**Glossary of terms from REF2021:**

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| **Term** | **Definition** |
| Assessment criteria | The panels will use the following criteria to assess the quality of each element of the submission:* Outputs – ‘originality, significance and rigour’
* Impact – ‘reach and significance’
* Environment – ‘vitality and sustainability’.
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| Codes of practice | Each institution making a submission is required to develop, document and apply a code of practice on determining who is an independent researcher and the selection of outputs in their REF submissions. with staff, for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research. |
| Double-weighting | Institutions may request that outputs of extended scale and scope be double-weighted (count as two outputs) in the assessment. |
| Early career researcher (ECR) | Category A staff who started their careers as independent researchers on or after1 August 2016. |
| Expert panels (main and sub-panels) | In each of the 34 UOAs an expert sub-panel will conduct a detailed assessment of submissions. The sub-panels will work under the leadership and guidance of four main panels. |
| Impact | An effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia. |
| Independent researcher | Independent researchers undertake self- directed research, rather than carrying out another individual’s research programme. |
| Interdisciplinary research | For the purposes of the REF, interdisciplinary research is understood to achieve outcomes (including new approaches) that could notbe achieved within the framework of a single discipline. Interdisciplinary research features significant interaction between two or more disciplines and/or moves beyond established disciplinary foundations in applying or integrating research approaches fromother disciplines. |
| Output | The product of research, as defined in the REF. An underpinning principle of the REF is that all forms of research output will be assessed on a fair and equal basis. |
| Research | For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as ‘a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared’. |
| Research assistant | Academic staff whose primary employment function is ‘research only’ and who are employed to carry out another individual’s research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right. |
| Quality profile/ sub-profile | The overall quality profile for the REF comprises of the scores for the three sub- profiles: outputs (60 per cent), impact (25 per cent), and environment (15 per cent). |
| Starred level definitions | Each of the three elements of the assessment – outputs, impact and environment – will receive a sub-profile, showing the proportion of the submission that meets each of four starred quality levels. |
| Submission | A submission comprises a complete set of data about staff, outputs, impact and the research environment, returned by an HEI in any of the 34 UOAs. |
| Submitted unit | A group or groups of staff identified by the HEI as working primarily within the remit of a UOA and included in a submission, along with evidence of the research produced during the publication period, examples of impact underpinned by research in the unit, and the structures and environment that support research and its impact. |
| Unit of Assessment | Submissions in REF 2021 will be made in 34 discipline-based ‘units of assessment’. There is an expert sub-panel for each UOA. |