REF 2029
Research Excellence Framework

Code of Practice template

Institution name: London Metropolitan University
Date of submission:11/05/2026
Date of resubmission: 10/11/2026

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to the Code of Practice

A Code of Practice (CoP) is a mandatory requirement for the Research Excellence Framework 2029 (REF29). It establishes the minimum standards for institutional participation by explaining the processes by which the University will make key decisions for the REF29 submission. This CoP has evolved from the version submitted to REF21, with a commitment to embedding REF processes within existing structures and policies, facilitated by the REF29 shift to decoupling of individual researchers from the assessment.

Broader features of our research culture and environment will be captured by disciplinary and institutional statements for the Strategy, People and Research Environment (SPRE) element to our submission.

This CoP, therefore, sets out the principles, policies and processes that will guide London Metropolitan University's (London Met) REF29 preparations. Our intention is to provide a clear and transparent framework to ensure all decisions relating to the identification of staff with significant responsibility for research (SRR), research independence (RI), and the selection of eligible outputs are fair, consistent and aligned with sector expectations.

London Met is committed to promoting a research environment in which colleagues at all career stages are supported to develop contributions to the REF29 submission. In doing so, the CoP reflects our strategic focus on social justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and our commitment to developing a research culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our research community. The CoP explains how the University will uphold the principles of

transparency, robustness and inclusivity to inform decision making. This will be achieved through clear governance structures, evidence-based evaluation, and accountability at each stage of the REF process.

By setting out these processes and responsibilities, the CoP enables staff to understand how REF29 decisions will be made, who is accountable for those decisions, and what mechanisms exist for feedback, review and appeal. It is a living document, to be updated as necessary in response to further guidance from the REF Panels. It has been developed in consultation with academic staff and relevant governance groups across the University and is readily accessible.

1.2 Code of Practice Principles

The REF29 principles of transparency, robustness, and equity and inclusion will be upheld in the following ways.

1.2.1 Transparency

Communication of REF29 planning and progress is made regularly to staff at University, School and UoA levels. The CoP has been developed through consultation across the University. Following initial drafting, the CoP was presented at a recorded briefing session for all staff in January 2026. The briefing covered all elements of the REF processes detailed in the CoP, including definition of SRR and RI, allocation of contracts to UoAs and selection of outputs. Slides and the recording are available on the University staff intranet, along with a summary, FAQs, and contact details for questions or feedback. Information about the CoP has been publicised via staff newsletters. Access is available for all staff, including those who may be absent, for example, on sick leave or maternity leave. Trade union consultation was undertaken during the final drafting of the CoP. All consultation feedback was reviewed and incorporated into preparation of a final version, with additional input from Heads of RKE and UoA Coordinators. This was submitted to SLT, Academic Board and Board of Governors for approval. The CoP approved by the UK funding bodies will be made available on the University intranet and on the public facing website in multiple formats to maximise accessibility.

1.2.2 Robustness

REF29 removes the direct link between individual staff members and Unit of Assessment (UoA) submissions, shifting the focus of assessment from individual researchers to the performance of disciplinary areas within the institution. This 'decoupling' enables greater alignment between REF preparations and existing research governance processes. At London Met, our aim is to keep REF decision making as simple as possible by incorporating it into a 'business as usual' approach. Key management and governance structures (Appendix A) utilise existing processes wherever possible, minimising additional administrative burden but, importantly, supporting openness and confidence in the approach.

London Met operates a well-established workload allocation process, which forms the basis for identifying SRR and RI contracts (see Parts 2 and 3). Allocations of research time are grounded in clear expectations and a rigorous annual review of research plans. Mentoring and training opportunities support staff in setting achievable short and long-term objectives for developing their research and progressing their careers.

The process is overseen by Heads of Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) within the Schools, reviewed by Deans and the Research Directorate (Academic Heads of Research and Knowledge Exchange and the Director of RKE & Enterprise Operations), and approved by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). At each stage, there are opportunities for discussion and refinement with the individuals concerned.

Collectively, these mechanisms ensure consistency and accountability across Schools, UoAs and individual staff members.

1.2.3 Equity and Inclusion

The shift from individual assessment also presents an opportunity to maximise the inclusivity of the submission. As the REF29 Guidance states, there is now greater "flexibility to create an equitable and inclusive approach to capturing a diverse range of research, research communities and research excellence wherever it is found". All our REF29 processes have been developed to capture the diversity of our research activity, foster an inclusive and positive

environment and to ensure fair representation. Our processes apply equally to all staff whether full-time, part time or on short term FTE contracts.

In addition to the Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) undertaken during development of the CoP, further EIAs will be carried out to assess the implementation of REF related policies and procedures as each UoA submission progresses (see below). This ongoing process of evaluation will ensure that decisions remain fair, transparent and aligned with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policies and principles throughout the preparation period.

1.3 Contextualisation within Institutional Policies

London Met is committed to fostering an inclusive research and learning community in which the rights, dignity and wellbeing of all individuals are respected, and in which unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated. This commitment reflects London Met's social justice mission to transform lives through education and to promote equity of opportunity across all aspects of academic and research practice.

The Centre for Equity and Inclusion is central to London Met's policy and practice, driving its pedagogical approach, student experience, and workplace culture (including research), serving as the catalyst for realising the University's commitment to social justice through the Education for Social Justice Framework and across all associated sub-strategies including the Inclusive Culture strand of our People Strategy. This work has led to London Met achieving:

- Recognition as a Disability Confident Leader in 2025
- Stonewall's LGBTQ+ inclusive employer silver award in 2024
- Athena Swan Bronze award in 2021

The principles and processes set out in this CoP and the fair and transparent implementation of all REF-related decisions are explicitly underpinned by the University's equality and diversity (EDI) policy.

1.3.1 Equality and Diversity Policy

London Met's Equality and Diversity Policy (EDP) describes the University's commitment to "to equality of opportunity and treatment and to the production, implementation, review and monitoring of policies that promote equality and diversity within the institution". It encompasses the general equality duties in respect of the protected characteristics of staff and students, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, by protecting against discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The EDP is equally applicable to part-time and fixed-term workers, including contract research staff, and is monitored for compliance to determine where improvements can be made through targets or other actions. It underpins related policies and guidelines:

- Harassment Policy
- Transgender Inclusion Guidelines and Transitioning at Work
- Flexible working policy
- Hybrid working policy
- Maternity leave policy
- Parental leave policy
- Paternity leave policy
- Shared parental leave policy
- Special leave policy

These policies promote a culture where the rights and dignity of all individuals are respected and embedded through key institutional strategic initiatives. Examples include our Race Equity Strategic Plan, the Inclusive Culture strand of our People Strategy, and the Education for Social Justice Framework. A range of mandatory EDI training is provided for staff, ranging from an equality and diversity briefing and challenging unconscious bias, to inclusive behaviours introduced in 2022 for all staff to develop equity literacy and practice. Recruitment processes require staff undergo a recruitment and selection essentials course, and an equality and diversity statement is mandatory for job applicants.

1.4 Update on Actions Since REF 2021

The University has a diverse academic workforce, but this was not reflected consistently across UoAs in our REF21 submission. The main issues related to gender balance and under-representation of early career researchers (ECRs) among staff identified as SRR. We have since embedded EDI considerations into day-to-day research practice by developing:

(1) A career development programme focused on identifying opportunities for early intervention. Linked to the Vitae Research Development Framework, a broader range of sessions are now available, such as developing short and longer term career goals, grant application planning and preparation, authorship practices, doctoral supervision, support for women researchers and a range of skills-based training also available to PGR students.

(2) More efficient and transparent decision-making processes for research planning and workload allocations. Role expectations are now clearly linked to the Personal Research Allowance (PRA) in the workload model, underpinned by an agreed research plan and annual review. This enables transparency and communication of support and development needs required to achieve personal objectives.

(3) Governance structures that promote transparency and enable EDI monitoring and policy review. Accountability lies with School and University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committees, which oversee management and effectiveness of the University's research and knowledge exchange activities. Internal funding opportunities have prioritised ECRs as a means of supporting progress to research independence. External grant applications now require initial feasibility checks to facilitate early guidance and support where required. In parallel, internal peer review and mentoring arrangements have been strengthened. This is particularly relevant in technical or applied research settings where progression may take longer.

Collectively, these processes have enhanced incorporation of EDI into strategic planning of research and knowledge exchange for individuals and the University. Considerable advances have been made since the 2021 REF submission, with a view to laying the groundwork for longer term and sustainable change. However, we recognise that progression to research independence can be difficult, particularly for ECRs and staff on teaching and research

contracts, where opportunities to develop and lead funded projects may be limited. Progress is made more challenging by financial uncertainty across the sector and the risks from disproportionate impacts on post-1992 institutions. The implications for REF, as well as for wider research capacity and culture, require ongoing review. Our responses to such issues will be described in our SPRE statements, and in any necessary amendments to the CoP after further EIAs and/or relevant policy change.

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Part 2: Identifying Staff Contracts with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)

The REF29 ‘volume measure’ provides a proxy for the University’s research capacity and is used to calculate how many outputs and impact case studies should be submitted by each UoA. Volume is based on the FTE of eligible staff contracts averaged over academic years 2025/26 and 2026/27. The primary employment function for eligible contracts must be to undertake either ‘teaching and research’ (ACEMPFUN 3 in the HESA staff record) or ‘research only’ (ACEMPFUN 2) activities, as recorded in the HESA Staff record. Staff on teaching only contracts will not be eligible for the REF29 volume measure. Only contracts deemed having significant responsibility for research (SRR) or research independence (RI) can contribute to the volume measure.

2.1 Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)

REF29 defines contracts with SRR as those for whom: (i) explicit time and resources are made available; (ii) to actively engage in independent research; and (iii) this is an expectation of the job role.

London Met applies all three criteria when identifying SRR contracts, within the context of time allocated for research in a workload model. Appendix C summarises the process used to identify eligible contracts for the volume measure. For teaching-and-research contracts, this process is embedded within the allocation of a Personal Research Allowance (PRA) in the annual workload. There are three PRA levels:

- 150 hours for staff who do not yet have an established research profile
- 300 hours for independent researchers with an established record of published outputs
- 450 hours for senior researchers who are leading in their field

For REF29, identification as SRR requires a PRA of 300 or 450 hours, representing 20-30% of the total workload dedicated to research. This threshold incorporates the ability to demonstrate

self-directed research (i.e. research independence), as distinct from research activities for another individual's funded project(s). Expectations associated with this level of PRA include:

- Producing high-quality research outputs annually
- Seeking and preparing external funding applications as lead or co-applicant
- Developing productive internal and external research collaborations
- Advancing knowledge exchange and impact activities
- Leading a research centre or group
- Eligible for the University research leave scheme (when available)

More senior researchers, such as Professors, Readers, and Associate Professors, are expected to generate multiple outputs, lead large external funding applications, and demonstrate national or international esteem and recognition beyond London Met.

PRAs are assigned with clear expectations for research and knowledge exchange activity, taking disciplinary contexts into account and expressed as specific objectives agreed during the annual performance review. The PRA is widely understood across the University and has been a core element of workload planning since REF21. Allocations are applied consistently across all eligible contract types—fixed term, part-time (pro rata), and full-time.

All academic staff are eligible to submit a research plan and have a fixed allocation of 175 hours for Research and Scholarly Activity (RSA), which they can utilise to support relevant general research or knowledge exchange activities.

All staff, including those at an early stage of their research career who may be on a pathway to SRR, have access to a comprehensive researcher development programme supporting their aspirations and career progression. We have communicated clearly that contributions to the REF29 submission are independent of the volume measure calculation, and welcome from all staff where an eligible link exists.

2.1.1 Decision-making and communication

The annual PRA process begins with the submission of a research plan (using a template) between October and January. Staff may seek optional feedback on draft plans from a research mentor or the Head of RKE. Provisional PRA allocations are determined in February/March through agreement of objectives with the Heads of RKE, followed by review by the relevant Dean. To ensure consistency and transparency, institutional oversight and provisional approval are provided by the Academic Head of Research and Director of RKE Operations, with final approval confirmed by SLT. Communication of PRA decisions are embedded in the institutional annual AWAM process but will include additional signposting to relevant sections of the CoP. This complements the wider CoP communications process described above (Section 1.2.1).

2.2 Staff, Committees, and Training

Details and membership of committees and groups involved in REF29 decision making are available in Appendix B. The University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) is responsible for the development and implementation of the University's academic strategies for research and knowledge exchange and provides oversight of work undertaken by the UoA Panels. It ensures adherence to the processes set out in the CoP and will recommend any refinements to REF processes or the CoP as required, including in response to further EIAs. Day-to-day research processes are managed by School Heads of RKE. Their responsibilities for REF29 are to:

- Lead the identification of SRR contracts through the PRA process
- Ensure clear and effective communication of REF policies and processes to staff within their Schools
- Support UoA Panels in identifying, collating, and reviewing staff contributions to the three REF elements
- Ensure that all REF related decisions are taken transparently, consistently, and equitably, and are communicated appropriately

UoA Panels

Led by a Panel Coordinator, the Panels are responsible for organising the collection of relevant information for UoAs at each stage of the REF preparation process. They will also collate and organise internal reviews of research outputs across the UoAs disciplines.

REF Delivery Group

Comprises Heads of RKE and Panel Coordinators and is chaired by the Academic Head of Research. It will oversee production of the UoA submissions, including a sustainable model for regular external output reviews, and is responsible for compiling the final list of outputs for institutional sign off. It will produce regular reports to the RKEC on the overall position of each UoA.

EDI training

Appropriate training is crucial to ensuring our REF submission is compiled through a set of processes that are fair to all staff and are free of bias (conscious or unconscious). All staff involved in REF committees and groups will have completed mandatory EDI e-learning modules. Additional REF specific training will be led by the Head of Learning and Development, supported by the Centre for Equity and Inclusion. The session will provide detailed guidance on:

- The background to REF, EDI and our CoP
- EIA outcomes, implications and future assessments
- Approaches to embedding EDI in output selection protocols
- Situational case studies for REF decisions, including ECRs, career breaks, and illness and disability

Staff who later become involved in REF29 processes will be required to undergo training before they can undertake these responsibilities.

2.3 Appeals

The University is committed to maintaining consistency in SRR and RI identification across the REF29 period. Formal appeals can only be raised on the grounds that the University's REF29

CoP has not been applied correctly, or in cases where there is a substantive change to a member of staff's contractual responsibilities. Issues regarding PRA allocation in workloads or research objectives are not within scope; staff should follow established processes for resolution within the Schools.

All individuals affected by REF decisions will be advised of their right of appeal. An appeals panel will be made up of senior staff not otherwise involved in REF decisions, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC). An appeal is triggered by submission of a form (Appendix D) to the Research and Postgraduate Office. The panel decision will be final (Appendix B).

2.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

When preparing this CoP for submission, an initial EIA was conducted to consider and understand the implications for equality of the process for identifying eligible SRR contracts for the 2025-26 academic year (Appendix E; see also 3.4 below). Comparison of demographic characteristics against the full academic staff profile revealed underrepresentation in age groups 31-40 (10%) and 41-50 (13%). No significant differences were found for gender, ethnicity, disability, marital status, religion, or sexual orientation. The University has since completed significant organisational changes. These will not in themselves disadvantage individual staff. However, in this or any other circumstance, any consequential decisions regarding SRR, RI or UoA allocation will be undertaken in accordance with the policies and principles of transparency, equity and inclusion set out in this CoP. A new EIA will be conducted on the policy and procedures for determining SRR before the end of 2026 to assess impacts on representation across protected characteristics. Further EIAs are scheduled for the Autumn of 2027 and prior to REF submission in 2028.

Findings from these EIAs will be used to identify any instances of significant under representation and to inform appropriate mitigating actions. Where disparities are identified, changes to policy and/or procedures will be recommended by the RKEC, which may include revision of PRA guidance, additional mentoring support, or adjustments to related performance review processes.

Where EIAs indicate that a particular policy or procedure is having a positive impact, the University may consider extending this approach to other aspects of REF preparation and submission. This ongoing evaluative process ensures that our REF29 activities remain robust, transparent and aligned with EDI policies.

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Part 3: Determining Research Independence

3.1 Policies and Procedures

All contracts for the REF29 volume measure must meet the definition of research independence. Consistent with REF29 Guidance, research independence refers to undertaking self-directed research, distinct from research activities conducted primarily in support of another individual's funded project(s). The Guidance also provides specific indicators of independence for research only contracts:

- Acting as lead applicant on externally funded research projects
- Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship that requires research independence
- Leading a research group or a substantial/specialised work package where research independence is an inherent expectation of the role

For UoAs 13–34, additional indicators may include:

- Being named as a co-applicant on an externally funded research grant or award
- Making significant contributions to the design, conduct, and interpretation of the research

London Met employs few staff on research only contracts. To be identified as an independent research contract and therefore eligible for the REF29 volume measure, job descriptions must fulfil at least two of the criteria listed above. In practice, eligibility is expected to apply to more senior contracts only; staff employed as Research Associates or Research Assistants are typically not expected to undertake self-directed research and are therefore these contracts are unlikely to meet the definition of independence.

Initial recommendations will be made by Heads of RKE and considered by the Research Directorate, with final ratification by the RKEC. Staff employed on research only contracts will be

notified by email of the outcome, to include additional guidance on REF29, SRR and RI, the basis on which decisions are made, and how staff can raise questions, concerns, or appeals

3.2 Staff, Committees, and Training

Roles, responsibilities and training of individuals and committees are described in section 2.2.

3.3 Appeals

Appeals about research independence will follow the process described in section 2.3.

3.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are too few research only contracts for a separate EIA to be feasible. Research only contracts were included in the EIA for SRR described in Section 2 and will also be incorporated into future EIAs for SRR.

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Part 4: Allocating Contracts to Units of Assessment

4.1 Policies and Procedures

Contracts are allocated to the UoA with which they are principally associated. In most cases, this is determined by an individual's disciplinary background and/or their affiliated School. In addition, all staff participated in an institutional audit of research outputs conducted in 2023, in which individuals were asked to identify the UoA(s) to which their work could potentially be submitted. All staff also have opportunities to discuss with Heads of RKE how their work aligns with UoAs during the PRA allocation process.

These sources have been reviewed and reconciled by Heads of RKE within each School, followed by discussions with UoA Coordinators to agree recommendations. These in turn have been reviewed by the Research Directorate and ratified by the RKEC. Communication of PRA outcomes includes a decision on UoA allocation.

4.2 Staff, Committees, and Training

Roles, responsibilities and training of individuals and committees are described in section 2.2.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

We regard all UoAs to be of equal importance. Contracts are allocated to UoAs based on disciplinary alignment and should have no impact on individuals. However, as a mandatory requirement, an initial EIA of eligible contracts allocated for the 2025/26 HESA staff record will be conducted to assess potential impacts on staff with protected characteristics. The RKEC will review the findings and consider mitigations, including further monitoring and EIAs.

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Part 5: Selecting outputs

5.1 Policies and Procedures

London Met aims to submit the highest quality outputs across active disciplines within UoAs, following the detailed criteria in the REF29 CKU guidance and by the REF Panels. The guidance makes clear that submissions must reflect the full disciplinary breadth and diversity of research undertaken within each UoA during the REF29 period, and this range should be clearly articulated in a Statement of Representation. Outputs will be assessed for eligibility and selected for submission following the process described below and summarised in Appendix F.

5.1.1 Identifying substantive link to outputs

A substantive link to an output is evidenced through an eligible employment relationship with the University. An author must have made a significant contribution to the output during the REF period (01/01/2021–31/12/2028). The RPO will liaise with HR to determine whether the REF29 definition of a substantive link is met by confirming the criteria set out in the Guidance:

- A minimum of 0.2 FTE for at least 12 months of continuous employment
- A role descriptor that includes an explicit expectation of research activity

The eligible employment relationship must have been in place either:

- At the point when the submitted output was first made publicly available, or
- Before the submitted output was first made publicly available. This 'pre-publication substantive link' is limited to two years for most outputs, and five years for longform or extended process outputs

Outputs will not be eligible where they are sole authored by, or the only substantive institutional link is through, the following groups:

- Postgraduate research students
- Visiting or honorary staff

- Staff on teaching-only contracts
- Staff on contracts with no explicit research expectation, including technical teaching or support only roles

The relevant contractual information will be gathered and updated on an ongoing basis up to the point of submission.

5.1.2 Former staff

In line with REF29 guidance, outputs authored by former staff may be included for submission where the eligibility criteria, including a substantive link to the University, are met. Review of eligible outputs and consideration for submission will include those produced by staff who have left the University through voluntary redundancy, severance, retirement or the expiry of fixed-term contracts. We will also include outputs by staff who have left through compulsory redundancy where the eligible employment relationship and first public availability coincide. The REF29 Guidance stipulates that the pre-publication substantive link cannot be used for cases of compulsory redundancy; this applies to all output types.

5.1.3 Representative submissions

Ongoing data collection within each UoA provides a profile of staff disciplinary specialisms and the breadth and depth of research activity that is taking place. This information will be used to map outputs to relevant research centres, groups, and major funded projects. Achieving and evidencing representativeness in this way will support the development of submissions that:

- Reflect, as fully as possible, the disciplinary diversity and structural configurations within each unit
- Include a broad range of research and output types, including non-textual, creative works, practice-led outputs and outputs using British Sign Language (BSL)
- Demonstrate contributions arising from multidisciplinary collaborations
- Consider author demographics and career stage

Mapping will take place both during the initial identification of outputs and during the final selection stage. All selection decisions will also be informed by EIA analyses (5.3 below).

5.1.4 Output assignment and selection

Each UoA will submit a number of outputs equivalent to 2.5 times the combined FTE of staff returned to that UoA, with no more than five outputs attributed to any individual. An author's contractual association with a particular UoA does not require their outputs to be submitted to that same UoA. Outputs may be submitted to more than one UoA within the institution, provided they fall within the disciplinary remit set out in each UoA descriptor. The final selection of outputs for submission will aim to optimise the overall quality of research presented within each UoA.

Outputs are reviewed regularly through the internal assessment process, which informs both workload allocation and preparation for REF. All staff are required to deposit their outputs in the University's research repository. These outputs are distributed to UoA Panels to check REF eligibility, with Open Access compliance confirmed by the Library Open Access Support. Heads of RKE and UoA Coordinators identify and assign internal reviewers and collate completed reviews for submission to a central database managed by the RPO. Reviewers are senior researchers with relevant research expertise within the discipline. Each output is scored using a 12-point scale, with free text comments to support the assessment:

- 4* (range 10-12) Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
- 3* (range 7-9) Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence
- 2* (range 4-6) Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour
- 1* (range 1-3) Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour
- U Unclassified. Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work, or

work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment

This approach provides transparency and an appropriate level of differentiation for ranking and selection outputs.

At several stages prior to submission, samples of internally reviewed outputs will be sent for external peer review, using the same scoring criteria. Subject specialists identified and nominated by the REF Delivery Group will be invited to assess a selection of outputs rated internally as of high quality. For multidisciplinary outputs, reviewers from more than one disciplinary background may be involved. Appointment of external reviewers will be based on their academic expertise and familiarity with the REF process. They will be fully briefed on the need to take account of this CoP before undertaking any reviews. Their assessments will be used to calibrate internal scoring and strengthen consistency across subsequent review rounds. External reviewers' comments will be considered alongside internal reviews and other evidence relating to the overall quality profile of outputs. As per the REF guidance, we will seek appropriate expertise to assess BSL outputs in their original form.

Final output selection will take place in a two-stage process, initially piloted and subject to an EIA to ensure submissions reflect the diversity of London Met's research activity, including interdisciplinary and collaborative work.

Stage 1

An initial pool of the highest rated eligible outputs for each UoA will be identified by UoA Panels from across the full range of disciplines represented, including outputs from former staff (where eligible), to maximise the overall quality of the submission. Where an output has received a range of scores, the REF Delivery Group will determine a recommended grade that reflects the underlying assessments, drawing on the mean score and the quality of reviewers' feedback. Should a number of outputs to be judged of equal quality within a UoA, selection will prioritise spread across subject specialisms.

The highest quality outputs from the remaining pool will then be selected, using the internal and external review assessments described above. These outputs will be ranked to arrive at the number required for submission. Where the required number of outputs is reached within a particular score band, selection decisions will prioritise the extent to which outputs represent the disciplinary profile of the UoA.

5.1.5 Responsible research assessment

Our approach aligns with CoARA of explicit recognition that research excellence can be demonstrated in a wide variety of ways and should not be reduced to quantitative metrics. In practice, this means placing primary emphasis on peer reviewed assessments of quality, supported where appropriate by the careful and responsible use of metrics, and with close attention to equality, diversity and inclusion. Thus, journal impact factors, publisher rankings and citation counts will not be used as primary indicators of output quality, or replace expert peer review. This approach maintains a focus on the intrinsic quality and contribution of each output. It will be applied consistently across all UoAs while also respecting disciplinary norms and differences. Where research metrics are used to support expert review, they must reflect disciplinary differences and career stage and comply with this CoP and CoARA guidance.

5.2 Staff, Committees, and Training

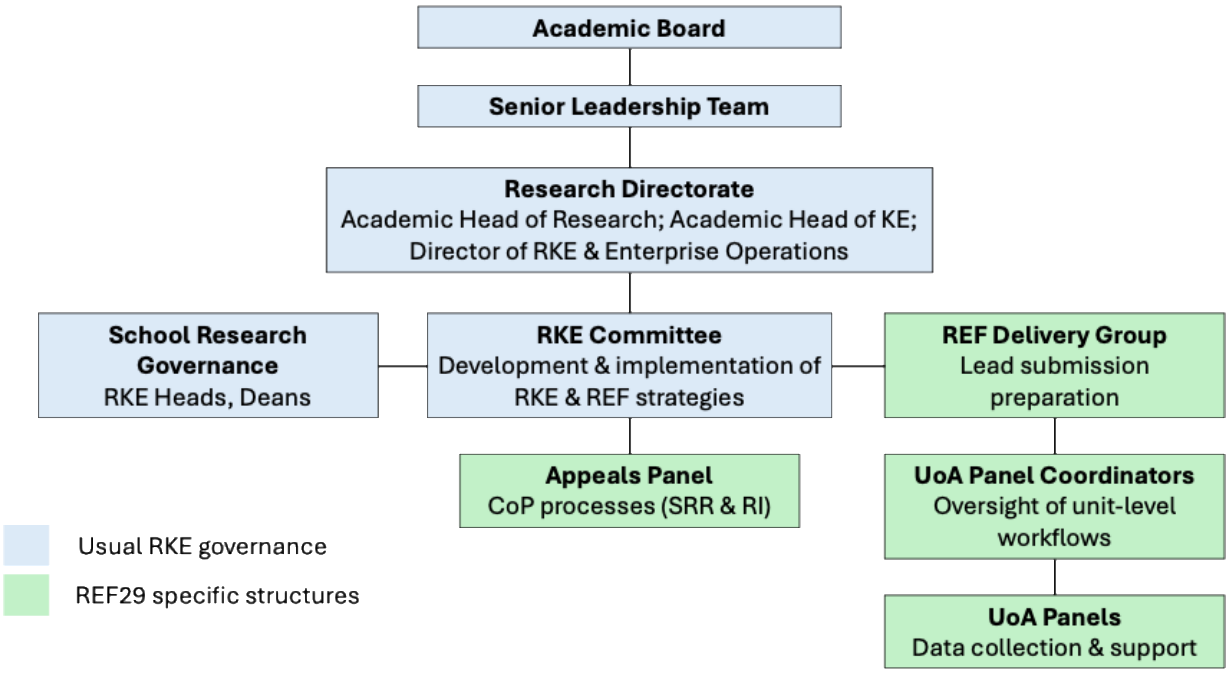
UoA Panels are responsible for making initial recommendations on outputs for submission. Final decisions on output selection are taken at institutional level through the REF Delivery Group. School and UoA representation on the REF Delivery Group enhances cross-disciplinary input and access to appropriate expertise where required. It is responsible for following the CoP to ensure the process results in the strongest selection of outputs across disciplines. Details of roles, responsibilities and training of individuals and committees are described in section 2.2 and Appendix B.

5.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

A systematic EIA analysis will be undertaken once an initial pool of outputs has been selected to assess inclusivity and representativeness (precise timings to be determined). While the primary focus will be on the distribution of selected outputs by protected characteristics, we will also examine career stage of authors, diversity of disciplines and output types to inform development of our SPRE statement of representation. Findings will be considered in the context of potential bias in the output selection procedures, requiring revision of the CoP, or wider University policies for action by the RKEC. Inclusive evaluation guidance and briefings will be provided to UoA Panels and the REF Delivery Group, including awareness of diverse output types, citation metric limitations and disciplinary representation within each UoA submission.

Part 6: Appendices

Appendix A: REF29 Management and Governance



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Appendix B: REF29 Committees and groups

University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

Responsibilities

The Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee is responsible under delegated authority from the Academic Board for the development and implementation of the University's academic strategies for research and knowledge exchange. The Committee monitors the activities of the Research Ethics Sub-Committee, the School Research Ethics Review Panels and the Research Degrees Sub-Committee and is responsible for the oversight and enhancement of the University's strategies related to research and knowledge exchange (including research income, REF planning and enterprise) and for advising the Academic Board in these areas.

Terms of Reference

Subject to the authority of the Academic Board, the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee is responsible for:

- Oversight of policies in respect of research and knowledge exchange, including strategies for REF submission preparation, consultancy, CPD, technology, community and public engagement and enterprise
- Monitoring and advising on the effectiveness of these policies and strategies, taking into account best practice from across the sector, and making recommendations to the Academic Board for their revision and improvement, including the development and implementation of robust and effective research and knowledge exchange governance arrangements
- Promoting the University's research and knowledge exchange activity, internally and externally, ensuring that it is recognised as a central component of the University's mission.
- Monitoring the policies and practices of key external organisations ensuring that the

University is alert to, and responds to, national and international developments in research and knowledge exchange

- Making recommendations to the Academic Board on any matter within the scope of the Committee's terms of reference
- Overseeing the activities of the Research Ethics Subcommittee and School Research Ethics Review panels by receiving annual reports (and the identification and monitoring of key performance indicators)
- Monitoring the implementation of research and knowledge exchange strategies across Schools, Research Centres and REF Units of Assessment
- Reporting annually to the Academic Board on the implementation of the University's research and knowledge exchange strategies and priorities, highlighting areas of achievement and issues which require further consideration
- Such other responsibilities as may be delegated to the Committee by the Academic Board from time to time
- The Research Degrees and Research Ethics Sub Committees report to the Academic Board via the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

Frequency of meetings

The Committee shall meet as necessary and no less than three times during the academic year.

Reporting

The Committee shall report to the Academic Board on its activities through a report to the following meeting of the Academic Board.

Method of operation

- The Committee shall discuss matters freely and openly. To ensure that the Committee can effectively fulfil its advisory and decision-making role, members and those in attendance must respect the sensitive and confidential nature of proceedings and the information considered by the Committee.
- The Committee may delegate aspects of its responsibilities to subcommittees and

working groups, provided these remain accountable to the Committee.

Membership

- Academic Head of Research (Chair)
- Director of Research, Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise
- Academic Head of Knowledge Exchange
- Chair of the Research Ethics Sub-Committee
- Head of the Graduate School and Chair of Research Degree Sub-Committee
- Head of Staff Researcher Development
- Head of Business Engagement
- School Heads of RKE
- REF Unit of Assessment Coordinators
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Impact Manager
- A research degree student elected by the Students' Union Executive Committee, appointed for a term of one year

REF29 Delivery Group

Responsibilities

The REF29 Delivery Group oversees the production of the REF29 submission. The Panel is charged with ensuring that all preparatory work is consistent with the policies and procedures detailed in this CoP.

Terms of Reference

- To advise the RKEC and Vice-Chancellor on the final REF29 submission
- To lead preparation of all elements of the REF submission including the section of outputs and impact case studies
- Oversee equality impact assessments and implementation of subsequent actions

- To ensure that the university develops and follows its own REF CoP, consistent with our institutional policies and wider equal opportunities legislation
- To monitor progress against key milestones and provide regular progress reports to RKEC

Membership

- Academic Head of Research (Chair)
- Director of RKE & Enterprise Operations
- Heads of RKE
- UoA Coordinators

Frequency of meetings

The group shall meet as required. Additional business may be conducted outside of meetings by means of electronic communication/individual action.

Unit of Assessment Panels

Responsibilities and membership

The purpose of the Unit of Assessment panels is the coordination of unit/discipline-level preparation for REF29. The panels comprise an overall Coordinator and discipline-specific panel members contributing to development of the three REF elements:

- Contribution to Knowledge and Understanding
- Engagement and Impact
- Strategy, People and Research Environment

Terms of reference

- Establish a supportive and inclusive working group with discipline-specific panel members
- With Heads of RKE, assess areas of strength and opportunity, including the wider environment, culture, and impact of the UoA
- Coordinate collection of data to support submission preparation, including verifying and updating existing data sources to ensure a cohesive unit-level narrative
- Work closely with Heads of RKE with the collation and review of outputs per discipline
- Review and report on the position of unit
- Maintain up to date knowledge and information on the guidance for REF29 as it emerges

Frequency of meetings

Panels shall meet as required. Additional business may be conducted outside of meetings by means of electronic communication/individual action.

Appeals Panel

The Appeals Panel will meet at in response to receipt of an appeal form and seek to determine an outcome within two months of this date. In reaching a decision, it will ensure that EDI policy is followed. The decision of the panel is final.

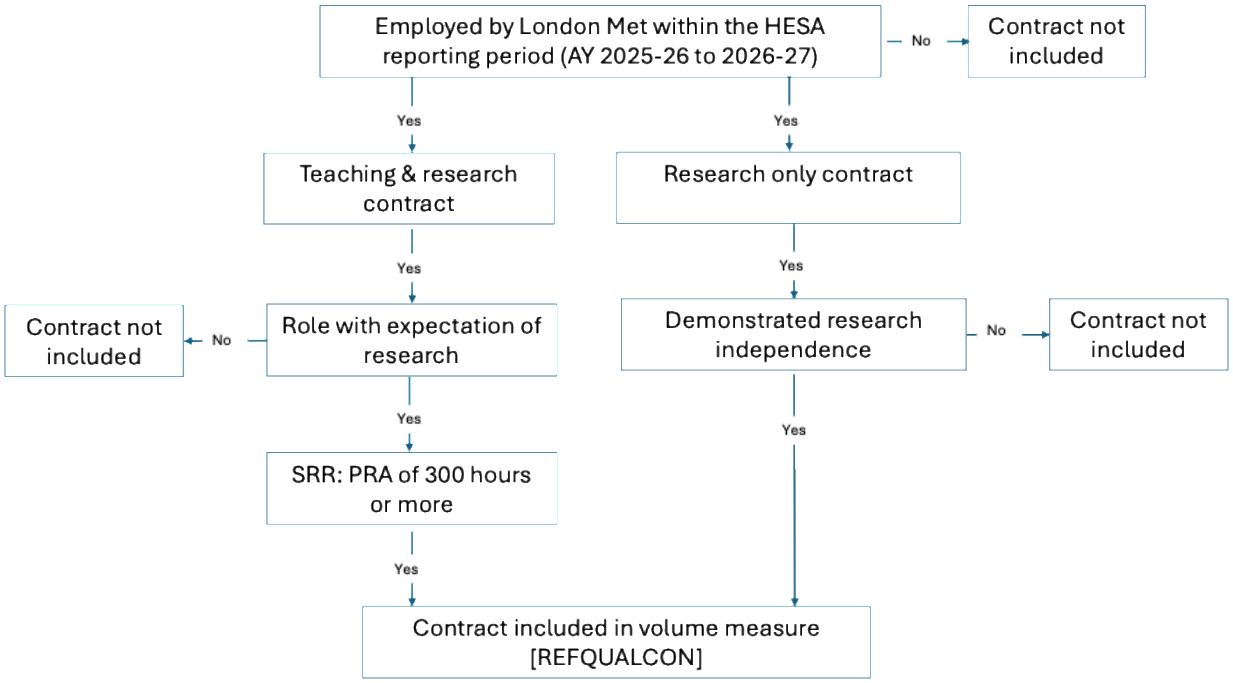
Terms of Reference

- To respond within two months of receipt of an appeal form to ensure timely outcomes at each stage in the development of our submission
- To ensure that decisions uphold EDI principles are upheld
- To report appeal decisions to the Research Directorate

Membership

- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and Provost
- HR Representative
- Senior academic not involved in REF management

Appendix C: Identification of Eligible Contracts for the Volume Measure



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Appendix D: Appeals form template

Your appeal will be collated by the Research and Postgraduate Office, but the panel assessing individuals' cases will be chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

1. Individual details

Name	
Job Title	
School	

2. Reason for appeal

• Identification of staff with significant responsibility for research was not carried out in accordance with the university's REF 2029 Code of Practice	
• Identification of staff as research independent was not carried out in accordance with the university's REF 2029 Code of Practice	
• Other (please provide details in section 3 below)	

3. Details of appeal

Please provide detailed information in support of your appeal. A separate sheet

may be used and supporting documentation appended if required.

4. Statement of appeal

By submitting this form I confirm that I wish to lodge a formal appeal for determination in accordance with the university's REF 2029 Code of Practice

Signed:

Date:

Please submit this form to the Research and Postgraduate Office at rpo@londonmet.ac.uk.

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Appendix E: Equality Impact Assessment for SRR (London Met template)

EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS FORM The University has responsibilities under the Equality Act to give 'due regard' to legally protected groups when making decisions or developing or reviewing policies. This form provides a framework to complete an EIA that records how the organisation discharged its public sector equality duties, and the information used to do this. The responsibility to undertake an EIA is delegated to the policy lead or decision-maker, with the ratification of the EIA completed by the SLT lead for the relevant area. **Please read our EIA Guidance before completing this form.**	
Name of Policy or Decision - *include the full policy/decision name and any reference* REF 2029 Code of Practice, subject to SLT approval.	Is this New? [**x**] Or Existing? [ ] *NB: An update of our REF 21 CoP but to all intents and purposes a new document*
Context - *provide a brief outline of the policy/decision under review and how this can be taken* Universities must publish a Code of Practice (CoP), setting out a minimum standard for participation in the REF. The CoP outlines how London Met will decide: • Which contracts are eligible for the REF volume measure • Allocations of contracts to Units of Assessment (UoAs) • Selection of outputs	
The name and role of the person completing this form 'The Completer': Academic Head of Research	Date of Assessment: 18/02/2026
Department/School/Professional Services area: Research and Knowledge Exchange	
Senior Leadership Team Ratification: name, signature and role, Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Date of Ratification: 25/02/2026

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1. Evidence considered - *What data or other information is available to support the evaluation of this policy/decision and inform whether there are likely to be positive/adverse impacts on legally protected groups? Please detail the evidence sources, including all document names/references.*

a) The draft REF29 CoP
b) Workforce data including contracts defined in HESA terms as "teaching", or "teaching and research".
(c) Comparison of Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR) contracts against full academic staff group demographic profile, for AY25-26. Contracts across academic years 2025-26 and 2026-27 will be averaged to calculate the REF 2029 volume measure.

2. Consultation - *Have you consulted staff or student representatives including those from protected groups? What were their views?*

We have consulted widely with staff (and student representatives) over a period of four months including:

- Code of Practice briefing session open to all staff with a recording available
- Published information via the University Staff Zone
- Inputs from staff responsible for research management and REF delivery and mechanisms
- Via School and University governance, including the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

3. Promoting equality - *Does this policy have a positive impact on protected groups? What evidence is there to support this? Could it do more?* The REF29 decoupling of individuals from the submission minimises adverse impacts. However, REF requires submissions to be representative of the diversity of research activities undertaken and with due regard for demographics, roles and career stages. Processes described in the CoP may lead to under representation of research areas and demographic groups.

4. Adverse impact - *insert additional rows if needed*

Identify any issues in the policy/decision which may have an adverse impact on the following legally protected groups:

1 People from different age groups

2 Disabled people

3 Males and Females

4 Trans people

5 Lesbians, gay men and bisexual people

6 Women who are pregnant or on maternity leave

7 People who are married or in a civil partnership

8 Religious/non-religious people or those with legally protected philosophical beliefs

9 People from the Global Majority communities or backgrounds

Issue Identified and Assessed *E.g. policy section, practice, specific or general aspect of the decision.*	**List the Protected Group(s) affected**	**Evidence** *Refer to information gathered (1) and consultation (2)and any relevant research findings*	**Justification** *Can the issue be justified for academic or business reasons? Please explain.*	**Proposed Mitigating Action/Timeline** *If the issue cannot be fully justified, identify the action(s) to be taken to mitigate or eliminate the adverse impact, including the dates by which this will be done.*	**The individual lead and their role function responsible for taking forward action(s)**
Identification of SRR for AY25-26.	*All protected groups*	*(a), (b) and (c)*	*The justification is described in the CoP (a) and is a mandatory requirement for calculation of the REF29 volume measure. The analysis shows staff in 31-40 and 41-50 age groups to be underrepresented.*	*Further attention will be given to SRR identification (via Personal Research Allocation) for AY26-27.*	*Academic Head of Research*

5. Monitoring - *How will you monitor the on-going impact of the policy or decision on protected groups? Detail the individual, team, committee and/or group responsible for doing this*.

This assessment will be reviewed and updated in light of further EIAs conducted during submission preparation, in line with REF requirements.

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Appendix F: Output selection process

