



Leeds Beckett University

REF 2029

Code of Practice

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Contents

Part 1: Introduction	4
Purpose.....	5
Leeds Beckett University Equality and Diversity Context	6
Actions taken since REF2021.....	6
Part 2: Identifying Staff Contracts with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR).....	8
Policies and Procedures.....	8
Criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR).....	9
Decision-Making and Communication	9
Staff and Committees.....	12
Roles and Responsibilities.....	13
Training	14
Appeals	14
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).....	15
Part 3: Determining Research Independence.....	17
Policies and Procedures.....	17
Criteria and Evidence	17
Decision-Making and Communication	18
Staff, Committees, and Training	18
Appeals	18
Equality Impact Assessment.....	18
Part 4: Allocating Contracts to Units of Assessment	19
Policies and Procedures.....	19
Staff, Committees, and Training	19
Equality Impact Assessment.....	20
Part 5: Selecting outputs	21
Policies and Procedures.....	21
Staff, Committees, and Training	26
Equality Impact Assessment.....	27

Part 6: Appendices..... 28

Appendix A REF2029 Code of Practice Equality Impact Assessments 29

EIA – General Overview 29

EIA of the processes for determining significant responsibility for research and research independence 31

EIA of the processes for the allocation of contracts to UOAs 35

EIA of the processes for determining the selection of outputs 36

Overall EIA Recommendations and next steps 39

Quantitative data analysis for the ‘EIA of the processes for determining significant responsibility for research and research independence’ 40

Appendix B. Form: Identification of research independence 51

Appendix C. Appeal form..... 52

Appendix D. Committees and their Terms of Reference..... 53

Academic Board 53

Research and Enterprise Committee 56

REF 2029 Strategy Panel 58

REF 2029 Data Assurance Group..... 60

REF 2029 Research Impact Group 62

Unit of Assessment Panel..... 64

Appeals Panel..... 65

Part 1: Introduction

1. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the UK's system for assessing research in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). It is managed by Research England on behalf of the four UK HE Funding Bodies.
2. In line with Leeds Beckett University's (hereafter the "University") Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, and in compliance with the Funding Bodies' requirements for REF 2029, we have produced this Code of Practice (hereafter the "Code") to outline the processes for identifying contracts that contribute to the REF volume measures, how contracts are allocated to Units of Assessment, and the policy and processes for the selection of outputs.
3. The general framework for assessment in REF 2029 and guidance to UK HEIs on making submissions will be published in the Guidance on Submissions and the Panel Criteria and Working Methods in 2026. The REF 2029 [Code of Practice Guidance](#), published on 16 January 2025, 12 June 2025 and on the 10 December 2025 provided the specific requirements used to develop and consult on this Code. The REF2029 Equality Impact Assessment Guidance, published 12 June 2025, informed the completion of the Equality Impact Assessment of the Code. If further guidance is published following the approval of this Code, the University will consult and approve any required amendments through its academic governance structure detailed in this Code or otherwise directed by the Funding Bodies.

Purpose

4. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that University processes and procedures for REF 2029 actively support and advance equality and diversity in research. It also underpins the University's commitment to meeting its obligations under the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality duty.
5. All University policies and processes and individuals and bodies making decisions shall adhere to the principles of this Code ensuring robustness, transparency, and equity and inclusion. This will mean:
 - a) **Robustness:** The policies and processes described in the Code accurately identify contracts contributing to the volume measures and reliably reflect roles and responsibilities of colleagues. The processes for selecting outputs are clearly described and consistently applied. The assignment of contracts to Units of Assessment is based on clear criteria that are consistently applied.
 - b) **Transparency:**

We consulted on and documented all policies and processes described in the Code.

 - i. We clarified and documented the role of individuals and committees involved in the processes and decision-making.
 - ii. We used a range of communication and dissemination mechanisms and channels to develop the Code, publicised it following the decision by the Funding Bodies, and carried out associated activities. This included in the development phase: open meetings with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation (PVC R&I) in April, May and September 2025; discussions at the quarterly REF 2029 Strategy Panel, School and University Research & Enterprise committees; the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) committee, and relevant colleague networks; and the University and College Union (UCU) and Unison. The principles of the draft Code were shared with all colleagues via the Research & Enterprise newsletter and relevant Microsoft Teams sites. On approval, the Code will be published, in an accessible format, on the University's website on dedicated REF2029 webpages. We will ensure that colleagues absent from work are contacted and made aware of the Code, as appropriate.
 - c) **Equity and Inclusion:** The Code is in alignment with our values and purpose. It outlines how decisions on contracts contributing to volume measures, the assignment of contracts to Units of Assessment, and the selection of outputs are fair, impartial, and aligned with creating an inclusive environment that supports a diversity of research and researchers.

Leeds Beckett University Equality and Diversity Context

6. The University's purpose is to make a positive and decisive difference to people, organisations and communities through excellent education, research, and service. Our values of [Ambition, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Teamwork, Pragmatism and Purposefulness](#) underpin all that we do.
7. The Research and Enterprise Committee, chaired by the PVC R&I provides strategic oversight of the University's research activity. It brings together colleagues from the eight academic schools, professional services, and postgraduate research students to shape and govern the work of the University in research, including strategy, people, culture and environment, and responsible research assessment. The University's EDI committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, convenes colleagues and students to hold the University to account for progress against its equality objectives. Its work is supported by operational groups, including the Chartermark group, and the staff networks.
8. The [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework](#) outlines the University's approach to delivering tangible and sustained change to create a fair, inclusive and equitable service and workplace. The Code supports this Framework and is aligned with our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) by developing transparent, robust and inclusive processes and procedures for identifying contracts with significant responsibility for research, independent researchers, assignment of contracts to Units of Assessment, and the selection of outputs. The Code also identifies where responsibilities for decision-making lie in relation to the University's governance mechanisms, and how individuals and committees are supported in discharging their responsibilities.

Actions taken since REF2021

9. Our Equality Impact Assessment for REF 2021 compared the characteristics of staff with significant responsibility for research with the University's total academic population. The key findings were:
 - a) Women were less likely than men to have significant responsibility for research.
 - b) There was a lower proportion of independent researchers in the 55 to 64 age group.
 - c) On an aggregated basis, part-time colleagues were under-represented compared with full-time colleagues in all but one Unit of Assessment.
 - d) A greater proportion of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic academic staff were research independent, compared with White academic staff.
10. We recognise that the gender disparity required action, so we made this a focus of our [Athena SWAN action plan](#).
11. In addition to targeted actions on gender, we continue to take a holistic approach to advancing equality and diversity in research and among researchers. Our focus includes a) strengthening the career pipeline for colleagues, including those transitioning into or out of HE, b) fostering an inclusive and supportive research culture and c) identifying and removing barriers to research for colleagues with protected characteristics, including intersectional dimensions.

12. Key actions included:

- a) From 2023 onwards, the University Executive Team members have each committed to leading their own EDI objectives to achieve meaningful change, and these are published on the University website.
- b) We developed and agreed a set of measurable institutional equality objectives to demonstrate how we are tackling discrimination, advancing equality, and fostering an inclusive research culture and environment.
- c) We use the Culture, Employment and Development of Academic Researchers (CEDARS) survey, the Postgraduate Research Experience (PRES) survey, and a Research Culture survey to identify challenges for an inclusive research community, develop action plans and evaluate progress.
- d) The Leeds Beckett Equity and Inclusion Research Fund and Programme proactively supports research projects that will have positive EDI benefits, for example through supporting promotion opportunities for colleagues from groups currently underrepresented at senior academic levels, enabling individuals to gain research momentum following a career break, or undertaking research activity that will benefit underserved or marginalised individuals or communities.
- e) From 2024, we agreed, communicated and embedded a set of EDI principles into all internal research and knowledge exchange funding.
- f) We reviewed and updated research-related policies and procedures, including a Code of Good Research Practice, and a public statement on the responsible use of research indicators.
- g) We reviewed and revised the University's promotion criteria to explicitly consider contributions to knowledge and understanding, the development of others, contributions to the wider discipline including open research, and contributions to society along three promotion paths: 1) Research, 2) Learning and Teaching and 3) Knowledge Exchange. By 2024, 50% of our professoriate were women, and 20% of professors identified as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic.
- h) The University became a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and a member of the UK Reproducibility Network, including participation in the Recognising and Rewarding Open Research (OR4) project.
- i) We are reviewing support for part-time and fixed-term contract researchers, including equitable access to mentoring, development opportunities and research-enabling resources, as well as improving communications and visibility of support.

13. The University's progress with how we develop research and researchers, support an inclusive research environment, and assess, recognise and reward a diversity of contributions fairly, contributed to the development of this Code.

Part 2: Identifying Staff Contracts with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)

14. The University's 'teaching and research' contracts (ACEMPFUN 3) in the HESA Staff record do not precisely identify all contracts with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR). This part describes the process and procedures for identifying SRR, created in line with the [REF 2029 Code of Practice guidance](#).
15. The University recognises that, during a career, the contribution of colleagues to the University's purpose is varied and can change. The University values the diversity of contributions to teaching, research, and knowledge exchange, which is also reflected in the dedicated promotion pathways for colleagues via Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Learning and Teaching. There is no expectation that everyone will make a significant contribution to all three areas, and the processes for identifying SRR reflect this.

Policies and Procedures

16. 'Teaching and research' contracted staff at the University with SRR are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and this is an expectation of the job role.
17. 'Teaching and research' contracted staff who are identified as SRR will be allocated an appropriate research allowance within their Work Allocation Model (WAM), normally at least 20% of their total deployment. This will be consistently applied across the institution and is in addition to the 150 hours of Research and Scholarly Activity (RSA) time that all teaching and research contracts are allocated within their workload.
18. All staff on 'teaching and research' contracts who are identified as having SRR will be included in the REF 2029 volume measure as their contract type qualifies for inclusion in the calculation.

Criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)

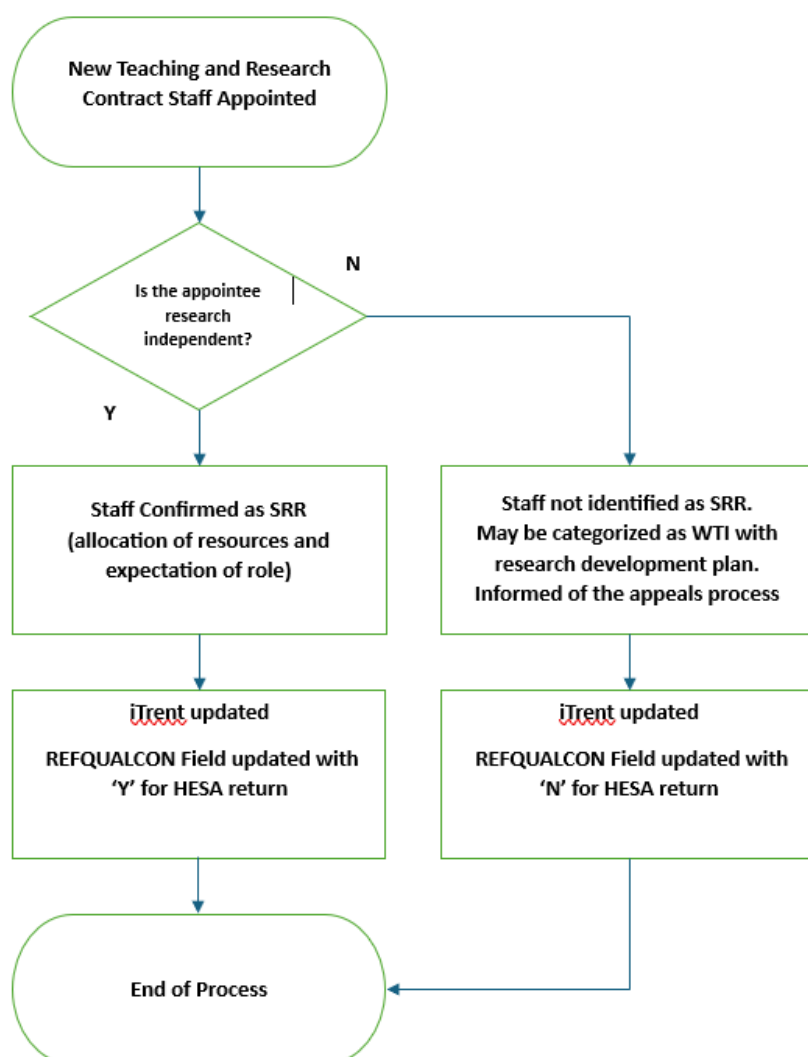
19. The identification for SRR is based on research independence, using the definition of an independent researcher derived from the [REF 2029 Guidance](#). Independent researchers are those who can evidence **at least one** of the following criteria:
 - a) Act as lead applicant on externally funded research projects.
 - b) Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship requiring research independence ([Research Fellowships demonstrating research independence for REF 2029 volume measure](#))
 - c) Lead a research group or a substantial/specialised work package.
 - d) For REF Units of Assessment 13-34 this may also include:
 - i. being named as a co-applicant on an externally funded research grant/award.
 - ii. having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.
20. 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.

Decision-Making and Communication

21. 'Teaching and research' contracted staff who have been identified as SRR by the end of July 2025, following confirmation of independence by the Unit of Assessment (UOA) Panels, will be allocated a minimum of 20% research time in their workload, will have explicit research objectives, and will be included in the REF 2029 volume measure as their contract type qualifies for inclusion in the calculation.
22. For **new** 'teaching and research' contracted staff employed from HESA year 2025-26 onwards, research independence will be verified on appointment (at contracting stage) by the relevant Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange (DoR&KE). If identified as SRR, they will be allocated a minimum of 20% research time, will have explicit research objectives, and will be included in the REF 2029 volume measure at the point of appointment as their contract type qualifies for inclusion in the calculation. The process for new 'teaching and research' contracted staff is set out in Figure 1.

23. 'Teaching and research' contracted staff who do not meet the criteria for SRR, as they are not actively engaged in independent research, may be identified as working towards independence (WTI). Their contract will not be eligible for inclusion in the REF volume measure calculation.
 - a) The member of staff identified as WTI will develop a Research Development Plan (RDP) with actions to support their development towards research independence, within no more than two years after completing a PhD degree or equivalent. To achieve this, the member of staff will be allocated research time within their workload, but this will be less than 20% FTE.
 - b) At the end of the two years, the member of staff will have the opportunity to evidence their research independence status using the criteria set in paragraph 19 and using the pro-forma in Part 6, Appendix B. If identified as SRR, the process described in paragraph 21 will be enacted.
24. There is no expectation that all 'teaching and research' contracted staff members will choose to make a case for SRR. In that case, they will be identified as not having significant responsibility for research and their contract will not be eligible for inclusion in the REF volume measure calculation.
25. All 'teaching and research' contracted staff will be contacted annually by the relevant DoR&KE to confirm their SRR status.
26. All 'teaching and research' contracted staff will be informed by the relevant DoR&KE on the appeal process (paragraphs 37-45).

Figure 1: Process for confirming SRR for new ‘teaching & research’ contracted staff.

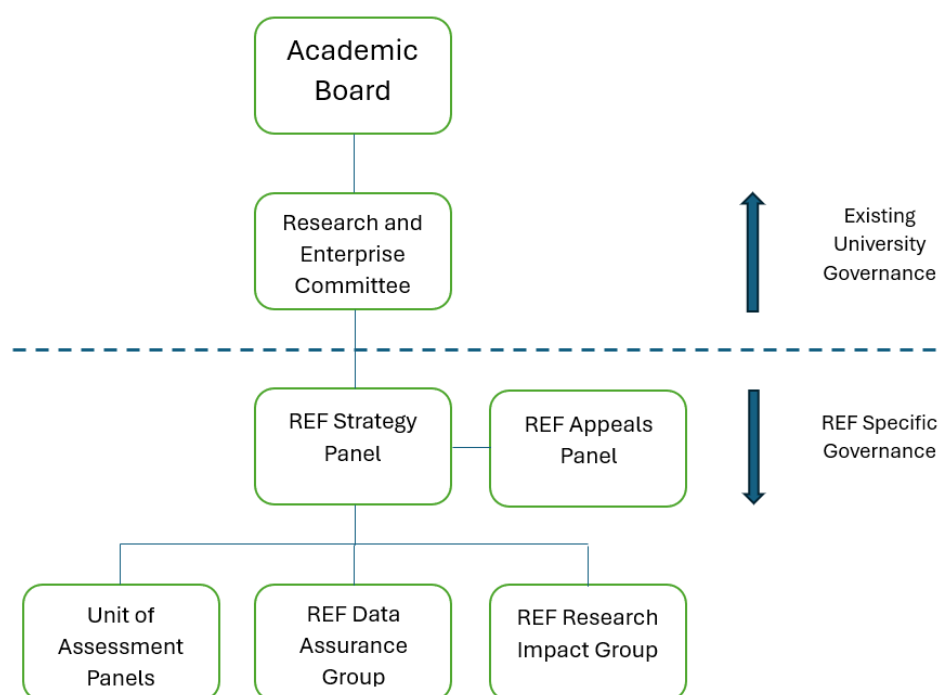


27. In circumstances when ‘teaching and research’ contracted staff with SRR change their role, for example by taking on a substantive management role, they will have the option to suspend their SRR status. Although they remain research independent, research will no longer be a primary expectation of their job role. The UOA Panels will annually by July receive and approve requests to suspend SRR, and their REFQUALCON field updated accordingly to ‘N’ for the period that their role has changed.
28. All contracts will be assigned to a REF UOA. The process is described in Part 4 of this Code.

Staff and Committees

29. The REF governance structure, shown in Figure 2, shows where accountability lies for adherence to the Code's principles of robustness, transparency, equality and inclusion. It provides a clear and auditable decision-making structure covering REF 2029 preparations and submission. The details of these committees, including terms of reference and membership, are included in Part 6, Appendix D.
30. The University's Academic Board and the Research and Enterprise Committee are an integral part of the University governance structure and have the oversight of the REF 2029 process.

Figure 2: Panel and Committee Structure Responsible for REF 2029 Governance at the University



Roles and Responsibilities

31. REF 2029 Strategy Panel (Decision-making) is a formal subcommittee of the Research and Enterprise Committee. It oversees the REF submission prior to approval by the University's Academic Board. The REF 2029 Strategy Panel makes decisions on the development and implementation of processes and policy in relation to REF, and ensures processes are consistently implemented. It has the following three supporting groups that make recommendations or decisions on different aspects of the REF Process:
 - a) Unit of Assessment (UOA) Panel (Decision-making): Each UOA has a Panel which is responsible for verifying research independence to identify volume-contributing contracts, assigning contracts to UOAs, and reviewing, selecting and assigning outputs to UOAs. The UOA Panels consistently and transparently apply the criteria set out in this Code, and then report to the REF Strategy Panel and the School's Research & Knowledge Exchange Sub-Committee.
 - b) REF 2029 Data Assurance Group (Advisory): Adhering to the processes described in the Code, the REF Data Assurance Group has responsibility for collating and maintaining REF-relevant data, working with departments including Human Resources, Finance, and Strategic Insight and Business Analysis (SIBA) to verify REF-relevant data. It provides recommendations to the REF 2029 Strategy Panel on improving the quality of the data that will contribute to the University's REF 2029 submission.
 - c) REF 2029 Research Impact Group (Advisory): Responsible for advising and informing the REF 2029 Strategy Panel and the REF Data Assurance Group on the progress of the development of REF Impact Case Studies, engagement that supports the generation of impact, along with providing recommendations concerning their development for the University's REF 2029 submission.
 - d) REF 2029 Appeals Panel (Decision-making): Responsible for decisions on appeals arising from the process for determining research independence for teaching and research contracts and research-only contracts.
32. The following individuals have formal roles and responsibilities in relation to REF:
 - a) Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange Services: Responsible for REF data assurance and oversight of the technical aspects of the University's REF 2029 submission. Manages the University's appeals process.
 - b) Research Excellence Manager: Responsible for managing the technical and administrative aspects of the University's REF 2029 submission.
 - c) Research Impact & Policy Engagement Manager: Responsible for leading and co-ordinating research impact and engagement activity.
 - d) Directors of Research and Knowledge Exchange (DoR&KE): Responsible for the overall strategy and implementation of all REF-related processes within Schools. They are also leading submissions as UOA Coordinators, collating the relevant academic content and writing individual unit submissions.
 - e) The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation (PVC R&I): Responsible for managing the institutional preparations for, and submission to the REF.

- f) The Vice-Chancellor: Has formal institutional responsibility for the REF submission.

Training

33. All Leeds Beckett University staff involved in REF-related committees, panels and groups are required to attend a bespoke REF training session on the University's REF 2029 Code of Practice, including REF guidance, responsible research assessment, and equality, diversity and inclusion in research. The training will be organised by the Research and Enterprise Service and delivered by colleagues with specialist experience of REF, research assessment and EDI. The REF training will take place after the approval of the Code by the Funding Bodies, and before June 2026, to align with key dates in the REF2029 timeline. All newly appointed members of REF decision-making groups will receive relevant training as part of their induction and ongoing development.
34. In addition, all Leeds Beckett staff complete the essential University online training packages on Equality and Diversity, and Equitable Decision Making every three years.
35. Once approved by the Funding Bodies, the Code and associated training materials will be available to all colleagues via dedicated REF 2029 webpages. There will also be regular updates via internal communication channels such as bulletins, blogs and REF 2029 information sessions.
36. Any changes in the current legislative context and best practice in EDI will be updated in the training and communications supporting the REF 2029 submission development.

Appeals

37. We have put in place fair, appropriate and timely procedures to inform staff who are not considered to have SRR, and the reason behind the decision, in accordance with the established criteria (paragraph 19). Our appeals procedure:
 - a) allows members of staff to appeal before a final decision is made.
 - b) ensures that the individuals who handle appeals receive appropriate training.
38. The University is committed to developing and maintaining positive and transparent employee relations which enables staff to raise matters relating to their employment, with the understanding that every effort will be made to seek a speedy and effective resolution. It is therefore expected that every effort is made to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity and at the most local level possible, in order to remedy causes of concern and promote productive working relationships.
39. Any appeals against the decision of the UOA Panel/DoR&KE related to SRR will be considered as follows:

Procedures: Informal Resolution

40. Staff who disagree with a decision arising from the identifying SRR process should discuss their concern as soon as possible with their own line manager in the first instance, or with the relevant DoR&KE, to resolve matters informally.
41. Where resolution at the informal stage has been unsuccessful, or circumstances make this route inappropriate, the matter should be raised formally.

Procedures - Formal Stage Appeals to SRR decision

42. The grounds for appeal are limited to the following:
 - a) The individual can evidence that the criteria have not been appropriately applied.
 - b) The University has not adhered to the procedures detailed in this Code.
 - c) There is new evidence that was not considered when the original decision was taken.
43. The appeal must be made in writing, using the Appeals form shown in Part 6, Appendix C, and sent electronically to the designated email (ref2029appeals@leedsbeckett.ac.uk).
44. In the interest of fairness and transparency, the Appeals Panel will be constituted of three members of the REF 2029 Strategy Panel not previously involved in the SRR decision and chaired by the Director of Research and KE Services. Research and Enterprise Services will support the administration of the appeals process.
45. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the staff member and the relevant DoR&KE within 20 working days following the receipt of the appeal and any required additional information. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final with no further right of appeal within the process.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

46. Under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, the University has a responsibility to give due regard to the impact of applying proposed new or revised policies or practice. In alignment with [REF 2029 EIA guidance](#), we conduct EIAs on the policy and procedures used to identify contracts with SRR, determining research independence for research-only contracts, assigning contracts to UOAs and for selecting outputs for the REF 2029.
47. EIAs are iterative and intended to be living, working documents. Where the assessment identifies a disproportionate impact on particular groups, we seek to mitigate this through adjustments to our policies or processes.
48. EIAs will be conducted at key stages of the REF 2029 submission to ensure fairness and transparency across core processes.
49. The process for determining RI, including identification of staff with SRR and allocation of research-only contracts to Units of Assessment (UOAs) was reviewed in August 2025. The EIA will be updated in August 2026 to incorporate analysis of 2025/26 data.
50. The output selection process underwent an EIA review in August 2025. Further updates are scheduled for August 2026 and August 2028 as the output pool is finalised.
51. The final pool of contracts contributing to the volume measure for 2025-26 and 2026-27, including UOA assignment, will be assessed through an EIA in August 2027.
52. These points are indicative and may be subject to change dependent on outcomes from the EIA process, and updated guidance from the Funding Bodies.

53. EIAs are completed with oversight from the University's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team to ensure a consistent approach. Where changes are made to address equality considerations, the rationale and details will be documented in the narrative sections of the EIA.
54. The EIA conducted in July/August 2025 covers the entire Code and is included in Part 6, Appendix A.
55. The EIA informed the policy and processes for the identification of SRR in the following ways:
 - a) Research independence was used by the University as the criterion for identifying SRR in REF 2021. Whilst women were under-represented in the submission in 2021, the percentage of women with SRR has since risen to 44% and we expect this to increase further in REF 2029, supported by the revised criteria for research independence.
 - b) The University mirrors the REF criteria for research independence. The change in the independence criteria from 'Principal Investigator' and 'Co-investigator' (for sub-panels 13-34) to 'Lead applicant' and 'Co-applicant' will reduce risks of biases that may have arisen due to grant awarding patterns by research funders.
 - c) The disclosure rates on protected characteristics of religion/belief and sexual orientation remain too low to support a meaningful quantitative assessment. We are taking action to better understand the reasons for low disclosure and to identify ways to improve confidence and reporting.
 - d) Colleagues working part-time and/or on fixed-term contracts may find it harder to demonstrate research independence. However, the pattern is not uniform for all colleagues on such contracts, and part-time colleagues are mainly located in three schools. We are working with these schools to understand if there are discipline-specific reasons and how these can be mitigated. This supplements the actions underway to support colleagues on part-time and/or fixed-term contracts.

Part 3: Determining Research Independence

56. The University's 'research only' contracts (ACEMPFUN 2) in the HESA Staff record do not precisely identify members of staff that are research independent. The following process and procedures for identifying research independence have been created in line with the [REF 2029 Guidance](#).

Policies and Procedures

57. A 'research only' contract is considered to demonstrate research independence if the staff member undertakes self-directed research, rather than primarily carrying out another individual's research programme, and can provide evidence to meet the criteria set out in paragraph 61.
58. 'Research only' contracted staff at the University below grade 6 are not independent as they are research assistants (or postdoctoral research assistants, research associates or assistant researchers) and are employed to carry out another individual's research programme.
59. 'Research only' contracted staff at grade 6 and above that were identified as research independent in HESA returns up to and including 2024-25 will be included in the REF 2029 volume measure as their contract type qualifies for inclusion in the calculation.
60. 'Research only' contracted staff at grade 6 and above that were not previously identified as research-independent, and new appointees, will follow the process for determining research independence described in paragraphs 57-59.

Criteria and Evidence

61. Independent researchers are those who can evidence **at least one** of the following criteria:
- a) Act as lead applicant on externally funded research projects.
 - b) Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship requiring research independence ([Research Fellowships demonstrating research independence for REF 2029 volume measure](#))
 - c) Lead a research group or a substantial/specialised work package.
 - d) Where research independence is an inherent expectation of a contract.
 - e) For UOAs 13-34 this may also include:
 - i. being named as a co-applicant on an externally funded research grant/award.
 - ii. having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.
62. 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.

Decision-Making and Communication

63. 'Research only' contracted staff at grade 6 or above will be invited annually and by July to complete the form in Appendix B and submit to the School's UOA Panel. The Panel will verify research independence if there is evidence of at least one of the criteria set out in paragraph 61. They will then be included in the REF 2029 volume measure from the point at which the independence criterion was met. For example, a Research Fellow who provides evidence of independence by leading a research group will be included in the volume measure from the time at which the leadership role started.
64. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as a change in contract where research ceases to be an expectation of the role, will a member of staff have their research independence status removed. This is in line with the [REF 2029 Guidance](#), which sets out that research independence should be considered persistent and only in exceptional cases should independence be removed.
65. For new 'research only' contracted staff, research independence will be assessed at the point of appointment (at contracting stage) based on the criteria outlined in paragraph 61. If confirmed as research independent, they will be included in the REF 2029 volume measure from their start date.
66. All research-only contracts will be assigned to a UOA. The process is described in Part 4 of the Code.

Staff, Committees, and Training

67. To support the principles of the Code – robustness, transparency, and equity and inclusion - the same committees and named staff involved in decisions on SRR described in Part 2 will also make decisions on Research Independence for research-only contracts. Paragraphs 29 to 36 detail the committees, staff and the training required of those involved in decision-making.

Appeals

68. This section is the same as in Part 2, please refer to the earlier text (paragraphs 37 to 45).

Equality Impact Assessment

69. The process of conducting the University's EIA for REF2029 is described in paragraphs 46-55 of this Code. The initial EIA is provided in Appendix A.
70. The University combined the equality impact assessment of the processes for determining research independence for research-only contracts and SRR for teaching and research contracts as the same criteria and procedures were used. The findings and actions in paragraph 55 apply here.

Part 4: Allocating Contracts to Units of Assessment

Policies and Procedures

71. All eligible contracts will be assigned to a UOA. The allocation process is designed to be transparent, consistent, and auditable, ensuring alignment with REF2029 guidance and the University's EDI Policy.
72. The eight academic schools of the University form the primary academic environment for research and teaching. Each School has a Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, who leads research and manages the allocation of resources to support subject-specific research in that School and interdisciplinary research within and between schools. The allocation of eligible contracts to UOAs will be based at School level.
73. Each School has a mix of academic subject areas (HESA subject codes) and research centres, neither of which consistently map to the REF Unit of Assessment descriptors. Following a review of eligible contracts by Directors of Research in 2024 and 2025, the University agreed three approaches:
 - a) Direct alignment to one UOA: Where a School's research wholly aligns with a UOA descriptor, all eligible contracts in that School will be assigned to that UOA.
 - b) Best-fit allocation to one UOA: Where a School's research aligns with more than one UOA descriptor, eligible contracts will be allocated to the UOA that best reflects the primary area of research activity in the School.
 - c) Multiple UOAs: In Schools where research fits into several distinct UOAs without the possibility of alignment to one UOA, eligible contracts will be allocated the UOAs aligned with the research.
74. A small number of eligible senior academic contracts are in departments outside academic schools. These eligible contracts will be allocated to a UOA based on their past or current research.
75. The University will make submissions to UOAs where contracts contribute to volume measures. The exception may be requests for exemptions from submission for small units, following the publication of guidance on small unit exemptions by the Funding Bodies in 2026.

Staff, Committees, and Training

76. This section is the same as in Part 2; please refer to the earlier text (paragraphs 29 to 36).

Equality Impact Assessment

77. The process of conducting the University's EIA for REF2029 is described in paragraphs 46-55 of this Code, with the initial EIA conducted in August 2025 and provided in Part 6, Appendix A.
78. The EIA informed the policy and processes for the allocation of contracts to UOA in the following ways:
 - a) Decisions on allocating contracts to UOAs are based on objective alignment with UOA descriptors via a fair and clearly documented process.
 - b) Unconscious bias training for decision-makers, supported by resources provided by the EDI team, ensures inclusive decision making.
 - c) Staff were consulted on and informed of the process and outcomes related to UOA allocation.

Part 5: Selecting outputs

Policies and Procedures

79. The University has developed and implemented policies that reinforce the key role of peer review and expert judgement while promoting an inclusive and transparent approach to research assessment. These include:
 - a) Adoption of the principles set out by [LBU's Code of Good Research Practice](#) which emphasises the importance of ethical conduct and integrity in all research and research-related activities.
 - b) The [LBU Promotions Policy](#), revised in 2024, which recognises a wide range of diverse contributions and uses peer review as the primary mechanism for assessment.
 - c) Commitment to the responsible use of research indicators as outlined in the [University's Statement on the Responsible Use of Research Indicators](#). This draws on sector-wide recommendations, including [DORA](#) (The Declaration on Research Assessment) that the University is a signatory to; [CoARA](#) (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment); the [Metric Tide Report \(2015\) Circular \(ukri.org\)](#) and its 2022 update *Harnessing the Metric Tide: Indicators, infrastructures & priorities for UK responsible research assessment*; the principles of the [Leiden Manifesto](#) for research indicators; and the UK Forum for Responsible Research Indicators.
80. The University's REF 2029 submission constitutes the collective research endeavour by our University community for the period starting 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2028. It does not serve as any form of assessment of performance at the level of individual colleagues. The University recognises and makes adjustments for factors that influence a colleague's ability to research productively, mindful of disciplinary differences in the types and frequency of outputs.
81. The procedures for selecting research outputs adhere to the [REF2029 Code of Practice and Contributions to Knowledge and Understanding \(CKU\) Guidance](#). These procedures prioritise the selection of the highest quality outputs while ensuring the representativeness of research, researchers and output diversity within submitting UOAs as defined by disciplinary norms. A set of Guiding Principles (paragraphs 83-91) has been developed to support this balanced approach, reflecting unit strategies, diverse output types, and interdisciplinary collaborations.
82. The output selection procedure comprises two stages. First, outputs are verified against the eligibility criteria, including substantive connection. Second, from the pool of eligible outputs, a selection process determines the outputs to be submitted, along with reserve output(s) where relevant.

Guiding Principles for Output Selection

83. The REF2029 Guidance for Contributions to Knowledge and Understanding (CKU) removes the requirement that a minimum of one output is associated with a single substantive link within a submission at UOA level. The Guidance sets out that (normally) no more than 5 outputs should be associated with a single substantive link within a submission at UOA level. If the maximum of 5 outputs associated with a single substantive link were to be exceeded, the submitting UOA will explain the rationale within its statement of representation.
84. Outputs from staff whose contracts ended due to compulsory redundancy will not be submitted.
85. Sole-authored outputs where the substantive link is via a contract without SRR will not normally be included in the REF 2029 submission, as research is not an expected component of their role. An exception applies to colleagues who are working towards independence as the University has allocated dedicated resources to support the development of colleagues at the early start of research careers (see paragraph 23).
86. In exceptional circumstances, institutions can request to reduce the number of outputs to be submitted to a UOA, known as unit-level reductions. At the time of writing this Code, the University has not encountered applicable circumstances and will only request a unit-level reduction in the event of *force majeure*.
87. Output assessment by peer review is a routine part of our University's processes such as promotion and previous REF exercises. Peer review is supported by training and development, delivered by former REF panel members and the DoR&KEs who bring substantial experience of research assessment in their disciplines. While external experts may be engaged, their involvement is not a requirement. Peer review will be the mechanism by which outputs are assessed for REF 2029 selection purposes, against the REF criteria for originality, rigour and significance.
88. If outputs are in languages other than English, including Welsh, Gaelic, Scots, Irish, Ulster-Scots, British Sign language, and Irish Sign Language, and there is an insufficient number of internal peer reviewers, the University may use appropriate external peer reviewers.
89. The [University's Statement on the Responsible Use of Research Indicators](#) recognises that the relevance and appropriateness of research indicators vary across disciplines and output types, and that their use is both complex and contentious. The University permits, but never requires, the use of research indicators in support of claims for the quality of research outputs. Where Panel Criteria and Working Methods specify the use of research indicators in support of assessments of significance of outputs, the University's UOA Panels may mirror that guidance - as long it complies with the principles of the updated *Harnessing the Metric Tide* (2022) report.
90. The University will use its Current Research Information System, Symplectic Elements, to conduct and document the REF 2029 output selection process fairly and transparently.
91. All forms of research outputs will be assessed on a fair and equitable basis. Since 2022-23, the University has reported annually on the diversity of research outputs through its Annual Research Report. This reporting provides a benchmark to support the representativeness of the final REF2029 submission.

Verification of Eligibility of Outputs

92. For an output to be eligible for submission it must:
 - a) Be the product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.
 - b) Have first been brought into the public domain during the publication period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2028 or, if a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period.
 - c) For journal articles and conference papers with an ISSN, meet the requirements of the REF 2029 Open Access policy.
 - d) Have a substantive link to the HEI making the submission.
93. The University will evidence a substantive link through an eligible employment relationship with an author (or equivalent) who has made a significant research contribution to the output, at the point at which the submitted output was first made publicly available. Outputs where the eligible employment relationship occurred before the output was first made available will also be eligible, as long as they fall within the time-limited periods stipulated in section 6.5 of the CKU Guidance, and the employment relationship was not ended through compulsory redundancy (see paragraph 84). These eligible employment relationships will be verified through the inclusion of a HESA Staff Identifier for each submitted output.
94. In exceptional circumstances, long-form or extended process outputs that were published prior to the eligible employment relationship may be eligible, providing the employment relationship commenced within 5 years of the output being first available and other output eligibility criteria are met. UOA Panels will verify eligibility of such outputs against section 6.10 of the CKU Guidance, and the REF 2029 Strategy Panel will approve such exceptional cases for inclusion in the eligible output pool.
95. Outputs where the substantive link is via an author who subsequently retired, left the University after the expiry of a fixed term contract, or left through voluntary severance/redundancy, will be eligible for submission. This is in line with the REF2029 guidance and the principle of outputs being substantively linked to the HEI through its support for the underpinning research.
96. Outputs sole-authored by, or where the only substantive link to the institutions is through the following groups, will not be considered eligible for submission:
 - a) postgraduate research students (including PhD theses).
 - b) visiting or honorary staff.
 - c) staff on teaching-only contracts (that is, those returned to the HESA Staff record as ACEMPFUN.01).
 - d) individuals employed on academic or other contracts with no explicit expectation of research within the job role; technical, teaching or support-only contracts.

97. As an exception to paragraph 96, sole-authored outputs will be eligible where the substantive connection is by staff on an emeritus contract and where the University has provided allocated time and funding specifically for that research. The University will evidence such substantive connections through verifiable written agreements, and seek clearance from the REF Director prior to submission.
98. From 1 August 2025 and annually by the end of July, UOA Panels will verify output eligibility based on the criteria in paragraphs 92-97 for all outputs that were made publicly available in that academic year. Outputs produced between 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2025 will be assessed for eligibility at one or more extraordinary UOA Panel meeting(s) to be convened following approval of this Code by the Funding Bodies. Outputs meeting the eligibility criteria will be flagged as 'REF2029 eligible' in the University's Symplectic Elements system.

Output selection process

99. The REF 2029 guidance for [Contributions to Knowledge and Understanding \(CKU\)](#) sets out that the number of outputs required in a submission is determined by multiplying the volume measure across HESA years 2025-26 and 2026-27 by 2.5 at UOA level. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for submission. We will establish an indicative output number for each UOA in June/July 2026 based on the REFQUALCON data in the 2025-26 HESA staff return. A final output number per UOA will be established by December 2027 using the REF Volume Measure Guidance and the 2025-26 and 2026-27 HESA staff returns.
100. Within the parameters for output eligibility, the primary criterion in the selection of outputs shall be quality, as defined by the REF criteria of originality, rigour and significance (see Table 1).

Table 1 Outputs: Criteria and definitions of starred levels (Source: REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions, p.84)

Four star	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, rigour and significance
Three star	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence
Two star	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour
One star	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour
Unclassified	Quality which falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research

101. For the purpose of internal peer review and assessment and to aid selection decisions, the University uses a finer grained 13-point scale ranging from 0 to 4+ (0, -1, 1, 1+, -2, 2, 2+ etc.).
102. An initial review of output samples was undertaken by UOA Panels in July 2024, as part of a REF preparation exercise to calibrate output scoring and provide feedback. Following the approval of the Code, there shall be two output review and selection periods: in July 2026 and July 2028. The July 2028 output review point will identify whether there are eligible outputs 'in progress' that could be included prior to the REF2029 submission date.
103. The process will be overseen by the UOA Panel for each UOA, which will ensure that the review and selection process is sensitive to disciplinary norms and to provide further assurance that the final submission is representative of the research within the UOA (see also paragraphs 79-82).
104. Each colleague with SRR and independent researchers on research-only contracts shall normally nominate between one and five outputs for peer review. Exceptions may apply where equality-related circumstances have impacted the colleague's ability to undertake research productively **AND/OR** the output eligibility requirements cannot be met (e.g. newly appointed colleagues). Colleagues are not permitted to review their own outputs.
105. Colleagues that are Working Towards Independence (WTI) will be invited, but not required, to nominate an output.
106. The UOA Panels will also select additional outputs for peer review from the total pool of eligible outputs to ensure that all potentially strong outputs have been identified and considered. This includes the outputs of former staff, subject to the conditions described in paragraphs 92 to 98.
107. Each output will be reviewed by a minimum of two academic staff, who, wherever possible, have the appropriate subject, methodological and/or output-type expertise. In the case of inter-disciplinary outputs, UOA Panels should draw on the expertise from other University UOA Panels to appropriately assess such outputs. For any eligible outputs in languages other than English, the provisions under paragraph 88 will apply.
108. Each output shall be given a single agreed score. Where the scores of the reviewers differ, an agreed score shall be determined through discussion with the UOA Coordinator.
109. Where a UOA has more outputs than required to meet the volume measure, the highest scoring outputs will be selected, following the distribution of outputs described in paragraphs 103 to 108. Where outputs have the same quality score, prioritisation will be given to those that lead to the greater diversity of the UOA submission (by subject, output type and/or researchers).
110. At the conclusion of each output review stage, authors will be informed of the indicative selection decision and provided with feedback. Feedback must be brief and constructive in tone. It is recognised that the output selection process will continue until the REF submission deadline, and the final selection will not be confirmed until that point.

111. A reserve output pool will be identified for the following contingencies:
 - a) For outputs due to be published between the July 2028 output review date and the end of the publication period.
 - b) For outputs with a delayed publication date a reserve output will be associated with the specific output which is pending publication. As per REF guidance, if the submitted output pending publication is not made publicly available on or before the 31 December 2028, the REF UOA Panel will assess the associated reserve output.
 - c) For double-weighted outputs.
112. Outputs will normally be assigned to the UOA associated with the author's contract of employment, based on the University's approach to assigning contracts to UOAs as articulated in paragraphs 71-75. In the exceptional cases where outputs are not fully covered by the UOA descriptor, the cross-referral flag will be used. Where an interdisciplinary output fits more than one UOA descriptor, the output will be aligned with the best fit UOA **OR** submitted to two or more UOAs if its inclusion is essential towards demonstrating diversity of subjects and research practices of the UOAs.
113. Following each review period, the REF 2029 Strategy Panel will evaluate the process used by each UOA to review and select the outputs and assign outputs to UOAs. Endorsement of the selection will be granted where the Panel is satisfied that this Code has been adhered to, that the process has been rigorous, fair and transparent, and that the outcome is the resulting selection represents the strongest possible submission that aligns with the University's EDI Policy.
114. The REF 2029 Strategy Panel will report to the University Research and Enterprise Committee for final consideration and approval.

Staff, Committees, and Training

115. This section is the same as in Part 2, please refer to the earlier text (paragraphs 29 to 36).

Equality Impact Assessment

116. The process for completing the Code's EIA is described in paragraphs 46-55, and the full EIA is included in Part 6, Appendix A.
117. The EIA informed the policy and processes for the selection of outputs in the following ways:
 - a) The University makes very limited and specific use of research indicators in the output selection process (paragraph 89) and does not use indicators that are known to be biased against groups with protected characteristics such as women or disabled colleagues. The biases that may arise from output nomination and peer review will be mitigated through bespoke training, close working with colleague networks including our Early Career Researcher (ECR) network, and reviews of panel composition.
 - b) The University invites colleagues with SRR and independent researchers on research-only contracts to nominate outputs, but makes explicit provisions for equality-related circumstances without creating barriers that an onerous declarations process may create.
 - c) The newly introduced criteria for output eligibility in the REF2029 CKU Guidance may affect colleagues on part-time or career-interrupted contracts. This will be monitored during the output eligibility checks in 2026.
 - d) The University made provisions for outputs of different formats and different languages to be assessed fairly.

Part 6: Appendices

Appendix A REF2029 Code of Practice

Equality Impact Assessments

EIA – General Overview

1. Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are central to everything we do at Leeds Beckett University (LBU), as an institution and community. It is a core component embedded into our overarching University Strategy and our organisational values. EDI is not only important in our compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), but central to the development of our research strategy, culture and environment, where everyone matters and can thrive in their careers.
2. As we embark on our REF 2029 submission plans, we consider equality, diversity and inclusion at every stage of the process from initial baselining through to final submission, in alignment with the REF guidance. We will complete formal Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to identify any areas of challenge, develop solutions and mitigate any risks. The EIAs inform how we design and implement our policies, processes, and practices, to ensure that they do not favour or adversely impact individuals or groups with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. This is specifically in relation to the protected characteristics which we will examine: sex, age, disability, ethnicity, religion or belief and sexuality. In addition, we look at working pattern (full-time/part-time) and contract type (temporary/permanent), and the intersectionality of characteristics, where possible, to assess wider considerations of equality and diversity.
3. EIAs are developed in collaboration with HR colleagues, data experts in our Strategic Analysis and Business Insights (SIBA) team, EDI experts, academic colleagues with research and/or lived experience, University Colleague Networks, LBU's Charter Mark Group, and colleagues in the Research & Enterprise team supporting the REF submission. This is to ensure that the group considering EIAs has the knowledge and expertise required to fully interrogate and analyse the data, investigate the relationship between the data and processes, and identify any areas where either good practice recommendations can be made, or interventions need to occur.
4. The following individuals, groups and governance committees are involved in the EIA:
 - a) Directors of Research & Knowledge Exchange (DoR&KE) in the Schools, the Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services, the Research Excellence Manager and the University EDI Team, as part of the consultation around the criteria used in the EIA and in the Code.
 - b) The University EDI Committee, the REF Data Assurance group, the REF 2029 Strategy Panel and University Research & Enterprise Committee as part of the process of agreeing the process and criteria used in the Code.
 - c) Our Colleague Networks and our Charter Mark Group (which oversees Athena Swan, the Race Equality Charter, and the Mental Health Charter) around the proposed

processes in the Code where the EIA has identified specific areas of concern and further consideration.

5. In developing the Code, we have considered areas that may affect equality and inclusivity drawing on a range of available data and evidence to ensure our processes remain fair and transparent. We are assessing the equality impact of our proposed criteria and processes for determining research independence (RI), significant responsibility for research (SRR), the allocation of contracts to UOAs, and the process for selection of outputs, using a mixed methods approach that combines quantitative analysis with qualitative insight.
6. To assess the proposed process and criteria:
 - a) For determining RI and SRR, we take a quantitative approach utilising University equality data, supported by qualitative narrative developed in consultation with colleagues in our EDI team, University Colleague Networks, SIBA and the LBU's Charter Mark Group.
 - b) For the selection of outputs, we take a qualitative approach using information from Symplectic Elements and aligned with the University's [Statement on the responsible use of research indicators](#). On the latter we undertake specific consultations via focus groups with representation from a range of stakeholders including DoR&KEs, Library Services, our Colleague Networks, and our Charter Mark Group.
7. Where a quantitative approach is used, any under/over representation of staff with protected characteristics will be subject to further analysis to determine statistical significance. In parallel, we will engage with colleagues, as described above, to gather relevant qualitative insight that support interpretation of the data. This will be accompanied by ongoing awareness of the wider University initiatives aimed at addressing inequality.
8. Any areas of concern identified will be referred to the University EDI Committee. Should any potential adverse impact be investigated and found to not be justifiable, the EDI Committee will advise on appropriate action to be taken to change the relevant policy or practice.

EIA of the processes for determining significant responsibility for research and research independence

Methodology

9. The Volume Measure in REF 2029 is based on staff identified as having significant responsibility for research (SRR; for teaching and research contracts) and being research independent (RI; for research-only contracts). Therefore, members of staff in scope in the first EIA include those on:
 - a) LBU Eligible staff contracts = all “teaching and research” and all “research only” contracts.
 - b) REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts = contracts contributing to REF 2029 Volume Measure (RI and SRR). We have decided to combine the data sets for RI and SRR for the following reasons:
 - i. The FTE for research-only staff is less than 20, which results in categories with fewer than five staff, raising the risk of individuals being identifiable.
 - ii. The criteria and processes for determining SRR (Part 2) and RI (Part 3) are identical in our Code.
10. The data on protected characteristics used in this initial assessment:
 - a) Was downloaded from iTrent (the University’s HR system) on June 30, 2025.
 - b) Is expressed as Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and based on a calculation of FTE between 1 August 2024 and 30 June 2025, replicating the HESA methodology for leavers/joiners.
 - c) Is made up of 868.6 FTE academic staff comprising the “LBU Eligible staff contracts.”
 - d) Following application of our current approach for determining research independence, which uses the REF 2021 criteria, 372.7 FTE (43%) were categorised as eligible to contribute to the “REF 2029 Volume Measure (SRR and RI combined numbers) contracts”.
11. Data has been analysed by:
 - a) Comparing data on protected characteristics between the results of this EIA and the results of the initial REF 2021 EIA submitted in July 2020, where comparative data were available (Sex, Ethnicity, Disability).
 - b) Exploring intersectionality between certain protected characteristics to ensure potential bias is not overlooked and to assess the combined impact of proposed processes.

12. Analyses have not included data where categories contain very small numbers, which could risk identifying individuals; in those cases, narrative instead of the numbers has been provided instead.
13. Conclusions and recommendations have been agreed via consultations and focus groups with representation from a range of stakeholders including DoR&KEs, EDI team, Library Services, our Colleague Networks, and our Charter Mark Group.

Summary of key findings from the EIA on determining SRR and RI

14. Table 1 summarises the key findings from the quantitative analysis and the planned actions to address the areas highlighted. The detailed quantitative analysis is presented in paragraphs 28 to 55 of Appendix A.

Table 1 – Key findings from EIA for determining SRR and RI and current and planned actions

EIA Area	Key Priority	Current Progress and Planned Actions
Sex	Address gender disparity in REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts.	i) To reduce potential bias in grant-related inclusion, the criteria are being amended (e.g. shifting from Principal/Co-Investigator status to applicant status). ii) The Athena Swan Action Plan (2022-26), includes targeted support for women with career breaks such as funding for research retreats, bespoke coaching and mentoring and peer support networks. iii) Further consultation will be undertaken with the University Athena Swan Group and the Women's Network to explore this challenge and develop mitigation measures.
Religion/ Belief	Improve data completeness	i) Charter Mark Group action plans include focus groups with staff at all career stages to address concerns around equality monitoring (as evidenced in the Research Culture Survey) and to encourage self-disclosure.
Sexuality	Reduce “Not Known” responses to enable meaningful analysis	ii) Collaborating with SIBA to improve EDI data quality and accessibility via Tableau.
Working Pattern	Investigate lower representation of part-time contracts in REF 2029 Volume Measure.	School level analysis shows almost 80% of part time colleagues are concentrated in the School of Humanities & Social Sciences (SHSS), Leeds School of Arts (LSA) and Carnegie School of Sport (CSS), with nearly half based in LSA. We are working with these schools to understand if there are discipline-specific reasons and how these can be mitigated.
Sex and Contract Type	Understand gender disparities in part-time and fixed-term contract contributions to the REF 2029 Volume Measure.	The numbers in the intersecting categories are low raising the risk of individual identification and limit conclusions. Ongoing monitoring will be incorporated into broader institutional EDI assessments and actions to ensure equitable opportunities across genders and contract types. This will include enhanced communication, training and expanding the membership of any REF-related groups to improve representation from men and women on part-time and/or fixed-term contracts.

Conclusion on EIA of the processes for determining SRR and RI

15. The EIA conducted on the process to determine SRR and RI has highlighted areas for ongoing attention as we progress with our REF 2029 planning. However, it **has not** identified any major areas of concern regarding the proposed REF 2029 Volume Measure processes outlined in our Code. These areas will continue to be monitored through future assessments with actions delivered as planned.

EIA of the processes for the allocation of contracts to UOAs

Methodology

16. The process for assigning contracts to REF Units of Assessment is described in Part 4 of the Code. The EIA considered qualitatively whether the proposed approach may result in differential impacts for colleagues with protected characteristics, and whether the allocation mechanisms support the principles of equity and inclusion.

Summary of key findings from the EIA on the allocation of contracts to UOAs

17. The EIA has identified the following findings:
 - a) The allocation process is grounded in objective criteria that align contracts with the most appropriate UOA based on the nature of the research undertaken.
 - b) Decisions are made by UOA Panels using documented descriptors and established procedures, reducing the risk of subjective interpretation or bias.
 - c) The process does not rely on individual characteristics, and no evidence was identified to suggest that the allocation criteria inherently disadvantage any protected group.
 - d) The opportunity for colleagues to discuss their allocation with the relevant DoR&KE, where appropriate, further supports transparency and ensures that staff understand the rationale for decisions.

Recommendations and next steps

18. To ensure that the allocation process remains equitable and inclusive, the following measures have been incorporated:
 - a) Training and awareness - DoR&KEs, UOA Panel members and others involved in allocation decisions will receive training on unconscious bias and equitable decision-making, supported by the University's EDI team.
 - b) Monitoring and review: Demographic data relating to UOA allocations (including sex, ethnicity, disability, working pattern and career stage) will be monitored to identify any emerging patterns of disproportionate representation.

EIA of the processes for determining the selection of outputs

Methodology

19. The Output selection process is set out in detail in Part 5 of the Code. The pool of outputs being submitted to REF 2029 will not be known until later in the exercise and therefore this EIA takes the form of a qualitative assessment of whether our proposed process to select outputs is aligned with the Equalities Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Summary of key findings from this initial EIA on the selection of outputs

20. Table 2 summarises the key findings from this EIA on the selection of outputs and the planned actions to address the findings.

Table 2 - Key findings from EIA for determining the selection of outputs and planned actions

Key Findings	Current and Planned Actions
Peer review process - potential for structural or unconscious bias in peer review of outputs may impact on groups with protected characteristics.	i) All colleagues involved in REF-related panels and in the selection of outputs have up-to-date relevant training as part of the University's essential Equality and Diversity training. In addition, anyone involved in output selection has bespoke REF training on the responsible use of research indicators. ii) Ensure diversity of REF 2029 panels.
Language of outputs - outputs which are in languages other than English, including British Sign Language, may not be included for selection if they cannot be peer reviewed.	The University has made provisions to ensure fair assessment of outputs in different formats and languages. If there is an insufficient number of internal peer reviewers, appropriate external reviewers will be engaged.
Use of research indicators – risk that indicators may not be applied fairly across disciplines or output types.	i) Research indicators will only be used in limited circumstances as described by Panel Criteria and Working Methods, and in support of peer review. ii) All UOA Panels have received guidance to comply with the principles of the updated Harnessing the Metric Tide (2022) report. iii) Reviewers will be trained and briefed on the Symplectic assessment module, including any updates associated with REF 2029, as they become available.
Output nomination - engaging colleagues who are absent in the nomination process	Line managers will contact absent staff on eligible contracts contributing to the volume measure to ensure they are informed of the Code and given sufficient time to provide comments or suggestions. There is more than one window for nominating outputs.

Output eligibility - colleagues on part-time or career-interrupted contracts (e.g., due to caring responsibilities, disability, maternity leave) may be more likely to fall below the 0.2 FTE or 12-month thresholds for being eligible to submit outputs.	Potential for monitoring of exceptions or borderline cases to be carried out in future EIA, once the pool of outputs for each UOA has been confirmed.
Output nomination - staff uncomfortable with nominating outputs (e.g., due to imposter syndrome, discrimination experiences) or unclear on the nomination process may feel disadvantaged or excluded.	i) Clear communication reassuring that UOA Panels review all eligible outputs, not only nominated ones. ii) Offer optional support sessions to assist with nominations. iii) Configure the Symplectic Elements assessment module to automatically record eligible outputs (meeting the OA policy) from staff on volume measures contributing contracts.
Output scoring - risk of unconscious bias in interpretation of REF scoring criteria.	i) All reviewers involved in the REF 2029 output selection receive training on equality and responsible research metrics. ii) Ensure diversity of REF 2029 panels.
Communication of output selection - staff may interpret selection outcomes negatively, which may impact on staff mental health.	REF guidance on feedback to output authors will be communicated clearly and constructively.

Conclusion of the EIA on the output selection process

21. The EIA conducted on the output selection process in the University's REF 2029 Code has not identified any major concerns over the proposed process and **does not** need to be amended.
22. We have identified key equality-related challenges and outlined mitigation measures, particularly through targeted training, diverse panel composition, responsible research assessment, and support for equality-related circumstances. We will continue to monitor relevant data, maintain staff training, and uphold open communication to ensure the process remains fair and transparent.

Overall EIA Recommendations and next steps

REF-related advisory and decision-making bodies

23. While all LBU committees and groups are expected to consider equality and diversity when forming their membership, we are committed to ensuring that the advisory and decision-making bodies informing our REF submission are as representative as possible. This helps to minimise the risk of inherent or unconscious bias. To this end, panels will be asked to review their membership at the start of each academic year. This will include consideration of the representation of characteristics highlighted in current and former EIAs - sex, ethnicity, working pattern and contract type - to support fair and inclusive representation within decision-making panels:
- a) UOA Assessment Panels
 - b) REF 2029 Strategy Panel
 - c) REF Appeals Panel.
24. Depending on the outcome of the reviews, changes may be made, such as:
- a) Expanding membership of any REF-related groups to improve representation of underrepresented staff, including those on part-time and/or fixed-term contracts.
 - b) Co-opting additional members or creating observer roles, supported by appropriate training, induction and time allocation.

Implementation of the EIA recommendations

25. We will implement the planned actions arising from the EIAs, as summarised in Tables 1 and 2, working with colleagues in the EDI team, schools and services as appropriate. We will develop and deliver an action plan and report progress to the EDI Committee and REF 2029 Strategy Panel on a periodic basis.
26. As part of our forward planning, we are committed to more actively celebrating research contributions from all staff, across all disciplines, to foster broader participation and recognition.
27. To monitor progress, we will regularly track representation data to assess whether outreach and support mechanisms are contributing to improved equity.

Quantitative data analysis for the ‘EIA of the processes for determining significant responsibility for research and research independence’

Sex

28. From 2020 to 2025, there has been an **increase** in FTE of women compared to men in both categories (eligible and submitted), so that in 2025, the LBU eligible population is almost 50:50 men and women (438.4 FTE Men Vs 430.2 FTE female).

Table 3 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by sex

Protected Characteristic	July 2020 (expressed as FTE)		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
	LBU Category A eligible staff	LBU Category A submitted staff	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Female	413.7	160.6	430.2	164.8
Male	458.2	208.3	438.4	207.9
Totals	871.9	368.9	868.6	372.7

29. In both 2020 and 2025, the percentage of women on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts was slightly lower than their proportion in the eligible staff population. In contrast, the percentage of men with REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts exceeded their share in the eligible staff population in both years, with the gap widening by 5 percentage points.

Although LBU's proportion of women included in the volume measures exceeds the sector average in REF2021 (LBU = 44%, sector = 38%), a gender gap remains within the University.

Wider LBU context

30. As part of our ongoing commitment to gender equity, LBU's Athena Swan institutional action plan includes a specific focus on improving career pathways for women. In recent years, we have introduced initiatives such as a dedicated equity and inclusion fund, intra- and inter-organisational networking schemes, and Research Retreats.

31. These efforts, particularly those aimed at early career researchers, may partly explain the increased number of women in the eligible staff population and the modest rise in those on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts. Progress is monitored through our Charter Mark Groups' action plans, the EDI Committee, and our HREiR plan, which is reviewed quarterly.

Age

32. The FTE numbers for each age bracket for the REF2029 volume-contributing contracts reflect the numbers within the LBU Eligible staff contracts.

Table 4 -Eligible versus volume contributing contracts, analysed by age (data only available for 2025)

Protected Characteristic	June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Age		
25-34	71.1	22.7
35-44	251.4	106.4
45-54	302.4	141.8
55-64	208.8	81.8
65 and over	34.8	20.0
Totals	868.6	372.7

Wider LBU context

33. The University is part of the Age Friendly Employer Pledge where we ensure inclusivity for older employees. Specifically, we are committed to hiring age-positively to combat ageism in recruitment, and to encourage career development for all ages. Both areas are foundational to our existing practice and linked to our values.

Ethnicity

34. The percentage of colleagues who identify as White has decreased slightly in all populations assessed, from 2020-2025 (by 31.6 FTE in LBU eligible contracts and 7.2 FTE in REF volume-contributing contracts). Conversely, the percentage of colleagues who identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic has increased slightly in all categories, from 2020-2025, by 30.1 FTE in LBU Eligible contracts and 10.3 FTE in REF volume-contributing contracts. Overall, the representation of colleagues who identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic rose from 15% in 2020 to 18% in 2025 in REF volume-contributing contracts.
35. The proportions of each ethnic group in REF volume-contributing contracts closely mirrors their proportions in the wider LBU eligible population.

Table 5 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by ethnicity

Protected Characteristic	July 2020 (expressed as FTE)		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Ethnicity	LBU Category A eligible staff	LBU Category A submitted staff	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
White	735.8	308.6	704.2	301.4
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	119.7	55	149.8	65.3
Not known/ prefer not to say	16.4	5.3	14.6	6.0
Totals	871.9	368.9	868.6	372.7

Wider LBU context

36. These positive results could reflect growing inclusivity and progress in equitable representation via the impact of our Race Equality Charter actions. The Centre for Race, Education and Decoloniality (CRED) at the Carnegie School of Education, working together with the Charter Mark Group and the EDI team, will help in embedding sector-leading best practice in researcher recruitment, development and promotion.

Disability

37. There is a marked increase in the number of colleagues declaring disability across assessed data sets in 2025 compared to 2020. Within the LBU Eligible staff contracts there is a rise from 33.1 to 57.6 FTE (+74%); within the REF volume-contributing contracts the number of staff rose from 13.0 to 17.1 FTE (+33%).
38. Within the REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts, the percentage of colleagues declaring disability has increased from 3.5% in 2020 to 4.6% in 2025.
39. “No Disability Declared” data shows a marked decline in LBU Eligible staff from 76.1 to 34.2 FTE (↓55%) and for the REF volume-contributing contracts from 33.3 to 14.3 FTE (↓57%). This pattern potentially indicates successful progress in reducing uncertainty and encouraging self-disclosure.

Table 6 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by disability

Protected Characteristic	July 2020 (expressed as FTE)		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Disability	LBU Category A eligible staff	LBU Category A submitted staff	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Declared disability	33.1	13.0	57.6	17.1
No known disability	762.7	322.6	776.8	341.3
No disability declared*	76.1	33.3	34.2	14.3
Totals	871.9	368.9	868.6	372.7

**(Not known category includes not known, prefer not to say and blank for 2020 data)*

Wider LBU context

40. We are working to myth bust, and address concerns colleagues may have about sharing equality monitoring information with the intent to build greater trust and confidence with our colleagues. Improved data collection will enable us to have a better understanding of our workforce and their needs.

Religion

41. The data analysed for 2025 show that the “not known” category represents almost a quarter of LBU eligible staff contracts and 20% of REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts. This makes it difficult to draw any clear conclusions regarding representation of religion.

Table 7 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by religion (data only available for 2025)

Protected Characteristic	June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Religion	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Declared Religion	316.8	127.6
No Religion	340.5	169.9
Not Known	211.3	75.2
Totals	868.6	372.7

Wider LBU Context

42. We are encouraging colleagues to further self-disclose with particular focus where we can see high ‘not known’ categories. We are working to:
- Enhance confidence in data disclosure: Continue building trust with staff by clarifying how personal data is used.
 - Reduce unknowns: Encourage voluntary disclosure through clear messaging and sensitive handling of personal identity data.
 - Monitor trends longitudinally: Collect comparable data to assess changes over time and detect patterns.

Sexuality

43. The data analysed for 2025 shows that the “prefer not to say/unknown” category represents a sizeable portion of the data analysed: over a quarter of LBU eligible staff contracts, and around a fifth of colleagues on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts. This result indicates ongoing sensitivity around disclosure, though slightly lower among contracts contributing to the REF Volume Measure. This makes it difficult to draw any clear conclusions regarding representation of sexuality.

Table 8 – Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by sexuality (only 2025 data available)

Protected Characteristic	June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Heterosexual	590.3	268.4
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer (LGBQ)	50.9	25.9
Prefer not to say/unknown	227.3	78.3
Totals	868.6	372.7

Wider LBU context

44. We are encouraging colleagues to further self-disclose with particular focus where we can see high ‘prefer not to say/unknown’ categories. We are addressing concerns colleagues may have about sharing equality monitoring information with the intent to build greater trust and confidence with our colleagues. Via specific networks and focus groups the university regularly check that colleagues have equal opportunities to engage in research and career development.
45. Improved data collection and communication on how data on sexuality is managed to ease concerns and encourage disclosure will enable us to have a better understanding of our workforce and their needs.

Working Pattern

46. As presented in Table 9 relative to the total numbers analysed in each of the two categories there is a difference between full- and part-time contracts, with a higher proportion of full-time contracts (+3%) included in the REF volume-contributing contracts.

Table 9 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by working pattern (only 2025 data available)

Protected Characteristic	June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Working Pattern	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Full Time	743.7	331.3
Part Time	124.9	41.4
Totals	868.6	372.7

47. The difference is small but warrants monitoring to ensure equitable participation in REF 2029 across all working patterns. There may be implicit challenges for part-time staff, such as balancing research with other commitments or access to research support that need attention.

Wider LBU Context

48. Almost 80% of part time colleagues on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts are based in SHSS, LSA and CSS (with almost half based in LSA). We are working with these three schools to understand any challenges that colleagues on part-time contracts may face regarding evidencing research independence.

Sex and Age

49. As presented in Table 10 the percentages for each sex and age group are similar between the LBU Eligible staff contracts compared with those on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts, showing that neither men or women of any age are over or underrepresented.

Table 10 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by sex and age (only 2025 data available)

Protected Characteristics		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Sex	Age Group	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Female	25-34	47.3	15.7
Female	35-44	126.9	43.0
Female	45-54	144.9	59.7
Female	55-64	100.0	40.4
Female	65 and over	10.9	6.0
Total Female		430	164.79
Male	25-34	23.8	7.0
Male	35-44	124.5	63.4
Male	45-54	157.5	82.1
Male	55-64	108.8	41.4
Male	65 and over	23.8	14.00
Total Male		438.4	207.9
Totals		868.6	372.7

Sex and Ethnicity

50. When looking at the intersectionality between sex and ethnicity, there are no major differences between data for colleagues of different sexes and ethnicities between the populations being analysed, showing that no men and women of any ethnicity are over or underrepresented.

Table 11 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by sex and ethnicity
(only 2025 data available)

Protected Characteristics		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Sex	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic /White	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Female	White	369.9	145
Female	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	55.0	19.0
Female	Prefer not to say/Unknown	5.3	Data set too small to include
Male	White	334.3	157.6
Male	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	95	46.3
Male	Prefer not to say/Unknown	9.3	Data set too small to include
Totals		868.6	372.7

Sex and Contract Type

51. Women who are fixed term make up 3% of the LBU Eligible contracts, but only 0.7% of the population of those on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts. There are no fixed-term men on REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts out of the 2% of the LBU Eligible men population. These differences are too small to analyse statistically, but we will continue to monitor this as part of our wider institutional EDI assessments to ensure that opportunities being fairly distributed across genders and contract types.

Table 12 – Eligible versus volume- contributing contracts analysed by sex and contract type (data only available for 2025)

Protected characteristics		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Sex	Contract Type	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Female	Fixed Term	26.3	Data set too small to include
Female	Permanent	403.9	162.2
Male	Fixed Term	17.8	Data set too small to include
Male	Permanent	420.6	207.9
Totals		868.6	372.7

Sex and Working Pattern

52. According to data presented in Table 13, women are more likely to work part-time (17% of all women), compared to men (12%). This may reflect wider patterns around caregiving, flexibility needs, or career pathways.
53. Women on part time contracts make up 8% of the LBU Eligible staff contracts and 6% of the REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts. Men working part time make up 6% of the LBU Eligible staff contracts, 5% of the REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts.

Table 13 –Eligible versus volume-contributing contracts, analysed by sex and working pattern (data available only for 2025)

Protected Characteristics		June 2025 (expressed as FTE)	
Sex	Working Pattern	LBU Eligible staff contracts	REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts
Female	Full Time	357	142.4
Female	Part Time	73.2	22.3
Male	Full Time	386.7	188.9
Male	Part Time	51.7	19.0
Totals		868.6	372.7

54. These differences are small, but we will monitor and further interrogate the data, considering the data in specific schools to understand any structural or perception-based barriers/impacts to REF 2029 volume-contributing contracts.

Disability and Contract Type / Working Pattern

55. The intersection of disability, contract type and working pattern was analysed and no evidence was found that the policies and processes set out in the Code disadvantage groups that share these characteristics.

Appendix B. Form: Identification of research independence

Research independence

Name:	
School:	
Unit of Assessment:	
Date submitted to UOA Panel / DoR&KE:	

REF Indicator of Research Independence	Evidence of indicator (Evidence must apply to the period Jan 2021 – present date)
Act as lead applicant on externally funded research projects.	
Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship requiring research independence (Research Fellowships demonstrating research independence for REF 2029 volume measure)	
Lead a research group or a substantial/specialised work package.	
For research-only contracts: Where research independence is an inherent expectation of the contract.	
For UOAs 13-34 this may also include: - being named as a co-applicant on an externally funded research grant/award. - having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.	

Appendix C. Appeal form

Appeals Form

Name:	
School:	
Unit of Assessment:	
Date submitted:	

Ground(s) for Appeal (Please tick)			
1. Failure to apply the REF 2029 Code of Practice criteria consistently when determining research independence			
2. Failure to adhere to the process for identifying colleagues as research independent, as articulated in REF 2029 Code of Practice			
3. New evidence that was not originally considered when the original decision on determining research independence was taken			
Date of Informal Discussion:			
Evidence to support your appeal: Please state why you wish to appeal (500 words maximum)			
What would be your preferred outcome of the appeal? (500 words maximum)			
Signed (applicant):		Date:	
All appeals must be submitted to ref2029appeals@leedsbeckett.ac.uk for review by the REF Appeals Panel			
Outcome of the Appeal (to be completed by REF Appeals Panel):			

Appendix D. Committees and their Terms of Reference

Academic Board

Terms of reference

Subject to the provisions of the Articles of Government; the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors; and the responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor, the Academic Board is responsible:

- a) subject to the requirements of validating and accrediting bodies, for: general issues relating to the research, scholarship, teaching and courses at the institution, including criteria for the admission of students; the appointment and removal of internal and external examiners; policies and procedures for assessment and examination of the academic performance of students; the content of the curriculum; academic standards and the validation and review of courses; the procedures for the awards of qualifications and honorary academic titles and the procedures for the expulsion of students for academic reasons;
- b) for considering the development of the academic and related activities of the University and the resources needed to support them and for advising the Vice-Chancellor and the Board of Governors thereon;
- c) for advising on such other matters as the Board of Governors or the Vice-Chancellor may refer to the Academic Board.

Statement of Primary Responsibilities

Subject at all times to the provisions of the Articles of Government, the Academic Board shall be the principal academic authority of the University and in exercising that role shall have the following primary responsibilities:

- a) to formulate, in consultation with the Schools, and recommend for approval to the Board of Governors, the academic strategy of the University, and to oversee its implementation;
- b) to maintain the University's academic standards and enhance the quality of its educational provision;
- c) to foster and promote research and other scholarly activity;
- d) to establish such criteria and regulations as may be required for the recruitment, selection, admission, education, and assessment of the students of the University, and the approval, modification, and review of its courses;
- e) to approve and modify, and to monitor and review the performance of, academic partnerships and the collaborative provision of education;
- f) to appoint and remove the internal and external examiners of the University;
- g) to confer awards and degrees of the University;
- h) to promote a rigorous spirit of inquiry, scholarship, and debate in all the University's academic activities, and to protect academic freedom.

Delegation

Pursuant to paragraph 6 of the Articles of Government, the Academic Board may establish such committees as it considers necessary to enable it to carry out its responsibilities provided that each establishment is first approved by the Vice-Chancellor and Board of Governors.

The Academic Board has established the following committees which shall exercise the functions and powers stipulated in their constitutions:

- a) Academic Quality & Standards Committee;
- b) Honorary Awards Committee;
- c) Access and Participation Scrutiny Committee;
- d) Research & Enterprise Committee;
- e) Research Ethics Sub-Committee
- f) Research Degrees Sub-Committee
- g) Sports Committee
- h) School Academic Committee
- i) School Research and Knowledge Exchange Sub-committee

Membership profile

Members [34]

Quorum [17]

- The Vice Chancellor (Chair) [1] – Ex-officio

Category A: Members drawn from Senior Management and Deans of School [17]

- The Deputy Vice Chancellors [2]
- The Pro Vice Chancellors [2]
- Deans of School [8]
- Director of Quality [1]
- Director of the Centre for Learning & Teaching [1]
- Director of Library & Learning Services [1]
- Director of Student Services [1]
- Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services [1]

Category B: Members drawn from elected academic and officer staff; students and co-opted members [16]. Members of Senior Management are not eligible for appointment in Category B.

- Student representatives [4] (two members of the SU Student Officer team and two nominees of the Students' Union)
- Professors [2]
- Chair of the Professoriate [1] – ex-officio
- Research Staff [1]
- Course Directors [3]
- Academic Staff [2]
- Professional Service Staff [3]

In attendance:

- University Registrar & Secretary

For non-ex-officio members, terms of office should normally be three years. Students' terms of office should normally be one year.

The Constitution of the Committee is made by resolution of the Board of Governors on 16 July 2021

Research and Enterprise Committee

Terms of Reference

The Research and Enterprise Committee is responsible to the Academic Board for overseeing research and enterprise, and the provision of research degrees in the University. The Committee's terms of reference are to:

- a) promote the strategic development of research & enterprise and other related scholarly activity across the University;
- b) advise the Academic Board on the development, review and implementation of the sections of the University's Academic Regulations related to research, and associated policies and procedures, in light of developing national and international expectations;
- c) oversee the provision of research degrees, in accordance with the Academic Regulations, and monitor the overall recruitment, admission, and OfS B3 Conditions (continuation, completion and progression) of research students;
- d) maintain oversight of the School Academic Committees in relation to the implementation of the research sections of the University's Academic Regulations and associated policies and procedures;
- e) promulgate good practice, innovation, and ethical conduct in research and enterprise and other scholarly activity.

Delegated Authority

The Research & Enterprise Committee has authority from the Academic Board to:

- a) oversee preparations for, and responses to, all external assessments of research and/or enterprise and monitor the implementation of any recommendations arising from them where appropriate;
- b) approve an annual report to the Academic Board on the management of research & enterprise, identifying any institutional matters for consideration and resolution;
- c) approve examination arrangements for research degrees on the recommendation of the relevant School and ensure that they are conducted, and awards recommended, in accordance with the academic regulations;
- d) agree the scope of internal quality audits and to appoint members of internal quality audit teams.

Delegation

The Research and Enterprise Committee has established, with the approval of the Academic Board:

- a) Research Ethics Sub-Committee which is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the University's Policy & Procedures relating to research ethics.
- b) Research Degrees Sub-Committee, which is responsible for the monitoring of adherence to, and application of, the sections of the University Academic Regulations related to research, the Quality Manual for Research Degree Programmes, the OfS B3 Conditions and the Code of Practice for research students.

In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Academic Board, the Committee may establish short life working groups to perform specific tasks and in so doing must determine their terms of reference, membership (including the Chair who must be a member of this Committee), and lifespan.

Membership Profile

Members [14]

Quorum [7]

- Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Innovation) (Chair) [1] – Ex-officio
- Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services [1] – Ex-officio
- Directors of Research and Knowledge Exchange [8] – Ex-officio
- Representative of the Library and Learning Services staff [1] – Nominated
- Associate Director, Research and Innovation [1] – Ex-officio
- PGR Student Representative [1] – Nominated
- The Chair of the Research Ethics Sub-Committee* – Ex-officio
- The Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee* – Ex-officio
- The Chair of the University's Professoriate [1] – Ex-officio

**Chairs of the Sub-committees are nominated by the Research & Enterprise Committee. These positions do not add to the numbers of members or quoracy requirements.*

Nominated members will be nominated by their respective Director of Service or Dean of School. For non-ex-officio members, terms of office should normally be three years. Students' terms of office should normally be one year.

REF 2029 Strategy Panel

Terms of Reference

- a) Inform decision making to the University Executive and Academic Board for the REF submission.
- b) Provide strategic direction for the University REF submission preparations and ensure consistency of approach across the University where this is possible.
- c) Ensure effective communication and engagement on the REF process across the University and act as a promoter for the REF submission process.
- d) Advise and inform Research and Enterprise committee on the development of REF process and policy and provide progress and update reports.
- e) Share good and best practice from external and internal sources, innovation, and ethical conduct in all aspects of REF activity.
- f) Responsible for providing the University's updated and approved Code of Practice.
- g) Oversee the development of the REF 2029 submission for all UOAs.
- h) Review and finalise the University's institution level evidence statement.
- i) Provide final recommendations on staff being returned as independent researchers, all UOA submissions, Outputs and Impact Case Studies and all their associated Disciplinary level evidence statements.
- j) Ensure that all required data is provided via the University systems and platforms to support the submission including EDI data.
- k) Oversee all subcommittees formed.

The REF Strategy Panel has a lifespan of the preparation for REF 2029 and will disband following the final submission though may meet for a final review meeting in academic year 28/29.

The REF Strategy Panel will normally meet quarterly during the Academic Year, although additional meetings may be scheduled as required.

Delegated Authority

The REF 2029 Strategy Panel is an advisory panel to the Research and Enterprise Committee and has delegated authority to:

- a) Prepare for, and respond to, REF 2029 and monitor the implementation of any recommendations arising from them.
- b) Oversee the development of the REF 2029 Code of Practice.
- c) Develop policy and processes necessary for REF 2029 submission.
- d) Agree the scope of REF mock reviews and to monitor results.
- e) Ensure that the REF principles of transparency, consistency, accountability, and inclusivity underpin all decisions.
- f) Ensure EIAs inform all decisions pertaining to REF 2029.
- g) Keep auditable records of all decisions made.

Delegation

The REF 2029 Strategy Panel has established, with the approval of the Research and Enterprise Committee, an Appeals Panel responsible for the fair judgement of any appeals decisions; and UOA Panels responsible for recommending the UOA submission for REF. In accordance with the Standing Orders, the Committee may establish short life working groups to perform specific tasks and in so doing must determine their terms of reference, membership (including the Chair who must be a member of this Committee), and lifespan.

Membership Profile

Members [25]

Quorum [13]

- PVC Research and Innovation (Chair) [1]
- Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services (Deputy Chair) [1]
- Deans of School [2]
- Directors of Research & Knowledge Exchange [8]
- Research Excellence Manager
- Assistant UOA leads [3]
- Equality and Diversity Manager [1]
- Representative from Libraries and Learning Services [1]
- Representative from the Strategic Insights and Business Analysis (SIBA) [1]
- Representative from Financial Services [1]
- Associate Director - Research and Innovation [1]
- Research Culture and Environment Manager [1]

For all members, terms of office should be the life of the Panel.

REF 2029 Data Assurance Group

Terms of Reference

The Group is chaired by the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange Services and membership includes the return compliers for all the required parts of the REF 2029 submission.

The Group is responsible for providing recommendations to the REF 2029 Strategy Panel for maintaining, and where required, improving the quality of the data that will contribute to the University's REF 2029 submission.

The Group will:

- a) Review and ensure the quality and accuracy of the data and metrics collated for the University's REF 2029 submission.
- b) Ensure all stakeholders aligned to providing data for each part of the University's REF 2029 submission and stay informed so they can ensure that the data collated conforms with the REF 2029 Guidance on Submissions.
- c) Ensure that all required data is provided via the agreed University systems and platforms to support the University's REF 2029 submission.
- d) Monitor progress against the REF 2029 project plan, which details key milestones for the collation and validation of data for the University's REF 2029 submission.
- e) Review key risks associated with the quality and accuracy of REF 2029 related data and recommend an appropriate course of action to mitigate any risks.
- f) Monitor, review, and provide recommendations to the REF 2029 Strategy Panel concerning the arrangements for communication and the promotion of engagement with the University's data preparations for its REF 2029 submission.

The Group has a lifespan of the preparation for REF 2029 and will disband following the final submission.

The Group will meet quarterly although may schedule additional meetings as required.

Delegated Authority

The REF Data Assurance Group has no delegated authority.

Reports to

The REF Data Assurance Group reports into REF 2029 Strategy Panel.

Membership Profile

- Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services (Chair)
- Research Excellence Manager
- Associate Director for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Representative from Libraries and Learning Services (Research Services)
- Representative from the Strategic Insights and Business Analysis (SIBA)
- Representative from Financial Services
- Representative from Human Resources
- Research Culture and Environment Manager
- Associate Director - Research and Innovation

In attendance when required:

- Pro Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation
- Representative from Libraries and Learning Services (Technical & Systems)
- Representative from Estates Services
- Representative from External Relations

REF 2029 Research Impact Group

Terms of Reference

The Group is chaired by the Research Impact and Policy Engagement Manager.

The Group is responsible for advising and informing the REF 2029 Strategy Panel and REF Data Assurance Group on the progress of the development of REF Impact Case Studies and the supporting processes and policies, along with providing recommendations concerning their development for the University's REF 2029 submission.

The Group will:

- a) Inform decision making to the REF Strategy Panel for the REF Impact Case Study submission.
- b) Monitor the development of the REF Impact Case Studies 2029 submissions for all UOAs.
- c) Advise the REF 2029 Strategy Panel on the strategic direction of the University REF Impact Case Study submission preparations and ensure consistency of approach across Schools where possible.
- d) Monitor the development of all training and education associated with impact data capture and reporting across the wider institution
- e) Ensure effective communication and engagement around the REF Impact process across the University and act as a promoter for the REF Impact Case Study submission process.
- f) Share good and best practice from external and internal sources, innovation, and ethical conduct in all aspects of REF Impact activity.
- g) Promote and monitor the use of the appropriate University systems and platforms to capture research impact data.

The REF 2029 Impact Group has a lifespan of the preparation for REF 2029 and will disband following the final submission though may meet for a final review meeting in academic year 28/29.

The REF Impact Group will normally meet quarterly during the Academic Year, although additional meetings may be scheduled as required.

Members

- Research Impact & Policy Engagement Manager
- Impact Leads, representing each Unit of Assessment
- Representative from Libraries and Learning Services

In attendance when required:

- Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange Services
- Representative from the Strategic Insights and Business Analysis (SIBA)
- Research Excellence Manager
- Directors of Research & Knowledge Exchange, representing each Unit of Assessment.

Unit of Assessment Panel

Terms of Reference

Each Unit of Assessment Panel is chaired by the School Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange and is responsible for the

The UOA Panel is responsible for:

- a) Recommending approval of applications for Research Independence, and, where applicable, confirmation of Working Towards Independence (WTI), applying the criteria set out in the REF 2029 Code of Practice.
- b) Reviewing and approving the selection of research outputs, and impact case studies, and the drafting of UOA *Strategy, People & Research Environment* statements.

Panels are expected to promote ethical practice and ensure that all equality and diversity standards are met.

Delegated Authority

The REF 2029 UOA Panel has delegated authority to approve applications for Research Independence

Reports to

The REF 2029 UOA Panel reports to the School Research & Knowledge Exchange Sub-committee and to the REF 2029 Strategy Panel.

Membership (min of 6)

- School Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange (Chair) [1] (or nominee)
- Professors
- Readers
- Heads of Subject

The UOA Panel has the option to co-opt in members where required to ensure it is representative of the diversity of staff in the School / University.

In attendance when required:

- Dean of School [1]
- Pro Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation
- Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
- Research Excellence Manager

The UOA Panel will meet as required to discharge its responsibilities.

Appeals Panel

Terms of Reference

The Appeals Panel is responsible for considering appeals from members of staff who disagree with a decision arising from determining research independence.

The Appeals Panel will consider appeals based on failure to apply the criteria consistently or adhere to the process for identifying colleagues as research independent, as articulated in REF 2029 Code of Practice.

Panels are expected to promote ethical practice and ensure that all equality and diversity standards are met.

Delegated Authority

The REF 2029 Appeals Panel has delegated authority to make decisions on appeals arising from the process for determining research independence for teaching and research contracts and research-only contracts.

Reports to:

The REF 2029 Appeals Panel reports to the REF 2029 Strategy Panel.

Members

- Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange Services (Chair) [1]
- School Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange* [1]
- Member of the REF 2029 Strategy Panel * [1]

*From a different school to the appellant

The REF 2029 Appeals Panel will meet as required to discharge its responsibilities.