

Dear Academic and Research Staff,

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the system used for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs).

The REF2021 results were released in May 2022 and Edinburgh Napier University performed extremely well. The University’s REF2021 results can be found [**here**](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/ref/Pages/REF2021-Results.aspx).

As we enter a new REF cycle, the REF team wanted to take a step back and reflect on the REF successes and also look at how processes could be improved for future submissions.

To provide regular updates on the developments in the new REF cycle, a quarterly newsletter will be circulated to all staff, highlighting any changes to the REF exercise, general sector news, what the REF team are working on, and what support and training will be available to you.

**Who are the REF Team?**

The REF team is based in the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Office.

Ceri Bain, REF Project Manager

Alison McIlveen, REF Officer

Elaine Lambie, REF Officer

There is a new team email address, REFteam@napier.ac.uk. Please get in touch should you have any questions or any suggestions about future communication.

Over the summer, the REF team has been working on the following projects:

**REF - lections Internal Evaluation Project**

Following the final REF submission in March 2021, the REF team led an internal evaluation to gather information on staff experiences.

Stage one consisted of an all-staff survey which was followed by qualitative group workshops and 1-1 interviews in stage two.

Resulting recommendations were approved by the University’s Research and Innovation Committee and will be implemented by the REF team or taken forward via continued consultation with relevant groups of staff.

More information on how your views and experiences of REF 2021 are being addressed can be found on the [**You Said, We Listened**](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/ref/Pages/You%20Said%2C%20We%20Listened.aspx) staff intranet page.

**Future Research Assessment Programme**

The Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP) was launched by the four funding bodies in May 2021. FRAP was initiated at the request of UK and devolved government ministers and funding bodies and will evaluate REF2021 aiming to explore possible future approaches to the assessment of UK higher education research performance. Further information about the programme can be found [**here​**](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/future-research-assessment-programme).

An initial consultation was launched in November 2021 to understand how individuals within the wider research community have been impacted by REF 2021. Another consultation was undertaken in Spring 2022 to seek views on the design of the UK’s future research assessment system.

The University’s response to both consultations can be found on the [**staff intranet pages**.](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/ref/Pages/Sector%20Consultation.aspx)

The outcomes of both consultations are **due end of November 2022** and will be communicated to staff in the next REF Update.

**Finally…**

Please do get in touch with the REF Team if you have any questions. There is also a [**REF FAQs page**](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/ref/Pages/REF-FAQs.aspx) on the Staff intranet that can be referred to as a useful resource on the Research Assessment Framework.

The next newsletter will be circulated in December 2022. Please note, targeted communications on specific REF processes and policies may be sent in the interim.

Best wishes

The REF Team