

## Update on REF2021

Initial decisions on the REF2021

Decisions on staff and outputs

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Practice-based research portfolio



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### Initial decisions on the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF 2017/01)

This document sets out the first set of the funding bodies' initial decisions on the Research Excellence Framework following the recent consultation. A further set of decisions will be taken on the remaining aspects of the framework in the autumn, incorporating further consultation activity.

#### Executive summary

Purpose and key points

January 2018

- What is REF?
- Recap Stern recommendations
- Summary of decisions to date
  - Core principles stay the same
  - Changes to weighting
  - Changes to selection of staff and outputs
  - Impact and environment
- Announcements of panel appointments
- Timetable for next steps

Research is....

A process of investigation leading to new insights effectively shared

1. EQUITY – fair and equal assessment of all types of research and forms of research output
2. EQUALITY – promoting equality and diversity
3. TRANSPARENCY – clear and open process of decision-making

## What is REF?

- System for assessing research in UK HEI undertaken by HEFCE, SFC, HEFCW and DfE (NI)
- REF team based at Research England following establishment of UKRI in April 2018 - Joint responsibility with other funding bodies retained

## What is it for?

- To provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of this investment
- To provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks for use within the HE sector and for public information
- To inform the selective allocation of funding for research

## In addition (Stern):

- To provide a rich evidence base to inform strategic decisions about national research priorities
- To create a strong performance incentive for HEIs and individual researchers
- To inform decisions on resource allocation by individual HEIs and other bodies

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Stern recommended:

1. All research active staff should be returned in the REF
2. Outputs should be submitted at UoA level with a set number per FTE (with some flexibility)
3. Outputs should not be portable
4. Panels should continue to assess on the basis of peer review
5. Institutions should be given more flexibility to showcase their interdisciplinary and collaborative impacts by submitting 'institutional' level case studies
6. Impact case studies could be linked to research activity and a body of work as well as outputs
7. Guidance should make it clear that impact case studies can focus on broad range of impacts
8. New institutional level environment assessment
9. UoA environment statements condensed and made complementary to the institutional level statements
10. REF data and metrics should be open, standardised and combinable with other research funders' data collection processes
11. Government and UKRI could make more strategic use of REF
12. Ensure no increased admin burden to HEIs from interaction of REF and TEF

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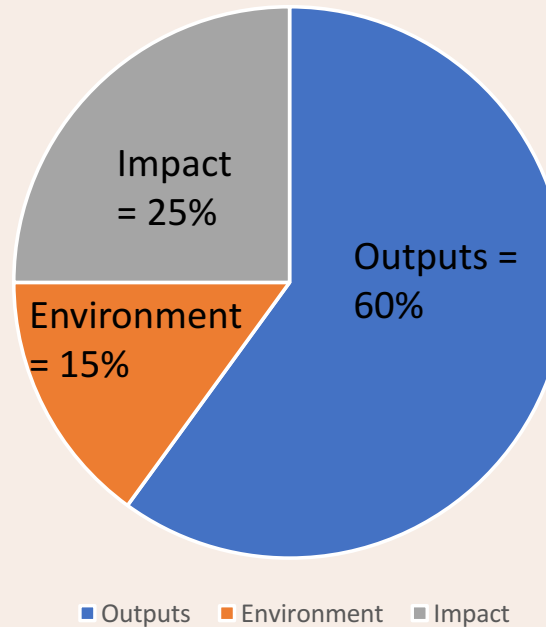
Summary of decisions to date: Main principles to stay the same

- The method of assessment will continue to be primarily peer review, based around expert sub panels that report to main panels.
- As for REF2014, three elements will be assessed – these are Output quality, impact and environment.
- In support of interdisciplinary research, at least one expert will be appointed to each sub-panel who will be responsible for assessing interdisciplinary research and the flag for interdisciplinary research will be retained (but still not mandatory).
- There will be an increased focus on collaboration and to this end, a specific requirement to discuss collaboration with organisations beyond higher education in the environment template.

- Changes to weightings

Change since 2014:

- Outputs: -5%
- Environment: =
- Impact: +5%



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## Glasgow School of Art

Overall profiles **Outputs** Impact Environment

Select UOA link to view submission

[Expand all profiles](#)

% of the submission meeting the standard for:

4\* 3\* 2\* 1\* U/C

4\* 3\* 2\* 1\* U/C

FTE  
Category  
A staff submitted

**34 - Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory**



**Overall**

23 38 31 8 0



**52.80**



## Glasgow School of Art

Overall profiles **Outputs** Impact Environment

Select UOA link to view submission [+ Expand all profiles](#)


**% of the submission meeting the standard for:**

4\* 3\* 2\* 1\* U/C

4\* 3\* 2\* 1\* U/C

FTE Category A staff submitted

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**34 - Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory** [-](#) **Overall** 23 38 31 8 0  **52.80**

Category	4*	3*	2*	1*	U/C
<b>Outputs</b>	9.4	36.7	41.7	11.6	0.6
<b>Impact</b>	30.0	50.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Environment</b>	70.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

## Changes to selection of staff

- All staff with significant responsibility for research are returned provided they are independent researchers on census date 31 July 2020
- ‘those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, that is an expectation of their job role’
- HEI’s, working with their staff and with guidelines, identify who is in scope for submission

## Significant responsibility for research:

- Not a straightforward contractual matter
- ‘many institutions will want to draw on the proportion of time that is allocated for research to identify staff in scope’
- Not a fixed set of criteria – a ‘menu’ that might include: PhD supervision, eligibility for research grants etc.
- Further guidance to be provided by REF

## Decoupling staff from outputs

- Average number of **outputs per FTE** will be 2.5
- **Minimum of 1 output** per staff member submitted (if in employment on the census date)
- **Maximum of 5 outputs** per staff member submitted
- Exceptional individual circumstances may reduce minimum requirement to zero (and measures to account for 'unit circumstances')
- Outputs may be submitted by BOTH the institution employing staff member on census date and a previous institution where the output was first made publicly available

## All institutions submitting to REF2021 to provide a Code of Practice covering:

- The institution's processes for ensuring a fair approach to selecting outputs
- Where applicable, the institution's processes for identifying 'Category A submitted' staff for any UoA in which it is not submitting 100 per cent of 'Category A eligible' staff.

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## Impact

- One case study, plus one case study per up to 15 FTE staff returned to the REF (for the first 105 FTE returned)
- Impact case studies cover research from 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2020; impact occurring from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2020
- Broader approach to underlying research to include a wider body of work or research activity
- Impact case studies submitted in REF2014 can be resubmitted – discussion ongoing about ‘additionality’ and whether they will be identified as submitted
- Impact also included as a section on the Environment template

## Environment:

- Weighting stays the same
- More structured template including section on Open Research
- Institution-level statement will be included, but for pilot purposes only

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Announcements of panel appointments:

**Main Panel D: Arts and humanities** – Professor Dinah Birch CBE, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Impact, University of Liverpool.

**UoA32: Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory** – Professor Anne Boddington, Kingston University

**UoA33: Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies** – Professor Maria Delgado – Central College of Speech and Drama

**UoA34: Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management** – Professor Justin Lewis, University of Cardiff

**UoA13: Architecture, Built Environment and Planning** – Professor Cecilia Wong, University of Manchester

**Sub-panel nominations are in – announcements expected in February 2018**

Timetable for next steps:

Feb 2018: Panel members announced

Summer 2018: Draft guidance on submissions

January 2019: Final guidance on submissions

2019: Preparation of submission system

2020: Submission (end Nov)

2021: Assessment