**University of Huddersfield**

**Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances**

This document is being sent to all staff on Academic contracts who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research (SRR) and those on Research Only contracts who have been identified as independent researchers (IR), and whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF 2021.

As part of the University’s commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, it has put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

* To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be entered into REF where they have;
	+ circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
	+ circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances e.g. mental health issues, caring responsibility, long-term health conditions
	+ two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
* To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual’s ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs.
* To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to Research England for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

**Applicable circumstances**

* Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
* Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
* Qualifying periods of family-related leave
* Disability (including chronic conditions)
* Ill heath, injury or mental health conditions
* Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
* Caring responsibilities
* Gender reassignment

And only where requests are being made for the removal of the minimum of one output requirement

* COVID-19 related circumstances - effects due to applicable circumstances (such as ill health, caring responsibilities) including other personal circumstances related to COVID-19 (such as health-related or clinical staff diverted to frontline services, staff resources diverted to other priority areas within the University in response to COVID-19 and/or external factors related to COVID-19 (for example, restricted access to research facilities)

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the above circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form. Further information can be found in paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions ([REF 2019/01](https://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/)). Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; it will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

**Ensuring Confidentiality**

The information provided on the disclosure forms will be seen by the members of the Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP) and by staff in Human Resources who process the data and papers. It will not be shared with Unit of Assessment Coordinators, Associate Deans Research and Enterprise staff, or the University REF Oversight Committee (REFOC).

If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, your factual employment history may be referred to and/or you will be contacted by a HR representative.

The ICP will hold a closed meeting to review and consider applications for individual staff circumstances and will communicate its decisions to individuals by confidential e-mail ensuring that any reductions in the number of outputs are clearly communicated and confirming the expectations of them as an individual submitting outputs within their UOA. HR will pass details of this form to the relevant contact (usually your line manager) within your department to ensure that expectations can be adjusted and appropriate support put in place for you.

Although the expectations of individuals with staff circumstances will stand, the University is only expected to make requests for reductions to outputs at UOA level where the cumulative effect of circumstances has disproportionately affected the UOA’s output pool. This means that UOAs are in general expected to manage the overall submission of outputs within the average of 2.5 outputs per FTE, with some staff submitting more and others less, taking any individual circumstances into account.

In addition, in all UOAs, an individual may be returned without the required minimum of one output without penalty in the assessment, where the nature of the individual’s circumstances has an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the REF period, so that the staff member has not been able to produce the required minimum of one.

Members of REFOC, Associate Deans Research and Enterprise and UOA Coordinators will be made aware of any approved reductions to outputs that could be made to the UOA submission but will not know the reasons for the reduction.

If the University decides to apply to Research England for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of ‘minimum of one’ requirement or unit circumstances), it will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the REF Guidance on Submissions (REF2019/01) (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the Research England REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals’ circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

At the University, a copy of the information provided by staff will be held on their personal files in Human Resources. All other copies will be destroyed after the REF process is completed in line with REF Data Protection processes.

To submit this form you should send it to Ruth.Sivori@hud.ac.uk , Head of Human Resources, by 6 November 2020.

**Name:** Click here to insert text.

**Department/School:** Click here to insert text.

Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Please complete this form if you have one or more applicable equality-related circumstance (see above) which you are willing to declare. Please provide requested information in the relevant box(es).

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| **Circumstance** | **Time period affected** |
| **Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher, leading your own research as opposed to carrying our research directed by others, on or after 1 August 2016).***Date you became an early career researcher.* | Click here to enter a date. |
| **Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector, during which you did not undertake academic research.***Dates and durations in months.* | Click here to enter dates and durations. |
| **Family-related leave;*** statutory maternity leave
* statutory adoption leave
* Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more.

*For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.* | Click here to enter dates and durations. |
|  |
| **Disability (including chronic conditions)***To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text. |
| **Mental health condition***To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Ill health or injury***To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance***To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*  | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Caring responsibilities***To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Gender reassignment***To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **COVID-19** (Applicable only where requests are being made for the removal of the minimum of one requirement)*To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.**The overall impact of COVID-19 effects should be considered in combination with other applicable circumstances affecting the staff member’s ability to research productively throughout the period.* | Click here to enter text. |
| **Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement.***To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |



Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

* The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
* I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by the Individual Circumstances Panel and staff in HR
* I realise it may be necessary to share the information with Research England, including the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree [ ]

**Name:** Print name here

**Signed:** Sign or initial here

**Date:** Insert date here

[ ]  I give my permission for a member of HR to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

[ ]  I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the relevant contact (usually my line manager) within my department/faculty/centre. (Please note, if you do not give permission your department may be unable to adjust expectations and put in place appropriate support for you).

I would like to be contacted by:

Email [ ]  Insert email address

Phone [ ]  Insert contact telephone number