### From Guidance on Submission document:

### Submission requirements for the unit-level environment template (REF5b)

1. Information is required about the environment for research and enabling impact for each submitting unit, relating to the period 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2020. A template for REF5b is provided in Annex I. Each submission must include a single completed REF5 form, consisting of the following sections:
	1. Unit context, research and impact strategy.
	2. People, including:
		* staffing strategy and staff development
		* research students
		* equality and diversity.
	3. Income, infrastructure and facilities.
	4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society.

1. The information provided in REF5b should relate to the environment of the submitted unit, and should not duplicate information about the institutional-level environment that is provided in REF5a.

1. Where a submission includes staff from distinct ‘departments’ or other organisational units, the submission should explain this and any distinctive aspects of the research environments of these organisational units, within each section of the environment template. There is no expectation that the environment element of a submission will relate to a single department or coherent organisational unit.
2. In providing evidence in the REF5b template, institutions should draw on supporting quantitative indicators where applicable. Detailed guidance on the requirements for the content of REF5b is provided in the ‘Panel criteria’ (Part 2, Section 4). This includes guidance on the use of quantitative indicators in REF5b, with reference to advice and examples based on the work of the Forum for Responsible Research Metrics.
3. Institutions may include URLs in REF5b, only for the purpose of verifying or corroborating claims made in the submission. Panels will not follow URLs to access additional evidence or information to supplement the submission.
4. The ‘Panel criteria’ describes how the sub-panels will use the information in form REF5b together with the data in forms REF4a/b/c in assessing the submissions to form the environment sub-profiles. Each section of the environment template will be significant in informing the environment sub-profile. The main panels have set out the weighting that will be given in the assessment to each section of the template in the ‘Panel criteria’.
5. To inform the sub-panels’ assessment of the ‘People’ section of the unit-level environment template (REF5b), EDAP will provide advice on overall strengths or areas of concern, on the basis of the generic assessment criteria and procedures. Each sub-panel will retain responsibility for recommending the quality profile for all work that was submitted in its UOA. EDAP will carry out a calibration exercise at an early stage in the assessment to develop a common understanding of the assessment criteria and standards.
6. Completed environment templates must be submitted according to the guidance on formatting and word limits, set out in Annex F.

#### Category C staff

1. Information about the contribution of Category C staff to the environment for research and enabling impact may be provided in the ‘Collaboration and contribution’ section of the REF5b template. The ‘Panel criteria’ sets out further guidance on which panels expect to receive this information and the nature of the information requested.
2. Category C staff are defined as individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit.
3. Category C staff may be employed by the NHS, a Research Council unit, a charity or other organisation except for an HEI. For clarity, the following do **not** meet the definition of Category C staff:
	1. Any staff employed by the HEI, including vice-chancellors or heads of HEIs; HEI staff on non-academic contracts, including those working in university museums and libraries; or retired staff who are still active in research (where they satisfy the definition in paragraph 120.h or, for retired staff, paragraph 120.b, these staff meet the definition of Category A eligible staff).
	2. Visiting professors, fellows and lecturers employed by other HEIs.

# Annex F: Format and page limits for textual parts of submissions

### Format

1. Templates for REF3, REF5a and REF5b will be provided to institutions in Word. Completed templates and case studies must be submitted as PDF documents for the assessment. A Word version of the templates and case studies will also be required. PDF documents must be accessible to screen reading technology (rather than scanned documents). Completed templates must adhere to the following:
* Arial font, 11 point (minimum)
* single line spacing (minimum)
* 2 cm margins (minimum).
1. Completed templates may include formatting (bold or underlined text, headings, lists, and so on), tables and non-text content, so long as the guidance on maximum page/word limits and on minimum font size, line spacing and margin widths set out in this annex are adhered to.

**Table F2: Page limits for REF5b**

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| --- | --- |
| Number of Category A submitted staff in the submission (FTE) | Word limit for environment template (REF5b) |
| 1 – 19.99 |  8,000  |
| 20 – 29.99 | 8,800 |
| 30 – 39.99 | 9,600  |
| 40 – 49.99 | 10,400  |
| 50 – 69.99 | 11,200  |
| 70 or more | 12,000, plus 800 further words per additional 20 FTE  |

**Table A4: Environment sub-profile: Criteria and definitions of starred levels**

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| The research environment will be assessed in terms of its ‘vitality and sustainability’. Panels will consider both the ‘vitality and sustainability’ of the submitted unit, including its approach to enabling impact from its research, and its contribution to the ‘vitality and sustainability’ of the wider research base. |
| Four star | An environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality and enabling outstanding impact, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.  |
| Three star | An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality and enabling very considerable impact, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.  |
| Two star | An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality and enabling considerable impact, in terms of its vitality and sustainability. |
| One star | An environment that is conducive to producing research of nationally recognised quality and enabling recognised but modest impact, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.  |
| Unclassified | An environment that is not conducive to producing research of nationally recognised quality or enabling impact of reach and significance.  |

### From Panel Criteria document:

### Section 5: Environment

#### Environment criteria

1. The sub-panels will assess the environment according to the generic criteria and level definitions in ‘Guidance on submissions’, Annex A. The main panels have set out below how the criteria will be understood by their sub-panels.
2. **Vitality** will be understood as the extent to which a unit supports a thriving and inclusive research culture for all staff and research students, that is based on a clearly articulated strategy for research and enabling its impact, is engaged with the national and international research and user communities and is able to attract excellent postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers.
3. **Sustainability** will be understood as the extent to which the research environment ensures the future health, diversity, wellbeing and wider contribution of the unit and the discipline(s), including investment in people and in infrastructure.
4. In assessing the environment element of submissions, panels will assess vitality and sustainability in terms appropriate to the scale and diversity of the research activity the submitting unit supports, and as appropriate for its subject area(s). They will assess vitality and sustainability in terms of both the research environment within the submitting unit, and its participation in and contribution to its subject discipline, academic community and wider society.
5. In forming the environment sub-profiles, the sub-panels will attach weightings to each of the four sections of the unit-level environment template (REF5b), as set out below:
* unit context and structure, research and impact strategy
* people
* income, infrastructure and facilities
* collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society.

The assessment will take account of the environment data as stated in paragraphs 362 to 363 and the information provided in the institutional-level statement (REF5a) as stated in paragraph 333.

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| **Main Panels A, B and C supplementary criteria – section weightings for the environment template (REF5b)**1. The sub-panels in Main Panels A, B and C will attach equal weighting to each of the four sections of the unit-level environment template (REF5b).
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| **Main Panel D supplementary criteria – section weightings for the environment template (REF5b)**1. In view of the primary role that people play as the key resource in the arts and humanities, the sub-panels in Main Panel D will attach differential weight to each of the components of the environment template as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy | 25% |
| People | 30% |
| Income, infrastructure and facilities  | 20% |
| Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society  | 25% |

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