

REF 2021 Code of Practice addendum

Context

On 24th March 2020 the sector was [notified that the REF submission was suspended in response to COVID-19](#) to mitigate the effect of institutions diverting staff resources to other critical areas. The [suspension of REF submission will be lifted on 31 July 2020](#); institutions were notified of the following deadline changes:

- Submission date changed to 31 March 2021
- Impact assessment period extended to 31 December 2020

Please note staff census date (31/07/2020) and research publication period (01/01/2014 – 31/12/2020) have remained the same.

Changes to Edge Hill University REF 2021 processes

The purpose of this addendum is to highlight changes to our REF 2021 processes in response to COVID-19 to ensure work may recommence and adhere to safe working practices.

General changes to REF processes

1. All panels will be held in adherence to social distancing measures (generally panels will meet virtually).
2. An additional quarterly REF Decision Panel meeting for identifying and determining staff REF status will be held in September 2020. Please note all deadlines dates will be available on the [Research Office's REF wiki](#).

Appeals process

Staff who received notification of their REF status during the previous round of decisions (March 2020) will be able to submit an appeal during the next round of decisions (September/October 2020). These individuals will be notified by email, or letter for those absent, when this window of opportunity is available. The University is offering this additional opportunity to appeal in recognition of the constraints on staff caused by COVID-19 during previous appeal window.

Process for disclosing personal circumstances

Please note the following changes are related to section 4.4, appendix 11 and 12 of [REF 2021 Code of Practice](#).

To support ongoing social distancing measures, including virtual meetings and limiting numbers on campus, our processes for disclosing personal circumstance will recommence electronically. If you wish to make a disclosure, please complete a disclosure form (see [REF 2021 Code of Practice](#) appendix 11)

and return an electronic copy to [Personal Circumstance Disclosure Panel \(PCDP\) Secretary, Joanne Morris from Research Office](#), marked confidential. A copy of your submitted form will be saved to the PCDP Secretary's OneDrive and will be shared with PCDP members in electronic meeting papers for a limited period of time to enable PCDP to review and determine whether you are eligible for reductions during virtual meetings.

The PCDP will continue to meet monthly as indicated in Code of Practice. The deadline for submitting disclosure forms will be the **5th of each month** (recommencing 5th August 2020) and the **final institutional deadline will be 5th November 2020**. Individuals and REF Decisions Panel will be notified, by email, of the PCDP decisions within two weeks of each meeting.

All disclosure form that are submitted in electronic format will be saved to PCDP Secretary's OneDrive. Access to forms/meeting papers will be granted on a time limited bases for PCDP members except for REF Manager who will have permanent access to support any circumstance which may affect business continuity. PCDP meeting papers will not be allowed to leave Edge Hill University's premises (physical and virtual) without the express permission of REF Manager; members will not be allowed to print or save disclosure forms to local drives. At the conclusion of virtual meetings members will be asked to confirm they do not have papers saved locally or printed.

For those who have already submitted a form either in hard copy or electronically the PCDP Secretary will be in contact to confirm that you are happy for your disclosure to be review electronically (for hard copies we will scan your forms so we can processes them electronically). Please note if you do not agree to allow the process electronically, we cannot guarantee that your disclosure will be reviewed in time for REF submission.

Date: 29/07/2020