisions.

2.5.3   Supporting our researchers

A key factor in supporting greater inclusivity in our researcher community and in addressing the issues identified through our EIA (**section 2.5.1**) will be the creation of bespoke training plans for individual academic colleagues, aligned to their 3-year research plans and specific needs. Working with the Athena SWAN Women in Research group, colleagues from UCU and staff groups, we aim to provide more tailored support to individuals to address actual and perceived barriers to colleagues in achieving their full potential in research.

Analysis of submitted 3-year research plans has already highlighted priorities for University-wide research training, and work is ongoing to develop the bespoke training programmes. This will enable RKE to work more effectively to support greater inclusion and diversity in the researcher community. Training, workshops and mentoring to support women in preparing high-quality research bids and outputs, and BAME colleagues in development of impact will be of particular importance.

With regards to REF, significant work has been undertaken within Schools and by RKE to raise awareness of impact, deliver training, and work with academic colleagues on an individual basis through the implementation of impact action plans to support the preparation of impact case studies. This is reflected in the substantial improvement in female researchers leading or acting as

deputy on potential impact case studies for REF2027 (46%) compared with REF2021 (22% of 'likely' case studies).

As part of our ongoing researcher development programme within the 2017-2027 RKE Strategy, the University is putting in place activities and measures to support greater engagement from all members of the academic community. This is supported by the academically-led Researcher Development Working Group, which includes a number of early career researchers. As part of this programme we have included training in areas including confidence and writing skills.

To support greater diversity in research leadership, RKE has been working with Schools and other professional services to ensure that committee leadership and membership positions are based on alignment of individuals' skills and experience, rather than on senior roles, with the result that a greater number of earlier career researchers have been appointed to interim and full leadership roles. This has been reflected in our appointment of earlier career researchers to deputy UoA leads to work alongside and be developed by UoA leads, giving them the potential to become UoA leads in the next REF. While the population of leads comprises 17% female and 17% BAME staff, deputy UoA leads are 58% female and 21% BAME. Positive action in the form of professorial promotions workshops has driven an increase in female professors from 17.5% to 22% over the last 2 years, and this work continues.

Support was provided to academic colleagues in completing their plans, through drop-in sessions provided by RKE, and by research leaders. To enable development of appropriate support in the future a question was included on the 3-year research plan template to ask colleagues whether they felt they had received adequate support in completing their plans. In the first submission round, 27% of colleagues noted that they would have liked more help. This will be followed up with colleagues more widely and additional training and support put in place for future 3-year research plan submission rounds.

2.5.4   Equality impact assessment on staff identified as having significant responsibility for research

At the time of writing (May 2019) the 3-year research plan assessment process to identify those colleagues with SRR has not yet been completed, so it is not yet possible to evaluate equality and inclusion data on our proposed staff submission to REF2021. Data from the first SRR process evaluation will be published in autumn 2019 and this Code updated. An EIA will be completed and final data on the University's whole staff submission will be published in autumn 2020 following the second SRR process.

Further EIAs will be undertaken on submission of 3-year research plans and those who have been identified as having SRR or being Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researchers for the first round of 3-year plan submissions (summer 2019), on the second round to be conducted in autumn 2019 (early 2020) and on the proposed REF staff submission (spring/summer 2020). These will be published on the REF intranet (www.salford.ac.uk/ref) and added to this Code.

Part 3: Determining research independence

3.1 Policies and Procedures

This section outlines the policies and procedures that the University will follow to determine whether staff on 'research only' contracts can be classified as being independent researchers, and therefore can be submitted to REF2021. This includes information on the criteria and processes by which decisions will be made, including the timescales for delivering decisions and the method and timescale in which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made.

> **Academic colleagues who are on 'teaching and research' contracts do not need to be assessed for independence; such colleagues' eligibility for return to REF is determined by the SRR process outlined in Part 2.**

3.1.1 Relevant REF2021 definitions

Research England defines an independent researcher as: "*an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme*".

Colleagues employed on 'research only' contracts must be independent researchers to meet the definition of Category A eligible. Postdoctoral Researchers and Research Assistants are not usually considered to be Category A eligible unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher.

3.1.2 Which academic colleagues need to demonstrate research independence?

At the University of Salford 'research only' contracts are held by colleagues whose job description states "Research Assistant" or "Postdoctoral Researcher". Research Fellows are not included in this group as these colleagues are employed on 'teaching and research' contracts.

All colleagues on 'research only' contracts who are identified as being independent researchers will be classed as having SRR so will be returned as part of the University's submission. Research-only colleagues are still encouraged to complete 3-year research plans to support their career development and identify training needs.

3.1.3 Criteria to determine research independence

Our criteria for independence are based on the indicators set out in Research England's guidance on submissions (REF2019/01) and are as follows:

A. Acting as principal investigator, or equivalent, on an externally funded research project (currently funded or has been funded since 2014);
B. Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement;
C. Supervision of doctoral researchers.

In addition, for UoAs within Main Panels C and D, the following indicators have been provided as additional factors demonstrating independence in these disciplines (as set out in the REF2021 Panel Criteria and Working Methods, REF2019/02: https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1084/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf). **Appendix 2** lists the UoAs to which the University will return, and highlights those UoAs to which these additional criteria apply:

D. Acting as a Co-Investigator on an externally-funded research project.
E. Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of an externally-funded research project.

A member of staff meeting any one of the indicators A – C will be considered an independent researcher. In units where additional factors D and E apply, an individual will be considered an independent researcher if they have met any of the indicators A – E.

REF2021 guidance states that a member of staff is not deemed to have undertaken independent research purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.

3.1.4 Process and timelines to determine research independence

Each academic colleague on a 'research only' contract of 0.2FTE or greater will be invited to complete a short researcher independence questionnaire to ascertain whether they meet any of the criteria outlined in **section 3.1.3**. Where colleagues answer 'Yes' to any of these questions, they will be asked to include evidence of how they meet that criterion. The questions are given below:

i. Have you ever acted as a Principal Investigator or equivalent on an externally-funded research project? (Y/N)
ii. Do you currently hold, or have you previously held, an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement? (Y/N)
iii. Have you ever acted as the supervisor for a doctoral student? (Y/N)

For colleagues to be returned to UoAs in Panels C and D (**appendix 2**) only:

iv. Have you ever acted as a Co-Investigator on an externally funded research project? (Y/N)
v. Have you had significant involvement in the design, conduct and interpretation of an externally-funded research project? (Y/N)

In addition, a separate section will ask whether they have plans to apply for external funding or fellowships and about their current training and development requirements.

Where colleagues have answered "Yes" to any of questions (i) to (iii), or colleagues coming under UoAs in Main Panels C or D (**appendix 2**) have answered 'Yes' to either of questions (iv) or (v), their ADRI will contact them to arrange a one-to-one meeting to discuss the activity they are currently undertaking or have undertaken, against these questions. The purpose of these meetings will be to discuss details regarding the awards, fellowships or projects that have been carried out, and the levels of responsibility assumed, to determine whether an individual's research meets the levels required to define them as an independent researcher.

Individual School decisions on independence will be discussed, validated and agreed at a meeting of ADRIs in spring 2020, chaired by the Dean of Research and attended by the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, the REF Manager, and the Inclusion and Diversity Manager. Final decisions will be agreed by the whole group and communicated to Human Resources (HR). Our process to determine members of staff who are independent researchers will occur during early 2020 to capture all 'research only' colleagues, including new starters beginning in post closer to the census date.

Following approval of the decisions on research independence, each colleague on a 'research only' contract will be sent a letter from HR formally notifying them whether they have been determined to be an independent researcher and therefore will be included in the University's REF2021 submission. This correspondence will also include details of the appeal process outlined in **section 3.3**.

The timeline is as follows:

- **April 2019**: communication was sent to all colleagues, including those on 'research only' contracts during the consultation on this Code of Practice. The information on the Code of Practice and the consultation was also communicated to research-only colleagues who were on leave.

- **December 2019**: all colleagues on 'research only' contracts contacted by the UoS REF Team via e-mail to ask them to complete their research independence questionnaire. This will be open for a period of 3 weeks as an online form, or Word document if this is preferred.

- **January 2020**: where additional information is required regarding research activities, ADRIs will hold one-to-one meetings with colleagues to record this. Information provided via questionnaires and meetings will be used to determine those colleagues who meet our criteria for independence. Individual School decisions to be validated at a meeting of ADRIs and approved at REF Steering Group. Outcomes will be communicated to colleagues along with information about the appeals process.

- **January/February 2020**: Appeals process to receive and review appeals and notify staff of outcomes.

- **February/March 2020**: Formal communication from HR regarding the outcomes of the research independence process.

3.2 Staff, committees and training (including equality and diversity)

The following members of staff are involved in determining research independence through reviewing the information provided in the research independence questionnaires, providing any additional information required, and participating in the meeting to validate and agree decisions on research independence:

- ADRIs
- Director, Research and Knowledge Exchange
- REF Manager
- Inclusion and Diversity Manager

All the individuals named above are also involved in assessing or managing the process to determine SRR and have received training as outlined in **section 2.3.5**.

3.3 Appeals process

The appeals process was communicated to colleagues during April 2019 as part of the consultation on the full draft Code of Practice, and again when colleagues were notified of the outcome of the assessment of their research independence.

Following notification of the outcome of assessment of research independence, those colleagues who have been determined not to be independent researchers will be entitled to appeal, on the following grounds only:

- Where there is evidence to suggest that decision-making processes have not followed the procedures set out in this Code of Practice;
- Where there is evidence to suggest that decision-making processes have not taken into account individuals' personal circumstances;
- Where there is evidence to suggest that decision-making processes have been discriminatory.

Where academic colleagues are concerned about the outcome of the assessment of their research independence, they are encouraged to approach their research group/centre lead informally in the first instance to discuss their concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved at this informal stage, colleagues may then choose to appeal.

Any colleague who does not engage with the process to determine independence will automatically be deemed not to meet the definition of an independent researcher and will not be permitted to appeal. This will include colleagues who do not complete the questionnaire or who do not attend a meeting with their ADRI (if requested, and there is no mitigating circumstance preventing them attending).

The appeals process will be opened in January/February 2020 for 4 weeks and colleagues will be able to submit their appeal through a secure web form to record details of the specific reason for the appeal. In a similar manner to appeals against decisions not to award SRR (**section 2.4**), appeals will be received and managed by staff who are independent from previous decision-making, specifically the Dean of Students and Director of the Doctoral School.

3.4   Equality Impact Assessment

A preliminary EIA was conducted in early 2019 during the development of the proposed criteria for researcher independence. The University has a small population of staff employed on 'research only' contracts (< 30) and is therefore constrained in its ability to study trends for this population. Applying the indicators suggested by Main Panels A and B plus the indicator from Main Panel's C and D regarding colleagues who hold a Co-Investigator position on an award resulted in a very small number of individuals who are potentially independent. We will be determining conclusively through one-to-one interviews whether any 'research only' colleagues meet criteria E in our stated list (**section 3.1.3**).

It is likely that the number of colleagues determined to be independent researchers will be very small (< 10) and, therefore, it is not possible to report equality characteristics without potentially identifying individual researchers. Where we can report general characteristics, these will be summarised nearer the deadline for the REF2021 assessment.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

4.1   Policies and procedures

This section outlines the policies and procedures that the University will follow in selecting outputs to be submitted to REF2021. This includes information on the criteria for decision-making, and the processes by which decisions will be made, including the timescales for delivering decisions and the methods and timescale in which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made.

4.1.1   REF2021 definitions and guidelines

For the purposes of REF, research outputs are defined as the product of research which is: "a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared". In order that outputs are eligible for inclusion in REF2021 they must fulfil the following criteria (as set out in REF2019/01):

1. First brought into the public domain during the publication period 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2020 or, if a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period.

2. Attributable to a current or former member of staff, who made a substantial research contribution to the output, which must be either:

   i.   Produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a Category A submitted staff member, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time that they produced that output or,
   ii.   Produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a former staff member who was employed according the Category A eligible definition when the output was first made publicly available.

3. Available in an open-access form, where the output is within scope of the REF2021 open access policy in terms of the deposit, discovery, and access requirements.

4.1.2   Key changes since REF2014

A review of REF2014 by Lord Stern led to a number of changes in the requirements and processes for identifying staff and research outputs for submission to REF2021. In previous REF and Research Assessment Exercises, only those staff with four research outputs, or special circumstances allowing a reduction in outputs, were eligible to be returned to REF. This led to significant issues with inclusion and diversity in staff selection across the Higher Education sector.

In REF2021, as well as requiring all eligible staff with significant responsibility for research to be submitted (**Parts 2 and 3**), research outputs have been decoupled from individuals, and measures introduced to allow greater flexibility in the numbers of outputs attributed to researchers. This is intended to support greater inclusion and diversity, and recognition of the contributions of earlier career researchers. We may also choose to submit research outputs from staff who have left the University; our position on inclusion of outputs from colleagues who have been made redundant is outlined in **section 4.1.6**.

For REF2021 the total number of outputs returned from each submitting unit must be equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of staff included in the unit submission rounding to the nearest whole number of outputs. However, the final number of outputs required per unit may be less than 2.5

times FTE if requests to reduce the number of outputs required based on staff circumstances declarations are accepted. The FTE may be different from the total numbers of staff members if one or more individuals are part time. The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF2021 allows for the University to submit staff with varying numbers of outputs, between a minimum of one and maximum of five, which is intended to support inclusion and diversity.

A minimum of one output will be required for each submitted current staff member, whether full or part time. There will be no minimum requirement for submitting outputs from former staff, and staff members may be able to apply for a reduction in this minimum requirement if they have had significant circumstances which have prevented them from being able to produce an output in this REF cycle. The process for identifying special circumstances and applying for a reduction in outputs is outlined in **section 4.3**.

Where a unit may need to submit staff without the minimum of one attributed output and where there are no grounds for requesting a reduction in outputs, then REF assessment will grade the 'missing' output(s) as 'unclassified'. This 'unclassified' grading of 'missing' outputs will also apply if there are insufficient outputs to meet the requirement of 2.5 outputs times FTE for any UoA submission. This will result in a reduction in the grade point average (GPA) for that UoA.

No more than five outputs may be attributed to any individual staff member, including former staff. More than five outputs associated with a single member of staff may be included in the submission, provided these additional outputs have been co-authored by other submitted staff members and can be attributed to another person, and that that person has no more than 5 outputs.

4.1.3   Non-text-based research outputs

For research outputs other than text-based or journal outputs, a record of the output is stored on the University's Figshare Research Data Management System. This may take include documents, for example a music score, or photographic record of a sculpture or similar piece of work, or music or video files. When an output is uploaded to Figshare a metadata record is created which can be uploaded to the University of Salford Institutional Repository (USIR) along with a 300-word summary of the output. This enables both open access of non-written outputs, and a central repository for all the University's research outputs.

4.1.4   Approach to selecting outputs

The University will submit a pool of outputs that represents the highest quality research conducted by a Unit of Assessment (UoA) (**appendix 2**) as a collective. With the exception of the minimum and maximum numbers outlined in the REF guidance on Codes of Practice (REF2019/03: https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1086/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_03-guidance-on-codes-of-practice.pdf), and allowing for reductions due to personal circumstances, there will be no expectations placed on academic colleagues regarding the number of outputs that should be attributed to them in the REF2021 submission. As stated in **section 1.1**, whether a colleague is submitted to the REF, or the number of outputs attributed to an individual, will not lead to any changes in contract type from 'teaching and research' to 'teaching only'.

Personal circumstances that have affected a researcher's ability to work productively during this REF period will be taken into account in REF2021 and the process through which colleagues can declare circumstances and request a reduction in outputs is detailed in **section 4.3**.

The University's estimated assessment of output quality has been determined through our internal peer review process, informed by external peer review of a proportion of outputs. The School of Health Sciences initiated internal peer review of research outputs in 2013. Since 2017, University-wide School-based peer review panels have regularly assessed the quality of research outputs against the REF criteria of originality, significance and rigour and provided overall estimated quality scores for each output. To embed the principles of responsible research assessment in decision-making for REF2021, all UoA submission teams and colleagues on internal review panels have been briefed on the approaches to be taken in assessment of the quality of research outputs. More information on the School internal peer review process, and the training provided, is given in **section 4.2**.

External peer review cycles have also informed our opinion of the quality of our outputs as judged by academic peers outside of the University. The strategy is that at least 10% of research outputs should be reviewed externally, with a further 10% of those being reviewed by a second external academic for validation and to inform final scoring decisions. Early in the REF cycle Schools identified their individual strategies and prioritisation as to which outputs should be reviewed externally, and which reviewers should be approached. In planning for REF2021, each UoA team determined an external peer review strategy to prioritise the outputs for which an additional perspective is needed to ascertain their potential quality in the REF assessment. The external review process is supported by the UoS REF team.

Research England have set out in the guidance on submissions (REF2019/01) that citation data will be provided to REF UoAs in Main Panel A, and to specific UoAs within Main Panels B and C. The assessment of the significance, originality and rigour of our outputs will continue to be based primarily on internal (and external) peer review and appropriate training will be provided to UoA submission teams to inform them of the limits of citation data (**section 4.2**) based on the University's commitment to the use of responsible research metrics outlined in **section 1.1.2**.

4.1.5 Process for selecting outputs

The output pool for each unit is to be constructed from outputs from current and former members of staff (excluding those who have been made redundant except as stated in **section 4.1.6**). From those colleagues identified as having SRR, UoA leads and deputy leads will identify the staff to be included in their particular unit submission, in consultation with other UoA leads, Deans of School, ADRIs and the Dean of Research, informed where necessary by data and analysis from RKE. Final composition of UoAs will be signed off by the REF Steering Group (**section 2.3.2**).

The University's REF team will provide a list of eligible research outputs and scores to each UoA lead and deputy based on the staff profile of that UoA. Internal and, where available external, peer review scores will be provided. Decisions on the final scores to be used will be taken by the UoA submission teams working closely with the REF Team and will be informed by internal and external peer review scores with sign-off by the REF Steering Group.

As detailed in the University's Open Access Policy, only those outputs which have been uploaded to the University of Salford Institutional Repository (USIR) will be eligible for inclusion in the University's REF2021 submission, even if they have previously been deposited in another institution's repository. Only outputs in USIR are selected for internal and external peer review.

The process of attribution of outputs to academic colleagues within a particular UoA (steps 3 and 4 below) will be first passed through an automated algorithm which uses the REF research output rules defined by Research England and outlined in **sections 4.1.2** and **4.1.3**. This Intelligent Output

Sorter (IOS) is designed to optimise the allocation of outputs in the UoA to maximise the potential grade point average (GPA) score of the UoA as a whole. The algorithm is intended to reduce sources of bias as it uses a rules-based approach for selecting and attributing outputs. It can also be run repeatedly to model scenarios or account for changes in UoA composition or circumstances very quickly.

The list of outputs and current/former staff allocation produced by the IOS will be downloaded and evaluated by the UoA submission team working with the UoS REF team to ensure the validity of the results, identify any potential anomalies, and undertake equality impact assessments (EIAs) on the composition of our research output pool. Where necessary, adjustments may be made to correct errors. The modelling exercise may be repeated until the final output submission profile, and the expected GPA, of the UoA is agreed upon by the UoA submission team, ADRIs and Dean(s) of School with oversight from the UoS REF Team. Final recommendations on the whole University REF2021 submission will be made by the REF Steering Group to Senate Research and Enterprise Committee and the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team for final ratification and academic and executive sign-off.

Individual colleagues currently employed at the University will be informed of which of their outputs have been included in the UoA submission but will not know the way in which these have been attributed to individual academic colleagues. After the REF2021 assessment, Research England will not publish the names of staff submitted to each unit (only the list of outputs) and will also not provide any information on the attribution of outputs to individual staff members when the results of the assessment are made available.

The following process will therefore be used to select outputs and attribute them to academic colleagues:

1. Define the total available output pool per unit from outputs produced by current colleagues with SRR and those staff who have left the University (excluding outputs from staff who were made redundant – see **section 4.1.6**).

2. Calculate the number of outputs required per UoA taking into account reductions that could be applied based on staff circumstances information.

3. Using the Intelligent Output Sorter, attribute the minimum of one output to each academic colleague with SRR based on the highest score, as determined by internal/external peer review.

4. Attribute the remaining outputs to colleagues beginning with the highest scored outputs first, then working down the list to make up the total required for the unit based on 2.5 x FTE (while not exceeding five outputs attributed per staff member).

5. Analyse the attributed output pool to:
    a. Validate the results of the Intelligent Output Sorter and correct any anomalies;
    b. Determine the representation of subject areas or sub-disciplines within the attributed outputs pool;
    c. Identify the number of papers attributed to colleagues with protected characteristics for comparison with the total available output pool (EIA).

6. If the EIA highlights inclusion and diversity issues in attribution of outputs, the Intelligent Output Sorter algorithm may be re-run to see if alternative configurations of output allocation may better represent the diversity of the University's research community. The

aim will be to maximise the quality of the University's submission, with a view to supporting inclusion and diversity if possible.

EIAs will be undertaken throughout this process during modelling of output selection and allocation and following the final submission of the University's REF2021 return.

4.1.6   Outputs from staff who have been made redundant

The University of Salford's approach to including outputs from staff who have been made redundant has been developed with and agreed by representatives from the University and College Union (UCU).

The University of Salford does not intend to include the research outputs of colleagues who have been made redundant within our REF2021 return. In consultation with UCU, we have agreed that the only exception to this would be for colleagues who have completed intensive research contracts and who have specifically indicated that their preference would be for their research outputs to be considered for selection.

4.2   Staff, committees and training

4.2.1   Output selection decision-making processes

As outlined in **section 4.1.4**, it is the responsibility of the UoA leads, ADRIs and Deans of School, working with the UoS REF team, to agree on and recommend the final list of outputs for submission to UoAs. Final recommendations on the whole University REF2021 submission will be made by the REF Steering Group to Senate Research and Enterprise Committee and the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team for final ratification and academic and executive sign-off. Details of these groups and the training provided to them are given in **sections 2.2.2** and **2.2.3**.

4.2.2   School / UoA internal peer review panels

The University established School internal peer review panels in 2015 and 2016. Training was provided to panel members and academic colleagues on preparing and assessing outputs for REF by REF2014 UoA sub-panel members during 2016. This training informed the preparation of guidance by the (then) School of Health Sciences for their Research Outputs Monitoring and Evaluation (ROME) internal peer review panel https://www.salford.ac.uk/research/health-sciences/research-impact-and-ref/research-outputs-monitoring-and-evaluation-rome. This process was recognised in the 2016 internal audit of REF Readiness as being the gold standard for internal peer review, and the guidance has been circulated to all School internal peer review panels to be used as the basis for their own processes.

Administration of internal peer review panels is managed by the RKE Doctoral and Research Support team. A summary of internal peer review panel processes is given in **appendix 13**. Membership of internal peer review panels is determined at a School level. RKE keep a record of panel membership, and support Schools to assist panels in being as representative as possible of their research communities.

4.2.3   Training

Equality and diversity training for colleagues involved in selecting outputs and in approving such decisions is undertaken as described in **section 2.3.5**. In addition, UoA teams and ADRIs are briefed by the Library on the appropriate use of citation data and responsible metrics. This focuses particularly on the problematic nature of the use of quantitative metrics at the level of a single output, including the importance of using normalised citations counts. UoA submission teams are made aware that citation practices vary across disciplines and sub-disciplines; differ by output type; are affected by time since publication and the equality characteristics of the authors and subject material; and can be influenced and inflated, for example, through self-citation. School internal peer review panels must have completed the mandatory online training modules as outlined in **section 2.3.5**.

4.3   Staff Circumstances

4.3.1.   *The purpose of the collection of staff circumstances information*

It is recognised by the University and by Research England that all academic colleagues may, at some point in their career, experience circumstances which may restrict or prevent them from undertaking their research or devoting the same time and intensity as they would normally. It is critical that such colleagues are not disadvantaged or compared with colleagues who have not experienced such circumstances.

It is essential that the University has safe, supportive, and confidential processes by which academic colleagues can voluntarily declare such circumstances and request that they are taken into account, in the secure knowledge that neither the circumstances, nor their declaration, will have any detrimental impact to their careers. This sub-section outlines the reasons and processes for declaration of circumstances, how these will be reviewed confidentially, and how decisions will be made as to whether it is appropriate to request a reduction in outputs to recognise the individual's circumstances.

The University's ethos on staff circumstances is that:

- We welcome declarations from colleagues, and that no inference will be drawn from this, however colleagues should feel under no obligation to come forward;
- We will respect colleagues' confidentiality and will deal with individuals sensitively;
- Through engagement with this process it is possible for there to be a reduction in the expected number of research outputs, however the quality of the outputs must not be compromised.

The REF assessment process allows institutions to notify Research England when members of staff have experienced circumstances that have affected their ability to research productively throughout the assessment period. The University is permitted to make requests for reductions in the number of outputs we are required to submit relating to circumstances that have had a considerable effect on individual colleagues and also where the effect of circumstances has substantially reduced the overall productivity of a unit during the REF period.

Research England has designed the REF2021 assessment so that we can use the flexibility provided by decoupling of staff and outputs to manage our portfolio of outputs for submission in each unit. Therefore, Research England do not expect that all staff members would be returned with the same number of outputs attributed to them in the submission, and the minimum and maximum output rules outlined in **section 4.1.2** support this.

Our pool of staff with SRR, and therefore who will be submitted to REF2021, will be determined by the definitions and processes set out in **Part 2** of this Code. This process allows for circumstances to be taken into account during consideration of 3-year research plans where they may have impacted the individual's ability to reach the level of SRR.

For purposes of confidentiality, the UoS REF Team will not have access to information regarding staff circumstances that may be contained within central HR staff records, for example, periods of parental leave. Colleagues can therefore decide whether they would like to voluntarily declare circumstances for consideration in determination of SRR and in requesting reductions in outputs. The process for declaring staff circumstances is given in **section 4.3.5**.

4.3.2   REF guidance on staff circumstances

The University can make a request to Research England that a member of staff be returned in our REF2021 submission without the required minimum of one output attributed to them if their circumstances are so exceptional that they have not been able to produce an eligible output during the REF period. Requests may be made for an individual researcher who has not been able to produce an eligible output where any of the following circumstances apply within the period 1st January 2014 to 31st July 2020:

1. An overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to one of more of the circumstances set out in points 1-5 below (such as an early career researcher (ECR) who has only been employed as an eligible staff member for a short time before the REF2021 census date);

2. Circumstances equivalent to 46 months or more absence from research, where circumstances listed in point 5 below apply (such as mental health issues, caring responsibility, long-term health conditions);

3. Two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.

The 46 months or more may include absence from work due to working part-time, where this has had an exceptional effect on ability to work productively throughout this REF period, so that a member of staff has not been able to produce an eligible output. For part-time working, the equivalent 'total months absent' would be calculated by multiplying the number of months worked part-time by the full-time equivalent (FTE) not worked during those months.

The University can also make a request to reduce the number of outputs required for a particular unit when the cumulative effects of staff circumstances have meant that the unit has been disproportionately affected by circumstances. This could occur if there is a high proportion of colleagues whose individual circumstances have affected their ability to work productively.

REF2021 guidance on submissions (REF2019/01) states that the following circumstances can be taken into account in determining requests for reductions in the number of outputs required:

1. **Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (ECR);**

    Staff who first met the definition of Category A eligible **on or after 1st August 2016** will be designated as an ECR. Although Research Assistants and Postdoctoral Researchers are commonly referred to as early career researchers within academic settings, these individuals

will not normally be Category A eligible and are therefore excluded from the REF ECR definition.

2. **Absence from work due to secondments and career breaks;**

The University is permitted to request a reduction in the outputs required for any individual and for the submitting unit where a staff member has been absent from work through undertaking a secondment or career break in a position outside of the HE sector, where the period of time in that role was 12 months or longer. During the secondment or period of time away from their substantive role, for an individual to be eligible for any reductions relating to their outputs then they must not have undertaken academic research.

3. **Completing clinical training in medicine or dentistry for junior clinical academics in UoAs 1-6;**

This applies to junior clinical academics who have not yet completed their training in Medicine or Dentistry.

4. **Qualifying periods of family-related leave;**

This encompasses statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1st January 2014 to 31st July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave. For staff who have taken paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave then this must have lasted for four months or more and been taken substantially during the period 1st January 2014 to 31st July 2020 to be taken into account as a specific staff circumstance affecting research productivity.

Shorter periods of family-related leave could be taken into account in instances where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities or other circumstances set out in this list.

5. **Circumstances equivalent to absence:**

Reductions to the outputs required for REF can also be requested for staff who have not taken a formal period of absence from work but who have experienced circumstances that have impacted on their ability to work productively during the REF assessment period. The following circumstances would be taken into consideration:

    i.   Disability

    ii. Ill health, injury or mental health conditions;

    iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare in addition to statutory parental and adoption leave;

    iv. Other caring responsibilities, such as, caring for an elderly or disabled family member;

    v.   Gender reassignment;

> vi. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in **appendix 3** or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

As part-time working is accounted for within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5), reduction requests on the basis of part-time working hours should only be made exceptionally, for example, where the FTE of a staff member has increased late in the assessment period and this does not reflect their average FTE over the REF period as a whole.

Colleagues may have had a combination of circumstances listed above, either occurring during overlapping time periods or at different points within the REF assessment period. We welcome the disclosure of all relevant circumstances so that colleagues' experiences can be appropriately taken into account as part of the University's REF submission.

4.3.3 Early career researchers (ECRs)

The University will collect information on colleagues who meet the REF definition of an early career researcher (ECR) as this is required as part of our statutory staff data return to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) for the 2019/20 academic year.

In order to determine which colleagues meet the REF definition of an ECR, during spring 2020 the UoS REF Team will contact academic colleagues who began their employment at the University on or after 1st August 2016 to verify their status. Any colleague who transitioned to research independence (i.e. took up their first 'teaching and research' contract, or 'research only' contract and first met one of our criteria for research independence) on or after this date will be designated an ECR within our HESA staff return.

The UoS REF Team will not automatically use staff ECR status for REF2021, as this information has been collected for the HESA return. Academic colleagues who would like their status as an ECR to be taken into account for REF2021, as a circumstance that has affected their research productivity, will need to declare this separately during collection of staff circumstances information.

4.3.4 Data confidentiality

Disclosure and management of individual's staff circumstances will be carried out under conditions of the strictest confidentiality, with information passed only to those who have a direct need to access it. All colleagues involved in the process of receiving and reviewing staff circumstances will do so under conditions of absolute confidentiality.

Only the Inclusion and Diversity Team within HR will have access to the complete circumstances forms. Collated staff circumstances information will be stored in a secure digital location where access is restricted to members of the Inclusion and Diversity Team. All data on staff circumstances and documentation provided by individuals to support their requests will be retained securely until the completion of the REF audit process in December 2021 after which it will be destroyed.

Staff circumstances information will be anonymised before review against the REF guidance for requesting reductions in outputs (REF2019/03: https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1086/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_03-guidance-on-codes-of-practice.pdf). The UoA submission leads and deputies (and teams) will be provided with high level information on the reduction of outputs within their UoAs but will not have access to personally

identifying information for colleagues who have declared circumstances, or the details of those circumstances.

Following submission of staff circumstances information to Research England, this information will be provided to the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) and the main panel chairs, who are all subject to conditions of strictest confidentiality in respect of all information contained in submissions. EDAP will review requests for reductions of outputs and may approach the University's REF Team for further information during the audit period if required. Such requests will be forwarded to the Inclusion and Diversity Team. During the REF2021 assessment members of REF UoA sub-panels will be informed that a reduction in the overall number of outputs in the submitting unit has been agreed without penalty on the basis of individual circumstances, but will not have access to any further information about individuals who have declared circumstances, or the details of those circumstances.

4.3.5   Procedure for confidential disclosure of staff circumstances

The REF2021 staff circumstances guidance was communicated to all colleagues during April 2019 as part of face-to-face consultations held by the Dean of Research on our full draft Code of Practice. In December 2019, HR will contact all colleagues identified as having SRR, who indicated that they may wish to have circumstances taken into account, by e-mail to inform them that if they wish those circumstances to be taken into account they must provide information regarding circumstances affecting their ability to research productively from 1st January 2014 onwards. Colleagues who are absent from the University at this time will be contacted by e-mail and a letter will also be sent to their home address. This process will be supported by face-to-face workshops led by RKE and the Inclusion and Diversity team, internal communications, information on the REF intranet and engagement with Schools. The staff circumstances template and guidance will also be made available to colleagues who intend to submit 3-year research plans in late 2019.

Colleagues will be able to declare circumstances information directly to the University's Inclusion and Diversity Manager. The template for declaration of individual staff circumstances is given in **appendix 14**. For some circumstances, supporting documentation may need to be provided alongside the information on the circumstances experienced, and our Inclusion and Diversity Manager will contact individual colleagues if this is the case. This additional information is required to ensure that all requests for reductions in outputs we make to Research England are based on verifiable evidence, in the case that our requests are subject to audit.

4.3.6   Process for determining requests for reductions

Personal circumstances declaration forms will be anonymised before evaluation. A panel comprising the Inclusion and Diversity Manager, the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange and the Director of the Doctoral School will consider each anonymised circumstances declaration against the possible output reductions that are permitted within the REF guidance on submissions (REF2019/01: https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf, see **appendix 14** for details of these output reductions and **appendix 15** for a worked example).

The process to determine how we can apply reductions within each unit will involve five steps:

1. Determine whether is a case to support the removal of the requirement of a minimum of one output, taking into consideration the nature and duration of the circumstances, and the declared impact on the member of staff

2. Determine whether there is a case for requesting unit reductions, according to the criteria included in the REF guidance on submissions, in outputs for each member of staff (up to 1.5 outputs per member of staff) and calculate the sum of these for the unit

3. Determine the reductions to give the total number of output reductions to be requested per UoA

4. Check that the request for each unit does not reduce the output pool below the minimum of one per submitted staff member without circumstances; if it does point 5 will apply

5. Determine whether the cumulative effect of circumstances for each unit warrants the submission of a request to Research England to reduce the total output requirement for any UoA.

A worked example is provided in **appendix 15** to illustrate how circumstances will be taken into account to calculate the output reduction for each unit (steps 1-4 above). We will consider making requests to Research England for reductions in outputs at a unit level (step 5 above) based on a combination of the following factors:

- The proportion of staff who have declared circumstances;

- The projected size (FTE) of the unit. We will consider all circumstances within very small units (<20 FTE) to have potentially impacted the unit;

- The size of the available pool of REF-eligible outputs compared to the number of outputs required in the REF assessment (based on outputs required equalling 2.5 x FTE). Disciplinary differences influencing the quantity of outputs available may mean that some units are more affected than others by staff circumstances.

Summary data on the proposed requests for reductions in outputs based on staff circumstances will be reviewed at REF Steering Group and Research and Enterprise Committee for discussion and approval and will be submitted to Research England by their stated deadline in 2020. No information on colleagues or their circumstances will be provided to either Committee.

The University of Salford does not set generic targets regarding the number of outputs that academic colleagues should contribute to their unit's output pool. Therefore, there will be no process to determine how individual academics' contributions should be revised dependent on declared circumstances.

The University would like to make colleagues aware that, due to the decoupling of staff and outputs in the REF2021 assessment, it may be the case that colleagues submit circumstances information that does not result in the University making an output reduction request to Research England. Circumstances information provided by colleagues that does not relate to a request for the removal of the minimum of one output will still be gathered and combined (anonymously) as Research England require us to provide a report to detail all staff circumstances information that was declared for REF2021, including information that was not used to make output reduction requests. This information will be collated and managed according to our commitments to confidentiality outlined in **section 4.3.4**.

4.4   Equality Impact Assessment

This section will be completed closer to the date of the REF2021 submission in November 2020.

Part 5: Appendices

Appendix 1. Further information on policies referenced in this Code and their links

Part 1

Section 1.1
University of Salford REF intranet
www.salford.ac.uk/ref
University of Salford 2017-2027 Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy
https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1784972/Research-and-Knowledge-Exchange-Strategy-Web.pdf
Review by Lord Stern of the REF2014 assessment
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-excellence-framework-review

Section 1.2
University of Salford 2016-2021 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy
https://www.salford.ac.uk/hr/equality,-diversity-and-athena-SWAN
University of Salford2018 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1641031/Equality-Diversity-Inclusion-Policy-June-2018.pdf)
Stonewall
www.stonewall.org.uk
Vitae HR Excellence in Research Award
https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/hr-excellence-in-research
Athena SWAN
https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-SWAN/
University commitment to the ten key Athena SWAN principles
https://blogs.salford.ac.uk/athena-SWAN/athena-SWAN-principles/

Section 1.3
University of Salford Research Data Management
https://www.salford.ac.uk/research/research-data-management
University of Salford 2017-2027 Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy
https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1784972/Research-and-Knowledge-Exchange-Strategy-Web.pdf

Section 1.4
University of Salford REF intranet
www.salford.ac.uk/ref

Section 1.5
University of Salford REF intranet
www.salford.ac.uk/ref

Part 2

Section 2.1
University of Salford REF intranet
www.salford.ac.uk/ref
Recommendations made by the UK Forum for Responsible Research Metrics

https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/research-policy/open-science/The%20Forum%20for%20Responsible%20Research%20Metrics/UK%20progress%20towards%20the%20use%20of%20metrics%20responsibly%2010072018.pdf

Section 2.2
University of Salford Research England blog on our approach to significant responsibility for research
https://re.ukri.org/blog/defining-significant-responsibility-for-research/?previewid=3943E52A-0178-4DEC-8CC66CBA8D94D4B8
University of Salford Dean of Research presentation on our approach to significant responsibility for research at Research England REF workshops in February 2019
https://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance/training-and-events-materials/

Section 2.4
University of Salford REF intranet
www.salford.ac.uk/ref

Section 2.5
University of Salford REF intranet
www.salford.ac.uk/ref

Part 3

Section 3.1
REF panel criteria and working methods (REF2019/02):
https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1084/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf

Part4

Section 4.1
REF guidance on Codes of Practice (REF2019/03):
https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1086/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_03-guidance-on-codes-of-practice.pdf

Section 4.2
University of Salford School of Health Sciences Research Outputs Monitoring and Evaluation (ROME) internal peer review panel
https://www.salford.ac.uk/research/health-sciences/research-impact-and-ref/research-outputs-monitoring-and-evaluation-rome

Section 4.3
REF guidance on submissions (REF2019/01):
https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf

Appendix 2. Units of Assessment to which the University of Salford will return in REF2021

Main Panel A	
UoA 3	Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
Main Panel B	
UoA 7	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
UoA 11	Computer Science and Informatics
UoA 12	Engineering
Main Panel C	
UoA 13	Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
UoA 17	Business and Management Studies
UoA 20	Social Work and Social Policy
Main Panel D	
UoA 25	Area Studies
UoA 27	English Language and Literature
UoA 33	Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies
UoA 34	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

Appendix 3: Summary of equalities legislation provided by Research England

Age	All employees within the Higher Education (HE) sector are protected from unlawful age discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment under the Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or if they are associated with a person of a particular age group.
	Age discrimination can occur when people of a particular age group are treated less favourably than people in other age groups. An age group could be, for example, people of the same age, the under 30s or people aged 45-50. A person can belong to a number of different age groups.
	Age discrimination will not be unlawful if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. However, in the context of the REF, the view of the funding bodies is that if a researcher produces excellent research an HEI will not be able to justify not selecting their outputs because of their age group.
	It is important to note that early career researchers (ECRs) are likely to come from a range of age groups. The definition of ECR used in the REF (see 'Guidance on submissions', paragraphs 148 to 149) is not limited to young people.
	Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should also note that, given developments in equalities law in the UK and Europe, the default retirement age has been abolished from 1 October 2011 in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
Disability	The Equality Act 2010, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (Northern Ireland only) and the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 prevent unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment relating to disability. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to have a disability or if they are associated with a person who has a disability (for example, if they are responsible for caring for a family member with a disability).
	A person is considered to have a disability if they have or have had a physical and/or mental impairment which has 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Long-term impairments include those that last or are likely to last for at least 12 months. Cancer, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), multiple sclerosis and progressive/degenerative conditions are disabilities too, even if they do not currently have an adverse effect on the carrying out of day-to-day activities. An impairment which is managed by medication or medical treatment, but which would have had a substantial and long-term adverse effect if not so managed, is also a disability.
	The definition of disability is different in Northern Ireland in that a list of day-to-day activities is referred to.
	There is no list of day-to-day activities for England, Scotland and Wales but day-to-day activities are taken to mean activities that people generally, not a specific individual, carry out on a daily or frequent basis.
	While there is no definitive list of what is considered a disability, it covers a wide range of impairments including: • sensory impairments • impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, depression and epilepsy

	- progressive impairments, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, HIV and cancer - organ specific impairments, including respiratory conditions and cardiovascular diseases - developmental impairments, such as autistic spectrum disorders and dyslexia - mental health conditions such as depression and eating disorders - impairments caused by injury to the body or brain. It is important for HEIs to note that people who have had a past disability are also protected from discrimination, victimisation and harassment because of disability. Equality law requires HEIs to anticipate the needs of people with disabilities and make reasonable adjustments for them. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment constitutes discrimination. If a researcher's impairment has affected the quantity of their research outputs, the submitting unit may return a reduced number of outputs (see 'Guidance on submissions', Part 3, Section 1, 'Staff circumstances').
Gender reassignment	The Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 protect from discrimination, harassment and victimisation of trans people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex. Staff in HE do not have to be under medical supervision to be afforded protection because they are trans and staff are protected if they are perceived to be undergoing or have undergone related procedures. They are also protected if they are associated with someone who has proposed, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment. Trans people who undergo gender reassignment will need to take time off for appointments and, in some cases, for medical assistance. The transition process is lengthy, often taking several years, and it is likely to be a difficult period for the trans person as they seek recognition of their new gender from their family, friends, employer and society as a whole. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 gave enhanced privacy rights to trans people who undergo gender reassignment. A person acting in an official capacity who acquires information about a person's status as a transsexual may commit a criminal offence if they pass the information to a third party without consent. Consequently, staff within HEIs with responsibility for REF submissions must ensure that the information they receive about gender reassignment is treated with particular care. If a staff member's ability to work productively throughout the REF assessment period has been constrained due to gender reassignment, the unit may return a reduced number of research outputs (see 'Guidance on submissions', Part 3, Section 1, 'Staff circumstances'). Information about the member of staff will be kept confidential as described in 'Guidance on submissions', paragraph 195. HEIs should note that the Scottish government recently consulted on, and the UK government is currently consulting on, reform of the Gender Recognition Act 2004, which may include streamlining the procedure to legally change gender.
Marriage and civil partnership	Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 as amended, individuals are protected from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership status. The protection from discrimination is to ensure that

	people who are married or in a civil partnership receive the same benefits and treatment in employment. The protection from discrimination does not apply to single people. HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not inadvertently discriminate against staff who are married or in civil partnerships.
Political opinion	The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protects staff from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of political opinion. HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not inadvertently discriminate against staff based on their political opinion.
Pregnancy and maternity	Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 women are protected from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to pregnancy and maternity. Consequently, where researchers have taken time out of work, or their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period has been affected, because of pregnancy and/or maternity, the submitting unit may return a reduced number of research outputs, as set out in 'Guidance on submissions', paragraphs 169 to 172. In addition, HEIs should ensure that female researchers who are pregnant or on maternity leave are kept informed about and included in their submissions process. For the purposes of this summary it is important to note that primary adopters have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave.
Race	The Equality Act 2010 and the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation connected to race. The definition of race includes colour, ethnic or national origins or nationality. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular race. HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not discriminate against staff based on their race or assumed race (for example, based on their name).
Religion and belief including non-belief	The Equality Act 2010 and the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to religion or belief. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular religion or belief. HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not discriminate against staff based on their actual or perceived religion or belief, including non-belief. 'Belief' includes any structured philosophical belief with clear values that has an effect on how its adherents conduct their lives.
Sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave)	The Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to sex. Employees are also protected because of their perceived sex or because of their association with someone of a particular sex. The sex discrimination provisions of the Equality Act explicitly protect women from less favourable treatment because they are breastfeeding. Consequently, the impact of breastfeeding on a woman's ability to work productively will be taken into account, as set out in 'Guidance on submissions', Part 3, Section 1, 'Staff circumstances'.

	If a mother who meets the continuity of employment test wishes to return to work early or shorten her maternity leave/pay, she will be entitled to shared parental leave with the father or her partner within the first year of the baby's birth. Partners may also be eligible for shared parental leave or pay. Fathers/partners who take additional paternity or adoption leave will have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave and barriers that exist to taking the leave, or as a result of having taken it, could constitute unlawful sex discrimination. Consequently, where researchers have taken additional paternity and adoption leave, the submitting unit may return a reduced number of outputs, as set out in 'Guidance on submissions', Annex L.
	HEIs need to be wary of implementing procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 that would be easier for men to comply with than women, or vice versa. There are many cases where a requirement to work full-time (or less favourable treatment of people working part-time or flexibly) has been held to discriminate unlawfully against women.
	HEIs should note that there are now requirements under UK and Scottish legislation for public authorities (including HEIs) to report information on the percentage difference amongst employees between men and women's average hourly pay (excluding overtime).
Sexual orientation	The Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to sexual orientation. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person who is of a particular sexual orientation.
	HEIs must ensure that their procedures and decision-making processes in relation to REF 2021 do not discriminate against staff based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

In addition, the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 states that trade union representatives have the right not to be victimised or dismissed because of their trade union duties whether or not the employer has a formal recognition agreement. If the union is formally recognised by the employer, the representatives are entitled by law to certain working arrangements to assist them in doing their job, often called 'facilities'.

Appendix 4: Summary of the University of Salford Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2016-2021

The focus of the University's new Inclusion and Diversity Strategy is on embedding inclusion rather than equality to better reflect the University's culture of welcoming diversity and the action-based and dynamic nature of the new Strategy. This will promote the concept of equality as a desired outcome achieved by drawing upon and engaging the different talents, life experiences and perspectives arising from human diversity for the benefit of the University of Salford.

The new Strategy sits within and responds to a developing legal and wider compliance framework (general and specific duties of the Equality Act 2010, HEFCE diversity conditions for University funding, the Equality Challenge Unit Athena SWAN commitments). It supports the University's ambition to support a larger proportion of our students across the degree completion finish line without the differential in attainment rates we have been seeing over recent years e.g. including but not limited to BAME achievement. However, the Strategy goes one step further and would support a diverse range of students progressing whilst at Salford, graduating with higher degree classifications and gaining improved employability, in line with our objectives. It also aligns with the University's new vision and strategy that commits to delivering excellence. To achieve these goals, the University needs to interweave diversity into all areas of the institution: the recruitment and retention of colleagues and students, the development of a curriculum that reflects the dynamic diversity of our world, and a supportive, and an inclusive environment that promotes the growth of everyone.

This Diversity and Inclusion Strategy offers a sustained, collaborative approach to making inclusion and diversity a meaningful reality. It offers specific direction to ensure that inclusion and diversity becomes part of our business as usual and sits within the context of the University of Salford's vision, core values and wider strategies. It identifies the University's approach to promoting inclusion and diversity across the full range of its activities, in employment, teaching and learning and as a partner working within local, national and international communities.

Appendix 5: Athena SWAN principles to which the University commits.

1. We acknowledge that academia cannot reach its full potential unless it can benefit from the talents of all.

2. We commit to advancing gender equality in academia, in particular, addressing the loss of women across the career pipeline and the absence of women from senior academic, professional and support roles.

3. We commit to addressing unequal gender representation across academic disciplines and professional and support functions. In this we recognise disciplinary differences including:
   - the relative underrepresentation of women in senior roles in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL);
   - the particularly high loss rate of women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM).

4. We commit to tackling the gender pay gap.

5. We commit to removing the obstacles faced by women, in particular, at major points of career development and progression including the transition from PhD into a sustainable academic career.

6. We commit to addressing the negative consequences of using short-term contracts for the retention and progression of staff in academia, particularly women.

7. We commit to tackling the discriminatory treatment often experienced by trans people.

8. We acknowledge that advancing gender equality demands commitment and action from all levels of the organisation and in particular active leadership from those in senior roles.

9. We commit to making and mainstreaming sustainable structural and cultural changes to advance gender equality, recognising that initiatives and actions that support individuals alone will not sufficiently advance equality.

10. All individuals have identities shaped by several different factors. We commit to considering the intersection of gender and other factors wherever possible.

Appendix 6: Inclusion and diversity governance structure

Inclusion, Diversity and Engagement Committee (IDEC)
Chair: Jo Purves, Pro Vice Chancellor International and Regional Partnerships
Purpose: To provide leadership on strategic matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. It involves overseeing the development and implementation of the University's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, as well as providing direction to ensure that the University meets it statutory obligations. This committee is the most senior in the inclusion and diversity structure, reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team

Athena SWAN Sub-Committee (ASSC)
Chair: Dr Francine Morris, Head of Athena SWAN
Purpose: To ensure the implementation and monitoring of the Athena SWAN Action Plan (Bronze Award), in accordance with set prioritization, including overseeing the development of the University's Silver award, initiating new related actions as required and ensuring application of the Athena SWAN principles throughout the University. This sub-committee reports into the Inclusion, Diversity and Engagement Committee and oversees the activities of the three Athena SWAN task groups, the Self-Assessment Team Network and the Women's Voice Network

Workplace Inclusion Committee
Chair: Anwen Bottois (Human Resources)
Purpose: To oversee and guide the implementation of the staff-related actions within the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2016-2021 and any other related action plans (e.g. Annual Inclusion and Diversity Report Action Plan) by sharing best practice and aligning with the Inclusive Student Experience Committee. This sub-committee reports into the Inclusion and Diversity Committee

Inclusive Student Experience Committee (ISEC)
Chair: Professor Neil Fowler, Dean of Students
Purpose: To oversee and guide the implementation of the student related actions within the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2016-20212 and the Inclusion and Diversity Annual Report, by sharing best practice and aligning with the Workplace Inclusion Committee. This sub-committee reports into the Inclusion and Diversity Committee

Appendix 7: 3-year research plan template

Personal 3-year research plan

Please refer to the Stages of Researcher Development matrix and indicators of achievement table (both found at www.salford.ac.uk/ref under the menu item "Opt in for SRR") to help you complete this form. Note that the criteria in the matrix have been updated since the staff consultation at the end of January so ensure you have the most current version.

Alongside your 3-year research plan, the following data (covering the period 1st January 2014 to January 2019) will be provided to the academic panels reviewing your plan:

Name
Job title
Full-time equivalent (full-time = 1.0FTE)
Number of years in post (from current contract start date)
Number of PhD students supervised (current and completed)
Number of PhD students co-supervised (current and completed)
Number of outputs in USIR
The five highest internal peer review scores for outputs in USIR
Number of submitted bids
Total external grant income
Total external grant income as PI
Total external grant income as Co-I
If you are included in the University impact database (Y/N)

FOR NEWER STAFF (who started at Salford after January 2014):
If you have received external grant funding and supervised PhD students/postdocs since January 2014 but prior to starting your role at Salford, please give details of this activity in Question 16, as we do not hold this information centrally.

Questions

1. What is your university username?

2. With which Research Centres are you affiliated?

3. List up to 5 keywords that describe your research area(s).

4. Please briefly describe your current research questions or programmes, and your future aspirations.

5. Please provide a summary of your current level of researcher development (from Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researcher to Level 3) in each of the five areas. Use the descriptions in the Stages of Researcher Development matrix to do this. Where you feel you meet the descriptors in more than one level then please indicate the highest level you can evidence.

| | Income | Partnerships & Impact | Professional Esteem | Outputs | Leadership & Citizenship | |
					People	Place
L3 (highest)						
L2						
L1						
Next-Generation or Joining/ Returning Researcher						

6. **INCOME (Future activity)**

Briefly outline your, or your team's, future bidding strategy including possible income streams, your planned timeline, and the activities you will undertake to develop higher quality and higher value bids.

(You do not need to list amount of income on this form as your bidding and award activity will be provided to the review panel along with your strategy plan).

7. **PARTNERSHIPS & IMPACT (Current activity)**

Outline how you are contributing to the ICZ agenda by listing UP TO THREE, non-academic collaborations or partnerships you have developed, or participate in, for the purpose of undertaking research, knowledge exchange, enterprise, or producing impact (defined for REF2021 as "a change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia").

These partnerships may involve academic collaborators but there should be clear benefits to non-academic partners and the wider world.

For each partner, please indicate whether evidence of impact is available to demonstrate benefits beyond academia (i.e. indicate whether the project is: At an early stage – no impact yet; In-progress – some evidence of impact; or Advanced – substantial impact can be evidenced)

8. **PARTNERSHIPS & IMPACT (Current activity)**

What type(s) of wider benefit could be achieved through your current external partnerships? (Select all that apply)

Cultural
Economic
Business/commercial
Environmental
Health
Public policy or services
Public knowledge and understanding
Wider societal benefits and quality of life

9. PARTNERSHIPS & IMPACT (Future activity)

Please list potential future partnerships you will aim to develop from your current research activity, including planned outcomes and impact. Indicate how the partnerships fit with your personal research agenda, wider research group/Centre strategy and the ICZ agenda.

10. PROFESSIONAL ESTEEM (Current activity)

List UP TO THREE of your most influential roles you currently hold within professional bodies/societies/funders/journals etc, which indicate your level of professional esteem.

11. PROFESSIONAL ESTEEM (Future activity)

Please outline potential roles you are looking to undertake within particular organisations to raise your professional profile (refer to the Indicators of achievement table - available on www.salford.ac.uk/ref under "Opt in for SRR" and linked to at the top of that page - to help identify roles).

12. OUTPUTS (Current activity)

(NOTE: The number of research outputs you have deposited in USIR and the five highest internal peer review scores will be provided to the assessment panel reviewing your plan. Therefore, this information is not required here)

Name up to THREE of your most influential outputs since January 1st 2014 that have been scored as 3* or 4* by your School's REF/ROME Panel and briefly list the reason(s) you believe this work was considered to be significant by the academic research community. If you do not yet have any outputs at this level, please give details of your best output.

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13. OUTPUTS (Future activity)

Please briefly outline your strategy to continue to raise the quality and profile of your research outputs and ensure your publications are disseminated to wider academic and non-academic audiences. (Where relevant also outline potential future patents).

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14. LEADERSHIP & CITIZENSHIP (Current activity)

PEOPLE
List the contributions you have made to supporting the researcher community in your Research Group/Centre, School or the wider University. This includes support for the individuals you directly supervise or mentor. Evidence what has been achieved through your contributions.

PLACE
List the contributions you have made to supporting the quality of the research environment in your Research Centre/Group, School or the wider University. This could include creating or implementing research strategies, establishing resources/equipment and technical training, developing strategic collaborations and partnerships, facilitating networking through organising conferences/meetings/seminar series.

For earlier career researchers, please list how you contribute to the activities of your research group and Centre, e.g. participation in meetings and events and taking up opportunities available to you.

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15. LEADERSHIP & CITIZENSHIP (Future activity)

Please outline any ideas or initiatives you have that will contribute to the development of a vibrant and sustainable research culture in your Research Group/Centre/School and the role you will take in realising these. This could include support for colleagues, development of early career researchers, supporting the formation of research collaborations within your Research Centre or leading the development of cross-University interdisciplinary projects.

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16. **FOR NEW STAFF ONLY (starting January 2014 onwards):**

If relevant, please briefly provide details of any external funding awarded and PhD students/postdocs supervised since January 2014 while employed at another institution.

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17. **DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT NEEDS**

Please list the development and support you will need to help you achieve your research career plan, for example technical training/up-skilling, strategic networking or conference participation. For researchers at Level 3, please outline what you believe is needed for earlier career researchers to develop.

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18. **OTHER INFORMATION**

Please detail any other additional information that you feel is relevant but has not been covered in the previous sections (e.g. if you are a newer member of staff who has been awarded internal funding).

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19. **Have you received sufficient support from your colleagues or established researchers in your School to complete this 3-year plan?**

Yes, I am happy with the level of support I received

No, I would have liked more help to do this

I did not want any support to complete this

20. **Equality considerations**

Aspects of your 3-year career plan contain information about your prior research activity as well as future proposals. We recognise that your past activities may have been impacted by many factors, and in order to appropriately support our researchers we ask that you indicate whether you would like your School academic review panel to take into consideration any particular circumstances you have experienced.

Please indicate whether any of these factors have occurred during the last 5 years that have had an effect on your research activity:

- long-term leave of absence from the workplace (e.g. maternity leave, sick leave);
- part-time working;
- ongoing ill health;
- caring responsibilities;
- gender reassignment;
- circumstances relating to other equality characteristics protected by law (age, disability, sex, race, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity).

Yes, I would like it to be noted that I have experienced one or more of the circumstances indicated above and that has affected my research activity

No, I have not experienced any of the circumstances indicated above

I decline to respond

Appendix 8. Full timeline for implementation of the process to determine staff with "significant responsibility for research" (SRR).

Date	Activity	Equality and diversity considerations
w/c 21st January 2019	Colleagues invited to feed into the consultation on the draft process for determining colleagues with SRR	The Dean of Research held three briefing sessions to provide more detail on the proposed SRR process and an opportunity for colleagues to ask questions. Meetings were held during the standard working day during term time, and on the main and MediaCityUK campuses.
w/c 25th February 2019	UoS REF Team provide response to consultation feedback	UoS REF Team respond to main issues arising during the consultation with revised process for determining colleagues with SRR. This is available on the intranet (www.salford.ac.uk/ref) under the "opt in for SRR" menu heading.
1st March – 14th April 2019	Colleagues invited to opt in and complete 3-year research plans	Time to complete the 3-year research plans has been extended to 6 weeks based on feedback from colleagues and Union representatives. A second opportunity to complete the SRR process will be available in early 2020 for colleagues who: - Are new in post (since 1st March 2018); - Are about to go on parental or other long-term leave/have recently returned from leave; - Work part-time; - Are employed on a fixed-term contract. RKE organised 4 drop-in events during March to support colleagues in planning and completing the 3-year research plan. Within the 3-year research plan form we have enabled colleagues to indicate whether circumstances might have affected research productivity and also to state whether they have received adequate support to complete their research plans. This will be followed up in all Schools to review researcher support mechanisms going forward.
3rd May – 21st May 2019	Assessment of 3-year research plans by academic panels (School-based)	Colleagues who will be involved in the assessment of 3-year research plans to undertake equality and diversity training prior to making decisions as a panel. Staff with diversity training to attend assessment panels and champion equality and diversity within the decision-making process. An additional process will be used to follow up with colleagues who are on the borderline for SRR and have checked on their plan that they have equality considerations.
22nd May – 14th June 2019	Moderation across Schools Final review of SRR allocations and comparison across Schools	UoS REF Team and Inclusion and Diversity Team conduct equality analysis on the decisions for SRR per School (analysis of colleagues determined to have SRR or be Next-Generation or Joining/Returning Researchers, by protected characteristic) and where there are significant differences in outcomes ask School panels to consider the reasons for this and whether decisions need to be revisited.

1st July 2019	Notify colleagues of their provisional SRR status Open the appeals process (**deadline for appeals of 12th August 2019**)	Appeals process to be overseen by colleagues who are independent of the assessment process and who have undergone equality and diversity training, i.e. Inclusion and Diversity Manager.
September 2019	Appeals process complete and colleagues notified whether they have SRR	Final outcomes of the appeals decisions to be monitored by protected characteristic.
	HR to submit the SRR status for each member of staff in our 2018/19 HESA staff return Embed activity and goals described in 3-year research plans in the 2019/20 PDR process	RKE to review all information provided in the 3-year research plans regarding training and development requirements and create relevant workshops/events to support together with an individualised training plan provided by the Researcher Development Coordinator. Training requirements will be provided to Schools, including Athena SWAN Teams to consider the mechanisms through which different staff groups can be supported.
Summer 2019-Spring 2020	Gradually embed recommended research workload allocations into individual/school allocations	UoS REF Team to gather data on workload allocation for staff with protected characteristics through an EIA. Use this to inform Schools about inequalities resulting from current practices and work with Human Resources Inclusion and Diversity Team to mitigate and improve.
Autumn 2019 – 30th June 2020	Provide a second opt-in process to be considered for SRR through completion of 3-year research plans	The second process to opt in allows the opportunity for colleagues who were away from the University (e.g. on leave) or a very new member of staff to have an appropriate opportunity to complete their 3-year research plan. This is also an opportunity for colleagues to reapply for SRR with an updated plan.

Appendix 9: Terms of Reference for Research and Enterprise Committee

Committee	RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE (REC)
Reports to	SENATE
Purpose	The Research and Enterprise Committee is responsible on behalf of Senate for the development and enhancement of research and enterprise, and the setting and maintenance of academic standards of research programmes leading to the University's qualifications and for the quality of postgraduate research student experience.
Terms of Reference	i. To oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the University Research and Enterprise strategy. ii. To determine and keep under review the academic regulations and associated procedures governing postgraduate research programmes. iii. To determine policy and procedures and oversee arrangements for the approval, amendment, review and withdrawal of research degree programmes, including those involving collaboration with partner institutions. iv. To monitor admissions to research degree programmes within Schools and any conditions upon or discretions accorded to candidates, and the annual student progression and achievement. v. To oversee supervisory and assessment arrangements for candidates, including Board of Examiners and External Examining. vi. To work in collaboration with other Senate committees to ensure a consistent approach to matters affecting students or research ethics. vii. To monitor, analyse and disseminate outcomes from the postgraduate research student evaluation of their learning experience and to review the effectiveness and enhancement of mechanisms for collecting postgraduate research student feedback. viii. To promote innovation and good practice in research and enterprise and to monitor and evaluate research initiatives across the University. ix. To monitor and advise Senate on the development of staff research and enterprise activity and researcher development and the development of research leadership. x. To advise Senate on ways in which research and innovation can influence teaching. xi. To facilitate the dissemination of good practice. xii. To assist in the identification and referral of academic staff development needs. xiii. To consider and report to Senate on such matters as may be referred to the Committee. REC will make recommendations to the Senate on the following: xiv. the approval of any new research award to be offered by the University. xv. The approval of any major new policy in relation to research degree policies and regulations. xvi. The approval of any amendments to the University's Research and Enterprise Strategy.
Constitution*	**Ex officio (2)** Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair) 1 Dean of Research 1 Director of Postgraduate Research 1 **Appointed (16)**

	Representatives from each School nominated by the Dean of School 2 per School 14 Two postgraduate research student nominees of the Students' Union Trustee Board* 2 **Elected (2)** Staff elected by and from the academic staff 2 **Co-opted (2)** Members of staff co-opted by the Committee. Where a specific need can be identified against the business of the Committee the Chair may identify one co-opted member (of the two) who is external to the University*. **Total (23)** *where business relates to individual student or staff data the meeting may be restricted to University of Salford staff only. **In attendance** Director, Research and Knowledge Exchange 1 Director of International and Regional Development 1 University Librarian 1 Serviced by Research and Enterprise
Frequency of Meetings	At least three times per year
Sub-committees	Academic Regulations Sub-committee (reporting also to ASQAC for taught degree regulations) School Research and Enterprise Committees

Appendix 10: Terms of Reference for REF Steering Group (including membership)

The REF Steering Group takes responsibility for the overall conduct and management of the REF 2021 submission process under the responsibility of the Dean of Research and reports to the Executive.

1. To advise the Dean of Research on strategic and policy matters in the development of the University's submission to REF2021.
2. To oversee the strategic management of the REF2021 submission across the University.
4. To address strategic issues and matters of policy regarding the approach to submissions at University and Unit of Assessment level, including the definition of Units of Assessment, strategic staff selection and decisions as to the placing of staff and determination of the minimum quality threshold to be applied for an individual Unit of Assessment.
5. To oversee data and systems required for the effective submission of REF2021.
6. To ensure that agreed University procedures are followed consistently across the selected Units of Assessment in accordance with the Code of Practice on the selection of staff and the relevant legislative framework.
7. To advise and make recommendations in relation to the appointment of Submission Coordinators.
8. To advise and make recommendations in relation to the appointment of School Impact Coordinators.
9. To oversee communications to the wider University community on REF preparations.
10. To consider any issues which arise relating to the inclusion or non-inclusion of individual members of staff in the submission, including any appeals from staff, ensuring that all relevant information is obtained to inform decisions and taking account of the criteria set out in the Code of Practice.
11. To monitor progress within Schools against the agreed submission schedule, to address any difficulties and to ensure that the submission is made in good time.
12. To address any issues that cannot be resolved at School level, including in particular any matters relating to Units of Assessment which involve staff from more than one School or unit.
13. To hold final editorial control over submissions in conjunction with the Vice-Chancellor.

Membership
Dean of Research (Chair)
Director, Research and Knowledge Exchange (Deputy Chair)
RKE Officer (Secretary)
Associate Deans Research
REF Manager
REF leads / UoA Submission Coordinators
Business Systems and Data Officer
Director of PGR
Executive Policy Officer
Head of Information and Analysis
Management Information and Systems Manager
School Impact Coordinator (one representative per meeting)
Impact, Engagement and Environment Coordinator
University Librarian
Other staff may be called in to specific meetings to provide advice and information

Appendix 11: Equality impact assessment data on development of criteria and processes for determining significant responsibility for research

	Gender		Nationality			Ethnicity			Religion					Sexuality			Age			Disability	
	Female	Male	EU/EEA	NON UK/EU/EEA	UK	BAME	Undisclosed	White	Christian	Muslim	None	Other	Undisclosed	Hetero	LGB	Undisclosed	20-34	35-49	Over 50	Declared Disability	Undisclosed
Overall staff population as % (T&R contracts, excl Snr Mgmt & RAs)	45%	55%	7%	6%	87%	13%	5%	83%	32%	3%	33%	7%	26%	71%	4%	25%	6%	45%	48%	3%	97%
Bid for funding	42%	58%	8%	7%	84%	15%	4%	81%	31%	3%	36%	6%	24%	72%	6%	23%	5%	51%	44%	3%	97%
Bids for funding as PI	39%	61%	9%	7%	84%	17%	4%	79%	29%	4%	38%	6%	24%	71%	6%	23%	4%	52%	44%	2%	98%
Bids for funding as Co-I	43%	57%	7%	7%	86%	12%	4%	84%	32%	3%	37%	5%	23%	73%	6%	21%	6%	51%	43%	4%	96%
Awarded funding	41%	59%	8%	6%	86%	15%	3%	82%	34%	3%	35%	6%	22%	70%	7%	23%	2%	50%	48%	3%	97%
Awarded funding as PI	41%	59%	8%	6%	85%	15%	3%	81%	32%	2%	37%	5%	23%	68%	8%	24%	2%	51%	47%	2%	98%
Awarded funding as Co-I	44%	56%	9%	6%	85%	14%	3%	83%	36%	3%	32%	6%	23%	72%	6%	22%	2%	51%	47%	5%	95%
Have research outputs listed in USIR	42%	58%	8%	8%	85%	15%	5%	80%	31%	3%	34%	7%	25%	72%	4%	24%	6%	46%	48%	3%	97%
Highest internal review score for outputs is 1*	59%	41%	6%	0%	94%	0%	6%	94%	24%	0%	24%	18%	35%	65%	0%	35%	0%	35%	65%	6%	94%
Highest internal review score for outputs is 2*	43%	57%	7%	5%	88%	13%	5%	82%	32%	3%	34%	3%	28%	69%	3%	28%	3%	38%	59%	5%	95%
Highest internal review score for outputs is 3*	41%	59%	9%	9%	82%	18%	5%	78%	31%	6%	37%	6%	21%	73%	6%	21%	9%	50%	41%	4%	96%
Highest internal review score for outputs is 4*	27%	73%	9%	11%	80%	16%	6%	78%	31%	0%	38%	3%	28%	70%	3%	27%	3%	56%	41%	0%	100%
Staff with 0 outputs assessed internally (currently being addressed)	48%	52%	6%	8%	85%	23%	4%	73%	29%	0%	25%	17%	29%	75%	2%	23%	8%	48%	44%	0%	100%
Listed in our impact database	38%	62%	8%	5%	87%	9%	5%	86%	27%	0%	40%	8%	25%	71%	6%	23%	6%	50%	45%	2%	98%
Lead academic on impact case studies	37%	63%	6%	5%	89%	9%	3%	88%	25%	0%	42%	6%	27%	73%	4%	23%	5%	48%	47%	2%	98%
Contributing to (not leading) impact case studies	42%	58%	16%	5%	79%	11%	16%	74%	37%	0%	32%	16%	16%	63%	16%	21%	11%	58%	32%	0%	100%
Lead/deputy on impact case studies marked as "likely" for REF2021	22%	78%	10%	5%	85%	7%	7%	85%	24%	0%	41%	5%	29%	63%	7%	29%	5%	46%	49%	5%	95%
Lead/deputy on impact case studies marked as "potential" for REF202	40%	60%	4%	8%	88%	12%	8%	80%	16%	0%	32%	16%	36%	72%	4%	24%	0%	60%	40%	0%	100%
Lead/deputy on impact case studies marked as "REF2027"	46%	54%	4%	4%	92%	10%	2%	88%	35%	0%	44%	6%	15%	79%	6%	15%	10%	44%	46%	0%	100%
Allocated research workload (2017/18)	46%	54%	8%	7%	85%	15%	5%	80%	34%	3%	31%	6%	26%	70%	4%	26%	5%	45%	50%	3%	97%
Allocated research workload at 0.01-19% (2017/18)	54%	46%	4%	3%	93%	8%	4%	88%	40%	1%	26%	6%	27%	69%	4%	27%	4%	37%	59%	4%	96%
Allocated research workload at >20% (2017/18)	40%	60%	10%	10%	80%	19%	6%	75%	30%	5%	34%	7%	25%	71%	4%	25%	5%	52%	43%	2%	98%
New staff in post (contract start date after 1st January 2014)	49%	51%	9%	9%	82%	14%	4%	82%	33%	5%	38%	9%	15%	84%	5%	11%	15%	61%	25%	3%	97%
Research leadership positions	37%	63%	11%	7%	81%	15%	4%	81%	28%	2%	48%	6%	17%	72%	6%	22%	6%	54%	41%	4%	96%
Professors	23%	77%	5%	4%	90%	20%	4%	75%	27%	4%	32%	6%	30%	69%	3%	28%	0%	27%	73%	3%	97%
Senior Lecturer/Reader	45%	55%	6%	5%	89%	11%	6%	82%	32%	2%	29%	6%	32%	61%	6%	33%	1%	32%	68%	3%	97%
Lecturer	52%	48%	7%	7%	86%	12%	4%	84%	35%	3%	32%	8%	23%	76%	3%	21%	9%	55%	36%	4%	96%
Research Fellow	33%	67%	19%	9%	72%	14%	5%	81%	16%	7%	63%	5%	9%	88%	2%	9%	28%	63%	9%	2%	98%
Part-time	68%	33%	6%	4%	90%	4%	3%	93%	41%	2%	28%	8%	23%	74%	3%	23%	8%	32%	60%	5%	95%
Full-time	41%	59%	7%	7%	86%	14%	5%	81%	30%	3%	34%	6%	27%	71%	4%	25%	6%	48%	46%	3%	97%
Fixed-term contract	33%	67%	21%	5%	74%	9%	5%	86%	21%	7%	53%	9%	9%	91%	2%	7%	35%	51%	14%	7%	93%
Permanent contract	46%	54%	6%	6%	88%	13%	5%	82%	32%	3%	31%	6%	27%	70%	4%	26%	5%	45%	50%	3%	97%

Appendix 12: Equality impact assessment template on development of criteria and processes for determining significant responsibility for research.

	How could the policy/ change impact on protected characteristics?	What actions will you take to mitigate the negative impact?
General Comments across all equality strands	Following the recommendations of the Stern review and changes in Research England's ethos for REF20121 we have developed our REF 2021 Code of Practice processes to ensure a fair and transparent approach. Equality, diversity and inclusion have been central to the development of all processes, procedures and decision-making panels throughout the period since submission of our REF2014 return. This includes the University's approach to defining significant responsibility for research which has been designed to support a more diverse and inclusive research community for REF20121 and into the future.	

Using equality monitoring data to identify any adverse impact during our design stage helped to guide our decision making and will continue this process throughout our REF journey.

Other measures have included practical actions, such as promoting greater diversity on the REF Steering Group, as well as continued discussions on matters of equality, diversity and inclusion in meetings of the Senate Research and Enterprise Committee, REF Steering Group, and the ADRI Forum. The University's Inclusion and Diversity Manager is a member of the Code of Practice Working Group, and she and the Head of Athena SWAN are members of REF Steering Group.

To support development of staff, greater inclusion in REF leadership, and succession planning for the next REF, Deputy Unit of Assessment Coordinators have been appointed to work alongside the UoA leads. This has enabled much greater representation of women on UoA teams and will build a strong foundation for future REF exercises.

Examples of how our draft REF 2021 Code of Practice shows evidence of this approach: -

3 Year Career Plan
- Academics have been asked to opt in to the REF process via the completion of a personal 3-year research strategy evaluation which will ultimately define significant responsibility and support decisions around allocation for research. Within the 3-year plan form we have encouraged staff to indicate whether circumstances related to equality issues have affected research productivity and also state if they have received sufficient support to complete their career plans. This will be followed up in all Schools to review researcher support mechanisms going forward.
- Staff who will be involved in the assessment of 3-year plans will undertake equality and diversity training prior to making decisions. Panels will be provided with data gathered by the REF Team on research activity by protected characteristic to provide an indication of existing bias within our research culture. There is also a guide on inclusive membership for panels. Initial attribution of outputs is achieved using an automated algorithm which adheres to the requirements and rules of REF. The results are then checked by the UOA leads, Associate Deans Research and Innovation and REF team, particularly with respect to equality and diversity.
- The analysis of the process of determining staff who have SRR highlighted that the use of some of our data as single points or for collective analysis may disadvantage

some staff groups with lower levels of activity in some areas. Therefore, the greater the range of measurements that can be used to recognise staff research activity then the more inclusive our support will be. Where processes require staff to participate then there should be at least two phases of activity or an on-going method of incorporating staff to provide opportunities for staff who are away or have time constraints.

- REF Team and Inclusion and Diversity Team will conduct equality analysis on the decisions for SRR per School (analysis of staff determined to have SRR or be Next-Generation, by protected characteristic) and where there are significant differences in outcomes ask School panels to consider the reasons for this and whether decisions need to be revisited.

- Appeals process is to be overseen by staff who are independent of the assessment process and who have undergone equality and diversity training. Any member of staff appealing the decision will be able to update their 3-year plan if required and then it will be assessed by their own School plus a second School.

- Final outcomes of the appeals decisions to be monitored by protected characteristic.

- Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) to review all information provided in the 3-year plans regarding staff training and development requirements and create relevant workshops/events to support together with an individualised training plan provided by our Researcher Development Coordinator.

Other Inclusion & Diversity considerations

- The University conducted a REF readiness exercise during late 2017 and first half of 2018. The modelling of equality monitoring data started at this point and highlighted areas of success or concern which was incorporated in the final methodology. The results of the REF Readiness exercise did not result in any changes to workload or contract status. A code of practice working group was set up which included representation from the Inclusion & Diversity Team at the University.

- Online training has been required for any member of staff participating in REF decision-making and additional, face-to-face and REF-specific, training based on Advance HE materials has been provided to staff involved in determining significant responsibility for research and research independence.

- Developing the SRR criteria cognisant of the presence of structural inequalities in our own and wider research culture and have designed the criteria at Level 1 (where the judgement is made about SRR, Next-Generation, or Associate researcher) to take into account the potential effect of inequalities.

- The code of practice outlines an independent appeal process to deal with equality-related issues in the context of the REF.

Our data analysis looked at the 6 areas of measurement for SRR by the characteristics of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy & maternity and marital status. The patterns of difference identified feed into the sections below.

In addition to the extensive data analysis, consultation took place on SRR and independence criteria/process during January and again in April/May. Effective communication of the code of practice to all eligible staff was key to ensuring they all had an

	equal opportunity to disclose any personal circumstances that might have affected their research productivity during the census period. The Salford branch of the University and Colleges Union was engaged in the consultation and their feedback also helped inform the process. Specific staff groups and committees were also invited to give feedback on the code of practice:- • Inclusion, Diversity and Engagement Committee (Chaired by Pro-Vice Chancellor) • Workplace Inclusion Committee (Chaired by Assistant Director HR) • Staff Networks – LGBT, BAME, Women's Voice. • Athena SWAN Sub Committee • Athena SWAN Women in Research Task Group	
Age	It is important to note that early career researchers are likely to come from a range of age groups. The definition of early career researcher (ECR) used in the REF is not limited to young people. Our data analysis shows that there is a difference between staff leading impact case studies (similar to starting pool of staff) vs staff contributing – i.e. more staff from the older age profile are involved and fewer from younger age profile.	Schools to consider impact strategies to look at who is partnering on impact case studies and whether more junior staff can collaborate.
Carers / People with caring responsibilities	Through consultation staff indicated that there would be issues with completing the 3-year plan in a short timescale, as the timescale for completion included half-term.	Time to complete the 3-year plans was extended to six weeks based on staff feedback. A second opportunity to complete the SRR process will be available in late 2019 for staff who during the rist round: - Are new in post (since 1st March 2018); - Are about to go on parental or other long-term leave/have recently returned from leave; - Work part-time; - Are employed on a fixed-term contract.
Disability	Equality law requires HEIs to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people and failure to make a reasonable adjustment constitutes discrimination. Where a disabled researcher's impairment has affected the quantity of their research outputs, this should be taken into account in considering how many outputs they are expected to contribute to the submission. For the purpose of the REF assessment period it is important to note that people who have had a past disability are also protected from discrimination, victimisation and harassment because of disability.	Our code of practice gives staff two opportunities to declare the impact of a disability on research undertaken and encourages staff to request a reasonable adjustment.

	Our declaration rates around disability are low and therefore it is difficult to identify any meaningful patterns using the data we have collected. Therefore, no adverse patterns are recorded for staff declaring a disability.	Improvements in monitoring data is a priority for the Inclusion and Diversity strategy.
Race / Ethnicity	Our data shows that impact areas have a lower proportion of BAME staff leading impact case studies for REF2021 – 7% down from 13% in the total staff population.	We have a small group of staff involved in developing impact case studies and many of these are continuing from REF2014. The future aim for supporting impact work is to create case studies with groups of staff, focusing on an interdisciplinary approach. This will be more inclusive strategy and will draw on the information provided by staff in their 3-year research plans to help them develop in this area.
Gender	Our data shows that whilst our total academic staff population is 45% female the proportion of female staff likely to be leading impact case studies for REF2021 is 22%. This is likely due to the fact that a high proportion of our professoriate is male and due to the non-portability of REF impact work the leaders for impact case studies will be those members of staff who are more established/senior researchers here.	To address this concern, in addition to preparing for REF2021 we are forward-planning our impact case studies for REF2027/28. We can determine at this stage that 46% of staff who are working towards a REF2027/28 case study are female and we will continue to embed support for impact development to broaden our institutional impact profile over the longer term and ensure all of our staff can translate their research into societal benefits.
Gender Reassignment	Trans people who undergo gender reassignment will need to take time off for appointments and in some cases, for medical assistance. The transition process is lengthy, often taking several years and it is likely to be a very difficult period for the trans person as they seek recognition of their new gender from their family, friends, employer and society as a whole. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 gave privacy rights to trans people who undergo gender reassignment. A person acting in an official capacity who acquires information about a person's status as a transsexual is liable to criminal proceedings if they pass the information to a third party without consent. Consequently, panel members must ensure that any information they receive about gender reassignment is kept confidential While not all people undergoing gender reassignment will choose to change their name, where they do, this may affect citation data.	Our code of practice gives staff two opportunities to declare the impact of transitioning on research undertaken and encourages staff to request a reasonable adjustment.

	Data is available on academic staff and gender reassignment but is minimal.	Improvements in monitoring data is a priority for the Inclusion and Diversity strategy.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	People entering a civil partnership or marriage may change their name, and this may affect the citation data associated with their research outputs. Data is available on staff marital status but is minimal.	Care will be taken to ensure name changes do not impact on returns. Improvements in monitoring data is a priority for the Inclusion and Diversity strategy.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination Order (Northern Ireland) 1976 women are protected from pregnancy- and maternity-related discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment. Consequently, if a researcher has taken time out of work because of pregnancy-related illness and/or maternity this should be taken into account in considering how many outputs they are expected to contribute to the submission. In addition, researchers who are pregnant or on maternity leave should not be overlooked during a submission process. Primary adopters have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave. Fathers/partners who take additional paternity or adoption leave or who take shared parental leave have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave and barriers that exist to taking the leave, or as a result of having taken it, could constitute unlawful sex discrimination. Consequently in the context of the REF, additional paternity and adoption leave and shared parental leave should be taken into account in considering how many outputs fathers or the partners of new mothers are expected to contribute to the submission. Small numbers of academic staff have taken maternity/ paternity/ adoption or shared parental leave during the current REF cycle and, therefore, it is not possible to study trends.	For staff who have indicated on their 3-year research plan that they have equality-related circumstances, we will be able to take into account maternity/ paternity/ shared parental and adoption leave as part of the consideration of their circumstances when determining whether they have SRR.
Religion & Belief	Our staff data shows high numbers of undisclosed/unknown around faith. No obvious patterns can be identified where the sample of staff is large enough to draw conclusions.	Improvements in monitoring data is a priority for the Inclusion and Diversity strategy.

Sexual Orientation	Our staff data shows high numbers of undisclosed/unknown around faith. No obvious patterns can be identified where the sample of staff is large enough to draw conclusions.	Improvements in monitoring data is a priority for the Inclusion and Diversity strategy.

Appendix 13: Internal peer review (IPR) process

- Before the start of each academic year research support officer (DS) will contact the Chair of the panel to agree dates for the 4 panel meetings required.

- 2 months before the agreed meeting date DS will select the latest IPR spreadsheet from the USIR exports folder and send on to the chair of the panel, to be returned within 2 weeks.

- Chair will allocate reviewer names to each paper on spreadsheet and send on to DS for their school. DS updates school IPR spreadsheet with details of new papers and name of reviewers for each paper.

- DS downloads all papers from USIR and uploads onto the IPR SharePoint. A new folder is created under the appropriate school for that round of reviews. The IPR SharePoint link is

- E-mail sent to each reviewer with details of the paper number, deadline to submit review (4 weeks from dispatch) and link to SharePoint site for their paper and supporting documents. Papers will no longer be attached to the e-mail sent to reviewers as they will be held on SharePoint.

- Reviews are received to school mailbox and comments from each reviewer added to the school spreadsheet.

- Chaser sent for missing reviews, to be returned within 1 week ensuring it is in place for the meeting.

- Before panel meeting DS will email the spreadsheet to the chair and if necessary provide a printed copy for their use at the meeting.

- At the IPR meeting the Chair will note the final score and any additional comments on the spreadsheet, either in paper or electronic format, then send on to DS after the meeting. DS will not be attending the IPR meeting.

- Any questions arising from the meeting, that require the DS to be involved, are sent on after the meeting for follow up.

- DS will update master spreadsheet with final score and any comments, then send an e-mail to Rob Shaw to confirm the spreadsheet is up to date with that round of reviews.

Appendix 14: Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances template

This document is being sent to all colleagues who have SRR (see REF 'Guidance on submissions', paragraphs 117-122). As part of the University's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for you to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected your ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly your ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as colleagues not affected by circumstances.

The collection of this information is entirely voluntary, and it is for you to decide whether you wish to share this information with the University for REF purposes. Please see section 4.3 of the REF Code of Practice for full details of all processes relating to the collection and analysis of staff circumstances information.

The University is collecting this information as part of preparations for our REF2021 submission for two reasons:
- To establish whether any colleague who will be returned to the REF2021 assessment has experienced circumstances that have significantly affected their ability to conduct research productively over the REF period. For these colleagues the University can make a request to Research England that they be returned without the required minimum of one output. The following circumstances apply here:
  - an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
  - an *equivalent* of 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
  - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- To establish whether there are any UoAs where the proportion of declared circumstances (including both the circumstances listed in the above point and the list below) is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

Applicable circumstances
- Qualifying as an ECR – started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016 (either by taking up a 'teaching and research' contract or, if on a 'research only' contract, through meeting one of our definitions of an independent researcher. See Part 2 of the REF Code of Practice).
- 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

Ensuring Confidentiality
The collection of circumstances information is being managed by the University's Inclusion and Diversity team, overseen by the Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Manager. Before circumstances forms are reviewed against REF circumstances guidance the I&D Manager will anonymise the information so that your name, username and School are not associated with your circumstances details and

your information can be kept confidential. Your circumstances information will not be shared with any individual within your School, including your colleagues involved in REF preparations.

If the University decides to apply to the funding bodies to request reductions in the number of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with information that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the REF criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the REF2021 'Guidance on submissions' document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

If information is submitted to UKRI, this data will be kept confidential to their REF Team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The University's REF Team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the REF assessment phase at the end of December 2021.

Changes in circumstances
The university recognises that circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the REF2021 census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then you should contact the Inclusion and Diversity Manager, Sue Clark to provide the updated information at S.Clark13@salford.ac.uk or on x50161.

Notification of outcomes
Following review of all submitted circumstances information the I&D Manager will contact you by email to notify you as to whether your circumstances have met the criteria provided by Research England to allow the University to request any reductions in outputs.

Please note that except for the circumstances that would allow an individual to be returned without the minimum of one output, the decisions to make requests to the funding bodies will be made on a unit level. Therefore, it may be the case that if the overall proportion of staff declaring circumstances is very low in the unit that you will be returned to, then the University may not make use of your circumstances information.

To submit this form you should email it as an attachment to the University's Inclusion and Diversity Manager, Sue Clark, at S.Clark13@salford.ac.uk.

Name: Click here to insert text.
University username: Click here to insert text.
School: Click here to insert text.

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

Circumstance	Time period affected
Early Career Researcher (either A: started on a 'teaching and research' contract on or after 1 August 2016, OR, B: employed on a 'research only' contract AND first met any of our criteria to demonstrate research independence since 1 August 2016 – see Part 3 of the REF Code of Practice). *If you have been employed at another institution on a 'teaching and research' contract, or a 'research only' contract plus you meet our definition of an independent researcher, you should enter the date on which you met one of these if this date was on or after 1 August 2016.* *Date you became an early career researcher.*	Click here to enter a date.
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.*	Click here to enter dates and durations.
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.*	Click here to enter dates and durations.
Disability (including chronic conditions)	Click here to enter text.

To include: 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 *To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Ill health or injury *To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance *To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Caring responsibilities *To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Gender reassignment *To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement. *To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.

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. The full information including personal details will only be seen by the University's Inclusion and Diversity Manager, however anonymised information will be seen by the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange and the Director of Post-Graduate Research.
- I realise it may be necessary for the University to share the information I have provided with Research England's REF Team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and REF main panel chairs.

I agree ☐

Name: Print name here
Signed: Sign or initial here
Date: Insert date here

☐ I give my permission for the Inclusion and Diversity Manager (or other HR representative, e.g. HR Business Partner) to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation to these.

I would like to be contacted by:

E-mail ☐   Insert email address

Phone ☐   Insert contact telephone number

Appendix 15: Permitted reductions in the total output pool for a unit based on staff circumstances.

Given the reduced output requirement for 2021, the tariffs for the defined reductions differ from those set in REF 2014. This is to ensure that a broadly equivalent reduction is given in the context of the submitted output pool, and to ensure that panels receive a sufficient selection of research outputs from each submitted unit upon which to base judgements about the quality of that unit's outputs.

Early career researchers
Table 4 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for ECRs who meet this definition

Table 4. Early career researchers: Permitted reduction in outputs

Date at which the individual first met the REF definition of an ECR	Output pool may be reduced by up to
On or before 31 July 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

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks
Table 5 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside of the HE sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research

Table 5. Secondments or career breaks: Permitted reduction in outputs

Total months absent between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020 due to a staff member's career break or secondment outside of the HE sector during which time no academic research was conducted	Output pool may be reduced by up to
Fewer than 12 calendar months	0
At least 12 calendar months but less than 28	0.5
At least 28 calendar months but less than 46	1
46 calendar months or more	1.5

The allowances in Table 5 are based on the length of the individual's absence or time away from working in HE. They are defined in terms of total months absent from work.

As part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5), reduction requests on the basis of part-time working hours will only be made exceptionally, for example, where the FTE of a staff member late in the assessment period does not reflect their average FTE over the period as a whole.

Table 6. Periods of family-related leave: Permitted reduction in outputs

Qualifying period of family-related leave	Output pool may be reduced by up to
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

While the reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months, shorter periods of such leave could be taken into account as follows:

1. By applying a reduction in outputs where there are additional circumstances, for example where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities.
2. By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other circumstances, according to **Table 5**.

Any period of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions above may in individual cases be associated with prolonged constraints on work that justify more than the defined reduction set out. In such cases, the circumstances should be explained in the request.

Combining circumstances

Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances that have a defined reduction in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of 1.5 outputs. For each circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.

Where **Table 4** is combined with **Table 5**, the period of time since 1 January 2014 up until the individual met the definition of an ECR should be calculated in months, and **Table 5** should be applied.

When combining circumstances, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously.
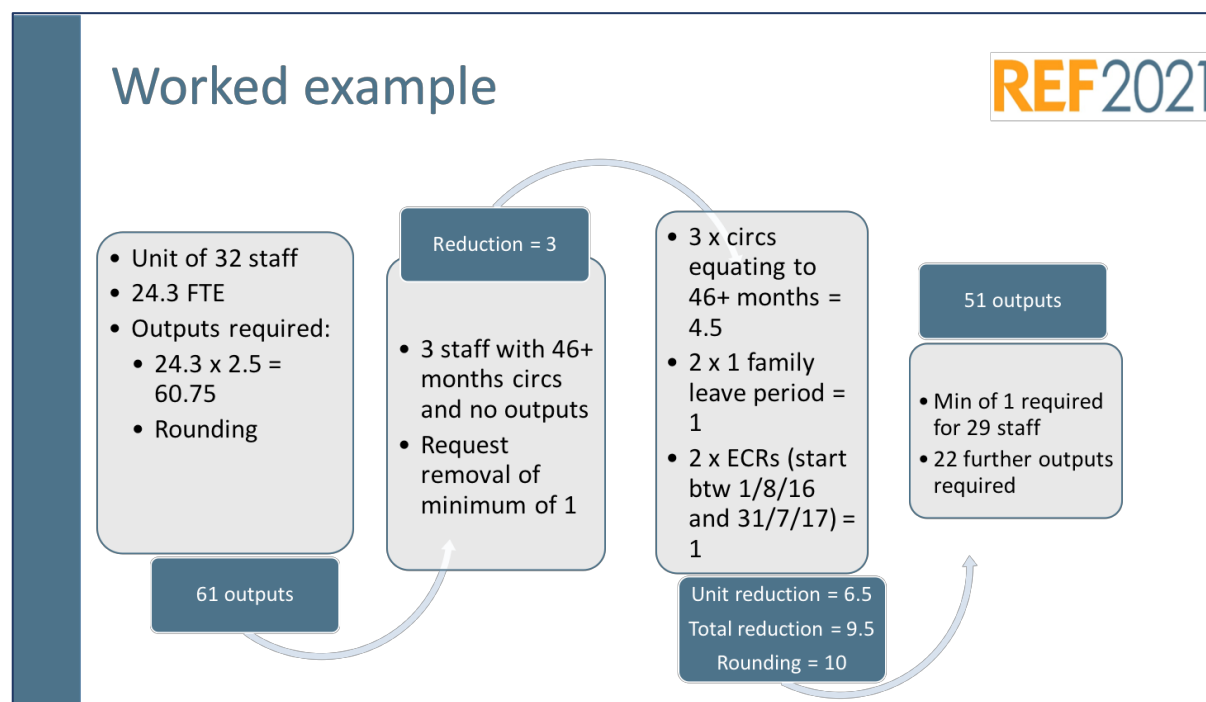
Where an individual has a combination of circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs **and** additional circumstances that require a judgement, the institution should explain this in the reduction request so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances. The circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs to be requested should be calculated according to the guidance above.

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

Where staff have had other circumstances during the period, including in combination with any circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs, the institution will need to make a judgement about the effect of the circumstances in terms of the equivalent period of time absent, apply the reductions as set out in **Table 5** by analogy, and provide a brief rationale for this judgement.

Appendix 15. Worked example provided by Research England to illustrate the output reductions that could be calculated per unit based on declared circumstances.

Worked example of the calculation to determine reductions in outputs based on individual circumstances combined across a unit. Taken from Research England REF staff circumstances webinar slides from February 2019 (available here: https://vimeo.com/315635707).

As outlined in the figure above, the first step in the calculation for reduction in outputs is to determine the total number of outputs required for the unit. In this example case the unit is 24.3 FTE and, therefore, applying the calculation of FTE x 2.5 results in a requirement to submit 61 outputs for this unit in the REF assessment.

Three members of staff have individual circumstances that have affected each of them for a period of time greater than 46 months and have meant that these individuals have been unable to produce the required minimum of one output during the REF period. Therefore, the unit can request that these three members of staff be returned without the minimum of one output attributed to them.

The next step takes into account all circumstances that have affected staff. Taking into account the specific reductions relating to each type of circumstance (in **Appendix 14**) means that this unit can reduce the output requirement by 4.5 (3 staff x 1.5) for staff with circumstances affecting them for 46+ months, and by 1 (2 staff x 0.5) for members of staff who have taken one period of family-related leave, and by 1 (2 staff x 0.5) for early career researchers who began their first position as independent researchers between 1st August 2016 and 31st July 2017. Note that if staff have had circumstances affecting them for 46+ months and they have been unable to produce an eligible output, the reduction that is permitted is 2.5, as their requirement for one output is removed and the unit can also reduce the overall total of outputs by 1.5.

The total possible reduction for this unit would equal 9.5, which would be rounded up to 10. This reduces the output requirement for this unit from the original total of 61 to a new total of 51.

Appendix 16: List of Abbreviations

ACF	Academic Career Framework
ADRI	Associate Dean Research and Innovation
AHSSBL	Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Law
BAME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CSE	[School of] Computing, Science and Engineering
DORA	San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
E&D	Equality and Diversity
ECR	Early Career Researcher
EDAP	Equality and Diversity Panel (Research England)
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ELS	[School of] Environment and Life Sciences
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GPA	Grade Point Average
H&S	[School of] Health and Society
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
HS	[School of] Health Sciences
I&D	Inclusion and Diversity
ICZ	Industry Collaboration Zone
IDEC	Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Committee
IOS	Intelligent Outputs Sorter
PDR	Performance and Development Review
PGR	Post Graduate Researcher
PI	Principal Investigator
REC	Research and Enterprise Committee
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RKE	Research and Knowledge Exchange
ROME	Research Outputs Monitoring and Evaluation
SRR	Significant Responsibility for Research
SAM	School of Arts and Media
SBS	Salford Business School
SoBE	School of the Built Environment
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine
SWAN	Scientific Women's Academic Network
UCU	University and College Union
UK	United Kingdom
USSU	University of Salford Students' Union
UoA	Unit of Assessment
UoS	University of Salford
USIR	University of Salford Institutional Repository
VCET	Vice Chancellor's Executive Team
WLBM	Work Load Balance Model

20th November 2019

Dear Professor Dayson

We are writing to you following to confirm UCU Salford branch's position on the institution's local Code of Practise for the REF2021.

The Salford branch of UCU confirm that the local Code of Practice for the REF2021 , and the processes for identifying those staff who will be submitted to REF have been developed in consultation with the Salford Branch of the University and College Union (UCU), and member feedback has been integrated into the University's processes for REF and into the local Code of Practice. This has been a collaborative and ongoing discussion, during which the University has shown a willingness to address the concerns raised by UCU members.

National and Regional UCU discussions are still taking place which may impact the position of the local UCU branch on the University of Salford's REF2021 Code of Practice.   However subject to the above, the local branch offer their support for the institution's Code of Practice.

Finally, we look forward in continuing to work in consultation with the employer in its implementation.

Kind regards

UCU Branch Officers

Ms Helen Franks: Branch President
Dr Umran Ali Vice-President/Equality Officer
Mr Paul Maggs Secretary/Comms Officer
Mr Bernie Maquire Treasurer/Membership Officer