# The Glasgow School of Art

Annual Research Plans for 2024-25

Guidance on the Content of Your ARP

V3

# Contents

## Guidance for those completing an ARP for 2024-25

This document provides guidance on the content you should provide in your Annual Research Plan for academic year 2024-25.

Since 2015/16, Annual Research Plans (ARPs) have been an important element of GSA's Activity Planning processes. Research time allocated in response to your ARP will be factored into your activity planning for the next academic year.

All FT or PT staff with an academic contract (0.2FTE or greater, teaching and research or research–only/research related job role) are entitled to submit an ARP, although doing so is not mandatory.

All staff seeking research time in 2024-25 must complete an ARP by 18th March 2024.

Your Annual Research Plan should be submitted using the online form on the GSA research repository, RADAR. For guidance on how to use the submission system, please see *How to Complete Your Annual Research Plan in RADAR*, available at http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/4881/ .

As in previous years, you should deposit completed outputs in RADAR (https://radar.gsa.ac.uk/contact.html) before including them in your ARP. If you describe a completed output in your ARP that is not available in RADAR, the reviewers will disregard it.


## Review Process

For ARPs submitted by 18th March 2024, we aim to confirm results and provide feedback by 15th May 2024.

ARP review will again follow the revised procedure introduced in 2021. Review will be undertaken by staff who were actively involved in the assessment of outputs for GSA's REF 2021 submission. This group (comprising Research Leadership Group and a number of additional GSA peer reviewers) has developed a consistent and sophisticated approach to assessment, and has gained a great deal of insight into research at GSA, across our disciplines. Their involvement will ensure that the ARP review process is more consistent and thus equitable for all staff. Each ARP will be reviewed by two reviewers and moderated via a chaired panel, as before. One of the two reviewers will summarise the feedback concisely, to ensure that it can be issued promptly and reliably. We will ensure there are no conflicts of interest (such as line management relationships) when ARPs are allocated to reviewers.

Based on the review panel's assessment, you will be recommended for 'emergent' time, 'normative time' or 'no research time' for academic year 2024/25. For a member of staff in a standard teaching and research role, a 'normative' or 'emergent' outcome corresponds to around 20% of their hours. This should be scheduled at times agreed with your line manager as part of activity planning – either regularly throughout the year or in concentrated blocks of time, depending on your responsibilities and the demands of the academic calendar.


### Normative Research Time (20%)

To qualify for Normative research time, staff must present a convincing plan for good quality research outputs and/or projects, articulated as such, plus evidence of completed outputs and projects that have been undertaken competently and independently, and which meet the definition of research (see p4, below). Most active, experienced academic researchers should be able to make a case for normative time, if they follow the guidance in this document and demonstrate that the work they are doing constitutes research of a suitable standard. For teaching and research staff, a Normative ARP outcome should result in around 20% of contracted hours being allocated for research. For those who

are already in more research intensive roles, Normative corresponds to the time available within their role to undertake independent research.

**Emergent Research Time (20%)**

The review panel may allocate Emergent research time if a member of staff convincingly demonstrates the ambition, motivation and potential to undertake independent research, but the work presented in the ARP is either:

- not yet of the necessary quality

- does not yet indicate sufficient experience or track record of undertaking independent research

Those who receive this outcome are likely to include early career researchers, such as recent post-docs in the early stages of developing their own research programme – but also potentially more established members of staff, who may have significant experience in teaching, scholarship, creative practice or knowledge exchange, but who would benefit from further time and support in order to realise the academic research potential of their work. Some in this group may not have entered the profession via a conventional academic pathway. Staff identified as Emergent Researchers have priority access to GSA mentoring schemes, and will benefit from training and development sessions and resources targeted at people with their level of research experience and track record. Emergent researchers are normally expected to 'graduate' to normative research status within around 3 years, or move to No Research Time.

**No Research Time (0%)**

ARP authors may not qualify for any research time where they have demonstrated limited understanding of research, or provided minimal evidence that they have undertaken or have feasibly planned to undertake research of an appropriate standard.

**Outcomes**

Researchers will be notified when their ARP outcome and feedback is available to view on RADAR (it will appear at the end of their completed ARP). Heads of Schools, line managers and convenors of each School's Research Sub-committee will also receive notification of ARP outcomes in their areas.

If ARPs are submitted late due to Mitigating Circumstances (where the circumstances allow), deadlines for review and communication of outcomes will be agreed with the staff concerned, so that they can plan accordingly, and keep their line manager informed. Please refer to page 13 for further information on mitigating circumstances.

## Impacts of Covid-19 on Research

We are conscious that the period since March 2020 has been (and continues to be) challenging for everyone at GSA, and that the effects of the pandemic have affected many people's ability to carry out planned research programmes. This will be taken into account by reviewers, and staff will not be penalised for making less progress than hoped since 2020 because of the pandemic. In that regard, please note the following:

- Use 'Update on Objectives in Previous ARPs' (Section 3, see below) to indicate if/how plans outlined in your previous ARP were affected by the pandemic. If they were delayed due to lack

of time, access to resources, travel restrictions etc. as a result of Covid-19, you need only note that here, and don't need to submit a separate Mitigating Circumstances form.

- Try to explain the nature of any such impacts in your ARP without disclosing sensitive personal information, but if you feel you need to, then do so by submitting a mitigating circumstances form to HR instead, rather than in the ARP itself.
- When describing projects and forthcoming outputs in sections 5 and 6, please note if these have been delayed, disrupted or adapted in response to the pandemic.

If you will be unable to submit your ARP by the deadline due to the impacts of the pandemic, or need to disclose sensitive information in order to explain how your research has been affected by the pandemic, please see the Mitigating Circumstances section later in this document for guidance.

## Note on the Removal of Enhanced Research Time Option

Unlike in previous years, there is no option to apply for Enhanced research time (40%) for the 2024-25 cycle of ARPs.

The decision to move to a consistent tariff for all ARP awarded research time has been made following approval by both the central Research Committee and the Senior Leadership Group, and consultation with trade union representatives.

The change seeks to address inconsistencies and challenges with the local resourcing and implementation of enhanced time.

Where staff require additional time to complete ambitious research projects, two routes are available:

- Staff may apply for research leave, which will continue to be resourced via a model of staff replacement costs; opportunities to apply for research leave should be available later in 2023-24, for leave to be taken (as agreed with line managers) in 2024-25.
- With the support of the Research team, staff may apply for external funding e.g. to a suitable UKRI scheme. Any fully costed staff time included in successful research bids will be in addition to the 20% normative or emergent time secured via the ARP process.

## Definition of Research

When considering your ARP, reviewers will expect your work to meet the REF definition of research, which is: **a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared**. It is your responsibility to present work in your ARP that meets this definition.

- A process of investigation or inquiry can be demonstrated with reference to research questions, strategy and methodology.
- New insights should add to academic knowledge, in a form that other scholars can engage with. Your research should have the potential to be drawn and built upon by others and to contribute to future research in the field.
- Other scholars can only respond to your work if they know about it, so you must ensure you have disseminated it appropriately.

The quality of research will also be considered with reference to REF criteria, that is in terms of its

**originality**, **significance** and **rigour**.

- **Originality** is the extent to which your output can be shown to have made a new and original contribution to knowledge and understanding in the field. What insights, critiques or knowledge have you contributed that other researchers have not previously?

- Such originality could take a variety of forms, for example: new arguments or forms of expression, interpretation and insight; engagement with new or complex problems; development, or novel application, of innovative research methods or techniques; generation and analysis of new data; advancement or critique of theory, or paradigms; new forms or methods of creative practice that are original in imaginative scope and meaning; new archival evidence that you have researched and interpreted using an appropriate methodology; the application of theories or knowledge to new contexts; incremental development of previous research.

- **Significance** should be understood as the extent to which your work has influenced (or has the potential to influence) knowledge, scholarly thought and/or practice in relevant fields. For instance, can you show that it has become a point of reference for subsequent work by others, or stimulated debate in your subject area?

- **Rigour** is the degree to which the work demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, as well as using robust and appropriate (and ethical) theories, methodologies, concepts, sources and analyses that ensure the reliability – and potential reproducibility or transferability – of the findings.

The mode of research or format of an output is not an indicator of its quality. Good research can take many forms while still meeting the above criteria, and can result in a wide range of outputs including (but not limited to): monographs, journal articles, edited collections, journal special issues, artefacts, bodies of creative practice, exhibitions, images, performances, designs, reports and audio-visual or non-print media.

## Before You Start Your ARP in RADAR

You can save yourself time and effort if you complete the following steps before you create a new ARP for 2024-25 in RADAR:

- Create or update the Research Profile section of your RADAR homepage ('Edit Profile' button) *before* you create a new ARP. If you do so, section 2 of your ARP form will be automatically pre-populated for you. A guide is available on creating a profile in RADAR.

- Make sure that any *completed* outputs that you intend to highlight in your ARP have been entered as research outputs into RADAR. This is essential. Please do so as soon as possible, for the RADAR team have a large volume of work to manage.

- If you ensure that your RADAR entries effectively articulate the research (as defined above), then you will not need to provide that information at length within your ARP.

- Read this document in full for guidance on the content you should provide in each section of the ARP, before you start completing it.

- Read the accompanying document, *How to Complete Your Annual Research Plan in RADAR* http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/4881/, for technical guidance on how to use the online form for drafting and submitting your ARP. This also includes instructions on how to use a previous ARP as a template for your new one.

- If you would prefer to draft your ARP offline before you copy it to RADAR, a Word template is available for this purpose at http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/6042/

## Completing the 2024-25 ARP Form via RADAR

First, log in to RADAR (radar.gsa.ac.uk), go to your Homepage section, and create a new ARP for 2024-25. Before you start to complete the form, make sure you are familiar with all of the sections, and the information that we are asking you to provide in each. By planning ahead, you can avoid having to repeat information in multiple sections. The sections, described in this document, are as follows:

Section 1. Personal Details

Section 2. Research Profile, Focus and Expertise (based on your existing Research Profile in RADAR)

Section 3. Update on Objectives in Previous ARP (also note Covid-related disruption here)

Section 4. Best Completed Research Outputs (focusing primarily on the last three years)

Section 5. Research Projects (current, forthcoming)

Section 6. Forthcoming Outputs

Section 7. PGR Supervision

Section 8. Research Environment

Section 9. Research Impact, Achieved or Planned

Section 10. Longer Term Research Plans (and training and development needs)

**Remember to save your work regularly using the 'Save and Return' button**. (Note that clicking the 'Next' page button on each page does not automatically save the content of the current page.)

## Your Annual Research Plan

## Section 1: Personal Details

**Guidance notes:**
- For 'Year', select '2024/25'.
- Please provide your name, job title, School and the amount of time that you are employed to work at GSA, expressed in terms of full-time equivalent (e.g. 0.6 FTE = 3 days per week).
- Please indicate if you have a mentor. (Then click 'Next'.)
- If you selected the "Other" option for a mentor, please provide further details on the next screen.
- 'Current allocation of research time' corresponds to the outcome of your last ARP.
  - **Please note**: If you did not submit an ARP for 2023/24, select 'No Time' – RADAR won't allow you to leave this field 'Unspecified'.
  - If you select 'No Time', please use Section 3 to explain if this is your first ARP, or if research time is being carried forward, e.g. due to maternity leave/a period of absence.

- 'Research time requested' is the research status you seek for 2024-25 (normative or emergent).
- Those (such as Fellows) in academic roles that already involve research, knowledge exchange or impact as main duties should request 'normative' time, denoting the norm for their type of contract. The ARP will not result in even more time for research if that is already your main job; but the outcome could clarify the time available for a researcher to work independently on their own research projects, rather than carrying out another researcher's programme.

## Section 2: Research Profile, Focus and Expertise

The purpose of this section is to give reviewers an overview of your research interests and experience. Note that if you have already completed the Research Profile section of your RADAR Homepage (see 'Before you start your ARP', above), that information will automatically appear in this section of your ARP. Any subsequent edits you make here will not then also appear in your public RADAR profile. If you create your ARP before you have created a RADAR Profile, then the section will be blank and you will need to add new content.

The purpose of this section is to give reviewers an overview of your research interests and experience, by way of introduction. This will allow them to consider how the details in the rest of your ARP relate to your field and expertise. We do not require more information than you would choose to include on your public profile. You do not need to use the full 500-word capacity (around 150 should suffice for most researchers).

## Section 3: Update on Objectives in Previous ARPs

In this section, you should provide a clear, concise summary of your progress towards any objectives described in your last ARP(s) – particularly in the Planned Outputs and Projects sections. Please do not provide a detailed narrative account, particularly of any outputs or activities that you will describe fully in later sections of this form. A list of relevant items, with a short note on progress will be sufficient. You can also note if your plans have changed (perhaps an opportunity arose to get involved in a new project), or if unforeseen challenges hampered your progress.

You should also use this section if you need to provide information on how COVID-19 has affected your ability to undertake research as previously planned (see 'Impacts of Covid-19 on Research', above). The review panel will factor this information into their assessment of recent work.

If this is your first ARP (or the first for several years), note any relevant research you have undertaken during the last two to three years.

In the section "How have you acted on the feedback in your last ARP?", please describe how you have acted on the feedback you received. If this is your first ARP, simply state this.

## Section 4: Your Best Completed Research Outputs

From the outputs that you have listed in RADAR, please select those that you consider to be the best examples of your research, with the emphasis on those that were completed (or first made publicly available) in the past two to three years. While there is no minimum number of outputs, please do not include more than eight (and we expect far fewer from most staff). We recognise that high quality research takes time to come to fruition, and are interested in what you regard as your highest quality examples. Make sure that any outputs described in this section have first been added to RADAR.

**Guidance notes:**

**Which Outputs to Include**

- This is one of the most important sections of your ARP, since arguably only your completed work can give a reliable indication of your track record, the quality of your research activities and your potential to complete planned research.

- In this section, we are looking for what you consider to be the best *research* outputs that you have completed, with an emphasis on the past two to three years. (See p4 above for details).

- Any outputs that you include in this section must have been deposited in RADAR, and must include the RADAR 'Output ID'. This will enable peer reviewers to click through to the full description of the cited output on RADAR. (The Output ID is the four-digit number that can be found in the 'Details' tab of your deposited output on RADAR).

- If you include a completed output in your ARP without first adding it to RADAR, the reviewers will essentially exclude it from their assessment.

- The maximum number of completed outputs that the ARP form will accept is eight, although we certainly do not expect most researchers to include that many. Use your judgement. Quality and potential are more important than quantity.

**Presenting Your Outputs**

- The reviewers' objective is to ascertain the nature, context and quality of the research enquiry and outcomes. They are also interested in supporting information, such as the nature of your contribution to the research and output (if they were jointly produced), and whether your work was subject to peer review (if applicable).

  Aim to provide reviewers with the following information:

  - Output type
  - Nature of your contribution (if co-authored or co-produced)
  - Word count, type of publication and name of journal/publisher (for textual outputs)
  - Medium, research field, exhibition/dissemination plans (for practice-based outputs – see next section)
  - Details of any peer review process
  - Research questions

- If the RADAR entry for your output effectively demonstrates the nature and quality of the research, then you need only provide a concise summary in your ARP and the link to the item in RADAR (and that is the reviewers' strong preference). If this is not wholly apparent in RADAR, then you will need to provide a more detailed articulation of the research in Section 4 of your ARP.

**Practice-Based Research**

If you undertake and disseminate research through (or about, or in) creative practice, you need to be able to place it in context and explain how it contributes new insights and knowledge.

For the purposes of an ARP, creative practice in and of itself does not self-evidently equate to research – you have to be able to explain and demonstrate the research dimensions of your work and distinguish it from professional practice. While this can be challenging, it is a fundamental skill that you need to develop in order to build a successful research career.

The research itself may not take a linear or sequential form, and questions and findings may emerge though the act and process of creating work, but you should be able to articulate the research enquiry and outcomes, even if to some extent you must do so retrospectively. The research (more than the researcher/creative practitioner) needs to be to the fore in any explanation, so the narrative may differ from descriptions of you and your work used in other contexts, such as exhibition catalogues (please avoid copying and pasting directly from other sources, without modification, unless they articulate research).

Your research enquiry might not be fully reflected in one individual output (artwork, design, exhibition, written work etc.), but through a range of projects and outputs over time, with common (and evolving) themes and sets of questions running through them. If it would help, you can use one of the 'Best Completed Research Output' fields in section 4 to explain how the individual outputs that you've included in the ARP represent a collective body of research.

Don't assume that the end product or output necessarily represents the culmination of your research or the best representation of it either – your research enquiry could relate more closely to your methods and processes than the final artefact or exhibition, for instance. Also, think about whether the subject of your research is something other than your creative discipline, even if your methodology involves investigating the subject through that discipline. You could be an artist who researches community engagement through art practice, for example, or a designer who investigates patient experience in healthcare through design practice.

## Section 5: Research Projects

Please provide details of any research projects in which you are currently involved, and indicate your role. Please include relevant projects that are already being undertaken ('Live'), proposals that have been submitted ('Pending') or new projects and proposals that you are actively planning or preparing ('Development' – preferably at a more advanced stage than only the initial idea).

**Guidance notes:**

- In this section, we are interested in well-defined and articulated activities that address explicit research questions, are positioned in relation to relevant fields and employ an appropriate methodology. You should also have a plan for undertaking the research. Please explain these points in your description.
- Use the 'Status' drop-down menu to indicate if each project is underway ('Live'), awaiting a response to a grant application or equivalent decision ('Pending') or a new projects or proposal that you are actively planning or preparing, e.g. grant application being written ('Development').
- State your role and level of contribution, and the identity of the project lead (if it is not you).

- Provide details of any partners with whom you are collaborating.
- Where applicable, give details of any research funding awarded or applied for.
- Provide details of project timetables and indicate any work you intend to undertake during the forthcoming ARP period (summer 2024 to summer 2025).
- Please do not include details of completed projects in this section. The results of completed projects should be reflected in either your Completed Outputs or Planned Outputs sections.
- Do not include details of very early stage, speculative or aspirational project ideas in this section, as reviewers will be unable to assess these. Ideas for future research projects that you are not yet actively developing should be included in Section 10 instead.
- If your current or pending projects have been affected by Covid-19 since 2020, you can indicate that here.

## Section 6: Forthcoming Outputs

Please describe any planned research outputs that you will work on or complete during the forthcoming ARP period (mainly 2024-25). Please indicate if there is already a confirmed route to dissemination (e.g. paper accepted, publishing contract awarded, exhibition date and venue confirmed).

**Guidance notes:**

- In this section, you should emphasise outputs that you will be working on in the forthcoming ARP period, and also those that are completed and due to be published or to otherwise enter the public domain for the first time in 2024-25.
- See 'Describing Your Outputs' in Section 4 above: most of the same criteria apply to your forthcoming outputs.
- Indicate if there is already a confirmed route to dissemination -- e.g. paper accepted, target journals identified, publishing contract awarded, exhibition date and venue confirmed.
- State expected dates of completion/publication.
- Include details on peer review, output type and (for textual outputs) word count etc.

Consider what is realistically achievable. As with Section 4, Reviewers are more interested in quality than quantity for the sake of it.

## Section 7. Current PGR students

All HEIs have a responsibility to support and develop the next generation of researchers in their disciplines and fields. PhD supervision is an important and rewarding activity for all researchers, including ECRs and is a key aspect of researcher development. Please provide details of current supervised Doctoral, MPhil or MRes students and their current status (if applicable)

**Guidance notes:**

- Add details of any current PhD, MPhil or MRes supervision duties at GSA.
- If you are not currently involved in supervision, leave this section blank.

## Section 8: Research environment

Summarise your recent and planned contributions to the research environment at GSA and in other academic contexts.

**Guidance notes:**

- As in section 3, a concise list of relevant activities and achievements, with accompanying notes, is preferred.

In terms of **GSA's research environment**, please note if you have undertaken activities such as giving or organising talks, acting as a research mentor, participating in research committees, contributing to REF preparations, undertaking internal peer review and PhD supervision and examination etc.

In terms of the **external research environment**, please note if you have undertaken any activities such as the following, and indicate the year in which the work took place (or will do):

- Editorship of journals (please specify if referring to special editions)

- Peer review for journals, book publishers or conferences

- Conference chair or organising committee roles

- UKRI Research Council peer review college, or peer review for other national and international grant funding organisations

- Membership of subject associations or academic bodies (e.g. CHEAD, ELIA, Design History Society, Association of Art Historians etc.). Please specify any responsible positions held (e.g. committee membership)

- Responsible roles (e.g. trustee, Board member) with other organisations (e.g. cultural, charitable, civic, industry)

- Residencies or fellowships

- Invited keynotes, lectures or performances (as distinct from papers selected for conferences through peer review)

- Prizes or awards received (or other indicators of recognition and esteem)

- External examination of research students, or supervision of research students at other institutions.

- Visiting Professorships

- Other

## Section 9: Research impact achieved or planned

If applicable, please give details of any demonstrable examples of impact arising from your research, e.g. beneficial change to individuals, groups or organisations beyond academia.

**Guidance notes:**

Use this section to tell us about any notable impact or engagement activities that you have completed (and briefly note the outcomes), or are planning.

By **engagement**, we mean the appropriate dissemination of research to different audiences –

particularly non-academic groups – and any actions taken to help them understand and respond to the work (e.g. through media coverage, presentations at events, workshops, reports or guidance materials produced for industry or public bodies etc.)

By **impact**, we mean a resulting effect on, change or benefit to people who engaged with your research – what was the difference that your research made, and what evidence do we have for that beneficial change?

Research impact can be defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia**.** It includes (but is not limited to) an effect on, change or benefit to:

- The activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
- of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals
- in any geographic location (whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally).
- It may also include the reduction or prevention of harm, risk, cost or other negative effects.
- It does not primarily include impacts on research or academic knowledge within the higher education sector.

Please indicate where you hold records providing evidence of the impact (or could obtain evidence).

As in section 3, a concise list of completed and planned activities with accompanying notes will be acceptable.

## Section 10: Longer-term research plans

Please describe your longer-term research plans and aspirations for the period after summer 2025. Be as specific as possible, and indicate when you aim to complete your objectives.

**Guidance notes:**

This section is important to GSA and the reviewers, who are interested in your potential research trajectory, and the implications for GSA's research environment, culture and plans. Evidence that you are thinking seriously about your longer-term research plans may help to justify investment in your time to undertake research.

Include longer-term research plans and aspirations for the period after summer 2024. What are your ambitions for your future development as a researcher, over the subsequent three to five years? For example: research projects you hope to undertake and complete, grants you aim to apply for, publications you intend to write (and for whom), or artefacts you plan to produce (but which are at a more embryonic stage than those included in earlier sections). Also consider people or organisations you would like to collaborate with, forms of experience that you hope to gain or roles you aim to hold (e.g. peer reviewing, editorships).

If you wish, include a note on any development, mentoring or training needs.

Be as specific as possible, and indicate when you aim to complete your objectives.

For earlier career researchers, you might find it helpful to consider the Researcher Development Framework materials that are available via GSA's subscription to Vitae https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development . (You will need to register individually, using your GSA email address.)

Vitae's advice to researchers is to set goals that are:

- explicit, with a clear focus, expressed as succinctly as possible;

- inspiring and framed positively, to provide motivation;
- measurable, so that you can track progress;
- challenging, so that you can stretch yourself;
- and with a defined timetable for short-to-medium term objectives.

## Mitigating Circumstances

Use the mitigating circumstances form to inform GSA of recognisably disruptive or unexpected events beyond your control that have:

- Significantly impaired your ability to undertake research
- Significantly impaired your ability to complete your ARP form by the deadline (18th March 2024).

The ARP form is permanently available on GSA's Research Repository, RADAR, and can be drafted or completed at any time. You do not have to wait until the ARP process is launched to begin working on your ARP.

The ARP process is formally launched in November each academic year, with a submission date in March, providing a generous window of time to draft and submit ARPs, working around other commitments. For the academic year in 2024-25, the ARP process will launch on 15th November 2023, and the submission window will run until the deadline of Monday 18th March 2024, i.e. for a period of four months.

If you wish to apply for the opportunity to submit your ARP at a later date due to mitigating circumstances, please submit a mitigating circumstances form as soon as possible, and **no later than Monday 19th February 2024**, i.e. one month before the ARP submission deadline. Please be assured that the information you provide through this process is confidential.

The maximum extension that will be granted for late submission of an ARP due to mitigating circumstances is four weeks (although most extensions will be much shorter). The latest anyone can submit an ARP in 2024-25 is therefore Monday 15th April 2024. (Please note: For very exceptional circumstances, the mitigating circumstances submission deadline and the extension deadline may be extended beyond four weeks.)

Once submitted, exceptional circumstances are considered by the nominated HR staff member and there are three potential outcomes: 1) extension request is approved; 2) extension request is declined; or 3) further information is required before a decision can be reached.

If you are granted an extension, but you do not submit an ARP by your extension deadline, you will not be eligible to participate in the ARP process for research time in 2024-25, and you will not receive research time for that year. You will next be able to submit an ARP to request research time

when the process commences for 2025-26.

This is to ensure that:

- the ARP mitigating circumstances process (and the ARP process as a whole), is run consistently, fairly and equitably;
- the ARP peer review process is conducted efficiently, within a single academic year;
- and research time decisions can be issued to Heads of Schools and line managers timeously, to enable effective planning and resource allocation for the next academic year.

Acceptable reasons for submitting a mitigating circumstances form include:

- serious or incapacitating injury, illness or medical condition or emergency operation
- significant short-term mental ill-health
- a long-term or chronic physical health condition, which has recently worsened significantly
- a long term or chronic mental health condition, which has recently worsened significantly
- a significant family or personal crisis (e.g. bereavement or serious illness affecting someone close to you, such as a family member, partner or friend)
- Jury service or court attendance.

Staff should provide HR with relevant evidence to support their extension requests (e.g. GP, hospital, or therapist documentation for health matters).

Note that if you wish to report disruption to your ability to undertake research caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, please do so in Section 3 of the ARP form (see above), rather than submitting a mitigating circumstances form – unless you need to disclose sensitive personal information.

The mitigating circumstances form is available on the Research section of the staff intranet in the Annual Research Plans section:

https://gsofa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/ProfessionalSupport/Research/Pages/ARPs.aspx

The form should be sent to HR. HR will then recommend a course of action to the Research Department – such as a submission extension – without sharing any sensitive information. Further information about the mitigating circumstances process for Annual Research Plan submission is available via the FAQs in the Annual Research Plans section of the staff intranet.

## Appeals Process

An appeals process is available for staff who participate in the ARP process if they believe that they were not treated fairly and in accordance with processes set out in this ARP Guidance document.

Potential grounds for appeal include:

1) Suspected inappropriate application of the processes set out in this ARP Guidance document resulting in a disputed decision about a member of staff's award of research time.

2) Suspected unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or because the individual concerned is pregnant or has recently given birth.

The appeals process consists of an informal stage and a formal stage:

**Stage 1: Informal**

At Stage 1, we will attempt to resolve any relevant concerns through informal discussion. A member of staff may raise an informal appeal by completing the ARP Appeals Form and submitting it to HR. Any appeal should be made within 28 days of receiving formal notification of their ARP outcome. HR will liaise with the Head of Research (as appropriate), before an advisory meeting is arranged between the member of staff and Head of Research to review the case informally, within 21 days of receipt of the appeal. A work colleague or trade union representative may accompany the member of staff to the meeting. We will maintain a record of all such stage 1 appeal requests, and the Head of Research will provide the member of staff with a written summary of the outcome of the advisory meeting (within 7 days of the meeting date), and the right to respond. At that point, the member of staff may either withdraw the appeal (if it is agreed that the appeal should not be upheld) or progress to stage 2.

**Stage 2: Formal Appeal**

When an appeal request cannot be resolved through informal discussion, the formal appeals process comes into effect. The member of staff making the appeal should inform HR in writing that they wish to escalate their appeal to Stage 2, within 21 days of receiving the outcome of stage 1. The case will then be considered at a formal ARP Mitigating Circumstances Appeals Panel, which will be convened for that purpose. The Appeals Panel will meet under the oversight of Deputy Director Research and Innovation, and will comprise a senior representative from HR and a senior research academic who has not been involved in any prior stage of decision making, or review of the appeal. A work colleague or trade union representative may accompany the member of staff to the meeting. The panel will consider the appeal on the basis of whether due process, as set out in the ARP Guidance was followed correctly. Evidence will be sought from those responsible for the relevant stage of decision making. The Appeal Panel's role is to determine whether the appeal should either be upheld or dismissed. If the panel concludes that there are legitimate grounds for the appeal, then

the decision on the ARP outcome will be re-assessed by the Appeals Panel, which will then communicate the outcome to the staff member. All decisions of the Stage 2 Appeals Panel will be final.

## Activity Planning Tool

An Excel activity planning tool is available from the [Annual Research Plans section](#) of the Research and Enterprise pages on the staff intranet, to help you schedule your research and other duties with your line manager before the 2024-25 session begins. An updated version for 2024-25 will be uploaded by June 2024, to coincide with confirmation of the ARP outcomes.

## Further Guidance

Guidance on how to submit outputs to RADAR and complete your ARP on RADAR is available from the RADAR Help & Contact Information page at: http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/contact.html

For guidance on how to submit your ARP, please see *How to Complete Your Annual Research Plan in RADAR*, available at http://radar.gsa.ac.uk/4881/

These may be updated from time to time, so please check for additional information periodically.

*This document was last updated on 23rd November 2023*