

University of Sussex Privacy Notice for REF 2021

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR), we (the University of Sussex) are required to inform you (non-staff) as to how your personal data will be used, shared and stored to support our submission to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF 2021).

About the REF

The purpose of the 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 outcomes are used to calculate about £2 billion per year of public funding for universities' research, and affect their international reputations. The results also inform strategic decisions about national research priorities. The next REF will be undertaken in 2021. The REF is managed by the REF team, based at Research England (RE), on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies.

The REF was first carried out in 2014, replacing the previous Research Assessment Exercise. It included for the first time an assessment of the broader impact of universities' research beyond academia: on the economy, society, culture, public policy and services, health, the environment and quality of life – within the UK and internationally.

Impact is assessed through the submission of case studies, which describe the changes or benefits brought about by research undertaken by researchers at the institution. Impressive impacts were found across all disciplines (or 'Units of Assessment' / 'UoAs'), with 44 per cent of submissions judged to be outstanding. A database of case studies submitted in 2014 can be found here: <https://impact.ref.ac.uk/>

How we will use the information you provide

You may have provided information for one or more impact case studies or environment statements as part of our submission to the REF 2021. In March 2021, we will send information about impact case studies and environment statements to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for the purpose of the REF 2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name - and details such as your job title and organisational affiliation - may be provided in these narrative statements.

We may also provide your contact details to the REF team at Research England, who could contact you in the event of an audit, to corroborate the information you've provided.

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at www.ref.ac.uk in particular publication 2019/01, 'Guidance on submissions'. Annex G of that document sets out the data that we will be required to share with UKRI.

Sharing the information you provide

To support the preparation of our REF submission, your data will be collected and held by the University's [Research Quality and Impact team](#), and may be accessed by other Sussex staff members involved in this work, including academic or Professional Services staff at School or divisional level, and academics (internal and/or external) undertaking peer review

of submission materials. Where we share your data for the purposes of peer review, we will do so with appropriate safeguards in place to ensure confidentiality and security of your personal information.

Research England is part of UKRI and under this arrangement, UKRI has the role of ‘data controller’ for personal data submitted by us to the REF.

Once submitted by us to the REF, UKRI may pass your data, or parts 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:

- Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland (DfE)
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
- Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

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 GDPR. 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. All panel members are bound by confidentiality arrangements.

Publishing the information you provide

The results of the assessment exercise will be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, in April 2022.

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published online by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, as well as by the University of Sussex. Published information is likely to include **textual information including impact case studies in which you may be referenced**. Your name, job title and organisation may be included in this textual information, but can be redacted by the University’s Research Quality and Impact team prior to submission (e.g. in relation to commercially sensitive or other confidential information). While the REF panel will access this information, redaction will prevent it from being published online at the end of the exercise (2022).

Other personal details will normally be removed, but may be submitted to REF via a separate part of the submission (e.g. contact details).

In addition, your testimonial may – where appropriate – be used anonymously (without identifying details) in material published by the University of Sussex, to showcase the quality

and impact of its research, including on Research and News webpages, social media, and promotional material such as prospectuses and posters.

Retaining and storing the information you provide

We will retain all data used in the development of the REF submission until completion of the REF audit process and publication of the results (summer 2022). We will retain copies of the textual elements of the submission (impact case studies, environment templates) for 10 years after the end of the REF 2021 review, as per the University's [Master Records Retention Schedule](#), in order to facilitate future REF submissions.

Giving you access to the information you provide

You may request access to any of your data that is held by us, restrict our use of your data or withdraw your data from use in our submission to the REF, before 1 March 2021.

Further information about your data protection rights can be found on the University's data protection pages: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/ogs/policies/information/dpa/rightsofindividuals>

Or by contacting the University's Data Protection Officer, Alexandra Elliott.

Email: dpo@sussex.ac.uk / Telephone: 01273 678472.

Sussex House
University of Sussex
Falmer
Brighton
BN1 9RH

Once submitted by us to the REF, you have the right to request a copy of any personal information that UKRI holds about you.

Further information about the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, the UKRI's Privacy Notice, and guidance on making a subject access request, can be found on the Research England website: <https://re.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards/foi-data-protection/>

If you have any concerns about your information being used for these purposes, please contact UKRI: dataprotection@ukri.org

Data Protection Officer
UK Research and Innovation
Polaris House
Swindon
SN2 1FL

This Privacy Notice should be read in conjunction with the **University's Data Protection Policy**: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/ogs/policies/information/dpa/dataprotectionpolicy>

This Privacy Notice may be used in conjunction with the [University of Sussex Privacy Consent Form for REF 2021](#).