**Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances template**

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see [‘Guidance on submissions’](http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/), paragraphs 117-122). As part of the University’s commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

* To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be submitted to REF without the minimum requirement of one output where they have;
	+ circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
	+ circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
	+ two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
* To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual’s ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs. For the University of Essex, this will be both for the REF 2021 and for the University’s own Research Strategy deadline requirements. This is to avoid inviting staff to submit a declaration twice.
* To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

**Applicable circumstances**

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

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

**Ensuring Confidentiality**

Within the institution, the information that you provide will be seen by the REF 2021 Individual Staff Circumstances Committee, the membership of which is Professor Christine Raines, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), Dr Owen Robinson and Professor Francisco Sepulveda (two independent academic members), Sarah Manning-Press, Research Governance and Planning Manager, and Karen Bush, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

If the University decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of ‘minimum of one’ requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the [‘Guidance on submissions’](http://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-submissions-201901/) 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 REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals’ circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

**Notification of outcome of declaration**

The acknowledgement of receipt of any declarations will include the date on which it will be reviewed by the Individual Staff Circumstances Committee Notification of the outcome of any declaration will be sent to the individual making the declaration within 10 working days of the review meeting.

**Changes in circumstances**

The University recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should contact Sarah Manning-Press (sarahm@essex.ac.uk) to provide the updated information.

To submit this form you should send it as an e-mail attachment to sarahm@essex.ac.uk by Monday 24 February 2020. However, please note that reviews will be undertaken and decisions will be made throughout the period between now and the deadline.

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

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

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

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

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

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| **Circumstance** | **Time period affected** |
| **Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).***Date you became an early career researcher.* | Click here to enter a date. |
| **Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.**Dates and durations in months. | Click here to enter dates and durations. |
| **Family-related leave;*** statutory maternity leave
* statutory adoption leave
* Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more.

*For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.* | Click here to enter dates and durations. |
|  |
| **Disability (including chronic conditions)***To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text. |
| **Mental health condition***To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Ill health or injury***To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance***To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*  | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Caring responsibilities***To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Gender reassignment***To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |
| **Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement.***To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.* | Click here to enter text.  |



Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

* The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
* I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes and for the purposes of the University’s Research Strategy deadline only and will be seen by members of the Individual Staff Circumstances Committee.
* I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree [ ]

**Name:** Print name here

**Signed:** Sign or initial here

**Date:** Insert date here

[ ]  I give my permission for a member of the HR Employee Relations Team to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation to this declaration.

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

I would like to be contacted by:

Email [ ]  Insert email address

Phone [ ]  Insert contact telephone number