

Code of Practice

Institution name: University of Warwick

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How to use this Code of Practice:

This Institutional Code of Practice sets out the University of Warwick's policies and procedures for preparing its submission to REF 2029. It is designed to be a clear, accessible reference point for academic and professional services colleagues involved in any aspect of REF 2029 preparation. This page outlines how to navigate the document and where to find key information.

Purpose of the Code of Practice:

The Code explains the institutional principles, governance structures, decision-making processes, and supporting mechanisms that ensure Warwick's REF 2029 submission is fair, transparent, robust, and aligned with the University's commitments to equity, inclusion, and responsible research assessment.

Who this document is for:

- Academic staff.
- 'Research Only' Staff.
- Heads of Department and Directors of Research.
- Unit of Assessment Management Teams.
- Professional Service Colleagues supporting REF 2029 preparations.
- Staff interested in understanding REF 2029 processes, decisions or expectations.

How the document is structured:

The Code of Practice is organised into six sections.

- *Part 1: Introduction.* Sets out the purpose, principles, consultation process, and institutional context for the Code, including equality, diversity, inclusion and responsible research assessment commitments.
- *Part 2: Identifying Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research.* Explains how the University of Warwick identifies eligible contracts that contribute to the staff volume measure.
- *Part 3: Determining Research Independence.* Describes how research independence is assessed for 'Research Only' staff, including criteria, indicators, governance processes, communication, and appeals.
- *Part 4: Allocating Contracts to Units of Assessment.* Outlines processes for assigning eligible contracts to the appropriate Unit of Assessment.
- *Part 5: Selecting Outputs.* Covers principles and processes for output eligibility and selection, diversity of outputs and responsible research assessment.
- *Part 6: Appendices.* Includes supporting materials such as the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 6.1), a Glossary of Terms (Appendix 6.2.4) and other referenced material.

Using the Code of Practice:

REF 2029

Research Excellence Framework

- Unit of Assessment Management Teams should ensure their processes follow the principles and procedures set out in this document.
- The Code of Practice should be read alongside the REF 2029 Guidance and REF 2029 Panel Criteria and Working Methods.

Where to find further support or advice:

- REF Planning Team: refplanning@warwick.ac.uk
- University internal REF 2029 webpages, including Frequently Asked Questions: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/ris/researchstrategy/ref/>
- National REF 2029 guidance, information and resources: <https://2029.ref.ac.uk/>

Part 1: Introduction

Part 1: Summary

- Part 1 sets out the purpose of the University of Warwick's Code of Practice, explaining how the institution will uphold the principles of Robustness, Accountability, Transparency, Equity and Inclusion in its approach to REF 2029 preparations.
- It outlines the University's commitment to fair and transparent processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence, assigning contracts to Unit(s) of Assessment and selecting outputs.
- The section describes a comprehensive programme of consultation and engagement with trade unions, Senate, the Research Committee, departmental leaders, academic and professional services colleagues, staff engagement and equality, diversity and inclusion networks, with all feedback reviewed and contributing to the final version.
- It positions the Code within Warwick's broader Social Inclusion Strategy and demonstrates alignment with legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the University's institutional commitments.
- **Why Part 1 Matters:** It establishes the foundation for the entire Code of Practice by articulating the principles, policy context, and institutional values that underpin all REF-related decisions, ensuring staff understand the purpose, fairness, and legitimacy of the processes described in later sections.

- 1.1. This document sets out the University of Warwick's Institutional Code of Practice to support its approach to preparing for submission to the four UK higher education funding bodies' Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029, ensuring the University adheres to the principles of Robustness, Accountability, Transparency, Equity and Inclusion.
- 1.2. The purpose of this Code of Practice is to explain how the University of Warwick demonstrates its commitment to fairness and transparency in its mechanisms for the selection of outputs, processes for assigning contracts to Unit(s) of Assessment, determining significant responsibility for research and establishing research independence.
- 1.3. This Code of Practice forms part of the University of Warwick's broader strategy to strengthen research culture by fostering an inclusive, collaborative, and dynamic environment in which researchers can thrive.

Robustness

- 1.4. The principles and processes set out in this Code of Practice will be applied to all aspects of the University's REF 2029 preparations to which they appropriately relate, ensuring consistent decision-making across the institution.
- 1.5. Individuals and bodies that are involved in identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence, assigning contracts to Unit(s) of Assessment, and selecting outputs for REF 2029 submission have been identified by role.
- 1.6. Operating criteria and terms of reference for individuals, committees, advisory groups and any other bodies concerned with these processes are provided in this Code of Practice and thus made readily available to all individuals and groups concerned.

Transparency

- 1.7. A copy of the draft Code of Practice was provided to the recognised trade unions representing staff at Warwick, UCU, Unison and Unite, and staff from Research and Impact Services met with their representatives to outline the processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence, assigning contracts to Unit(s) of Assessment, and selecting outputs. The unions were invited to provide written and verbal feedback on both the content and the proposed dissemination of the Code of Practice. All feedback received was reviewed and contributed to revisions included in the final version.
- 1.8. A timetable of structured stakeholder engagement supported the development of the Code of Practice (Appendix 6.2.1). Between February and April 2026, key groups, including the University's Senate, the Research Committee, departmental research leads, academic and professional services staff, and staff engagement and equality, diversity and inclusion networks, were consulted through coordinated communications, meetings and feedback mechanisms to ensure alignment with institutional policy and REF 2029 requirements ahead of governance approval.
- 1.9. The draft Code of Practice was published on the University's Intranet, requesting feedback from staff. In addition to direct email responses, an online feedback form was made available to enable staff to provide comments easily and anonymously (Appendix 6.2.2) A dedicated REF Planning resource account (refplanning@warwick.ac.uk) is available for staff where queries relating to REF 2029 and the University's REF-related processes can be raised.
- 1.10. All feedback received was considered and informed the final version of the Code of Practice.
- 1.11. The finalised and approved Code of Practice will be made available in accessible formats and publicised through multiple institutional channels, including the staff intranet and the University's external website to ensure access for colleagues working remotely or overseas. Supplementary resources such as Frequently Asked Questions and brief guidance materials

will be provided to support understanding. Departments will highlight the Code of Practice through routine communications, and staff on leave of absence will receive direct email notifications signposting them to the final version and how to access further support.

Equity and Inclusion

- 1.12. This Code of Practice aims to promote an inclusive environment, enabling the University to identify all staff who have a significant responsibility for research, all staff who are independent researchers, and the excellent research produced by staff, for submission to REF 2029.
- 1.13. The University of Warwick ensures fair and impartial submission decisions through transparent criteria applied consistently across all Units of Assessment. Decision-making bodies consider the full range of research activity across disciplines, career stages, roles, methods and output types, recognising the diverse ways excellent research is produced. The University of Warwick's commitment to inclusivity ensures equitable consideration of contributions from early career, part-time, fixed-term and staff with non-traditional career paths.

Contextualisation within Institutional Policies

- 1.14. Our [Social Inclusion Strategy](#) outlines our aspiration to remove economic, social, and cultural barriers that have prevented people from working, studying, and succeeding at Warwick. Encouraging and supporting the recruitment, retention, and development of all staff is a central part of our work in this area as we know that having diversity represented in our staff means that the University can achieve its vision of excellence in education and research. This commitment is underpinned by key University policies which include the [Statement of Intent on Social Inclusion](#), [Dignity Principles Policy](#), [Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Policy](#), [Trans Inclusion Code of Practice](#), and [Adjustments Policy](#).
- 1.15. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the University's equality objectives, the University strives to encourage and support the recruitment, retention and development of all staff, regardless of any protected characteristics. This commitment is underpinned by the [Statement of Intent on Social Inclusion](#), [Adjustments Policy](#) and [Dignity Principles Policy](#) including the [Trans Inclusion Code of Practice](#).
- 1.16. In accordance with the duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010, we publish equality information at least once a year to demonstrate our compliance and be transparent about our performance on equality. But our approach goes much further than the bounds of legislative practice and the requirements of regulators. Our Social Inclusion team work to ensure that inclusion is embedded in all of Warwick's work. Our collective commitment to equality is reflected in our success in external charters, awards, and benchmarking exercises - we are a University of Sanctuary, we have a Bronze Race Equality Charter award, have held the HR Excellence in Research award since 2012 and hold an institutional Silver Athena Swan award along with a number of Bronze, Silver, and Gold departmental Athena Swan awards.
- 1.17. Equality Impact Assessments are being conducted at key stages of this REF 2029 exercise in relation to the protected characteristics i.e. determination of research independence,

assignment of contracts to Units(s) of Assessment, and selection of outputs. A further Equality Impact Assessment will be performed at the conclusion of the REF 2029 submission to ensure that the processes outlined in the Code of Practice have been adhered to.

Update on Actions Since REF 2021

- 1.18. The University has progressed several initiatives since REF2021 in consideration of the recommended actions following the final Equality Impact Assessment on the REF2021 Code of Practice and REF2021 submission.
- 1.19. *Increase the proportion of female identifying, people of colour, or staff with disabilities to apply for research and academic positions.* We are committed to broadening representation, particularly in senior roles, to enhance the staff and student experience and reinforce Warwick's reputation as an inclusive employer. Our Inclusive Talent programmes nurture under-represented talent and strengthen the pipeline of diverse future leaders, and our Inclusive Recruitment Guide outlines the actions we can take throughout the recruitment process to achieve a diverse workforce. Heads of Department can also use the People Data App to access institutional and departmental workforce and gender pay gap data, supporting the ongoing monitoring of staff profiles and trends. This work directly supports our [Social Inclusion Strategy](#).
- 1.20. *Fair and equitable research environment where individuals can thrive and work productively.* At the University of Warwick, we are committed to fostering a fair, inclusive, and supportive research environment in which individuals can thrive and conduct excellent research. Since 2021/22, we have delivered a range of major institutional programmes, including the PATHWAY programme addressing the underrepresentation of Black researchers, comprehensive initiatives to support early career researcher wellbeing, development of a Research Culture Catalogue showcasing more than one hundred grassroots-funded projects, and our co-leadership of the Midlands Innovation TALENT programme. We also celebrate our research community annually through the Research Celebration event. To guide and coordinate this work, we established the Research Culture Forum and, in 2025, undertook an institution-wide consultation to develop a community-derived Research Culture Roadmap and Action Plan. Warwick has further strengthened its national and international influence through the establishment of the National Centre for Research Culture in 2023. Through flagship initiatives such as the annual International Research Culture Conference, the Research Culture Enablers Network, Conversation Series, and the International Consortium for Research Culture, Warwick has played a central role in convening diverse stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and co-create. This evolving ecosystem has fostered new networks, supported collaborative funding success, and expanded opportunities for collective learning and sharing of best practice. Our research culture activity is supported by an external Advisory Board, ensuring that our work remains connected, innovative, and credible.
- 1.21. *Development of a workload framework.* From 2023, the University of Warwick has implemented an Academic Workload Allocation Framework, which sets out principles for allocating academic workload in a fair, transparent, and balanced manner. The Framework accounts for the diversity of academic roles and disciplinary practices, enabling effective planning by Heads of

Department and ensuring alignment with institutional priorities. It also supports consistency in workload modelling and contributes to simplifying institutional reporting processes such as Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC).

- 1.22. *Develop a research training strategy.* The University of Warwick has enhanced its training and development provision to support researchers at all career stages, with a strong focus on early career and postgraduate researchers. A dedicated Researcher Training Working Group has developed a comprehensive Researcher Training and Development Directory, while the co-designed Doctoral Researcher Development Programme provides tailored support across disciplines in key areas such as methodology, writing, careers, and wellbeing. Additional initiatives include a researcher-specific induction, Research Leadership training, and the Early-Stage Researcher Development Framework, which supports informed career planning and research direction. The Institute of Advanced Study further empowers postdoctoral researchers through its flagship events and training programme, Accolade, designed to foster career development and collaboration. Additionally, Research and Impact Services commissions training for researchers seeking to apply to Horizon Europe and collaborate with European partners. Established in 2026, Research Culture Week helps create critical mass by bringing together training and development opportunities from across the University. Organised around Warwick's research culture commitments, the programme offers bitesize sessions that showcase support available throughout the year and reinforces the University's commitment to staff development, including the 10 days of professional development set out in the Researcher Development Concordat.

Part 2: Identifying Staff Contracts with Significant Responsibility for Research

Part 2: Summary

- Part 2 explains how the University identifies staff contracts with Significant Responsibility for Research, resources, and an expectation to undertake independent research.
- The University states that academic staff on 'Teaching and Research' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03) contracts meet the criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research and contribute to the REF 2029 staff volume measure.
- The section outlines the eligibility rules, including how FTE is calculated using HESA Staff data averaged across the two qualifying years (2025/26 and 2026/27), and clarifies which contract types do not contribute to the calculation (e.g. 'Teaching Only' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.01)).
- It sets out the institutional process for identifying eligible contracts, ensuring consistency across throughout the University of Warwick and reflecting REF 2029 guidance on contract types, research expectations, and employment continuity.
- **Why Part 2 matters:** It establishes a fair, consistent, and transparent basis for determining which staff contribute to the REF 2029 volume measure. This is crucial because this staff volume measure determines the number of outputs and impact case studies that must be submitted.

Policies and Procedures

- 2.1. Eligible contracts belong to academic members of staff whose primary employment function is 'Teaching and Research' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03) as recorded in HESA Staff data and are on university payroll within the REF 2029 FTE calculation period (i.e. 2025/26 and 2026/27).
- 2.2. [Section 3 paragraph 8.4 of REF 2029 Guidance](#) defines significant responsibility for research as:

"Contracts with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of the job role."
- 2.3. The position of the University of Warwick is that 'Teaching and Research' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03) contracts typically identify significant responsibility for research by meeting criteria stated in [Section 3 paragraphs 8.4.2- 8.4.4 of the REF 2029 Guidance](#), and provided below, for all Units of Assessment to which the University of Warwick will make a submission.

- 8.4.2 *Explicit time and resources are made available.’ Indicators of this could include one or more of:*
- *a specific proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the context of the institution's practices, and applied in a consistent way.*
 - *research allocation in a workload model or equivalent.*
- 8.4.3 *To engage actively in independent research.’ Indicators of this could include one or more of (HEIs are also advised to refer to the indicators of independence, as additional guidance on this aspect):*
- *eligibility to apply for external research funding as the lead or co-applicant.*
 - *access to research leave or sabbaticals.*
 - *membership of research centres or institutes within the HEI*
- 8.4.4 *‘And that is an expectation of the job role.’ Indicators of this could include one or more of:*
- *current research responsibilities as indicated in, for example, career pathways or stated objectives.*
 - *expectations of research by role as indicated in, for example, job descriptions and appraisals.*

2.4. In line with REF 2029 Guidance on the staff volume measure [Section 3 paragraph 4.0.1-4.0.5](#), and provided below, the identification of significant responsibility for research serves a core purpose as it enables the identification of eligible staff contracts and their associated FTE (HESA: CONFTE) in the HESA Staff data, which is averaged over 2025/26 and 2026/27 to calculate the number of outputs and impact case studies required for each Unit of Assessment. To contribute to the FTE for REF 2029, an eligible contract must be held by a staff member who is on the University payroll in at least one of the qualifying years (2025/26 or 2026/27). While the staff volume measure is calculated using these two years only, outputs may be drawn from across the full REF 2029 publication period (1 January 2021 – 31 December 2028).

- 4.0.1 *The volume measure in REF 2029 ensures that the scale of an institution’s submission aligns with its research capacity. It will be used to determine the number of outputs and impact case studies required for each Unit of Assessment (UoA) submission, ensuring proportionality.*
- 4.0.2 *Only ‘Research Only’ (Contract.ACEMPFUN 2) and ‘Teaching and Research’ (Contract.ACEMPFUN 3) contract types will contribute to the volume measure calculation.*
- 4.0.3 *The volume measure for REF 2029 will be calculated based on the percentage of a full-time equivalent year (CONFTE) of these contracts that have significant responsibility for research (SRR), and research independence (RI).*
- 4.0.4 *This approach marks a significant shift from previous REF exercises. Instead of a single census date where staff lists were submitted, REF 2029 will calculate the volume*

measure by averaging the CONFTE of volume contributing contracts across the two academic years 2025-26 and 2026-27.

4.0.5 The volume measure will be expressed as a decimal. The funding bodies will make this calculation by totalling CONFTE for volume contributing contracts and dividing the total by 100, for example a CONFTE of 250% would be expressed as 2.5.

- 2.5. The University of Warwick returns its teaching-focussed staff to HESA as 'Teaching Only' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.01) and therefore these contracts do not contribute to the staff volume measure calculation.
- 2.6. The contracts of staff members with a primary academic employment function of 'Teaching and Research' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03), as recorded in the HESA Staff data (2025/26 and 2026/27), will be routinely identified to contribute to the REF 2029 staff volume measure calculation (HESA: REFQUALCON.01). This covers all our 'Teaching and Research' staff, Assistant Professors through to full Professor.

Part 3: Determining Research Independence

Part 3: Summary

- Part 3 outlines how the University determines research independence, particularly for staff on 'Research Only' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.02) contracts, whose independence must be established for their FTE to contribute to the REF 2029 volume measure.
- The University treats all 'Teaching and Research' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03) staff as independent researchers, while 'Research Only' staff are assessed using indicators set out in REF 2029 guidance, such as Principal Investigator status, competitively-won fellowships, or leadership of a research area or work package.
- A structured annual assessment process is set out, involving departmental review, validation by the REF Planning team, oversight by the REF Submission Steering Group, and final approval by the REF Executive Group.
- The University provides a clear communication and appeals process, including transparency for 'Research Only' staff, support for colleagues on long-term leave, and a formal appeals panel to review claims of procedural error.
- **Why Part 3 matters:** Establishing research independence ensures the staff volume measure accurately reflects the research capacity of the University of Warwick, safeguards fairness for 'Research Only' staff, and ensures compliance with REF 2029 guidance governing which contracts can contribute FTE to the staff volume measure.

Policies and Procedures

- 3.1. For the avoidance of doubt, all colleagues on 'Teaching and Research' contracts (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03) are typically considered by the University of Warwick to be independent researchers.
- 3.2. For contracts belonging to a member of staff whose primary employment function is 'Research Only' (HESA: ACEMPFUN.02), as recorded in HESA Staff data and are on the university payroll within the REF 2029 FTE calculation period (i.e. 2025/26 and 2026/27), the University of Warwick must determine research independence for the associated FTE to contribute to the staff volume measure calculation (HESA: REFQUALCON.01).
- 3.3. Whilst the intention of REF 2029 is to decouple research outputs from the staff volume measure, REF 2029 Guidance [Section 4 paragraph 6.7.1](#) states that:
 - 6.7.1 *Outputs sole-authored by, or where the only substantive link to the institutions is through the following groups, will not be eligible for submission:*
 - *postgraduate research students (including PhD theses)*

- *visiting or honorary staff*
- *staff on teaching only contracts (that is, those returned to the HESA Staff record as ACEMPFUN.01)*
- *individuals employed on academic or other contracts with no explicit expectation of research within the job role, technical teaching or support only contract.*

This decision responds to concerns that unreasonable pressure may be placed on staff who are not provided with time or resources to undertake or enable research. This does not apply to those on non-academic contracts where the individual contributes to the unit's research (e.g. technicians). An institution's pool of submissions is therefore likely to predominantly reflect those individuals with significant responsibility for research or demonstrate research independence.

- 3.4. The determination of research independence for 'Research Only' staff serve a core purpose for REF 2029 as it enables the identification of eligible contracts and their associated FTEs (HESA: CONFTE) in the HESA Staff data, which are averaged over the academic years 2025/26 and 2026/27 to calculate the number of outputs and impact case studies required for each Unit of Assessment. To contribute to the FTE for REF 2029, an eligible contract must be held by a staff member who is on the University payroll in at least one of the qualifying years (2025/26 or 2026/27). Whilst the calculation of the FTE only covers two qualifying years, outputs can be used from the whole REF 2029 period (1 January 2021 – 31 December 2028).
- 3.5. Within the scope of this Code of Practice, an individual is considered to have commenced their career as an independent researcher from the point that:
- they held a contract of employment, which included a primary employment function of undertaking research with any Higher Education Institution or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, **and**
 - they first met the definition of an independent researcher, as set out below.
- 3.6. A definition of independent researcher, and possible indicators, are set out in the REF 2029 Guidance [Section 3 paragraph 9.2.1](#). An independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than another individual's research programme. For example, it is expected that a 'Research Only' contract of a Research Assistant (sometimes referred to as a post-doctoral research assistant), Research Associates and in many cases a Research Fellow would not normally be eligible as these researchers are typically working on somebody else's research project, therefore do not meet the 'self-directed' research criterion to demonstrate independence.
- 3.7. The University of Warwick considers that the vast majority of 'Research Only' staff employed on research grants, internally Grade 6 or below, and undertaking research directed by a named Principal Investigator who won the research funding, will not meet the REF 2029 definition of an independent researcher and therefore, their contract would not contribute to the volume measure.

- 3.8. The University takes the view that all 'Research Only' contracts will be assessed for research independence, only for the purpose of determining which contracts contribute to the REF 2029 staff volume measure, the procedure for which is detailed below.
- 3.9. Possible indicators of independence are listed below. We note that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and, where appropriate, multiple factors may need to be considered. Across all main panels, the following indicators would normally identify research independence:
- leading or acting as Principal Investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project
 - holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement
 - leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package
- 3.10. A [list of competitive research fellowships](#) that, according to funders inherently require or demonstrate research independence is set out on the REF 2029 website. It intends to support the identification of 'Research Only' staff who meet the REF 2029 definition of research independence, in accordance with the criteria outlined in [Section 9.2.1 of the Volume Measure guidance](#). Fellowships included in this reference list are considered indicative of research independence and may therefore support the classification of relevant contracts as contributing to the volume measure.
- 3.11. Furthermore, Units of Assessment 13-34 also consider the following attributes may generally indicate research independence in their disciplines.
- being named as a co-Investigator on an externally funded research grant or award.
 - having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.
- 3.12. In line with REF 2029 Guidance [Section 3 paragraph 9.3](#) research independence should be considered persistent and only removed in exceptional cases.
- 3.13. The overall process to determine research independence will be as follows:
- a. Each year, the University will identify all staff employed on 'Research Only' contracts by reviewing data in the People Management system (SuccessFactors) from January, ahead of the HESA Staff data submission deadline for that academic year.
 - b. The department, with oversight from the Unit of Assessment Management Team, will be responsible for reviewing this cohort and providing initial assessments of research independence, based on REF 2029 Guidance and their understanding of individual roles and responsibilities.

- c. The REF Planning team will supplement these assessments with data relating to research grants, contracts, and qualifying fellowships, as outlined in REF 2029 Guidance, to support a robust determination process.
 - d. The Units of Assessment Management Team, in collaboration with the REF Submission Steering Group, will agree decisions regarding research independence for all 'Research Only' staff. The REF Planning team will provide provisional analyses to assist in this process.
 - e. The REF Executive Group will review and approve the final list of research independent staff annually by October, in advance of the HESA Staff data submission deadline.
- 3.14. To support transparency, consistency, and fairness in determining research independence, the University of Warwick will execute a structured and inclusive communication approach for 'Research Only' staff and will provide clear and detailed guidance to these colleagues on the criteria, expectations, and principles that underpin these determinations. Through this approach, the University balances clear communication and procedural consistency.
- 3.15. The guidance on researcher independence, along with the process for determining research independence, will be communicated through established institutional channels such as internal staff updates and departmental meetings, tailored workshops, and the annual personal development review process.
- 3.16. 'Research Only' staff will be notified, following the REF Executive Group's approval of the annual HESA Staff data, that they may request their research independence determination. Staff who wish to find out their determination or obtain further clarification may do so by emailing the REF Planning team (refplanning@warwick.ac.uk), who will provide information on the decision reached and the process followed.
- 3.17. In situations where staff are on long-term leave, care will be taken to ensure that determination of their research independence by the University is communicated to them. While direct engagement during such periods may not always be feasible, Heads of Department will be expected to review available evidence of their research activities and consult with the People Team as needed to make fair and reasonable assessments. These colleagues will also be written to directly to inform them of the process and how they may request their determination should they wish to do so, as outlined in paragraph 3.16 of this Code of Practice.
- 3.18. Should staff who consider that the process of determining research independence was not correctly followed and wish to query on this basis may do so through established departmental or People Team channels. Formal appeals will be considered confidentially by the REF Appeals Panel, which will consult relevant departments and communicate outcomes to the staff member and Head of Department as appropriate.

Staff, Committees, and Training

- 3.19. The staff and committees outlined below are responsible for determining research independence and selecting outputs for REF 2029 submission. Training for all those involved in these decision-making bodies is outlined in paragraphs 3.45-3.48 of this Institutional Code of Practice.
- 3.20. The research independence status of a researcher, as determined by the REF 2029 processes, will not be used for any other purpose than the overall calculation of the Unit of Assessment, and institutional, staff volume measure.
- 3.21. This section provides details of the decision-making bodies that will oversee the determination of research independence for REF 2029 submission.

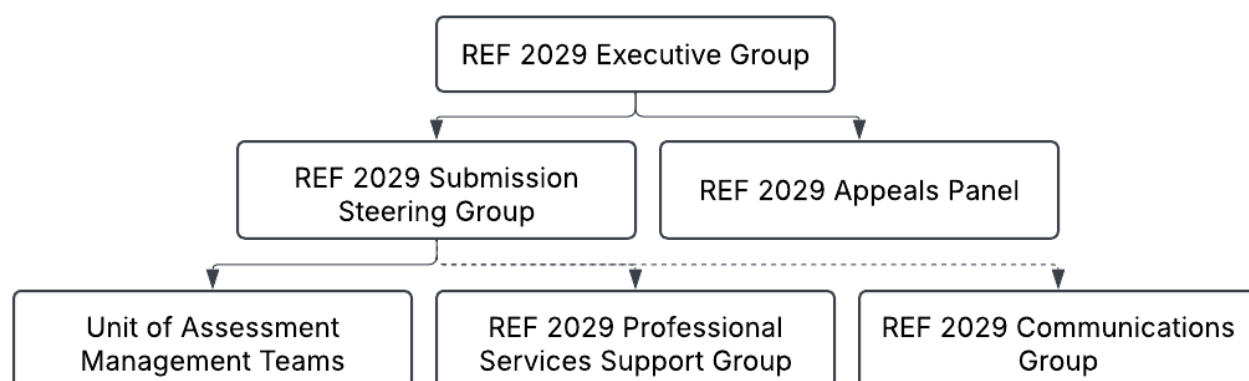


Figure 1. Diagram of University of Warwick REF 2029 Governance Structures. Solid lines indicate groups with decision-making responsibilities; dashed lines indicate reporting relationships for groups without decision-making responsibilities.

REF Executive Group

- 3.22. The REF Executive Group is the overarching body that steers REF institutional strategy and policy. It does not meet with academic departments. REF Executive Group membership and Terms of Reference are listed below.
- 3.23. The membership of the REF Executive Group is as follows:
- Chair: Vice-Chancellor
 - Provost
 - Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research

- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Research Impact, Governance and Ethics)
- Vice-Provost and Chair, Faculty of Arts
- Vice-Provost and Chair, Faculty of Social Sciences
- Vice-Provost and Chair, Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
- Chief People Officer
- University Librarian
- Director of Research and Impact Services

In attendance

- Associate Director (Research Policy, Performance and Systems), Research and Impact Services
- Head of Research Planning (REF Manager), Research and Impact Services

3.24. The Terms of Reference of the REF Executive Group are as follows:

- On behalf of the Senate, to have oversight of the University's preparations for the REF 2029.
- To develop overarching policies and strategies for managing the University's submission to REF 2029.

3.25. The Head of Research Planning (REF Manager), Research and Impact Services, and the Associate Director (Research Policy, Performance and Systems), Research and Impact Services shall serve as Secretariat to the Group.

REF Submission Steering Group

3.26. The REF Submission Steering Group is the body that meets directly with Unit of Assessment Management Teams to prepare and consider all aspects of the University's REF submission, focusing on the core areas of REF 2029 assessment: namely Contributions to Knowledge and Understanding, Engagement and Impact, and Strategy, People and Research Environment.

3.27. The membership of REF Submission Steering Group comprises a subset of the REF Executive Group membership: the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) (or nominee) shall chair meetings with Units of Assessment Management Teams, and the requisite Deputy Chair (Research) of the Faculty Board shall also be present as a member of the Group. The Head of Research Planning (REF Manager), Research and Impact Services, and the Associate Director (Research Policy, Performance and Systems), Research and Impact Services shall serve as Secretariat to the Group. Faculty Heads of Administration and/or Departmental Administrators shall attend in an advisory capacity only, where necessary.

- Chair: Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research

- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Research Culture)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Research Impact, Governance and Ethics)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (STEM Impact, Knowledge Exchange and Partnerships)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Interdisciplinarity and Research Communications)
- Deputy Chair, Faculty of Arts
- Deputy Chair, Faculty of Social Sciences
- Deputy Chair, Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine

Unit of Assessment Management Team:

- Unit of Assessment, or Departmental REF, Lead (s)
- Head of Department (s)
- Director of Research (s)
- Director of Impact (s)

In attendance

- Director of Research and Impact Services
- Associate Director (Research Policy, Performance and Systems), Research and Impact Services
- Head of Research Planning (REF Manager), Research and Impact Services
- Assistant Director and Head of Research Impact, Research and Impact Services

3.28. Attendance at meetings will reflect the Unit of Assessment, i.e. Deputy Chairs and Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellors will only attend meetings for the departments and/or Units of Assessment under their remit.

3.29. The University recognises that REF 2029 Units of Assessment do not always correspond directly to departmental structures. Accordingly, the configuration of Units of Assessment for REF 2029 has been informed by assessment of disciplinary strengths, past REF performance, and readiness consultations with departments. Operational engagement with Units of Assessment is undertaken through the REF Submission Steering Group, reflecting the fact that Units of Assessment represent REF 2029 disciplinary groupings rather than organisational reporting lines.

3.30. The Terms of Reference of the REF Submission Steering Group are as follows:

- To confirm the identification of staff with significant responsibility for research, determinations of research independence and the selection of outputs for submission to REF 2029.
- To approve assessed quality level ratings for research outputs and impact case studies. The REF Submission Steering Group decisions on such matters are final.
- To act as the sole decision-making body on contract eligibility used to determine the CONFTE.
- To consider and sign-off submissions to Unit of Assessments.

3.31. The membership of the REF Executive Group and REF Submission Steering Group has been drawn from professorial and senior professional services staff who are members of the University's senior management.

Unit of Assessment Management Team

3.32. Unit of Assessment Management Teams are senior academic staff responsible for coordinating all aspects of REF 2029 preparation within their Unit of Assessment. They act as the primary operational group working with the REF Submission Steering Group, providing subject-specific expertise, drafting and reviewing the submission components, ensuring that the submission reflects the full range of research undertaken within the Unit of Assessment.

3.33. In cases where the submission to a Unit of Assessment has contributions from more than one university department, the Unit of Assessment Management Team functions as a cross-departmental coordinating body. It is responsible for ensuring consistent interpretation of REF 2029 guidance, fair representation of all participating departments, and coherent drafting of the submission. Membership from each contributing department is required to ensure that decision-making is inclusive and informed by the breadth of the Unit of Assessment's research activity.

3.34. Guidance for the Unit of Assessment Management Team are:

- To ensure that the research outputs selected are of the highest quality and to ensure that they are representative of the submitting Unit of Assessment, reflecting the diversity of contributions, research areas, output types and research strengths across the Unit of Assessment.
- To apply transparent and consistent approaches for output selection, Unit of Assessment assignment, working within the principles set out by this Code of Practice.
- To facilitate and review output quality assessments, identifying gaps, imbalances and where outputs may be considered for an alternative Unit of Assessment, and advising where external review or subject-specific expertise may be required.
- To recommend the outputs selected for submission to REF 2029.

- 3.35. The Unit of Assessment Management Team will typically make decisions by consensus. Where disagreement arises, particularly within multi-department Units of Assessment, the Unit of Assessment Lead (s) are responsible for facilitating discussion, presenting options, and seeking an agreed position. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter will be referred to the REF Submission Steering Group.
- 3.36. The list of roles set out under *Unit of Assessment Management Team* in paragraph 3.27 represents a minimum membership rather than a fixed or exhaustive list, and departments may expand membership to reflect local structures and workload needs. Additional members may include, for example, relevant Departmental Administrators or REF relevant professional services staff who should attend in an advisory capacity only and to support effective submission planning.
- 3.37. The Unit of Assessment Lead will typically be the nominated member of staff within a department who holds responsibility for its REF 2029 submission. Where a submission draws on research from more than one department, a single Unit of Assessment Lead may be jointly appointed by the contributing Heads of Department, or the respective departmental REF Leads may act as co-Leads for the Unit of Assessment.

REF Professional Services Group

- 3.38. The REF Professional Services Group will not have any decision-making powers but will be essential to coordinate REF 2029 submission activities.
- Chair: Director of Research and Impact Services
 - Co-Chair: Associate Director (Research Policy, Performance and Systems), Research and Impact Services
 - Head of Research Planning (REF Manager), Research and Impact Services
 - Associate Director and Head of Research and Academic Services, Library
 - Open Research Manager, Library
 - REF Lead, People Team
 - REF Lead, DataLabs (HESA Returns)
 - Associate Director (Research Culture, Governance and Compliance), Research and Impact Services
 - Assistant Director and Head of Research Impact, Research and Impact Services
 - Research Culture Manager, Research and Impact Services
 - Representative from the Social Inclusion Team

In attendance:

- Research Strategy Development Managers, Research and Impact Services
- Research Planning Manager, Research and Impact Services
- Research Planning Officer, Research and Impact Services

3.39. The Terms of Reference for the REF Professional Services Group are:

- To coordinate REF 2029 submission preparations and activities across professional services, ensuring alignment with institutional requirements.
- To facilitate information flows between central teams, academic departments, and committees involved in REF 2029 preparation.
- To promote consistency in operations, data handling, and compliance across professional services in support of institutional REF 2029 preparations.
- To report and escalate professional-services matters, risks, issues, and resource requirements relating to REF 2029 to the REF Executive Group.
- To identify opportunities to streamline processes, share best practice, and improve efficiency across all REF 2029-related support functions.
- To ensure Professional Services staff are informed, trained, and supported in relation to their REF 2029 roles and responsibilities.

REF Communications Group

3.40. The REF Communications Group will not have any decision-making powers in respect of the processes outlined in this Code of Practice but will coordinate REF 2029 internal and external Communications activities.

- Chair: Associate Director (Research Policy, Performance and Systems), Research and Impact Services
- Head of Research Planning (REF Manager), Research and Impact Services
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Interdisciplinarity and Research Communications)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Research Culture)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Research Impact, Governance and Ethics)
- Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (STEM Impact, Knowledge Exchange and Partnerships)
- Assistant Director and Head of Research Impact, Research and Impact Services
- Associate Director (Brand Strategy and Campaigns), Chief Communication and Marketing Officers Group
- Research Communications Manager, Chief Communication and Marketing Officers Group

- Digital Marketing Officer (Research), Chief Communication and Marketing Officers Group
- Research Culture Manager, Research and Impact Services
- Representative from the Internal Communications team, Chief Communication and Marketing Officers Group
- Representative from the Press Office, Chief Communication and Marketing Officers Group
- Research Planning Officer, Research and Impact Services (Secretary)

3.41. The Terms of Reference for the REF Communications Group are:

- To develop and oversee a REF communications strategy to support staff, leadership, and external stakeholders.
- To ensure key messages are consistent, accurate, and aligned with institutional values.
- To provide guidance on the timing, tone, and format of REF-related communications.
- To identify and mitigate risks associated with REF-related messaging (e.g., staff morale, reputational risks).
- To act as a point of coordination between academic units, professional services, and senior leadership.
- To monitor the effectiveness of communications and adjust where necessary.

REF Appeals Panel

3.42. The membership for the REF Appeals Panel follows:

- University of Warwick Professor Emeritus
- An academic representative of the Senate
- Chief People Officer (or delegated alternate)
- An independent Member of Council.

3.43. The Terms of Reference for the REF Appeals Panel are:

- To consider cases of staff members who have appealed against the decision of the REF Submission Steering Group regarding research independence on the basis that the decision with regards to research independence was made because of a procedural error.
- To re-examine how the decision regarding research independence was reached and to seek further evidence, where necessary, to confirm or change the REF Submission Steering Group's decision.

- 3.44. The REF Appeals Panel will meet as required and depending on the number of appeals.
- 3.45. Equality and Diversity training is available via different routes to all members of staff, from face-to-face training, online modules, video resources, how-to guides and awareness events.
- 3.46. Staff involved in making decisions about research independence are appointed to REF Executive Group, REF Submission Steering Group and REF Appeals Panel.
- 3.47. In addition, staff from Professional Services with appropriate professional expertise and whose roles require their involvement will play a key role in the process and advising the above groups and panels.
- 3.48. All staff involved in REF 2029 decision making will participate in equality opportunities legislation, unconscious bias, legal compliance and REF 2029 selection processes training. Professional services staff who are involved in the process will also be required to attend.

Appeals

- 3.49. Staff who believe that a decision regarding their eligibility for REF 2029, as determined by the University's process for assessing research independence, has resulted from an error in the process outlined in Part 3, have the right to query or appeal.
- 3.50. A nominated Pro-Vice-Chancellor or named deputy, not otherwise involved in the determination of research independence for REF 2029, will be appointed to help and advise potential appellants.
- 3.51. Members of staff considering making an appeal are encouraged to discuss their case with the nominated Pro-Vice-Chancellor or deputy. Appellants should contact refappeals@warwick.ac.uk to arrange to meet with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor or their deputy.
- 3.52. Appellants are requested to complete the Appeals pro forma which can be found at Appendix 6.2.3 or by emailing refappeals@warwick.ac.uk.
- 3.53. Appeals to research independence decisions can be submitted at any time.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.54. A thorough and systematic Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted on the policy and procedures for determining research independence to assess whether criteria and decision-making processes are proportionate, evidence-based, and applied consistently across all staff groups.
- 3.55. For policy and procedures relating to the identification of research independence of 'Research Only' contracts, the assessment shall consider data on the protected characteristics of staff determined to meet the definition.
- 3.56. The statistical analysis reviewed as part of the Equality Impact Assessment will be used to inform decision making, ensuring that no group with protected characteristics are treated differently and where discrepancies are identified that these are justified or mitigated.
- 3.57. A review of the Equality Impact Assessment will be a standing agenda item at the REF Submission Steering Group meetings. The REF Executive Group will consider this data, and any apparent imbalances will be investigated by members of the Group. If any imbalance is judged to reflect inequality, the REF Executive Group will address the matter before making its submission in 2028. Full details of the Equality Impact Assessment will also be available to the REF Appeals Panel.

Part 4: Allocating Contracts to Unit(s) of Assessment

Part 4: Summary

- Part 4 explains how the University of Warwick assigns eligible staff contracts to the most appropriate Unit of Assessment, based on the individual's substantive research area rather than organisational structures or cost centres.
- A clear annual assignation process is described, involving identification of eligible contracts, initial review by Unit of Assessment Management Teams, institutional consistency checks by the REF Planning team, and final approval by the REF Executive Group.
- The policy permits divergence from HESA cost centres where justified and recognises that Unit of Assessment allocation may change over time as staff roles or research trajectories evolve.
- Clear procedures are included for colleagues with multiple eligible contracts, ensuring each contract is allocated individually and recorded accurately in the HESA REFUA2029 field.
- **Why Part 4 matters:** Accurate Unit of Assessment assignation underpins coherent submissions, ensures that the staff volume measure aligns with disciplinary fit, and enables outputs and impact case studies to be planned effectively across the institution.

Policies and Procedures.

- 4.1. Each eligible staff contract must be associated with a [Unit of Assessment](#) that best reflects the individual's area of academic or research responsibility. This association must be recorded in the REFUA2029 field of the HESA Staff data and must be supported by a clear rationale. While the alignment of a contract to a Unit of Assessment should be consistent and defensible, it is also recognised that research activities and institutional structures evolve over time. Therefore, the allocation of contracts to Unit of Assessment may change from year to year to reflect substantive shifts in staff roles or research direction.
- 4.2. Although HESA cost centres can provide a useful starting point for understanding a staff member's academic context, the University of Warwick acknowledges that they do not necessarily determine the appropriate Unit of Assessment for REF 2029 purposes.
- 4.3. Divergence from the HESA cost centre is permitted, if there is a clear rationale for the Unit of Assessment allocation, which should be documented and available for audit if requested. The priority in all cases is to ensure that the allocation of an eligible contract reflects the substantive research contributions of the individual, in alignment with the submitting Unit of Assessment as determined by the REF Submission Steering Group.

- 4.4. The overall process for allocating eligible contracts to a Unit of Assessment will be as follows:
- a. The REF Planning team will identify all eligible academic staff contracts through the People Management system (SuccessFactors) from the January prior to the HESA Staff data submission deadline for each academic year.
 - b. The relevant department, with oversight from the Unit of Assessment Management Team, will review this data and provide initial recommendations on Unit of Assessment assignment, drawing on REF 2029 Guidance, Panel Criteria, this Institutional Code of Practice and their knowledge of staff roles, research activity, and disciplinary alignment.
 - c. Initial mapping will be reviewed by the REF Planning Team in Research and Impact Services to ensure consistency and compliance with REF 2029 guidance. Allocation decisions will be validated against the staff member's job description, research outputs, and institutional structures.
 - d. Unit of Assessment Management Teams will make initial recommendations based on disciplinary expertise, which will be reviewed with the REF Submission Steering Group to account for institutional considerations.
 - e. The REF Executive Group will review and approve the final Unit of Assessment assignments annually by October, ahead of the HESA Staff data submission deadline to ensure allocations optimise the coherence of the submission.
- 4.5. For members of staff with multiple eligible contracts, each contract will be considered independently, and where appropriate, assigned to different Units of Assessment. The HESA: REFUOA2029 field must be completed accurately for each contract. All allocation decisions will be recorded, with justifications maintained in an auditable format.
- 4.6. For the avoidance of doubt, as per the REF 2029 Guidance, the staff volume measure and outputs are no longer directly linked for submission purposes. Therefore, outputs may be submitted to a Unit of Assessment that differs from the one associated with the author's eligible contract. Assignment of Unit of Assessment to outputs is detailed in this Code of Practice in paragraphs 5.28-5.35.

Staff, Committees, and Training

- 4.7. The staff with responsibility for allocating eligible contracts to Units of Assessment reflect the structures and terms of reference for decision making is outlined in paragraphs 3.22-3.44.
- 4.8. Departments, with oversight from Unit of Assessment Management Teams, will make final recommendations to the REF Submission Steering Group on the allocation of eligible contracts to Units of Assessment.
- 4.9. REF Submission Steering Group drawing on advice of Unit of Assessment Management Teams, advises the REF Executive Group on final decisions on allocation of eligible contracts to Units of Assessment.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.10. A thorough and systematic Equality Impact Assessment will evaluate whether the process for assigning eligible staff contracts to Units of Assessment is designed and applied in a transparent, inclusive, and equitable manner. Attention will be paid to the potential for structural bias, such as the disproportionate allocation of certain staff groups to specific Unit of Assessment based on disciplinary assumptions, research focus, or historical practices.
- 4.11. The Equality Impact Assessment will draw on anonymised and aggregate demographic data to assess the potential for direct or indirect discrimination relating to protected characteristics. Where potential adverse impacts are identified, appropriate mitigations will be implemented, including the use of consistent and inclusive assignment criteria, training for those involved in the allocation process, and ongoing monitoring of Unit of Assessment assignment patterns.
- 4.12. The Equality Impact Assessment will be informed by engagement with relevant staff networks, governance groups, and equality, diversity, and inclusion representatives to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered and reflected in the allocation process.
- 4.13. A standing item at REF Submission Steering Group meetings will focus on monitoring and reviewing emerging patterns in Unit of Assessment assignments.
- 4.14. The REF Executive Group will receive and consider regular reports on these patterns and investigate any identified disparities. Where such disparities suggest potential inequalities, the REF Executive Group will oversee the implementation of appropriate corrective actions well in advance of the final REF 2029 submission deadline.

Part 5: Selecting Outputs

Part 5: Summary

- Part 5 sets out how the University will select outputs for submission, emphasising that the decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2029 allows for a broader, more inclusive reflection of excellent research.
- Outputs will be selected solely based on quality, using REF 2029 criteria on originality, significance, and rigour, and not on factors such as seniority, contract type, or career stage; the number of outputs selected is determined by multiplying the staff volume measure by 2.5.
- Detailed procedures ensure outputs meet the substantive link requirements, including employment criteria, internal research support, and rules for former staff, non-research contracts, and long-form outputs with time-limited exceptions.
- The section outlines processes for interdisciplinary outputs, cross-Unit of Assessment discussion, treatment of diverse output types (including non-textual and multilingual work), and periodic monitoring for output diversity and representativeness.
- **Why Part 5 matters:** Robust and inclusive output selection ensures that each Unit of Assessment's submission represents the excellence and breadth of Warwick's research, complies with REF 2029 policy, and supports responsible research assessment practices aligned with CoARA principles.

- 5.1. The decoupling of outputs from the staff volume measure provides increased flexibility to develop an inclusive and equitable portfolio of outputs that best represents the excellent research undertaken within a Unit of Assessment.
- 5.2. Each Unit of Assessment Management Team will apply a transparent, structured process for the selection of outputs, grounded in the principles of academic integrity, consistency, and inclusivity. Outputs will be selected based solely on research quality as defined by REF 2029 criteria without regard to the author's seniority, contract type, or career stage.
- 5.3. When selecting outputs for inclusion in the University of Warwick's REF 2029 submission, decisions will be based on identifying those outputs that demonstrate the highest intrinsic quality and the strongest alignment to the relevant Unit of Assessment, as assessed in accordance with the REF 2029 Guidance and Panel Criteria for outputs first made publicly available during the REF publication period (1 January 2021 – 31 December 2028).

- 5.4. As per REF 2029 Guidance [Section 4 paragraph 2](#), for each Unit of Assessment, the University of Warwick will submit a number of research outputs equal to the Unit of Assessment staff volume measure multiplied by 2.5 and rounded to the nearest whole number.
- 5.5. The University of Warwick will require each Unit of Assessment Management Team to submit to Senate a summary of the principles underpinning the review and selection of outputs for consideration by REF Submission Steering Group.
- 5.6. The decisions on the selection of outputs will be made with the aim of ensuring the best overall submission for the University of Warwick, by submitting only those outputs that represent the highest quality of research. The best decision is understood to be a fair and transparent selection process that reflects the full breadth of excellent work undertaken by our staff and maximises quality in the context of the Units of Assessment that are being submitted to the REF 2029 assessment.
- 5.7. Decisions on the selection of outputs for submission to REF 2029 will be used solely to build the highest-quality submission and will not be used for any other purpose.
- 5.8. These core principles underpin the University of Warwick's approach when selecting outputs for submission to REF 2029 and are operationalised through the policies and procedures outlined in paragraphs 5.9–5.58 that follow.

Policies and Procedures

o Identifying substantive link to outputs

- 5.9. A 'substantive link' is defined as a verifiable association between the University and the research leading to an output, based on an 'eligible employment relationship.' The University of Warwick must have enabled or supported the research that resulted in the output.
- 5.10. An 'eligible employment relationship', as set out in the REF 2029 Guidance [Section 4 paragraph 6.3](#), is defined as:
- *A minimum of 0.2 FTE for at least 12 months continuous employment (as defined by Section 210 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA 1996) or the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996) by the HEI making the submission. Continuous employment may be demonstrated by a sequence of consecutive contracts.*
- AND
- *The role descriptor includes an explicit expectation of research activity (as distinct from scholarship) within the role.*

5.11. An eligible employment relationship must have occurred either at the time the submitted output was first made publicly available or before the submitted output was first made publicly available, when the research resulting in the output was carried out. For most outputs, this period falls between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2028, though it may be extended for long-form or extended process outputs as determined by the respective sub-panels. Outputs made publicly available before the employment relationship began are not eligible, unless covered by approved exceptions.

5.12. To verify the substantive link, outputs identified for consideration of submission to REF 2029 shall be assigned a 'submitting author' by the Unit of Assessment Management Team(s). Using the HESA ID of the submitting author, the REF Planning team in Research and Impact Services shall determine the following information:

- Employment dates at the University of Warwick
- Contract type and duties (whether there is an expectation of research)
- FTE and duration of contract
- Continuity of employment

No information on eligible employment relationships, substantive links, links to outputs or individualised staff data will be published by Research England or enter the public domain following the conclusion of REF 2029.

5.13. The timing of the eligible employment relationship is key to establishing a substantive link:

- if the eligible employment relationship occurred at the point of publication, the substantive link to the output is accepted.
- if the eligible employment relationship occurred before publication, additional supporting evidence is required.
- if the eligible employment relationship occurred after publication, the output is ineligible unless it qualifies under an approved exception.

5.14. Where the substantive link occurs before the date the output is first made publicly available, the Unit of Assessment must provide evidence to support the outputs submission to REF 2029 for review by the REF Submission Steering Group so that the outputs eligibility for REF 2029 submission is determined. The evidence may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Internal research support. For example, funding for research materials, technical or research support, conference attendance, laboratory space, or resources/materials.
- Internal or external work-in progress presentations.
- External grant to support a relevant programme of research.

- Eligible employment relationship when the research resulting in the output was undertaken.
- 5.15. In line with REF 2029 Guidance [Section 4 paragraphs 6.4.3 and 6.5.1](#), the time-limited period prior to publication during which the research must have been conducted to establish a substantive link may extend before January 2021. For most outputs, this period is up to two years before publication, while for long-form or extended-process outputs it extends to five years.
- 5.16. In line with REF 2029 Guidance [Section 4 paragraph 6.10.2](#) long-form or extended-process outputs, for example monographs or curated exhibitions, may be submitted even if the eligible employment relationship began after publication, provided they fall within a time-limited exception period, defined by the REF 2029 main panels as five years.
- 5.17. For the avoidance of doubt, outputs will not be eligible where the only substantive link to the University of Warwick is through individuals without an eligible employment relationship. This includes postgraduate research students and visiting or honorary staff. Outputs solely authored by, or solely linked to the institution through, these groups cannot be submitted to REF 2029.
- 5.18. Outputs produced by staff employed on non-research contracts, such as 'Teaching Only' contracts (HESA: ACEMPFUN.01), are generally ineligible for submission to REF 2029. This reflects the absence of research responsibilities within these contract types. However, exceptions may be considered in cases where the University of Warwick has explicitly allocated time and funding to support research activity that directly led to the output. Such support must be clearly documented and demonstrate that the individual was enabled to undertake research beyond their contractual duties.
- 5.19. Where outputs from staff on non-research contracts are proposed for submission, the REF Submission Steering Group, in consultation with the department and oversight from the Unit of Assessment Management Team, must review the individual's contract to confirm there is no formal expectation of research. The department must then provide robust evidence that the University of Warwick explicitly supported the research activity, for example through workload, internal research funding awards, or other documented institutional support. This evidence should clearly show that the staff member had access to dedicated time and resources to undertake the research leading to the submitted output.
- 5.20. The department is responsible for submitting the evidence and proposed outputs to the REF Submission Steering Group for review. This process ensures consistency, transparency, and compliance with this Code of Practice and REF 2029 requirements, safeguarding the integrity of the submission and upholding fair assessment standards.

- 5.21. In cases where the REF Submission Steering Group endorse the submission of an output from a non-research contract to REF 2029, then only will the case be submitted to the REF 2029 team for formal clearance by the REF Director, which is in line with [Section 4 paragraph 6.8](#) of REF 2029 Guidance.
- o **Selecting outputs where the substantive link is via former staff**
- 5.22. Outputs published by former staff holding an eligible employment relationship with the University of Warwick during the REF 2029 period may be included in the submission.
- 5.23. Units of Assessment Management Teams planning to include an output published by a former member of staff should raise this with the REF Planning team in Research and Impact Services, who shall verify the eligible employment relationship of the former staff member using the REF 2029 criteria, summarised as follows:
- Held a contract of at least 0.2 FTE for 12 continuous months.
 - Had an explicit expectation of research in the contract.
 - Was employed at the time of publication or during the period in which the research was conducted, prior to publication.
 - Was not subject to compulsory redundancy at the time of or before publication.
- 5.24. In cases where the REF Submission Steering Group endorse the submission of an output from a former member of staff to REF 2029, where reasonably possible, the former member of staff will be notified of the intended submission, confirming the institutional support for the research and invited to raise their queries or concerns by email to refplanning@warwick.ac.uk.
- 5.25. In accordance with REF 2029 guidance, outputs for which the substantive link was established prior to the output being made publicly available will not be eligible for submission if the author was subject to compulsory redundancy.
- 5.26. For the avoidance of doubt, voluntary severance and retirement do not affect the eligibility of outputs, which may still be submitted where a substantive link can be demonstrated.
- 5.27. The University of Warwick recognises that there may be specific circumstances in which it is appropriate to submit outputs from staff subject to compulsory redundancy, to recognise their contribution during the REF 2029 assessment period. This provision particularly applies to individuals previously employed on fixed-term contracts, including early career researchers supported through research fellowships.

o Assigning outputs to Unit(s) of Assessment

- 5.28. Staff should provide details of their publications to the University of Warwick via deposit to its online repository, which holds additional information to ensure that Open Access eligibility requirements for outputs are met. Open Access compliance for all outputs in scope of the REF 2029 Open Access policy will be verified through the University's established repository processes.
- 5.29. Each Unit of Assessment Management Team will submit a summary of the principles underpinning the review and selection of outputs to REF Submission Steering Group.
- 5.30. The REF Submission Steering Group will oversee output review and selection processes to ensure a robust and consistent approach across all Units of Assessment. It will also expect Unit of Assessment Management Teams to communicate the output selection process to staff for outputs being considered by the REF Submission Steering Group.
- 5.31. A research output is initially assigned to the most appropriate Unit of Assessment by the relevant Unit of Assessment Management Team, using the REF 2029 Panel Criteria and Working Methods. Where the research spans multiple disciplines, the department and/or Unit of Assessment Management Team should flag it as an interdisciplinary or a cross-Unit of Assessment output to the REF Planning Team to ensure early engagement with other relevant Unit of Assessment Management Teams, coordinated discussion to assess disciplinary alignment, and the use of subject expertise from all contributing areas. The REF Submission Steering Group will oversee this review to ensure that interdisciplinary outputs are assigned to the Unit of Assessment(s) that best reflect their disciplinary focus.
- 5.32. The process for assigning outputs to Unit(s) of Assessment is as follows:
- a. The originating Unit of Assessment Management Team reviews the output against the REF 2029 Panel Criteria and Working Methods, considering whether the research spans multiple disciplinary areas or could reasonably align with more than one Unit of Assessment.
 - b. If no interdisciplinary content is identified, the output may be assigned to the initial Unit of Assessment, and the decision is recorded for audit purposes.
 - c. Where interdisciplinary content is identified, the output is formally flagged as an interdisciplinary or cross-Unit of Assessment case by the originating Unit of Assessment Management Team to the REF Planning Team, who then notify and share the output with the relevant alternative Unit of Assessment Management Team(s).

- d. The alternative Unit of Assessment Management Team(s) review the output, drawing on internal subject specialists across the contributing disciplines to assess the suitability of the output for their Unit of Assessment.
 - e. The output is then assessed against the relevant REF 2029 Panel Criteria and Working Methods to determine its best fit to an alternative Unit of Assessment.
 - f. A recommendation on the appropriate assignment of outputs to a Unit of Assessment is submitted to the REF Submission Steering Group, who review the proposed assignment to ensure fairness, consistency, and alignment with REF 2029 Guidance and Panel Criteria.
 - g. Should the relevant Unit of Assessment Management Teams disagree on the appropriate Unit(s) of Assessment assignment, the matter is escalated to the REF Submission Steering Group for resolution.
 - h. The confirmed Unit(s) of Assessment assignment is communicated to all relevant Unit of Assessment Management Teams and recorded by the REF Planning Team.
- 5.33. The REF Submission Steering Group reviews proposed output Unit of Assessment assignments to ensure they are based on disciplinary content rather than author affiliation, which shall maintain consistency and fairness across Units of Assessment and in compliance with this Code of Practice.
- 5.34. To prioritise transparency and engagement, where possible, authors are consulted on Unit of Assessment fit, with respect to interdisciplinary research.
- 5.35. Final decisions on assigning outputs to Unit of Assessment(s) rest with the REF Executive Group.
- o **Procedures for supporting diversity of outputs**
- 5.36. To ensure an inclusive approach to research outputs and to capture the full breadth of research activity, all staff are encouraged to nominate outputs of any type, textual, non-textual, practice-based, digital, or multi-modal, for consideration by their Unit of Assessment Management Team. This process is designed to recognise the diversity of research expression and prevent exclusion of outputs based on traditional disciplinary preferences or conventions of form.
- 5.37. All submitted outputs are assessed internally using criteria centred on originality, significance, and rigour. Reviewers are instructed, through institution-wide REF 2029 guidance documents and briefings, to judge outputs on content, not form, ensuring that diverse output types receive equal consideration and are not disadvantaged by disciplinary conventions or biases.

- 5.38. Where an output requires expertise beyond the immediate experience of the Unit of Assessment Management Team, independent or internal subject specialists with direct experience in the relevant mode of research are consulted where available. This ensures that all research outputs are evaluated with appropriate disciplinary understanding and contextual sensitivity.
- 5.39. The University recognises the value of research outputs published in any language and is committed to ensuring that multilingual scholarship is fairly considered in its REF 2029 submission process. Outputs authored in languages other than English, will be assessed on their relevance and quality without disadvantage. To support linguistic inclusivity, the University provides appropriate mechanisms such as translation, abstract summaries, or expert peer commentary, enabling equitable assessment in line with REF 2029 Guidance.
- 5.40. The REF Submission Steering group will conduct periodic output diversity reviews. These reviews shall consider the types and formats of outputs proposed and selected within each Unit of Assessment, helping to identify any underrepresented categories in the context of the discipline. The data are used to promote a balanced and inclusive portfolio reflecting the diversity of research activity across disciplines.
- 5.41. The REF Submission Steering Group will submit a report annually to the REF Executive Group, drawing on analysis from the output diversity review and feedback from Unit of Assessment Management Teams, to support transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in promoting inclusive, format-agnostic research assessment.
 - o **Procedures for ensuring submissions are representative of the research undertaken within the submitting unit during the REF period**
- 5.42. The University of Warwick is committed to ensuring that all REF 2029 submissions are demonstrably representative of the research activity undertaken within each submitting Unit of Assessment during the REF publication period (1 January 2021 to 31 December 2028).
- 5.43. As per paragraph 5.36 of this Code of Practice, staff members will be provided with equitable opportunity to nominate research outputs for REF 2029 consideration by their respective Unit of Assessment Management Team. There are no restrictions on output type, format, disciplinary convention, or medium.
- 5.44. Outputs will be mapped to Units of Assessment based on disciplinary content, institutional research themes, and alignment with REF 2029 Panel Criteria. Author affiliation will not determine Unit of Assessment assignment. Where outputs span multiple disciplines, internal

and/or external experts consulted where appropriate to ensure responsible and equitable assignment.

- 5.45. As part of REF 2029 preparations, each Unit of Assessment Management Team will undertake a structured mapping exercise to review the full range of research activity conducted during the assessment period. While the final selection of outputs will be based primarily on submitting those that represent the highest quality of research, the mapping exercise enables Unit of Assessment Management Teams to make these quality-focused recommendations in a transparent and informed manner, ensuring that opportunities for inclusion have been considered across the full scope of the Unit of Assessment's research activity.
- 5.46. [Section 4 paragraph 7.2](#) of REF 2029 Guidance states that no more than five outputs should normally be associated with a single substantive link, to ensure submissions reflect the full breadth of research within each Unit of Assessment. Where a Unit of Assessment Management Team anticipates exceeding this threshold, the case must be referred to the REF Submission Steering Group, who will review the rationale and determine whether the proposed approach may proceed.
- 5.47. The University will conduct regular reviews of nominated outputs to assess the range of output types represented across all Units of Assessment. Attention will be given to identifying and addressing imbalances or underrepresentation of certain output types, disciplines, or methodological approaches. This process will be documented and overseen by the REF Submission Steering Group.
- 5.48. Each Unit of Assessment will report to the REF Submission Steering Group outlining progress toward representative submissions. These reports will include summaries of output diversity, engagement with interdisciplinary and practice-based work, and identification of any gaps. The REF Submission Steering Group will review these reports and advise on any required interventions to maintain institutional standards.
- 5.49. Where possible, the University's research information systems will be used to track eligible outputs across the REF 2029 period, by staff member, Unit of Assessment, and output type. This data will be used to verify that the final selection reflects the range of research outputs produced by the submitting unit.
- o Policies and procedures and responsible research assessment practice**
- 5.50. Selection of outputs for submission will align with the [University of Warwick's commitment to responsible research assessment](#). As [a signatory to the Coalition on Advancing Research Assessment \(CoARA\)](#), the University of Warwick applies its principles to its REF 2029 preparations, using bibliometric data responsibly and not in isolation, with primary emphasis on the intrinsic quality and contribution of the research. Where an output does not clearly align with the panel

criteria for a particular Unit of Assessment, the REF Submission Steering Group, guided by the relevant Unit of Assessment Management Team, will seek review from an appropriate alternative Unit of Assessment to ensure disciplinary fit and fair assessment.

- 5.51. To support these processes, the REF Submission Steering Group and/or REF Executive Group may request the preparation of indicative scenarios or alternative modelling for output selection within each Unit of Assessment. These scenarios are advisory only and are intended to inform, but not replace, the recommendations made by each Unit of Assessment Management Team regarding which outputs to include.
- 5.52. Use of AI-assisted analytical tools, such as to produce indicative scenarios or alternative modelling of output selections, is permitted in line with the [University of Warwick guidance on AI in Research](#). Recommendations regarding the quality of outputs and their selection will continue to be made by Unit of Assessment Management Teams, based on academic judgement and in line with this Code of Practice.
- 5.53. The REF Submission Steering Group understands that Unit of Assessment Management Teams may have individual research outputs externally reviewed, accepting that the level and extent of this may vary according to discipline.
- 5.54. External review may be used as an aid to help Unit of Assessment Management Teams to prepare submissions through gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the overall quality of the Unit of Assessment's submission.
- 5.55. Unit of Assessment Management Teams opting to undertake an external review as part of their REF 2029 preparations must be mindful of General Data Protection Regulation, Subject Access Requests, potential conflicts of interest, and the guidance contained in this Code of Practice.

Staff, Committees, and Training

- 5.56. The staff with responsibility for selecting outputs reflect the structures and terms of reference for decision making is set out in paragraphs 3.22-3.44.
- 5.57. Unit of Assessment Management Teams will make final recommendations to the REF Submission Steering Group on output selection.
- 5.58. REF Submission Steering Group, drawing on advice of Unit of Assessment Management Teams, advises the REF Executive Group on final decisions on output selection.

- 5.59. Unit of Assessment Management Teams and internal reviewers will participate in training focused on inclusive evaluation practices, including awareness of diverse output types and REF 2029 guidance on their assessment. Researchers receive accessible support via detailed Frequently Asked Questions, guidance documents, and workshops explaining how diverse outputs, such as performances, policy briefings, software, and curated exhibitions, can be submitted and fairly assessed.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.60. A thorough and systematic Equality Impact Assessment evaluates whether the output selection process is designed and applied in a manner that is transparent, inclusive, and free from structural bias. Attention is paid to potential risks such as over-reliance on citation metrics or other criteria that may disadvantage certain disciplines or staff groups.
- 5.61. The Equality Impact Assessment will utilise anonymised and aggregate demographic data to identify any potential for direct or indirect discrimination relating to protected characteristics. Appropriate mitigations will be implemented where potential adverse impacts are identified, including inclusive selection criteria, training for reviewers, and ongoing diversity monitoring.
- 5.62. The Equality Impact Assessment will be informed by consultation with relevant staff networks, governance bodies, and equality, diversity and inclusion representatives.
- 5.63. A standing item on the agenda of the REF Submission Steering Group meetings with Units of Assessment will be dedicated to reviewing and monitoring emerging patterns in output selection. The REF Executive Group will receive and consider these reports and will investigate any identified imbalances. Where such imbalances are determined to indicate potential inequality, the REF Executive Group will implement appropriate corrective actions prior to final submission in 2028.

Part 6: Appendices

6.1 Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment

Date written: 04/03/2026

Date of most recent update: 14/04/2026

The [EIA Guide](#) provides advice on completing an EIA. An EIA should:

- Demonstrate steps taken to assess the equality impact of the work, and any impact found.
- Respond to negative impact by identifying changes or mitigations (where needed).
- Build in review to identify unforeseen impacts and assess if mitigations are working.

Background

Title of work being assessed: REF 2029 Code of Practice: Researcher Independence, Output selection, and Unit of Assessment assignment.

Owner(s): Head of Research Planning (REF Manager). Research Planning Manager

Brief outline of the work including purpose/aims:

The REF 2029 Code of Practice sets out the guidelines and procedures that Warwick have developed to outline how key decisions will be made about the submission to REF 2029. These decisions concern identifying contracts that contribute to the REF 2029 staff volume measure and selecting research outputs for submission. This Equality Impact Assessment considers the equality and equity implications of three interrelated REF 2029 processes: determination of researcher independence, assignment of eligible staff to Unit of Assessment and selection of research outputs. The purpose is to ensure these processes are fair, transparent, consistent, and compliant with equalities legislation in line with the Equality Act 2010, REF 2029 guidance and institutional social inclusion and research integrity policies. It will draw on demographic data for staff included in REF processes, historical REF outcomes, and institutional equality, diversity and inclusion data to assess potential differential impacts across protected characteristics and will consider how the Code of Practice criteria and processes interact with institutional structures (e.g., contract types, disciplinary assignment, promotions pathways) and how these may advantage or disadvantage particular groups. This Equality Impact Assessment is the first analysis in the REF 2029 cycle and was completed prior to approval of the Code of Practice by Research England. It is treated as a live document and will be updated throughout the REF 2029 cycle, with Equality Impact Assessments as a standing agenda item within REF 2029 institutional governance.

Who does this work affect?

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This Equality Impact Assessment applies to all University of Warwick staff who may be included in, or affected by, REF 2029 submission processes.

The REF 2029 Code of Practice directly affects the following colleagues, whose contracts may contribute to the staff volume measure through assessments of researcher independence and assignment to Units of Assessment:

- 'Research Only' staff (HESA: ACEMPFUN.02) and
- 'Teaching and Research' staff (HESA: ACEMPFUN.03)

The following groups may also be indirectly affected by REF 2029 processes:

- Staff whose work contributes to research, but who are not in the staff volume measure, including professional services colleagues supporting research environments.
- Interdisciplinary staff whose work spans multiple Units of Assessment.
- Part-time, fixed-term, or atypical-contract staff who may have variable research expectations.

It also covers all individuals and groups involved in designing, implementing, or reviewing REF 2029 processes, including:

- Unit of Assessment Management Teams and reviewing panels.
- Departmental, Faculty and institutional REF 2029 groups.
- Staff responsible for research independence assessments, Unit of Assessment assignment, and output selection.
- Governance bodies.

REF 2029 processes are public functions and therefore fall within the scope of the Public Sector Equality Duty. In meeting this duty, the University of Warwick must give conscientious and informed consideration to equality impacts when designing and implementing REF 2029 processes, including decisions on researcher independence, Unit of Assessment assignment, output selection, and appeals. This Equality Impact Assessment provides the evidence that these obligations have been embedded into institutional REF 2029 procedures from the outset and will continue to be monitored throughout the assessment period. This assessment relates solely to REF 2029 submission processes. Individual performance management, appraisal, promotion, capability, probation, and disciplinary procedures remain out of scope, and REF-related decisions must not be used as proxies for such processes. In line with REF 2029 guidance, this Equality Impact assessment evaluates institutional REF 2029 processes rather than the inclusion or assessment of individuals. The focus is on how decisions are made, such as research independence judgements, Unit of Assessment assignment procedures and output selection mechanisms, and whether these processes, as designed and implemented, risk producing unjustified disadvantage for staff with protected characteristics.

Impact

What has been done to check the equality impact of the work, and what was found?

This Equality Impact Assessment has reviewed the Code of Practice processes for REF 2029 which are (i) the determination of researcher independence, (ii) assignment of eligible staff to Units of Assessment, and (iii) selection of research outputs. The review considered whether the design and operation of these processes could produce differential outcomes for staff with protected characteristics, including where effects may be indirect or cumulative.

Method and Scope

This Equality Impact Assessment is informed by a systematic review of the Code of Practice and associated governance arrangements, alongside qualitative evidence from relevant institutional committees and groups. In line with REF 2029 guidance, the Equality Impact Assessment considers the potential for differential and cumulative impacts arising from the design and application of REF 2029 processes. Intersectionality is considered, recognising that staff may hold multiple protected characteristics and that combined effects may increase the risk of disadvantage. As this Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in advance of key decision-making stages, further and more detailed analysis of demographic and REF-related data will be incorporated in subsequent iterations, for example, regarding output selection.

Data and evidence base (initial analysis).

Initial quantitative analysis draws on staff data provided by the Information Digital Group on 13 March 2026. The dataset is drawn from the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF pilot exercise, using fields relating to Academic Employment Function (HESA: ACEMPFUN), REF 2029 Unit of Assessment assignments (HESA: REFUOA2029), and REF qualifying contracts (HESA: REFQUALCON). Data were pseudonymised at source using unique identifiers. The analysis that follows includes academic staff only (HESA: ACEMPFUN.01 (Teaching- only), HESA: ACEMPFUN.02 ('Research Only'), and HESA: ACEMPFUN.03 ('Teaching and Research')) and excludes atypical contracts.

Comparator and interpretation.

For REF2021 comparison purposes, a University Human Resources staff snapshot dated 1 May 2020 has been used as a baseline and enriched with centrally held protected characteristic data and Staff Selection Group determinations. Our analysis of the REF eligible contracts drawn from HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise includes grade 6 researchers and therefore represents a broader academic cohort than that considered in REF2021 analyses.

Headline findings

Preliminary data analysis:

This initial analysis compares the institutional academic population only (HESA: ACEMPFUN.01 (Teaching- only), HESA: ACEMPFUN.02 ('Research Only'), and HESA: ACEMPFUN.03 ('Teaching and Research')), the REF 2029 eligible contract (HESA: ACEMPFUN.02 and HESA: ACEMPFUN.03) pool, and the group currently identified for submission (HESA: REFQUALCON.01). The purpose is to identify potential differential patterns by protected characteristic and contract type that may require explanation, further scrutiny, or mitigation.

Sex: Female representation reduces across successive stages, from 40.62% of the institutional academic population to 36.46% of the eligible pool and 34.07% of the submitted group (headcount). A similar pattern is observed on an FTE basis, with female representation decreasing from 40.23% (institutional) to 35.40% (eligible) and 33.89% (submitted). Male representation increases correspondingly (Tables 1, 2).

Ethnic group representation: Ethnic group representation reduces from 39.85% of the institutional academic population to 38.53% of the eligible pool and 26.27% of the submitted group (headcount). Within the submitted group, white British staff account for 67.88% (Tables 3, 4). These shifts warrant continued monitoring and contextual assessment at Unit of Assessment-level.

Age: No significant proportional shifts are evident across age bands when comparing eligible and submitted groups (Tables 5, 6). Submitted staff are concentrated in mid-career age ranges, consistent with expectations arising from research independence criteria.

Disability: Declared disability decreases from 7.35% at institutional level to 5.50% within the eligible pool and 5.40% of the submitted group (headcount) (Tables 7, 8). Disclosure rates remain comparatively low and may under-represent the extent of disability within the academic population.

Contract type: The proportion of staff on open-ended or permanent contracts increases from 49.35% of the institutional academic population to 58.13% of the eligible pool and 89.08% of the submitted group (headcount) (Tables 9, 10). This pattern is consistent with REF research independence requirements and the prevalence of fixed-term contracts among research-only and early-career staff.

Unit of Assessment assignment: No material concerns are evident at university level; however, Unit of Assessment-level variation and outliers have been identified and will be kept under review (Tables 11, 12, 13, 14, 15). This includes differences in sex ratios between panels and a higher white British to ethnic group representation ratio within Panel D.

All findings are provisional and will be re-run at key REF 2029 decision points, including research independence determinations, assignments of contracts to Units of Assessment, and output selection. Any discrepancies identified will be documented and, where appropriate, escalated through governance.

Ongoing considerations:

‘Research Only’ staff representation in submission. Early indications suggest a risk that ‘Research Only’ staff with protected characteristics may be underrepresented in the REF 2029 submission relative to their share of the eligible ‘Research Only’ population. Potential drivers include uneven application of research independence criteria, variable access to mentoring or grant holding opportunities, and differential contractual stability.

Unit of Assessment assignment decisions. Allocation of staff to Units of Assessment may be affected by structural or unconscious bias, especially for interdisciplinary researchers or those whose profiles do not align with prevailing disciplinary norms. This may influence the likelihood of submission, availability of internal support, and perceived fit of outputs.

Output selection patterns. There is a risk of under-representation of certain protected groups within selected outputs. Contributory mechanisms include differential opportunity to publish (e.g., career breaks, part-time, or fractional working), disciplinary publication practices, and implicit bias (such as academic seniority) within internal review processes where calibration is limited.

Process navigation and transparency. Staff with disabilities, caring responsibilities, or limited access to informal networks may face greater barriers in navigating feedback, and appeal routes linked to research independence. Inaccessible communications or timelines that do not account for adjustments can compound disadvantage.

Data limitations and disclosure. Incomplete or uneven disclosure of protected characteristics, and small population sizes in some Units of Assessment, constrain the ability to detect and evidence differential impacts. This creates a risk that real disparities remain obscured.

These impacts are potential and require confirmation through evidence set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation plan below. Where confirmed, mitigations will be applied proportionately and reviewed for effectiveness.

Consultation and Engagement

The Code of Practice has been through a staged and inclusive consultation plan, engaging a wide range of stakeholder which include University leadership, departmental research leaders, all staff groups, Trade Unions, staff engagement and equality, diversity and inclusion networks, the People Team, and institutional governance bodies via multiple accessible channels such as emails, inbox insite staff newsletter signposting, meetings, an in person Town Hall, and

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formal committee reviews, ensuring opportunities for feedback across the consultation period from February to March 2026. It is designed to promote transparency, fairness, and institutional oversight by enabling stakeholders to comment on the draft Code of Practice, identify equality-related impacts, raise concerns about workload and procedural clarity, and contribute to strengthening equality, diversity and inclusion considerations before governance approval and submission to Research England.

Does the work...

- **Support our Social Inclusion objectives?** (See our [Social Inclusion Strategy](#)): Yes
- **Reflect our institutional values?** (Read our guidance on [values-based EIAs](#)): Yes
- **Include positive action?** (See an explanation of [legal positive action](#)): No
- **Impact on free speech/academic freedom?** (Read our guidance on [free speech](#)): No

If yes, please provide further detail below:

The Code of Practice has been written to support the Social Inclusion Strategy by ensuring that REF 2029 submission processes are equitable and transparent, reflect the diversity of Warwick's research community, and recognise the varied contributions staff make.

Institutional values are embedded throughout the Code of Practice and its associated University processes, drawing on lessons learned from REF 2021 where relevant. A broad range of stakeholder groups has been engaged to ensure that diverse voices across the University community are heard. Staff are encouraged to contribute feedback through multiple accessible routes, including online feedback forms, in-person meetings, and direct comments on the draft Code. The Code of Practice avoids unnecessary jargon and acronyms and has been reviewed using accessibility software to support clarity and readability.

Mitigation

If negative impact is found, what change(s) and/or what mitigation(s) will you make?

If a negative impact is found during the REF 2029 submission, then changes will be made to the processes to ensure that the university is being as equal and equitable as possible to staff. All decision-making staff taking part in the process will receive Equality and Diversity training and further training will be available to staff where necessary.

Equality Impact Assessments are embedded throughout the University's REF 2029 submission process, and these will continue to be updated during the formulation of the policy all the way through to the final submission. All staff at the university will have the opportunity to feedback into the document and processes and the Code of Practice will only be finalised following this opportunity to respond.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Quantitative equality monitoring (by protected characteristic and contract type, including intersectional considerations where feasible) will be repeated at each major REF 2029 decision stage (research independence determinations, Unit of Assessment assignment updates, and output selection). A summary of any emerging disparities and actions taken will be reported through institutional REF governance, with material issues escalated to the REF Executive Group for scrutiny and direction.

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- Fair and consistent application of research independence criteria, Unit of Assessment assignment, and output selection processes.
- Early detection of any disproportionate impacts on staff with protected characteristics.
- Transparent governance, clear documentation, and timely mitigations when disparities arise.

These objectives directly support commitments stated within the Equality Impact Assessment mitigation framework, including continuous evidence testing, calibration checks, and monitoring of decision-making patterns.

Role	Responsibility
REF Planning Team	Oversight of equality risks; receives monitoring reports escalates to Governance
Social Inclusion Team	Support with data analysis; conducts intersectional analysis.
Warwick Data and AI Labs	Provides segmentation of contract types, protected characteristics, and submission related data.
Unit of Assessment Management Teams	Maintain transparent rationale for independence, assignment, and selection decisions; supply documentation for audits.
REF Executive Group	Reviews emerging patterns; makes recommendations for mitigation; ensures accessibility of processes.

Review

Date for the EIA to be reviewed: This Equality Impact Assessment is a live document. It will be updated whenever REF 2029 -related policies, processes, or criteria change during the REF 2029 assessment period, rather than solely as part of an annual review cycle. Any revision to independence decisions, Unit of Assessment assignment processes, output selection mechanisms, or appeals procedures will trigger a further Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that due regard to the Equality Act 2010 is maintained and evidenced.

Review of Equality Impact Assessments are a standing agenda item within REF submission governance (including discussions with Unit of Assessment Management Teams). Further Equality Impact Assessments building on this initial assessment will be completed prior to the University's REF 2029 submission, including a final report post-submission. Any recommendations arising will be reviewed and implemented where appropriate.

Supporting Data

Sex	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total
Female	1740	40.62%	895	36.46%	524	34.07%
Male	2544	59.38%	1560	63.54%	1014	65.93%
Total	4284	100.00%	2455	100.00%	1538	100.00%

Table 1. Headcount of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Sex.

Sex	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total
Female	1162.15	40.23%	700.55	35.40%	452.91	33.89%
Male	1726.45	59.77%	1278.32	64.60%	883.53	66.11%
Total	2888.60	100.00%	1978.88	100.00%	1336.44	100.00%

Table 2. FTE of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Sex.

Ethnic Group	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total
Ethnic group representation	1707	39.85%	946	38.53%	404	26.27%
Unknown/Prefer not to say/Not available	276	6.44%	135	5.50%	90	5.85%
White British	2301	53.71%	1374	55.97%	1044	67.88%
Grand Total	4284	100.00%	2455	100.00%	1538	100.00%

Table 3. Headcount of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Group	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total
Ethnic group representation	1076.74	37.28%	741.97	37.49%	358.36	26.81%
Unknown/Prefer not to say/Not available	162.08	5.61%	109.84	5.55%	78.86	5.90%
White British	1649.77	57.11%	1127.07	56.95%	899.22	67.28%
Total	2888.60	100.00%	1978.88	100.00%	1336.44	100.00%

Table 4. FTE of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Ethnic Group representation.

Age	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total
0 – 20	2	0.05%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
21 – 25	334	7.80%	42	1.71%	0	0.00%
26 – 35	1318	30.77%	787	32.06%	218	14.17%
36 – 45	1186	27.68%	759	30.92%	543	35.31%
46 – 55	727	16.97%	454	18.49%	395	25.68%
56 – 65	561	13.10%	326	13.28%	298	19.38%
>66	156	3.64%	87	3.54%	84	5.46%
Total	4284	100%	2455	100%	1538	100%

Table 5. Headcount of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Age.

Age	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total
0 – 20	0.23	0.01%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
21 – 25	76.22	2.64%	23.013	1.16%	0	0.00%
26 – 35	825.81	28.59%	601.84	30.41%	191.82	14.35%
36 – 45	920.75	31.88%	636.39	32.16%	485.271	36.31%
46 – 55	580.07	20.08%	396.013	20.01%	356.888	26.70%
56 – 65	411.17	14.23%	272.478	13.77%	254.861	19.07%
>66	74.35	2.57%	49.141	2.48%	47.601	3.56%
Total	2888.60	100%	1978.88	100%	1336.44	100%

Table 6. FTE of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Age.

Declared Disability	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total
Disability declared	315	7.35%	135	5.50%	83	5.40%
No disability declared	3760	87.77%	2225	90.63%	1400	91.03%
Not available/prefer not to say	209	4.88%	95	3.87%	55	3.58%
Total	4284	100%	2455	100%	1538	100%

Table 7. Headcount of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Declared Disability.

Declared Disability	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total
Disability declared	200.131	6.93%	107.933	5.45%	101.843	7.45%
No disability declared	2577.006	89.21%	1798.499	90.88%	1218.75	89.19%
Not available/prefer not to say	111.463	3.86%	72.448	3.66%	45.847	3.36%
Total	2888.60	100%	1978.88	100%	1366.44	100%

Table 8. FTE of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Declared Disability.

Contract Type	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total	Headcount	% of Total
Open-ended/Permanent	2114	49.35%	1427	58.13%	1370	89.08%
Fixed-term	2170	50.65%	1028	41.87%	168	10.92%
Total	4284	100%	2455	100%	1538	100%

Table 9. Headcount of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Contract Type.

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Contract Type	Institutional Academic Population (T&R, R-F and T-F Staff)		Eligible Staff Pool (T&R and R-F Staff)		Submitted Group	
	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total	FTE	% of Total
Open-ended/Permanent	1865.59	64.58%	1272.345	64.30%	1229.324	91.98%
Fixed-term	1023.01	35.42%	706.53	35.70%	107.117	8.02%
Total	2888.60	100%	1978.88	100%	1336.44	100%

Table 10. FTE of the Institutional Academic Population, Eligible Staff and Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise by Contract Type.

Unit of Assessment	Sex		
	Female	Male	Total
01 Clinical Medicine	0	0	0
02 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care	54	51	105
04 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	18	19	37
05 Biological Sciences	25	72	97
06 Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	4	16	20
08 Chemistry	11	41	52
09 Physics	22	93	115
10 Mathematical Sciences	32	122	154
11 Computer Science and Informatics	3	46	49
12 Engineering	24	132	156
16 Economics and Econometrics	17	51	68
17 Business and Management Studies	76	129	205
18 Law	34	28	62
19 Politics and International Studies	28	44	72
21 Sociology	26	20	46
23 Education	28	20	48
26 Modern Languages and Linguistics	23	20	43
27 English Language and Literature	23	22	45
28 History	28	29	57
29 Classics	10	11	21
30 Philosophy	9	23	32
32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	6	4	10
33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies	23	21	44

Table 11. Headcount of the Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise Units of Assessment by Sex

Unit of Assessment	Ethnicity			
	Ethnic group representation	Unknown/Prefer not to say/Not available	White British	Total
01 Clinical Medicine	0	0	0	0
02 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care	37	7	61	105
04 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	10	3	24	37
05 Biological Sciences	20	10	67	97
06 Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	1	1	18	20
08 Chemistry	6	2	44	52
09 Physics	18	8	89	115
10 Mathematical Sciences	31	12	111	154
11 Computer Science and Informatics	23	4	22	49
12 Engineering	58	6	92	156
16 Economics and Econometrics	19	12	37	68
17 Business and Management Studies	81	9	115	205
18 Law	21	2	39	62
19 Politics and International Studies	16	2	54	72
21 Sociology	18	1	27	46
23 Education	8	0	40	48
26 Modern Languages and Linguistics	7	3	33	43
27 English Language and Literature	7	0	38	45
28 History	8	5	44	57
29 Classics	1	0	20	21
30 Philosophy	9	0	23	32
32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	2	1	7	10
33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies	3	2	39	44

Table 12. Headcount of the Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise Units of Assessment by Ethnicity

Unit of Assessment	Age							
	0-20	21-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	>=66	Total
01 Clinical Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
02 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care	0	0	7	38	34	18	8	105
04 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	0	0	5	12	12	7	1	37
05 Biological Sciences	0	0	9	40	23	22	3	97
06 Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	0	0	0	3	6	10	1	20
08 Chemistry	0	0	7	17	17	10	1	52
09 Physics	0	0	22	35	29	22	7	115
10 Mathematical Sciences	0	0	36	49	31	31	7	154
11 Computer Science and Informatics	0	0	6	22	14	5	2	49
12 Engineering	0	0	16	58	48	27	7	156
16 Economics and Econometrics	0	0	14	19	13	9	13	68
17 Business and Management Studies	0	0	41	69	47	36	12	205
18 Law	0	0	5	29	16	8	4	62
19 Politics and International Studies	0	0	11	24	24	12	1	72
21 Sociology	0	0	5	20	10	9	2	46
23 Education	0	0	3	19	10	14	2	48
26 Modern Languages and Linguistics	0	0	10	12	12	8	1	43
27 English Language and Literature	0	0	6	19	6	11	3	45
28 History	0	0	8	19	11	16	3	57
29 Classics	0	0	1	5	9	5	1	21
30 Philosophy	0	0	2	13	7	8	2	32
32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	0	0	1	3	1	3	2	10
33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies	0	0	3	18	15	7	1	44

Table 13. Headcount of the Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise Units of Assessment by Age

Unit of Assessment	Declared Disability			
	Yes	Prefer not to say	No known impairment, health condition or learning difference	Total
01 Clinical Medicine	0	0	0	0
02 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care	7	3	95	105
04 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	3	1	33	37
05 Biological Sciences	5	2	90	97
06 Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	1	1	18	20
08 Chemistry	3	0	49	52
09 Physics	4	4	107	115
10 Mathematical Sciences	5	7	142	154
11 Computer Science and Informatics	2	2	45	49
12 Engineering	9	1	146	156
16 Economics and Econometrics	1	6	61	68
17 Business and Management Studies	7	7	191	205
18 Law	8	0	54	62
19 Politics and International Studies	4	3	65	72
21 Sociology	6	1	39	46
23 Education	3	1	44	48
26 Modern Languages and Linguistics	0	4	39	43
27 English Language and Literature	5	1	39	45
28 History	2	1	54	57
29 Classics	2	0	19	21
30 Philosophy	4	0	28	32
32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	4	1	5	10
33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies	5	2	37	44

Table 14. Headcount of the Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise Units of Assessment by Declared Disability

Unit of Assessment	Contract Type		
	Open-ended/Permanent	Fixed-term	Total
01 Clinical Medicine	0	0	0
02 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care	90	15	105
04 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	36	1	37
05 Biological Sciences	80	17	97
06 Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science	20	0	20
08 Chemistry	45	7	52
09 Physics	94	21	115
10 Mathematical Sciences	136	18	154
11 Computer Science and Informatics	47	2	49
12 Engineering	152	4	156
16 Economics and Econometrics	66	2	68
17 Business and Management Studies	180	25	205
18 Law	59	3	62
19 Politics and International Studies	66	6	72
21 Sociology	44	2	46
23 Education	41	7	48
26 Modern Languages and Linguistics	34	9	43
27 English Language and Literature	40	5	45
28 History	45	12	57
29 Classics	16	5	21
30 Philosophy	29	3	32
32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	9	1	10
33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies	41	3	44

Table 15. Headcount of the Staff submitted to the HESA Staff data 2024/25 REF 2029 pilot exercise Units of Assessment by Contract Type

6.2 Referenced material in the CoP.

6.2.1 Code of Practice Consultation Timetable

Date	Stakeholder	Engagement method	Expected contribution
Monday 9 February 2026	REF Executive Group	Draft Code of Practice tabled to meeting.	Feedback and approval of draft Code of Practice.
Monday 16 February 2026	Departmental Research Leadership	Direct email that includes link to document linking to draft Code of Practice on dedicated internal webpages.	Coordinate feedback within department, providing comment to draft.
Monday 23 February 2026	All staff	Article in University staff newsletter 'inbox insite' linking to draft Code of Practice on dedicated internal webpages, including plain language summary of each section, and general feedback form.	Feedback via online form, email, or comment on draft Code of Practice.
	Chairs of Social Inclusion Staff Engagement and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network Groups	Direct email linking to draft Code of Practice.	Feedback via direct comment on draft Code of Practice.
Monday 2 March 2026	All 'Teaching and Research' and 'Research Only' staff	Direct email linking to draft Code of Practice on dedicated internal webpages, including plain language summary of each section, and general feedback form.	Feedback via online form, email or direct comment on draft Code of Practice.
Monday 9 March 2026	All staff	Article in University staff newsletter 'inbox insite' linking to draft Code of Practice on dedicated internal webpages, including plain language summary of each section, and general feedback form.	Feedback via online form, email or direct comment on draft Code of Practice.
Wednesday 11 March 2026	Trade Unions	Paper tabled to People Team and Trade Union Joint Working Group Meeting.	Feedback via verbal comments and/or direct comment on

REF 2029

Research Excellence Framework

			draft Code of Practice.
Friday 20 March 2026	All staff	In-person Town Hall featuring panel on Guidance and presentation on draft Code of Practice.	Verbal feedback on draft Code of Practice.
Thursday 19 March 2026	Research Committee	Draft Code of Practice tabled to meetings.	Feedback and approval of draft Code of Practice.
Monday 23 March 2026	University-wide consultation closes	Revise draft Code of Practice in line with feedback and REF 2029 Guidance.	
Wednesday 15 April 2026	Senate	Revised Code of Practice tabled to meeting.	Feedback and approval.
Tuesday 28 April 2026	University Executive Board	Institutional approval of Code of Practice prior to submission to Research England.	Approval.
Monday 11 May 2026	REF Executive Group	Final approval of Code of Practice.	Approval.
Monday 11 May – Friday 15 May 2026	Research England	Submit University of Warwick REF2029 Code of Practice to Research England.	

6.2.2 Draft Code of Practice online feedback form

University of Warwick REF 2029: Draft Institutional Code of Practice

The purpose of the Code of Practice is to explain how the University of Warwick demonstrates its commitment to fairness and transparency in its mechanisms for the selection of outputs, processes for determining significant responsibility for research and establishing research independence.

The principles and processes covered by the Code of Practice will be applied to all aspects of the University's REF 2029 preparations, to support consistent decision making at all levels of the University.

We welcome feedback on the draft Code of Practice from everyone involved in research or REF-related activity, regardless of role or career stage.

Departmental Research Leadership are provided a separate opportunity to comment and feedback on the draft Code of Practice. This survey is designed to collect structured, section-specific insights to support revisions.

All questions are optional. If you select a negative rating, please provide a brief comment to help us understand your concern.

For colleagues who prefer to prepare their responses offline, the questions are also available to download as a PDF via the following link: <http://bit.ly/3OhPeHa>

Please address any queries to refplanning@warwick.ac.uk.

This form shall close by **Monday 23 March 2026**.

Overall clarity

1. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strong disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The Code of Practice is clearly written.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The purpose of each section is clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The document provides enough information to understand the REF processes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

REF 2029 Principles

3. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The process of identifying Significant Responsibility for Research is clearly explained.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The process for determining Research Independence is clearly explained.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The processes for the selection of Research Outputs are clearly explained.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The process for assigning Contracts to a Unit of Assessment are clearly explained.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

Transparency

5. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
The communication routes for REF 2029 University of Warwick processes are clearly explained.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
University of Warwick Governance for REF 2029 processes are clearly explained.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

Part 2: Identifying Significant Responsibility for Research

Section specific feedback

7. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Criteria are clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The process is transparent.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

Part 3: Determining Research Independence

Section specific feedback

9. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Criteria are clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The process is transparent.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Process and basis for appeals is clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more

Part 4: Assigning contracts to a Unit of Assessment

Section specific feedback

11. Please rate your agreement with the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Criteria are clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Process is fair.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

Part 5: Selecting Outputs

Section specific feedback

13. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Explanation of 'substantive link' is clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Approach is inclusive of output types.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Handling of interdisciplinary research is clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The requirements for submitting outputs from former staff are explained clearly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

Accessibility

15. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
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The document is accessible to staff unfamiliar with REF 2029 processes.

☐☐☐☐☐

The language is inclusive and avoids unnecessary jargon.

☐☐☐☐☐

16. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

Confidence in the Process

17. Please rate your agreement with the following statement:

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

After reading the Code of Practice, I understand how REF 2029 processes will apply to me.

☐☐☐☐☐

18. If you have responded 'Strongly disagree' or 'Disagree', please tell us more.

19. Would you like to explain or expand on any negative ratings you have selected?

20. Are there areas where further guidance would be helpful?

And finally

21. Is there anything further you would like to tell us to support the development of the final Code of Practice?

22. Would you like us to follow up with you to discuss your feedback?

☐ Yes ☐ No

23. If yes, please provide your email address:

The University of Warwick is the Data Controller of any information you have entered on this form and is committed to protecting the rights of individuals in line with Data Protection Legislation. The University's Data Protection webpages provide further information on your rights and how the University processes personal data. If you wish to submit a data subjects rights request, make a complaint or report a suspected personal data breach, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer by email at infocompliance@warwick.ac.uk.

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Microsoft Forms

6.2.3 REF 2029 Appeals Pro Forma

Appeals Process Overview

Staff who believe that the process for determining research independence was not correctly followed, in accordance with the University's procedures outlined in the *REF 2029: University of Warwick Code of Practice*, have the right to appeal on these grounds.

Appellants should submit their case using the pro forma below.

Section 1. Personal Details

Name	
Department	
Email address	

Section 2. Basis of Appeal

Procedural Irregularity

I believe the University's published process for determining research independence was not correctly followed in my case.

Tick to confirm:

Section 3: Summary of Appeal

Please provide a clear explanation of your appeal.

Include:

- The reason(s) you believe the decision was procedurally incorrect
- Any evidence you wish to reference

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Section 4: Supporting Evidence

Please list and attach any relevant documents (e.g., emails, role descriptions, workload evidence, decision letters, etc).

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Section 5: Desired Outcome

Please state the outcome you are requesting as part of this appeal:

--

Section 6: Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this appeal is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

6.2.4 Glossary of Terms

An output/ a research output	A product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.
CONFTE	The percentage of a full-time equivalent (FTE) year being undertaken by staff on the contract over the course of the HESA reporting period.
Definition of research	The REF 2021 definition of research is unchanged. For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. This includes: • work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, culture, society, and/or to the public and voluntary sectors • scholarship, which is defined for the REF as the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines, in forms such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues and contributions to major research databases • the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights • the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction Effectively shared includes research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports.
Diverse outputs	Research encompasses a wide range of practices that generate an equally broad spectrum of outputs, and the diversity of output forms in REF 2029 refers to ensuring that each Unit of Assessment and main panel recognises and values this breadth by allowing research to be expressed in the formats most appropriate to the work, its audiences, and its partners; these may include innovative forms, accessible

	reporting styles, and modes of expression that diverge from traditional disciplinary conventions.
Eligible employment relationship	Eligible employment relationships are defined as: • a minimum of 0.2 FTE for at least 12 months continuous employment (as defined by Section 210 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA 1996) or the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996) by the HEI making the submission. Continuous employment may be demonstrated by a sequence of consecutive contracts and • the role descriptor includes an explicit expectation of research activity (in line with the REF definition of research) within the role. 'Research activity' is not restricted by profession and an eligible employment relationship may be with any staff member who undertakes, enables or supports research
FTE	A unit of measurement that allows employers to adopt a single metric for comparison with the full-time average.
HESA Staff data	The Staff data record collects individualised data on the personal characteristics of Staff, the details of their contracts, and the activities undertaken as a result of those contracts.
HESA: ACEMPFUN.01	An academic contract that is 'Teaching Only'.
HESA: ACEMPFUN.02	An academic contract that is 'Research Only'.
HESA: ACEMPFUN.03	An academic contract that is both 'Teaching and Research'.
HESA: REFQUALCON	A contract that qualifies to contribute to the volume measure for REF. • Code 01: Contract qualifies for contribution to the REF volume measure calculation • Code 02: Contract is not eligible for inclusion in the REF volume measure calculation
HESA: REFUOA2029	Records the principal Research Excellence Framework (REF) Unit of Assessment for staff.
Impact case study	An Impact case study describes specific impacts that occurred during this REF 2029 period underpinned by research undertaken in the submitting Unit of Assessment.
Output eligibility period	• Outputs must be first made publicly available between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2028.

	- Where the final form of an output was delayed due to COVID-19 beyond 31 December 2020 and was subsequently published by 31 March 2021 and submitted to REF 2021, that output cannot be resubmitted to REF 2029. - Where the date of imprint on a publication lies outside the publication period but the actual date of appearance is within the publication period, evidence of the actual date on which it became publicly available will be required for data verification purposes, such as a letter from the publisher.
Research independence	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.
Significant responsibility for research	Contracts with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of the job role.
Staff volume measure	The staff volume measure ensures that the scale of an institution's submission aligns with its research capacity. It will be used to determine the number of outputs and impact case studies required for each Unit of Assessment (UoA) submission, ensuring proportionality.
Substantive link	A substantive link describes the relationship between a Higher Education Institution and research, submitted in the form of an output. The Higher Education Institution must have enabled the research leading to an output that is first made available during the output eligibility period. A substantive link must be evidenced through an eligible employment relationship with an author (or equivalent) who has made a significant research contribution to the output.
Unit of Assessment	A Unit of Assessment is a disciplinary grouping to which universities submit their research outputs, impact case studies, narratives and data about their research environment.