

Staffordshire University's REF2021 Code of Practice on Staff and Outputs

Part 1: Introduction

Codes should address the following:

1. This Code of Practice sets out Staffordshire University's approach to ensuring equality of opportunity for all eligible staff in REF2021. All individuals involved in making decisions, and the panels which they comprise, will adhere to this Code of Practice and the underlying principles thereby ensuring equality, transparency, consistency and accountability.

How the code relates to broader institutional policies / strategies that promote and support E&D.

2. Staffordshire University's Connected University Strategy demonstrates its clear commitment to supporting talented people and promoting diversity and inclusivity. Our stated ambition is to be an 'anchor institution' supporting the social and economic development of our local communities through the impact of our teaching, learning, scholarship and research. Ensuring our staff and student community is diverse and reflects the culture and heritage of the communities we serve is key to delivering this strategic plan.
3. Operationally, the University has a comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework framework 2018-21 (see Figure 1). This framework is overseen by the University's Head of Equality and Diversity appointed in October 2017. She reports directly to the Chief Operating Officer, a member of the University's Executive. The University's EDI work is reported on an annual basis to the Board of Governors. These arrangements ensure that this work has the highest visibility within the University.
4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded across the University's formal committees and governance structures:
 - A formal process for Equality Impact Assessments was introduced in 2018 and is now central to the management processes and reporting requirements of committees and management teams. In addition an Equality Impact Assessment Quality Assurance process was introduced in January 2019 to enable good practice to be identified and shared, and incremental quality improvements to EIAs to be made.
 - The University Inclusion Group was established in January 2019. This strategic group reports to the Senior Leadership Team and comprises representatives from each School and Service, along with specific inclusion related working groups to support key institutional EDI workstreams such as Athena SWAN, Race Equality Charter and HR Research in Excellence Award. The Chief Operating Officer and the Deputy Vice Chancellor are Executive Sponsors for these key equality initiatives.
5. The Head of Equality and Diversity has worked very closely with the University's Director of Research in the development of this Code of Practice, which has ensured that the Code is aligned with the University's EDI framework.
6. In particular, the Code is congruent with the University's EDI Framework 2018-21, which includes the University's Inclusion Statement and Values, Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives 2018-21 and Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2018-21. This latter three-year action plan is further supported by annual action plans, including but not limited to:
 - Athena SWAN – Self Assessment Team established and work underway to submit a Bronze Institutional application in November 2020.
 - Race Equality Charter - Self Assessment Team established and work underway to submit a Bronze Institutional application in February 2020 to maintain our current bronze accreditation.

- Disability Confident – achieved Disability Confident Committed level in January 2019. Work is progressing to develop a staff and student Disability Network which will then develop and implement a Disability Inclusion action plan.
- Stonewall Workplace Index – key actions include the development of a Transgender Inclusion policy (July 2018), the development of an Allies' Programme (February 2019) and our ongoing support for Stoke-on-Trent Pride.
- The HR Research in Excellence Award was achieved in 2018.

An update of actions taken since REF 2014

7. Following the institution's submission to REF2014, an Equality Analysis was undertaken by the Equality and Diversity Manager and REF Officer in February 2014. The member of the University's Executive responsible for this was the Executive Pro-Vice Chancellor, and it was commissioned on behalf of the University's Academic Board.
8. This Equality Analysis identified the characteristics of those submitted to REF2014, compared with the academic body. This is outlined in Table 1, below.

Table 1. Equality monitoring for REF 2014

Protected Characteristic	Category	Academic body	Staff selected for REF
Gender	Male	54%	67%
	Female	46%	33%
Disability	Disabled	5%	4%
	Non-disabled	95%	96%
Race	White	87%	81%
	BAME	12%	19%

9. With regards to the profile of the people selected for the REF, the Equality Analysis noted that;
 - The pool of submitted staff closely matched the overall academic population in terms of disability (5% of academic population and 4% of people selected),
 - A higher percentage of staff from a BME (Black or Minority Ethnic) background were selected (19%) compared to the overall academic BME population (12%),
 - While 46% of the academic population was female, only 33% of those selected [for the REF] were female.
 - The report found "No obvious causes... for the relatively low numbers of female academics (33%) and high numbers of BME staff (19%) included in the REF. This could simply be a reflection of the particular subject areas covered by the University submission or related to the fact that the overall submission numbers are relatively small (91 in total)."
10. The report recognised that the relatively low proportion of female academics submitted to the REF was the primary area to be addressed as a result of the Equality Assessment and cited the "development of female academics and how their research is encouraged" as a matter of priority to be addressed in the longer-term.
11. In terms of recommendations, the 2014 report stated that "the University is aware of a gender imbalance in terms of female Professors within the University (20% female) and is currently undertaking research to identify the cause of this inequality. This investigation may highlight actions that will address the apparent gender inequality within the academic staff group in terms of their development and research opportunities... The University is already considering actions such as a mentoring scheme to address these issues and to encourage more female academics to increase their scholarly activity. This data will be monitored on an annual basis and further action taken as appropriate."
12. Since 2014, the University has taken several steps to promote a supportive and inclusive environment for all researchers, and in particular to support and enable female academics to undertake research

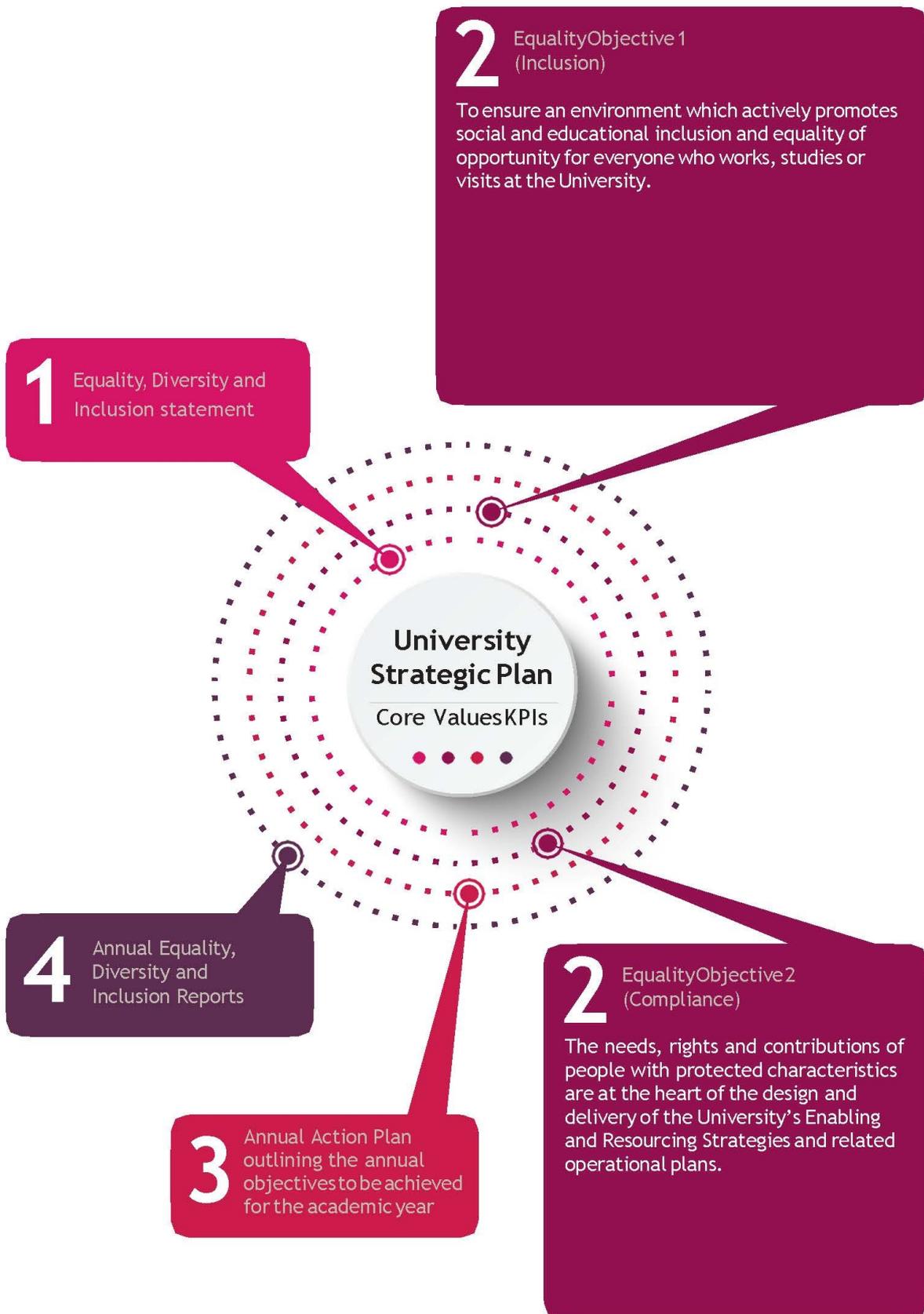
and progress their career:

- In 2016, the University's Academic Development Unit supported mentoring of staff through the introduction of an internal Coaching Academy offering academics peer to peer support. In 2019 coaching support has been offered specifically to staff who are research focussed to gain support and insights from others that have been successful in areas such as publishing and research income capture. This initiative developed a group of internal coaches and provided them with training and support to coach early career researchers, and those new to research. These coaches then acted as mentors for less experienced researchers in areas such as identifying research topics, how to write a successful funding bid, how to work with others to create a successful paper and other aspects of research career development.
 - The University's Professoriate have actively provided a mentoring network for early career researchers and have established a series of 'Meet the Professors' event where academics can drop in to meet professors from a variety of subject disciplines to gain peer support and advice.
 - Peer support is provided for female researchers with the establishment of a Women's Academic Network led by one of our Female Associate Professors. This network has 88 members from across the Institution at varying levels of academic seniority and seeks to support female researchers in the advancement of their research and careers. The University has supported several female academics to attend leadership training courses over several years. This has proved successful in both supporting the individuals' career and also to help develop capacity for mentoring and peer support for female academics at earlier stages in their career.
 - The University has held an annual Professorial Call since 2013, which is open to all staff. Since 2016, this invitation for staff to apply, sent directly from the Vice Chancellor, has explicitly included the text, "As part of the University's commitment to equality, the Professorial Conferment Committee actively encourage applications from women who meet the conferment criteria." Specific training sessions are delivered ahead of each Call to support all applicants.
13. There is evidence that these measures are having a positive impact. There has been a positive increase in female professors and associate professors in the last five years (2014-19). In this period 40% of professorial titles conferred have been to females. Of associate professorial (reader) titles conferred in the last 5 years, 53% have been to females, suggesting that the University has been successful in encouraging and supporting female academics to progress in their careers. Similarly, of all applications received for titles (professor and associate professor), 41% have been from women, suggesting that female academics feel supported and confident to apply for these titles.
14. Currently, 31% of professors are female, an increase of 11% since 2013. There has been an even greater increase with regards to associate professors (equivalent to readers), as currently 45% of associate professors are female.
15. As discussed in the previous section on Equality and Diversity, the University has taken measures to increase Equality and Diversity, most notably through the appointment of a Head of Equality and Diversity appointed in October 2017. This post reports directly to the Chief Operating Officer, a member of the University's Executive. A formal process for Equality Impact Assessments was introduced in 2018 and is now central to the management processes and reporting requirements of committees and management teams. The University Inclusion Group was established in January 2019. This strategic group reports to the Senior Leadership Team and comprises representatives from each School and Service.
16. To support the University becoming a more inclusive institution, an assessment of the breadth and depth of equality, diversity and inclusion across the University was undertaken between November 2017 and February 2018 through direct engagement with:
- Schools and Services – individuals and Senior Management Teams;
 - The recognised trade unions, UNISON and UCU;
 - Students Union – Leadership Team and Network Groups;

- and through an Equality and Diversity questionnaire, which was completed by Deans of Schools and Directors of Services.

17. The aim of this exercise was to understand the University's maturity in the area of EDI and to develop a draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework – detailed in paragraph 6. Following approval by Senior Leadership Team in March 2018, it was launched in April 2018. This framework is hard-wired into the Connected University Strategy, as is demonstrated diagrammatically overleaf:

Figure 1. The interrelationships between the University's Strategic Plan and EDI actions



How the institution is addressing the principles of Transparency, Consistency, Accountability, and Inclusivity in demonstrating fairness

Transparency

18. To ensure complete transparency in relation to REF2021 and the University's approach to it, including this Code of Practice, the University has put in place a program of internal communications including our dedicated staff channel Workvivo as outlined in Table 3. Once this Code of Practice has been approved, it will also feature on the University's externally-facing website (<http://www.staffs.ac.uk>).

Consistency

19. The University has developed robust, standard processes, which it is applying across all of its Units of Assessment for a) identifying category A staff who have significant responsibility for research, b) identifying whether 'research only' staff are independent researchers and c) which outputs are to be submitted to the REF.

20. We expect that there will be no significant differences in processes between REF main panels; any identified, minor differences will be because of variations in patterns of employment between disciplines, e.g. the much higher prevalence of category A staff with a practitioner background in Arts-based disciplines or health and social care, than in STEM subjects.

21. This Code will apply to all staff – including those on fixed term and fractional contracts.

Accountability

22. The development of this Code of Practice has been undertaken by the University's Director of Research, in close collaboration with the University's Head of Equality and Diversity, and supported by the University's Research, Innovation and Impact Services (RIIS) team. Details of the REF Management and Governance Structure are outlined in Appendix 1. Table 2 provides an overview of the accountability associated with the Code of Practice.

Table 2. Accountability

Executive oversight	Day to day management	Governance of University REF preparations
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Director of RIIS Unit of Assessment Leads	REF Task and Finish Group (Appendix 2b) University Research and Innovation Committee (Appendix 2a) Academic Board

23. The REF Task and Finish Group is supported by a number of other panels as set out in Appendix 2, namely the University REF Panel, Output Selection Panels and REF Circumstances Panel.

24. The Code of Practice has been approved by the Research and Innovation Committee, Academic Board, the Senior Leadership Team, the University Executive and the recognised unions, UCU and UNISON.

Inclusivity

25. The Code of Practice has been developed by the Research, Innovation and Impact Services team, in close collaboration from the outset with the University's Head of Equality and Diversity to maintain a focus on potential inequality arising from our Code of Practice implementation. Inclusivity has been a key consideration from the start of the development of this Code, and the collaboration with the Head of Equality and Diversity has ensured staff with protected characteristics¹ have been considered and supported throughout the REF process. Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken at appropriate stages in the development of this Code of Practice to ensure we identify and address any potential inequality.

¹ REF 2019/03, paragraph 18

Reference to these principles should also be made, as appropriate, in completing the sections below.

How the code is being communicated to staff across the institution (including those on leave of absence), through various mechanisms and channels, including the staff intranet

26. The University has taken steps to ensure that all staff, including those on leave of absence, have had the same opportunity to comment on the draft Code of Practice. This includes consultation with UCU and UNISON, and a series of communication activities as outlined in Table 3. Communication activities have been devised by our Communications Team to ensure consistency of messaging. Use of the intranet and staff app will also enable professional service staff to have access to consultation material.

Table 3: REF2021 COP communications timeline

Draft COP presented to the Research and Innovation Committee	March 2019
Consultation on COP with UCU and UNISON	April 2019
Consultation on the draft Code of Practice with all academic and research staff. The draft Code was put onto the staff intranet (IRIS) and all staff emailed and invited to provide feedback to a dedicated email address. A letter was sent to the home addresses of staff who were absent from work	April 2019
Content of the email/letter sent out on the all staff news email and put on the all staff app (WorkVivo) to encourage further engagement and feedback	April 2019
Equality Impact Assessment stakeholder consultation events	May 2019

Part 2: identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

Part 2 need only be completed where the institution will not be submitting 100% of Category A eligible staff in one or more UOA.

Policies and procedures – where not submitting 100% of eligible staff.

Criteria used for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, including information about how the criteria are being applied, and grounds for decisions taken.

27. The promotion of research careers explicitly features in two of the three strategic pillars of the Connected University Strategic Plan: Talented People and Innovative and Applied Learning, with the third pillar Connected Communities being underpinned by research excellence.
28. Staffordshire University's research mission and key strategic objectives underpinning the Connected University Strategic Plan are articulated in greater detail in the Research, Innovation and Impact Strategy 2018-2021 which is available to all staff on our intranet, IRIS². This sets ambitious research targets for the institution, places clear expectations on those members of academic staff who have responsibility for engaging in research and establishes institutional support priorities for research. Targets are established through annual objectives agreed at Personal Development Review (PDR) meetings where line managers will review progress against research objectives, work-loading and support needs. The PDR Policy and related resources are available to all staff on the intranet, IRIS³.
29. Progress against our strategy is measured through the University's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
30. In accordance with the Research, Innovation and Impact Strategy, research support (which encompasses physical resources, professional support staff and academic staff time) is focused on those staff with responsibility for undertaking high-quality research in areas in which the University can develop an international reputation and critical mass. As a modern civic University, the number of staff with significant responsibility for research is lower than in research-led universities. The majority of academic

² https://staffsuniversity.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/riis/EcXxSC_PSYlAl2vYFdVO2yABwHHTPKztOO6if5gMRXMSIA?e=vRjCsW

³ <https://iris.staffs.ac.uk/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=5815&SearchId=147819>

staff at Staffordshire University across all disciplines focus primarily on teaching, scholarship and some knowledge exchange activities.

31. Support is provided to both early career researchers (ECRs) and academic staff wishing to engage with research through doctoral level studies to enable the development of a career trajectory for significant responsibility for research in line with our Academic Development Framework.
32. Research allocation has been granted through a workload model to determine the degree of individual research capacity building, with reviews occurring through the annual Performance and Development Review (PDR) process. Departments, schools and the University as a whole has been delivering a proactive research environment in accordance with preparatory activities for REF2021.
33. Staff with significant responsibility for research are defined by Research England as “those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role”⁴. In accordance with the University’s Research, Innovation and Impact strategy and its need to focus its limited resources on those who will generate the research to enable it to meet its targets, the following criteria, which have been agreed by the Senior Leadership Team, must be met by staff who are to be given significant responsibility for research:
 - annual research PDR objectives set within the context of a research plan;
 - an allocation of research time of a minimum of 20% of their contracted hours;
 - active and sustained contribution to the development of the University’s research environment, for example, including but not limited to:
 - supervision of research students;
 - securing investment in the research infrastructure through research grants and/or corporate sponsorship or investment;
 - research leadership roles within Schools and/or research centres.

How decisions are being made and communicated to staff, including timescale.

34. The University REF Panel (URP) will determine which staff members meet the eligibility criteria. It will comprise the following individuals as outlined in Appendix 2c:
 - Director of Research (Chair)
 - Unit of Assessment Leads
 - Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR&OD)
 - Deputy Vice-Chancellor
35. Data will be collated from Research, Innovation and Impact Services (RIIS), HR and Planning and Business Intelligence to show performance against each of the criteria outlined in paragraph 33 to identify an initial list of staff believed to have significant responsibility for research.
36. This data will involve analysis of:
 - a. Record of securing investment in the research infrastructure through research grants and/or corporate sponsorship or investment;
 - b. PDR objectives for staff that were set research objectives in the 2018/19 academic year, in accordance with Annex A of the research strategy;
 - c. Research student supervision – staff who are either first or second supervisors will be identified;
 - d. Titles or workload information for staff with research leadership roles.
37. This data will be checked by the Director of Research and sent to Deans of the six schools for review and feedback. The feedback will be collated by RIIS for submission to the URP.
38. The URP will convene in June (following submission of the Code of Practice) and initially consider this list of staff deemed to have significant responsibility for research.
39. Each current staff member identified through this process will then be contacted and asked to verify the research data and confirm to RIIS.

⁴ REF 2019/01

40. RIIS will collate the final data for consideration by the URP at a meeting early September when the final list of staff with significant responsibility for research will be determined by the URP.
41. The decision will be communicated to the REF Task and Finish Panel, who will review the implementation of the Code of Practice and the equality monitoring data of this stage and will formally endorse the decision.
42. All academic staff members with a teaching and research contract will then be sent an 'outcome letter' by 30 September 2019 which will explain whether or not they have been classed as having significant responsibility for research, and how they may appeal the decision (as outlined in paragraphs 57-62). This deadline will allow integration of responsibilities into the Performance Development Review process for the Academic Year 2019/20. Staff will be sent a final letter in September/October 2020, following the census date, confirming their SRR status.
43. Discussions will take place between individuals who are given significant responsibility for research and their School management to ensure that they are given time and support to deliver their research objectives; each individual will need to demonstrate that they are meeting the criteria on an ongoing basis through achievement of these research objectives in the annual PDR process.

Managing conflicts of interest and improper influence

44. Members of the URP will declare any conflicts of interest or possible improper influence at each meeting and will not be involved in the decision making where such a conflict or influence exists. An improper influence includes all interests which an objective and fair minded observer would consider could improperly influence a URP member's judgement.
45. The evaluation of the eligibility of URP members to be classified as having significant responsibility for research will be made by the Vice-Chancellor with advice from the Director of Research and the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development. These three decision makers are not eligible for REF submission in their own right, so there is no conflict of interest in their decision making with regard to a URP member.

If the approach to identifying staff with significant responsibility for research varies, according to variation in employment practices by UOA, codes of practice should outline each process used.

46. The University's Code of Practice is appropriate for all UOAs.

Codes of practice should describe stages of approval (diagrams, schematics & timelines might be included as an aid).

47. Appendix 3 provides a flow diagram of this process.

Development of process(es).

How processes to be followed have been consulted on and agreed with staff representative groups

48. The development of the process for identifying staff with significant responsibility formed part of the Code of Practice consultation. The processes are described in Table 3 earlier in the document, and is reproduced here for convenience (overleaf).

Table 3. REF2021 Code of Practice communication timeline

Draft COP presented to the Research and Innovation Committee	March 2019
Consultation on COP with UCU and UNISON	April 2019
Consultation on the draft Code of Practice with all academic and research staff. The draft Code was put onto the staff intranet, IRIS, and all staff emailed and invited to provide feedback to a dedicated email address. A letter was sent to the home addresses of staff who were absent from work.	April 2019
Content of the email/letter sent out on the all staff news email, and put on the all staff app, WorkVivo, to encourage further engagement and feedback.	April 2019
Equality Impact Assessment stakeholder consultation event	May 2019

How the final agreed processes have been / are being communicated to staff, if different to that described in Part 1: Introduction.

49. The processes are as described in paragraph 26.

Staff, committees and training

Procedures for appointing designated staff and committees / panels responsible for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research (distinguishing between those with advisory and those with decision making roles).

50. The procedures around the accountability of staff and committees/panels were developed by the Director of Research in their capacity for the operational delivery of REF2021 preparations and formed part of the consultation on the Code of Practice. This delivery structure and appointment of individuals to the URP and other panels/groups was considered and approved subject to further work by the University's Senior Leadership Team and Executive in April 2019.
51. Applicants not confirmed as receiving significant responsibility for research status can appeal by submitting a written appeal to the REF Appeals Panel. This panel will comprise the Pro Vice-Chancellor - Place and Engagement, Director of Strategic Planning and the Chief Operating Officer. All individuals are independent from the URP (the associated decision making body). Should there be a case for revisiting the URP decision, the panel will refer the case back to the URP for reconsideration as outlined in Appendix 3.

Information provided should include role descriptions for individuals and terms of reference for committees / panels, modes of operation, and record-keeping procedures, as well as information about where these roles / committees / panels fit into the wider institutional management structure.

52. The structure and governance of Staffordshire University's REF2021 submission is outlined in Appendix 1. REF governance aligns with the formal university committee structure, with the REF Task and Finish Group having operational responsibility for the University REF2021 submission in line with Research England guidance and associated legislative requirements. This group reports into the Research and Innovation Committee, which in turn reports to Academic Board (the highest Committee with overarching responsibility for the academic work of the University). Linkages to University management structures will be via the Deputy Vice-Chancellor reporting to the Senior Leadership Team, with information cascading down from this forum to inform School and Senior Management Teams. Governors will have oversight of REF2021 delivery through Academic Board minutes and directly through the Strategy and Performance Committee which has oversight of REF-related KPIs and RII Strategy delivery.
53. The key duties and responsibilities of each REF2021 panel/committee is outlined in Appendix 2.
54. All designated REF Committees/Panels will be minuted, with minutes retained for the purposes of recording decision making and providing information to potential appeals. Minutes will be shared to parent committees, with data anonymised as appropriate to protect individuals. Records will be retained

electronically on a dedicated Microsoft SharePoint site, with access controlled by the Director of Research and a document retention plan will be developed.

Details of training provided to individuals and committees involved in identifying staff, the timescale for delivery, and content (including how it has been tailored to REF).

55. The staff involved in all the REF panels and committees outlined in Appendix 2 will receive mandatory training on REF2021, the contents of this Code of Practice and how to embed equality requirements by Autumn 2019. This will be overseen by the University's Chief Operating Officer, who has Executive-level responsibility for all HR, Equality and Diversity matters.

Appeals.

How the appeals process has been communicated to staff.

56. An outcome letter will be issued to all academic staff on a teaching and research contract as to whether they will be deemed to have significant responsibility for research (as outlined in Appendix 3). This letter will detail the appeals process available to all staff if they are discontented with the outcome.

Details of the process, including how cases are submitted, eligible grounds for appeal.

57. In the event of an appeal, an individual should submit a letter to the Appeals Panel within 10 working days of receiving the outcome letter from the URP. It should set out the grounds for appeal and provide any supporting evidence. The grounds for appeal are:

- Procedural irregularity, or
- Information not known at the time that may materially change the judgement made by the URP.

58. Appeals will be heard by the REF Appeals Panel, which will comprise:

- Pro Vice-Chancellor - Place and Engagement (Chair)
- Chief Operating Officer
- Director of Strategic Planning

59. The REF Appeals Panel will reach one of two possible judgements:

- Appeal upheld and the case is referred back to the URP for reconsideration
- Appeal not upheld. No further action will be taken.

Details of those involved in hearing any appeals (demonstrating their independence from earlier decision processes), timescales, and how decisions are being communicated to staff.

60. As is stated above, appeals will be heard by the REF Appeals Panel which will comprise the Pro Vice-Chancellor - Place and Engagement, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Strategic Planning. None of these people will have been involved in any decisions made by the University REF panel or Output Selection Panels.

61. Appeals will be heard within ten working days of being made, where possible. The panel will make a judgement on whether the appeal needs to be considered again by URP, they do not issue a judgement on significant responsibility itself. If the outcome is upheld, the University REF Panel will reconsider the initial decision within ten working days, if possible.

62. The reconsideration of the individual's status will be communicated to the staff member by email at the earliest opportunity.

Equality impact assessment.

How an EIA has been used to inform the identification of staff and make final decisions.

63. We have used the Staffordshire University Equality Impact Assessment template and guidance document to develop our Code of Practice and a stakeholder Equality Impact Assessment engagement meeting is a part of the Code of Practice consultation. This enabled us to identify those members of staff that might potentially be disadvantaged through the REF2021 process and to identify and implement safeguards.

64. We have worked with key stakeholders to ensure that our processes are inclusive for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research and 'independent' researchers, along with how we will make

final selections of outputs to ensure that those staff with circumstances which have impacted on their ability to research productively through the assessment period are not disadvantaged through this process and the output selection is representative of our staff base.

65. Through the consultation outlined in Table 3, we have ensured that this Code of Practice has, as far as possible, been co-developed and co-owned by all key stakeholders.

66. We will undertake ongoing equality monitoring throughout the REF2021 process, which will compare the personal protected characteristics relevant to REF of:

- the academic body as a whole, compared to those currently engaged in research, based on the PDR objectives for 2018/19.
- the academic body as a whole, against those given 'significant responsibility for research' following the process described in this section, and use this to investigate and address any differential outcomes or underlying inequality, if any is found to be present.

The data from this monitoring will be sent to the REF Task and Finish Group for review and will be made available to the Appeals panel as required.

Part 3: Determining research independence.

Policies and procedures.

Criteria used for determining staff who meet the definition of an independent researcher, including information about how the criteria are being applied.

67. Staffordshire University is using the criteria set out in REF 2019/01 guidance to determine if a member of staff is an independent researcher. An independent researcher is defined in paragraphs 131-133 of the 'Guidance on Submissions' as "an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme". All 'category A' staff on 'teaching and research' contracts who engage in research undertake self-directed research, rather than carry out the research of another individual. As such, these staff are considered independent researchers.

68. 12 staff were submitted as 'research only' in the 2017/18 HESA return and these staff (plus any new) will be considered by the University REF Panel (URP) to determine research independence. Research, Innovation and Impact Services, HR and Planning and Business Intelligence will provide the URP with information relating to the following criteria to inform their decision:

- Acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.
- Leading a discrete and substantial work package of a large externally funded research project, which is equivalent to a principal investigator role on a responsive mode grant.
- Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.

How decisions are being made and communicated to staff, including timescale.

69. Following the review outlined in paragraph 68 and endorsement by the REF Task and Finish Group, the Director of Research will send the researcher a decision letter which will explain whether or not the person is classed as an independent researcher. This letter will also set out and how the researcher may appeal the decision.

70. Decisions will be communicated to the University REF Panel, who has responsibility for oversight of the implementation of the Code of Practice.

Codes of practice should describe stages of approval (diagrams, schematics & timelines might be included as an aid).

71. Appendix 4 outlines the process of approval.

Staff, committees and training.

(Where such staff and committees are the same as those outlined in Part 2, institutions can cross-refer to that section)

Procedures for identifying designated staff and committees / panels responsible for determining research independence (distinguishing between those with advisory and those with decision making roles).

72. Determining research independence will be considered by the University REF Panel (URP). The staff, committees and training elements for this element are therefore outlined in Part 2, paragraph 55.

Appeals.

(Where the process follows that outlined in Part 2, institutions can cross-refer to that section)

How the appeals process has been communicated to staff.

Details of the process, including how cases are submitted, eligible grounds for appeal.

Details of those involved in hearing any appeals (demonstrating their independence from earlier decision processes), timescales and how decisions are being communicated to staff.

73. Appeals will be considered by the Appeals Panel as outlined in Part 2 (paragraphs 56-62).

Equality impact assessment.

How an EIA has been used to inform the identification of staff and make final decisions.

74. An assessment of the impact of the process for identifying those research staff who are research independent compared to the characteristics of all 'research only' staff, will be undertaken if this is likely to yield statistically-significant results that could be used to inform an action plan.

75. However, the numbers involved are likely to be small and so it may not be possible to undertake any statistically meaningful analysis.

76. The data from this monitoring will be sent to the REF Task and Finish Group for review and will be made available to the Appeals panel as required.

Part 4: Selection of outputs

Codes should address the following:

Policies and procedures.

Details of procedures that have been developed to ensure the fair and transparent selection of outputs, including the HEI's approach to submitting outputs by former staff, including those made redundant

Information should be provided about the processes for selecting outputs have been developed and the rationale for adopted methods.

77. Research excellence is at the heart of the University, central to its vision and strategy of being the Connected and Digital University. The three pillars of its strategic plan, namely Innovative and Applied Learning, Connecting Communities and our Talented People, are underpinned by research excellence.

78. In line with this vision and strategy, the University has put in place inclusive processes that will support the further development of research excellence at Staffordshire University and enable it to maximise the quality of the outputs it submits to each Unit of Assessment (UOA).

79. To ensure that all staff had the opportunity to contribute to REF in a fair, transparent and inclusive way, in May 2017 all academic staff were sent an email from the DVC and the then Director of Research which encouraged them to put forward for review outputs they considered to be high quality. The email stated: *'We are asking all academic staff to partake in this stock take exercise to make sure that we capture as fully as possible all the research activity being undertaken in the University and the breadth of work we*

do as an institution.'

80. These outputs went through an internal review and scoring process. As part of our calibration, a selection of outputs was submitted for review by external advisors who (in the vast majority of cases) were former REF2014 or REF2008 panel members. A range of outputs were selected by UOA leads (supported by RIIS) to benchmark and gauge the effectiveness of our internal calibration of quality, with a view to the University submitting the strongest possible outputs for REF2021.
81. Following the implementation of the Code of Practice and definition of individuals with significant responsibility for research, formal output selection will occur through Output Selection Panels (OSP) as outlined in Appendix 2d. There will be one OSP per UOA to be submitted. The OSPs will have responsibility for determining the output selection and allocation within each UOA. They will review potential individuals and associated outputs through the following process:
 - Outputs will be selected from the University's repository, STORE
 - Outputs will be reviewed by two individuals and a score given, based on REF scoring criteria
 - External calibration considered – providing a calibration of internal grading of originality, significance and rigour from a perspective of the different panels.
 - Strongest outputs selected
 - OA compliance considered
82. Output selection will be overseen by the REF Task and Finish Group to:
 - ensure the process has been followed
 - the outputs selected are representative of the unit
 - consider outcomes from the staff circumstance panel
 - review equality monitoring data
83. Feedback will be provided to Research Centres, clusters and groups on the outcome of the quality review of outputs to support the personal development of researchers and their publication strategies.
84. The outputs submitted will be the top ranked 'n' outputs, where 'n' is the number needed for that UOA, subject to the requirements that:
 - Each person must submit at least one output, subject to the removal of the 'minimum of one' criteria where compliant with eligibility requirements for staff circumstances. Therefore, if a person's highest ranked output is not in the top 'n', their best output will be included and the lowest ranking output in the top 'n' removed.
 - Each person can submit no more than five outputs, so if the top 'n' includes more than five from one person, and it is not possible to allocate the extra (i.e. those above five) to another author who is also in the submission, then these extra output(s) will be removed and the replaced with the best output(s) not in the original 'n'.
 - Qualitative comments will be considered in making final decisions on output selection when choosing between two or more outputs with the same score.
 - The UOA's outputs must be compliant with the Open Access rules – where the initial 'n' outputs do not meet the rules, the lowest ranked output(s) will be removed and replaced with the best OA-compliant output that was not in the original 'n'.
85. Once the minimum of one criterion for all staff to be submitted to the UOA has been met, the University will consider outputs from former as well as current members of staff on an equal basis; with regard to former members of staff, it expects that any outputs it submits will come only from people who have chosen to resign or leave under a voluntary severance scheme.
86. In making the final choice of outputs, it will also consider the potential benefits to other parts of the submission, e.g. the environment statement, of ensuring that all other things being equal, the choice of outputs demonstrates the vitality of the research environment in the UOA and does not necessarily reflect a uniform contribution of outputs from researchers across the UOA output pool.
87. Decision making criteria will be consistent across all UOA panels through the involvement of RIIS staff and equality monitoring will be conducted to review impact on output selection.

Codes of practice should describe stages of approval (diagrams, schematics & timelines might be included as an aid).

88. Appendix 5 flow chart details the relevant stages of approval.

Staff, committees and training.

(Where such staff and committees are the same as those outlined in Parts 2 or 3, institutions can cross-refer to that section)

Procedures for identifying designated staff and committees / panels responsible for selecting outputs (distinguishing between those with advisory and those with decision making roles).

Information provided should include role descriptions for individuals and terms of reference for committees / panels, modes of operation, and record-keeping procedures, as well as information about where these roles / committees / panels fit into the wider institutional management structure.

89. The people involved in making final decisions about the outputs to be submitted to each UOA are outlined in Appendix 2d. These individuals will be supported by RIIS staff who will gather and analyse potential outputs, provide guidance on REF2021 guidelines, input feedback from external reviewers and provide consistency of approach across the panels.

90. Decisions on which outputs will be submitted will be reported to the REF Task and Finish Group for review along with associated equality monitoring data, and from there to the Research and Innovation Committee. The REF Task and Finish group has ultimate responsibility for endorsement of output selection via governance of the implementation of the Code of Practice.

91. All designated REF Committees/Panels will be formally recorded, with minutes retained for the purposes of recording decision making and providing information to potential appeals. Minutes will be shared to parent committees, with data anonymised as appropriate to protect individuals. Records will be retained electronically, with access controlled by the Director of Research and a document retention plan will be developed in accordance with the GDPR.

Details of training provided to individuals and committees involved in the output selection process, the timescale for delivery, and content (including how it has been tailored to REF).

92. All staff involved in the REF panels and committees outlined in Appendix 2 will receive mandatory training on REF2021, the contents of this Code of Practice and how to embed equality requirements, by Autumn 2019. This will be overseen by the University's Chief Operating Officer, who has Executive-level responsibility for all HR, Equality and Diversity matters.

93. All staff making final decisions on outputs (Appendix 2d) have received training on REF2021, this Code of Practice and EDI training to seek to remove the potential for bias in the selection of outputs.

94. The key part of the selection of outputs, i.e. the assessment of the quality of those outputs, will have been undertaken for the vast majority of those outputs by panelists from REF2014 and/or RAE2008. The University has not trained REF2014/RAE2008 panel members whose reviews of outputs were used to calibrate its internal reviews, but rather is relying on the training they will have received when panel members, together with their experience and expertise. They will receive a standardised briefing on the Staffordshire University Code of Practice and expectations.

95. The procedures for selecting outputs to be submitted in each UOA, and the staff involved in doing so have been approved by the University's Executive and Senior Leadership Team.

Disclosure of circumstances.

Procedures for taking into account staff whose circumstances have affected their ability to research productively throughout the period in relation to the unit's total output requirement.

Procedures for taking into account the effect of circumstances that have had an exceptional effect on the ability of an individual staff member to research productively throughout the period so that they do not have the required minimum of one output.

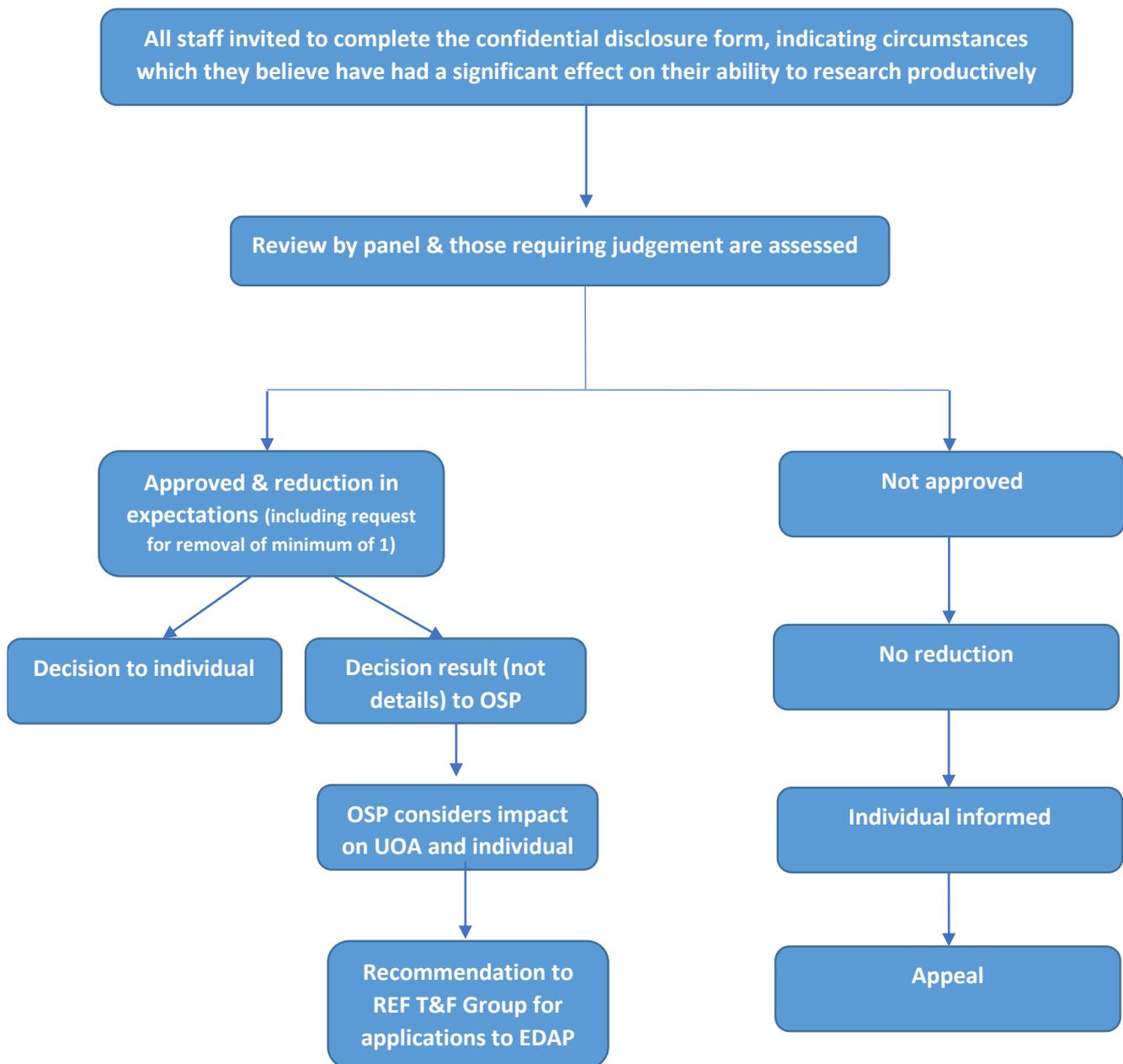
For both of the above cases, procedures for:

staff to disclose circumstances in a confidential manner

units to adjust expectations about staff contribution to the output pool, as appropriate

96. For the convenience of all colleagues who may have circumstances which have affected their ability to research productively during this REF period (i.e. 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2020), the full guidance relating individual circumstances is reproduced in Appendix 7 of this Code of Practice. The full guidance in its original form is Annex L of the 'Guidance on Submissions', available at: https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf
97. To ensure that the University's submission reflects the work of all staff who have significant responsibility for research, the University will ensure that it takes into account all eligible circumstances which individuals have declared to it and which have had an effect on any individual's ability to research productively during the REF period. This applies to all staff, including those on fixed term or fractional contracts.
98. All category A staff and 'research only' staff will be invited by email (or letter, for those absent) in June 2019 to submit a confidential disclosure form, modelled on the template produced by Research England, to the University's REF Circumstances Panel. The University will do all that it reasonably can to ensure that individuals are encouraged to disclose circumstances, but disclosure will be voluntary and confidential to the REF Circumstances Panel. The email/letter will ask that responses are sent before either 30 June 2019 or 15 September 2019 – the latter deadline ensures that decisions made will inform workload planning in the 2019/20 academic performance management process.
99. Further deadlines will be set for 2020 to ensure subsequent circumstances are captured, with the panel convening as necessary.
100. The forms will be stored in a secure online portal, and access to the forms given only to the members of the University's REF Circumstances Panel (RCP); the DVC (Chair), Director of Research, Assistant Director of HR, Head of Equality and Diversity and Head of Research, Environment and Development. The panel will meet in July 2019 and late September 2019 to consider forms submitted by the relevant deadline.
101. The RCP will consider each submitted form, and make an assessment of the appropriate reduction in outputs for each individual.
102. Information of decisions on reductions in outputs (but not the confidential reasons for them) will be given to the Output Selection Panel.
103. The individual will be informed of the outcome by letter, within ten working days. If the circumstances are such that the judgement of the panel is that the individual should be submitted to the REF without the minimum of one output, the individual will be informed that the University will be requesting this of Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) by March 2020 and that when this request is granted (or rejected), the individual will be informed of the outcome.
104. The Output Selection Panels will have the responsibility to monitor the cumulative effect of circumstances on an individuals' ability to research productively and the resulting impact on a UOA. If they find the impact is significant, the Output Selection Panel will submit a recommendation to the REF Task and Finish Group for a request for a reduction in total outputs required by that UOA (in accordance with the procedures laid out by Research England in Autumn 2019).
105. The REF Task and Finish Group will consider this request and if approved the University will submit a request to Research England for a reduction in total outputs for the specific UOA.
106. The process is described in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The process for assessing the effect of individual circumstances at an individual and Unit of Assessment level.



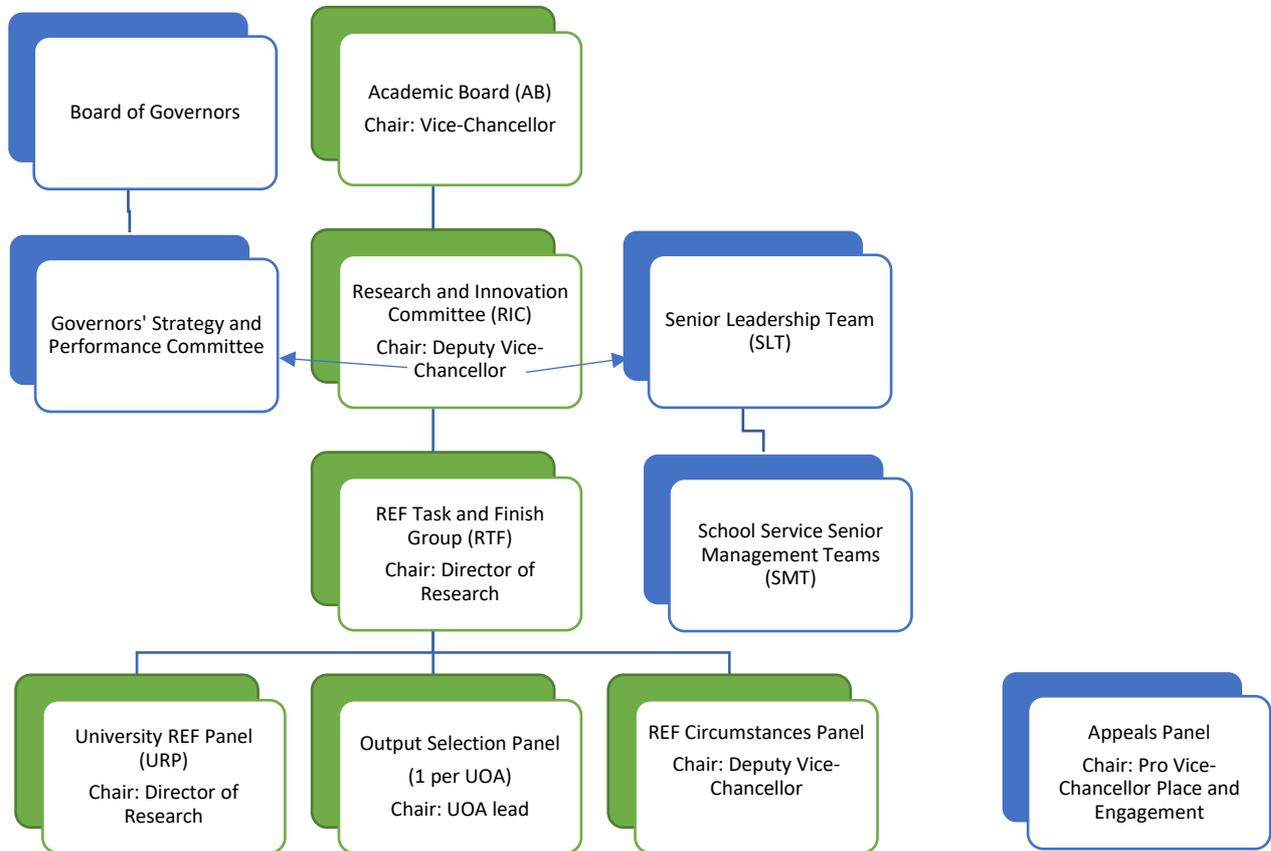
Equality impact assessment.

How an EIA on the spread of outputs across staff (in relation to their protected characteristics) has been used to inform the final selection of outputs to be submitted.

107. We have used an Equality Impact Assessment to inform the process for selecting outputs, and in doing so sought to remove bias within the process.
108. We sought to remove bias in output assessment by seeking assessment for all (or almost all, where complete external assessment was not possible) outputs considered for submission by external assessors who were panel members in REF2014 and/or RAE2008. We have asked our assessors to use REF2014 criteria when assessing outputs, and to give each output a score and additionally to give qualitative comments about each output.
109. We have sought to remove bias in the final selection of outputs by having clear criteria for selecting outputs; those with the highest scores are selected, and where two or more outputs have the same score then the qualitative comments will be considered, together with ensuring that the selection of outputs maximises the evidence of the vitality and sustainability of the research environment.
110. Once we have selected the outputs using the unbiased criteria above, we will undertake equality monitoring to establish if our processes gave us a spread of outputs which reflects our academic staff. This will be reviewed by the REF Task and Finish Group to identify any potential issues in the process of selection. The results will also be considered to inform the development of our research environment to ensure all staff have equality of opportunity to develop high quality outputs. If this indicates any lack of diversity, then we will put in place measures to improve the position in the next REF.

Part 5: Appendices

Appendix 1 – REF Management and Governance Structure



Appendix 2 - Committee and Panel Responsibilities

2a. Research and Innovation Committee

Role description	<p>To advise the Academic Board on matters relating to Research and Innovation.</p> <p>To oversee the University's strategic approach to Research and Innovation, including the institutional approach to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and any future research quality assessment exercises.</p> <p>To oversee the development and implementation of institutional policy, procedure and guidance in respect of Research Governance, Environment, Ethics, Annual Monitoring of Research Provision, Regulations, the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), Doctoral and Early Career Researcher development, and to make recommendations to the Academic Board.</p>
Decision making responsibilities	Strategic endorsement of REF2021 submission and elements outlined below in REF Task and Finish Group.
Membership	<p>Chair: Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Ex officio: Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor - Place and Engagement, Director of Research, Director of Employer Partnerships, Director of Strategic Planning, Head of Graduate School, Chair of Research Ethics Committee, Head of the Professoriate, Dean (or representative) of each School, Librarian with Research Portfolio, Representative from Digital Services, Representative from Estates, Representative from ECRs, Member nominated by the Students' Union,</p> <p>Officer support: a member from RIIS</p>

2b. REF Task and Finish Group

Role description	<p>Monitoring guidance and information from Research England relating to REF2021 and considering the implication for the University</p> <p>Monitoring the compliance of the University's outputs against the University's Open Access policy and REF2021 rules on Open Access;</p> <p>Providing Operational oversight and governance of REF2021 project management activities in line with the Code of Practice.</p> <p>Advise RIC on the implications of REF policy and where appropriate recommend relevant interventions related to the research environment and achievement of associated University KPIs.</p>
Decision making responsibilities	<p>Approve and endorse sub panel decisions on output selection, SRR confirmation, independent researcher status, staff circumstances and requests for small unit exemption (in line with Code of Practice principles).</p> <p>Approve UOA composition and content of final REF2021 submission.</p> <p>Endorse UOA submissions for environment and impact.</p> <p>Review of Equality Impact Assessments and Equality monitoring data.</p> <p>Oversee REF Risk Log.</p>
Membership	<p>Director of Research (Chair), Chair of the Professoriate</p> <p>Head of Research Environment and Development, Research Policy and Governance Manager, Research Impact Manager, Research and Digital Services Librarian, UOA leads to which the University is intending to submit</p> <p>Ex officio: Deputy Vice-Chancellor</p>

	In attendance: Assistant Director of HR and OD, Head of Equality and Diversity, Head of Planning and Business Intelligence, Head of Corporate Reporting Officer support: Research Services Coordinator (RIIS)
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2c. University REF Panel

Role description	Implementation of the University Code of Practice with regards to identification of staff with significant responsibility for research and the identification of independent researchers.
Decision making responsibilities	Consideration of identification of staff with significant responsibility for research in REF2021 Determining whether staff meet the definition of an independent researcher
Membership	Director of Research (Chair) Unit of Assessment Leads Assistant Director of HR Ex officio: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Officer support: Research Services Coordinator (RIIS)

2d. Output Selection Panels

Role description	UOA coordination of all elements of UOA REF2021 submission – 1 panel per UOA
Decision making responsibilities	Implementation of output review process in line with Code of Practice. Finalisation of REF1, REF2, REF3, REF4 and REF5 elements for consideration by REF Task and Finish Group.
Membership	UOA lead (Chair), UOA environment lead, UOA Impact lead, Associate Deans for Research and Enterprise, Director of Research, Research Policy and Governance Manager, Research Services Coordinator.

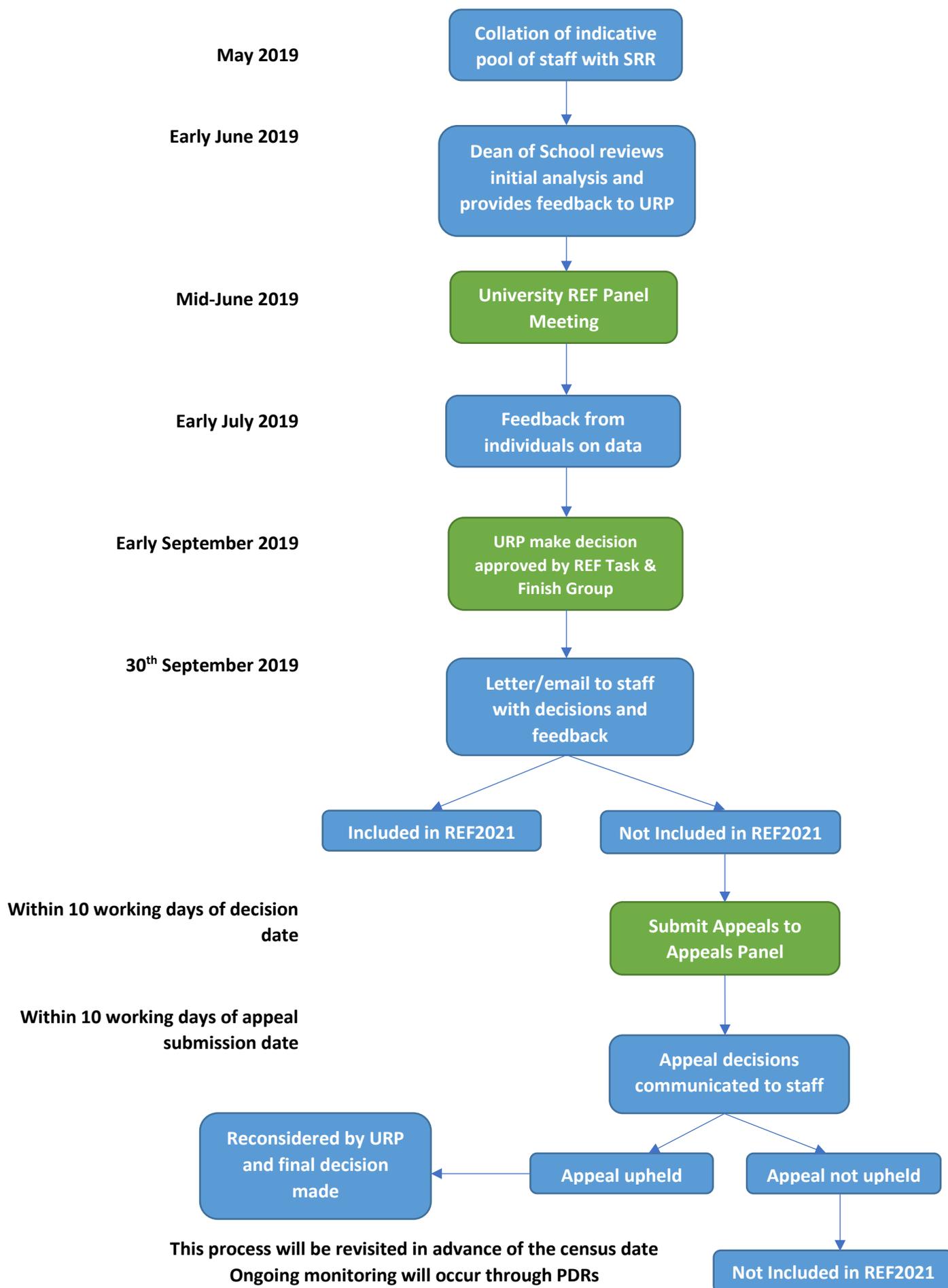
2e. REF Circumstances Panel

Role description	Consideration of self-disclosures of equality-related circumstances and potential associated reductions.
Decision making responsibilities	Decision on appropriate reductions for equality-related circumstances. Reporting to Output Selection Panel on outcomes of decisions (not the subject of decisions).
Membership	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair), Director of Research, Assistant Director of HR, Head of Equality and Diversity and Head of Research Environment and Development.

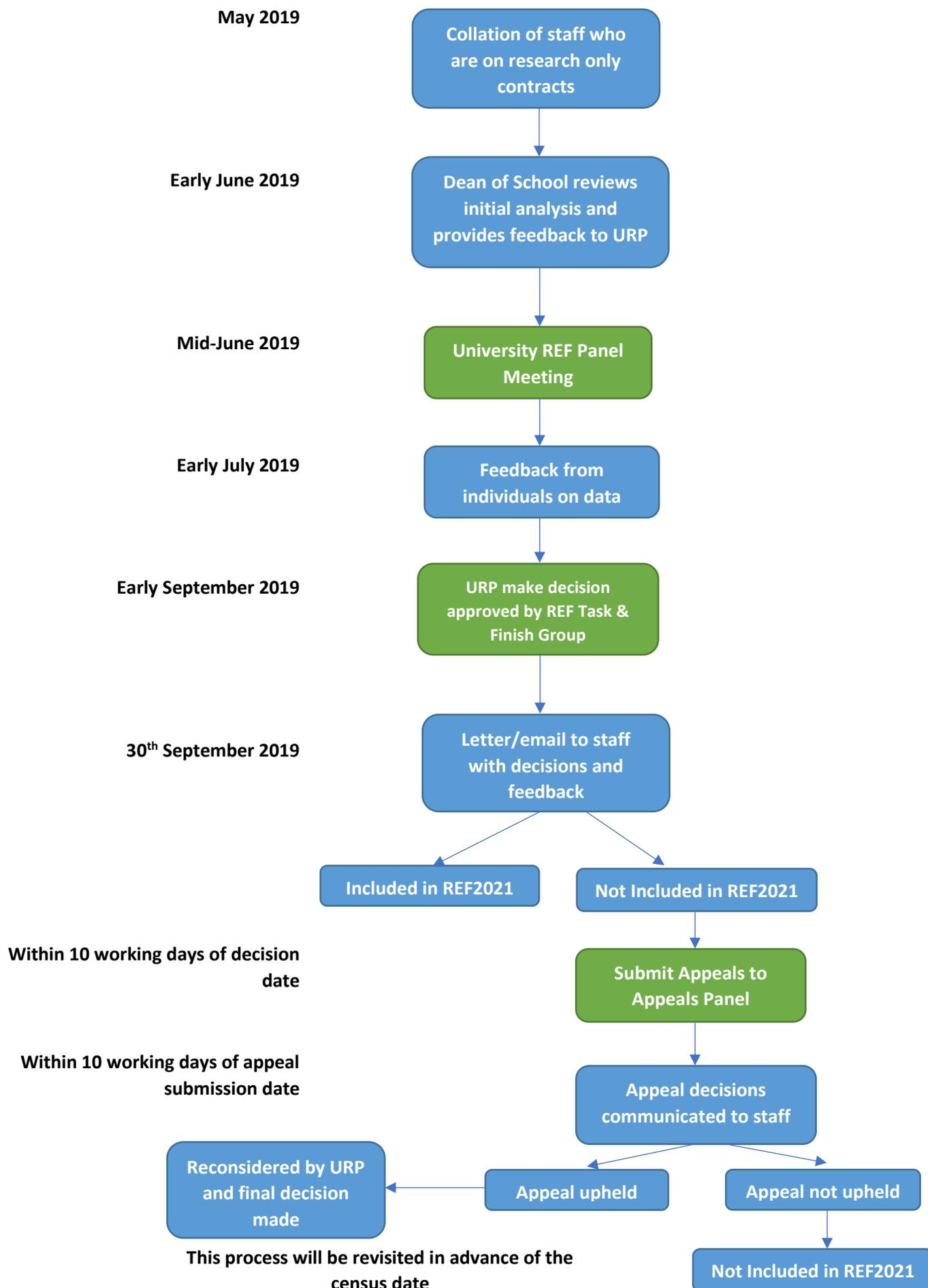
2f. Appeals Panel

Role description	Independent panel to review appeals against decisions made by the University REF Panel, Output Selection Panels, REF circumstances panel.
Decision making responsibilities	Considerations of formally submitted appeals and decision on: Appeals upheld Appeal not upheld Outcome reported to relevant panel.
Membership	Pro Vice-Chancellor - Place and Engagement (Chair), Chief Operating Officer, Director of Strategic Planning. Officer support: Research, Policy and Governance Manager.

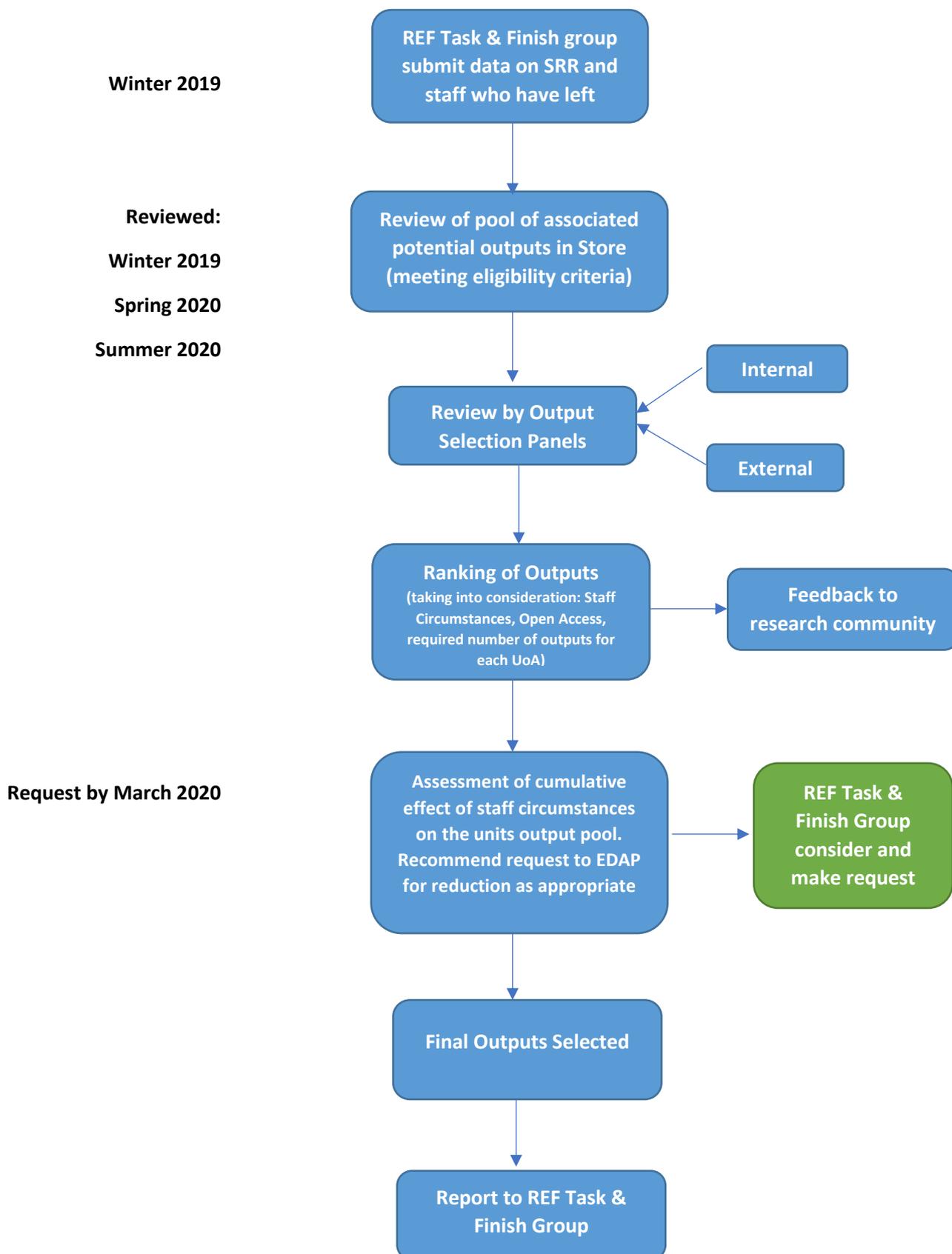
Appendix 3: Process for identifying staff with Significant Responsibility for Research



Appendix 4: Process for identifying research independence



Appendix 5: Process for the Selection of Outputs



This process will be revisited in with additional Output Selection panels added to allow for delays due to Covid-19

Appendix 6: Key individuals and their REF2021 roles

1. The **Vice-Chancellor** chairs Academic Board, University Executive and the Senior Leadership Team.
2. The **Deputy Vice-Chancellor** has executive-level responsibility for research.
3. The **Director of Research** is the most senior manager responsible for research strategy implementation and all operational areas therein. The Director of Research reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
4. The **Unit of Assessment (UOA) Leads** are members of the University's Professoriate with research expertise in academic disciplines relevant to the UOA and will have responsibility for determining output selection for their Unit of Assessment.
5. The **Assistant Director of HR** leads the University's HR team and reports to the Chief Operating Officer.
6. The **Head of Equality and Diversity** has responsibility for the operation of the University's Equality and Diversity Framework and has a strategic role to support inclusion within the REF2021 processes. This post reports to the Chief Operating Officer.
7. The **Pro Vice-Chancellor - Place and Engagement** and **Chief Operating Officer** are members of the University Executive, independent of REF management activities and supporting the Appeals process
8. The **Director of Strategic Planning** is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (reporting to the Chief Operating Officer) and is independent of REF decision making to participate in appeals.
9. RIIS staff will have operational responsibility for the management of the REF2021 submission, namely:
 - **Head of Research Environment and Development**
 - **Research Services Coordinator**
 - **Research Policy and Governance Manager**
 - **Research Impact Manager**

They will have the following duties:

- Project management
- Risk management
- Secretariat and participants on panels
- Data management and coordination
- Cross-university liaison with regards to REF preparation activities
- Policy and strategy advice
- REF2021 regulatory guidance
- Stakeholder consultation
- Impact case study support
- Submission of the final return to Research England

Appendix 7: Equality-related circumstances guidance

taken from https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1092/ref-2019_01-guidance-on-submissions.pdf

additional guidance will also be considered from

<https://www.ref.ac.uk/publications/guidance-on-revisions-to-ref-2021>

1. Given the reduced output requirement for 2021, the tariffs for the defined reductions differ from those set in REF 2014. This is to ensure that a broadly equivalent reduction is given in the context of the submitted output pool, and to ensure that panels receive a sufficient selection of research outputs from each submitted unit upon which to base judgements about the quality of that unit's outputs.

Early career researchers

2. ECRs are defined in the 'Guidance on submissions' (paragraph 148). Table L1 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for ECRs who meet this definition.

Table L1: Early career researchers: Permitted reduction in outputs

Date at which the individual first met the REF definition of an ECR:	Output pool may be reduced by up to:
On or before 31 July 2016	0
Between 1 August 2016 and 31 July 2017 inclusive	0.5
Between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018 inclusive	1
On or after 1 August 2018	1.5

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks

3. Table L2 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside of the HE sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.

Table L2: Secondments or career breaks: Permitted reduction in outputs

Total months absent between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020 due to a staff member's secondment or career break:	Output pool may be reduced by up to:
Fewer than 12 calendar months	0
At least 12 calendar months but less than 28	0.5
At least 28 calendar months but less than 46	1
46 calendar months or more	1.5

4. The allowances in Table L2 are based on the length of the individual's absence or time away from working in HE. They are defined in terms of total months absent from work.
5. As part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5), reduction requests on the basis of part-time working hours should only be made exceptionally. For example, where the FTE of a staff member late in the assessment period does not reflect their average FTE over the period as a whole.

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:
 - a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
 - b. Additional paternity or adoption leave⁵, or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.
7. This approach to reductions for qualifying periods of family-related leave is based on the funding bodies' considered judgement following consultation in the previous REF exercise that the impact of such a period of leave and the arrival of a new child into a family is generally sufficiently disruptive of an individual's research work to justify the specified reduction.
8. While the above reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months, shorter periods of such leave could be taken into account as follows:
 - a. By applying a reduction in outputs where there are additional circumstances, for example where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities.
 - b. By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other circumstances, according to Table L2.
9. Any period of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave⁶ that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions in paragraph 6 above may in individual cases be associated with prolonged constraints on work that justify more than the defined reduction set out. In such cases, the circumstances should be explained in the request.

Combining circumstances

10. Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances that have a defined reduction in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of 1.5 outputs. For each circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.
11. Where Table L1 is combined with Table L2, the period of time since 1 January 2014 up until the individual met the definition of an ECR should be calculated in months, and Table L2 should be applied.
12. When combining circumstances, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously.
13. Where an individual has a combination of circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs and additional circumstances that require a judgement, the institution should explain this in the reduction request so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances. The circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs to be requested should be calculated according to the guidance above (paragraphs 2 to 10).

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

14. In UOAs 1–6, the number of outputs may be reduced by up to one, without penalty in the assessment, for Category A submitted staff who are junior clinical academics. These are defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or its equivalent prior to 31 July 2020.
15. This allowance is made on the basis that the staff concerned are normally significantly constrained in the time they have available to undertake research during the assessment period. Where the individual meets the criteria in paragraph 14, and has had significant additional circumstances – for any of the other reasons set out in the ‘Guidance on submissions’ in paragraph 160 – the institution can make a case for further reductions in the unit reduction request.

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

16. Where staff have had other circumstances during the period (see paragraph 160e. in this ‘Guidance on submissions’ document) – including in combination with any circumstances with a defined reduction in outputs – the institution will need to make a judgement about the effect of the circumstances in terms of the equivalent period of time absent, apply the reductions as set out in Table L2 by analogy, and provide a brief rationale for this judgement.

⁵ ‘Additional paternity or adoption leave’ refers to leave of up to 26 weeks which is taken to care for a child where the person’s spouse, partner or civil partner was entitled to statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave, and has since returned to work. The term ‘additional paternity leave’ is often used to describe this type of leave although it may be taken by parents of either gender. For the purposes of the REF, we refer to this leave as ‘additional paternity or adoption leave’.

⁶ ‘Shared parental leave’ refers to leave of up to 50 weeks which can be shared by parents having a baby or adopting a child. This can be taken in blocks, or all in one go

Institutional Approval

Name:

Position:

Date: