REF2029 Code of Practice

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1 Introduction

1.1 Principles of the Code of Practice

Our CoP is underpinned by the REF2029 CoP principles as detailed below:

- Robustness
- Transparency
- Equity and inclusion

The development of this Code of Practice has been informed by input received from a wide-ranging process of consultation with committees, groups, and staff across the University (see below). The feedback received from consultation has informed, in particular, the criteria for determining significant responsibility for research, the independence status of Research-only staff, and the University's approach to outputs selection.

1.1.1 Robustness

Recognising that some aspects of the Code of Practice will govern processes across multiple REF cycles and on an annual basis, we have looked to develop the relevant policies and processes in a manner that allows for robust practice and information collection, and where such information can be derived as objectively as possible.

1.1.2 Transparency

We have considered transparency in relation to ensuring widespread awareness of the policies and processes governed by the Code of Practice and ensuring that the processes themselves support transparency in decision making. This Code of Practice will be made available in accessible formats and publicised to all academic staff across the institution through established internal REF communication channels (internal REF SharePoint, monthly REF newsletter), via inclusion in the weekly all-staff news and information communications, through cascaded communications via REF Unit of Assessment (UoA) Leads and research leaders, and via targeted events. Once approved, the Code of Practice will be available internally as well as on an externally facing website dedicated to REF news and information shared publicly. Working with the University's People and Organisational Directorate, there will also be email and postal communication to all staff who are recorded as being on a leave of absence and email communication to those based outside of the UK (however, recognising that the majority of UofG staff based outside of the UK do not fall within our HESA return, and therefore, within the REF2029 volume measure).

1.1.3 Equity and Inclusion

In accordance with the University of Glasgow's legal responsibilities both as an employer and a public body, the University's REF procedures as set out in this Code have been developed to align

with our legal requirements in the Equality Act 2010, and with the Scottish Public Sector Equality Duty (SPSED). The University is committed to treating employees on different contracts (this includes fixed-term and part-time staff, and contract research staff) and work schedules no less favourably than comparative groups.

The University's commitment to equality of opportunity for all staff, regardless of contract type, is set out explicitly in the University's Equality and Diversity Policy, analysed and reported under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) via Staff Equality Monitoring Reports, and overseen by the Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee. This is further reflected in its Academic Promotion Policy, Professorial Zone Movement Policy, Recruitment Policy, Fixed term, Leave Policies, Flexible Working Policy, and in explicit support for different contract types. Finally, the University's articulated Research Culture Priorities underscore the ways we do research, then ways we value diverse contributions to our research landscape and its outputs, and how we support all those that contribute to this research landscape.

Decision-making in this context follows University policy-making practices where equity, inclusion and equality impacts are considered at all stages. This has been a critical consideration in the development of the policies and processes within this Code and the accompanying Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). All papers presented for decisions to committees, in this case the REF Project Board (RPB), Senior Management Group (SMG) and the Research Planning and Strategy Committee (RPSC), must contain relevant information about the equality impacts of what is under consideration.

1.2 Contextualisation within Institutional Policies

Our explicit institutional strategic principles as articulated in our *Research Strategy 2026-2036* form a guide for our internal practices in relation to policy, guidance, and evaluation:

1. We value the quality of our research over its quantity.
2. The University succeeds when our individual researchers succeed.
3. How research is done is as important as what is done.

The University has a robust policy landscape and ensures that policies are visible to all staff. Further, policy and guidance are contextualised as part of a larger landscape for research staff, supporting colleagues to engage with the detail of concordats which the University has signed. Importantly, this also includes the University's sector leading work on research culture and enacted through our agreed research culture priorities and action plan.

1.3 Update on Actions Since REF2021

The table below provides an overview of the actions identified in the University of Glasgow REF2021 Equality Impact report and the activities and outcomes that have followed.

Identified action	Planned activity	Outcome
Improving research independence for early career BAME staff	Conduct a focused investigation on circumstances surrounding early career BAME staff, particularly looking at fellowship success rates, to determine whether there is unintended bias in the criteria for determining research independence. Identify and implement measures to support staff.	Statistical review and staff focus groups were held in 2022. Under-representation was visible although decreasing over time, and variable across disciplines, funder types, award types, contract types, and employment grades. Outcomes based on the recommendations include the creation of a staff 'Global Majority Network', actions under the University's 'Understanding Racism, Transforming University Cultures' programme, and the development of a University Fellowships Framework. Basing the criteria for determining research independence on inherent expectation of the contract was also intended to ensure that criterion which can perpetuate systemic negative bias (e.g. PI status).
Investigating lower output numbers by female authors and, where necessary, improving support for publication	Conduct further analyses on available data to determine what links, if any, exist between sex and output scores and selection; also investigate the potential output pool to determine why the percentage of female-authored outputs is significantly lower than male-authored outputs. Where evidence suggests, identify and implement measures to support staff.	The analysis undertaken noted under-representation in the overall numbers of female-authored outputs available for review internally (22% to 78%, female-authored to male authored). Within that process, female-authored outputs had a slightly higher rate of selection (28% to 72%). This highlighted the broader issue of support across the lifecycle. The University is committed to EDI and gender equality and continues to undertake work to ensure that all staff are treated fairly and equitably. Ongoing work is taking place via participation in Athena Swan awards (allowing schools to review their local environments), work undertaken via the Research Culture Action Plan to support staff development, including the development of research portfolios. In addition, there is further ongoing work on support for staff led by the People and Organisational Development team and the Gender Equality Steering Group, such as dedicated support for parents and carers and the development of a mentoring portal.

Evaluating and, where necessary, strengthening engagement with impact for staff at all career stages	Use the impact mapping and audit exercises to understand patterns of first engagement with impact activity at different career stages. On this basis, consider how best to support staff in achieving impact from their work as their career develops.	A number of initiatives were piloted in response to internal mapping and auditing, such as an Impact Mentor Network, the development of seed funding opportunities, the appointment of staff in several larger schools to lead specific mentoring and peer support initiatives for early and mid-career researchers. The training package across the University in this area has expanded significantly and, with IAA funding, KE associates have been attached to every school in the University, with researcher impact literacy and KE activity support being the key priorities.
Supporting the career development of staff, particular female, and BAME staff	To continue to address career development, through implementation of the university's strategic priorities whether related to overall quality of staff experience or through targeted activities such as via 'Understanding Racism, Transforming University Culture'.	Ongoing initiatives, including sector-leading work on Research Culture and the development of the Talent Lab, which is a suite of development opportunities for research staff. These programmes are well-received and subject to ongoing evaluation via the Lab for Academic Culture.

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

At the University of Glasgow, all eligible Research & Teaching (AEF 3)[1] contracts have significant responsibility for research and are, therefore, included in the REF2029 volume measure. Contractual employment expectations of those on Research & Teaching job roles include a requirement to be actively engaged in independent research and explicit time and resources are made available. This policy is unchanged from the University's policy for REF2021 and was confirmed for REF2029 by the University's REF Project Board and ratified by Senior Management Group (SMG).

3 Determining Research Independence

[1] AEF3 refers to "Academic Employment Function 3" and is a definition provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency in relation to staff on Research & Teaching contracts.

3.1 Policies and Procedures

3.1.1 Criteria and Evidence

For REF2029, the FTE relating to a Research-only contract (AEF2)[2] can be included within the REF2029 volume measure if it meets the REF2029 definition of "Research Independence". A 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.' Indicators of research independence, as defined in the REF guidance on the volume measure[3], include where contracts:

- Act as lead applicant on externally funded research projects.
- Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship requiring research independence.
- Lead a research group or a substantial/specialised work package.
- Where research independence is an inherent expectation of a contract.

For UoAs 13-34 this may also include:

- Being named as a co-applicant on an externally funded research grant/award.
- Having significant input into the design, conduct, and interpretation of the research.

It is at the institution's discretion to identify which criterion or combination of criteria might be most appropriately used for the identification of "Research independence" on an annual basis.

3.1.2 Criteria and Evidence

The University of Glasgow's approach and design of the process has been underpinned by the principles of robustness, transparency, equity, and inclusion. In particular, recognising that research independence would need to be indicated in the annual HESA return, a robust annual process is critical whilst ensuring inclusivity, equitability, and transparency and an easy to implement process. It is also recognised that the criteria above are not a reflection of an individual's ability to undertake research independently but a precise contractual relationship with the institution. A reduced burden for individuals on Research-only contracts to provide evidence on an annual basis, or to feel as though the nature of their employment activity was constantly under scrutiny creating uncertainty or anxiety, was also a vital consideration.

As such, the institutional process draws on two of the REF0229 criteria above for decision-making:

- Where research independence is an inherent expectation of a contract.

[2] AEF2 refers to "Academic Employment Function 2" and is a definition provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency in relation to staff on Research-only contracts.
[3] REF2029 Volume Measure Guidance, Section 9.

- Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship requiring research independence.

3.1.3 Inherent Expectation of a Contract

On review of all Research-only job role descriptions, all job role descriptions at Grade 8 and above[4] have research independence as an inherent expectation of the role. This is reflected in the Grade 8 job description noting that following specifically:

> *"1. Play a leading role in the management and development of the project and to work independently and in collaboration to bring the project to a successful completion including establishing and maintaining external collaborations both nationally and internationally.*
> *2. Play a leading role in the planning, design and conduct of research, individually or jointly, in accordance with the project deliverables and project/Institute/College/University research strategy. [...]*
> *5. Lead the development, both independently and in collaboration with others (including stakeholders) of the identification of potential funding sources and lead in the development of proposals to secure funding from internal and external bodies to support future research of international quality."* [5]

As this is strictly based on contractual status, no scrutiny of individuals and their circumstances will be required on an annual basis.

There is an exception relating to clinical research-only appointments at Grade 8 and above who are undertaking PhDs, and Research Scientists at Grade 8, where independence is not an inherent expectation of the job descriptions.

Therefore, <u>all staff on Research-only contracts at Grade 8 and above (excluding the specific exceptions listed)</u> meet the criterion of research independence on the basis of inherent expectation of a contract and their contractual FTE will contribute towards the volume measure.

3.1.4 Competitively Awarded Fellowships Requiring Research Independence

[4] Research-only job descriptions are available here. There are a small set of Clinical Research-only roles that are not formally listed according to the academic grade structure; these are typically, but not exclusively, related to clinical academic roles. For the purposes of identifying research independence, these roles are mapped against the academic grade structure. That mapping indicates if it is Grade 8 and above, or where it might be Grade 7 and aligned to a named fellowship. There are exceptions for some MVLS staff in specific clinical appointments as identified in Core (HR) system who are undertaking PhDs or who have not been awarded PhDs. There is also an exception for the inclusion in the volume measure of those on G8 of the Research Scientist track. Research independence is not an inherent expectation of those contract types at that grade.

[5] Grade 8 Research Fellow job description.

It was recognised that at Grade 7, there are colleagues undertaking self-directed research as recipients of independently won, competitively awarded fellowships requiring research independence.

External competitively awarded fellowships
The FTE for Research-only contracts at Grade 7 can be considered to meet the REF2029 research independence definition where the individual employed holds an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship which is listed within the list provided by REF/ Research England.

Some fellowships in that list are marked with an asterisk to denote that they support the transition to independence (e.g. MRC Career Development Awards or NIHR Advanced Fellowship). For those fellowships marked with an asterisk, the contractual FTE will be marked independent in the second academic year of the role (i.e. in the year which has/will have the twelve-month anniversary of the role); it is only in that second academic year that the FTE will contribute towards the REF volume measure.

University of Glasgow competitively awarded fellowships
The University has had a track record of offering highly competitive fellowships; these include LKAS fellowships and specific named College fellowships. The contractual FTE of all holders of the University of Glasgow fellowships listed in the appendices (6.1) can contribute towards the REF volume measure.

Subsequent contracts
If an individual on a Grade 7 contract moves to a different Research-only Grade 7 contract within the University, but their previous contractual FTE has contributed to the volume measure because they held an approved external or University of Glasgow competitively awarded fellowship, the FTE of their new contract will continue to be considered as having research independence and will continue to contribute to the REF volume measure. This will come into effect from the 2025/26 academic year and the relevant annual HESA submission of contractual FTE data.

3.1.5 Decision-Making and Communication

As the decision on research independence is primarily reliant on contractual status for those on Grade 8 and above, this has removed any ad-hoc decision making. Where the decision rests on the awarding of a competitive fellowship, the key decision making relates to confirming the list of University of Glasgow competitively awarded fellowship which is a list approved by the REF Project Board (see below, 3.2.1).

This approach will be communicated through the consultation process of the development of the Code of Practice and in the subsequent publication of the final and agreed University of Glasgow Code of Practice.

3.2 Staff, Committees and Training

3.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Management Group

The Senior Management Group (SMG) advises the Principal, as Vice-Chancellor and the chief executive officer of the University, on matters of policy, along with advising Court and Senate on matters of strategic policy (academic and resource) and acting on a day-to-day basis to implement the policies of Court and Senate. SMG has overall responsibility for strategic decisions relating to the preparations for and the shape of the University's submission to REF2029.

Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange)

The Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) (VP-RKE) is responsible for University research strategy and policy development, and acts as institutional Lead for REF. The VP-RKE is a member of SMG and chairs the REF Project Board (RPB).

REF Project Board

RPB is responsible for strategic decisions and the development and implementation of the relevant policies and procedures concerning REF. The Board reports to SMG.

RPB is chaired by the VP-RKE who is also a member of the Senior Management Group. Each College is represented via the Dean of Research and senior research professional staff with responsibility for REF. This links RPB to College-level REF decision making and allows for information to be cascaded in both directions. University Services teams who provide leadership and support for REF operations are also represented, e.g. Research Services, Planning, Insight & Analytics, Library Services, and People & Organisational Development.

Research Planning & Strategy Committee

The VP-RKE also chairs the Research Planning and Strategy Committee (RPSC), the University's senior research committee. This Committee, with a broad membership of research leaders, professional services and nominated members (technicians, post-doctoral staff, student representation), has a consultation and advisory function in relation to REF decision making.

3.2.2 Training

All staff involved in REF processes in either an advisory or decision-making capacity, along with those involved in the processing of REF data, are required to complete mandated training as agreed by the University. These are:

- **Diversity in the Workplace:** this course an introduction to the concepts of equality, diversity and inclusion and an overview of the main legislation and its practical implications. *Mandatory for all University staff*.
- **Let's Talk About Race in the Workplace:** this course provides support to staff to consciously and proactively address racial bias within the workplace. *Mandatory for all University staff*.

- **Unconscious Bias in HE:** this course covers the nature of bias and its impact in the workplace, providing useful psychological insights into how our own behaviour might be affected by bias and what we can do to reduce or eliminate its influence on our working relationships and the decisions that we make. *Required for line manages, supervisors and/or recruiters*.
- **REF Sensitive Data (REF2029):** this course covers processing personal data relating to University REF preparations, including output scoring and impact case study development, and covers processing and storing personal and confidential data, using excel safely with personal data and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). *Required for staff involved in University REF preparations*.

Specifically in relation to research independence, training requirements are aligned to the broader training on mitigating bias. Decision making is limited because the contribution to the volume measure is determined by the criterion of inherent expectation of the role and includes all the contractual FTE of all those on Grade 8 contracts and above.

3.3 Appeals

As research independence is determined contractually, i.e. for Grade 8 or above, or at Grade 7 when holding an agreed fellowship, the only matter open to appeal is whether a fellowship, not currently on the approved list, should be added.

For competitively awarded external fellowships
A request should be made to the Research Enhancement team (ref@glasgow.ac.uk) following a discussion with the UoA Lead or the Dean of Research (DoR) of the relevant college, providing the relevant information.

For competitively awarded University of Glasgow fellowships
A request for a University of Glasgow fellowship type to be included should be made in the first instance to the DoR in the relevant College, or to the Research Enhancement team (ref@glasgow.ac.uk) should it be an institutionally-awarded fellowship.

If the request for the inclusion of an external or University of Glasgow competitively awarded fellowship type is refused the following appeals process applies:

- Information relating to the appeal should be made to the Research Enhancement team (ref@glasgow.ac.uk).
- The information will be reviewed be an Appeals Panel convened to review the matter which will be chaired by the Senior Vice Principal and comprise the Executive Director of People and Organisational Development and one other staff member as appropriate. Decisions will be reported to the RPB.

3.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EIA appears in the appendices (Section 6.3) of this Code.

RPB has played a vital role in working through each stage of the development of this Code and EIA to make institutional decisions. As it is a cross-University Committee it has representation from senior leaders in each disciplinary-focused College alongside professional staff either supporting research operations and management in each College or fulfilling specific professional roles. Each decision reflected in our REF policies and procedures noted herein and in our accompanying EIA was able to be given detailed consideration from diverse disciplinary and operational perspectives which reflect the full range of our research environment as well as ensure alignment with REF guidance in being objective, inclusive and transparent.

As we are not making any assessments/evaluations and decisions have no bearing on ongoing access to research resources, promotion, or performance, there are no concerns of negative impacts. Demographic data will be kept under review as part of the assessment of the overall research environment and our institutional research culture. Reviews would highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action.

This process was also discussed and formally approved by the University's SMG with a consideration that in its simplification and focus on contractual expectations it was also removing some of the negative aspects of reviewing an individual against specific research performance criteria (e.g. ability to apply as Principal Investigator or similar).

4 Allocating Contracts to UoAs

4.1 Policies and Procedures

4.1.1 Approach

For REF2029, and from the academic year 2025/26 onwards, a UoA indication is required within the annual data submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The organisational structure of the University of Glasgow, as with other universities, does not fully align with the disciplinary or UoA structure of the REF exercise. Moreover, the nature of collaborative research and greater interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary research activity can often mean that individuals may be homed within thematically based structures or within disciplinary homes different to the area of their research focus.

The overarching approach by the University of Glasgow is to allocate all relevant contractual FTE to a UoA most closely related to the contract holder's research, using the REF UoA remit descriptions. As the REF submission overall represents the University's strategic position rather than disciplinary or individual perspectives and reflecting the delinking of individuals from the REF

submission, decisions regarding UoA allocations ultimately rest with the institution and not the individual concerned. The descriptors of REF2021[6] are used until those for REF2029 are available. Where two or more UoAs might be relevant, the decision to confirm a specific UoA is governed by the process below.

4.1.2 Process

Allocation to UoAs is completed and maintained within the University's HR system (CORE). As a starting point, UoAs indicated for the REF2021 exercise were retained. Those who have joined since have been allocated a UoA which reflects as close alignment to the disciplinary home of their School or their own research based on the REF UoA remit descriptions. These allocations are undertaken locally within the College.

All UoAs listed within CORE, whether provided for REF2021 or since, are being reviewed by the Colleges in the academic year 2025/26 to ensure they are linked to UoAs that are likely to be submitted by the University for REF2029. Fit to the remit and consideration of alternative UoAs are being considered reflecting the full spectrum of an individual's research.

The process for changing a UoA allocation is as follows:

- A REF UoA Lead reviews the UoA and can make a request of the Chair of the College Assessment Panel (CAP) for a change of UoA for a specific contractual FTE. Where the UoAs sit primarily within the remit of the CAP (see below, 4.2.1), the decision is determined by the Chair of the CAP.
- Should the change of UoA involve decision-makers across two or more Colleges, all Chairs of the relevant CAPs will be consulted and a decision agreed amongst them.
- If a decision cannot be agreed by the relevant Chairs of the CAPs, the request will be escalated to the VP-RKE for a final decision.
- Should the VP-RKE be conflicted, the decision will be escalated to SMG for a decision.

4.1.3 Decision Making

The decision-making in relation to UoA allocation to contracts is listed above in 4.1.2, including the escalation route for a final decision should it be required.

4.2 Staff, Committees and Training

4.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

College Assessment Panels (CAPs)

CAPs are responsible for overseeing the preparation and approval of REF materials for the College; CAPs are chaired by the DoRs and have ultimate responsibility for ratifying submissions

[6] The relevant REF2021 Unit of Assessments can be found in Part 2 of the *REF2021 Panel Criteria and Working Methods* document.

for each UoA, including output selection decisions. CAPs will be required to make strategic decisions in support of the Colleges' and the University's REF return. CAPs report to RPB via their DoR (the Chair of CAP), who is a member of RPB, and onwards to SMG.

Deans of Research *(DoRs)*
The College DoRs are responsible for the strategic leadership and coordination of REF preparations at a College level, representing their Head of College and VP-RKE. They chair the CAPs. DoRs liaise with UoA Leads to support informed decision-making and hold final accountability for College- and UoA-level REF decisions. As members of RPB, DoRs are instrumental in coordinating and disseminating information between cohorts with REF responsibilities, managing the flow of information to the Colleges from RPB and vice versa.

UoA Leads
With direction from the CAP and reporting to the DoR, the UoA Leads are responsible for supporting the DoR and the CAP in overseeing the submission for their UoA to REF2029. This includes taking responsibility for implementing REF-related processes at a local level, REF decision making and ensuring that the UoA submission is delivered in line with the institutional REF2029 timeline and in accordance with institutional and College-level REF policies and processes. The UoA Leads oversee the UoA REF Teams, which comprise the following roles: REF Engagement & Impact (E&I) Lead and, where identified, the Contributions to Knowledge & Understanding (CKU) Lead and the Strategy, People & Research Environment (SPRE) Lead.

See 3.2.1 for descriptions of SMG, the VP-RKE role and RPB.

4.2.2 Training

All staff involved in the REF in any capacity must undertake required training as detailed in section 3.2.2.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EIA appears in the appendices (Section 6.3) of this Code.

RPB has played a vital role in working through each stage of the development of this Code and EIA to make institutional decisions. As it is a cross-University Committee it has representation from senior leaders in each disciplinary-focused College alongside professional staff either supporting research operations and management in each College or fulfilling specific professional roles.

Each decision reflected in our REF policies and procedures noted herein and in our accompanying EIA was able to be given detailed consideration from diverse disciplinary and operational perspectives which reflect the full range of our research environment as well as ensure alignment with REF guidance in being objective, inclusive and transparent.
Allocations to UoAs are discipline-related decisions and subject to the nature, extent and clarity of the UoA remit descriptors. Any impacts would be indirect due to disciplinary differences

combined with individual characteristics but mitigated by the 'de-linked' nature of the overall assessment. There is no individual advantage or disadvantage to be allocated to a specific UoA for volume measure purposes.

5 Selecting Outputs

5.1 Policies and Procedures

5.1.1 Approach

The University of Glasgow's principles for selecting outputs foreground our commitment to supporting our community of researchers irrespective of discipline, career stage, or role to produce rigorous and excellent research. The REF exercise invites us to share a selection of outputs produced within that assessment cycle which we deem to be appropriate to the disciplinary remit of a specific Unit of Assessment, and which have been deemed to be of the highest quality. Assessment of quality is the primary and critical determining factor in the selection process for the University of Glasgow submission.

5.1.2 Definition of Research and Output Types

All outputs that meet both the REF2029 definition of research and other eligibility criteria as provided by REF are available to be selected for submission. For the purpose of REF, "research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared." [7] The guidance specifically notes the following:

"5.3.2 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

5.3.3 Effectively shared includes research that is published, disseminated, or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports."

The guidance also notes that:

[7] REF2029 Contributions to Knowledge and Understanding (CKU) Guidance, Section 4

"5.4.1 The definition of research excludes:

- the routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components, and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques
- the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research."

As such, a wide range of output types embody the definition above and are welcomed and encouraged. A non-exhaustive list was made available for REF2021[8] and an updated version of this information is expected to be provided for REF2029.

5.1.3 Determining the Eligible Pool of Outputs

Substantive link to outputs of staff currently employed by the University of Glasgow

The eligible pool of outputs which can be considered for selection will consist of those outputs where a substantive link can be evidenced between a listed author on the output and the University of Glasgow; specifically, where the relevant author has an eligible employment relationship. An eligible employment relationship as defined by the guidance requires that an author has or had a minimum of 0.2 FTE continuous employment for at least 12 months and their role descriptor includes an explicit expectation of research activity.

For the University, all staff that are on Research & Teaching (R&T) contracts and Research-only (R-only) contracts, across all grades, are deemed to have an explicit expectation of research activity. In addition, at the University this includes staff on Technical and Specialist role contract at Grade 6 (research pathway) and Grades 7 and 8 based on stated expectations with job descriptions.

For an output to be submitted by the University of Glasgow, the University must have enabled the research which led to the output that is first made publicly available during the REF output eligibility period (1st January 2021 to 31st December 2028). Some exceptions may apply.[9]

Outputs authored by individuals while they are on an excluded contract (see Exclusions, below) will be eligible for submission if the individual moved to an eligible contract (i.e. R&T and R-only specifically) where the following criteria are met:

- The move to the eligible contract took place during the REF2029 period (1 January 2021 to 31 December 2028), where both contracts were at the University of Glasgow and meet the definition of continuous employment.
  AND
- The eligible contract meets all criteria for an eligible employment relationship within the REF period.

[8] A non-exhaustive list is available in Annex K of the REF2021 Guidance and Criteria on Submissions.
[9] We are awaiting further guidance on these exceptions in the REF2029 guidance.

Substantive link to outputs of former staff
The outputs authored by staff who have left the University to go to another role, have retired, or are deceased, can be selected for submission. This includes staff who have taken voluntary severance, enhanced retirement or whose fixed term contract has come to a natural conclusion. It is expected that the same substantive link to the University, noted above, and eligible employment relationship requirements (i.e. 0.2 FTE continuous employment for at least 12 months) will have applied at the time of the output being researched or produced.

Outputs where the substantive link is solely from a member of staff who was made compulsorily redundant or dismissed will not be available to be selected for submission.

The University retains the right to communicate with staff who have left regarding potential contributions to REF2029.

Exclusions
Outputs solely authored by, or where the only substantive links to the University is through the following groups, are not eligible for selection or 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.

Exceptional Circumstances
In the instance that a UoA would like to consider submitting an output sole-authored by a member of staff on a Teaching-only contract, honorary emeritus contract or other non-research contract, and where it can be evidenced that the University has provided time and funding to support that specific research activity, the process will be as follows:

- The UoA Lead may make a request to CAP with their justification for inclusion. If not endorsed by CAP, the CAP will be responsible for recording the decision and communicating this to the UoA Lead.
- If endorsed by CAP, this will be submitted to the REF Team for review by the VP-RKE. The REF Team will record the decision and communicate this with CAP.
- The decision will be based upon the nature of the justification and is final.

5.1.4 Initial Allocation of Outputs to UoAs

Outputs will be assigned to a UoA or multiple UoAs based on the REF2029 Unit of Assessment descriptors[10] and a determination of fit within the relevant UoA is made by the REF UoA Lead or,

[10] The REF2021 UoA descriptors will be used until the REF2029 descriptors are made available.

where appointed, the REF CKU lead for that UoA. Consideration of fit to UoA will be made by the Output Scoring Committee (OSCs) through the selection process and can be escalated to the CAPs, if required. The REF UoA Lead/CKU Lead or the OSC can choose to consult an external reviewer if deemed appropriate. As permitted by the REF guidance, should the output meet the remit descriptor for more than one UoA, it can be available to be selected for submission to multiple UoAs.

5.1.5 Output Review Processes and Responsible Research Assessment Practice

Output Review

The UoA's OSC (see below, 5.2.1) is responsible for the review and scoring of research outputs for REF. To support this, each OSC is required to agree and provide an output scoring methodology that outlines how the OSC will evaluate output quality and defines the method by which outputs are allocated to reviewers and then scored, including agreement on scores and the approach to conflicts of interest. Output scoring methodologies for each UoA are made available on the University of Glasgow REF SharePoint once they are finalised.

Ensuring responsible assessment practice

All OSCs will adhere to the University's commitments to fair, transparent, and responsible assessment as a signatory of the San Francisco Statement on the Use of Quantitative Indicators in the Assessment of Research Quality.[11]

Citation data

Citation data will be provided by the institution only where REF panels have historically used such data in assessment and only as raw citation count and field-weighted citation impact (FWCI). As with REF2021 panel practice, it can be used as an indicator of academic significance and will not be used as a primary or sole tool for assessment. The absence of citation data will not be taken to mean an absence of academic significance and OSCs will be considerate that citation data can be an unreliable indicator for some types of outputs. For REF2021, this was restricted to UoAs 1-6 (Main Panel A) and UoAs 7,8,9 and 11 (Main Panel B) and UoA 16 (Main Panel C). Citation data will only be made available to those UoAs. Should the list of UoAs receiving citation data be further restricted or enlarged for REF2029, the availability of citation data will be adjusted accordingly.

Responsible use of AI in support of review and selection processes

It is not anticipated that generative AI tools will be used in review and selection processes for REF2029 processes. There is one key principle for the use of generative AI in activities related to research at the University of Glasgow (and therefore in preparing for REF 2029), in line with the University's Generative AI Guidance for Researchers: any use of generative AI tools must be accompanied by critical analysis and oversight on the part of the user. Should any REF-related activities or selection processes make use of generative AI tools, this is must be fully transparent and acknowledged in agreed working methods, e.g. those of OSCs.

[11] More information, including the full statement, is available on the University's Responsible Metrics webpage.

5.1.6 Output Selection Processes

Selection processes

Output selection processes within the Output Scoring Committees are underpinned by the following principles:

- Ensuring a robust approach to review of all outputs which might be eligible for consideration within the specific UoA remit.
- Undertaking specific calibration and review exercises in preparation, involving external review where appropriate.
- Ensuring a consideration of REF-specific requirements are followed, e.g. that no more than 5 outputs may be attributed to a single author within a specific UoA, consideration of open access requirements.[12]
- Ensuring all outputs will be treated the same irrespective of what language they are produced in, in particular that outputs in British Sign Language and recognised languages (namely Scottish Gaelic, Scots, Ulster Scots, Irish and Irish Sign Language) are treated in accordance with their legal status relating to protection and promotion. That the selection is determined first and foremost by a consideration of quality. Where the decision rests between outputs deemed of a similar quality, considerations may include breadth of subject area, research practice, output types, and diversity of the researcher community.

Representativeness

The final selection of outputs made by the relevant OSC will include a consideration of representativeness of the research strategies, structures and research activity of the submitted unit during the REF period, as well as being reflective of the diversity of subject areas, research practices and output types within the submitted unit, in alignment with the principles set out above. The OSCs' approach to providing a representative outputs selection will be considered and approved by the relevant CAP(s).

5.1.7 Output Scoring and Confidentiality

Scoring

Scoring will be undertaken by the relevant OSC. Where an output is being considered for multiple UoAs due to fit to UoA descriptor remits, it is anticipated that each OSC will score separately considering discipline expectations and norms.

Purpose of scoring

Scoring of an output is undertaken solely for the purpose of REF UoA preparations and selection. Such scores are not to be used by the relevant School, UoA, College, Institution nor any of the

[12] Should it be appropriate within multiple UoA disciplinary remits, it may be appropriate that more than 5 outputs are attributed to a single author in submission to multiple UoAs with no more than 5 outputs attributed to a single UoA. REF guidelines do permit the submission of *more* than 5 outputs attributed to a single author within a single UoA but only with further explanation within the Strategy, Police and Research Environment UoA narrative to explain why this might have been necessary.

relevant output authors for other purposes beyond REF-related activities. This includes purposes such as promotion or progression.

Confidentiality of scoring
It is required that scores provided for REF preparation and selection processes are kept strictly confidential to those involved in REF preparations, review, or selection processes.

The intention behind requiring confidentiality is to ensure that such scores are not available for unintentional misuse for other purposes and to support those scoring undertake those obligations with objectivity.

Confidentiality of selection
In accordance with the de-linking of individuals from the assessment for REF2029, it is an expectation of OSCs and CAPs that the final list of outputs chosen for selection are kept confidential. This is to ensure that the act of an output being selected is not considered to be an esteem factor for an individual, and similarly that non-selection of an output is not equated with the lack of quality of the output. It should be recognised that an OSC and CAP will have had to take a number of aspects into consideration for that final selection including: representativeness, outputs diversity, REF regulations (e.g. on open access) and output maxima.

5.1.8 Decision Making

For the decision-making processes on identifying eligible outputs, allocation of outputs to UoA and consideration of representativeness, see 5.1.3, 5.1.4 and 5.1.6, respectively. The final decision on outputs to be submitted to REF2029 sits with CAPs, having been advised by OSCs on the recommended outputs submission as determined by their review processes.

5.2 Staff, Committees and Training

5.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

CKU Leads (or UoA Leads)
UoAs may appoint a CKU Lead as part of their REF UoA Team; where they are not appointed, the UoA Lead will take on CKU-related responsibilities. The CKU Lead is responsible for coordinating the UoA's submission to CKU, including identifying outputs for review, scoring outputs, and ultimately selecting outputs for submission. This includes ensuring output eligibility, monitoring Open Access compliance, and supporting the UoA's SPRE submission as it relates to e.g. representativeness of outputs.

Output Scoring Committees
Each UoA will appoint an Output Scoring Committee (OSC) that will be responsible for reviewing and scoring research outputs and identifying those to be submitted to REF2029. A Chair of the OSC will be identified, who will manage the OSCs discussions and decisions. This may be the UoA Lead / CKU Lead; where it is not, the OSC Chair will liaise with the UoA Lead / CKU Lead where

there are concerns or conflicts of interest. Final decisions of the OSC will be presented to CAP for final ratification.

See 4.2.1 for the description of CAPs.

5.2.2 Training

All staff involved in the REF in any capacity must undertake required training as detailed in section 3.2.2.

5.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EIA appears in the appendices (Section 6.3) of this Code.
RPB has played a vital role in working through each stage of the development of this Code and EIA to make institutional decisions. As it is a cross-University Committee it has representation from senior leaders in each disciplinary-focused College alongside professional staff either supporting research operations and management in each College or fulfilling specific professional roles. Each decision reflected in our REF policies and procedures noted herein and in our accompanying EIA was able to be given detailed consideration from diverse disciplinary and operational perspectives which reflect the full range of our research environment as well as ensure alignment with REF guidance in being objective, inclusive and transparent. Further, UoA level decision making is mediated by CAPs whose senor members sit on RPB, ensuring that UoA level considerations are reflected in high level decisions and that institutional decision making is implemented across all areas.

Criteria for demonstrating a substantive link are clear and transparent with little room for individual judgement. Indirect impacts may stem from hiring practices which determine type or roles on offer or appointment of staff to contracts. Indirect impact may also stem from wider responsibilities relating to grade or workload balance in relation to research output production. It will be imperative that this continues to be closely monitored as part of the assessment of the overall research environment and our institutional research culture. Review would highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action.

The processes of assigning outputs to UoAs and scoring outputs are subjective, although based on disciplinary knowledge, clarity of the UoA remit descriptor and the strategic views of the UoA. This is undertaken by experienced and trained staff and decisions are part of defined processes rather than owned by an individual. Further, having an output scored or included within a REF submission has no bearing on processes relating to an individual's progression or access to support of their research. However, despite the delinking of individuals from the REF2029 submission, the perception of the benefits of inclusion or a sense of negativity of an output not being included persists.

Assessment of quality is the primary and critical determining factor in the selection process for the University of Glasgow submission. Where deciding between outputs deemed of a similar

quality, additional considerations may include breadth of subject area, research practice, output types and diversity of the researcher community. The lack of blind evaluation could result in both positive and/or negative impact and unconscious bias remains a consideration. We recognise it is impractical to ensure blind evaluation but have mandated training to mitigate.

Staff involved in making any decisions related to the REF, including those on CAPs and OSCs, undertake training in relation to unconscious bias, diversity, race, and handling REF data. This is to ensure that insofar as possible staff are equipped to conduct their roles in these processes fairly. These training courses are mandatory and attendance is monitored.

Further, mitigation of potential bias or unfairness in selection is through calibration panels reviewing multiple outputs, limiting citation data only to UoAs where citation data is routinely used and used in the context REF panels will, not including journal names, inclusion in the online selection tool of as many relevant outputs as possible of those published since 1st January 2021.

6 Appendices

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6.1 List of University of Glasgow Competitively Awarded Fellowships

The following are competitively awarded fellowships by individual University of Glasgow Colleges which are deemed to be comparable to the list of fellowships provided by the Funding Councils for REF2029.

- Future Fellows, College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences
- Collaborative Fellowship, College of Science and Engineering
- Interdisciplinary Research Fellows, College of Social Sciences
- Kentigern Fellows, College of Social Sciences

6.2 Glossary of Acronyms

BAME	Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic
CAP	College Assessment Panel
CKU	Contributions to Knowledge & Understanding
CO-I	Co-Investigator
DoR	Dean of Research
E&I	Engagement & Impact
EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
EDSC	Equality & Diversity Strategy Committee
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FWCI	Field-weighted citation impact
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
OSC	Output Scoring Committee
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
MVLS	College of Medical, Veterinary, and Life Sciences
PI	Principal Investigator
PGR	Postgraduate Researcher
R-Only	Research Only
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RPB	REF Project Board
RPSC	Research Planning and Strategy Committee
R&T	Research and Teaching
SMG	Senior Management Group
SPRE	Strategy, People & Research Environment
SPSED	Scottish Public Sector Equality Duty
UoA	Unit of Assessment
VP-RKE	Vice Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange)

6.3 University of Glasgow REF2029 Equality Impact Assessment

6.3.1 Introduction

The University of Glasgow conducts Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on policies, processes and products as outlined in the Scottish Public Sector Equality Duty (SPSED). This EIA, conducted as part of the University's REF2029 preparations, covers processes relating to volume measure, allocating contracts to UoAs and output selection. It will provide a consideration of the specific policies and processes, accompanied by relevant data, to ensure that the University can address any understood equality issues within this REF process, identify any concerns for broader institutional policies and practices, and on completion of REF2029, identify and put mitigations in place in relation for future similar exercises.

This EIA was developed as part of the REF Code of Practice development and consultation. It was reviewed by the University's RPB and the University's Equality and Diversity Unit.

In addition to following the funding councils' guidance on the REF2029 EIA, we have also made use of the structure of the University of Glasgow's institutional equality impact assessment form in the structure below.[13]

6.3.2 Aims and objectives of the University of Glasgow REF2029 policies and processes

A critical intention of the University of Glasgow REF2029 policies and processes was to ensure equitability, ensuring that in the design of these processes that there is no confusion nor conflation of REF-related processes in relation to ongoing institutional processes and policies relating to an individual's career progression, research performance, or access to opportunities and, in doing so, to avoid any unintended impacts of REF processes on those institutional processes.

Our REF2029 policies and processes are explained in the University of Glasgow Code of Practice and apply to any individual who might be considered in relation to volume measure, allocation of UoA to contracts, outputs selection and any other REF-related process. The changes to REF2029 widens the range of individuals that this might cover. It includes, as in REF2021, all those with research activity within their roles, e.g. those on Research and Teaching or Research-only contracts, and it also includes those who have, or might be considered to have, a role in contributing to research or impact activity across the institution.

6.3.3 Consultation, review and data analysis

The processes and policies of the REF2029 Code of Practice were shared within the university community for consultation between 9 March and 27 March 2026. This was following two points of consultation with Trade Union representatives and discussion and consultation of the Code of Practice and its policies and processes with the RPB, REF UoA Leads and specific policy areas with the University's Senior Management Group.

This REF2029 Equality Impact Assessment document is to be considered a living document and will be reviewed at regular intervals, in particular, during the following windows:

- **October 2026 – December 2026:** allowing for data analysis of the first HESA submission which contributes to the volume measure and reflection of all processes relating to volume measure (i.e. independent researcher identification and allocation to UoA); alongside any new considerations relating to output selection and impact case study selection processes which require amendment or where mitigations should be highlighted via RPSC or other institutional committees for institution wide policies and processes which might have been identified. Papers presented to RPSC are available to all members of the University community.
- **October 2027 – December 2027:** allowing for a data analysis of the full volume measure across the relevant REF2029 two-year period and the relevant processes; reflection on any new considerations relating to output selection and impact case study selection processes which require amendment or where mitigations should be highlighted via RPSC or other institutional committees for institutional wide policies and processes which might have been identified. Papers presented to RPSC are available to all members of the University community.
- **December 2028 – March 2029:** revisit the volume measure data analysis; complete a data analysis relating to output selection and impact case study selection processes. Provide reflection and identify mitigations for future REF and institutional processes within the finalised Equality Impact report.

The specific datasets to be analysed are highlighted below in relation to each policy and process area. The University of Glasgow recognises the myriad challenges of the use of diversity data in such analyses, including reporting gaps, and the challenge of inference from small, patchy or supressed datasets. The changes to REF regulations whilst usefully supporting the delinking of the individual from the institutional REF submission, also provides challenges as to what aspects of data are appropriate or meaningful. Where appropriate, and where a baseline might be required in the comparison and analysis of any data, the data as at 31 July 2025 will typically be used. Although processes relating to impact case study selection are not required, in our final analysis we will include appropriate data analysis of our impact pipeline, impact stories supported to be developed as impact case studies and the final impact case study selection process.

[13] https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/policy/eias/

6.3.4 Impact analysis on multiple groups

We have explored each policy area in turn below. We have considered the unintended negative consequences and what might be done to reduce or mitigate those and how we might further enhance any positive consequences.

6.3.4.1 Volume-measure: staff on teaching and research contracts

Policy/process: As per Section 2 of the Code of Practice, the contractual FTE of all staff on teaching and research contracts will contribute to the volume measure. The data, as at 31 July 2025, will be used as a baseline in relation to 2025/26 and 2026/27 HESA submissions.

Ongoing data analysis: Data will be analysed at an institutional and Main Panel level in relation to sex, age (in age bands), race (in groupings), and by grade. It will be explored if reporting in relation to disability or religion or belief is feasible and can be used for an analysis. Undertaking analysis in relation to gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation would not be practical.

Protected Characteristics	**Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact**	**Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used**	**Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.**
• Age; • Disability; • Gender reassignment (Including Gender Neutral Language); • Marriage or Civil Partnership; • Pregnancy and Maternity; • Race; • Religion or Belief; • Sexual Orientation; • Sex	No discernible impact	All staff on R&T contracts are included within volume measure based on the expectations of their contract. Any impact, positive or negative, would be indirect and not due to the application of this policy.	This is a process unchanged from REF2021 and there is therefore no additional positive impact. As we are not making any assessments/evaluations and decisions have no bearing on ongoing access to research resources, promotion, or performance, there are no concerns of negative impacts. Demographic data will be kept under review as part of the assessment of the overall research environment and our institutional research culture. Reviews would highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action.

6.3.4.2 Volume measure: Staff on research-only contracts

Policy/process: As section 3 of the Code of Practice describes, the UofG institutional process draws on two of the REF2029 criteria above for decision-making in determining research independence:

- Where research independence is an inherent expectation of a contract.
- Hold an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship requiring research independence.

Ongoing data analysis: The data, as at 31 July 2025, will be used as a baseline in relation to the 2025/26 and 2026/27 HESA submission. However, the baseline will not include complete data relating to the identification of those with independently won, competitively awarded fellowships requiring research independence as that was not a consideration for the academic year 2024/25. Data will be analysed at an institutional and Main Panel level in relation to sex, age (in age bands), race (in groupings) and by grade. It will be explored if reporting in relation to disability or religion or belief is feasible and can be used for an analysis. Undertaking analysis in relation to gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and sexual orientation would not be practical. Data analysis will explore specifically the nature of the demographic of all staff on research-only contracts and those whose contract contributes to the volume measure.

Protected Characteristics	Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
• Age; • Disability; • Gender reassignment (Including Gender Neutral Language); • Marriage or Civil Partnership; • Pregnancy and Maternity; • Race; • Religion or Belief; • Sexual Orientation; • Sex	No discernible impact. *Potential for perceived impact; see column on actions to be taken.*	• All staff meeting the criteria above for research independence are included in the volume measure. • Decisions are made on transparent criteria with a small number of defined and agreed exceptions, e.g. clinical staff on contracts related to pursuit of a doctoral qualification who are not research independent, Grade 7 holders of defined fellowships who are considered to be research independent, holders of explicitly transitional/developmental fellowships who are deemed research independent only in their second year of the fellowship. • General positive impact on all staff as inclusion is based on contract rather than individual performance or personal circumstances. • Inclusion in the volume measure itself is of no direct benefit to individuals, and they may be otherwise included in REF submissions based on their contributions to knowledge and understanding or their demonstration of impact or in the SPRE narrative. • There is a need to recognise that there may inherent equality issues in any competitive process, e.g. for the award of fellowships and in how any individual may have support and access to opportunities. • There are additional potential criteria for research independence provided in the REF guidance. These were reviewed for inclusion in the University of Glasgow definition, but it was considered that there are issues regarding equality and equitability inherent in these criteria, e.g. becoming a PI and/or Co-I or leading work packages. These criteria tie individuals and individual performance to the volume measure and mitigate against a sense of inclusion. Further, there are concerns that individuals must be put forward or have to put themselves forward for assessment to meet these criteria, lessening the equity of inclusion by contract. Undertaking that kind of exercise on an annual basis could be divisive and serve to be exclusionary. • The sole matter for appeal is the inclusion of a fellowship on the list of those where Grade 7 staff are considered as having research independence. There is an agreed process for this detailed in the Code of Practice.	For those at Grade 8 and above, this is strictly based on contractual status, with no scrutiny of individuals and their circumstances required on an annual basis. Any impacts, positive or negative, would be indirect and only discernible through analysis of the data. For those at Grade 7, their contractual FTE will only contribute to the volume measure based on the REF2029-defined list of competitive external fellowships and an agreed and defined set of competitive fellowships awarded by the University of Glasgow. Demographic data will be kept under review within this EIA. These will highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action. Any appeals will be monitored and reported to the RPB for transparency. We recognise that especially for those at Grade 7 there might be a perceived positive impact of being included within the volume measure due to meeting the criterion of an external fellowship and a perceived negative impact for those not holding such an external fellowship but who might feel that the nature of their research activity merits their contractual FTE contributing to the volume measure. More generally, since 2024 the University has been supporting specific activity relating to a fellowships framework to consider the support for those applying for fellowships whether as internal or external candidates. This has also included exploring how best to ensure selection and recruitment processes to fellowships are transparent and robust. Such processes are done independently of any current or future REF considerations. **Mitigating actions:** ensure clear communications to individuals to understand and recognise that inclusion in volume measure has no bearing on an individual's current or future progression or performance.

6.3.4.3 4.3 Allocating contracts to UoAs

Policy/process: See Section 4 of the Code of Practice. Allocation to UoAs will be based on UoA remit descriptions and for those with potential to be attributed to multiple UoAs as a strategic decision by the institution. The University of Glasgow's organisational structures of Schools within its four Colleges only occasionally perfectly align with REF units of assessment. In most Colleges a School may hold individuals with research interests relating to multiple UoAs.

Ongoing data analysis: The data, as at 31 July 2025, will be used as a baseline in relation to the 2025/26 and 2026/27 HESA submission. However, on 31st July 2025, UoAs will not have been necessarily allocated to all those who met the criteria for research independence, in particular those whose contractual FTE contributes to the volume measure because they hold an independent competitively awarded fellowship. Data will be analysed at an institutional and Main Panel level in relation to sex, age (in age bands), race (in groupings) and by grade. It will be explored if reporting in relation to disability or religion or belief is feasible and can be used for an analysis. Undertaking analysis in relation to gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and sexual orientation would not be practical. Data analysis will explore the extent to which the UoA changed between the baseline and the two intervening years and what implications that may or may not have had to the protected characteristics which can feasibly be analysed.

Protected Characteristics	**Positive, Negative, or No Impact**	**Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used**	**Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.**
•Age; •Disability; •Gender reassignment (Including Gender Neutral Language); •Marriage or Civil Partnership; •Pregnancy and Maternity; •Race •Religion or Belief; •Sexual Orientation; •Sex	No discernible Impact *Potential for perceived impact; see column on actions to be taken.*	• There is no individual advantage or disadvantage to be allocated to a specific UoA for volume measure purposes. • Further, there are no implications for the individual in UoA assignment in terms of how their research or impact activity is supported. • The overarching approach by the University of Glasgow is to allocate all relevant contractual FTE to a UoA most closely related to the contract holder's research, using the REF UoA remit descriptions. • The REF submission overall represents the University's strategic position rather than disciplinary or individual perspectives. This reflects the delinking of individuals from the REF submission and decisions regarding UoA allocations ultimately rest with the institution and not the individual concerned. • Where an individual can meaningfully fall within multiple UoAs, the assignment decision will be taken strategically based on the UoA approach to submission. • All UoA allocations are held within HR systems and are being reviewed by Colleges in the academic year 2025/26 to ensure they are linked to Units of Assessment that are (i) likely to be submitted by the University for REF2029 (ii) reviewed prior to the REF2025/26 submission (iii) reviewed prior to the 2026/27 submission especially in relation to new members of staff or those whose contracts may have changed. • Individuals may have concerns about their personal assignments as the idea of 'delinking' may not be well understood. Requests for changes to UoA allocations or where individuals could meaningfully fall into more than one UoA are reviewed by CAP Chairs for the UoAs concerned with disagreements escalated to the VP-RKE and ultimately SMG. This reflects the institutional nature of the decision. • We recognise that there can be a perception of both positive and/or negative impact that an individual might feel based on where their volume measure is attributed. This might be link to a sense of loyalty or pride in association with specific disciplines and therefore the subsequent sense of disloyalty or disappointment to not be associated with a specific UoA.	Allocations to UoAs are discipline level decisions. Any impacts would be indirect due to disciplinary differences combined with individual characteristics but mitigated by the 'de-linked' nature of the overall assessment. Demographic data will be kept under review as part of the EIA and, where relevant, within the submission narrative for Strategy, People and Research Environment. Review will highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action. **Mitigating actions:** ensure clear communications to individuals to understand and recognise UoA allocation has no bearing on an individual's current or future progression or performance. Alongside general awareness raising, it will be intended to also remove the perception of either a positive or negative impact relating to UoA allocation.

6.3.4.4 Output selection: determining substantive link to current and former staff

Policy/process: See Section 5 of the Code of Practice. This aspect of the process will be fully governed by the REF2029 requirements to ensure compliance with a substantive link and the technological functionality to support that. The outputs selection pool is drawn from any output where the research was enabled during an eligible employment relationship which includes the following contracts:

- Research and Teaching
- Research-only
- Technical and Specialist role contracts at Grade 6 (Research pathway) and Grades 7 and 8 based on the expectation of research activity within their job descriptions.

The UoA Output Selection Committees are made aware of the eligible pool of outputs based on what has been indicated within the university's outputs management system. Any member of staff can include output records there across all output types. All outputs attributed to any individual in those categories above are available to UoA leads and outputs selection committees through an interface called PROMPT. Whether an output meets all the compliance requirements of the REF2029 regulations (still to be confirmed) cannot be automated within this system.

Ongoing data analysis: The baseline to be used will be 1 August 2026 to reflect that much of the review and selection processes are yet to get fully underway and will be compared with the final submission. Data will be analysed at an institutional and Main Panel level (where feasible) in relation to sex, age (in age bands), race (in groupings) and by grade. It will be explored if reporting in relation to disability or religion or belief is feasible and can be used for an analysis. Undertaking analysis in relation to gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and sexual orientation would not be practical. The considerations will be: what is the total volume of outputs available for selection from the contract types listed above by grade and protected characteristics where data analysis is feasible in relation to the final submission. It will also explore, if applicable, what outputs might have been submitted which were produced when on an excluded contract because someone was subsequently on an eligible contract.

Protected Characteristics	**Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact**	**Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used**	**Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.**
• Age; • Disability; • Gender reassignment (Including Gender Neutral Language); • Marriage or Civil Partnership; • Pregnancy and Maternity; • Race; • Religion or Belief; • Sexual Orientation; • Sex	No discernible impact	• Determination of a 'substantive link' to UofG which enables consideration of an output for selection is determined on objective criteria related to whether it was produced by an individual in a role that has a genuine expectation of research activity (as below), on an eligible contract (as below), where the underpinning research was enabled by the University, and where it was made publicly available during the REF output eligibility period (1 January 2021 to 31 December 2028). • Genuine expectation of research activity: all staff on R & T contracts and R-only contracts, across all grades and staff on Technical and Specialist role contract at Grade 6 (research pathway) and Grades 7 and 8 based on stated expectations within job descriptions. • Eligible contract: an author had or had a minimum of 0.2 FTE continuous employment for at least 12 months • Where individuals may have changed from ineligible to eligible roles at the University as part of a period of continuous employment, their outputs may be considered where both contracts were at UofG, the contract itself met eligibility requirements and was within the REF period. Such decisions on contractual changes or recruitment are not undertaken solely for REF, given the myriad other responsibilities which a change to an eligible contract might entail or require. Because REF2029 have	Criteria for demonstrating a substantive link is clear and transparent with little room for individual judgement. Indirect impacts may stem from hiring practices which determine type or roles on offer or appointment of staff to contracts. Indirect impact may also stem from wider responsibilities relating to grade or workload balance in relation to research output production. It will be imperative that this continues to be closely monitored as part of the assessment of the overall research environment and our institutional research culture. Review would highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action. The extent to which outputs are available for selection is dependent on the extent to which the individual has ensured their outputs are on the outputs management system. There is ongoing encouragement to ensure this is completed for other institutional purposes, e.g. Professional Development Review (PDRs). There could be perceived positive or negative impacts by the individual that their outputs as part of the assessment of the overall research environment and our institutional research culture. Review would highlight notable shifts or changes in data requiring additional analysis or action

Protected Characteristics	Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
		brought in this exception, there could be a perceived positive impact; in reality the availability of the output for selection has neither positive nor negative impact on the individual's ongoing performance and progression within the institution • Outputs from former staff must meet the same eligibility requirements with the same substantive link criteria having applied at the time of the output being researched or produced. • Outputs from staff who were made compulsorily redundant or who were dismissed may not be included. • Exceptional circumstances for consideration of a sole-authored output by an individual on a contract without expectation of research (excluding PGRs, visiting or honorary staff where employment contracts do not exist) may be considered where a case is made to the REF team and reviewed for a decision by the VP (R&KE). • We recognise in our Code of Practice this aspect of the REF2029 regulation but do not anticipate a likelihood of making use of it and any use of it will be subject to a decision by the national REF team. We do not anticipate making use of this because the outputs of individuals not on eligible contracts are not part of the dataset typically available to UoA leads or Output Selection Committees.	

6.3.4.5 <u>Output selection: Output Review, Scoring and Selection</u>

Policy/process: See Section 5 of the Code of Practice. The UoA Output Selection Committees identify outputs for review from the eligible pool of outputs and will undertake internal scoring and selection in relation to the scoring methodologies published on the internal REF2029 SharePoint site for each Outputs Selection Committee.

In addition to considering protected characteristics as throughout this section, and in accordance with the REF 2029 Code of Practice Guidance, our processes ensure that outputs in British Sign Language and other recognised languages (namely Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Scots, Ulster Scots, Irish, and Irish Sign Language) are not treated less favourably in output selection. UoA level agreed output scoring methodologies and output review practices, devised by OSCs and overseen by CAPs, reflect this.

Ongoing data analysis:
The baseline to be used will be 1 August 2026 to reflect that much of the review and selection processes are yet to get fully underway and will be compared with the final submission. Data will be analysed at an institutional and Main Panel level (where feasible) in relation to sex, age (in age bands), race (in groupings) and by grade. It will be explored if reporting in relation to disability or religion or belief is feasible and can be used for an analysis. Similarly, reporting related to outputs in recognised languages will be consider in terms of feasibility for analysis. Undertaking analysis in relation to gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and sexual orientation would not be practical. The considerations will be: what outputs were selected given the total volume of outputs available for selection, with analysis by grade and protected characteristics where data analysis is feasible in relation to the final submission. It will also explore at institutional level and Main Panel (wherever data allows it to be feasible) an analysis of grade profile in relation to sex, age (in age bands), race (in groupings), disability and religion or belief and by grade.

Protected Characteristics	Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
• Age; • Disability; • Gender reassignment (Including Gender Neutral Language); • Marriage or Civil Partnership; • Pregnancy and Maternity; • Race; • Religion or Belief; • Sexual Orientation; • Sex	Potential positive and/or negative impact from the inappropriate use of data relating to output scores or selection: see the detailed actions	• Overall having an output scored or included within a REF submission has no bearing on processes relating to an individual's progression or access to support of their research. However, despite the delinking of individuals from the REF2029 submission, the perception of the benefits of inclusion or a sense of negativity of an output not being included persists. • The processes of assigning output to UoAs are subjective, although based on disciplinary knowledge, clarity of the UoA remit descriptor and strategic views of the UoA. This is undertaken by experienced and trained staff and decisions are part of defined processed rather than owned by an individual. • The processes of scoring outputs are subjective, although based on disciplinary knowledge and understanding of REF processes. This is undertaken by experienced and trained staff and decisions are part of defined processed rather than owned by an individual. This includes activities such as calibration exercises within groups of internal reviews and with external colleagues, typically experienced previous REF panellists. • Individuals may feel that their work sits in a particular disciplinary space, and this may conflict with institutional evaluations. While this might be uncomfortable for individuals, it is not to their detriment given the de-linked nature of the REF exercise. While there would be no formal benefit, in an output being highlighted to a different UoA to where the individual might habitually identify, because of alignment with the UoA remit could raise greater awareness of the individual or team's research and research interests. • Assessment of quality is the primary and critical determining factor in the selection process for the University of Glasgow submission. Where deciding between outputs deemed of a similar quality, additional considerations may include breadth of subject area, research practice, output types and diversity of the researcher community. • The lack of blind evaluation could result in both positive and/or negative impact and unconscious bias remains a consideration. We recognise it is impractical to ensure blind evaluation but have mandated training to mitigate. • It is recognised that when scores are made available they can sometimes be interpreted without a consideration that the score will have been linked to fit to UoA. And, although such scores are not intended to be use for probation, promotion and progression purposes, typically access to such data has often led to individuals choosing to use it.	**Mitigating actions**: a number of mitigating actions and practices are in place to ensure mitigation of negative impact on individuals and limited unfair positive benefits for others through these processes. Staff involved in making any decisions related to the REF, including those on CAPs and OSCs, undertake training in relation to unconscious bias, diversity, race, and handling REF data. This is to ensure that insofar as possible staff are equipped to conduct their roles in these processes fairly. These training courses are mandatory and attendance is monitored. Further, mitigation of potential bias or unfairness in selection is through calibration panels reviewing multiple outputs, limiting citation data only to UoAs where citation data is routinely used and used in the context REF panels will, not including journal names, inclusion in the online selection tool of as many relevant outputs as possible of those published since 1st January 2021. The University provides an online repository for outputs and output selection tools for use by OSCs. The accessibility of these tools is important to ensure that staff are able to use them effectively to deposit outputs or participate fully in the work of OSCs. Additionally, ensuring tools, such as those used for as output repository and output scoring, are designed and/or implemented with accessibility for users in mind. The University includes the following statement in its Code of Good Practice in Research about which all staff are informed: *The University is signatory to the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and the Hong Kong Principles for Research Assessment and these commitments sit alongside the University's previous adoption of the Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics in 2017. The University expects all internal research evaluations to align with these principles and those of the University's Statement on the Use of Quantitative Indicators in the Assessment of Research Quality.* Communications and information sharing with staff across the University is required to ensure that staff are aware of the tools being used, are able to access and use them, and are aware of REF-related policies and guidance that might affect their overall eligibility (e.g. open access requirements). Also ensuring clear communications to individuals to understand and recognise output scoring and/or submission has neither positive nor negative bearing on an individual's current or future progression or performance is key. Scores provided for REF preparation and selection processes are kept strictly confidential to those involved in REF preparations, review or selection processes. This ensures that any scores are not available for unintentional misuse for other purposes and to support those scoring undertake those obligations with objectivity.

Protected Characteristics	Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
		• Similarly, there is potential for positive and negative impact should the scores be permitted for use in other contexts within the School, College or institution. Recognising also that an output will have been score in the context specifically of REF criteria and fit to UoA. • Exceptional circumstances for consideration of a sole-authored output by an individual on a contract without expectation of research (excluding PGRs, visiting or honorary staff where employment contracts do not exist) may be considered where a case is made to the REF team and reviewed for a decision by the VP-RKE. A positive impact may be felt by the individual where it is included. We recognise in our Code of Practice this aspect of the REF2029 regulation but do not anticipate a likelihood of making use of it and any use of it will be subject to a decision by the national REF team.	Similarly, it is not intended to that the final lists of submission are shared beyond those involved in finalising the submission to minimise any positive or negative association made with an output having been chosen for submission. In accordance with the de-linking of individuals from the assessment for REF2029, the final list of outputs chosen for selection is kept confidential to ensure that the act of an output being selected is not considered to be an esteem factor for an individual, and similarly that non-selection of an output is not equated with the lack of quality of the output. Principles for selection include each UoA ensuring a robust approach, undertaking calibration and review exercises, involving external review where appropriate, ensuring REF criteria are met, and ensuring all outputs will be treated the same irrespective of what language they are produced in and including those that are legally protected.

6.3.4.6 <u>Appeals Processes</u>

Policy/process: Each Section of the Code of Practice discussed appeals processes relevant to that section. This is summarised here.

Ongoing data analysis: There will be no ongoing data analysis, but the final equality impact report will include information on the number and nature of any appeals considered.

Protected Characteristics	Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
• Age; • Disability; • Gender reassignment (Including Gender Neutral Language); • Marriage or Civil Partnership; • Pregnancy and Maternity; • Race, Religion or Belief; • Sexual Orientation; • Sex	No discernible impact	• Where possible and where there is a subjective or contestable aspect to a decision, processes are put in place which have built in escalation points or appeal processes to ensure that any contested decisions are reviewed and considered objectively and in a strategic context. • **SRR/Independent Research Grade 8+:** no basis for individual appeal as based on role/job description. Any appeal would need to be based on either an entire Grade or entire category e.g. Clinical Academics G8 • **Independent Researcher – Grade 7 Fellowships:** appeals process in place should there be an appeal for the year in which the Grade 7 Fellowship holder's contract is included in the volume measure. • The inclusion of specific fellowships for G7 research independence may be appealed in the first instance to the DoR in the relevant College and then to an Appeals Panel convened to review the matter. The panel will be chaired by the Senior Vice Principal and	**Mitigating actions:** Staff involved in making any decisions related to the REF, including those on CAPs and OSCs undertake training in relation to unconscious bias, diversity, race, and handling REF data. This is to ensure that insofar as possible staff are equipped to conduct their roles in these processes fairly and equitably. These training courses are mandatory and attendance is monitored. Decision-making is through defined processes with relevant escalation points to senior management who have a strategic view of the institutional submission.

Protected Characteristics	Positive, Negative, or No discernible impact	Please explain the impact or why there is no impact including details of any evidence/data used	Detail actions taken/ that will be taken to increase positive or reduce negative impact (or why action is not possible). Detail how you plan to measure the relevant outcomes and outputs of your activity.
		comprise the Executive Director of People and Organisational Development and one other staff member as appropriate. Decisions will be reported to the REF Project Board. • Putting forward an appeal in relation to a fellowship will be considered confidentially and will have neither positive nor negative impacts on the individual making the appeal whether they are the fellowship holder, a UoA lead or any other individual. • Any data, e.g. start dates or fellowship types, felt to be incorrect can be queried (by individuals, College REF leads, etc.) to the central REF team for investigation with College and P&OD colleagues. • UoA allocation: there is no detriment or advantage to an individual of UoA allocation and therefore there is no appeals process for UoA allocation in a given year. • REF UoA Leads can make a request to the Chair of the CAP for a change of UoA for a specific contractual FTE. Where the UoAs sit primarily within the remit of the CAP, the decision is determined by the Chair of the CAP. Where more than one College is involved, all Chairs of the relevant CAPs will be consulted and a decision agreed amongst them. Escalation is to the VP-RKE for a final decision or where there may be a conflict of interest, to SMG for a decision. • Exceptional circumstances requests related to output selection are made by UoA Lead to the CAP along with a justification for inclusion. If not endorsed by the CAP, the CAP will be responsible for recording the decision and communicating this to the UoA Lead. If endorsed by CAP, this will be submitted to the REF Team for review by the VP-RKE. The REF Team will record the decision and communicate this with CAP.	