Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021

The purpose of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) is to assess the quality of UK research and to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research by the four UK higher education funding bodies. The REF is managed by the REF team, based at Research England (RE), on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies. RE is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and under this arrangement UKRI has the role of ‘data controller’ for personal data submitted by us to the REF.

If you are a researcher who has been included as part of our Lancaster University submission to the REF 2021, in 2021 we will send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI for the purpose of the REF2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name and details such as your date of birth, Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID), research groups, and contract dates will be provided along with details of your research. If you have declared individual circumstances and a request is made to allow a reduction in the number of outputs submitted, without penalty, some details of your personal circumstances will be provided.

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at [www.r](http://www.rae.ac.uk/)ef.ac.uk in particular publication 2019/01, ‘Guidance on submissions’.

**Sharing information about you**

UKRI may pass your data, or parts of it, to any of the following organisations that need it to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research and to carry out their statutory functions connected with funding higher education:

* Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland (DfE)
* Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
* Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

Some of your data (Unit of Assessment, HESA staff identifier code and date of birth) will also be passed to the [Higher Education Statistics Agency](http://www.hesa.ac.uk) (HESA) to enable it to verify coded data returned to it as part of our HESA staff return (see [www.hesa.ac.uk](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/)). Data returned to the REF will be linked to that held on the HESA staff record to allow UKRI and the organisations listed above to conduct additional analysis into the REF and fulfil their statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 (England, Wales and Scotland) or the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Northern Ireland).

UKRI and the organisations listed above will use the information to analyse and monitor the REF2021. This may result in information being released to other users including academic researchers or consultants (commissioned by the funding bodies), to carry out research or analysis, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679). Where information not previously published is released to third parties, this will be anonymised where practicable.

UKRI will require that anyone who has access to your data, held in UKRI’s records, paper or electronic, will respect its confidentiality and will only process it in accordance with instructions issued for the purposes specified by UKRI.

Parts of your data will be passed to the REF expert panels and the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (whose members are independent of UKRI) for the purpose of conducting a systematic evaluation of submissions, in accordance with predetermined criteria and methods. Panels will make judgments about the material contained in submissions and will not form quality judgments about individuals. All panel members are bound by confidentiality arrangements.

**Publishing information about your part in our submission**

The results of the assessment exercise will be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, in April 2022. The published results will not be based on individual performance nor identify individuals. UKRI will delete all the personal data that we hold about you within one month of publication of the results of the assessment exercise, other than information in impact case studies and environment statements (see below).

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, and will be made available online. **Published information is likely to include textual information including impact case studies and environment statements, in which you may be referenced**. Your name, job title and periods of employment may be included in this textual information.

*Textual parts of Lancaster’s submission e.g. impact case studies, environment statements and other textual information will not normally be submitted with personal information (other than names and job titles). Any personal information (other than names and job titles) will be removed in the redacted version(s) of such documents that are submitted.*

Unless redacted, the information to be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, will include a single list of all the outputs submitted by your employer in each Unit of assessment. The list of outputs will include standard bibliographic data for each output, but will not be listed by author name.

**Data about personal circumstances**

You may voluntarily disclose personal circumstances to [REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:REF-circumstances@lancaster.ac.uk) Information submitted will be treated confidentially in accordance with our [Code of Practice](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/research-services/research-information--systems/ref/lancasters-code-of-practice/) ([further guidance on submitting circumstances is available online](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/research-services/research-information--systems/ref/staff-circumstances/)). The information declared could permit us to submit your information to the REF without the ‘minimum of one’ requirement (without penalty), or to submit a reduced number of outputs for the overall unit without penalty. If (and only if) we apply either form of reduction of outputs, we will need to provide UKRI with individual-level data that you have declared about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the ‘Guidance on submissions’ document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals’ circumstances on completion of the assessment phase, which will be no later than one month after publication of the results of the assessment exercise.

We will send the REF team a report that will include a summary of all voluntarily declared personal circumstances, whether or not they were used to reduce the output requirements. This report will only contain data in aggregated form and will not contain information that will identify individual members of staff.

The lawful basis for processing your personal data is ‘legal obligation’ and ‘task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority’. Where data about your individual circumstances are special category data (as defined in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR), the specific condition for processing is that ‘processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes’.

**Accessing your personal data**

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, you have the right to see and receive a copy of any personal information that UKRI holds about you. Further information about the Act and GRPR, and guidance on making a subject access request, can be found on the [RE website](https://re.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards/foi-data-protection/).

If you have any concerns about your information being used for these purposes, please contact:

Data Protection Officer

UK Research and Innovation

Polaris House

Swindon, SN2 1FL

Email: [dataprotection@ukri.org](mailto:dataprotection@ukri.org)

**Lancaster University Privacy Notices can be found on our** [**website**](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/privacy/) **along with information about how to exercise your GDPR rights**.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

Information Governance Team

Email: [Information-governance@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:Information-governance@lancaster.ac.uk)