

Annual Research Plans and Problems in Reaching Agreement on Activity Plans for 2020/21

Annual Research Plans (ARPs) are an integral element of the Activity Planning Policy and Procedures at GSA. Each ARP is assessed by two members of the ARP peer review panel, including one from the ARP author's own School. Their reviews are then discussed with a larger group of reviewers, who collectively agree the outcomes for each ARP. The process is subject to further scrutiny to ensure that all ARPs are reviewed on equal terms. The process is outlined in section 5 of the GSA Activity Planning 2018 Guidance, which is available at: <http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/1590077/gsa-activity-planning-guidance-2018.pdf>. Peer reviewers assessed ARPs based on the guidance provided at: <http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/6178/1/180509JR%20-%20ARP%20guidance%20for%20reviewers%202018.pdf>.

Given that ARPs are integral to Activity Planning, should any problems arise in reaching agreement for an activity plan, as it relates to allocated research time, then section 4.1 of the GSA Activity Planning Policy applies (see:

<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/1344257/GSAActivityPlanningPolicyandCoverSheet2016-2017.pdf>).

That is, any failure or delay in reaching agreement for an activity plan should be dealt with under the appeals procedure defined in section 4.3/Appendix 1 of the HE2000 contract. The procedure seeks first to resolve any issues quickly, locally and informally through the Head of Department/Head of School structure, but should that prove unsuccessful, a formal appeals process is also defined.

Should the possible grounds for appeal relate to the outcome of an ARP, then the Head of Research and Enterprise will be consulted as part of the **appeals process**, and an explanation of the ARP result will be provided, with reference to the ARP and the review process. ARP review is designed to be robust, and any outcomes will be defended, but in exceptional cases, when a legitimate justification is deemed to have been made and the appeal panel judges it to be necessary, an ARP may be re-reviewed. The outcome of any such process will be recorded and supplied to the local Research and Enterprise Committee of the school in which the researcher is based.

Note that if the author of the ARP was subject to mitigating circumstances that affected their ability to complete an ARP to the appropriate standard, they are expected to have completed a mitigating circumstances form prior to the ARP submission deadline. The form is available on the GSA website, from the activity planning area at the foot of this page:

<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/key-information/policies/institutional-policies/>

Head of Research and Enterprise, 2020