

UKRI response code guidance

In researchfish, 'response codes' are used to inform research organisations which of their awards are required to submit outcomes. UKRI assigns a code to each award before each submission period; research organisations are then asked to review them and to request any changes which they believe should be made.

Code	Meaning
1†*	A submission is expected; the award holder is employed** by the funded organisation.
2	A one-year reporting exemption has been agreed, a submission is not expected.
3	Award withdrawn from the reporting cycle; further outcomes are no longer expected.
4†	A submission is expected; the award holder is not employed by the funded organisation.
5	The obligation to report has ceased; a submission may be made but is not expected.

† PIs with award codes 1 or 4 are required to make a submission as part of UKRI's terms and conditions. Further details of our reporting requirements can be found on our website: <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/manage-your-funding-award/report-your-research-outcomes/>

* Only code 1 awards are used to determine the reporting compliance rate of a research organisation.

** If the award is a studentship, the code is used to indicated students currently registered at the funded organisation. This applies irrespective of where the student's training is taking place.

Timetable

Any response code change requests that you provide to us before 21 January 2022 will be processed before the start of the submission period. We will continue to process requests received after this date but award holders for whom an exemption is requested may still receive communications from us while these are processed.

Change requests should only be submitted by research organisation administrators using the template provided to them via email on 6 December 2021. They should be sent to researchoutcomes@funding.ukri.org

Reasons to request changes to Response Codes

Response code change requests are normally justified in the following circumstances:

From Code(s)	To code	If...
1 or 4	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The award holder will be working in a remote location without viable internet access for the duration of the submission period• A temporary change in the personal circumstances of the award holder means they have been (or will be) exempt from undertaking their normal academic duties from the date of the request until at least the close of the submission period. For example, parental leave or sick leave that lasts for the duration of the submission period.• It has not been possible to start the project due to exceptional circumstances (for example, due to COVID-19)
1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The award holder is no longer employed by the funded organisation
4	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The award holder has not left (or has returned) to the funded organisation
1, 4 or 5	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All known outcomes and impacts have already been reported and no others can reasonably be expected.• The award holder has retired or left academia, and no other person can be identified who was involved in the research and is able to fulfil the award holder's reporting obligations.
3	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is additional significant outcome/impact to report on an award previously withdrawn from the reporting process

General Reporting Obligations

Typically:

- Awards to principal investigators including fellows are assigned response code 1 (or 4 if appropriate) until at least five years after the funding period ends. However, this can vary depending on the research council and funding scheme – see Annex 1 and 2 of this document for MRC-specific and EPSRC-specific guidance.
- Studentships are assigned response code 1 from the third year of the studentship until the studentship ends, and response code 4 for three years after it ends. After this, response codes are changed to code 3 or 5.

As studentship reporting will be optional in 2022, we will be changing all studentships to response code 5 (unless they are already code 3). We will revert these changes after the submission period. This ensures that students are told reporting is optional when they log into researchfish.

The impact of COVID-19 on reporting requirements

We understand the continuing impact of COVID-19 may mean that some award holders are unable to make a submission this year. Our current policies around response code 2 requests should be sufficient in allowing for COVID-19 related exemptions. However, please do submit any exemption requests you are unsure of and UKRI will assess these on a case-by-case basis. UKRI will consider all requests sympathetically and apply a principle of trust when considering the case presented.

Valid requests include:

- Changes to the role of award holders (for example researchers entering COVID-19 related clinical roles) will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Any other temporary change in the individual circumstances of the award holder as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that means they have been (or will be) prevented from undertaking their normal academic duties during the submission period. This includes, for example, sickness, additional caring responsibilities, or home schooling that significantly limit the award holder's ability to report during the submission period.
- Delays arising from COVID-19 which means the project has not started.

Invalid requests include:

- Delays or disruption to your research project except those specified in the above. It is vital that we understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the volume and diversity of research outcomes, and this will be enabled by the data provided during the 2022 submission period.
- The award holder is unable to access to their lab or other work facilities. Researchers are asked to complete their researchfish submission as best as possible with the information that they do hold.

Given the new and evolving nature of COVID-19, If you are unsure as to whether a request is valid or not, please get in touch.

Aggregated information provided as part of the response code requests will be used to help us understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the community.

Annex 1. Additional MRC response code guidance

The MRC has been collecting outputs via researchfish for many years and have been provided with a lot of interesting and valuable information from our researchers. We greatly value the input from our researchers on all outputs that allow us to assess the long-term impact of funding from the production of outputs. As such we felt that inputting a response code of 5 for awards that are a number of years past the end date would restrict the aims of our data collection. We would ask that researchers that have received funding from the MRC report their outcomes on researchfish up to the point by which they believe there will be no further outputs reported against the award.

When assessing response code change requests for awards that are a number of years past the end date, we will take several factors in to account. Firstly, we will check all funding awards that the researcher has to report in researchfish for the MRC. If a researcher has awards that are either active or have an end date less than five years before the submission period, then all awards will remain open for submission. In researchfish, all awards for a single funder are submitted at the same time and therefore if there are no outputs to be added to an award there is very little extra work required to submit alongside the more recent awards. It also keeps the option for any outputs that the researcher is currently producing for their 'Active' award to be attributed against the older award, should the researcher think that it is relevant to the work produced from the older award. This is a 'Just in Case' measure rather than an expectation that there will be further outputs produced on the older award.

Secondly, we check the output data against the award. If the output data on researchfish appears to show the researcher being active in producing outputs that are attributed to their award on researchfish since the last submission, then we will keep the award open for submission. Any outputs added to researchfish that are not submitted can't be used for reporting purposes and may not appear on Gateway to Research. The main area that we look at for this assessment is the Publications as we can easily determine whether there are publications published in the last year. We will also look at the Collaborations and Further Funding sections to determine if partnerships are still active. The data provided by researchers across the MRC includes many instances where a collaboration or instance of funding is listed as 'Still Active'. It is important that researchers regularly update their outputs to highlight when outputs have ended. It may be the case that some collaborations are still active, in which case there may be some future outputs to be reported, but if these partnerships have ended then we would ask that researchers amend the data in researchfish to reflect this.

Lastly, we will look at the length and value of the award for the researcher. There are a large number of awards from the MRC that are active for more than five years and with a large amount of funding provided. For these awards we hope that a larger number of outputs will be produced that may become realised over a longer period of time and therefore may keep the award open for reporting longer after the award has ended.

Annex 2. EPSRC's specific exceptions to the general principle

EPSRC Funding Scheme	Normal mandatory reporting period
Discipline Hopping Awards	reporting through researchfish not normally required more than 3 years after end of grant
Facility-only	
Mathematical Sciences Small Grants	
Network	
Overseas Travel Grants	
Postdoctoral Mobility	
PPE	
Fusion	reporting through researchfish not normally required more than 8 years after end of grant
Programme Grants	
Science and Innovation Awards	
Institutional Sponsorship' grants (including 2010 'Grant Balances' and 2012 'Small Items of Research Equipment' grants)	reporting through researchfish not normally required
Impact Acceleration Accounts	
NSEW awards	
RCUK Academic Fellowships*	
<p>Unless otherwise notified, other EPSRC Grants/Fellowships in researchfish are not normally <i>required</i> to report through researchfish for more than 5 years after end of grant.</p> <p>Grant/Fellowship holders will be notified when alternative requirements exist.</p> <p>*The RCUK Academic Fellowships scheme was launched in 2004 to provide more attractive and stable research career paths into academia.</p>	