

REF2014 Panel criteria: Examples of complex circumstances

Example 1

UOA 24: Anthropology and Development Studies

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The staff member took a period of eight months maternity leave from March 2010 to November 2010.
- In November 2010 she returned to work on a 0.5 FTE basis until May 2012.
- She continued to breastfeed her baby between November 2010 and May 2011, which was incompatible with undertaking her research.
- She returned to fulltime work and her research in May 2012.

Effect on research

In addition to the period of maternity and part-time working, during the first 6 months that the staff member returned to work on a 0.5 FTE basis, she focused on her teaching commitments as breastfeeding was incompatible with her research project that requires frequent travel to South Sudan. She therefore postponed her research until May 2011 when she stopped breastfeeding her child.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of 1 output for 1 period of maternity leave
- Reduction of 1 output for:
 - 6 months postponement of research project between November 2010 and May 2011 due to breastfeeding
 - 6 months due to working 0.5 FTE on research between May 2011 and May 2012

Total: 1 x period of maternity leave plus 12 months absent from research

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommend to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of two outputs is accepted.

The staff member is entitled to a reduction of one output for the period of maternity leave. While this tariff recognises the impact of pregnancy and maternity on women's careers it does not take into account working part-time or incompatibility of research with breastfeeding. In addition to the time spent on maternity leave, her research has been affected for a period of twelve months during the REF period. This is comparable to the timeframes outlined in the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods' and consequently the panel agree with the reduction of two outputs.

Example 2

UOA 30: History

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Developed pre-eclampsia (a complication of pregnancy) and was admitted to hospital on 9 September 2009.
- Unable to conduct research while in hospital and maternity leave commenced on 30 September 2009.
- The child was born 10 weeks premature on 28 October 2009.
- The staff member took nine months maternity leave returning to work on 30 June 2010.

Effect on research

In addition to her period of maternity leave, she took a total of 15 days pregnancy related sick leave following her admission to hospital and was unable to conduct her research during this time. Despite the difficult circumstances of her pregnancy and the premature birth of her child, she and her child were well on her return to work.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of 1 output for 1 period of maternity leave
- Reduction of 1 output for:
 - 0.5 months pregnancy-related illness (calculation based on 30 days per month)

Total: 1x period of maternity leave plus 0.5 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted, but the case for a reduction of two outputs is not accepted.

The staff member is entitled to a reduction of one output for the period of maternity leave. A further reduction in output would only be justifiable if the period of additional disruption to research was comparable to the tariff outlined in table 2, part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'. While the panel took account of the 0.5 months and recognised the disruption caused by preeclampsia and a premature birth, the panel felt it was unlikely to be comparable to a period of 12 months.

Example 3

UOA 9: Physics

Nature and timing of circumstances

- A first period of maternity leave was from 21 April 2010 to 31 January 2011.
- In March 2011 it became evident that the staff member was having difficulties returning to her research and in July 2011 she was diagnosed with postnatal depression.
- Following the diagnosis she was signed off work for 2 weeks, referred for counselling and prescribed antidepressants.
- From 01 October 2011 she started to work on a 0.6 FTE basis. Her ongoing recovery from postnatal depression meant that from this point there was minimal disruption to her research.
- She took a second period of maternity leave from 21 March 2013. She is due to return to work in January 2014.

Effect on research

The effect on the staff member's contracted hours was 2 periods of maternity leave, 2 weeks sick leave and 17 months working on a 0.6 FTE basis. Additionally, her research was disrupted during the period by postnatal depression. She was diagnosed with postnatal depression in July 2011, which caused significant disruption to her research until October 2011. The condition began causing disruption to her research from March 2011, which is supported by advice from occupational health. Occupational health advised that, as postnatal depression usually starts in the first year after birth, it is likely to have affected her prior to July.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of two outputs for two discrete periods of maternity leave
- Reduction of one output for:
 - 6.8 months due to working 0.6 FTE for 17 months
 - 0.5 months sick leave
 - Additional disruption due to postnatal depression for approximately 7 months

Total: 2 x periods of maternity leave, plus 7.3 months absence and 7 months disrupted research.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 3

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of three outputs is accepted.

The staff member is entitled to a reduction in two outputs for two periods of maternity leave during the REF period. The advisory panel also recognise that she should be given a further reduction in outputs due to a combination of postnatal depression and working 0.6 FTE for 17 months. The panel recognises that while she was diagnosed in July 2011 with postnatal depression, the period in which her research was affected began in March 2011.

Example 4 - Please note, this example has been revised in order to clarify how the calculation combining early career researcher status with other circumstances should be carried out. As stated in paragraph 83 of the 'panel criteria' document 'the period of time since 1 January 2008 up until the individual met the definition of an early career researcher should be calculated in months, and Table 2 should be applied.' (*'Calculation of reduction of outputs' and 'EDAP rationale' updated on 24 January 2013.*)

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Early career researcher, and first met this definition on 4 July 2009.
- Conducting research into the effect of pesticide use on crop production.
- The staff member informed her Head of Department that she was pregnant in February 2011 and on the advice of the Health and Safety Adviser ceased her practical research.
- Took eight months maternity leave from October 2011 to June 2012.
- On her return to work in June 2012 she worked 8 months at 0.6 FTE.

Effect on research

In addition to her period of maternity and part time working, her pregnancy affected her ability to research. Her research project was at a very early stage when she became pregnant, which prevented her from undertaking practical research. While she was able to conduct some research during her pregnancy, this primarily involved background reading. Consequently, the full findings of her 4 year research project have been delayed. This has affected her ability to publish her findings on a key research project that took place during the REF period.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of one output for period of maternity leave
- Reduction of two outputs for:
 - 18 months absence before becoming an Early Career Researcher
 - 8 month delay to research during pregnancy
 - 3.2 months absence due to working part time (0.6 FTE for 8 months)

Total: 1 x maternity plus 29.2 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 3

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of three outputs is accepted.

She is entitled to a reduction of 1 output because she took a period of maternity leave during the REF period. In addition to working on a part time basis and qualifying as an Early Career Researcher during the REF period, her ability to conduct research was also limited for an 8 month period due to health and safety requirements in pregnancy. Given that her research project was at a very early stage and she was unable to undertake practical elements of the project, the advisory panel recognise that she would have been limited in her ability to progress her research and produce research outputs during this time.

Example 5

UOA 21: Politics and International studies

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The staff member adopted a 3 year old child in 2006 with his partner.
- In May 2009, his partner died following a short illness.
- His partner had devoted their time to caring for their adopted son. Consequently, the staff member had to find alternative childcare and help his son adjust to the new arrangements as well as come to terms with the loss of a parent.
- He collects his son from school and if possible, works from home during school holidays.

Effect on research

Although there has been no effect on his contractual hours, he has been unable to devote as much time to his research as his peers due to his childcare commitments. The death of his partner has caused disruption to his research – he has had to come to terms with his bereavement and help his child to do so as well.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of one output for disruption to research from May 2009 onwards due to childcare and bereavement.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The panel noted that he has been able to conduct research throughout the duration of the REF period. However, the panel recognises that caring for an adopted child who experienced the loss of an adoptive parent not long after adoption would have had an impact on his ability to produce research at a similar rate to his peers. In addition, it was noted that he also had to come to terms with his own loss.

Example 6

UOA 8: Chemistry

Nature and timing of circumstances

- His partner was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in December 2010.
- Following the diagnosis his partner's condition rapidly deteriorated and in October 2011 it was recognised that a 24 hour carer was required.
- He experienced considerable difficulty arranging appropriate care and he took unpaid leave for a period of six months from November 2011 to May 2012.
- On his return to work in June 2012 he worked 0.8 FTE for the remainder of the REF period.
- Since June 2012, he has received support from his local authority but he continues to accompany his partner to relatively frequent (every couple of weeks on average) hospital appointments.

Effect on research

- 6 months unpaid leave November 2011 to May 2012
- 0.8 FTE from June 2012 to October 2013

He also had to cope with the rapid deterioration in his partner's condition from December 2010 to October 2011 when he was undertaking his contracted hours. During this period he was unable to devote sufficient time to his research into nanoparticles, which resulted in the findings being delayed.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 6 months unpaid leave November 2011 to May 2012
- 3.2 months absence due to working 0.8 FTE from June 2012 to October 2013
- Disruption to research for 10 months

Total: 9.2 months, plus disruption to research for 10 months.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The panel noted that he was absent from academic duties for a total of 9.2 months during the REF period. However, the panel recognises that He's research was also affected by the rapid deterioration in his partner's condition that occurred over a 10 month period between December 2010 and October 2011.

Example 7

UOA 28: Modern Languages and Linguistics

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The individual is the primary carer of her child, who was diagnosed with Myalgic Encephalopathy (ME) in January 2009.
- She took September 2009 to March 2010 as a period of unpaid leave so that she could devote more time to caring for her daughter.
- Between April 2010 and August 2012 she continued to provide additional care for her daughter while carrying out her academic duties.
- From September 2012 her daughter's ME improved and her daughter was able to return to school. This enabled the staff member to devote more time to her research.

Effect on research

Her research was affected from January 2009 to August 2012. She took 6 months unpaid leave during this time; between April 2010 and August 2012 the time she could devote to research was restricted due to her caring commitment – she received help from the local authority but only for 2 hours a day and she regularly worked from home in order to ensure her daughter's requirements were met. She also frequently accompanies her daughter to medical appointments, which have now become less frequent following her daughter's improvement. During the affected period she has been unable to conduct research at the rate of her colleagues as she has had to ensure that her daughter's care requirements are met on a daily basis.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for 6 months unpaid leave and 2 years and 4 months caring commitment

Total: 6 months plus additional disruption to research

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Chair Panel that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The panel noted that her research time was not reduced by 12 months or more during the REF period. However, the panel recognised that in addition to the 6 months unpaid leave taken to care for her daughter, her research time will have been limited due to her being her disabled daughter's carer for period of 28 months or more during the REF period.

Example 8

UOA 27: Area Studies

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The individual's parents were admitted to a nursing home in January 2007. Her mother has Alzheimer's and was no longer able to care for the staff member's father who had a series of strokes in 2006.
- She visits her parents regularly and liaises with the home on their care. She is the home's emergency contact and on a number of occasions has had to accompany her parents to appointments or visit the home during working hours should she need to meet with the home manager or her parents' doctor.

Effect on research

Her contracted hours have not been affected. On a number of occasions she has had to accompany her parents to appointments or visit the nursing home during working hours, which has affected her ability to devote time to research.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for ongoing disruption to research throughout the period due to her caring responsibilities.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Chair Panel that the case for a reduction of one output is not accepted.

The advisory panel recognises that caring for old parents can impact on research. However, throughout the REF period, no significant changes in her parents' condition have been reported and they have been receiving 24 hour care in a nursing home. If her parents had not been receiving 24 hour nursing care or if one of her parents' conditions had become unstable, the panel may have considered this case differently. The advisory panel did not feel that the case was substantially different from the type of circumstances faced by many academics with old parents.

Example 9

UOA 29: English Language and Literature

Nature and timing of circumstances

- He developed symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in both his wrists in March 2011. After taking six weeks off work, it was diagnosed in May 2011.
- Following the diagnosis a number of adjustments were made to his working arrangements that proved ineffective.
- He started to use voice recognition software in June 2011 and it took him approximately four months to train the software and fully adjust to a different way of working.

Effect on research

His research was affected from March 2011 to October 2011. In addition to the 6 weeks leave, the period following his return to work was disrupted as adjustments made to his working arrangements proved ineffective. This meant his ability to conduct and write up research during this period was restricted. Further disruption occurred from June until October 2011 while he adjusted to voice recognition software as he could not undertake research at his usual rate as he adjusted to new methods of working.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for a period of 7 months, due to the development of an impairment that would be considered a disability under the Equality Act 2010, and time for effective reasonable adjustments to be implemented.

Total: 7 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Chair Panel that the case for a reduction of one output is not accepted.

The advisory panel recognises that it can take time for staff to receive a diagnosis and in some cases for effective reasonable adjustments to be implemented. However, the panel felt that the total time affected was not comparable to the tariff outlined in table 2, part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'.

Example 10

UOA 5: Biological Sciences

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The individual has a mobility impairment, she is a wheelchair user and cannot walk up or down stairs.
- Due to severe flood damage in November 2012, the university had to temporarily close the laboratory that she usually works in for a period of 4 months.
- Alternative laboratory space was made available to staff in an old listed building which is not accessible to wheelchair users. The university did try to find suitable laboratory space for the staff member but nothing appropriate was available at such short notice.
- While the laboratory was being refurbished it was agreed that she would focus on her teaching responsibilities.

Effect on research

She was unable to conduct research from November 2012 until March 2013 due to the lack of an accessible laboratory.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for 4 months prevention from conducting research.

Total: 4 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Chair Panel that the case for a reduction of one output is not accepted.

The advisory panel recognises that the lack of an accessible laboratory will have disrupted research for a period of 4 months. However, the length of time affected in relation to the REF period as a whole is minimal and the panel would normally expect research to be disrupted for a period of 12 months or more for a reduction in outputs to be accepted.

Example 11

UOA 3: Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Started to suffer from an undiagnosed condition in January 2009. Frequently lost consciousness and experienced severe fatigue and weight loss.
- Illness persisted throughout the REF period.
- Between January 2009 and October 2013, took a total of 13 months sickness absence.
- Throughout the period affected the staff member has had frequent hospital appointments and tests to identify the cause of her illness, including tests for tumours and epilepsy, which proved inconclusive. She has also had to try a range of treatments, some of which have had serious side effects.

Effect on research

During the affected period she did not change her contractual hours or FTE but was signed off on sick leave for a total of 13 months. She has had to attend frequent hospital appointments and has had to cope with the uncertainty of not knowing the nature of her condition. This has been particularly upsetting. Given the lack of a diagnosis and the unpredictable nature of the illness, considerable disruption was caused to her research.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of two outputs for:

- 13 months sick leave
- Disruption caused by her illness, ongoing hospital appointments, and numerous treatments for an additional period of 3 years and 9 months.

Total: 13 months plus additional disruption to research.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of two outputs is accepted.

Given the nature of the illness, the panel recognises that her research time during the REF period was in fact reduced by more than 13 months. Research was disrupted for a period totalling 58 months.

Example 12 – Please note, the calculation method used in this example is incorrect. Where circumstances are combined, time prior to an individual satisfying the definition of an early career researcher should be calculated in months and added to months due to other circumstances, before applying table 2. A reduction of 2 outputs is the outcome when either calculation method is used here.

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The individual is an early career researcher who first met the REF definition in September 2009.
- He was born with a minor hearing impairment and used a hearing aid but in January 2010 he experienced a sudden and significant loss of hearing.
- In March 2010, following an occupational health assessment, adjustments were implemented to enable him to resume his fieldwork on adolescent development.
- In September 2010 a note taker was employed to ensure reliability and consistency.

Effect on research

Research was affected from January 2010 until December 2010. While he was able to resume his fieldwork in March 2010, the speed at which he could work was reduced as he was developing his lip reading skills and did not have access to a reliable note taker. Consequently, he often had to cancel meetings with his research subjects and their commitment to the project drifted.

It took him a further period of adjustment to work with the regular note taker, who was appointed in September 2010. In December 2010 the university's occupational health provider advised that he now found the note taking effective in helping him to understand the adolescents he was observing and he found lip reading pretty effective in some environments. He has now adjusted to his hearing loss but his fieldwork and research outputs were disrupted and delayed as a result, and it took time for the university to identify appropriate and effective reasonable adjustments.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output according to tariff for early career researchers.

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 2 months due to assessment of requirements and implementing new reasonable adjustments
- 9 months (plus additional delay) to adapt to lip reading, using note takers and re-establish contacts

Total: ECR plus 11 months, plus additional time for adjustments to new methods of working and re-establishing contacts

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of two outputs is accepted.

The panel recognises that as an early career researcher, he is entitled to a reduction in one output. The panel also recognises that loss of hearing would have had a significant impact on his fieldwork, particularly given its nature. Therefore, while research was affected for less than 12 months, the panel recommends that a further reduction in output is accepted. The panel recognises that in the case of some disabled staff, it can take time for reasonable adjustments to be effective due to the need for staff to adapt their methods of working and in some cases, the need to trial different adjustments.

Example 13

UOA 20:Law

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The staff member has mental health difficulties and was absent due to depression for several periods of between two and three weeks during the 2009/2010 academic year, totalling 2.5 months.
- During a period of long term sickness absence from January to June 2011, the staff member was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and was placed on new medication to help her manage the condition.
- The staff member found returning to work in June 2011 difficult because a number of relationships with colleagues had been strained due to the symptoms of the condition. In addition, while the medication was effective, it caused unpleasant side effects including thyroid problems and nausea.
- HR records show that it took about 6 months for the right balance of medication to be found and for the staff member to settle back into work.

Effect on research

Research was affected from September 2009 until December 2011. The staff member was not able to conduct research while absent for 8.5 months due to disability related sickness. In addition to this, during the 6 month period following return to work, the side effects of medication and the impact on relationships with colleagues severely disrupted her research project and consequently delayed research findings.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for:

- 8.5 months disability related sickness absence in 2009/10 and between January and June 2011
- 6 months additional disruption to research from June to December 2011.

Total: 14.5 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The advisory panel recognises that the staff member was unable to conduct research for a period totalling 8.5 months. A reduced number of outputs would normally be accepted if a researcher is unable to conduct research for a period of 12 months or more during the REF period. However, in this case the panel recognise that ability to conduct research was disrupted for a further 6 months when the staff member had returned to work due to the need to rebuild relationships within the team and adjust to new medication.

Example 14

UOA 32: Philosophy

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Involved in a road traffic incident on 14 March 2012.
- Experienced multiple injuries including broken ribs, a punctured lung, fractured wrists and a head injury, which resulted in short term memory loss.
- Returned to work on 01 October 2012.
- Due to the memory loss she suffered, the staff member had to review a significant amount of her research conducted in 2011/12 to ensure that she was still familiar with this and her subject area.
- She was able to recommence her research in April 2013.

Effect on research

She was absent from work and unable to conduct research from 14 March to 01 October 2012. When she returned to work she needed to familiarise herself with her subject area due to the injuries she had sustained. This took a period of 6 months, during which time she was unable to conduct her research.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for:

- 6.5 months absence due to recovery from road traffic accident
- 6 months to familiarise with subject area and research due to memory loss

Total: 12.5 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The advisory panel recognises that the impact of the road traffic accident and subsequent memory loss will have had a significant impact on her ability to conduct research during the REF period. The time period affected is also comparable to the tariff outlined in table 2, part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'

Example 15

UOA 18: Economics and Econometrics

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Diagnosed with bowel cancer in February 2008 and was off work receiving medical treatment and recovering from surgery until October 2008.
- Returned to work on a 0.4 FTE basis, and was receiving chemotherapy until December 2008.
- In early January 2010, the staff member developed a secondary cancer and again received extensive medical treatment.
- Returned to work in November 2010 on a 0.2 FTE basis, enabling her to resume her research while she continued to regain her health.
- In November 2011 she returned to working on a 0.4 FTE basis.

Effect on research

The effect on contracted hours were:

- February to October 2008 unable to conduct research due to treatment (8 months)
- October 2008 to January 2010 0.4 FTE (15 month period)
- January 2010 to October 2010 unable to conduct research due to treatment (9 months)
- November 2010 to October 2011 0.2 FTE (11 month period)
- October 2011 to October 2013 0.4 FTE (24 month period)

Additionally, during the time that the staff member was undertaking research in the period, she was receiving medical care and was therefore unable devote as much time to her research as her peers. For example, when she returned to work after her first treatment for cancer she was still receiving chemotherapy, which caused her to experience fatigue and nausea.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 3 outputs for:

- 17 months absence due to treatment for cancer
- 23.4 months due to working 0.4 FTE
- 8.8 months due to working 0.2 FTE
- Disruption to research when undergoing treatment and during recovery

Total: 49.2 months, plus disruption

Proposed reduction in outputs: 3

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of three outputs is accepted.

The advisory panel note that the impact of two cancers during the REF period will have been significant. In addition, the panel note that she has worked part-time while regaining her health. The time period affected is also comparable to the tariff outlined in Table 2, Part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'.

Example 16

UOA 22: Social Work and Social Policy

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The individual had a stroke in January 2011 and lost much of his ability to communicate both verbally and in writing.
- Following speech and language therapy he returned to work in August 2011 but the stroke continued to impact on his cognitive functions and he could not conduct or produce research at his usual rate.
- His ability to communicate verbally improved at a greater rate than his ability to communicate in writing.
- A range of adjustments were tried, including voice assistive software but due to the impact of the stroke on his speech and cognitive function in relation to writing, voice assisted software proved ineffective.
- He was provided with an assistant to support him with written communication and he continued to use this assistant until June 2012.

Effect on research

In addition to the 8 months long term sickness absence, he spent a period of 10 months adjusting to new methods of working.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- 18 months absence and disruption.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel seeks further information from the REF team before making a recommendation on this case.

There is insufficient information provided to enable the panel to make a judgement. Primarily, the advisory panel would like clarifying information about the cognitive impact of the stroke on the staff member's ability to conduct research. In addition, the panel would like to know when he started to use an assistant and if and when the use of the assistant started to enable him to return to producing research outputs at his usual rate.

Example 17

UOA 1: Clinical Medicine

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Junior clinical academic and has not yet gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT).
- Diagnosed with breast cancer in April 2009 and underwent surgery on 29 April 2009.
- Underwent a three month course of chemotherapy.
- Returned to work following treatment on the 2 November 2009.

Effect on research

She was unable to conduct research between 29 April 2009 and 2 November 2009 while she was undergoing treatment. On finding the breast lump in early April 2009, her ability to research was affected. She has a family history of breast cancer and was very distressed at having found a breast lump and the consequent diagnosis. The diagnosis of breast cancer has placed considerable strain on the staff member and her family and while she returned to work shortly after her therapy ended, the experience has had a longer term effect on her psychological well-being.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 2 outputs according to the allowance for junior clinical academics.

Reduction of 1 output for 6 months absence and disruption to research following her diagnosis.

Total: Junior clinical academic, plus 6 months and additional disruption.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 3

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of three outputs is accepted

The advisory panel recognise that she is entitled to a reduction in two outputs as she is yet to gain her Certificate of Completion of Training. Additionally, the advisory panel recognise that the impact of the diagnosis of and treatment for breast cancer will have had a significant impact on the ability of the staff member to conduct research during the REF period. In particular the panel noted the impact of the diagnosis on the individual's psychological wellbeing given her family history.

Example 18

UOA 7: Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences

Nature and timing of circumstances

- She started to experience frequent headaches and blurred vision in February 2009 and was placed on migraine medication.
- Her headaches and vision did not improve and she began to experience memory loss resulting in an urgent referral to hospital at the end of April 2009. Following tests, she was diagnosed with a brain tumour.
- In early May 2009 the staff member underwent surgery to remove the tumour and this was followed by radiotherapy and a 6 month course of chemotherapy.
- She returned to work on 15 February 2010 on a 0.6 FTE basis for the remainder of the REF period.

Effect on research

- 3.5 weeks sick leave between February and April 2009
- Absence from May 2009 to 15 February 2010 for treatment and recovery from brain tumour
- Worked 0.6 FTE from 15 February 2010 to 31 October 2013.

Due to experiencing frequent headaches and blurred vision, she was unable to research productively between February 2009 and April 2009 and was frequently off sick during this period.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 2 outputs for:

- 2 months unable to research at normal capacity (includes 3.5 weeks sick leave)
- 9.5 months absence due to treatment and recovery from brain tumour.
- 17.8 months due to working 0.6 FTE from 15 February 2010 to 31 October 2013

Total: 29.3 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of two outputs is accepted.

Given the period of time affected the advisory panel felt that the time period affected is clearly comparable with the tariff as outlined in Table 2, Part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'.

Example 19

UOA 15: General Engineering

Nature and timing of circumstances

- He made his intention to become a trans man known in June 2009. He has received the backing of his department.
- He started hormone therapy in July 2009 and worked on a 0.5 FTE basis from July until December 2009.
- Since January 2010 he has undergone a series of medical treatments requiring varying amounts of time off totalling 7 months. He has regular counselling appointments and is still in the process of transitioning.

Effect on research

During the REF period he took a total of 7 months out for medical treatment and also worked 0.5 FTE for five months. He has had a number of personal problems as his transition has resulted in strained relationships with his children and other family members. This, coupled with the time off that he has required, has been stressful and has impacted upon his ability to focus on his research. He changed his forenames in November 2009 and has had to rebuild his research reputation on the basis of his new name and his presentation as a man.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for:

- 7 months absence due to medical treatment
- 2.5 months due to working 0.5 FTE for five months
- Disruption to research throughout the period

Total: 9.5 months plus additional disruption to research

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

A reduced number of outputs would normally be accepted if a period of 12 months or more during the REF period is affected. The panel recognised that while research time had been reduced by 9.5 months, he started the process of transition in June 2009 and the process was ongoing at the end of the REF period. Consequently, his research was affected for more than 9.5 months and the impact is comparable to the tariff outlined in Table 2, Part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'.

Example 20

UOA 34: Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Took a period of five months additional paternity leave from beginning October 2011 to beginning March 2012.
- Returned to work on 05 March 2012 on a 0.4 FTE basis for the remainder of the REF period.
- On his return to work he was the main carer for his child.

Effect on research

He had 5 months absence from work due to additional paternity leave, and 12 months due to working on a 0.4 FTE from 05 March 2012 to 31 October 2013. As he is the main carer for his child, he has had difficulty devoting as much time to his research due to his childcare commitments.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for 1 period of Additional Paternity Leave

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 12 months for part time working
- Main carer responsibilities

Total: 1 x paternity plus 12 months absence due to part time working, plus additional disruption due to caring responsibilities

Proposed reduction in outputs: 2

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of two outputs is accepted.

The staff member is entitled to one reduction in outputs for the period of paternity leave taken. A further reduction in output is also appropriate due to his having worked on a part time basis for some of the REF period. In determining the tariffs for maternity leave, adoption leave and additional paternity leave, the main panels took into consideration the normal ongoing childcare commitments of parents.

Example 21

UOA 16: Architecture, Built Environment and Planning

Nature and timing of circumstances

- When his child was six months old, he took a period of three months additional paternity leave from January 2012 – March 2012.
- When his child was a year old, he took three months unpaid leave from July 2012 to October 2012.

Effect on research

Absence from research for:

- 3 months due to Additional Paternity Leave
- 3 months due to unpaid leave

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for 6 months absence in period.

Total: 6 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is not accepted.

Given the length of Additional Paternity Leave taken, he is not entitled to a reduction in outputs on the grounds of additional paternity leave alone. Staff are only entitled to a reduction in outputs when the period of additional paternity leave taken is 4 months or more. Shorter periods of Additional paternity leave can be taken into account when combined with other circumstances but when combining the 3 months additional paternity leave with the 3 month period of unpaid leave, the total period affected is not comparable to the tariff outlined in table 2, part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'. If the period of unpaid leave taken had been longer, the panel may have requested that further information be provided on the nature of the leave. In addition, the panel would have taken into consideration evidence of ongoing childcare responsibilities.

Example 22

UOA 12: Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The individual ended a relationship with a colleague in June 2010. Following this, he began receiving unpleasant messages and threats from his colleague, who also spread malicious rumours about him within his field of research.
- Initially he ignored the threats and messages but his colleague lodged a complaint against him alleging sexual assault, which they had also reported to the police.
- The university placed him on suspension for a period of two months from December 2010 while the alleged assault was investigated by the police.
- While on suspension, he was violently attacked by his colleague and a restraining order was applied for and granted.
- The police and university investigation cleared him of the alleged sexual assault and he was reinstated to his post in February 2011.
- He was unable to return to work until April 2011 due to depression and injuries that he suffered in the attack.
- The colleague's trial took place in March 2012 and prior to the trial and subsequent imprisonment, security at his office was increased as the colleague violated the restraining order on a number of occasions.

Effect on research

Research was affected from June 2010 to March 2012. He was suspended for 2 months and took 2 months sick leave due to depression and injuries suffered in the attack. During the affected period his reputation within his field was damaged, the case was also reported in local media and his ability to focus on and conduct research was considerably disrupted.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 4 months' absence
- Disruption to research from June 2010-March 2012

Total: 4 months plus additional disruption to research

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The panel recognises that while he was only absent from research for 4 months, his ability to conduct research between June 2010 to March 2012 would have been significantly affected due to the impact of allegations and actions of his colleague on his mental and physical wellbeing.

Example 23

UOA 19: Business and Management Studies

Nature and timing of circumstances

- He joined the department in January 2011 from another UK university after being racially harassed by a senior member of staff within his former department between January 2008 and March 2010.
- He felt that his position within the university was untenable following a successful grievance process within the institution that did not result in the situation being resolved to his satisfaction. Consequently, he lodged a complaint against the institution with the Employment Tribunal in February 2010 and left his post in October 2010.
- The Employment Tribunal recently ruled in his favour and highlighted that his former employer had failed to take action to discipline the member of staff responsible for leading a sustained campaign of harassment against him due to his race. It also noted the impact of this on his mental wellbeing and the damages awarded took into consideration the fact that his career progression was affected by the actions of the staff member concerned.
- Between January 2008 and March 2010, he was signed off work for a total of 5.5 months due to stress.

Effect on research

His research was affected from January 2008 to March 2010. During this time he was absent for a total of 5.5 months but the actions of his colleague affected his ability to progress in his career and focus on his research. There was also a 3 month period between him leaving his former employer and commencing his current contract, in which he was unable to conduct research.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 8.5 months absence
- Disruption to research from January 2008 to March 2010

Total: 8.5 months plus additional disruption to research

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The panel recognises that while he was only absent from research for 8.5 months, his ability to conduct research between January 2008 to March 2010 was significantly affected by racial harassment. In addition, the panel noted the impact that this had on his mental wellbeing and ability to progress his research.

Example 24

UOA 16: Architecture, Built Environment and Planning

Nature and timing of circumstances

- Early career researcher and first met this definition on 15 April 2011.
- Diagnosed with dyslexia during his undergraduate degree and it affects his reading and writing.
- On commencement of post, reasonable adjustments were put in place for him as advised by the occupational health adviser and the staff member himself.
- Screen reading and voice activated software were provided alongside proof reading support.

Effect on research

He manages the impact of dyslexia effectively and the adjustments in place enable him to produce research at a rate comparable to his colleagues.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 2 outputs for:

- Early career researcher

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 30.5 months due to impact of dyslexia from commencement of post on 15 April 2011 to 31 October 2013

Proposed reduction in outputs: 3

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of two outputs is accepted, but that the case for a reduction of three outputs is not accepted.

The advisory panel recognises that he is entitled a reduction of 2 outputs due to his early career researcher status. However, while the panel recognises the impact that dyslexia can have, as highlighted by the information provided, the staff member is effectively managing his dyslexia, the reasonable adjustments in place are effective and he is able to produce research at a rate comparable to his colleagues.

Example 25

UOA 28: Modern languages and linguistics

Nature and timing of circumstances

- He is open about being gay with both staff and students at the college.
- In April 2009 his department introduced an anonymous student survey.
- Unfortunately, student feedback on his seminars and lectures included a number of inappropriate comments about his sexuality and given the anonymity of the survey it was not possible to trace the source of the comments. Consequently, with the support of his department, he chose to handle the matter by making clear to students that such comments were inappropriate and contrary to the college's equality policy.
- Following the survey he began to receive occasional emails from unidentifiable sources that were discriminatory, threatening and of an increasingly personal nature.
- In April 2010 he asked his department to take action as he no longer felt safe in the institution and requested a period of unpaid leave until the source of the abuse was identified.
- The sporadic nature of the emails meant that the source was not identified until September 2010. The source was identified as a colleague and they were immediately suspended from post.
- He returned to his research in November 2010.

Effect on research

His ability to focus on his research started to be affected following the survey when the comments started. He lost confidence and found it difficult to concentrate on his research but did not want to seek medical help. When he was not absent from research, his research output was comparable to that of a member of staff working on a 0.5 FTE contract.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of 1 output for:

- 6 months disruption to research from April 2009 to April 2010 with 0.5 FTE productivity
- 7 months absence from research

Total: 13 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

The time period affected is comparable to the tariff as outlined in Table 2, Part 1 of the 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods' and the advisory panel recognise the impact that harassment can have on a staff member's ability to work productively.

Example 26 – Please note, this example was added on 11th January 2013.

UOA 21: Politics and International Studies

Nature and timing of circumstances

- The member of staff first worked as an academic from 1998 until 2003, researching and publishing work on Eastern European politics and society, based on fieldwork and archives in that region.
- From 2003 to 2007 she took a career break, to bring up her two children (born in 2003 and 2005).
- When seeking to resume her academic career from 2007 she found it very difficult to secure another academic position that would allow her to continue with research. She secured a series of casual and fixed-term teaching-only positions in universities between 2007 and 2009. All of these were teaching-only contracts, in which she had no contracted duties or time allowed for research.
- She secured a lectureship at the HEI on 1/9/2009, from which point she was able to resume her research.
- In addition, up until 1/9/2009, she would not have been able to travel to Eastern Europe for sufficient blocks of time to continue with necessary fieldwork, due to childcare responsibilities for her two young children; and her teaching-only contracts from 2007 to 2009 did not enable her to refocus her research to a different topic requiring less travel.

Effect on research

- The member of staff was unable to pursue any research between the start of the REF period (1/1/08) and 31/8/09.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of one output for 20 months.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

A break from research while still working within the higher education sector is not accepted as an absence for the purposes of allowing a reduction in outputs. However, in this case it was clear that the individual was unable to pursue research for a 20 month period, due to the effect of starting a family. Although she was working within HE during this period, she was clearly contracted to carry out teaching only and was unable to carry out research, and this was due to the effect of starting a family.

Example 27 – Please note, this example was added on 11th January 2013.

UOA 7: Earth Systems and Environmental Science

Nature and timing of circumstances

- From September 2010 to August 2012 the staff member took on the role of Pro-vice Chancellor for learning and teaching within the university, a period of 24 months during the REF period.
- Their duties and job description for that period were amended to 0.8 FTE management and 0.2 FTE academic/research.

Effect on research

- This management role has significantly impacted on the staff member's ability to carry out research between the period from September 2010 to August 2012.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Absence of 24 months x 0.8 = 19.2 months.

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is not accepted.

A break from research while working within the higher education sector is not accepted as an absence for the purposes of allowing a reduction in outputs. (The only exception to this is where the individual's change in contracted duties was due to a complex circumstance or protected characteristic. In this case there is no indication that the exception applies.)

Example 28 – Please note, this example was added on 11th January 2013.

UOA 6: Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Nature and timing of circumstances:

- The staff member has suffered from rheumatoid arthritis since August 2008.
- The diagnosis was confirmed in February 2009.

Effect on research:

This staff member has suffered from rheumatoid arthritis for 63 months of the REF period (August 2008 to October 2013). The illness varies between patients and in this case is characterised by chronic pain and fatigue and often flares up in response to stress.

Although the staff member has been able to fulfil contractual duties, and they have not had any periods of recorded sick leave relating to this condition, their productivity has been affected, due to fatigue and constant pain.

Although the effect of the illness has been uneven throughout this period, the staff member estimates they have on average been able to work productively at an equivalent of approximately 0.7 FTE since August 2008.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

- Reduction of one output for 18.9 months (63 months working at estimated 0.7 FTE)

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

Although no absence due to sickness was recorded the panel recognises that, given the nature of the illness, the staff member's research was significantly disrupted during the REF period. The panel therefore recommends that the request for a reduction of one output is accepted.

Example 29 – Please note, this example was added on 11th January 2013.

UOA 6: Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Nature and timing of circumstances:

- The staff member's partner was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer in June 2008.
- Treatment and recovery were ongoing until February 2010, a period of 20 months. The staff member was allowed compassionate leave during this period to care for their partner, a total of 8 weeks during the 20 months. However recovery was slow and the staff member's work was significantly disrupted for the entire 20 month period due to the emotional, physical and mental strain which was placed upon them during this period.
- Recurrence of the cancer in July 2010 resulted in further treatments, major surgery and subsequent recovery over a period of 26 months. The staff member was again given compassionate leave during this period totalling 9 weeks. But again disruption to their work was significant for the entire 26 month period.

Effect on research:

In addition to two periods of compassionate leave totalling 3.9 months, the staff member's ability to conduct research was constrained for a period of 42.1 months (46 months while their partner underwent treatment and recovery from cancer less 3.9 months compassionate leave) due to the emotional, physical and mental strain placed upon them while caring for their partner during treatment for a prolonged recovery from cancer. During this period the staff member estimates they were effectively only able to operate at an average of 0.8 FTE.

Calculation of reduction of outputs:

Reduction of one output for:

- 3.9 months compassionate leave
- 8.4 months absence due to ongoing disruption to research (estimated as working at 0.8 FTE for 42.1 months)

Total: 12.3 months

Proposed reduction in outputs: 1

EDAP's recommendation, with rationale:

The advisory panel recommends to the Main Panel Chair that the case for a reduction of one output is accepted.

An absence of 3.9 months was recorded for the staff member, and the panel recognises that, in addition, there was significant disruption to the staff member's ability to conduct research for a period of 42.1 months.