UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR REF 2021

SEPTEMBER 2020

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The University of Cumbria (UOC) places great value on the wide range of advanced scholarship and research activity undertaken by our academic community. This supports excellence in teaching and learning on our programmes and develops high quality enterprise activity including knowledge exchange, consultancy and collaborative projects with partners. UOCs support for research and our submission to research audit (Research Excellence Framework 2021 - REF2021) contributes to our Strategic Plan (Aim 5) in 'equipping and enabling our staff to succeed, and celebrating success'.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure that activities in the support of staff for our submission to REF2021 meet our strategic aims, equality obligations, and that principles of transparency, consistency, accountability, and inclusivity are reflected at every stage throughout the process. Though our academic staff are on a national academic contract (including responsibility for teaching and research), many staff are primarily engaged in advanced scholarship activity. This Code of Practice therefore outlines our process for identification of staff with 'significant responsibility for research', and the selection of outputs for REF2021.

The Code will be submitted to Research England by 7 June 2019, to be approved by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP). Codes that are not approved can be revised and resubmitted by the final deadline, and must be in place to submit to REF2021. Codes will be published on the REF2021 website in December 2019.

UOC's Code of Practice for REF2014, and guidance for REF2021, has helped to shape and inform this document. Moreover, we have implemented new working structures since the previous exercise, including REF Development Groups with open membership, and a REF Steering Group - ensuring broad institutional representation and input. This has been further reinforced by a communications plan, a detailed consultation and development phase, training plans for key decision makers, Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and progression through the committee structure to ensure that staff agree on the institutional approach.

1.2 Code of Practice - Relationship to Institutional Strategies for Research

UOC's three-year **Strategic Plan – 'Enriching People through Place'** - builds on the achievements of the last decade to position the institution as a provider of HE for Cumbria and a thriving, lead player in delivering professional higher-level learning to meet the demands of an ever evolving workforce and emerging markets. This Code supports the strategic plan by building research communities, highlighting excellent outputs, and providing recognition for the research of our staff.

The **Research, Innovation & Enterprise Strategy** promotes our nationally and internationally recognised research, scholarship, innovation and knowledge exchange that enables positive change for individuals and communities, with global reach. By building and utilising staff expertise, the strategy ensures all students experience an academic culture that is research informed, vital and challenging. UOC's research centres, centres of excellence and collaborative partnerships facilitate growth of reputation, influence and impact.

The **Code of Practice for Research** supports these strategies by setting out principles of good conduct for research which employees and students are expected to adhere to. It specifically covers expectations, best practice, and sets out our position on research misconduct, whether accidental or deliberate, and processes for reporting, investigation and sanctions. This Code demonstrates our commitment to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (UUK, 2012) - a national framework for good research conduct and governance.

The **HR Excellence in Research** (HREIR) award was received in 2016 and recognises UOC's commitment to support the growth and career development of researchers, with the aim of improving the quantity, quality and impact of research undertaken. This was recently retained at the two-year review point and is subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

1.3 Code of Practice - Relationship to Institutional Strategies for Equality and Diversity

Institutional Policies – Equality and Diversity

UOC is an Athena Swan and Equality Challenge Unit member, a Disability Confident and Mindful employer, and Stonewall Diversity Champion. An **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Plan (2017-2021)** has objectives linked to the Annual Operating Plan, and is supported by an EDI Steering Group chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Director of Student & Staff Services) - also a member of the REF Steering Group. Broader membership of the EDI Steering Group is representative of departments and services, and the terms of reference are in appendix 8.

The equality objectives demonstrate our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all our staff and students, who underpin the work that we will carry out until 2021 in terms of our equality agenda. The university is committed to producing an annual EDI Report, alongside an annual Gender Pay Gap Report and Equal Pay Audit, which is completed every two years, to monitor EDI data and themes, across the characteristics and other relevant groups. As well as meeting our legal obligations in alignment with the Equality Act 2010 and related Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), we seek to adopt good practice in providing an environment where all our students and staff feel welcome and can fulfil their potential.

Overall, UOC is committed to:

- **Advancing equality of opportunity** - We believe in treating everyone with equal dignity and respect, valuing particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity and supporting those who traditionally have fewer opportunities.
- **Valuing and celebrating diversity** - We embrace diversity and recognise the valuable contribution made by all our students and staff and the positive impact that this has on our success.
- **Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** - We will not tolerate illegal discrimination on the grounds of gender, gender identity, marital status, civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, religion or belief, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity or any other grounds. Neither will we tolerate any form of bullying or harassing behaviour.
- **Promoting good relations -** We encourage students and staff to learn from each other, share experiences and opinions, and challenge each other in a safe environment, adopting a constructive and positive approach.
- **Removing barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their potential -** We are committed to creating and sustaining an inclusive learning experience for our students and a positive and supportive working environment for our staff and no-one will receive less favourable treatment and everyone will be given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

1.4 Addressing principles of Transparency, Consistency, Accountability, Inclusivity in Demonstrating Fairness

Transparency: Our REF2021 processes have demonstrated transparency throughout each stage, with opportunities for all staff involvement regularly publicised during the assessment period. Staff have been made aware of the draft Code of Practice, and the general principles within them, prior to, and during a formal engagement and consultation phase. Feedback has been regularly incorporated into the Code and discussed at the REF Development Groups and Steering Group. See section 1.6 and appendix 4 for our programme for making staff aware of the Code, and explaining this clearly.

Consistency: Our REF2021 governance principles are consistent across the institution. In regards to identifying staff with significant responsibility for research and research independence, we have provided full justifications, and implemented these effectively. To manage this, and support decision-making, we have utilised the working structures, as outlined in appendix 1.

Accountability: The various responsibilities for implementing our REF2021 submission are clearly defined in appendix 1. This includes i) determining research independence, ii) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, and iii) selecting outputs for REF submissions. Training plans for those in these roles are outlined in 1.7, and terms of references for groups has been provided in appendices 2. and 3.

Inclusivity: Our REF2021 process will be guided by the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2017), and will impartially identify all staff who are independent researchers, all staff with significant responsibility for research, and the excellent research produced by staff across all protected groups.

1.5 Update on Actions since REF 2014

<u>REF Steering Group, Subject Related REF Development Groups, Appeals and Individual Circumstances Panels</u>

UOC intends to build on the significant achievements made in REF2014, and has developed working structures to plan for REF2021. The institution received Research Degree Awarding Powers in April 2019. To support accountability, this Code identifies who will be involved in the staff identification process, decision making, and the relevant training undertaken. Terms of reference are provided in appendix 2 and 3.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) chairs the **REF Steering Group -** the principal decision making body for staff identification and output selection. This group has responsibility for UOC's REF2021 submission timetable, adherence to equality, diversity and inclusion principles, and for implementing outcomes from staff appeals (see 2.15).

Seven **REF Development Groups** are Unit of Assessment (UOA) specific, have an open membership for academic staff, and represent the main advisory body. Groups undertake initial analysis of the quality of outputs, and write the draft environment statement and impact case studies for consideration by the REF Steering Group. Groups have a minimum of one 'lead' to ensure that appropriate communication and feedback is given to individuals at each stage and that they are made aware of the appeals and individual circumstances process. The overall academic structure is in appendix 5.

The **REF Appeals Panel** is entirely independent of the Steering and Development Groups, and will consider appeals and inform the Steering Group accordingly. Appeals can only be made on the basis that the institution has not adhered to its Code of Practice, or that staff selection decisions have been based on inaccurate data.

The **REF Individual Circumstances Panel** will consider all applications in confidence, using the pro-forma provided by REF. Since REF2014, and informed by completed Equality Impact Assessments (EIA), UOC has introduced the **'MyHR'** online portal with a 'diversity' tab to voluntarily declare a protected characteristic. This data has been used to prepare EIAs for REF2021 and identify potential impacts on equality and diversity.

Furthermore, all members of these groups have undertaken UOC's mandatory equality and diversity training modules. Members of the REF Steering Group (which includes REF Development Group Leads), Appeals Panel, and Individual Circumstances panels have also undertaken REF-specific training (see training plan in section 1.7). For further details on the roles and responsibilities of these REF groups, see appendices 1, 2 and 3, and appendix 7 for broader actions since 2014, including research mentoring, research centres and groups, open access, research development programme, summer school and the activity database.
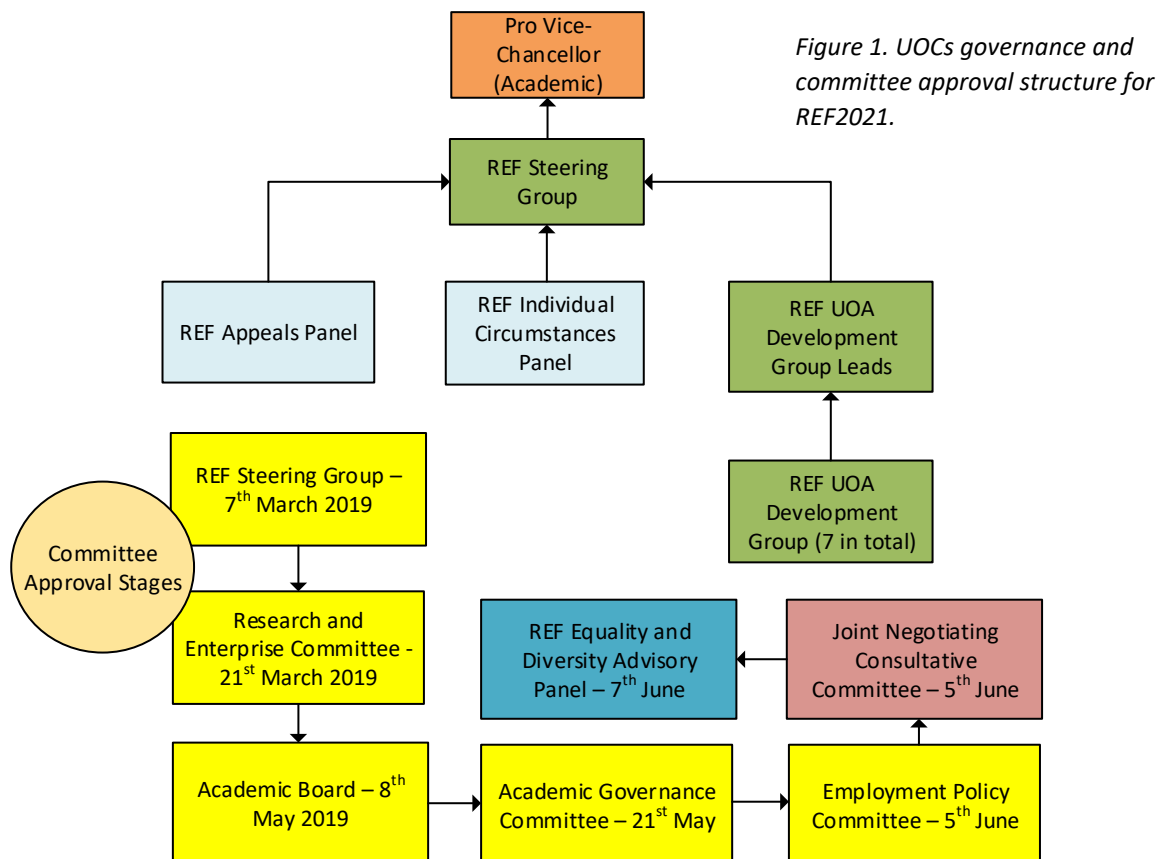
Figure 1. UOCs governance and committee approval structure for REF2021.

1.6 Communication of the Code to staff across the institution

This Code of Practice has been disseminated widely to all eligible staff members at the University. Additional details and timings regarding communication are provided in appendix 4.

- University staff have been consulted and engaged with regarding the code's development, including the sharing of progress at staff conferences.
- Code of Practice specific focus groups (open to all academic staff) have been held across each of our five campuses, with union representatives also present where available.
- The final draft of the Code of Practice was published on the University's intranet (StaffHub) between 12th April and 3rd May for final comments, and amendments prior to approval at Academic Board.
- Presentation of the Code at Research and Enterprise Committee, Academic Governance Committee and the Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee. The Code was also sent via email correspondence to the Employment Policy Committee.
- Hard copies of the Code (including those printed in alternative formats, if requested) are available from the Research Office, on request.
- All staff have been made aware of the Code through email briefings, and electronic communication tools. The main communication tool for all staff regarding REF will be email and StaffHub (staff intranet).
- Academic staff away from work have been kept updated by letter during the engagement and consultation phase and again once the final Code has been agreed.
- This Code will be published on the external facing website once approved by REF.
- The results of academic staff identification decisions, appeals and feedback will be communicated on an individual basis.
- Terms of Reference for the REF Steering Group and REF Development Groups are available on StaffHub.
- On-going dialogue will be held with members of academic staff under consideration in order to manage the iterative process of development towards REF submission. This will include helping academic staff to identify their readiness for submission and prioritisation of individual workload.

1.7 Training Plan

All staff on our REF Steering Group, Appeals and Individual Circumstances Panels as well as the REF Development Group Leads, are required to undertake the following training plan:

Completion of mandatory training modules, including:

- **Unconscious bias** - This module explains how to overcome unconscious bias to improve decision making and professional relationships, and to create more open, inclusive and effective organisations.

- **Diversity in the Workplace -** Introducing the concepts of diversity, equality and equal opportunities, this training covers all aspects of The Equality Act 2010. Stereotyping, prejudice, bullying and harassment and legal liability are explored in addition to challenging unacceptable behaviour.

- **Inclusive, Cohesive and Safe Universities -** This Prevent training course supports, and provides evidence of implementation, of the Prevent Duty in the prevention of extremism and radicalisation by focusing on the safeguarding of students and helping to identify any areas for improvement. The course also supports staff to more effectively recognise, manage and implement practical responses to support safeguarding work and in preventing extremism and radicalisation.

- **Recruitment and Selection –** This module provides staff with practical guidance on key aspects of how to attract and recruit the best people using the University's recruitment and selection processes.

- **Safeguarding -** This module equips staff with the confidence to deal with safeguarding issues, recognise signs of neglect and abuse, to know the steps necessary to report these issues, and empower staff with the knowledge and tools they need to get support or take action.

Completion of REF-specific face to face training, undertaken by UOC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, covering:

- The Equality Act 2010 in the context of REF2021
- The nine protected characteristics and other groups, and their relevance for REF2021.
- Feedback from EIAs from REF2014 regarding Early Career Researcher's (ECRs), part-time staff, and staff taking maternity and parental leave, and the institutional approach through the individual circumstances panel.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and its relevance for REF2021
- UOC's Equality Objectives and how these are upheld throughout the REF2021 process.
- The Equality Briefing for REF2021 Panels (provided by REF, July 2018), including past disability.
- Dealing with and addressing implicit bias and unconscious bias in the context of our REF2021 submission.
- Our approach to EIAs for REF2021 and supporting their development.
- Use and importance of diversity data through 'MyHR' to inform EIAs.

Completion of follow up REF-specific face to face training module, undertaken by UOC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, and informed by Advance HE training, and covering:

- Updates from training provided by Advance HE.
- Modelled scenarios of EDI in practice, as provided by Advance HE.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessments

Equality impact assessments (EIA) will be carried out at key points in the staff identification and output selection process and considered at the REF Steering Group; ensuring no differential impact on particular groups. These will be informed by summary level data on protected characteristics, provided by HR. EIA recommendations from REF2014 have also now been implemented, with improved recording and data capture of protected characteristics, and clearer processes in place for informing staff away from work. EIA's for REF2021 will take place at the following points:

- EIA 1 (standalone) - When finalising the Code of Practice and in determining the composition of the REF Steering Group, and staff identified as having significant responsibility for research and research independence (Completed May 2019)
- EIA 2 (standalone) - Selecting outputs for submission (Conducted December 2019)
- EIA 3 (standalone) - Considering appeals against identification of staff who do not have significant responsibility for research (Conducted July 2020)
- EIA 4 (overview to be submitted to REF) - Preparing the final submission, including comparing staff with significant responsibility for research versus all staff, independent researchers versus appropriate character pool, and distribution of outputs across staff in the UOA. (Conducted October 2020)

We will use best practice in equality assessment and use information gained from engaging, consulting or involving staff from protected groups to inform EIAs in the REF preparation process. The final EIA will be submitted to research funding bodies after submission and will be published on the UOC website.

PART 2: IDENTIFYING STAFF WITH SIGNIFICANT RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESEARCH (SRR)

2.1 Overview

Our Code of Practice will implement the recommendation of the Stern Review that all staff with significant responsibility for research (SRR) are returned to the REF, provided they are independent researchers. The University of Cumbria is distinctive in that it has a strong regional mission and many staff have responsibilities for activities other than research including knowledge exchange, professional practice, and scholarship.

The key determinant for staff eligibility as defined by REF2021, is having 'Category A' status. This refers to staff with:

- A contract of employment of 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) or greater, on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date.
- A primary employment function to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research', and that this research is undertaken independently.

However, the REF2021 guidance also stipulates that:

"Where these criteria will also identify staff who do not have significant responsibility for research, the institution may develop, document in a code of practice (see 'Guidance on codes of practice', REF 2018/03) and apply an agreed process to identify who among their staff meeting the core eligibility criteria have significant responsibility for research."

UOC's Code of Practice, the flow diagram in section 2.3, and the following explanatory notes will therefore serve to outline the institutions agreed process for identifying 'Category A' staff who meet the core eligibility criteria, and have significant responsibility for research. Central to this process are two pathways for 'significant' (see 2.10) and 'emerging' (see 2.12) responsibility for research. This supports the institutional approach to REF2021 as well as the ongoing development of academic staff and researchers.

2.2 Staff Engagement in development of the Code of Practice

Consideration and development of the draft Code of Practice entered a staff engagement phase between January and April 2019. This involved:

- Presentation of the draft Code and proposed approach to identifying staff with significant responsibility for research at staff conferences.
- Engagement with the unions and union representatives, and presentation of the Code at the Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee (JNCC) in June 2019.
- Open-attendance focus groups for each campus (five in total), with union presence where available, to consider the proposed approach to identifying SRR, determining research independence and selecting outputs, with opportunities to ask questions and raise concerns.
- Regular updates via email, and at team briefings, disseminated by line managers.
- Opportunities to contact Research Office directly to ask questions and receive clarification.
- Informing staff in writing who are absent from work.

Direct change to the Code occurred as a result of this staff engagement phase, including development of the institutional pathways for significant and emerging responsibility for research; see section 2.10, 2.11, and 2.12.

In regards to securing staff agreement, the draft Code was considered at the REF Steering Group on 7th March 2019, and the Research and Enterprise Committee on 21st March 2019. A final consultation phase took place between 12th April and 3rd May 2019 whereby the draft of the Code was made available on the staff intranet (StaffHub) for final comment between 12th April and 3rd May, and staff were informed of this opportunity via Global emails. The Code was then approved at Academic Board on 8th May, and was additionally received for noting and comment by Employment Policy Committee (5th June), REF Steering Group (14th May) and Academic Governance Committee (21st May). The Code was also presented to the Joint Consultative Negotiating Committee (5th June).

2.3 Significant Responsibility for Research and Independent Researcher Flow Diagram

START

Will the individual be employed by the HEI on the census date?

— No → Outputs of former staff may be eligible for submission. See 'outputs' flow diagram

— Yes →

Are they on a min. 0.2 FTE contract?

— No →

— Yes →

Evidence of substantive connection required for those on 0.2- 0.29 FTE contracts

Do they have a verifiable substantive connection to the HEI?

— No →

— Yes →

Are they on a teaching and research or research only contract?

— No →

— Teaching and Research →

— Research Only →

To be eligible for REF2021, staff employed on 'research only' contracts must be independent researchers. An independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme (see section 3.1 and 3.2)

— Not Independent Researcher →

— Independent Researcher → Individual is Category A eligible

Figure 2. Flow diagram for determining Category A status of UOC staff.

Do 100% of Category A eligible staff have significant responsibility for research?

— Teaching and Research ←

— No →

— Research Only →

Do they fulfil the criteria for the 'Pathway for Significant Responsibility for Research'? (see section 2.10)
'Explicit time and resources are made available'
- Allocated time and resource to support and develop researchers
- Allocated time and resource to support research teaching

'To engage actively in independent research'
- Active engagement in the research of our research centres and groups
- Acting as an independent researcher

'And that is an expectation of their job role'
- Member of the doctoral community
- Expectation of significant research responsibilities

— No →

Process for identifying research independence and significant responsibility set out in the Code of Practice

Individual is not eligible for submission. Outputs may be eligible if former staff.

Individual is considered for the **'Pathway for Emerging Responsibility for Research'** (see section 2.12)

To support pathways, SARA is to be discussed through the PPDR process.

Are they an Early Career Researcher, defined as fulfilling the 'independent researcher' criteria since 1st August 2016 (see Part 3).

— No →

— Yes →

Reduce Output Pool for UOA depending on when individual met REF definition of an ECR (see section 2.8).

Include as Category A submitted staff

Individual will count towards the unit FTE for output and impact case studies and will be required to submit 1-5 outputs

2.4 Will the individual be employed by the HEI on the census date and be on a minimum 0.2FTE contract?

Submitted staff must be employed by UOC on the 31st July 2020 and have a minimum employment contract of 0.2FTE. Outputs from eligible staff who have previously been employed will be considered if attributable outputs were first made publicly available while the staff member was employed as a Category A eligible member of UOC staff.

2.5 Do they have a verifiable connection to UOC?

For staff employed on minimum fractional contracts (0.20 to 0.29 FTE) on the census date, UOC will provide a short statement (up to 200 words) evidencing the clear connection of the staff member with the submitting unit. A range of indicators is likely to evidence a substantive connection, including but not limited to:

- Evidence of participation in and contribution to the research environment, such as involvement in research centres, research leadership activities, supervision of research staff, or PGR students.
- Evidence of wider involvement in the institution, for example through teaching, knowledge exchange, administrative, and /or governance roles and responsibilities.
- Evidence of research activity focused in the institution (such as through publication affiliation, shared grant applications or grants held with the institution).
- Period of time with the institution (including prospective time, length of contract).

2.6 Are they on a teaching and research, or research only contract?

The majority of academic staff are on teaching and research contracts (if on a research only contract, see 2.7).

2.7 Research Only Contracts – determining being an 'independent researcher'

Staff on research only contracts must demonstrate that they carry out self-directed research rather than carrying out another individual's research programme - Research Assistants will therefore not be eligible. Staff on research contracts that carry out self-directed research will be included in the REF2021 submission provided that there is evidence of the individual fulfilling at least one of the three 'independent researcher' criteria. See Part 3 for full criteria for determining research independence.

2.8 Are they an Early Career Researcher, defined as fulfilling the 'independent researcher' criteria (see 2.7 and Part 3) since 1st August 2016?

If the individual has fulfilled the 'independent researcher criteria' (see Part 3 for criteria) since 1st August 2016 then that individual may be considered an ECR. The output pool for their submitting UOA may be reduced depending on when the individual met this definition of an ECR, and subject to consideration by the REF. See below for possible reductions.

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

2.9 Teaching and Research Contracts – Criteria for 'Significant Responsibility for Research' (SRR)

Staff employed on teaching and research contracts of 0.2 FTE or greater must additionally meet the criteria for having 'significant responsibility for research' (SRR). The REF guidance stipulates that this includes 'those for whom explicit time and resources are made available', 'who actively engage in independent research', and where research 'is an expectation of their job role'. UOC has developed a pathway for 'significant responsibility for research' (outlined in 2.10) which determines whether a member of staff has SRR. Staff who are not eligible, will be considered for the 'emerging responsibility for research' (ERR) pathway, see section 2.11 and 2.12.

2.10 University of Cumbria – Pathway for Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)

Staff are filtered against the measures, and any fulfilled since 1 January 2014 are highlighted – there is no hierarchy. To have SRR as an expectation of employment function, staff must:

- Fulfil a minimum of one **Principle** within each of the three **REF Indicators**. To fulfil a principle, at least one related **Measure** must also be fulfilled.
- For example, Alex is a research mentor (fulfilling 1.1), leads a research group (fulfilling 2.2), and has a formal research plan (fulfilling 3.2). Alex has SRR despite not teaching on doctoral programmes (not fulfilling 1.2), not having a doctoral degree (not fulfilling 3.1) and not presenting research at a research centre or professional body (not fulfilling 2.1).

Notes	• *The three REF Indicators represent REF terminology used to determine significant responsibility for research.*
	• *The six principles and corresponding measures are based upon the employment functions that we expect UOC staff with significant responsibility for research to be undertaking.*
	• *The audit details outline how the Research Office will draw down on data to determine fulfilment of the measures and the associated principles.*
	• *The components of the measures are dynamic, however must be fulfilled on the census date of 31 July 2020 to be eligible for submission to REF2021.*

REF INDICATOR	PRINCIPLE	MEASURE	AUDIT DETAILS
1. Explicit time and resources are made available	**1.1 Allocated time and resource to support and develop researchers.**	Doctoral Supervisor	Data from Supervisor audit log. Broken down into 'Current Research Supervisors'
		Acting as a Research Mentor	Data from Research Mentor list.
	1.2 Allocated time and resource to support research teaching.	Teaching on Doctoral Programme	Data from Summer School, Research Skills Development Programme and Research Supervisor Workshops. January 1 2014 to date.
2. To engage actively in independent research	**2. 1 Active engagement in the research of our research centres and groups**	Acting as a steering group member or academic lead for a strand of research focus.	Academics who have been identified as sitting on a steering group or as an academic lead within a research centre or group. For current research centres and groups, see: cumbria.ac.uk/research/centres-and-groups/
		Presenting at a research centre.	Data provided from centre records and Research Office events spreadsheet. For current research centres and groups, see: cumbria.ac.uk/research/centres-and-groups/
		Presenting research or contributing to research of a learned society, professional association, or professional body.	Data from Research and Scholarly Annual Surveys and research activity database.
	2.2 Acting as an independent researcher.	Principal / Co Investigator on commissioned or externally-funded research project	Data from Finance and Research Office records
3. Expectation of their job role	**3.1 Member of the doctoral community.**	Achieving a doctoral degree	Data from monthly staffing reports.
	3. 2 Expectations of significant research responsibilities.	Formal SRR pathway research plan as indicated in a PPDR or declared via the	Data from Research and Scholarly Annual Survey and PPDR records (HR63).

		Research and Scholarly Activity Annual Survey	

2.11 Teaching and Research Contracts – Criteria for 'Emerging Responsibility for Research (ERR)

Our consultation and engagement with staff regarding the Code of Practice revealed a need to develop career pathways that support ongoing career development of our academic community. Following from this feedback, we have developed an additional, and complimentary, pathway for 'emerging responsibility for research' (ERR).

The ERR pathway has been developed to mirror the 'significant responsibility for research' (SRR) pathway in 2.10, with staff able to move across the two, but only eligible for REF submission if demonstrably fulfilling the SRR criteria. The ERR pathway outlined in 2.12 will support development of researchers for future REF exercises. Section 2.13 also outlines how we intend to support staff on these pathways.

2.12	University of Cumbria – Pathway for Emerging Responsibility for Research		
Staff are filtered against the measures, and any fulfilled are highlighted since 1 January 2014 – there is no hierarchy. To have ERR as an expectation of employment function, staff must: Fulfil a minimum of one **Principle** within each of the three **REF Indicators**. To fulfil a principle, at least one related **Measure** must also be fulfilled.			
Notes	*The three REF indictors represent REF terminology used to determine significant responsibility for research; and are repeated here to support staff development for REF2028.* *The five principles and corresponding measures are based upon the employment functions that we expect UOC's staff with emerging responsibility to be undertaking.* *The audit details outline how Research Office will draw down on data to determine fulfillment of the indicators and principles.* *The components of the measures are dynamic.*		

REF INDICATOR	PRINCIPLE	MEASURE	AUDIT DETAILS
1. Explicit time and resources are made available	**1.1 Utilising and recording SARA time for scholarly or research activity.**	SARA record and use and outputs generated / uploaded to Insight	Data from HR / My HR Data from Summer School, Research Skills Development Programme and Research Supervisor Workshops.
		Contribution to report / chapter / book	
		Writing papers / articles	
		Research data collection	
		Keynote / public lecture	
		Invited speaker	
		Exhibition / installation / art practice	
		Attend conference	
		Teaching on doctoral programme.	
2. To engage actively in independent research	**2.1 Engagement with a research centre or group**	Meeting with steering group member or academic lead to develop understanding about research focus.	For current research centres and groups, see: cumbria.ac.uk/research/centres-and-groups/ .
		Attend network / board / committee	
		Attending a research centre or group event.	
	2.2 Contribution to the design, conduct and interpretation of scholarly activity or research.	Attending internal / external events or training about external bidding and partnerships.	Data from HR and Research Office about training event attendance. Data from Research and Scholarly annual surveys.
		Attend writing project meeting	
		Contribute to bid writing	
		Engaging with a learned society, professional association, or professional body.	
3. Expectation of their job role	**3.1 Studying for a postgraduate degree.**	Studying towards a doctoral degree.	Data from monthly staffing reports.
		Other academic study / postgraduate programme	
	3.2 Development of research responsibilities	SARA Plan.	Data from Research and Scholarly annual survey and PPDR records (HR63).
		Formal ERR research plan as indicated in a PPDR or declared via Annual Research Survey	

2.13 Support for staff on SRR and ERR pathways

These two pathways and their associated frameworks will be used to highlight principles and measures that support development of SRR and ERR. They have been developed within our institutional context, and will be utilised to support and guide career development of our academic communities. The SRR and ERR pathways also provide a range of tangible actions that enable staff to contribute to the excellence of the University in several ways, with submission to REF being only one element of recognised research activity at UOC. Inclusion or otherwise in the REF2021 submission, or alignment to a pathway, has no further impact on decisions relating to future support or progression at UOC.

These two pathways will be utilised in a coordinated way across the institution to support and guide career development of our academic communities, by linking them to the following:

- Performance and Professional Development Review (PPDR) - SRR/ERR pathways referred to in PPDR and linked to use of Scholarly and Research Activity (SARA) leave to inform objective setting, research focus and aspirations, and formulation of Research Plans.
- Research Mentoring - ERR/SRR pathways referred to in mentoring guidance and used as a guide to support bridging individuals across pathways.
- Research Plans - Principles and measures within SRR/ERR pathways used to inform development of individual research plans, and linked to objectives regarding the PPDR and use of SARA leave.
- Annual Research and Scholarly Survey - Principles and measures within SRR/ERR pathways mirrored within the survey to ensure data capture.
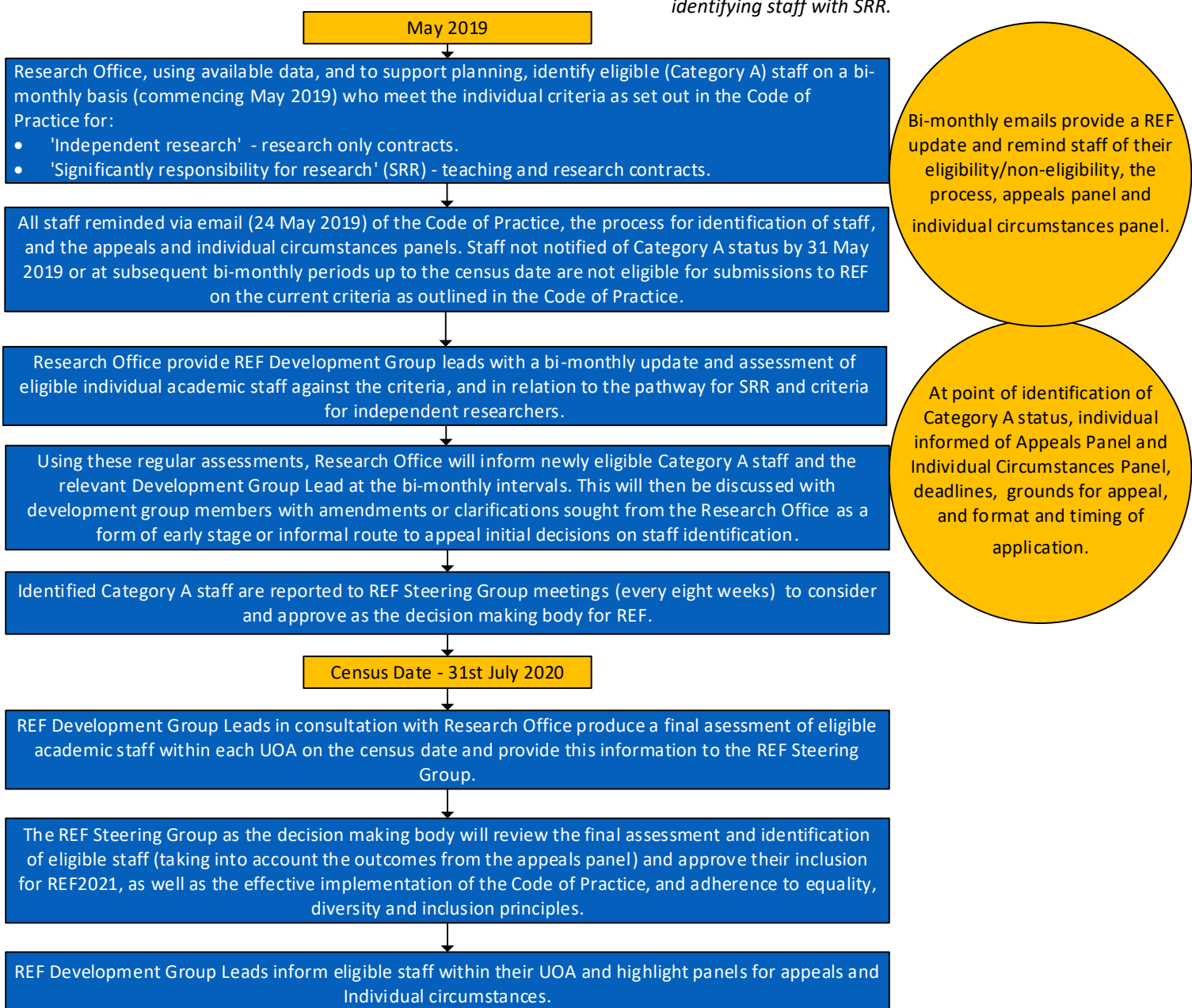
The use of pathways was approved by Academic Board on May 8th 2019 for implementation across the institution with guidance for line managers issued over the course of June/July 2019.

2.14 Implementing Identification of Staff with SRR

The REF2021 Guidance requires that all staff meeting the institution's criteria for SRR should be submitted to REF2021. Therefore, all staff that are determined to be on the SRR pathway on the census date as outlined above will be returned to the REF and will be required to contribute between one and five research outputs (except in cases where individual circumstances have been approved).

The measures within the SRR pathway (see 2.10) utilise data that is held centrally by the Research Office, so the process of staff identification will commence with auditing of available staff data on a bi-monthly basis (every two months). The REF Development Group Leads will then work consultatively with staff within UOAs, and with the Research Office, to confirm eligibility of staff prior to, and on, the census date, and make their final recommendations on staff identification to the REF Steering Group as the decision making body. Staff will be informed of the appeals and individual circumstances panels before and after the census date as part of an iterative process. The diagram below indicates our approach:

Figure 3. Flow diagram for identifying staff with SRR.

May 2019

Research Office, using available data, and to support planning, identify eligible (Category A) staff on a bi-monthly basis (commencing May 2019) who meet the individual criteria as set out in the Code of Practice for:
- 'Independent research' - research only contracts.
- 'Significantly responsibility for research' (SRR) - teaching and research contracts.

All staff reminded via email (24 May 2019) of the Code of Practice, the process for identification of staff, and the appeals and individual circumstances panels. Staff not notified of Category A status by 31 May 2019 or at subsequent bi-monthly periods up to the census date are not eligible for submissions to REF on the current criteria as outlined in the Code of Practice.

Research Office provide REF Development Group leads with a bi-monthly update and assessment of eligible individual academic staff against the criteria, and in relation to the pathway for SRR and criteria for independent researchers.

Using these regular assessments, Research Office will inform newly eligible Category A staff and the relevant Development Group Lead at the bi-monthly intervals. This will then be discussed with development group members with amendments or clarifications sought from the Research Office as a form of early stage or informal route to appeal initial decisions on staff identification.

Identified Category A staff are reported to REF Steering Group meetings (every eight weeks) to consider and approve as the decision making body for REF.

Census Date - 31st July 2020

REF Development Group Leads in consultation with Research Office produce a final asessment of eligible academic staff within each UOA on the census date and provide this information to the REF Steering Group.

The REF Steering Group as the decision making body will review the final assessment and identification of eligible staff (taking into account the outcomes from the appeals panel) and approve their inclusion for REF2021, as well as the effective implementation of the Code of Practice, and adherence to equality, diversity and inclusion principles.

REF Development Group Leads inform eligible staff within their UOA and highlight panels for appeals and Individual circumstances.

Bi-monthly emails provide a REF update and remind staff of their eligibility/non-eligibility, the process, appeals panel and individual circumstances panel.

At point of identification of Category A status, individual informed of Appeals Panel and Individual Circumstances Panel, deadlines, grounds for appeal, and format and timing of application.

2.15 Appeals Panel and Process

The flow diagram in 2.14 will be undertaken as an initial 'mock exercise' in May 2019 (see appendix 4 for timeline), and as indicated, staff will be informed of their potential eligibility for REF2021, as well as the opportunity to appeal. As indicated in the flow diagram there will also be an opportunity for an early stage informal route to appealing decisions on staff eligibility before a final assessment of eligible staff is made.

Assessments of staff eligibility will be conducted on a bi-monthly basis (every two months) up to the census date to inform planning within the REF Development Groups. Identified staff will be informed of their eligibility for REF2021 formally through the Research Office and made aware of the reasons behind decisions, in accordance with the criteria and any new staff identified will be informed as part of the bi-monthly assessments. Throughout all communications, formal appeals procedures will be highlighted with details on process and time frames. This information will also be available on StaffHub.

Appeals against decisions will be handled by an independent appeals panel specifically convened for REF 2021, with members having had REF-specific training. There will be three meetings of the appeals panel throughout the assessment period (September 2019, February 2020, and July 2020) to ensure appeals can be considered before the census date of 31 July 2020. Appeals will not be accepted on the basis of quality decisions related to outputs or where an individual's submission is excluded because a strategic decision has been made to not submit to a UOA.

Staff will be required to submit a pro-forma outlining the basis of their appeal (available on StaffHub and see appendix 9) on the 1st of the month in which the appeals panel is meeting. The timing of this will allow appeals to be considered before final staff identification is made. Prior to the census date, the REF Steering Group will approve the final identification of eligible staff, taking into account the outcomes from the Appeals Panel meetings.

Appeals will only be accepted on procedural grounds, including:

- The process for identification of staff with SRR or as independent researchers was not applied in accordance with this Code.
- There was an error in the data used by the Research Office in determining staff with SRR.

The independent REF Appeals Panel comprises the Chair of Academic Governance Committee (Panel Chair), Director for Academic Quality and Development, Industry Contracts Manager, and a HR Business Partner. On reviewing the application for appeal, the panel will issue a decision to be implemented by the REF Steering Group. The decision of the appeal panel is final. See appendix 9 for further details on process and the appeals form and diagram below regarding timings.

Figure 4. Flow diagram for appeals process and timings.
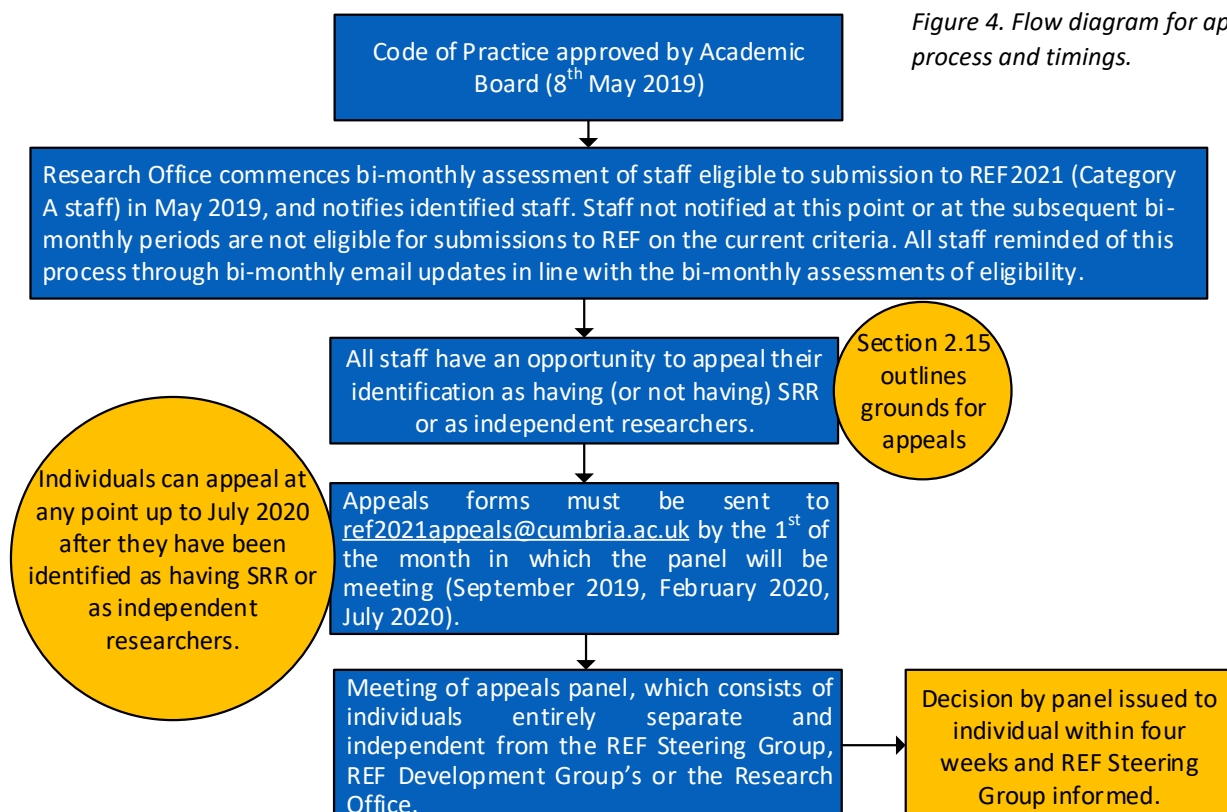
PART 3: DETERMINING RESEARCH INDEPENDENCE

3.1 Defining Independent Researchers

UOC identifies independent researchers according to the REF definition as 'Category A' eligible staff on:

- Research only contracts
- Teaching and research contracts where the staff are on the pathway for SRR as outlined in Part 2 of this Code of Practice.

Regarding staff on research only contracts, and as shown in the flow diagram in section 2.3, research only staff must also demonstrate their independence, and that they are undertaking self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme. Indicators of research independence include:

1. Leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.
2. Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.
3. Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.

In accordance with the REF guidance, UOC does not recognise Research Assistants or Research Associates as independent researchers where the primary employment function is research only and they are employed to carry out another individual's research programme.

3.2 Identifying Independent Researchers

On the census date, and bi-monthly (as with staff with SRR), we will ascertain which staff are on research only contracts. Following from this, and to determine independence, the Research Office will identify if the individual in question meets the indicators listed below by utilising available, and auditable, data.

Research Independence Indicator	Audit Details
1. Leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project.	Data from Finance and Research Office records
2. Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.	Data from Research Office records.
3. Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.	Academics who have been identified as sitting on a steering group or as an academic lead within a research centre or group. For current research centres and groups, see: cumbria.ac.uk/research/centres-and-groups/

If fulfilling **any one** of these indicators, that individual will be deemed to have research independence, will be informed of their 'Category A' status as part of the bi-monthly assessments, and will be submitted to REF2021.

This criteria will be used to determine the research independence of Research Assistants, Research Fellows, and Senior Research Fellows. Early Career Researchers (ECRs) must also demonstrate the point at which they fulfilled the independent research criteria in order to be classified as such, for the purposes of REF. If fulfilled since 1st August 2016, that individual may be considered an ECR by the REF (see 2.8).

An equality impact assessment was conducted following the application of the criteria for determining research independence. See section 1.8 for further details.

For details of the appeals and individual circumstances process, see relevant sections within Part 2 of this Code of Practice. Staff wishing to appeal research independence are able to utilise the appeals process outlined in 2.14. on the basis that the process outlined in this code has not be followed or that data held by Research Office to determine research independence is inaccurate. Research-only staff identified as having Category A status are also able to declare individual circumstances as per the process outlined in section 4.12.

PART 4: DETERMINING SELECTION OF OUTPUTS

4.1 Overview

All staff who have been identified as having SRR and research independence (Part 2 and 3) will be required to submit a minimum of one research output to the relevant Unit of Assessment (UOA), in liaison with the REF Development Group Leads. Each output must meet a minimum estimated quality threshold of 2* or above.

Submissions to REF2021 must include a set number of research outputs, per UOA, equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission. Rounding to the nearest whole number will be applied to give a whole number of outputs for submission. This number will be adjusted, as appropriate, to take account of successful requests for staff individual circumstances (see section 4.12).

In addition to the quality threshold of 2* or greater, each output must be:

- The product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. (The full definition of research for the purposes of the REF is at appendix 6.)

- First brought into the public domain during the publication period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 or, if a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period.

- Attributable to a current or former member of staff, who made a substantial research contribution to the output, which must be either:

    i. Produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a Category A submitted staff member, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time they produced that output or;

    ii. Produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a former staff member who was employed according to the 'Category A' eligible definition when the output was first made publicly available.

- Available in an open-access form, where the output is within scope of the open access policy.

All published research and scholarly outputs must be deposited in the institutional open access repository, **Insight** (http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk).

Outputs will be selected only on the basis of their quality, and will take no account of any personal characteristics including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief including non-belief, sex (including breastfeeding and paternity or adoption leave) or sexual orientation. Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken at pertinent points in the selection process to ensure that discrimination is avoided and to promote equality (see section 1.8).

See section 2.2 for details of how staff have been engaged with in regards to the selection of outputs.

Two **Impact Case Studies** must also be provided per submitted unit with less than 19.99FTE staff. We do not anticipate any UOA submissions exceeding this threshold.

4.2 Determining Output Eligibility Flow Diagram

Figure 5. Flow diagram for output eligibility and decision making.

START

Does the output meet the REF definition of research? (see appendix 6) — No → **Output is NOT eligible for submission**

Yes

Was it first made publically available between 1/1/14 and 31/12/2020? — No

Yes

Authors must have made a substantial research contribution

Is it attributable to a current or former member of Category A staff within the unit? — No

Yes

Member of Category A submitted staff on 31/7/2020

Former member of staff

See Section 2 of this Code for Category A staff criteria

Did the staff member leave between 1/1/14 and 31/7/2020 — No

Yes

Yes

Was the output generated while they were a Category A staff member at the HEI? — No

Yes → Is the output in scope of the open access requirements? — No

See Section 4.8 of this Code

Yes

Is it compliant? — No → Does it carry an allowed exception?

UOAs may return a max of 5% of in-scope outputs that do not meet the requirement nor have an exception applied

Yes

Yes

Yes   No

Output fits descriptor for a UOA that UOC is submitting to. — No

Yes

Output is externally reviewed and is deemed to meet quality threshold (2* or above). — No → Output is internally reviewed and is agreed amongst REF Development Group to meet quality threshold (2* or above). — Yes → Output is eligible for submission

Yes

A minimum of 1 output (average 2.5 per 1 FTE) for all Category A staff will be included in the submission.

4.3 Does the output meet the REF definition of research?

For the purposes of the REF, research is defined **as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.**

It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, culture, society, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It includes research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports.

It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.

4.4 Was it first made publically available between 1/1/2014 and 31/12/2020?

The output must have been brought into the public domain during the publication period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 or, if a confidential report, lodged with the body to whom it is confidential during this same period.

4.5 Is it attributable to a current or former member of Category A staff within the unit?

Outputs must be attributable to a current or former member of staff, who made a substantial research contribution to the output, which must be either: i) Produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a Category A (see section 2) submitted staff member, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time they produced that output or ii) Produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by a former staff member who was employed according the 'Category A' eligible definition when the output was first made publicly available.

4.6 Former staff

A submitting unit can include outputs of staff formerly employed as Category A eligible (former staff) where the output was first made publicly available during the assessment period. This includes staff who remain at the institution but are no longer Category A. Outputs from staff who have been made redundant will not be submitted. Outputs made publically available between August and December 2020 are only eligible for submission by the Category A staff members' current employer. If submitting former staff, the Research Office will endeavour to notify the individuals concerned.

4.7 Is the output in scope of the open access requirements?

Any submitted output that fits both aspects of the definition below is an 'in-scope' output and must comply with the open access policy.

- Journal articles with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) or conference contribution in conference proceedings with an ISSN.
- The output is accepted for publication on or after 1 April 2016.

'Out of scope' outputs may be listed in the submission without meeting open access requirements. The following outputs, as well as those listed as underpinning research impact, are not required to meet the requirements:

- monographs and other long-form publications
- non-text outputs
- working papers or outputs submitted to pre-print systems that are not the version 'as accepted for publication'
- the data which underpins some research
- confidential reports that are not published because of commercial or other sensitivity.

4.8 Is it compliant?

For each submission, a maximum of five per cent of in-scope outputs that do not meet the policy requirement or do not have an exception applied can be submitted.

Outside of this threshold, outputs must be the author's accepted manuscript, and meet the following requirements:

- Deposit – output must be in 'Insight' the University repository, within three months after the date of publication (output accepted 1 April 2016- 31 March 2018) or within three months after the point of acceptance (output accepted 1 April 2018 – 31 December 2020).

- Discovery – output must be presented in a way that allows it to be discovered by readers and by search engines.

- Access – output must be presented in a form that allows anyone with internet access to search electronically within the text, read it and download without charge.

4.9 Does it carry an allowed exception?

If one of the following exceptions applies to the deposit, then that output will not be required to meet any of the open access criteria in section 4.8 (deposit, discovery, access):

- Deposit exceptions:
    - At the point of acceptance, it was not possible to secure the use of a repository;
    - there was a delay in securing final peer-reviewed text;
    - the staff member to whom the output is attributed was not employed on a Category A contract at the time of submission;
    - it would be unlawful or a security risk to deposit or request the output.

- Access exceptions:
    - Output depends on reproduction of third party content for which open access right could not be granted.
    - Publication requires embargo period exceeding stated maxima.
    - Publication actively disallows open access deposit.

- Technical exceptions:
    - At point of acceptance, staff member to whom output is attributed was employed at a different HEI and it has not been possible to determine compliance.
    - Repository experience short-term technical failure that prevented compliance.
    - An external service provider failure prevented compliance.

- Further exceptions:
    - When an output is unable to meet the criteria due to individual circumstances of the author, industrial action, closure days and software problems.
    - Output was not deposited within three months of acceptance date, but was deposited within three months of the earliest date of publication. In this instance, the output will need to meet all other policy requirements.

4.10 Implementing Selection of Outputs

The flow diagram below compliments the flow diagram in 4.2, and outlines our institutions process for selecting outputs as well as the roles of the REF Steering Group and REF Development Group.
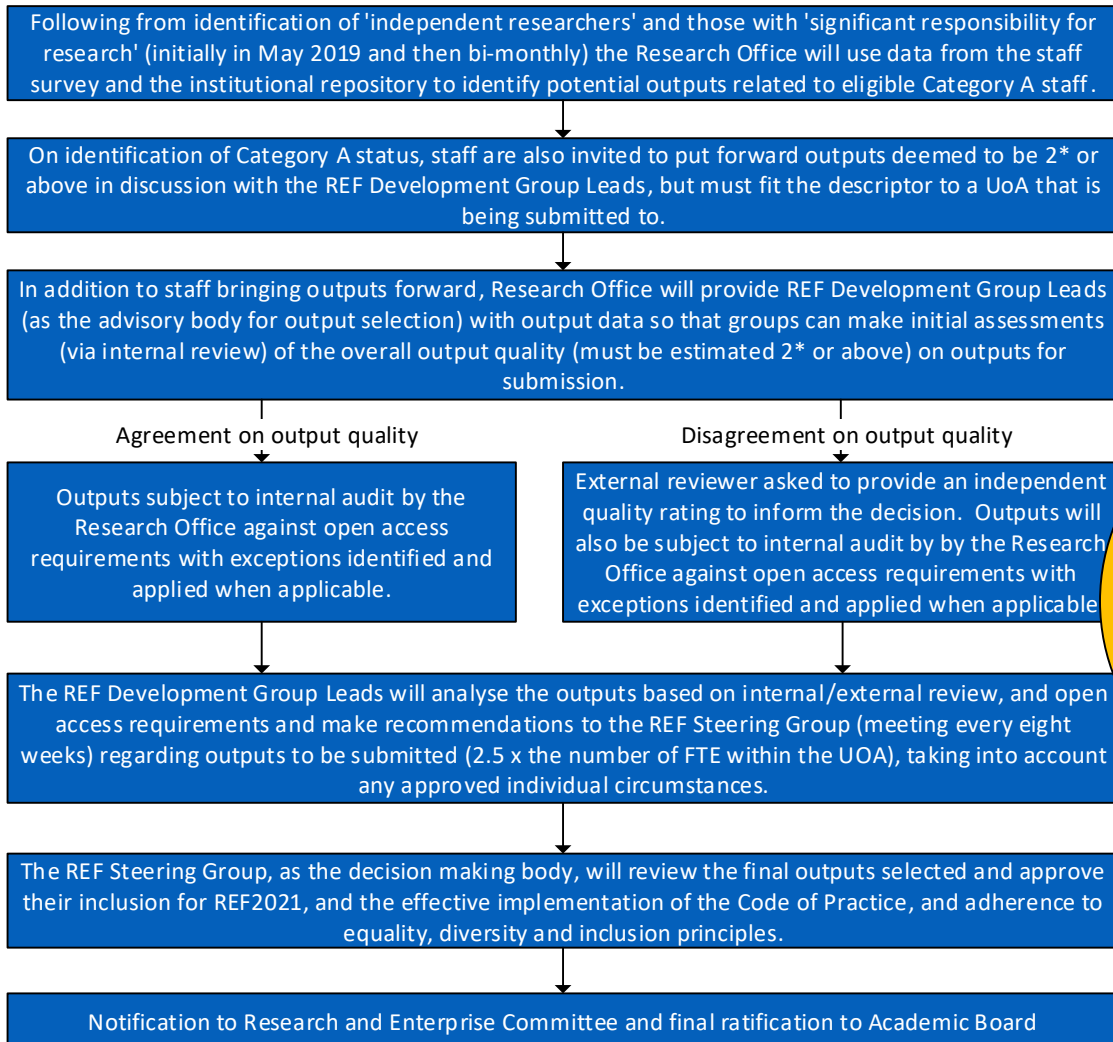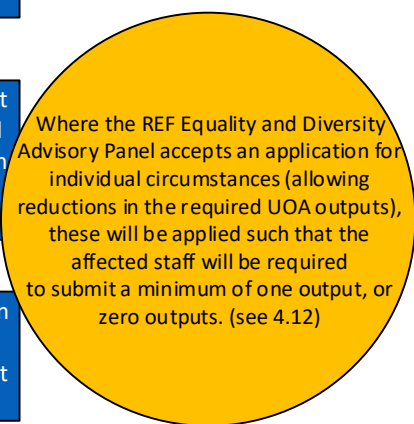
Following from identification of 'independent researchers' and those with 'significant responsibility for research' (initially in May 2019 and then bi-monthly) the Research Office will use data from the staff survey and the institutional repository to identify potential outputs related to eligible Category A staff.

↓

On identification of Category A status, staff are also invited to put forward outputs deemed to be 2* or above in discussion with the REF Development Group Leads, but must fit the descriptor to a UoA that is being submitted to.

↓

In addition to staff bringing outputs forward, Research Office will provide REF Development Group Leads (as the advisory body for output selection) with output data so that groups can make initial assessments (via internal review) of the overall output quality (must be estimated 2* or above) on outputs for submission.

Agreement on output quality → Outputs subject to internal audit by the Research Office against open access requirements with exceptions identified and applied when applicable.

Disagreement on output quality → External reviewer asked to provide an independent quality rating to inform the decision. Outputs will also be subject to internal audit by by the Research Office against open access requirements with exceptions identified and applied when applicable.

↓

The REF Development Group Leads will analyse the outputs based on internal/external review, and open access requirements and make recommendations to the REF Steering Group (meeting every eight weeks) regarding outputs to be submitted (2.5 x the number of FTE within the UOA), taking into account any approved individual circumstances.

↓

The REF Steering Group, as the decision making body, will review the final outputs selected and approve their inclusion for REF2021, and the effective implementation of the Code of Practice, and adherence to equality, diversity and inclusion principles.

↓

Notification to Research and Enterprise Committee and final ratification to Academic Board

Figure 6. Flow diagram for selection of outputs and decision making.

Where the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel accepts an application for individual circumstances (allowing reductions in the required UOA outputs), these will be applied such that the affected staff will be required to submit a minimum of one output, or zero outputs. (see 4.12)

4.11 Assessing the viability of UOA's

The University is committed to submitting all excellent research to REF2021 and ensuring the best possible quality profiles. However, this cannot be based solely on the excellence of individual staff members or individual pieces of work. Judgements will also be made regarding the wider viability of each UOA as a whole, which must contain a minimum of the equivalent of 5FTE eligible staff members to be considered for submission. This will ensure each UOA is capable of achieving scores of suitable quality in the assessment of reach and significance of impact as well as the vitality and sustainability of research environment.

Where research activities span a number of UOAs, the most appropriate unit will be selected for submission, in terms of identifying the strongest outcome for the University. Where necessary, staff can be submitted with an expectation that outputs may need to be cross-referred to another UOA.

UOA selection may be reconsidered at later selection stages (see timetable in Appendix 4) on the basis of significant changes in staffing or other factors which affect the viability of submission within the UOA. The REF Steering Group will make decisions on the viabilities of UOA's.

4.12 Consideration and Disclosure of Individual Staff Circumstances

Overview

UOC is committed to supporting equality and diversity throughout the REF2021 exercise, and the institution has put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. See appendix 10 for the individual circumstances form.

Where the individual circumstances of staff eligible for submission have constrained their ability to produce outputs or to work effectively throughout the assessment period, requests (supported by evidence) may be submitted to the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) for a reduction without penalty in the total number of outputs required overall for a submission to a UOA. This includes the possibility to request removal of the minimum requirement of one research output on an individual where their circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output.

Requests for individual staff circumstances must be submitted on the template provided by REF2021 (see appendix 10) by the final deadline **31 January 2020** and will be considered by the **Individual Circumstances Panel**, which consists of the Research Development Manager, HR Business Partner, and Enterprise and Operations Manager. Staff will be informed of their eligibility for REF on a bi-monthly basis from May 2019, and at the same time made aware of the opportunity to declare individual circumstances, the procedures, and the final deadline. Staff can submit requests outside of department and unit structures and should be sent to the Research Development Manager (james.hodge@cumbria.ac.uk). The individual circumstances form will be sent directly to all Category A staff identified as being eligible for REF2021 throughout our bi-monthly updates.

On receipt of requests, the Individual Circumstances Panel will review these and make a decision on whether to accept or reject the request. Accepted requests will form the basis of an application to the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) for a reduction in the number of outputs. This will be submitted by the Individual Circumstances Panel via the REF secure submission system before the deadline of **March 2020**.

Where staff have been subject to constraining circumstances but do not disclose this information through the identified channels, they will not be considered for submission with reduced outputs.

Applications to Individual Circumstances Panel

Applications for consideration of individual circumstances are entirely voluntary and staff are under no obligation to declare individual circumstances if they do not wish to do so. Furthermore, UOC's approach to individual circumstances is consistent with the circumstances provided by the REF Guidance on Submissions, and will be consistently applied across all UOAs. Requests must be based on the circumstances defined by REF2021 and must be supported where appropriate by further information and evidence.

The purpose of providing staff with an opportunity to have individual circumstances considered is threefold:

- To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be entered into REF where they have:
  - circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see applicable circumstances below);
  - circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research (but not from work, in general) due to equality-related circumstances;
  - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual's ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload and production of research outputs.
- To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill heath, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment

Decisions and Confidentiality

For requests applying for defined reductions (such as period of time from when an individual has become an Early Career Researcher), requests will be reviewed by Research England's REF Audit and Data Verification Team, who will advise the Equality and Diversity Panel (EDAP) on whether sufficient information has been provided and guidance followed appropriately. Requests may be referred to EDAP if further judgment is required.

Reduction requests that require judgement on the extent of the impact of individual circumstances, or requests to remove the minimum of one output, will be considered by EDAP who may also seek advice from the four 'Main Panel Chairs' for REF2021. EDAP will then make a recommendation based on the available evidence and provide this in writing to UOC.

Requests for individual circumstances are dealt with confidentially between the University's own Individual Circumstances Panel, Research England's REF Team, EDAP and the main panel chairs, who are all subject to maintain confidentiality regarding submission information. In regards to assessment of UOCs submission, REF sub-panels will know where a reduction in the overall number of outputs in the submitting unit has been agreed without penalty on the basis of individual circumstances, but will not have access to further information about the circumstances. This enables individuals to disclose information confidentially, and for a consistent approach to individual circumstances to be applied during UOCs REF2021 submission.

Timeline

Figure 7. Flow diagram for declaring individual circumstances.
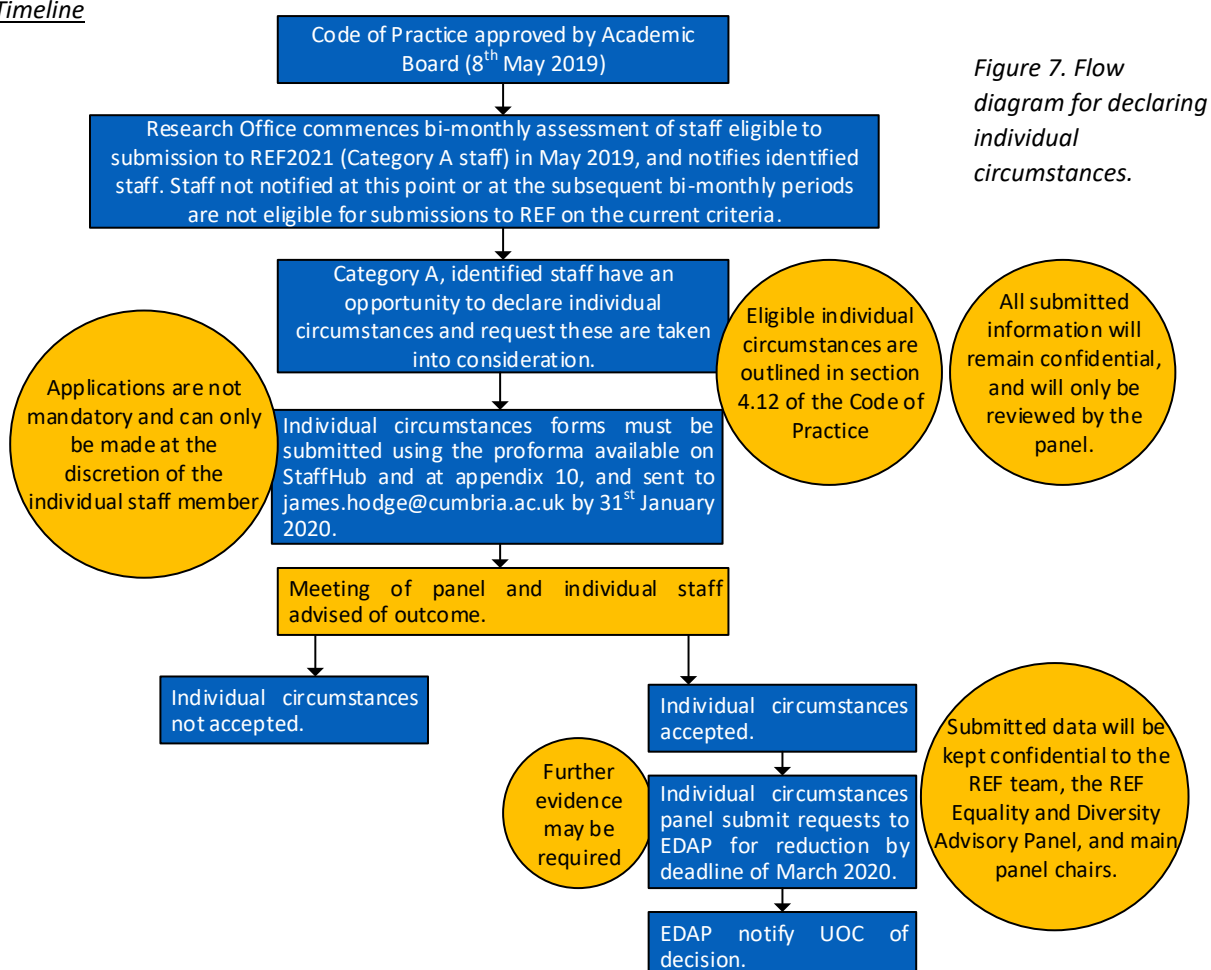
Appendix 1. – REF2021 Committees

Name of Panel	Committee formation	Membership	Roles	Position within process
REF Steering Group	Formed from key members of the University with strategic responsibility for research and management.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Health, Environment & Innovation)	Chair with responsibility for staff identification and output selection decisions for the institution.	Receive recommendations from REF Development Group and Research Office and make strategic decisions on: • Identification of staff with significant responsibility for research and on research independence. • UOAs to be submitted • Output selection.
		Director of Research and Head of Graduate School	Strategic responsibility for research activity across the institution. Role in ensuring consistency of the application of staff identification and output selection practices.	
		Directors of Institutes or Senior Representative	Strategic responsibility for submissions as a representation of Institute activity.	
		Head of HR and Organisational Development	Strategic responsibility for ensuring fair practices and adherence to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion legislation.	
		Research Student representative	PGR student body representation.	
		Research Development Manager	Operational responsibility for submissions as a representation of the Research Office.	
		Research Officer	Knowledge of guidelines, and support for data management, including records of decisions.	
		REF Development Group Leads	Operational responsibility for submissions as a representation of Department and/or UOA activity.	

Name of Panel	Committee formation	Membership	Roles	Position within process
REF Development Groups	Comprises the key staff actively involved in managing research activity, including department and centralised roles. The members link in to research activity across the whole of the University.	Research Development group Lead	Chair of the group, with strategic responsibility for all academic activities at institutional level. Will present the recommendations of the Group to the steering group.	Assess feasibility of submission to relevant UOAs based on quality of research and make recommendations for output selection to the Steering Group. Support and facilitate consultative identification of staff and make recommendations to the Steering Group. Assess, select and develop impact case studies and research environment data for selected UOA's. Coordinate REF activity within UOA and make recommendations based on scoping and assessment to the Steering Group.
		Research Development Manager	Strategic responsibility for research activity across the institution. Role in ensuring consistency of the application of practices across the institution.	
		Relevant Professors	In-depth knowledge of on-going research activity within the department. Liaison with individual staff members to scope readiness for REF submission and with discipline leads to identify UOA viability. Key drivers of impact and environment elements for UOAs under consideration.	
		Relevant Associate Professors	Local responsibility for research strategy, ensuring that recommendations on UOAs to be submitted meet Departmental needs.	
		Senior Lecturer representative	Local responsibility for research strategy, ensuring that recommendations on UOAs to be submitted meet Departmental needs.	
		Research staff	Administrative support, including record keeping, and support on official REF guidelines and consistent application of Code.	
		Departmental nominated Research Leads	Local responsibility for research strategy, ensuring that recommendations on UOAs to be submitted meet Departmental needs.	

REF Development Group	Potential UOA
Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy	3
Education	23
Business & Management Studies	17
Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	32
Social Work and Social Policy	20
Geography and Environmental Studies	14

Name of Panel	Committee formation	Membership	Roles	Position within process
Individual Staff Circumstances Panel	The panel has been formed by staff with knowledge of the REF process, HR knowledge and expertise in equality and diversity legislation.	Research Development Manager	Knowledge of REF guidelines regarding the handling of Individual Staff Circumstances. Liaison with panels on decisions for reduced outputs without penalty. Responsibility for receiving and handling disclosed information on staff circumstances.	To consider information disclosed by staff relating to individual circumstances that may merit submission with a reduced number of outputs. The panel will make decisions on whether a member of staff can be submitted with reduced or no outputs, calculating the appropriate number of reduced outputs for circumstances and submitting evidence to REF. Decisions will be made by consensus on the basis of the information disclosed by the individual in each case on the available pro-forma.
		HR Business Partner	Liaison with staff data to verify circumstances disclosed where these relate to contractual issues or defined periods of absence from work. Expertise on the Equality Act 2010.	
		Enterprise and Operations Manager	Independent member.	

Name of Panel	Committee formation	Membership	Roles	Position within process
Appeals Panel	The panel has been formed from impartial individuals with knowledge of research who have not been directly involved in the staff identification and output selection process. It includes HR Manager, Student and Staff Services to ensure the relevant obligations have been followed.	Chair of Academic Governance Committee	Chair, with responsibility for ruling on whether any complaints received should be upheld.	The panel will consider any appeals received from staff regarding staff identification. Cases for appeal will be considered ahead of the final submission, and decisions will be passed to the Steering Group, identifying whether the appeal should be rejected or if the decision must be reconsidered.
		Director of AQD	Knowledge of guidelines, administrative support including records of decisions.	
		HR Business Partner	Expertise in the Equality Act 2010.	
		Industrial Partnerships & Contracts Manager	Independent Member	

Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference (REF Development Groups)

Group / Panel Name: **RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF2021) DEVELOPMENT GROUPS**

Parent Committee / Reporting to: REF Steering Group

Duration: 2015 - 2021

Purpose / Terms of Reference:

1. The development groups will encourage all academic staff to engage with the REF process and facilitate their work to be considered for submission.
2. The development groups will enable an ongoing process of dialogue with individuals and groups of academics to provide guidance, discussion and appropriate support for research active staff.
3. The development groups will enable consideration of appropriate REF Unit of Assessments (UOA) for REF2021 and beyond.
4. The lead for each development group will bring together potential staff within a cogent group on a regular basis.
5. The development groups will provide discipline specific analysis of the; a. quality of outputs; b. impact and; c. research environment of the potential Unit of Assessment (UOA) areas.
6. The development groups will collate the evidence for impact and write the draft impact case studies for each potential UOA.
7. The development groups will write the draft environment statements for each potential UOA.
8. The development groups will adhere to the REF Code of Practice and follow the University's Code of Practice for Research.
9. Each development group will regularly report and make recommendations for staff identification and output selection to the REF Steering Group.

Set of principles for selection and criteria relating to the Development Group Leads:
▪ REF Development Group Lead must be a member of the Professoriate
▪ REF Development Group Lead must have previous experience of the REF process
▪ REF Development Group Lead can appoint a co-lead or subject lead where the subject area is vast, in order to have greater coverage of the staff community

Membership of a UoA to be inclusive to those with subject specific research, for some this will be development for a future REF, and some may be members of more than 1 UoA until decision is reached on the dominant UoA.

Membership
▪ Research Development group lead
▪ Research Development Manager
▪ Relevant Professors
▪ Relevant Associate Professors
▪ Senior Lecturer representative
▪ Research staff
▪ Departmental nominated Research Leads

Attendee only (as and when required):
▪ Research Officer
▪ Information Services representative (for Open Access requirements)
▪ Other Professional Service representatives as required
▪ PgR Students

Reporting Method: Regular Reports to: REF Steering Group
Group Secretary: Agreed representative of the group

Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference (REF Steering Group)

Group / Panel Name: RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF2021) STEERING GROUP

1.1. <u>Parent Committee</u>
Research and Enterprise Committee

1.2. <u>Terms of Reference</u>
- The Steering Group will take the lead on REF decision-making and will have an overview of the REF Development Groups.
- To make decisions on generic issues such as quality thresholds and the timetable for the REF staff identification and output selection process.
- To develop and disseminate documentation to clearly define the key decisions of the REF process, alongside identification of the key decision points, and decision-makers.
- To be the main REF decision making panel on staff identification and output selection.
- To consider advice from the REF Development Groups.
- To take decisions on the Unit of Assessment (UOA) to submit to, individual staff identification and impact case study selection.
- To lead on guidance as required for the REF process.
- To request relevant external review of each intended UOA prior to submission.
- To take forward any decisions made to existing and relevant committees within the University structure for verification.

There are seven REF Development Groups aligned to one or more UOA's that report directly to the REF Steering Group

1.3. <u>Membership</u>

Chair
Deputy Vice Chancellor (Health, Environment & Innovation)

Members
Director of Research
Director of Institute of Science, Natural Resources & Outdoor Studies

Director of Institute of Business, Industry and Leadership
Director of Institute of Education
Director, Institute of the Arts
Head of the Graduate School
Head of HR and Organisational Development
Research Student Representative
Research Development Manager
Research Officer

REF Development Group Leads:

Allied Health	Dr Tim Donovan
Education & Outdoor Studies	Prof Heather Prince /Prof Sally Elton-Chalcraft
Business	Prof Andy Gale
Arts, Drama & English	Prof Robert Williams/Prof Mark Wilson
Sociology/Psychology/Social Work/Social Policy	Prof Kaz Stuart/ Dr Nicoletta Policek
Biology/Conservation/Forestry/Environmental Sciences	Prof Ian Convery

In Attendance/Observer
Research Student representative

In Attendance (by invitation according to items under discussion)
Metadata & Open Access Librarian
Enterprise and Operations Manager
Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer

1.4. Secretary
Research Administrator

1.5. Frequency of Meetings
6 meetings per year

1.6. Reporting
Regular Reports to: Research and Enterprise Committee and Academic Board.

1.7. Status
Temporary – for the duration of REF 2021

Appendix 4 – REF2021 Communications and Process Plan

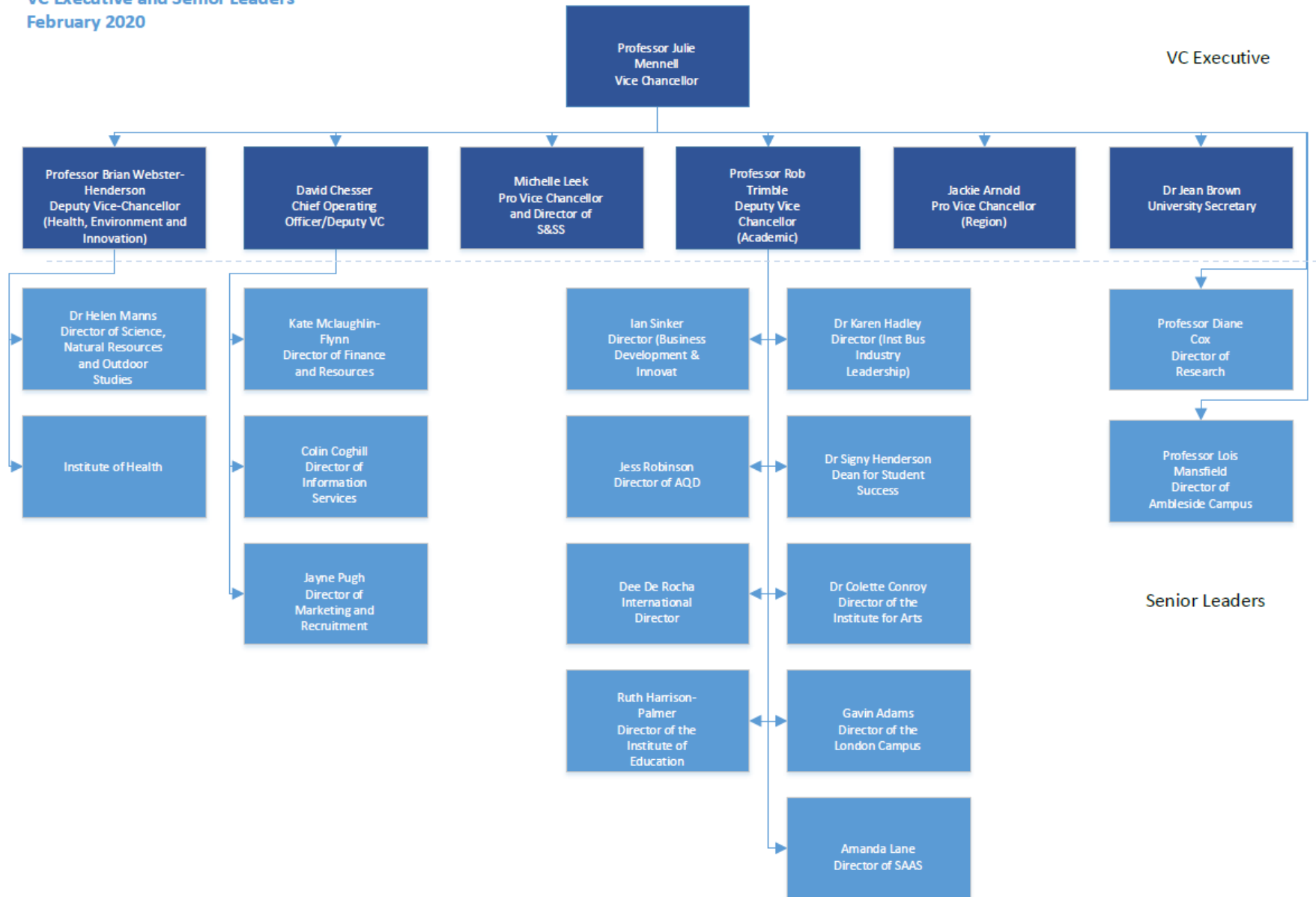| Action	Responsibility	Timing
REF Planning Meeting and Formation of Steering Group and Development Groups	PVC Academic	October 2015
First meeting of REF Steering Group	Research Office	December 2015
Open Invitation to join REF Development Groups	Research Development Manager	March 2016
Review of the Stern Report, summary paper and implications circulated.	Research Development Manager	November 2016

Update on Institutional Repository (Insight) and REF2021	Information Services	July 2017
REF Update to Research and Enterprise Committee	Research Development Manager	September 2017 January 2018, March 2018
REF Workshop for Academic Staff	Research Development Manager	June 2018
Invite academic staff to attend a REF Development group(s).	REF Development Group Leads	October 2018
Staff Conference – workshop 'RDAP next steps & the REF' with Prof Diane Cox.	Director of Research Office	November 2018
Research Office & Graduate School REF2021 StaffHub page updated	Research Office	January 2019
Roundtable seminar: 'Research into higher education: what makes your research 'high quality' in relation to the REF and wider perspectives?' - circulated to all staff.	Research Office	January 2019
Launch of Code of Practice staff consultation stage. Email invitation for all staff to attend focus groups on UOC's REF2021 draft Code of Practice.	Research Office	All staff Global email – 11 Jan & 25 Jan 2019 Academic Global email - 11 Jan & 25 Jan 2019
Final Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria published by REF	REF Steering Group	Jan 2019
Team Briefing - 'REF2021 and our Strategy – how are we preparing for REF2021?' - circulate to all staff.	All staff team briefing update from the Vice Chancellor	12 Feb 2019
Draft Code of Practice staff focus group sessions.	Research Office	6 Feb 2019 – Lancaster 13 Feb 2019 – Carlisle 27 Feb 2019 – Ambleside
REF Steering Group - specific equality, diversity and inclusion training for REF Steering Group Members.	Research Office	March 2019
Code revised following focus groups and reviewed by the Steering Group and Research and Enterprise Committee	REF Steering Group and Research and Enterprise Committee	March 2019
Invite reminder to academic staff to attend a REF Development group(s).	REF Development Group Leads	April 2019
Draft Code of Practice staff focus group session.	Research Development Manager	4 Apr 2019 - London
Code available on StaffHub for final comment	Research Office	12 April – 3rd May
Code approved by Academic Board	Research Development Manager	8th May 2019
Steering Group approve in principle final Code of Practice.	REF Development Group	14th May 2019
Code presented to Academic Governance Committee	Research Development Manager	21st May 2019
Run mock process for staff eligibility, based on draft Code, with eligible staff informed and made aware of the appeals and individual circumstances process.	REF Development Group	May 2019
EIA 1 - When finalising the Code of Practice and in regards to the composition of the REF Steering Group, and staff identified as having significant responsibility for research and research independence	Research Office / Diversity Officer	May 2019
Code presented to Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee	Research Development Manager	5th June
Code circulated to Employment Policy Committee	Research Development Manager	5th June 2019
Deadline for submitting code of practice to REF, for review by REF Equality and Diversity Panel (EDAP)	Research Office	7th June 2019
Follow up focus groups to discuss the REF and research – all staff invited via staff global email	Research Office	June 2019
Completion of the 2018–19 and 2019–20 HESA individualised staff return - identifying staff with significant responsibility for research – Global Email Update on REF	REF Steering Group	June – August 2019
External Review of Impact Studies and Outputs	External	June – August 2019
Appeals Panel Meeting	Research Office and Panel	**September 2019**

-Global Email Updates (bi-monthly) on REF; Review mock process for staff eligibility and output selection based on draft Code. -Verify that outputs meet open access requirements and undertake initial selection round with feedback to staff with significant responsibility for research. -Testing of data with pilot REF submission system -REF Update at Research and Enterprise Committee and on Team Briefing	Research Office REF Steering Group Research Office Research Office	September – November 2019
EIA 2 - Selecting outputs for submission	Research Office / Diversity Officer	December 2019
Code Approved by EDAP	EDAP	December 2019
Survey of submissions intentions complete; deadline for multiple submissions and exceptions, and review of draft unit-level environment statements.	Research Office	December 2019
Individual Circumstances Panel Meeting	**Research Development Manager**	**January 2020**
Evidence verification for impact case studies; initial selection.	Research Office	Jan – Feb 2020
Appeals Panel Meeting		**Feb 2020**
-Deadline for reduction requests due to staff circumstances -Formal release of the submission systems and accompanying technical guidance; Invitation to HEIs to make submissions; -Invitation to nominate panel members and assessors for the assessment phase; Review of draft institutional-level environment statement -REF Update at Research and Enterprise Committee and on Team Briefing	Research Office	March 2020
Appeals Panel Meeting		**July 2020**
EIA 3 - Considering appeals against identification of staff who do not have significant responsibility for research	**Research Office / Diversity Officer**	**July 2020**
Census Date – Category A Staff Informed	Research Office	**31st July 2020**
Completion of the 2018–19 and 2019–20 HESA individualised staff return - identifying staff with significant responsibility for research.	Research Office	July-Aug 2020
REF Steering Group Meetings Extended with agenda item including consideration of new anonymized data on individual circumstances	Research Office	October and November 2020
REF Update at Research and Enterprise Committee/Academic Board	Research Office	November 2020
EIA 4 - Preparing final submission, including comparing staff with significant responsibility for research versus all staff, independent researchers versus appropriate character pool, and output distribution across UOA staff.	**Research Office / Diversity Officer**	November 2020
Commencement of uploading output data to REF Submission System	Research Office	November 2020
Impact Case Study Evidence Gathering and Secure Storing	Research Office	November/December 2020
REF Steering Group Meetings Extended with agenda item including consideration of new anonymized data on individual circumstances	Research Office	January-February 2021
Commencement of uploading Impact/Environment templates to submission system as ready and available	Research Office	January-February 2021
Final Submission Deadline	Research Office	March 31 2021

Appendix 5 – UOC Academic Structure *(Updated August 2020)*

VC Executive and Senior Leaders
February 2020

VC Executive

Professor Julie Mennell Vice Chancellor	

Professor Brian Webster-Henderson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Health, Environment and Innovation)	David Chesser Chief Operating Officer/Deputy VC	Michelle Leek Pro Vice Chancellor and Director of S&SS	Professor Rob Trimble Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)	Jackie Arnold Pro Vice Chancellor (Region)	Dr Jean Brown University Secretary

Senior Leaders

- Dr Helen Manns — Director of Science, Natural Resources and Outdoor Studies
- Institute of Health
- Kate Mclaughlin-Flynn — Director of Finance and Resources
- Colin Coghill — Director of Information Services
- Jayne Pugh — Director of Marketing and Recruitment
- Ian Sinker — Director (Business Development & Innovat
- Jess Robinson — Director of AQD
- Dee De Rocha — International Director
- Ruth Harrison-Palmer — Director of the Institute of Education
- Amanda Lane — Director of SAAS
- Dr Karen Hadley — Director (Inst Bus Industry Leadership)
- Dr Signy Henderson — Dean for Student Success
- Dr Colette Conroy — Director of the Institute for Arts
- Gavin Adams — Director of the London Campus
- Professor Diane Cox — Director of Research
- Professor Lois Mansfield — Director of Ambleside Campus

Appendix 6. – REF Definition of Research

For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.

It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, culture, society, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.

It includes research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports.

Appendix 7. – Overview of Research Activity since REF 2014

Research Mentoring

Research mentoring has been undertaken at the University for a number of years by proactive researchers, including mentoring across departmental or institutional boundaries. This was formalised in 2015 to ensure that all academic staff and relevant academic-related staff have access to effective mentoring in relation to their research work and researcher identity. The focus of research mentoring is decided by the mentee in negotiation with the mentor. The intention of the formal scheme was to complement current or future informal research mentoring arrangements. The Scheme addresses equality and diversity issues by providing choice for the mentee, guidance to mentors and mentees, access to advice and ongoing evaluation. Mentoring often concentrates on strategic level issues including planning, dissemination, networking, impact, contribution to institutional research aims and developing a researcher profile. In 2018-19, there were 54 listed research mentors and 55 researcher mentees using the scheme.

Research Centres and Groups

Our academic areas of focus are the arts; applied psychology and social sciences; business and leadership; conservation and forestry; education; health; outdoor studies; science and technology; and sport sciences. To support and provide a focus for our academic and research activity, the University has a number of Research Centres and groups. There are four established Research Centres:

- Centre for Regional Economic Development (CRED);
- Institute for Leadership and Sustainability (IFLAS);
- Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA);
- Learning, Education and Development (LED) Research Centre

A proposal is in implementation for a research centre within the Institute of Health that would bring together Active Ageing, other health related research networks, and the Health and Social Care Evaluations (HASCE) unit, which is a well-established facility providing evaluations for a range of organisations and agencies delivering health and social care, tailored to client needs.

The following Research Groups support the research environment of the University. These provide a critical mass of research active staff, taught and research students in focussed cogent areas of expertise:

- Teacher Education Advancement Network (TEAN)
- Active Ageing Research Group (AARG)
- Arts Research Initiative (ARI)

Open Access

In conjunction with staff in Information Services, an Open Access Policy for Research and Scholarly Outputs was written in 2015 and is regularly reviewed. All academic staff deposit their work in the institutional repository, Insight, as the University has agreed on a green open access approach. Through Insight, we have the capacity in place for supporting the expansion of research outputs. The University has invested in the repository; there have been many improvements including, cleaner workflows, guidance for depositors, and JISC plugin for additional discovery, distribution and exposure.

Internal Research Funds, Sabbatical Leave and Early Career Grants

The University promotes research activity, advanced scholarship and its development by providing funding on a competitive basis. There are three funds available through the Research Office: Internal Research Fund, Early Career Grants, and the Sabbatical Leave Scheme; open for applications throughout the academic year. Additional professional development funding is available through Departments for mandatory training.

The Internal Research Fund focuses on developing individual research capabilities and experience. It supports a full range of research and advanced scholarship that leads to high quality research outputs, the UKRI access agenda, external research engagement, and enhances the research environment. This fund also provides seed money for new projects and smaller amounts to support research costs and dissemination.

All academic staff employed by the University for a period of more than three years can apply for Sabbatical Leave. This scheme allows academic staff to have an extended period of leave to undertake research, innovation, teaching development and/ or knowledge transfer that support University strategies. Entitlement to sabbatical leave is based on the merits of a proposal and the strategic needs of the Department and University. Early Career Researcher grants support colleagues who are at an early stage in their research career through grants (maximum of one per applicant) of up to £5000. Early Career Researcher (ECR) Grants aim to support those at an early stage in their career to undertake substantial research activity which will help the applicant in becoming an established researcher

Research Skills Development Programme

Research students undergo a wide training and development programme. Within the University, the "transferable and professional skills" Researcher Development Programme is coordinated by the Graduate School. The "discipline specific" skills are provided within the relevant Department or Centre. Our Programme provides opportunities for research students to engage across disciplinary boundaries. Training on ethics is a mandatory component of the programme for students and supervisors.

Research Skills Development Summer School and Research Student Conference

An annual two week Doctoral summer school is held at the beginning of July offering a variety of sessions, which are well attended by current and prospective students and are also open to staff. The summer school provides opportunities for networking and discussion and includes a Research Student Conference. The Research Student Conference highlights the work of the University of Cumbia's current doctoral candidates and gives students an opportunity to hear from those who are already on the PhD journey, share reflections and offer feedback and advice in a collegiate environment.

Annual Research and Scholarly Survey

The University conducts an annual survey to capture all research and scholarly activity undertaken within the year by academic staff. The annual survey is an essential process that enables us to record and celebrate research and scholarly activity across the University. It helps us to guide general and personalised support for research development by Heads of Department, line managers, members of the Professoriate and the Research Office. The data captured in this survey, together with information gathered monthly forms the basis for our research and scholarly activity database, maintained centrally by the Research Office.

Appendix 8 – Terms of Reference (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group)

Group / Panel Name: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STEERING GROUP

1.1 Parent Committee

University Board Employment Policy Committee via the Vice Chancellor's Executive as required.

1.2 Terms of Reference

- To oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of an Equality and Diversity Plan and Objectives, which identifies key priorities and ensures compliance with our statutory duties for both staff and students.
- To identify and highlight any risks in relation to Equality and Diversity.
- To propose actions to mitigate any risks identified including changes to policies, processes and procedures.
- To inform VCE on a regular basis of:
  o any issues or risks identified
  o progress made against actions
  o proposed recommendations
- To oversee the preparation of an annual EDI report and recommend its approval at VCE by COO and Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development, with onward reporting to the Board's Employment Policy Committee.
- To receive and consider staff and student equality data on a regular basis as well as information from relevant specialists and other committees, as appropriate, in order to inform equality objectives for the university.

1.3 Members' responsibilities:

- To act as EDI champions within each area of the university and pro-actively support any EDI initiatives agreed by the committee.
- To share best practice and bring ideas and initiatives to the committee for discussion and approval.
- To support the embedding of EDI in all business practices in order to mainstream EDI as part of all day-to-day activities.
- To raise awareness of issues by promoting EDI throughout the University in support of the University's values and strategic commitment to making a positive impact on our communities.

1.4 Membership
Chair

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Health, Environment & Innovation)	Brian Webster-Henderson

Members

EDI Officer	Lee McDermott
Dean for Student Success/Nominee	Dr Signy Henderson/Anne Oakey
Head of Student Support	Honor Rhodes
Director Student Services	Emma Bales
Head of HR & OD	Marie Knox-Davis
Director Institute of the Arts	Colette Conroy
Programme Administration Manager	Amanda Holmes
Director of Information Services	Stephen Young
Representative for Academic Staff	Dr Sally Elton-Chalcraft
Representative for Academic Staff	Steven McCarthy-Grundwall
UCU Representative	Karen Lockney
Unison Representative	Diane Lattimer
Co-ordinating Chaplain	Alex Logan

UCSU Welfare & Support Officer   Molly McConnell

1.5 Quoracy
With 15 members, quoracy will be 9 people.

1.6 Frequency of Meetings
2 meetings per year, for a maximum of 1.5 hours per meeting.

1.7 Reporting
Matters and minutes of the group are reported to the Vice Chancellor's Executive as required. The group presents an annual report to the University Board Employment Policy Committee.

1.8 Data Responsibilities
Staff and student EDI data
Annual EDI Report to EPC/Board of Directors

1.9 Key Institutional Policies
EDI University Policy and Objectives.

1.10 Status
Permanent establishment.

Appendix 9 – REF2021 Appeals Form

Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Appeals Form

Appeals against decisions will be handled by an independent appeals panel specifically convened for REF 2021, with three meetings throughout the assessment period (September 2019, February 2020, and July 2020) to ensure that appeals can be considered before the census date of 31 July 2020. Use this form if you wish to appeal against the

University's decision on identification of eligible staff for the institutions submission to Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021).

Please ensure that prior to entering into the Appeals Process that you contact your REF Development group lead and/or your Head of Department for an informal discussion.

Please also ensure that you have read the REF2021 Code of Practice, available on StaffHub, and specifically section 2.15. This form must be sent to ref2021appeals@cumbria.ac.uk by the 1st of the month in which the panel will be meeting (September 2019, February 2020, July 2020).

1. Individual Details

Name	
Role	
Department	
Date	

2. Grounds for appeal

In completing this form I wish to lodge a formal appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

Process for identification of staff with significant responsibility for research or as independent researchers was not applied in accordance with the Code of Practice	
There was an error in the data used by the Research Office in determining criteria for staff with significant responsibility for research or research independence.	

3. Detail of grounds for appeal

Please provide information below to support this appeal. Please continue on a separate sheet if required and append any supporting documentation as appropriate

4. Recommendation of Appeal Panel

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5. Reasons for Decision

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6. Signed by Chair

Signature	
Name (print)	
Date	

University of Cumbria

REF 2021

Appendix 10 - Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances Form

Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Individual Circumstances Form

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see 'Guidance on submissions', paragraphs 117-122). Category A refers to staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research or are independent researchers.

As part of the university's commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and

particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

- To enable staff who have not been able to produce a REF-eligible output during the assessment period to be entered into REF where they have;
    - circumstances that have resulted in an overall period of 46 months or more absence from research during the assessment period, due to equality-related circumstances (see below)
    - circumstances *equivalent* to 46 months or more absence from research due to equality-related circumstances
    - two or more qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- To recognise the effect that equality-related circumstances can have on an individual's ability to research productively, and to adjust expectations in terms of expected workload / production of research outputs.
- To establish whether there are any Units of Assessment where the proportion of declared circumstances is sufficiently high to warrant a request to the higher education funding bodies for a reduced required number of outputs to be submitted.

Applicable circumstances

- Qualifying as an ECR (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016 – see Code of Practice Part 3)
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave
- Junior clinical academics who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of training by 31 July 2020
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill heath, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, you are requested to complete the attached form. Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the 'Guidance on submissions' (REF 2019/01). Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

Ensuring Confidentiality

Individual circumstances forms should be returned to the Research Development Manager (james.hodge@cumbria.ac.uk) by **31st January 2020**. All submitted information will be placed within a secure folder, remain confidential, and will only be reviewed by the panel, which consists of the Research Development Manager, HR Business Partner, and Enterprise Operations Manager.

If on consideration of received individual circumstances forms, UOC decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with disclosed data about individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number

of outputs. The REF 'Guidance on submissions' document (paragraphs 151-201) provides more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

If UOC applies for a reduction of outputs, information will be submitted to Research England via the secure submission system before **March 2020.** Outcomes from this will be received by REF before July 2020 and will be communicated to staff on an individual basis by the Research Development Manager.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF team and UOC will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

Changes in circumstances

The university recognises that staff circumstances may change between completion of the declaration form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should contact their HR partner to provide the updated information.

Individual Circumstances Form

To submit this form you should complete in as much detail as possible and return this to james.hodge@cumbria.ac.uk by **31st January 2020**.

Name: Click here to insert text.

Department: Click here to insert text.

Do you have a REF-eligible output published between 1 January 2014 and 31 July 2020?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please complete this form if you have one or more applicable equality-related circumstance (see above) which you are willing to declare. Please provide requested information in relevant box(es).

Circumstance	Time period affected
Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016 – see Code of Practice section 2.8 for ECR criteria). *Date you became an early career researcher.*	Click here to enter a date.
Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2020.	Tick here ☐
Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector. *Dates and durations in months.*	Click here to enter dates and durations.

Family-related leave; • statutory maternity leave • statutory adoption leave • Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more. *For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.*	Click here to enter dates and durations.
Disability (including chronic conditions) *To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Mental health condition *To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Ill health or injury *To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance *To include: Type of leave taken and brief description of additional constraints, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Caring responsibilities *To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.
Gender reassignment *To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable*	Click here to enter text.

to research productively. Total duration in months.	
Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement. *To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.*	Click here to enter text.

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by the Individual Circumstances Panel.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

     I agree   ☐

Name: Print name here

Signed: Sign or initial here

Date: Insert date here

☐ I give my permission for an HR partner to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

☐ I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the relevant contact within my department. (Please note, if you do not give permission your department may be unable to adjust expectations and put in place appropriate support for you).

I would like to be contacted by:

     Email ☐   Insert email address

     Phone ☐   Insert contact telephone number

Appendix 11 - Confirmation of staff agreement for the processes established to identify staff with SRR

University of Cumbria

FAO
Steven Hill
Director of Research
Research England

(sent via email)

Professor Julie Mennell
Vice Chancellor
Fusehill Street
Carlisle CA1 2HH

01228 634700
julie.mennell@cumbria.ac.uk

University of
Cumbria

These drafts were then presented to staff across each of our five campuses in a 'focus group' setting whereby a set number of questions were posed to attendees regarding our process for determining SRR and identifying staff with SRR. In addition to facilitation from the Research Office, administrative support was also in attendance to ensure that all pertinent points were recorded and incorporated into further iterations of the SRR processes and the wider Code.

All staff were invited to attend these focus groups via two global email messages that highlighted the need for staff to be involved in shaping the SRR processes. They were held across all of our campus locations to ensure wide staff engagement, including in Lancaster (February 6), Carlisle Brampton Road (February 13), Carlisle Fusehill Street (February 13),

University of Cumbria

Code of Practice, the process for SRR, and that all eligible staff had now been informed via email as part of the mock exercise.

Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee
The draft Code of Practice for REF2021 along with an Executive Summary was then shared with the Joint Negotiating and Collective Committee (JNCC) on the agenda for the meeting on June 5. At the meeting the paper was presented by colleagues in the Research Office and was discussed by JNCC committee members, including the two formally recognised trade unions, UCU and UNISON.
The main areas of the Code were highlighted to the committee, including the process for determining SRR, the selection of outputs, and the upholding of fairness and transparency