



1. Data Controller

Data Controller: University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Registration Number: Z7674926

2. Overview

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. The next assessment exercise will be conducted in 2021 (REF2021). The purpose of REF 2021 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.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR require institutions to inform their staff and other stakeholders as to how data about them that are submitted to the REF will be used. This REF2021 Privacy Notice explains what personal information the University processes in relation to the REF2021 exercise for the following individuals:

1. **Individuals currently employed by Northumbria University** whose employment involves undertaking research and who are considered to be REF-eligible.
2. **Individuals formerly employed by Northumbria University** whose employment involved undertaking research at the time of their employment who are considered to be REF-eligible during the REF assessment period.
3. **Individuals who have worked at the University on a contract or temporary basis** in a role that involved undertaking research at the time of their employment and who are now considered to be REF-eligible during the REF assessment period.

3. Purpose of the processing and the lawful basis for the processing

If you are included in Northumbria's submission to REF2021 we will be required to send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI, principally to ensure that the University meets the validation requirements for our submission. The information will include your name and details such as your date of birth, research groups, and contract dates. These details will be provided along with details of your research. If you are submitted with individual circumstances that allow a reduction in the number of outputs submitted some details of your personal circumstances will also be provided.

Full details of the data we are required to submit can be found in the REF2021 '[Guidance on submissions](#)'.

We also use information about individuals to help us understand the make-up of our research active staff population and to undertake equality impact assessments to help inform our decision making processes in relation to current and future research assessments.

4. Categories of personal data and the lawful basis for the processing

Individuals currently employed by Northumbria University

The following data is necessary to inform Northumbria's REF2021 preparations. Data will be submitted to REF as part of the University's submission in November 2020. The Legal Basis for holding and submitting this information is that is 'the processing is necessary for you to perform a task in the public



interest or for your official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law' and 'the processing is necessary for a contract you have with the individual'.

- HESA staff identifier and/or staff number.
- Name (initials and surname).
- Open researcher and contributor ID (ORCID) (where held).
- Contracted hours/FTE.
- Job Title/Position
- Information about contract type and any secondments/periods of unpaid leave, including dates.
- Whether any personal data should be omitted from the published data for specific reasons, such as commercial sensitivity or security.

You may voluntarily (processing via explicit consent) disclose personal circumstances to your submitting unit, which 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 without penalty. Please see the '[Guidance on submissions](#)' document (paragraphs 151-201) and our [Code of Practice](#) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF2021 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.

To identify the occurrence of special circumstances to facilitate possible reduction of outputs to a submitting unit of assessment. If (and only if) we apply for either form of reduction of outputs, we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have voluntarily disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs.

The Legal Basis for holding and submitting this information is Consent: the individual has given clear consent for the University to process their personal data for a specific purpose.

- If ECR (started career as an independent researcher on/after 1 August 2016), date of commencement of ECR status.
- Information about maternity leave, adoption/surrogacy leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave, time off for dependants within the assessment period, including dates.
- Details of sick leave within the assessment period.
- Information about any medical or health conditions you have or have had within the assessment period.
- Gender reassignment.
- Circumstances equivalent to absence including: ill health , mental health , injury, caring responsibilities

To facilitate Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)

EIAs will be undertaken at key points during the REF2021 exercise, including preparation of the code of practice. Following data processing for the EIA, data will be anonymised (where possible) prior to being shared. To protect the identity of individuals, data classifications of less than 5 will not be published.



The Legal Basis for holding and submitting this information is the University's Legitimate Interest.

- Information about protected characteristics including: age, sex/gender, gender reassignment, disability status, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, religion or religious beliefs, and sexual orientation.

Individuals formerly employed by Northumbria University

The Legal Basis for holding and submitting this information is that is 'the processing is necessary for you to perform a task in the public interest or for your official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law' and 'the processing is necessary for a contract you have with the individual'.

- HESA staff identifier and/or staff number.
- Name (initials and surname).
- Open researcher and contributor ID (ORCID) (where held).
- Contracted hours (FTE of REF-eligible contract(s)).
- Job title/position when at the University.
- Grade when at the University.
- Employment dates (on REF-eligible contract) at the University and as a researcher.
- Early career researcher status.
- Details of any periods of secondment or unpaid leave during which any outputs were first made publicly available.
- Whether any personal data should be omitted from the published data for specific reasons, such as commercial sensitivity or security.
- Details of any student supervision that the individual has undertaken at the University.
- Funding (including: details of grants held during the assessment period).

Individuals who have worked at the University on a contract or temporary basis

The Legal Basis for holding and submitting this information is that is 'the processing is necessary for you to perform a task in the public interest or for your official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law' and 'the processing is necessary for a contract you have with the individual'.

- Staff reference code (academic visitor number, where available).
- Name (initials and surname).
- Employing organisation.
- Position/job title (including: details about specific research responsibilities).
- Details of affiliation with the University (including: evidence that research is primarily focused in the submitting unit; any honorary positions; and duration of affiliation).
- Details of any teams/groups/collaborators that the individual has/is a member of at the University
- Details of any student supervision that the individual has undertaken at the University.
- Funding (including: details of grants held during the assessment period).

5. Where does data come from?

Northumbria University will lawfully collect data directly from you as an interested party connected to research being undertaken by Northumbria University for example as a collaborator or stakeholder in Northumbria's research, or a participant at an event or exhibition which has been informed by research from Northumbria.



6. Third party Data Sharing REF

As part of the REF assessment process, UKRI may pass your data, or some 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:

- Research England
- 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 (HESA) to enable it to verify coded data returned to it as part of our HESA staff return (see 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 REF 2021. 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

7. 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 December 2021. The published results will not be based on individual performance nor identify individuals.

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 in which you may be referenced. Your name and job title may be included in this textual information. Other personal and contractual details, including your date of birth and all information about individual staff circumstances will be removed. Research and Innovation Services (RIS) will check all impact case studies and environment templates before submission to ensure that personal information (other than names and job titles) are removed prior to submission.

UKRI will also publish a list of the outputs submitted by us in each UoA. This list will not be listed by author name.



8. Your Rights (including under GDPR)

You have a number of rights in relation to the processing of your personal information, each of which may apply to differing degrees dependent upon the nature of the processing. You have the right to:

- Request access (to a copy) of the personal information held about you.
- Request that we correct inaccurate or incomplete data.
- Ask to have certain data 'erased' by us.
- Request that we restrict certain processing of your personal data.
- Request that any data you submitted to us electronically be returned to you or passed to a third party as a data file.

Due to the nature of research related processing, in some cases, there may be specific exemptions as to why we are not required to comply with some of the above rights, such as when implementing your rights would preclude or prejudice the research outcomes for which data were collected.

Where it is deemed necessary to refuse any request from you to exercise your rights, we will explain the reasons for this within one month. You have the right to complain about our decision to the Information Commissioner.

- For more information about any of the above please see the GDPR pages of our website.
- In order to exercise any of the above rights, please contact the Data Protection Officer (details below).

If data collected about you has been anonymised it will not be possible to identify you or access your personal information.

9. Data Protection Officer

The Data Protection Officer for Northumbria University is Duncan James.

If you have any questions which you feel have not been covered by this Privacy Notice, or if you have concerns or a complaint in relation to the University processing your personal data, please do not hesitate to email us at: dp.officer@northumbria.ac.uk

If your request is urgent, please call +44 (0)191 243 7357

10. Lodging a Complaint with the Information Commissioners Office

Should you be dissatisfied with the University's processing of your personal data, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's. For more information see **Information Commissioner's web site**.