Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

Research Excellence Framework 2021:
Code of Practice

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1837, the Royal College of Art (RCA) is the world's oldest art and design university in continuous operation, and it has been ranked the number one University of Art and Design each year since 2015 in the QS World University Rankings. In REF2014, the RCA submitted a higher percentage of eligible staff than any other specialist art and design university, and it achieved the highest level of research intensity of any submission by a specialist art and design university. Our academic staff and doctoral students undertake original research in art and design, their creativity and entrepreneurship generating tangible benefits for our quality of life, for the creative and cultural life of the UK and beyond, and for businesses, industry and public services

We aim to ensure the RCA remains the best place in the world to do Art and Design research. The Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy aims to deliver this goal in 2016-21 by:

- Maintaining a research-intensive culture, including submitting 100% of our research-active staff to the next Research Excellence Framework exercise, and supporting staff to achieve at least 50% of the RCA's submission graded as world leading (4*).
- Generating substantial income from research and knowledge exchange projects, aiming to generate £5m per year in research and knowledge exchange income by 2021.
- Developing our business and industry links, building on our existing relationships with global companies, as well as our engagement with public and third sector organisations, governments and policy makers.
- Ensuring strong support for research career development, across the all career stages from research students to senior academic staff.
- Preparing effectively for the 2021 Research Excellence Framework, providing support and training for staff to develop and complete high-quality research outputs that have demonstrable impact, and ensuring systems are in place to enable the gathering and reporting of robust evidence and data about excellent research outputs, research impact and the research environment.

The College is committed to celebrating diversity, eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity. It is the College's aim to encourage and support all staff and students to reach their full potential, and to create a positive and inclusive working and learning environment.

This Code of Practice sets out the steps the College will take to ensure that fairness, transparency, equality and diversity are at the heart both of the way we deliver our strategic

objectives for research and knowledge exchange, and of the way we prepare our submission for REF2021.

The RCA recognises the importance and value of a Code of Practice which details responsibilities, operating criteria and processes, and provides a framework for decision-making for REF2021 which addresses the following principles:

a) **Transparency:** All processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research (where applicable), determining research independence, and selecting outputs for inclusion in REF submissions should be transparent.

b) **Consistency:** The principles governing the processes covered by codes of practice should be consistent across the institution.

c) **Accountability:** Responsibilities should be clearly defined, and individuals and bodies that are involved i) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, ii), determining research independence and iii) selecting outputs for REF submissions should be identified by role. Codes should also state what training those who are involved in processes have had.

d) **Inclusivity:** The processes described in the Code should promote an inclusive environment, enabling institutions to identify all staff who have significant responsibility for research, all staff who are independent researchers, and the excellent research produced by staff across all protected groups.

1.1 Implementation of principles

The implementation of this Code takes account of these principles in the following ways:

a) Transparency:
- The Code will be easily accessible and publicised to all academic staff across the institution, including on relevant College intranet pages and will be sent (by mail) to those on long-term leave (e.g. career breaks, maternity, sickness etc.).
- The Code will be actively disseminated and explained through relevant meetings of committees and groups, as well as Schools, Research Centres and other relevant departments.
- The Code will be presented to staff at lunchtime seminars and other communication events, and staff will be invited to speak to colleagues from the Research Office and Human Resources should they have any questions about the Code of Practice.

b) Consistency:
- The Code of Practice sets out the principles to be applied to all aspects and stages of the process at all levels within the institution where decisions will be made, including how staff circumstances will be taken into account.

c) Accountability:

- This Code identifies who will be involved in: i) determining research independence and ii) selecting outputs for REF submission, and outlines what training those staff will have undertaken.
- The Code describes the operating criteria and terms of reference for individuals, Committees, advisory groups and any other bodies concerned with decisions about research independence and the selection of outputs.

d) Inclusivity:
- The Code seeks to identify all eligible Category A staff for submission to REF2021.
- The Code sets out the arrangements for Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to determine whether the RCA's processes for determining research independence and output selection for REF2021 may have a differential impact on particular groups by reference to one or more protected characteristic(s). It is recognised that as a small institution, the EIA's analysis will involve smaller numbers which can heavily influence statistical data; however, the EIAs will be key in identifying any unintended consequences of the RCA's processes.

1.2 Communication of the Code of Practice

This Code will be circulated electronically to all staff in June 2019 and will be freely available on the REF2021 pages on the RCA intranet. Paper copies are available on request from the Research Office (rke@rca.ac.uk).

In addition, the Code will be communicated via the following:

- The Director of Research & Innovation, the Head of Research Development and the Deputy Director of HR will communicate the Code of Practice through formal standing Committees and Groups, for approval before submission (May 2019) as well as to provide information and further opportunities for questions after the Code of Practice has been submitted to the funding bodies in June 2019.
- Members of the REF Strategy Committee from the Research Office and HR will present and discuss the Code of Practice and answer questions at the next the Joint Consultative Meeting with the unions. The draft Code of Practice will also be shared with the UCU Regional Officer for information.
- Following submission of the final Code of Practice to the funding bodies, members of the REF Strategy Committee from the Research Office and HR will hold lunchtime seminars on each campus to discuss the Code of Practice and answer questions.
- Members of the REF Strategy Committee from the Research Office and HR will make

themselves available to attend School, Research Centre and Departmental meetings to discuss the Code of Practice, such as School Learning & Teaching Committees, research meetings and other relevant meetings

- Taking account of staff preferences and learning differences such as dyslexia and dyspraxia, the REF Strategy Group will provide opportunities for staff to receive information verbally and to ask questions, in addition to circulating documents electronically. This will be offered via drop-in surgery sessions and by appointment with the Head of Research Development and the Deputy Director of HR on an ongoing basis.

2.   SCOPE OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE

This Code of Practice is applicable to all staff, both full-time and part-time, whose contracts include the expectation of research activity and management within the terms and conditions of employment.

3.   EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The RCA's revised (2018) Equality and Diversity Policy outlines the College's commitment to providing an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of the protected characteristics contained within the 2010 Equality Act where all members of its community are treated with respect and dignity. The College aims to create a culture of diversity within its community, providing a dynamic working and learning environment, where all members are valued for their contribution and individuality.

The College is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
- Gender (including gender reassignment, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity)
- Religion, belief
- Sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)

The College is also mindful to ensure that those staff who are on fixed-term contracts or who are part-time are not treated less favourably than comparable staff on permanent (open-ended) contracts or who are full-time.

The RCA recognises the valuable contributions to research made by members of its diverse community.

The College is committed to ensuring that all staff have equal access to the full range of institutional facilities. Reasonable adjustments to working practices are considered wherever possible in order to accommodate a more diverse community. This has included implementing recommendations from workplace needs assessments conducted for staff with learning differences such as dyslexia and dyspraxia.

The College's Council has ultimate responsibility for compliance with the College's equality obligations and receive annual reports from the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Chief Operating Officer has overall responsibility for the Equality and Diversity Policy, while the Human Resources and Registry teams ensure the policy is reviewed and revised as necessary.

Following analysis of workforce data and feedback received from both staff and students across the institution, the College has outlined how it will respond to its public sector equality duties through the setting of Equality and Diversity Objectives for 2018-2021. The objectives relating to the workforce are as follows:

Objective 1: Improve gender balance in the workforce
Areas of focus include: career progression, attraction and retention strategies, gender pay gap and leadership and governance

Objective 2: Improve the ethnic diversity of the workforce
Areas of focus include: career progression practices, attraction and retention strategies and student body, workforce and community profiling

Institutional policies & procedures that promote E&D:

- Academic Employment Framework which includes the Academic Probation Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Family-friendly policies such as maternity, paternity, shared parental leave, flexible working, career break policy, additional leave,
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy

The whole research community at the College shares responsibility for the successful application of this Code of Practice. Specific responsibility falls to the REF Strategy Group, the Director of Research and Innovation, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in ensuring that decisions related to REF2021 are free from discrimination, and in line with the principles set out in this Code of Practice.

3.1 The Legal Framework

The RCA will comply with all the legal duties placed upon it by:

- the Equality Act 2010
- the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- the Employment Act 2002 including Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 and Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) (Amendment) Regulations 2008
- the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

3.2 Types of discrimination and definitions

Under the Equality Act, there are four main types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation

Direct discrimination: occurs where someone is treated less favourably directly because of:

- a protected characteristic they possess - this is **ordinary direct discrimination;** and /or
- a protected characteristic of someone they are associated with, such as a friend, family member or colleague - this is **direct discrimination by association;** and/or
- a protected characteristic they are thought to have, regardless of whether this perception by others is actually correct or not - this is **direct discrimination by perception.**

Indirect discrimination: is usually less obvious than direct discrimination and can often be unintended. In law, it is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied to a group of employees (or applicants) but has (or will have) the effect of putting those who share a certain protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared to others without the characteristic in the group, and the employer is unable to justify it.

Harassment: is defined as 'unwanted conduct' and must be related to a relevant protected characteristic or be 'of a sexual nature'. It must also have the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Victimisation: is when an employee suffers what the law terms a 'detriment' - something that causes disadvantage, damage, harm or loss - because of:

- Making an allegation of discrimination, and/or
- Supporting a complaint of discrimination, and/or
- Giving evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination, and/or
- Raising a grievance concerning equality or discrimination, and/or
- Doing anything else for the purpose of (or in connection with) the Equality Act 2010

Victimisation may also occur because an employee is suspected of doing one or more of these things.

Taking 'positive action'

Under the Equality Act, an employer can take what the law terms 'positive action' to help employees it thinks:

- Are at a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic, and/or
- Are under-represented in the organisation, or whose participation in the organisation is disproportionately low, because of a protected characteristic and/or
- Have specific needs connected to a protected characteristic.

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

The College's Public Interest Disclosure/Whistleblowing Policy provides protection to workers who publicly disclose certain serious concerns such as failure to comply with legal obligations or improper conduct or unethical behaviour.

3.3 Update on relevant actions taken since REF2014

New employment framework for academic staff

The College introduced a new employment framework for academic staff during academic year 2015/16.

The new framework provides protected research time for tutors and senior tutors and replaces the former system of research remission. It also defines roles for all tutors and senior tutors in terms of research and teaching.

Following successful negotiations between the RCA and the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU), and a clear acceptance of the proposals in a consultative ballot of UCU members at the RCA on the proposed new academic terms and conditions, the new academic employment framework (AEF) was implemented in the spring term of the 2015 - 16 academic year.

Through the new academic contract the College aims to ensure that the academic workforce is recognised and rewarded through:

- transfer of academic staff from fixed term contracts to permanent employment;
- guaranteed significant time for research, in consultation with the dean;
- dedicated time for undertaking the activities critical to the future success of the College;
- proportioning the amount of time spent on teaching activities so that individuals and schools can effectively plan their teaching, research and other commitments.
- provide an increased level of protected research time to early career academics.

At its core, the new contract allows the College to introduce a new, more equitable method for allocating research time. Depending on a staff member's category (teaching or research) and grade (Tutor or Senior Tutor), they are entitled to a maximum proportion of total time on teaching (operating as a ceiling) and a minimum proportion of total time on research (operating as a floor). See table below:

Role	Teaching (ceiling)	Research (floor)
Senior tutor (teaching)	70%	10%
Senior tutor (research)	50%	20%
Tutor (teaching)	70%	10%
Tutor (research)	50%	20%

It is possible for a senior tutor (research) or a tutor (research), to increase the proportion of time spent on research, through a successfully funded project, leaving less time for teaching or other activities. By contrast, it is expected that a senior tutor (teaching) or a tutor (teaching) would always have a minimum threshold of time spent on research, in order to underpin their teaching.

4. DETERMINING RESEARCH INDEPENDENCE

All teaching and research and research-only academic contracts at the RCA include specified time for research. Staff on these contracts are able to access internal research funding, training and development opportunities and other resources intended to support their research. RCA staff on teaching & research or research-only contracts of 0.2 FTE or above

are therefore considered to meet the criteria to be Category A eligible researchers with significant responsibility for research, and all such staff will be submitted to REF2021.

4.1 Criteria

Per the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions: *Category A eligible staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date* (31 July 2020)*, whose primary employment function is to undertake 'research only' or 'teaching and research'. Staff should have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit. Staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher.* (p. 36, paragraph 117)

Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role. (p. 42, paragraph 138)

It is recognised that it is normal practice in art and design for staff to be employed on minimum fractional contracts (0.2 - 0.29 FTE) with joint appointments with industry or personal practice, and that these minimum fractional contracts represent a substantive connection to the RCA. Staff on these contracts are active participants in the RCA's research environment and are involved in research groups and clusters, research leadership activities and supervision of postgraduate research students. They engage in teaching, knowledge exchange and research responsibilities as part of their roles and are active members of the RCA's research community.

Staff employed on 'research only' contracts must be independent researchers in order to be considered Category A eligible staff for submission to the REF2021 exercise. Per the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions: *For the purposes of the REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme.* (p. 41, paragraph 131)

The criteria below are being used to identify those research-only staff who are independent researchers and will be returned to the REF2021 exercise as Category A eligible staff. In order to be considered an independent researcher, staff on research-only contracts must fulfil at least two of the criteria below:

1. Appointed as the primary or secondary supervisor for doctoral research students
2. PI or CoI (or equivalent) on a research project, whether externally or internally funded
3. Significant input into and ownership of the design, conduct and interpretation of the research through undertaking self-directed research (rather than carrying out another individual's research programme)

4. Leading a research group or leading a substantial research work package within a larger research project, regardless of the funding source.

How is the RCA applying these criteria?

Staff on research-only contracts must fulfil at least two of the criteria above in order to be considered independent researchers to meet the definition of Category A eligible for REF2021.

4.2 Process for making and communicating decisions on research independence

Following the RCA's internal review of REF2014 outcomes, the College committed in the RCA Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021 (published 2015) to submitting at least 90% of all staff. In light of Lord Nicholas Stern's Research Excellence Framework Review (2016), the REF consultation process (2018), and the publication of the final REF2021 guidance (2019), the RCA committed to submitting 100% of Category A eligible staff to REF2021.

The RCA established the REF Strategy Group in 2016 to lead preparations for REF2021. The REF Strategy Group has issued regular updates to staff via intranet bulletins and newsletters, and the Director of Research & Innovation (Chair of the REF Strategy Group) and the Head of Research Development have provided regular REF preparation updates, including the RCA's intention to submit 100% of Category A eligible staff, to Deans of Schools, Research Centre Directors and RCA staff at standing committee meetings (Senate, Academic Standards Committee, Senior Management Team meetings, Deans' Group meetings, Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy Committee, Research & Knowledge Exchange Operational Committee).

The process for making and communicating decisions on research independence for staff on research-only contracts will be:

- Deans and Research Centre Directors will meet with staff on research-only contracts in autumn/winter 2019 to discuss whether they meet the criteria for independent researchers. Deans and Directors will communicate decisions about research independence to research-only staff (individually) after consulting with the REF Strategy Advisory Sub-group.
- Deans and Research Centre Directors will receive REF-specific equality & diversity training and will be briefed on the established criteria for research independence prior to meeting with their staff who are on research-only contracts. (Please see below for more information on the REF-specific equality and diversity training which will be provided to all staff involved in REF2021 decision-making.)
- The appeals process will be communicated at the time of decision for any staff who believe that the process and criteria as set out in this Code of Practice were not applied appropriately in judging their research independence. Please see section 4.5 below for

more information about the RCA REF2021 Appeals Process.

4.3 Roles and responsibilities of committees and staff

This section sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff and RCA Committees involved in the preparation and approval of the submission for REF2021. It focuses on responsibilities in respect of the inclusion or non-inclusion of individual staff members within the RCA's submission.

Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy Committee
The Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (RKEI) Strategy Committee has overall responsibility for the RCA's REF2021 submission and will endorse the REF2021 submission (including approval of this Code of Practice) prior to final approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost.

The RKEI Strategy Committee comprises the following staff:

- Director of Research & Innovation (Chair)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost
- Director of Communications & Marketing
- Director of Finance
- Director of HR
- Director of IT, Library and Technology Services
- Head of Research Centres
- Head of Research Development
- Head of Research Programmes
- Head of Knowledge Exchange
- Head of Executive Education
- Director of InnovationRCA
- 1x Research Centre Director
- 4x Deans of Schools

Secretariat is provided by the Research & Knowledge Exchange Administrator. Membership is comprised of senior staff in relevant Professional Services departments as well as representative senior staff in the academic Schools, Research Centres and InnovationRCA to develop and implement the RCA's Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (RKEI) Strategy and related policies. The RKEI Strategy Committee also advises Senate on the development and implementation of the RKEI Strategy and related policies, including any related to the College's REF2021 preparation and submission, such as this Code of Practice. (For more information about the RKEI Strategy Committee, please see Annex F.)

REF Strategy Group

The REF Strategy Group makes recommendations about the RCA's REF2021 strategy and advises on preparation of the REF2021 submission. REF Strategy Group reports to the Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy Committee via the Director of Research & Innovation. The REF Strategy Group acts in both an advisory capacity (e.g. advising Deans and Research Centre Directors on the application of the criteria for research independence) and in a decision-making capacity (e.g. the final decision on outputs to be included in the RCA's REF2021 submission will be made by the REF Strategy Group).

REF Strategy Group membership:

- Director of Research & Innovation (Chair)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost
- Head of Research Development
- 2x Deans of Schools
- Research Centre Director
- Deputy Director of HR
- Director of IT, Library and Technology Services
- Director of Communications & Marketing
- External member with significant REF panel experience
- RCA Research Professor (with specific responsibility for REF)
- RCA Council Member

with the provision to co-opt senior member(s) of academic staff as required. All meetings are minuted by the Research & Knowledge Exchange Administrator and are attended by the Research Information Manager.

Academic staff appointed to the group are primarily senior staff within the RCA who either have extensive research experience and/or experience of previous research assessment exercises. Professional services staff appointed to the group are senior staff within the RCA who will be involved in the RCA's preparation of and submission to REF2021.

The REF Strategy Group reports to and is accountable to the RCA's RKEI Strategy Group and the Senior Management Team; its activities and decisions are also disseminated to the RCA's Deans' Group.

Members of the REF Strategy Group are involved in working sub-groups focusing on particular operational, advisory and decision-making aspects of the RCA's REF2021 submission. These sub-groups consist of members of the main REF Strategy Group but with the provision to co-opt members of academic staff as required. All staff involved in the REF Strategy Group, as well as any staff co-opted for REF Strategy Working Sub-groups will receive REF-specific

equality and diversity training (as detailed below).

Responsibilities:

- Agree the RCA's REF2021 strategy (informed by the RKEI Strategy 2016-2021 and RCA Strategy 2016-2021)
- Establish milestones leading up to the REF2021 submission
- Oversee sub-groups focussing on specific issues, e.g. establishing repository guidance and training; developing the RCA's Code of Practice for REF2021
- Develop REF2021 guidance materials
- Establish a Gantt chart/timeline for activities leading to the REF2021 submission
- Approval of RCA Code of Practice for agreement by RKEI Strategy Committee and Senate (with noting by Academic Standards Committee and Equality & Diversity Committee)
- Advisory and decision-making responsibilities with regards to determining independent researcher status, final selection of outputs and impact case studies, and final oversight of the RCA's environment statement

Ways of working:

- Established 2016
- The REF Strategy Group will generally meet once per month, with the frequency changing closer to the REF submission date.

The remit of the REF Strategy Group is to:

- Provide leadership for the RCA's participation in and submission to REF2021;
- Determine RCA REF2021 planning and ensure its effective communication throughout the College;
- Assure the quality and robustness of the RCA's submission to REF2021, including approving and ensuring the implementation of the Code of Practice on applying the criteria for research independence for staff on research-only contracts, the selection of outputs, the final selection of impact case studies, and approval of the RCA's environment statement(s);
- Discuss and agree outputs to be included in the RCA's REF2021 submission, with due advice from external assessors if appropriate. Final approval of the outputs for inclusion in the RCA's REF2021 submission lies with the Director of Research & Innovation.

Staff involved in advisory and decision-making roles
Director of Research & Innovation:

- Providing leadership in preparation for REF2021;
- Chairing the REF Strategy Group;
- Overseeing communication with regards to the RCA's REF2021 strategy and preparation;
- Overseeing the preparation of the RCA's Code of Practice, including the criteria for research independence, and advising the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost on recommendations made in this regard.

Head of Research Development:

- Assisting the Director of Research & Innovation on and providing management for the preparation of the REF2021 submission;
- Assisting with the preparation of the RCA's Code of Practice, including the criteria for research independence, and advising the Director of Research & Innovation on recommendations made in this regard;
- Assisting the Director of Research & Innovation with communicating the RCA's REF2021 preparation and strategy;
- Coordinating, with the Research Information Manager, information gathering, output and data collection;
- Managing and overseeing data entry and upload using the REF2021 submission system.

Deans of Schools, Research Centre Directors, and Departmental Directors who are responsible for teaching & research staff:

- Advising staff in their School/Centre/Department with regard to the REF2021 processes;
- Assisting the Director of Research & Innovation on the preparation of the REF2021 submission;
- Meeting with staff on research-only contracts to discuss their status as independent researchers per the criteria in this Code of Practice and advising the Director of Research and REF Strategy Group in this regard;
- Information gathering, output and data collection.

Deputy Director of HR:

- Assisting with the preparation of the RCA's Code of Practice;
- Communication of Code of Practice and staff circumstances processes;
- Managing the voluntary declaration of staff circumstances processes;
- Advice and guidance on equality & diversity matters;

- Organising for EIAs to be undertaken, ensuring findings reported to relevant Committees/Groups and that EIAs inform ongoing development of the Code.

External Assessors

Where an external assessor contributes to the selection process, they will be fully briefed on the need to take account of this Code of Practice and provided with a copy of the Code before undertaking their assessment. External assessors will not act in a decision-making capacity regarding research independence or the selection of outputs or impact case studies, nor will they be provided any information about individual staff circumstances. If used, external assessors will be asked to comment on the quality of outputs, impact case studies or the RCA's environment statement only.

4.4 Training for advisory and decision-making staff

All relevant staff (including external assessors) involved in advisory, decision-making and appeals committees and processes as outlined in this Code of Practice have, or will have undertaken, standard unconscious bias training either by attending a course on campus, or by completing the course available via an e-learning module on the College's intranet. As with the face-to-face training, the e-learning module course defines and explores unconscious bias. It looks at the different types of unconscious bias that exist and the steps that individuals can take to reduce unconscious bias in the workplace.

In addition, all relevant staff will undertake further equality and diversity training with a REF-specific context and will include case studies provided in a face-to-face session on campus. This training is scheduled to take place late summer/early autumn 2019, prior to the exercise for establishing research independence for research-only staff and the RCA's formal internal REF2021 quality assessment exercise, which will take place in late winter 2019/early winter 2020.

4.5 Appeals

This section sets out the procedure through which the RCA will respond to any appeal arising out of ineligibility due to decisions taken about research independence, investigating them in a fair and transparent manner. All appeals and consequential outcomes will be monitored and reported through the Director of Research & Innovation and the Deputy Director of HR to the REF Strategy Group. It should be noted that there is no right of appeal against the academic or strategic judgement of those responsible for selecting staff members for inclusion in the REF submission unless there are grounds for thinking that the judgement was exercised unfairly or in contravention of the principle of equality.

As the RCA will be submitting all Category A eligible staff members to REF2021, research-only

members of staff who are deemed not to meet the established criteria for research independence will not be considered Category A eligible staff and will not be submitted to REF2021. Those research-only staff not considered to be independent researchers are able to appeal the decision if they believe the reasons behind the decision have not met the established criteria in this Code of Practice.

All Category A eligible staff will be formally notified of their inclusion in the RCA's REF2021 submission in autumn/winter 2019 to coincide with the RCA's formal internal REF2021 quality assessment exercise. Members of staff on research-only contracts will be invited to meet with their Deans or Research Centre Directors early autumn 2019 to discuss their roles and whether they meet the established criteria for research independence. Deans and Directors will make recommendations to the REF Strategy Group about the eligibility of research-only staff for REF2021 submission as independent researchers, and research-only staff will be provided feedback following this process as well as a decision about their eligibility as Category A independent researchers. Research-only staff will receive this feedback by late autumn 2019.

For each appeal the RCA receives from a research-only member of staff not decided to be an independent researcher by their Dean/Director, the REF2021 Appeals Committee will review the basis of the appeal in detail. Where an appeal is partially or fully upheld, the College will seek to implement a solution that is fair and proportionate while ensuring the continuing maintenance of the Code of Practice. Where an appeal is not upheld, the College will explain its decision clearly, and guide the appellant through the process. No staff will be disadvantaged by virtue of having made an appeal.

The principles of the REF2021 appeals process are that the process is fair, efficient and transparent. The process provides for two stages. These are: (a) Stage One: Formal, detailed consideration of the appeal (b) Stage Two: Review of the decision made at Stage One and confirmation of the final decision of the College.

Any appeal must be made by the staff member themselves; this process is not intended for use by a third party to make an appeal on behalf of a staff member.

Once a staff member has made an appeal, records will not be held on the staff member's file by HR, but kept securely in a separate appeals file held within the Research Office. Records will be retained as required for a reasonable period. This is to ensure that the College can make an informed response to any request from the UK funding bodies for a review of the decision as well as for REF2021 audit purposes.

The REF2021 appeals process may not be used to appeal against academic decisions about inclusion or exclusion of outputs or about any issues which should be taken under the

College's complaints or misconduct policies; these policies contain their own provisions for reviews of decisions. In addition, the UK funding bodies will offer a robust and independent process that will duly consider complaints about the implementation of the RCA's Code of Practice that cannot be satisfactorily resolved through the College's appeals process. Complaints may be made by individuals directly affected by the (non-)implementation of an HEI's Code of Practice or by those outside the process who have reason to believe that an institution has breached its approved Code of Practice. The funding bodies aim to develop a process that enables individuals to provide information confidentially. Further details of this process will be set out by the funding bodies in autumn 2019, and the RCA will ensure these details are made available to staff at that time.

Appeals will only be accepted outside of these timescales if there is a good reason for the delay; such complaints will be accepted only at the discretion of the Director of Research & Innovation.

The RCA shall endeavour to respond to appeals within the timescales outlined. On occasion it may be necessary to extend these deadlines; it is not possible to gauge, for all cases, how long an investigation into the issues may take, and on occasion there may be circumstances beyond the College's control that prevent the appeal being considered in accordance with the stated timescales. In such cases, revised deadlines will be communicated clearly to all parties.

Stage One: Formal Consideration
Staff members may submit a Stage One appeal within 10 working days from the receipt of the decision regarding their research independence and REF eligibility. Staff should send their appeal and any supporting evidence to rke@rca.ac.uk.

The only grounds on which an appeal may be considered are:

(a) that there was an internal administrative error;
(b) that the assessment of the individual's status as an independent researcher was not conducted in accordance with the College's REF2021 Code of Practice;
(c) that some other material irregularity relevant to the decision occurred.

Disagreement with the academic judgement of the REF Strategy Group with regards to output selection does not constitute grounds for appeal.

The Director of Research & Innovation will review the appeal, and may refer the appeal back to the staff member with a request for more evidence before proceeding. If there are no grounds for the appeal that accord with this Code of Practice, then the appeal shall be rejected; the appellant shall be directed to the provisions for a review of the Director of Research & Innovation's decision under Stage Two in such cases.

Where an arguable case in accordance with this Code of Practice is established by the appellant, the Director of Research & Innovation shall refer the appeal to the Dean or Director of the staff member as well as the REF Strategy Sub-group responsible for providing advice on deciding research independence. The Dean or Director may, at that point: (a) Recommend to the Director of Research & Innovation that the appeal be upheld and that the decision should be amended; (b) Confirm the original decision on the basis that the case and / or evidence are not sufficient to warrant a revised decision.

The Dean or Director may request further evidence from the staff member, and may also consult with members of the REF Strategy Advisory Sub-group, before reaching their decision. The Dean or Director shall report their final decision to the Director of Research & Innovation within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal.

Following receipt of the Dean/Director's decision, the staff member may choose to proceed to Stage 2 with their appeal by confirming their intention to the Director of Research & Innovation within 10 working days of the receipt of the decision via email (to rke@rca.ac.uk).

Stage Two: Review
If the staff member chooses to proceed to Stage 2 with their appeal to request a review of the Stage 1 decision and the process of reaching the decision, then the Director of Research & Innovation shall convene the REF2021 Appeals Committee to hear the appeal. The Committee will be convened within 15 working days of the receipt of the staff member's intention to proceed to Stage 2.

The RCA REF2021 Appeals Panel:

- Director of Academic Development (Chair)
- Chief Operating Officer and Chair of RCA Equality & Diversity Committee
- School or Departmental General Manager

Any request for review at Stage Two must be made on one or more of the following grounds:
(a) That the provisions of this Code of Practice were not correctly applied;
(b) That the final outcome is manifestly unjust and cannot be reasonably sustained;
(c) That evidence has become available that could not reasonably have been presented at Stage One of the process, and that may arguably have led to a different outcome.

Please note that in respect to (b) above, a case must be made for the decision being manifestly unjust; the staff member simply disagreeing with the outcome is not sufficient.

The Chair of the REF2021 Appeals Committee will consider the case made by the staff

member, and may seek additional evidence, either from the parties to the appeal or from any other source.

The REF2021 Appeals Committee may either uphold or reject the Director of Research & Innovation's original decision. The appellant will be notified of the decision within 5 working days of the Panel meeting. This decision shall be the final decision on behalf of the RCA.

Funding Bodies' Complaints Process
The funding bodies will develop an independent complaints process for appeals regarding the implementation of higher education institutions' codes of practice which cannot be satisfactorily resolved through the institution's appeals process. The funding bodies will provide further details on this process in autumn 2019. Individuals (whether directly affected by the non-implementation of the institution's code of practice or not) who believe that an institution has breached its approved code of practice will be able to make complaints and provide information confidentially. Please note that this process will not accept individual complaints that challenge the adequacy of the approved code of practice itself.

4.6 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be conducted at key points in the RCA's REF2021 preparation, including:

- Informal internal quality assessment (winter 2018/spring 2019)
- Application of research independence criteria for research-only staff (autumn 2019)
- Formal internal quality assessment (late winter 2019/early winter 2020)
- Final output selection and submission (November 2020)

The purpose of conducting the EIAs is identify whether there is a differential impact on particular groups by reference to one or more protected characteristics (as outlined in the 'Equality and Diversity' section above). As a small specialist institution, EIAs within the RCA will involve smaller numbers of staff which could heavily influence percentages reported in statistical data, so the EIAs will reflect this, where appropriate, highlighting instances that have a marked impact for particular groups. The RCA will investigate should any *prima facie* imbalance be found.

EIAs will be undertaken by a relevant member of staff within HR and, in line with best practice, will involve members of the College's Equality and Diversity Committee who fall within particular protected characteristics as a means of informing the EIA. The findings of the EIAs will:

- be reported to the Equality and Diversity Committee and the REF Strategy Group;

- inform the ongoing development of this Code of Practice; and
- be kept under review as the submission is prepared.

The EIAs should enable the College to identify where discrimination may inadvertently be occurring within our REF processes. They will also enable the College to identify where a particular policy or practice has a positive impact on the advancement of equality or where there is an opportunity to take a step that will have a positive impact.

The ongoing monitoring process is an important way of determining whether anti-discrimination measures taken, such as this Code of Practice, are effective. It plays an important part in ensuring that equality of opportunity is a reality within the RCA.

EIAs undertaken as part of the College's preparations and submission to REF2014, highlighted the following areas for consideration and action:

- *Ethnicity:* The lack of ethnic minorities represented within the group of eligible staff who could be and, who subsequently were, submitted to the last REF was identified as a concern in the 2014 EIA. The lack of BME staff within the College has been discussed at the College's Equality and Diversity Committee with a view to developing strategies to address this imbalance. As referred to above, this has since been identified as one of the primary E&D objectives to be addressed for 2018 - 2021.
- *Early Career Researchers (ECRs):* Although REF2014 was considered demonstrably supportive of Early Career Researchers with a lower number of outputs being permitted, the College deemed there to be a negative impact on this group as there was a significant lower number of staff employed whose work would be at a sufficient standard to be submitted, i.e. to meet the REF quality threshold. Through the introduction of a new academic employment framework (AEF) in early 2016, the College affords more time (i.e. up to 2 years) to newly appointed early career academics to produce at least one 3* research output as well as more protected time within their contract of employment to spend on research activity, i.e. 10% more than experienced colleagues.
- *Part-time staff:* out of 78% of eligible part-time staff who could be submitted to REF2014, only 50% were submitted with the other 50% coming from 22% of full-time eligible staff. This suggested that part-time staff either lacked capacity within their contracted hours to produce outputs or to produce outputs that met the REF quality threshold. The introduction of the new academic employment framework (AEF) was intended to address this, by providing protected time for research. In addition, over recent years the College has sought to avoid introducing such small fractional contracts (i.e. those at 0.2FTE) and, wherever possible, to increase the FTE of those members of staff on that level of fractional contract, while also supporting those staff that are on fractional contracts because they are also practicing artists, designers,

architects and similar outside of their work at the College. The College seeks to support part-time staff in their professional development and research activities by scheduling staff development events on numerous occasions and on different days of the working week to provide ample opportunity to staff to take advantage of training and development opportunities. Part-time staff also have access to the full range of Research Office support, including internal research and knowledge exchange funding opportunities and support to develop proposals for external funding.

- *Fixed-term contracts:* prior to the introduction of the academic employment framework (AEF), the College's long-term practice was to offer academic positions on a fixed term basis, i.e. for up to 3 years. The expiry of these contracts were reviewed at the appropriate time and a decision taken as to whether they should be renewed or not. After 4 years, such staff would be made permanent, however, at the time of the last REF, the total number of eligible staff on permanent and fixed term contracts was split 50/50. Slightly more permanent staff were submitted to REF2014 compared to those on fixed term contracts but overall the statistics indicated that the College did not differentiate between staff on permanent or fixed term contracts in supporting and recognising their research. Contracts of employment under the AEF are permanent. The College seeks to ensure that fixed term contracts are offered for objectively justifiable reasons such as, maternity cover, long-term sickness or back-fill for contracted staff who are 'acting-up' into a promoted position e.g. for an academic term or year. Those staff on fixed term contracts are afforded the same level of protected time for research as permanent staff. Staff on fixed term contracts are also invited to staff development events to support their professional development and research activities and are eligible to access internal funding to support their research and knowledge exchange activities.

5. SELECTION OF OUTPUTS

5.1 Principles guiding the RCA's selection of outputs

- All Category A eligible staff will be asked to submit their highest quality output (minimum of 1 requirement). The remainder of the RCA's submission will be comprised of the highest quality outputs produced by Category A eligible members of staff, up to a maximum of 5 outputs each.
- Only in exceptional circumstances will outputs from former members of staff be

considered for the RCA's REF2021 submission. These circumstances could include staff who leave their employment (but are not made redundant) at the RCA very close to the REF2021 submission deadline or former staff who have made a substantial contribution to the RCA's body of research and whose research reflects the current research ambitions of the RCA as well as that of the RCA's Schools and Research Centres. The RCA does not intend to submit outputs from former members of staff who have been made redundant.

- Where there are multiple outputs deemed to be the same quality level at the threshold of the RCA's submission requirement (2.5 outputs x total Category A eligible staff FTE on the census date), the REF Strategy Group will make academic and strategic decisions on which outputs to submit.
- If an output which is subject to the REF Open Access Policy (journal articles and conference contributions with an ISBN) is deemed to be high quality but has not met the requirements of the REF Open Access Policy, then it will be the decision of the REF Strategy Group whether to include the output in the RCA's submission weighed against the 5% non-compliance threshhold.
- Submissions to REF2021 are intended to be institutional submissions, reflecting the quality of the institution's research and culture as a whole, rather than the quality of individual research. However, the REF Strategy Group and Research Office will communicate to Deans and Research Centre Directors, as appropriate, the final list of outputs from their areas included in the RCA's REF2021 submission.

5.2 Processes for identifying and selecting outputs for submission to REF2021

- The RCA will undertake a Mock REF exercise in autumn/winter 2019 to begin to identify the highest quality outputs in the RCA's collective pool of outputs.
- Staff will be invited to submit their highest quality output, alongside up to 4 outputs, to the Mock REF. A minimum of 2 assessors will review each output (a mixture of experienced REF assessors and newly trained assessors, with the intention for assessors to mainly be internal staff) and assign a quality rating (1* to 4* or Unclassified).
- Staff will be provided with formal feedback following the Mock REF in spring 2020.
- A final output selection exercise will take place in summer/autumn 2020 to form the submission for November 2020 and to ensure that the RCA has identified the correct number of outputs for staff (minimum of 1, maximum of 5, taking into account any double-weighted outputs) and the correct number of outputs required for the submission. (Total FTE x 2.5)
- The final list of outputs for submission will be reviewed by the REF Strategy Group in summer/autumn 2020 and approved by the RKEI Strategy Committee.

For more details of the staff, committees and training involved in selection of outputs, please

see the previous section.

5.3 Support for staff preparing and submitting to REF2021

- An internal quality exercise took place in early 2019 to provide support and guidance on the development of outputs. Staff were asked to submit 1 or 2 outputs to the exercise, with reviewers with previous experience as REF panellists (2 internal members of staff as well as a Visiting Professor and a recently retired Professor) providing indicative quality ratings and comments on areas for improvement to strengthen outputs. Feedback was provided to the Schools and Research Centres to inform discussions about next steps with individual staff members with regards to their continued development of their REF outputs.
- Schools, Research Centres and other submitting departments will work collaboratively with their staff to identify their highest quality outputs to be considered for submission to REF2021.
- Training sessions and surgeries will continue to be offered through the final output selection exercise in summer/autumn 2020 to provide staff with advice, guidance and support in preparing their outputs and supporting materials for submission.

5.4 Disclosure of staff circumstances

As a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, the funding bodies (including HEFCE) have put in place processes to recognise the effect that an individual's circumstances may have on their productivity. Following advice by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP), the following equality-related circumstances have been identified that, in isolation or together, may significantly constrain the ability of submitted staff to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period (for more in-depth definitions, please see Annex H):

a. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (ECR)
b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave
d. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs are:
    i. Disability
    ii. Ill-health, injury, or mental health conditions
    iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, or maternity, in addition to a clearly defined period of maternity leave
    iv. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member)
    v. Gender reassignment

     vi.   Other circumstances related to the protected characteristics outlined under the 'Equality and Diversity' section of this Code of Practice, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation

For staff who have experienced individual circumstances that have affected their ability to produce research outputs during the REF2021 period (1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020), it may be possible to remove the requirement to submit a minimum of one output for REF2021. This would be the case if the staff member's circumstances meant that they had not been able to produce any eligible outputs during the submission period. An 'eligible' output is one that meets the REF2021 definition of research (please see Annex C) and the requirement for submission, and is not a reference to the quality of the output. If staff have experienced circumstances that meet the criteria above, but have nevertheless been able to produce at least one eligible research output within the required timeframe, then it will not be possible to remove the requirement to submit the minimum of one output, regardless of the quality of that output.

5.5 Process for Disclosure of Staff Circumstances

- The College will use the standard REF2021 template for disclosing circumstances.
- The HR team will invite staff to declare voluntarily and confidentially any circumstances that may have affected their ability to produce research outputs within the REF2021 timeframes.
- The HR team will issue the template to all staff (including to those staff who are absent from College for whatever reason).
- HR will also provide background information including what the disclosure of circumstances is for, how it will be used, who will see it, what the deadline is, and other relevant information.
- HR will send periodic reminders to all staff about the declaration form and process up until the deadline (to account for any staff who join after the initial email is sent).
- Staff will be able to email their completed forms confidentially to HR, or to submit them in person to HR, whichever is most appropriate.
- All forms will be provided in strict confidence to a small subset of the REF Strategy Group, led by Deputy Director of HR. This subgroup will assess the effect the declared circumstances have had on the ability of individual staff members to research productively throughout the period, in order to determine if a request should be made for the removal of the minimum requirement of one output, in accordance with the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions document.
- Any staff who are determined to have experienced circumstances which have affected their ability to research productively throughout the period and who have no eligible outputs will be notified of the removal of the requirement of a minimum of one output as soon as the REF Strategy Group has reached a decision. For some complex

circumstances, the REF Strategy Group may need to seek further advice and approval from the funding bodies' REF team before the decision can be communicated.

- The RCA will submit to a single unit of assessment (UoA32: Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory). The submission will be of a sufficient size to allow the College to absorb any reductions in output at the individual staff level. We therefore do not intend to seek any unit-wide reductions in the number of outputs we are required to submit to REF2021.

5.6 Communication about the voluntary disclosure of individual circumstances

- Drop-in sessions will be offered by HR and the Research Office at which they will explain the REF disclosure process and offer staff the opportunity to have a confidential 1:1 discussion with whomever they feel most comfortable discussing their questions and/or concerns.
- Lunchtime seminars will be offered to explain the process to small groups of staff, in order to provide additional opportunities for staff to ask questions about the process and what it means for their involvement in the REF2021 submission.

5.7 Confidentiality

The College will ensure confidentiality for all staff members who disclose individual circumstances in the context of REF2021. Any such information disclosed voluntarily will be protected and processed in line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) as incorporated into UK law through the Data Protection Act 2018. The information disclosed will be used to decide on the removal of the minimum requirement of one output for the staff member concerned and will be shared only with the minimum necessary number of those members of staff who have decision-making responsibilities for REF2021 as outlined in section 4.3 above.

ANNEX A: REF2021 TIMELINE

	REF2021 Timeline	RCA Timeline
June 2016		REF Strategy Group formed
September 2017	Publication of 'Initial decisions on the Research Excellence Framework' by the funding bodies, following consultation on implementation of the Stern review recommendations (REF 2017/01)	
October 2017	Publication of 'Roles and recruitment of expert panels' (REF 2017/03)	Demystifying the REF and How to Improve Your Research Profile training sessions begin
November 2017	Publication of 'Decisions on staff and outputs' (2017/04)	
February 2018		REF 300 Word Descriptor and Portfolio Training and Surgery sessions begin
March 2018	Panel membership for criteria phase announced	Internal RCA REF Survey deadline to inform REF Strategy Group about potential staff outputs
July 2018	Publication of draft 'Guidance on submissions' and 'Panel criteria'	
September 2018		Impact Stocktake and support for REF impact case studies begins
October 2018	Close of consultation on draft 'Guidance on submissions' and 'Panel criteria'	

January 2019	Publication of final 'Guidance on submissions', 'Panel criteria', and 'Guidance on codes of practice'; appointment of additional EDAP members	
Early-Mid 2019		Informal internal quality assessment takes place to provide constructive feedback on staff outputs and 300 word descriptors for further development
May 2019		REF Strategy Group finalise Code of Practice and communicating CoP to: Academic Standards Committee; Equality & Diversity Committee; Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy Committee (for sign-off); Senate (chaired by Vice Chancellor; formal approval 29 May 2019).
Noon on 7 June 2019	Code of Practice submission deadline	RCA to submit final Code of Practice.
Spring/Summer 2019	Invitation to request multiple submissions, case studies requiring security clearance, and exceptions to submission for small units (staggered deadlines in May, September and December 2019); beta versions of the submission system will be available in both test and live environments for institutions to use	Share Code of Practice with Joint Consultative Committee and local UCU representative.

Code of Practice information sessions and events to be offered by Research Office and HR.

Preparation continues of outputs, impact case studies and environment statement.

Portfolio and 300-word descriptor training continues.

Equality Impact Assessment to coincide with completion |

		of informal quality assessment.
Autumn 2019	Pilot of the REF submission system; survey of submissions intentions opens; proposed date for inviting reduction requests for staff circumstances (proposed deadline is March 2020). EDAP to request revisions to Codes of Practice as necessary.	REF-specific Equality & Diversity Training, including Unconscious Bias, delivered to all RCA staff involved in REF decision-making and advisory capacities. Deans, Directors and Department Heads meet with staff on research-only contracts (following training) to discuss REF eligibility (research independence). Equality Impact Assessment undertaken to coincide with research independence discussions with staff on research-only contracts. Following approval by the funding bodies and the external Equality & Diversity Advisory Panel, RCA to communicate final Code of Practice to staff more widely through lunchtime seminars, joining School and Research Centre meetings, offering 1:1 discussions. Staff invited to voluntarily disclose to HR individual circumstances which may significantly constrain their ability to produce outputs or work productively during the assessment period. Provisional deadline January 2020.
December 2019	Survey of submissions intentions complete; final deadline for requests for multiple submissions, case studies requiring security clearance, and exceptions to submission for small units; publication of approved codes of practice .	

	Approved Codes of Practice to be published by end of 2019.	
Winter 2019/20		RCA's formal mock REF Assessment Exercise to take place.
Early 2020	Formal release of the submission systems and accompanying technical guidance; invitation to HEIs to make submissions; invitation to nominate panel members and assessors for the assessment phase; deadline for staff circumstances requests	Provisional deadline for staff to voluntarily disclose individual circumstances (January 2020).
Mid 2020	Appointment of additional members and assessors to panels	Final decision on output selection (Director of Research & Innovation, in consultation with REF Strategy Group). Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken to coincide with final output selection.
31 July 2020	Census date for staff; end of assessment period (for research impacts, the research environment, and data about research income and research doctoral degrees awarded)	
27 November 2020	Closing date for submissions	Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken on final REF2021 submission.
31 December 2020	End of publication period (cut-off point for publication of research outputs, and for outputs underpinning impact case studies)	
29 January 2021	Deadline for providing further details for outputs pending	

	publication; redacted versions of impact case studies; and corroborating evidence held for impact case studies	
2021	Panels assess submissions	

ANNEX B: REF2021 TIMELINE FOR RCA STAFF

Research Independence

Deans and Directors will meet with their staff on research-only contracts to discuss research independence and REF eligibility following E&D training. Staff can submit an appeal within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

Internal Quality Assessment

Staff to be submitted to REF2021 will be invited to submit between 1 and 5 outputs (and associated supporting material) to the RCA's formal internal quality assessment for consideration. All staff members must have a minimum of 1 output.

Summer/Autumn 2019

Autumn 2019 - Spring 2020

Autumn/Winter 2019

Winter 2019 - Spring 2020

Training

Decision-makers to receive REF-specific Equality & Diversity and Unconscious Bias training prior to undertaking conversations with staff about research independence, considering staff circumstances, or selecting outputs for submission.

Staff Circumstances

Staff will be invited to voluntarily submit any individual circumstances which have affected their ability to work productively since 1 January 2014, which they would like taken into account in output selection if they do not have the required minimum of one output. The RCA will submit eligible requests to the REF team in March 2020 for approval to reduce the requirement for a minimum of one to zero outputs.

Spring/Summer 2020

Census Date

The date on which staff must be in post at the submitting institution and meet the eligibility criteria to be returned as Category A submitted.

27 November 2020

Panel Assessment

Panels assess submissions throughout 2021.

Output Selection

Outputs submitted to the internal quality assessment will be assessed internally and final assessments submitted to the REF Strategy Group in Summer 2020. The REF Strategy Group will aim to make a final decision on output selection for submission by end of Summer 2020, or early Autumn 2020 at the latest.

31 July 2020

Submission Deadline

This is the closing date for REF2021 submissions.

2021

ANNEX C: KEY DEFINITIONS

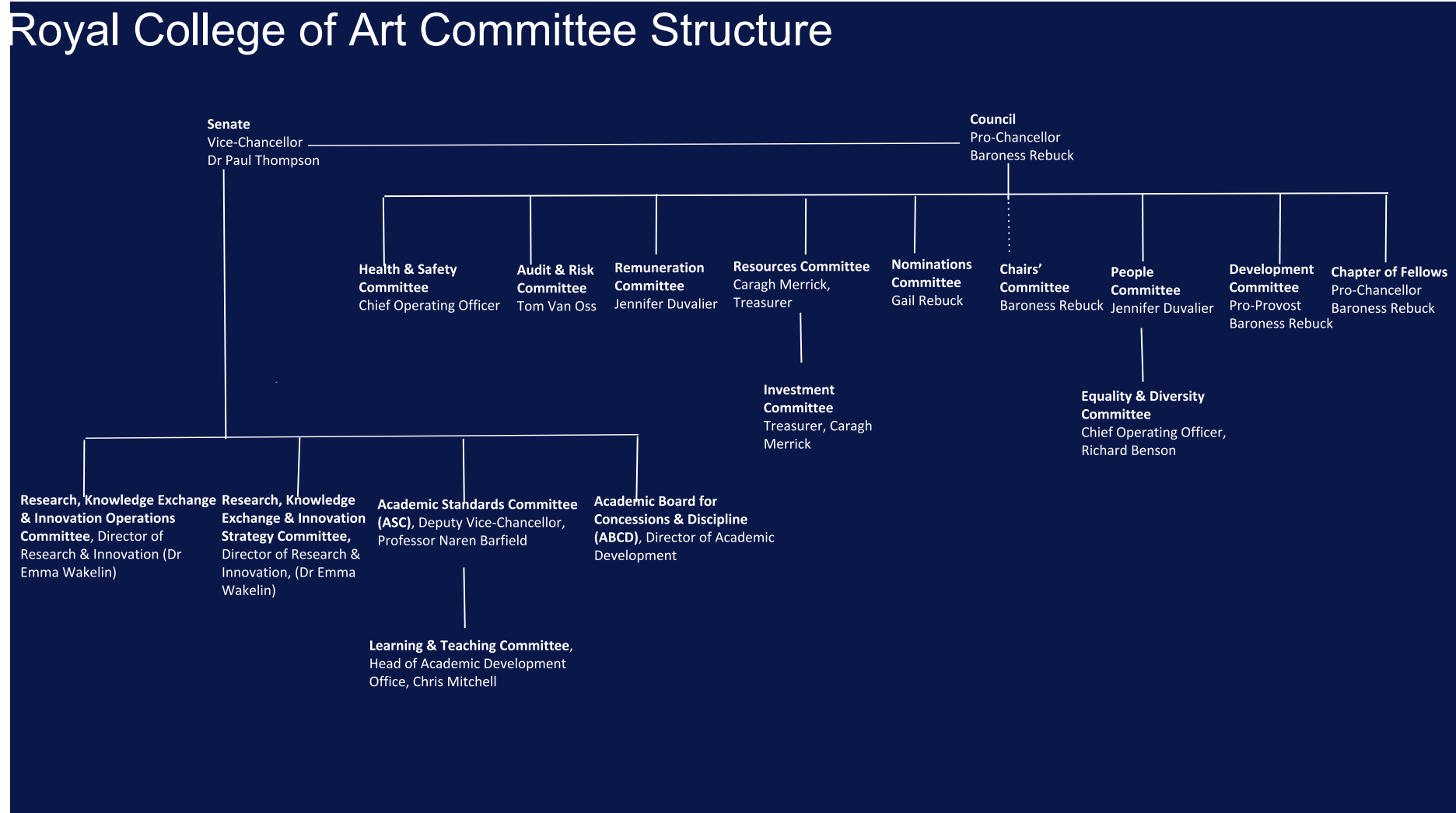| Term	Definition
Assessment period	Research impacts, the research environment and data about research income and research doctoral degrees awarded must fall within the assessment period: 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2020.
Census date	The date on which staff must be in post at the submitting institution and meet the eligibility criteria to be returned as Category A submitted staff is 31 July 2020.
Category A eligible staff	Academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date, and whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'. Staff should have a substantive connection with the submitting institution. Staff on 'research only' contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher. Staff meeting these criteria will form the total eligible staff pool but may not necessarily be submitted.
Category A submitted staff	Category A eligible staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date.
Codes of practice	Each institution making a submission is required to develop, document and apply a code of practice on determining who is an independent researcher and the selection of outputs in their REF submissions. Those institutions not submitting 100% of Category A eligible staff will be required to include the criteria and processes, agreed with staff, for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research.
Early career researcher (ECR)	Category A staff who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016.
Independent researcher	Independent researchers undertake self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme.
Output	The product of research, as defined in the REF. An underpinning principle of the REF is that all forms of research output will be assessed on a fair and equal basis.
Publication period	Outputs submitted to REF2021 must have been first made publicly available between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2020.
Research	For the purposes of REF, research is defined as 'a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.'

Research assistant	Academic staff whose primary employment function is 'research only' and who are employed to carry out another individual's research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right.
Significant responsibility for research	Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role.
Staff circumstances	Measures to take account of the effect of individuals' circumstances on research productivity during the period. These measures will allow an optional reduction in the unit's output requirement. They also allow an individual to be returned without the required minimum of one output without penalty in the assessment, where the circumstances have had an exceptional effect on productivity, so that the staff member has not been able to produce an eligible output.
Submission	A submission comprises a complete set of data about staff, outputs, impact and the research environment, returned by an HEI in any of the 34 UOAs.

Royal College of Art Committee Structure

Senate
Vice-Chancellor
Dr Paul Thompson

Council
Pro-Chancellor
Baroness Rebuck

Health & Safety Committee
Chief Operating Officer

Audit & Risk Committee
Tom Van Oss

Remuneration Committee
Jennifer Duvalier

Resources Committee
Caragh Merrick, Treasurer

Nominations Committee
Gail Rebuck

Chairs' Committee
Baroness Rebuck

People Committee
Jennifer Duvalier

Development Committee
Pro-Provost
Baroness Rebuck

Chapter of Fellows
Pro-Chancellor
Baroness Rebuck

Investment Committee
Treasurer, Caragh Merrick

Equality & Diversity Committee
Chief Operating Officer, Richard Benson

Research, Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Operations Committee, Director of Research & Innovation (Dr Emma Wakelin)

Research, Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Strategy Committee, Director of Research & Innovation, (Dr Emma Wakelin)

Academic Standards Committee (ASC), Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Naren Barfield

Academic Board for Concessions & Discipline (ABCD), Director of Academic Development

Learning & Teaching Committee, Head of Academic Development Office, Chris Mitchell

Decision-Making

Advisory

REF Strategy Group

Deans/Directors

RKEI Strategy Committee

Senate

Equality & Diversity Committee

Academic Standards Committee

Noting/Receiving Information

ANNEX F: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR KEY COMMITTEES

REF STRATEGY GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE
Membership (from June 2019):
- Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost
- Director, Research and Innovation (Chair)
- Head of Research Development (Deputy Chair)
- Deputy Director of Human Resources
- Research Professor
- RCA Council Member, RCA
- 2x Deans of Schools
- 1x Director Research Centre
- External Advisor

In attendance:
- Research Information Manager
- RKE Administrator (secretariat)

The membership may change or staff co-opted into the Group depending on the point in the REF cycle to reflect the key tasks of the REF Strategy Group.

Responsibilities:
- Agree the RCA's REF2021 strategy (informed by the RKEI Strategy 2016-2021 and RCA Strategy 2016-2021)
- Establish milestones leading up to the REF2021 submission
- Oversee sub-groups focussing on specific issues, e.g. establishing repository guidance and training; developing the RCA's Code of Practice for REF2021
- Develop REF2021 guidance materials
- Establish a Gantt chart/timeline for activities leading to the REF2021 submission
- Approval of RCA Code of Practice for agreement by RKEI Strategy Committee and Senate (with noting by Academic Standards Committee and Equality & Diversity Committee)
- Advisory and decision-making responsibilities with regards to determining independent researcher status, final selection of outputs and impact case studies, and final oversight of the RCA's environment statement

Ways of working:
- Established 2016
- The REF Strategy Group will generally meet once per month, with the frequency changing closer to the REF submission date.

Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy Committee Terms of Reference

The RCA Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Strategy Committee is charged by Senate to:

1. Develop and implement RCA research, knowledge exchange and innovation (RKEI) strategy and related policies.

2. Advise the Senate on the development and implementation of RKEI strategy and related policies which will include:
   a. the organisation, development and conduct of RKEI and allied activities in the College, including pricing of income-generating RKEI activities, and preparations for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF2021), forthcoming Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and other future national and international research, knowledge exchange and innovation benchmarking exercises;
   b. oversight of the development of internationally excellent and world leading, interdisciplinary and collaborative RKEI with global impact;
   c. the development of strategic RKEI initiatives within the College in accordance with the recommendations of Council working groups.

3. Establish, review and monitor annual College-wide and School/Centre- specific RKEI income targets (in accordance with Council and Senate as appropriate).

4. Approve the annual surplus allocation resulted from industry funded KE and Executive Education activities.

5. Allocate internal QR, HEIF and other RKEI funds and monitor the outcomes in accordance with the RKEI Strategy and in preparation for REF2021 and similar national exercises.

6. Strategically plan and monitor RKEI activity carried out by Schools, Centres and research groups within the RCA and to develop strategic relationships in line with:
   a. learning and teaching strategies
   b. the RCA Internationalisation Strategy
   c. staffing policies

7. Strategically plan for the effective dissemination of RKEI, and to realise global impact.

8. Advise the Staff Committee on the allocation of RKEI time in staff contracts and/or workload planning.

9. Strategically plan for research staff development and equal opportunities in line with the Researcher Development Framework, to include the development of a structure for research staff career development and to review the funding and career structure of researchers at all levels.

10. Advise the Senate on the most effective and economic utilisation of facilities, accommodation and staff for RKEI purposes, including refurbishment and equipment.

11. Review RCA RKEI publications including the Research Student Handbook and the RKEI pages of the College website.

12. Monitor the development of the RCA Digital and Physical Repositories in line with Open Access policy and HEFCE guidelines in preparation for REF2020 or similar national or international benchmarking exercises.

13. Advise the Vice-Chancellor's Office, Senior Management Team, and Research Centres and groups on the strategic benefits of research partnerships, collaborative initiatives, and policy consultations.

14. Receive reports from the Research Ethics Sub-Committee on the discharge of its responsibilities.

Membership:

Ex-officio
Director of Research and Innovation (Chair)
Deputy Vice- Chancellor and Provost
Director of Finance
Director of HR
Director of Communications & Marketing
Director of IT, Library and Technology Services
Head of Research Centres
Head of Research Development
Head of Research Programmes
Head of Knowledge Exchange
Head of Executive Education

Co-opted
Director, InnovationRCA
Director of one of the RCA Research Centres
Four Deans of School

Secretary:
Research and Innovation Administrator

Invited Observers:
A maximum of two people per meeting invited by the Chair.

Terms of Office:
Representative members of academic staff will serve on the committee for a maximum of three years; their term of office can be extended by a maximum of three years with mutual consent.

Quorum:
One half of the total actual membership

Frequency of meetings:
Every two months

Updated June 2019

ANNEX G: RCA REF2021 OUTPUT SELECTION

Supporting and Preparatory Activities

Training and Surgery sessions (ongoing)

Direct support from Deans/Directors, line managers, research leads in own department (ongoing)

Informal quality assessment with developmental feedback (early 2019)

Mock REF Exercise
(Autumn/Winter 2019)

Staff to submit min. 1, max. 5 outputs for quality assessment

Formal feedback to staff on output quality in Spring 2020

Final Output Selection Exercise
(Summer/Autumn 2020)

Staff to submit final version of output(s) for consideration following Mock REF feedback

REF Strategy Group to consider submitted outputs and Mock REF quality assessment to form RCA's REF2021 submission

RKEI Strategy Group approves final REF2021 submission; Research Office makes submission

RCA REF Submission
(27 November 2020)

REF Strategy Group to inform Deans/Directors of final output selection for their relevant Category A submitted staff

ANNEX H: STAFF CIRCUMSTANCES DEFINITIONS

From the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions:

Term	Definition
Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks	Absences must be outside the HE sector and in which the individual did not undertake academic research. (Annex L, paragraph 3)
Circumstances requiring a judgement	Where staff have had 'other circumstances' during the period, the institution will need to make a judgement about the effect of the circumstances in terms of the equivalent period of time absent, apply the reductions, and provide a brief rationale for the judgement. (Annex L, paragraph 16)
Combining circumstances	Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances that have a defined reduction in outputs, these may be accumulated. However, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously. (Annex L, paragraphs 10-11)
Early Career Researchers (ECR)	ECRs are defined as members of staff who meet the definition of Category A eligible on the census date, **and** who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016. For the purposes of the REF, an individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which: a. they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, **and** b. they first met the definition of an independent researcher. The following do **not** meet the definition of an ECR (this list is not exhaustive): a. Staff who first acted as an independent researcher while at a previous employer – whether another HEI, business or other organisation in the UK or elsewhere – before 1 August 2016, with a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater. b. Staff who first acted as an independent researcher before 1 August 2016 and have since had a career outside of research or an extended break from their research career, before returning to

	research work. Career breaks outside the HE sector are included in the types of circumstances where requests for output reductions may be made. c. Research assistants who would not normally meet the definition of an independent researcher. (paragraphs 148-149)
Qualifying periods of family-related leave	This includes: • Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave. • Additional paternity or adoption leave, or shared parental leave, lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020. (Annex L, paragraph 6)

ANNEX I: RCA ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT FRAMEWORK

Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

1   Introduction

1.1   The following terms and conditions of service apply to academic staff employed by the Royal College of Art ("the College").

1.2   In this document "academic staff" or "staff" means senior tutors, research leaders, tutors and research fellows at the College, and any other person holding an appointment deemed equivalent by the Council and Senate.

1.3   All appointments are subject to the provisions (as amended from time to time) of:

1.3.1   the individual appointment letter, these terms and conditions of employment, and the teaching and research categories document (together are referred to as the contract of employment); and

1.3.2   (Following successful completion of probation) the College's charter, statutes and ordinances governing academic staff, a copy of which is available on the College website.

1.4   In the event of any conflict between the contract of employment and the College's charter, statutes and ordinances, the statutes shall take precedence.

2   Salary

2.1   The initial salary is specified in the individual appointment letter. Details of the College's current salary scales are available on the college intranet.

3   Annual increments

3.1   The normal annual incremental date is 1 August.

3.2   Staff appointed at a grade up to and including grade 10, receive an incremental increase each year, until they reach the highest substantive (service) scale point associated with the post to which they are appointed.

3.3   Once appointed, a member of staff (if in post on 31 March) will move to the next scale point on the salary scale each year on 1 August until they reach the maximum of the scale (excluding any contribution points).

4   Hours of work

4.1   The notional full time working week is 35 hours.

4.2   The pattern of work may vary with the expectation that the contractual time commitment is achieved with reference to the full calendar year. The exact working pattern is for agreement with the line manager.

5   Teaching and research

5.1   Academic staff are defined as either teaching academics or research academics. Each category has a **maximum** proportion of time on teaching (operating as a ceiling) and a **minimum** proportion of time on research (operating as a floor) with the proportions varying in each category as follows:

Role	Teaching (ceiling)	Research (floor)
Senior tutor (teaching)	70%	10%
Senior tutor (research)	50%	20%
Tutor (teaching)	70%	10%
Tutor (research)	50%	20%

5.2   Identification of whether an individual is a teaching or research academic is included within the individual appointment letter.

5.3   Full details are contained in the 'research and teaching categories' document which also forms part of the contract of employment.

6   Holiday

6.1   **Leave entitlements**

   6.1.1   The leave year runs from 1 October until 30 September. Full time academic staff are entitled to 30 days' leave[1] a year.

   6.1.2   These days are offered in addition to such days as the College is customarily closed (at least five a year) and to bank and public holidays normally observed in England and Wales.

   6.1.3   These entitlements are *pro rata* for part-time staff.

6.2   **Timing of leave**

   6.2.1   Annual leave is taken by staff subject to the operational needs of the College and at such times and on such notice as is agreed in advance by the staff member's line manager, who may need to consult with their dean or director in advance of approving leave. Staff are normally required to give notice of at least twice the

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[1] Any variation from this leave entitlement is detailed in the individual appointment letter.

period of annual leave requested i.e. an application to take one week's leave requires two weeks' notice.

6.3 **Duration of leave**

6.3.1 Requests for periods of leave of up to three weeks in duration outside term time are not ordinarily refused. Any request for a continuous period of leave exceeding three weeks is granted only in consultation with the relevant dean or director, and is by exception.

6.4 **Carrying over of leave from one leave year to the next**

6.4.1 Academic staff may not normally carry forward annual leave from one leave year to the next.

6.4.2 Staff are deemed to have used any statutory holiday entitlement (including bank and public holidays and college closure days) before any contractual holiday entitlement.

6.5 **Entitlement to leave at the start and end of employment**

6.5.1 In the annual leave year in which employment commences or terminates, leave entitlement accrues on a *pro rata* basis. Fractions of half a day or less are treated as half a day's annual leave and fractions of more than half a day are treated as one day's annual leave.

6.5.2 If, on the termination of employment, a member of staff has exceeded his/her accrued leave entitlement, the College is entitled to deduct the excess from any payments due, including payment of salary.

6.5.3 In the case of summary dismissal, any accrued but untaken leave is based on the minimum holiday entitlement under the Working Time Regulations 1998 only. For these purposes any paid leave already taken (including any paid holiday on bank and public holidays and college closure days) is deemed first as statutory paid holiday.

6.5.4 If, on the termination of employment, a member of staff has remaining accrued leave entitlement, the College may require him/her to take it during the notice period or may alternatively pay the appropriate sum in lieu of such accrued leave, at the College's discretion.

6.5.5 The basis for calculation of a day's paid leave for full time staff is 1/260th of basic salary.

6.5.6 For part-time staff, annual leave entitlement and any calculation under this clause of a deduction or payment in lieu on termination is calculated *pro rata* to the full time equivalent.

7   Sickness

7.1   Staff who are absent from work for whatever reason must make every reasonable effort to contact their line manager (or an explicitly agreed nominee) in person and within one hour of their normal starting time to inform him/her of the reason for their absence and its expected duration.

7.2   If unable to establish contact with the nominated individual, staff may contact the relevant human resources manager. School/departmental arrangements for reporting absence must also be followed.

7.3   If the absence is due to sickness or injury and lasts for seven calendar days or less the member of staff must complete a self-certification form which is available on the college intranet. It should then be submitted electronically or by post to the relevant human resources manager within 48 hours of the return to work.

7.4   If the absence is due to sickness or injury and lasts for more than seven calendar days the member of staff is required to produce a medical certificate signed by his/her medical practitioner stating the reason for absence, no later than the 8th calendar day of illness, and forward it electronically or by post to reach the relevant human resources manager no later than the 10th calendar day of illness.

7.5   A new medical certificate should be sent thereafter covering all periods of absence. The member of staff agrees to consent to a medical examination (at the College's expense) by a clinician nominated by the College, should the College so require.

7.6   The member of staff agrees that any report produced in connection with any such examination is disclosed to the College and the College may discuss the contents of the report with the relevant medical practitioner.

7.7   The member of staff shall authorise disclosure of and co-operate in ensuring the prompt delivery of any resulting report to the College. Using reasonable endeavors to try and obtain medical information about the employee, the College reserves the right to use the medical information it has available to it when making decisions about the employee's employment.

7.8   Further details of the College's sick leave provisions are available in the College's sickness policy.

8   Unauthorised absence

8.1   The College will not pay salary for any periods of unauthorised absence.
8.2   For the purposes of the Employment Rights Act 1996, staff of the College authorise the College to deduct from their salary any sums due by them to the College, including any overpayments, loans or advances made to them by the College. Unless a deduction is made from their final salary payment, deductions will be made over a reasonable period. The College would advise staff in advance of any such deductions, and the duration over which it would take them.

9   Pension

9.1   The College participates in the pension benefits scheme provided by the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL).

9.2   An employee's membership of the pension scheme is subject to the rules and trust deed of the scheme in force which may be amended from time to time.

10   Probation

10.1   The first two years of employment is a probationary period during which time the suitability for the position to which the employee has been appointed is assessed. The College reserves the right to extend the probationary period if, in its opinion, circumstances so require.

11   Notice

11.1   At any time during the probationary period, or at the end of it, either party may, without reason stated, give not less than three months' notice in writing to the other to terminate the appointment. The rector or chief operating officer are empowered to give such notice on behalf of the Council. During the probationary period Statute 23 of the College's charter, statutes and ordinances 2011 does not apply.

11.2   Following completion of the probationary period, either party may terminate the appointment by giving not less than three months' notice in writing.

11.3   The College may terminate the employment of a member of staff, without notice, or payment in lieu of notice, if s/he is guilty of gross misconduct and/or is summarily dismissed in line with College policy and procedures. During any period of notice of termination of employment (whether given by the member of staff or the College), the College is under no obligation to assign any duties to the member of staff and is entitled to exclude him/her from its premises, although this will not affect the right of the employee to receive normal salary and other contractual benefits.

12   Policies and procedures

12.1   Academic appointments (following successful completion of the probationary period) are subject to the charter, statutes and ordinances of the College insofar as these may be in force, and may be modified from time to time.

12.2   The College operates a number of policies in relation to employment, including those covering discipline and grievance, which are available on the college internet.

13   Criminal convictions

13.1   All staff are required to disclose any criminal conviction acquired during employment at the College. Failure to do so may constitute a disciplinary offence and could result in dismissal. Staff must make a declaration as soon as they become aware that they are the subject of any police enquiry or investigation, or have accepted a caution or been found guilty of a criminal offence, during the course of their employment.

13.2   Staff must make the declaration in writing to the director of human resources who will assess the relevance of the disclosure in relation to the member of staff's role at the College and will make a recommendation to the rector on any necessary action.

14   Expenses

14.1   Reasonable and necessary expenses which are incurred in the proper performance of duties will be reimbursed by the College, providing that they have been approved in advance in accordance with the College's expenses approval process.

15   Deductions from wages

15.1   The College may make a salary deduction in the event that a member of staff has been found to have failed in his/her duty to exercise reasonable care and skill, and that that failure has led to the loss, theft or damage of any equipment provided to them by the College, including but not limited to a computer, electronic devices or other equipment.

15.2   If a member of staff has been found to have caused intentional damage to College equipment, or has otherwise defrauded the College, the College reserves the right to make a deduction from his/her salary up to the value of the damage/fraudulent gain, subject to approval by the director of human resources.

15.3   This clause is without prejudice to the right of the College to recover any sums or balance of sums owed by a member of staff to the College by legal proceedings.

16   Names, addresses and national insurance details

16.1   All staff must supply the relevant human resources manager with their full name, permanent address, telephone and mobile number. In an emergency (e.g. a sick relative or an urgent processing of a mortgage application), the College may contact the member of staff by telephone.

16.2   Changes to such information must similarly be notified together with proof (sight of the appropriate certification) in the case of a change of name. Staff must provide up to date details of their next of kin or point of contact in the case of an emergency.

16.3   Staff must supply their national insurance number to the relevant human resource manager within seven days of their employment commencing. Newly appointed staff who do not have a national insurance number are advised to contact the Department of Work and Pensions without delay.

16.4   New staff should provide the relevant human resources manager with parts 2 and 3 of Form P45 in connection with income tax in respect of any previous employment.

16.5   New staff must supply details of a bank account into which the College may make their salary and other payments by electronic transfer.

MARGARET BIRD
Director of Human Resources
February 2016

Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

TEACHING AND RESEARCH CATEGORIES

1   Background

1.1   Under the employment framework for academic staff, tutors and senior tutors are categorised as either research or teaching.

1.2   Each category has a **maximum** proportion of the total time spent on teaching (operating as a ceiling) and a **minimum** proportion of total time spent on research (operating as a floor), with the proportions varying in each category.

1.3   There are four academic role profiles:

- senior tutor (teaching);
- senior tutor (research);
- tutor (teaching);
- tutor (research).

The table below shows the floors and ceilings for each role profile.

Research and teaching floors and ceilings

Role	Teaching (ceiling)	Research (floor)
Senior tutor (teaching)	70%	10%
Senior tutor (research)	50%	20%
Tutor (teaching)	70%	10%
Tutor (research)	50%	20%

1.4   Your individual appointment letter[1] identifies to which of these roles you are appointed.

1.5   It is important to note that it is possible for a senior tutor (research) or a tutor (research), to increase the proportion of time spent on research, through a successfully funded project, leaving less time for teaching or other activities.

1.6   By contrast, it is expected that a senior tutor (teaching) or a tutor (teaching) would <u>always</u> have a minimum threshold of time spent on research, in order to underpin their teaching.

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[1] The individual appointment letter together with the terms and conditions of employment and this teaching and research categories document, together make up the academic employment framework which constitute the contract of employment.

1.7 Teaching includes, but is not limited to: preparation, assessment, curriculum development, tutorials, lectures, seminars, master's tuition and doctoral supervision.

1.8 Teaching and research together should not fill all the time available. For all academic staff the remaining time is spent on activities including knowledge exchange, line management and leadership, college citizenship, executive education and administration.

2 Principles

2.1 There is a process to transfer staff between the research and teaching roles and vice versa[2].

2.2 With the exception of the floors and ceilings for research and teaching, the terms and conditions of employment for all academic staff employed in the roles listed in section 1.3 above, are identical.

2.3 Adjustment of teaching loads should enable all staff to participate in a level of research appropriate to their role.

3 Appointment to the teaching or research category

3.1 For appointment to the research category, the academic must demonstrate evidence of one of the following:

- submission into the last Research Excellence Framework (REF) or equivalent; **or**
- evidence[3] of reasonable expectation of submission to REF in the next cycle, including reasonable expectation of demonstration of achievement, with the volume of output commensurate with the amount of time contracted, at the rate of one output per year of at least 3* REF quality[4]; **or**
- an early career research academic (in line with the definition in section 4.1 below).

3.2 The College would take into account any individual circumstances that would qualify the academic to submit a reduced number of research outputs in accordance with the REF rules, for example absence on maternity leave occurring substantially during the REF period[5].

3.2 For appointment to the teaching pathway, staff would normally undertake research to underpin teaching during their contracted hours.

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[2] The process is described which is described in the document '*Process for transfer between research and teaching categories and progression from tutor to senior tutor'*.
[3] Evidence for existing staff should be in the form of a current five year research plan. 'Current' meaning one that has been reviewed during the last appraisal cycle.
[4] As agreed in consultation with the dean (and director or research if appropriate)
[5] REF rules are subject to change and the College would refer to the rules in force at the time of submission.

4 Early career research academic

4.1 Academic staff are considered early career researcher academics for a period up to **4 years and 3 months** from the start of their academic career as an independent researcher[6]. An individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which:

- they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any UK institution of higher education or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas; **and**
- they undertook independent research, leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work. (A member of staff is not deemed to have undertaken independent research purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.)

4.2 Based on the REF2014 census date, it is anticipated that staff fulfilling the definition in section 4.1 above, on or after 1 August 2015, are eligible for submission to REF2020 as early career researchers.

4.3 On appointment, or initial allocation, an early career research academic would hold a doctorate (or recognised equivalent) and have research at least at 2* level. Within their first two years they would produce at least one 3* research output. Early career research academics have a higher floor for research than other research academics, with a minimum of 30% of their time spent on research. Staff appointed as an early career research academic must obtain a professional teaching accreditation within the first two years of their appointment.

MARGARET BIRD
Director of Human Resources
February 2016

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[6] In line with the definition provided by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) for the 2014REF.

Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Purpose

1. The College is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation, where all members of its community are treated with respect and dignity. It aims to create a culture of diversity within its community, providing a dynamic working and learning environment, where all members are valued for their contribution and individuality.

2. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of:
   - age
   - disability
   - ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
   - gender (including gender reassignment, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity)
   - religion, belief
   - sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)

Scope

3. The College is an institution operating in a local, national and international context.

4. The policy is applicable to all staff, students and applicants. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff and students should treat each other, visitors, contractors, sub-contractors, service providers, suppliers and any other persons associated with the functions of the College.

5. We will work to ensure that all of our students, employees and visitors, as well as those who seek to apply to work or study with us are treated fairly and are not subjected to unlawful discrimination in any form.

Aim

The College aims to promote equality of opportunity for all, through the following objectives:

- mainstreaming equality into the College's strategic and planning agenda;
- complying with its legal obligations;
- having an effective data monitoring and analysis process that supports this policy;
- assessing the impact on equality in our policies, procedures and practices at the College;
- involving staff, students and other stakeholders in the development and delivery of our equality objectives;
- ensuring that managers and staff undergo appropriate equality training for their role;
- promoting equality and diversity through internal and external communications;
- ensuring staff and student support services are accessible to all;
- ensuring that both existing staff and students, as well as those who seek to apply to work or study with us, are treated fairly and that individuals are judged solely on merit and by reference to their skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude and potential;
- ensuring that staff, students and their unions' representatives are provided with appropriate forums e.g. the College Equality and Diversity Committee and network groups, to discuss equality and diversity issues and raise any concerns;
- ensuring that all contractors and service providers operating on behalf of the College are aware of this policy and expected to adhere to it.

Implementation

7. The College community as a whole, shares responsibility for the successful application of this policy, whilst specific responsibility falls on managers and advisors who are professionally involved in staff and student support, development and supervision.

8. The College is committed to developing initiatives to support all minority groups that have been disadvantaged in the past and to help address some of the imbalances which may still exist between its staff and student populations and the college community. The College will not, however, permit positive discrimination.

9. The College will seek to ensure that all staff and students have equal access to the full range of institutional facilities and that adjustments to working and learning practices are considered wherever reasonably possible in order to accommodate a more diverse community.

10. Any staff member or student who believes that he/she may have been the victim of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation shall have recourse to the College's relevant procedures – Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation (staff members) and the Student Complaints Policy (students). The College is committed to finding resolution for complaints under these procedures.

11. The College will work in partnership with recognised trade unions and the Students' Union as well as external organisations where appropriate to combat all forms of unlawful discrimination.

Role and Responsibilities

12. Council has ultimate accountability for compliance with the College's equality obligations and will receive annual reports from the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Chief Operating Officer has overall formal responsibility for the Equality and Diversity Policy. Human Resources and Registry will ensure the policy is reviewed and revised as necessary

13. Staff and students have a responsibility to:
   * understand this policy and the related procedures and to contact their manager, Human Resources or Registry with any questions;
   * challenge or report inappropriate behaviour or any discrimination in accordance with the relevant procedure.

14. Managers have a responsibility to:
   * set a good example by treating all members of the College with dignity and respect;
   * correct unacceptable behaviour;
   * ensure staff and students know how to report discrimination, bullying and harassment.
   * ensure that reporting incidents does not result in victimisation;
   * deal with complaints fairly, thoroughly, quickly and confidentially;
   * ensure that due consideration is given to equality and diversity within their sphere of influence.

15. Human Resources is responsible for considering all existing and emerging equality legislation with a view to identifying relevant issues, which are then translated into the

relevant College policies and procedures. Human Resources is also responsible for:

- supporting the implementation of the College's equality objectives through involvement and consultation;
- data monitoring, analysis and policy development;
- designing and delivering training and awareness raising campaigns;
- providing advice, support and guidance on related issues.

Complaints

16. Any cases of harassment, discrimination, bullying or victimisation will be taken very seriously by the College. Any member of staff or student found guilty of unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including where appropriate, dismissal/termination of registration for gross misconduct.

17. Staff, students or other parties who make a complaint of discrimination have the right to do so without fear of victimisation and the College will make every effort to ensure victimisation does not occur and that any complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly.

18. The Anti-bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Procedure and the Student Complaints Policy are accessible on the College intranet and will guide the reader through how to make a complaint.

19. Any member of the public who wishes to make a complaint should address their complaint to the College school or department in question, in the first instance.

20. Human Resources will be happy to help with enquiries relating to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Equality Objectives

22. The equality objectives outline how the College will respond to its public sector equality duties. The key objectives have been identified in order to support the integration of equality of opportunity into all areas of the College and are directly linked to the College's overarching strategic agenda.

23. Progress against the College's equality objectives will be measured using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods. The Equality and Diversity Committee will receive termly monitoring reports that ensure progress is tracked and evaluated.

Further Information

24. Further information and support is available from:
• Human Resources
• Registry
• Student Support office
• Trade Union or Student's Union representative

May 2018

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2018–2021

OBJECTIVE 1 Improve gender balance in the workforce	
Areas of Focus	**Actions**
Career progression practices	Examine data on the career progression of women across the organisation; identify and respond to trends or issues that may impede or improve success rates.
	Increase the engagement and profile of senior women across the College in governance, leadership, diversity networks, communications and related initiatives.
	Aim to increase awareness of gender bias; organise activities to help raise awareness of unconscious bias.
	Monitor the application and take-up rates for flexible working and Keeping In Touch (KIT) days to ensure consistent family-friendly practice across the College.
	Investigate and introduce measures to support staff returning to work following a career or maternity/paternity break.
	Encourage all Schools to identify an initiative that encourages women's development or celebrates women's successes.
Attraction strategies	Examine why the majority of applicants for technical posts and senior academic posts are male and what can be done to influence this finding.
	Examine and address the disproportionate number of female staff at Grades 4 and 5.
	Examine why are the majority of applicants for administrative/professional posts (grades 6 - 10) and support roles (grades 1 – 5) are female and what can be done to influence this finding?
	Actively seek to widen the pool of applicants in senior promotions with the aim of increasing the number of women applying.
Retention strategies	Examine the types of leavers from the institution to determine if there are issues in the retention of certain genders in specific job categories.
	Consider whether exit procedures are sufficiently robust to capture meaningful data.
Gender Pay Gap	In tandem with the actions above, consider why the College's gender pay gap, while below the sector average, is higher at Grades 10 and above. Highlight steps that will improve this position.
Leadership and governance	Identify and recommend minimum requirements/recommendations for the gender profile of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and influential committees.
	Examine the membership and composition of SMT and the College's governance bodies annually and encourage measures to help remedy any clear shortfalls in gender representation. Monitor and report on gender balance of College committees.

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OBJECTIVE 2 Improve the ethnic diversity of the workforce	
Areas of Focus	**Actions**
Career progression practices	Examine data on the career progression of BME staff across the organisation; identify and respond to trends or issues that may impede or improve success rates.
	Increase the engagement and profile of senior BME staff across the College in governance, leadership, diversity networks, communications and related initiatives.
	Aim to increase awareness of racial discrimination or stereotyping; organise activities to help raise awareness of unconscious bias.
	Examine promotion practices that may impede BME staff moving from lower to higher graded roles.
Attraction strategies	Consider whether the image and reputation of the RCA promotes or hinders the attraction of BME applicants for roles.
	Examine the low numbers of BME applicants for technical posts and what can be done to influence this finding.
Retention strategies	Examine the types of leavers from the institution to determine if there are issues in the retention of BME staff in specific job categories.
Student body, workforce and community profiling	Improve the capture and reporting of ethnicity data for staff and students to facilitate more accurate assessments against the ethnic make-up of the communities (internal and external) we serve in the UK and overseas.

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OBJECTIVE 3	
Establish effective methods for monitoring equity of opportunity and experience in the student application process and in student success and progression.	
Areas of Focus	**Actions**
Record-keeping	Ensure SIS data is gathered and evaluated regularly.
	Establish a mechanism for monitoring whether protected characteristics (one or more in combination) affect an applicant or student's chance of success.
	Ensure consistent records on reasons for leave of absence kept are kept. Examine whether particular programmes or people with particular protected characteristics are disproportionately affected. Determine how best the College uses this information and how lessons learned best inform future practice.
	Identify and implement a mechanism for measuring participation levels according to socio-economic status.
Student experience	Establish workable methods for monitoring student experience in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion (e.g. student survey, School-specific equality audits, SU interest groups, input from Student Support staff)
Language and Communication	Undertake an audit of language used in communication with potential applicants.
	Undertake a Dyslexia and Dyspraxia-focused audit of application and induction processes.

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OBJECTIVE 4	
Monitor equity of opportunity and experience in the student application process and in student progression	
Areas of Focus	**Actions**
Opportunity	Examine the equity of the application process. Determine whether protected characteristics, cultural background, socio-economic status, home country affect an applicants' experience.
	Examine whether RCA applicants' previous institutions produce a disproportionate number of successful or unsuccessful applicants. Consider making productive links with institutions that produce high-achieving students but do not result in applications to the College.
	Examine School and programme-specific information about cohorts and how imbalances (in terms of who applies, gains a place, and successfully studies at the RCA) might be addressed.
Language and Communication	Develop a consistent approach to communication with applicants and students, taking into account best practice in relation to protected characteristics and inclusivity.
	Establish staff training to reflect best practice in verbal and written communication with a diverse student cohort (gender options, microagressions, pronouns etc).
	Conduct an audit of external bodies to whom the College reports on protected characteristics (HESE, HEFCE, Office for Students etc). Lobby for more inclusive language where applicable.

Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

ANNEX K: RCA REF2021 APPEALS PROCESS

Staff may only appeal decisions regarding their status as independent researchers with regards to REF2021 eligibility if they believe the reasons behind the decision have not met the established criteria in this Code of Practice. Appeals may not be made against academic decisions regarding outputs. Please see xx for more information on appeals.

Pre-appeal process

Deans and Directors with staff on research-only contracts receive REF-specific Equality & Diversity and Unconscious Bias training.

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Deans and Directors with staff on research-only contracts to meet with staff to discuss their independent researcher status

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Deans/Director take recommendations to REF Strategy Group and decisions agreed

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Deans/Directors notify staff of decisions regarding research independence and REF2021 eligibility

Within 10 working days of the receipt of the decision

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Stage 1 Appeal

See xx for more information on criteria for research independence.

Staff who believe the decision does not meet the established criteria submit appeal to the Director of Research & Innovation

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Director of Research & Innovation reviews the appeal and may request additional information before proceeding

Within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal

No grounds for an appeal: Appeal rejected (appellant notified)

Grounds for appeal: Appeal referred to relevant Dean or Director and REF Strategy Sub-Group who may request additional information

Within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal

Within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal

Original decision upheld: Appeal rejected (appellant notified)

Appeal upheld: Recommend to Director of Research & Innovation that decision should be amended (appellant notified)

Stage 2 Appeal

Appellant may request a review of the Stage 1 decision by notifying the Director of Research & Innovation

Within 10 working days of the receipt of Stage 1 decision

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Stage 2 Appeal

Within 10 working days of the receipt of Stage 1 decision

Appellant may request a review of the Stage 1 decision by notifying the Director of Research & Innovation

See xx for more information on criteria for research independence.

Within 15 working days of the receipt of Stage 2 appeal

Director of Research & Innovation convenes RCA REF2021 Appeals Panel

REF2021 Appeals Panel may request additional evidence and information

Within 5 working days of the Panel meeting

Within 5 working days of the Panel meeting

Final Decision
Original decision upheld:
Appeal rejected (appellant notified)

Final Decision
Appeal upheld: Decision amended (appellant notified)

The funding bodies will establish a complaints process which will allow individuals to lodge complaints and provide information confidentially about the non-implementation of institutions' code of practice where the issue has not been able to be satisfactorily resolved through the institution's appeals process. Further details about this process will be set out by the funding bodies in autumn 2019; please see xx for more information.

ANNEX L: RCA REF2021 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

To be updated as EIAs are completed. Please see Section 4.6 above for more information.