



University of the West of England, Bristol

Code of Practice for REF2021

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Executive Summary

It is a requirement of REF2021 that Universities develop, agree and publish a Code of Practice that sets out the policies and procedures being undertaken with respect to their REF submission. Guidance published by the Funding Bodies in January 2019 provides the context within which the University has drafted this Code of Practice (and accompanying appendices).

Following an initial consultation on the Key Elements of the Code of Practice (November 2018 - January 2019), a full consultation with all academic staff to finalise the Code of Practice took place in March/April 2019, culminating with approval by Academic Board in May. The Code will be submitted to the Funding Bodies for approval by 7 June 2019 and is expected to be published by December 2019.

This document focusses on the three core areas of the Code which relate to:

- the process by which the university will determine staff considered to have 'significant responsibility for research' (and whose research outputs are therefore eligible for submission);
- the definition of 'research independence', a criterion we are expected to apply to staff in the early stages of their research career;
- the process of selecting the outputs to be submitted from the total pool of eligible outputs.

Eligible staff

For the purposes of REF2021, all academic staff will be designated as 'eligible' if they are academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, on the payroll on the census date, whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'. For staff on 'research only' contracts, the eligible pool will only include those who are independent researchers.

'Submitted' staff

'Submitted' staff will be designated as those from among the total pool of eligible staff who have been identified as having 'significant responsibility for research' on the census date of 31 July 2020. Eligible staff will typically be considered to have significant responsibility for research if, on that date, they:

- a) are Professors or Associate Professors, *or*
- b) have been allocated 110 bundles (approx. 20%) or more of 'research time' within their workload for 2019/20 (pro rata for part-time staff), *and*

- c) are operating as independent researchers.

Workload allocations will be those reflected in the version of the workload model for the year 2019/20 as on the census date.

All staff will be made aware of their status with respect to REF2021 in autumn 2019 and an appeals process will be put in place for staff who wish to have their position reviewed.

Research independence

In line with REF guidance, an independent researcher is considered to be an ‘individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual’s research programme’. This may include those:

- leading or acting as a PI or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work (including internally-funded competitive schemes).
- holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.
- acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project

For REF 2021, therefore the default position is that;

- Senior Research Fellows on the census will be considered as independent researchers,
- Research Fellows will be considered on an individual basis, against the criteria noted above.
- Research Associates will not be considered as independent researchers

All research staff will be made aware of their status with respect to REF2021 in autumn 2019 and an appeals process will be put in place for staff who wish to have their position reviewed.

Selection of outputs

Outputs will be chosen for submission on the basis of quality, to best represent the excellence of research generated by the unit over the assessment period and to ensure as far as possible that the submission benefits the University as a whole. The quality of outputs will be determined by at least two assessments by internal or external peer reviewers (including outputs generated by eligible staff at UWE who have left during the assessment

period). The selection process will recognise the requirement to include at least one, and a maximum of five, outputs per submitted member of staff.

Individual Circumstances

Account will be taken as appropriate, of the individual circumstances of staff that may have affected their ability to generate research outputs over the assessment period (2014- 2020). However, the University has no expectation about the contribution any individual may make to the pool of outputs selected for submission.

All submitted staff will be invited, voluntarily, to submit details of the individual circumstances, which will be treated in confidence and considered by an independent panel.

Where a case is made that an individual has been unable to generate the minimum requirement of one output over the period, this will be considered in confidence and, if agreed, will be submitted to the Funding Bodies for consideration.

Early Career Researchers

Early Career Researchers will be identified in accordance with the REF definition and their outputs considered alongside those of all submitted staff and assessed against the same quality criteria.

Equality Impact Analysis

An initial equality impact assessment on the overall Code has been undertaken on the draft Code of Practice and a further, more detailed, equality analysis will be undertaken following the Mock REF in autumn 2019.

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 The REF in the context of the UWE Bristol Strategy 2020 and 2030

The University's ambition for 'Research with Impact' 2020 Strategy is to achieve *"world-class performance in selected areas of research that meets the needs of our community, a sustainable economy and society and feeds the scholarship and enquiry that underpins our learning and teaching"*. As we approach REF2021, we recognise this as an important measure of our progress, a milestone in our development to establish critical volume and ensure the sustainability of our research. Successful engagement with the REF is the means by which we seek to maximise the reputational and financial benefits to the University but also to implement a process that is rigorous, transparent and fair, in line with the expectations of the Funding Bodies.

It is important however that UWE Bristol's REF strategy is seen in the context of our broader ambition and in particular our emerging Strategy 2030 which prioritises *"working together to create, challenge, develop and apply knowledge to solve problems and broaden understanding"*. Our strategy for the next decade is *"to continue to drive and inspire a culture of transformation – locally, nationally and globally. We will be at the forefront of creating new solutions to worldwide challenges, and maximising the potential of our students and staff through our outstanding practice-led learning and teaching, research and enterprise. We want UWE Bristol to be recognised globally as a leader in real world focused teaching and research."*

In doing so, we have identified five key values, including *inclusivity*. We aim to make UWE Bristol *"a supportive and inspiring place to learn and work – somewhere where diversity of experience and perspective is encouraged, and learning and research is shared and accessible to as many people as possible."* This is reflected in our approach to REF2021 which is designed to address the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability, and inclusivity.

For example, in its approach to REF 2021, and in particular the criteria set out to identify staff with significant responsibility for research, the University has sought to be more inclusive of staff supported to undertake research than in previous exercises. This is in line with the outcome of the Stern Review and the framework for REF2021 set out by the Funding Bodies, as well as the institution's own inclusivity objectives. Initial estimates suggest that something like 33% more UWE staff are likely to have their research submitted to REF2021 than in REF2014.

1.2 Equality and Diversity

UWE Bristol's REF 2021 Code of Practice sits within a broader framework of organisational culture at UWE Bristol which includes an organisational strategy (*Inclusivity 2020*) committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. In addition to meeting needs of individuals in the protected groups outlined in the Equality Act 2010, we strive to embed inclusivity in all our strategic and day-to-day activities.

Strategic activity at UWE Bristol reaches every corner of our work, and is underpinned by our ambitions and values. Our Equality and Diversity Policy sets out the University's commitment to the development of inclusive and supportive learning and working environments for all students and staff where all individuals have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

In our research activities, this commitment is evidenced most strongly through the work of our departmental and University level Athena SWAN self-assessment teams and the delivery of associated action plans, which champion and implement gender equality and intersectional initiatives within Faculties and at University level. We were proud to have renewed our Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award in 2017.

All planned changes whether of buildings, policies or other initiatives (including this Code of Practice) undertake an equality-focused consultation to ensure that impact on protected groups has been considered and mitigating actions put in place for any negative impacts identified.

The governance committee responsible for equality, diversity and inclusivity, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee is chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost of the institution. They also serve as the Senior Diversity Champion, leading the six Executive Deans and Heads of Service who serve as Senior Diversity Champions for specific protected characteristics. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee is supported by a dedicated Equality and Diversity Unit.

In developing this Code of Practice, the REF Management team has liaised closely with the Equality and Diversity Unit. This has included planning and undertaking Equality Impact Assessments and analysis and in supporting associated stakeholder consultation and equality training.

Actions taken since REF 2014

Our Equality Analysis for REF2014 indicated that there were 'no apparent issues in relation to ethnicity, disability and age but some concern over smaller proportion of women being

submitted than men' (32% of eligible men submitted compared to 22% of eligible women). We have therefore sought to provide further support to female researchers, most notably through active engagement with Athena SWAN. This is seen as a key strategy for fulfilling our commitment to the advancement of gender equality in academia. Led by two senior staff, one of whom is also a member of REFSIG, UWE Bristol renewed its Athena SWAN Bronze university status in 2017. Since 2014, three departments have had their Bronze awards renewed and two have made their first successful applications. The university also continues to promote the careers of women and early career researchers through a Women Researchers Mentoring Scheme and through the Vice Chancellor's Early Career Researcher awards (in which the success rate for female applicants is higher than for male). The equality analyses being undertaken through the implementation of this Code of Practice will be scrutinised in particular to identify progress with regard to the inclusion of women researchers in the REF.

Since 2014, the University has also reinforced its programme of support of Equality and Diversity through a range of actions seeking to promote its objectives for inclusivity, led by a team of six Executive Deans and Heads of Professional Service serving as Senior Diversity Champions. This has included making online E&D training mandatory for all staff since 2014. The UWE Manager training package, which includes a unit on 'Creating an inclusive workplace', also became mandatory for all people managers in 2017.

Inclusivity 2020 (UWE Bristol's four year Single Equality Scheme launched in 2016) supports our aspiration for each protected characteristic group to have as good an experience and progression as every other protected characteristic group. For example, support for disabled staff included the launch in 2016 of a dedicated Support Service for Disabled Staff, including advice and support for staff and managers on Reasonable Adjustments, Access to Work, and Mental Health. UWE Bristol became a Disability Confident employer in 2016 and a Mindful Employer in 2017.

In 2015, UWE Bristol was ranked 11th in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, the top university in the Index. We have remained a Stonewall Diversity Champion in subsequent years. We have sponsored Bristol Pride since its re-launch in 2010 and have been one of its six main sponsors since 2015. We were the inaugural Bristol Pride Accessibility Sponsor in July 2018.

UWE Bristol has pioneered support for mental health and well-being issues through its Mental Health First strategy, led by the Vice Chancellor personally and comprising a range of support services, guidance and training. This includes a confidential and independent Employee Assistance Programme and a suite of training modules around mental health and well-being, including mandatory mental health and stress management training for managers.

1.3 Transparency, Consistency, Fairness and Communication with staff

The process set out in this Code makes transparent the means by which we will identify staff with significant responsibility for research, determine research independence and select outputs for inclusion in REF submissions. These processes, as embodied in this Code of Practice, will be applied consistently and fairly across the institution. Key to this commitment is the importance of consulting and communicating with staff across the institution (including to those on leave of absence), through various mechanisms and channels, including the staff intranet. In addition to the consultation process described below, regular updates on progress in the development of the Code have been made via the University's committee structures and other key fora. Once agreed by the Funding Bodies and published on the external web site and intranet, all staff will be alerted to the final version of the Code.

1.4 Accountability, staff, committees and training

Ultimately the Vice Chancellor is responsible for ensuring the REF submission is made in accordance with the Code of Practice, which will require agreement by the Academic Board and with the staff body more widely, including the University and College Union.

Responsibility for the day-to-day development and implementation of the Code of Practice, and for all aspects of the REF submission, lies with the REF Strategy Implementation Group (REFSIG) which comprises the senior research managers of the University. This is chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) and comprises the Associate Deans (Research) in each of the four University Faculties and two Assistant Directors of Research, Business & Innovation (RBI), the professional service responsible for supporting research and innovation, including the REF. One of the Assistant Directors is also designated as the University REF Manager (see Appendix 1).

REFSIG reports directly to the Vice Chancellor and also provides reports for the University's Academic Board and its Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee. Communication with Faculties is via Faculty Executives and the Associate Deans (Research) who also chair Faculty Research & Knowledge Exchange Committees.

For each Unit of Assessment the University is submitting to, a UoA leader (or Co-leaders) has been appointed through an open recruitment process. They are responsible for leading the development of the submission to that unit, reporting to the relevant Associate Dean (Research) and thence to REFSIG. Other staff or groups may be appointed within Faculties to support the Unit of Assessment leaders in that task.

(See Appendix 1 – Committee structures, membership and terms of reference Appendix 2 –Reporting lines, and Appendix 3 – Unit of Assessment role descriptor).

1.5 Consultation

The University has consulted widely in the development of this Code. An initial consultation document on the *Key Elements of a Code of Practice for REF2021* was published on the intranet in November 2018 with a consultation period running through to 31 January 2019. All UWE Bristol staff were alerted to the publication of the consultation document via the Weekly Staff News which is emailed to all staff. It was also circulated directly to Executive Deans, Associate Deans (Research), Heads of Departments, the Researchers Forum (the representative forum for research-only staff) and REF Unit of Assessment leads. The document was considered at a range of committees and fora including Academic Board, Faculty Executives, University Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee, the Athena SWAN Steering Group and all Faculty Research & Knowledge Exchange Committees. A drop-in session open to all staff was organised as was a meeting with E&D Staff Networks (self-organised groups that bring together staff who identify with a group relating to one of the protected characteristics). It was also discussed with the Equality & Diversity Unit, Human Resources and UCU.

Comments on the *Key Elements of a Code of Practice for REF2021* were submitted by a range of individuals, committees and groups in a variety of forms, including verbal comments, meeting minutes, emails and more formal responses. These were considered by the REFSIG and adjustments and clarifications made to the key elements of the Code in drafting the full version.

The consultation on the full Code of Practice was instigated in March 2019, with a deadline for comments of 30 April. Published on the intranet, all staff were alerted to the publication of the Code via personal emails, or via home address if on leave of absence, and in accessible formats if required. As with the initial consultation, it was considered at all relevant fora and committees and circulated directly to Executive Deans, Associate Deans (Research), Heads of Departments, the Researchers Forum, E&D Staff Networks, UCU and REF Unit of Assessment leads. The Code was considered by Faculty Executives, University Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee and all Faculty Research & Knowledge Exchange Committees. Drop-in sessions open to all staff were held on each of the university's three main campuses. Issues raised by the consultation were considered by REFSIG on 25 April REF and final adjustments and clarifications made to the Code. Final approval was given by Academic Board on 15 May. Agreement with the staff body has been secured through discussion with and consideration by, UCU.

1.6 Training

All staff with a significant role in the implementation of the Code of Practice will undergo mandatory training with respect to equality and diversity, specifically tailored to the context of the REF and of the Code of Practice. This will include staff involved in the key processes of i) identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, ii) determining research independence and iii) selecting outputs to be submitted. It will therefore include members of REFSIG, the REF team in RBI, UoA leaders and members of the Appeals and Individual Circumstances Panels. Internal and external reviewers will also be invited to attend.

The resources to support training will include material provided by Advance HE Equality, (Diversity, Inclusion and the Research Excellence Framework 2021: A workshop for practitioners) and the Funding Bodies (REF Guidance and associated webinars and presentation slides). Based on guidance provided by Advance HE, training will also include how to discuss 'significant responsibility' and 'independence' with staff and the impact of this on their career. An open event for all staff will also be organised to feedback on the REF process and its implications for staff careers, as well as advising where appropriate on the appeals process.

This training will take place following the Mock REF in autumn 2019 and agreement of the Code by the Funding Bodies, in advance of the implementation of the Code and the decision-making process that will confirm who has been identified as having significant responsibility for research and the final selection of outputs to be submitted.

(See Appendix 4 – Further information about the REF E&D Training Programme).

1.7 Appeals

An appeals process, in relation to identifying staff with significant responsibility for research and determining research independence, is available to all staff. Appeals may be made once a provisional indication has been given of staff who would be considered Category A eligible and Category A submitted for REF2021. This will follow a Mock REF being undertaken in the summer/autumn 2019. Details of the appeals procedure will be communicated to all staff as part of the process of informing staff of their provisional designation as Category A eligible and Category A submitted, and any subsequent changes. This will include making available an appeals form and associated guidance.

Once staff are aware of their provisional designation, appeals can be made anytime up to the REF census date of 31 July 2020. This will be considered initially as an informal appeal with the option of moving into a formal appeal if the member of staff concerned wishes to do so. Only staff whose status changes as a consequence of the implementation of the Code following the census date can appeal after that date, with a final deadline of 30 September 2020.

Appeals can only be made on the grounds that the process for determining significant responsibility for research or research independence has been incorrectly applied or is based on inaccurate information for the individual concerned.

Appeals will be submitted to the REF Manager and considered by a panel reporting to REFSIG comprising an Executive Dean from a faculty different to that of the appellant, a member of the Board of Governors, the Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and the Head of Human Resources, or nominee, supported by the Deputy REF Manager. Appeals will be considered and the outcome conveyed to the individual within a period of 15 working days. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final. Staff involved in the appeals process will also undergo REF-specific equality and diversity training.

1.8 Equality impact Assessment

An initial equality impact assessment on the overall Code has been undertaken on the draft Code of Practice (**Appendix 5- Initial Equality Impact Assessment**). This has been compiled in collaboration with the Equality & Diversity unit and published for consultation in March 2019.

A further, more detailed, equality analysis will be undertaken following the Mock REF in autumn 2019. This will look in particular at:

- the equality profile of Category A staff provisionally identified as having SRR, compared to the profile of all Category A eligible staff
- the equality profile of research-only staff provisionally considered to be independent researchers compared to the profile of all research staff
- the equality profile of the designated authors of provisionally selected outputs compared to the profile of the designated authors of the total pool of selectable outputs (including ECR status)
- the equality profile of staff allocated internally funded research time compared to the profile of those applying for such time

In addition, intersectional analyses will be undertaken where the data is of sufficient detail to provide meaningful information.

Following analysis and publication of the outcome, REFSIG will consider what, if any, actions should be taken in relation to the Code and advise the Vice Chancellor accordingly. Any significant changes to the Code will need to be agreed with the Funding Bodies.

A final equality impact assessment and analysis will be undertaken on the final submission early in 2021 to inform the University's future thinking in relation to equality and diversity and research, including our approach to future REF exercises.

Equality and impact case studies

Impact case studies will be selected through an iterative and developmental process over the assessment period designed to identify those eligible case studies that can demonstrate the greatest reach and significance, irrespective of who is designated as the academic lead(s). This process is led by the REFSIG in liaison with Unit of Assessment leaders and case study leads with support from staff in RBI. As part of the final equality impact assessment, the equality profile of academic staff leading submitted case studies will be analysed by comparison to the profile of all eligible and submittable staff with a view to informing the University's approach to the support and facilitation of impact post-REF2021, including the future selection of case studies.

Part 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

2.1 Category A eligible staff

The University is required to identify REF-eligible staff. These staff will comprise the total pool of staff from which individuals deemed to have significant responsibility for research are identified and whose outputs will be eligible for submission.

For the purposes of REF2021, all academic staff will be designated as ‘eligible’ if they meet the following definition, as provided in the guidance published by the Funding Bodies: *Academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) or greater, on the payroll on the census date, whose primary employment function is to undertake either ‘research only’ or ‘teaching and research’. Staff should have a substantive connection with the submitting institution. For staff on ‘research only’ contracts, the eligible pool should only include those who are independent researchers.*

At UWE Bristol, eligible staff will include all staff on standard academic contracts with an FTE of 0.2 or greater on the census date (31 July 2020) and a substantive connection to the institution (**see Appendix 6 – Definition of Key REF Terms**).

It will also, typically, include Senior Research Fellows given the expectation that their role requires them to undertake independent research. Research Fellows will be considered on a case by case basis against the definition of research independence given that there are variable practices and disciplinary differences in the way research at this level is organised. Research Associates, typically, will not be considered eligible as they are not normally considered to be undertaking independent research (see Part 3 below).

2.2 Category A submitted staff

In line with the REF guidance, ‘submitted’ staff will be designated as those from among the total pool of eligible staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date. As a consequence of this designation, their outputs can be included in the institution’s submission.

2.3 Significant Responsibility for Research

In the REF guidance, staff with significant responsibility for research are defined as *“those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role”*. In addition, it is specified that *“many institutions will want to draw on the proportion of time that is allocated for research to*

identify staff in scope. The funding bodies consider that this will be an appropriate approach, where there is a clear and agreed rationale for the proportion that is set".

Based on this guidance, it is proposed that eligible staff at UWE Bristol will typically be considered to have 'significant responsibility for research' if they:

- d) are Professors or Associate Professors, *or*
- e) have been allocated 110 bundles or more of 'research time' (approx 20%) within their workload for the year of the specified REF census date, pro rata for part-time staff, *and*
- f) are operating as independent researchers.

It is important to recognise that the criteria for defining significant responsibility for research apply on the census date of 31 July 2020 and do not reflect the status of staff over the whole assessment period. While the REF process assesses research over an extended period (2014 to 2020), in terms of staff eligibility, the REF (as with the RAE before it) is based on a snapshot on the census date. The criteria for significant responsibility therefore reflect expectations on staff in relation to their roles and workload position as they are on the census date and are not linked to any expectations about either the quality or number of outputs that are generated over the assessment period.

- **Professors and Associate Professors**

Professors and Associate Professors are typically considered to have significant responsibility for research as an expectation of their roles. Exceptionally these titles may be used where there is no such expectation e.g. senior managers and those appointed on the basis of their expertise and role in support of knowledge exchange rather than research. Where this is the case such staff will not be considered to have significant responsibility for research. This expectation should be explicit in the terms of their employment.

- **Workload allocation**

110 workload bundles (broadly equivalent to 20% of workload) is considered to reflect sufficient time and resources to justify someone being considered to have *significant* responsibility for research on the census date of the REF. As indicated above, it is a requirement that this is determined on the census date, it is not specifically a measure of the time or resources required to generate outputs for the REF, either during the year of the census date (2019/20) or over the assessment period of REF2021 as a whole (2014-2020).

The workload allocation of part-time staff will be treated pro rata so that, for example, an eligible member of staff on a 0.5 FTE contract on the census date would be considered to have significant responsibility if they have 55 workload bundles or more for independent research or more (i.e. equivalent to 20% of workload, consistent with the % threshold for full-time staff).

- **Independent research**

It is recognised that not all staff on standard academic contracts who are allocated research time are expected to undertake independent research. Staff in the early stages of their research development, including those undertaking doctoral or equivalent level research training or research support, for example, would not normally be considered to be undertaking independent research. Where appropriate, the criteria for independence will therefore be applied to determine whether an eligible member of staff is considered to have 'significant responsibility' (see Part 3).

- **Application of criteria**

Staff will be considered 'submitted' for REF 2021 if they are considered to have significant responsibility for research on the census date (31 July 2020) according to the above criteria. Workload allocations will be those reflected in the final version of their workload model for the year of the census date (2019/20).

- **Research time**

For the purposes of this definition, 'research time' includes:

- internally funded research allocations (to support someone undertaking independent research)
- externally funded research allocations (to support someone undertaking independent research)

- **Internally funded research**

The University is committed to providing internal support for research-related activities in the areas of research excellence and emerging excellence that align with the University strategic priorities. This support is provided through a number of mechanisms including in the form of internally funded research time.

Internally funded time for research is the resource that supports the time of staff on academic contracts to undertake research activities, where they align with UWE Bristol research priorities. Resources are allocated via various schemes and processes according to clearly stated criteria, some organised at faculty level and some through central schemes such as the Vice Chancellors Early Career Researcher Awards and the Interdisciplinary Research Challenge Fund. All workload data is held centrally on a single workload management system.

Equality data on the allocation of resources are monitored to ensure equality of opportunity and that allocations are made through fair and transparent processes. In addition to general monitoring, for the REF census year in particular, REFSIG will oversee a university-wide equality analysis to identify any issues regarding the allocation of research workload. This

will include comparing the equality profile of staff being allocated research time with that of those applying for such allocations (see section 1.8).

- **Externally funded research**

Workload associated with externally-funded research is also included within the workload model of academic staff. All applications for external research income are provided with Full Economic Cost estimates relating to the proposed inputs of staff associated with the project. These are converted into an individual's workload regardless of the grade of the member(s) of staff involved. Where this is designated as research workload for Category A eligible staff, this will count towards the 110 workload bundles used in the Code in the criteria for SRR, provided they are associated with an expectation that the staff are undertaking independent research.

2.4 Process for determining SRR

As noted, staff will be considered 'submitted' for REF 2021 if they are considered to have significant responsibility for research on the census date (31 July 2020) according to the above criteria. Where appropriate, workload allocations will be those reflected in the final version of their workload model for the year of the census date (2019/20).

As part of the preparations for REF2021, a mock process will be undertaken with 31 July 2019 as the census date. As a result, all Category A eligible staff will be made aware of whether they meet the definition of having 'significant responsibility for research' as at that census date, based on provisional data for workloads in 2019/20, and where appropriate whether they are considered to be independent researchers.

Any changes to this status as they emerge during 2019/20 in the lead up to the REF2021 census date, including any changes required as a consequence of the review of our Code of Practice by the Funding Bodies, will be communicated to the individual staff affected, and once the final Code is published. Any further changes to this status as a consequence of the applying the Code as on the census date of 31 July 2020 will also be communicated to the individual staff affected.

Category A eligible staff (excluding Professors and Associate Professors) who join the university during 2019/20, and whose workload allocation only covers part of the year, will be considered to have SRR if their research time consists of the equivalent of at least 110 workload bundles for the year, calculated pro rata from the FTE period of employment during the year. So, for example, someone joining the University on a full-time contract on 1 February 2020 and who has an allocation of 55 research wlbs for the remaining 6 months of 2019/20 will be identified as having SRR (the FTE equivalent of this allocation for 12 months being 110 wlbs).

The same principle will apply to staff who are on long-term absence for a specific period during 2019/20 and whose workload allocation is only agreed for part of the year, including those, for example, on maternity leave and long term sickness. In such circumstances the period of absence and the period of the workload should be clearly identified and recorded.

2.5 Systems supporting the process

Advice, procedures and information systems in support of the REF process are provided by staff in Research, Business & Innovation (RBI), led by the designated REF Manager with a team comprising a Deputy REF Manager and Head of Research Information & Systems. All data about people, outputs and other aspects of the REF process are held on a central database managed by RBI, held in accordance with the University's data protection policy. This includes a REFCV system linked to the institutional repository that includes information about the research outputs of staff, and the outcomes of reviews of those outputs. The database also includes information from HR about the employment status of staff and data about workload allocations acquired from the University's workload management system. Staff considered to have significant responsibility for research are identified through this information according to the process outlined above and in Appendix 4.

2.6 Decision-making process

For both the mock and final submission, the information regarding SRR and research independence will be presented to the REFSIG and shared with the relevant Unit of Assessment lead. Any issues raised by the process will be considered by the REFSIG who will be the decision-making body.

2.7 Staff, committees and training

The process of defining Significant Responsibility for Research and of considering the position of individual staff will be governed by the same committees described in Part 1 above.

2.8 Communication with staff

As noted above, all staff will be made aware of their provisional status with respect to REF2021 following the Mock REF in 2019 via individualised emails (or letters if absent from work for an extended periods). An appeals process will be available for staff who wish to have their position reviewed. Any changes in status will be communicated directly to the relevant staff, and will be confirmed once the final Code is applied on the census date of 31 July 2020.

2.9 Appeals

Staff will be entitled to appeal if they feel an incorrect decision has been made regarding their designation (see Appeals above). Appeals can only be made on the grounds that the process for determining significant responsibility for research has been incorrectly applied or is based on inaccurate information for the individual concerned.

2.10 Equality impact Assessment

As noted in Part 1 above, a detailed, equality impact analysis will be undertaken following the Mock REF in autumn 2019, which includes an analysis of the equality profile of Category A staff provisionally identified as having SRR, compared to the profile of all Category A eligible staff. Intersectional analyses will be undertaken where the data is of sufficient detail to provide meaningful information.

Following analysis and publication of the outcome, REFSIG will consider what, if any, actions should be taken in relation to the process and criteria for identifying staff with SRR and advise the Vice Chancellor accordingly. Any significant changes to the Code will need to be agreed with the Funding Bodies.

A final equality impact assessment and analysis will be undertaken on the final submission early in 2021 to inform the University's future thinking in relation to the process and criteria for identifying staff with SRR within its wider aim of being "a supportive and inspiring place to learn and work – somewhere where diversity of experience and perspective is encouraged, and learning and research is shared and accessible to as many people as possible."

(See Appendix 7 – Overview of process for identifying staff who are eligible and submitted for REF 2021).

Part 3: Determining Research Independence

3.1 Research Independence and research staff

In line with REF guidance, an independent researcher will be considered to be an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual's research programme on the census date. This may include those:

- leading or acting as a principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work (including internally-funded competitive schemes such as the Vice Chancellor's Early Career Research Awards or Interdisciplinary Research Challenge Fund awards) .
- holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.
- leading a research group or a substantial work package

In addition, in the social sciences, arts and humanities (panels C and D), it may include:

- acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project
- making significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research

As noted above, at UWE Bristol it is an expectation of their role that Senior Research Fellows act as independent researchers. Research Fellows could be acting independently - there are variable practices and disciplinary differences in the way research at this level is organised, as reflected for example in the broader criteria noted above for social sciences, arts and humanities. Research Associates would typically be carrying out research in the capacity of an assistant to a senior colleague and therefore would not be considered as independent researchers.

For REF 2021, therefore;

- Senior Research Fellows on the census date will be considered as independent researchers, unless exceptionally it can be shown that they do not meet any of the criteria of independence given above.
- Research Fellows on the census date will be considered on an individual basis, against the criteria of independence given above.
- Research Associates on the census date will be not considered as independent researchers, unless exceptionally it can be shown that they do meet at least one of the criteria of independence given above.

3.2 Research Independence and research and teaching staff

As noted in paragraph 2.3, UWE Bristol staff on 'teaching and research' contracts cannot be assumed to be independent researchers. The criteria of independence, as noted in paragraph 3.1 above, will therefore be applied as part of the process of determining significant responsibility for research (see Part 2 and Appendix 7).

3.3 Decision-making process

The process for determining research independence, for both 'research' and 'research and teaching' staff will mirror that for significant responsibility described in Part 2 above.

Through the communication and consultation on the Code of Practice, all staff have been made aware of the proposed eligibility criteria for both Category A eligible and Category A submitted staff, including the definition of 'independence' in relation to research-only and research and teaching staff (see Part 1, Communication with Staff).

For research staff, information provided by HR will be used to identify SRFs, RFs and RAs. The position of RFs in relation to independence will be considered by the Associate Dean (Research) for the relevant faculty, liaising with the Fellow and their line manager to determine if one or more of the criteria of independence have been met, and a recommendation made to REFSIG accordingly.

For staff who are Category A eligible, the independence criterion will be applied in considering the nature of workload allocation, in particular whether the external or internal resources allocated support an expectation that the individual will be operating independently. In most cases where the resources support research time it will be assumed the independence criterion will be met unless it is evident that it is specifically for doctoral or equivalent level research development, or research-related activities that do not in themselves constitute independent research.

3.4 Communication with staff

Following the Mock REF in summer/autumn 2019, all research staff will be informed via individual emails, or by letter if absent from work for an extended period, whether they are considered to meet the definition of 'independence' as of the mock census date, and therefore meet the definition of both Category A eligible and Category A submitted. This will include the outcome of the review of all Research Fellows by the relevant Associate Dean (Research) reporting to the REFSIG.

As a result, Research Associates will be given the opportunity to make a case to be considered as independent researchers, and Senior Research Fellows will be given the opportunity to make a case not to be considered as independent researchers. These will also be considered by the relevant Associate Dean (Research) reporting to the REF Strategy Implementation Group. The REFSIG will make the final judgement although the appeals process will still be open if staff wish to pursue an appeal (see paragraph 1.7).

In all cases a record will be kept by the REF Manager which will comprise the evidence to support the decision regarding a judgment on research independence of research staff. Any changes to this status as they emerge during 2019/20 in the lead up to the REF2021 census date, including any changes required as a consequence of the review of our Code of Practice by the Funding Bodies, will be communicated to the individual staff affected, and will be confirmed once the final Code is applied on the census date of 31 July 2020. For staff who are Category A eligible, communication about their status as independent researchers is covered in Part 2 above.

3.5 Staff, committees and training

The process of defining research independence and of considering the position of individual staff will be governed by the same committees described in Part 1 above.

3.6 Appeals

The Appeals process regarding the determination of research independence will be as described in Part 1 above. Appeals can only be made on the grounds that the process for determining research independence has been incorrectly applied or is based on inaccurate information.

3.7 Equality impact assessment

As noted in Part 1 above, a detailed, equality analysis will be undertaken following the Mock REF in autumn 2019, which includes an analysis of the equality profile of research-only staff provisionally considered to be independent researchers compared to the profile of all research staff.

Following analysis and publication of the outcome, REFSIG will consider what, if any, actions should be taken in relation to the process and criteria for identifying staff considered to be independent researchers and advise the Vice Chancellor accordingly. Any significant changes to the Code will need to be agreed with the Funding Bodies.

A further equality impact assessment and analysis will be undertaken on the final submission early in 2021 to inform the University's future thinking in relation to the process and criteria for identifying staff considered to be independent researchers within its wider inclusivity objectives.

Part 4: Selection of outputs and declaration of individual circumstances

4.1 Policy and Procedures

Outputs will be chosen for submission on the basis of quality, to best represent the excellent research generated by the unit over the assessment period. In doing so, the outcome of any equality impact assessment will be taken into account to ensure that outputs have been selected without disadvantaging any particular protected groups. However, there is no expectation that outputs will be selected specifically to reflect the diversity of Category A submitted staff in any particular unit.

The process of selection will recognise the requirement to include at least one, and a maximum of five, outputs per Category A submitted member of staff. However, beyond this there will be no expectation of how many outputs any particular individual will contribute. This is an important principle of the University's process that will be impressed on staff involved in the selection process through the mandatory training provision.

Review process

Since 2016, all staff have been invited to provide details of their outputs over the REF2021 assessment period on a central database (REFCV system) linked to the institutional repository, managed by the REF team in RBI. Review of these outputs has been undertaken on an on-going basis. All outputs under consideration, including eligible outputs generated by Category A staff who have left UWE Bristol during the assessment period, are required to have at least two assessments, by internal and/or external reviewers and scored against the published REF quality criteria (**See Appendix 8 – Guidance for Reviewers**). Where there is significant disparity in the assessment of a particular output by two reviewers, a third will be sought.

These assessments are organised by the UoA leaders, reporting to Associate Deans (Research). Internal and external reviewers are chosen on the basis of their research expertise and, in the case of external reviewers, often on the basis of their experience of the REF process. UoA Leaders are also responsible for each output being given an overall score, based on at least two assessments, which is stored on the central database in RBI (see Part 1). Output scores are provided at the level of high/solid/low within each grade as defined by the REF guidance e.g. high 3*, solid 3*, low 3*.

Staff are given feedback on the overall score for their individual outputs by UoA Leaders and may be offered additional anonymous feedback based on the reviewers' comments as appropriate, for developmental purposes.

The total pool of selectable outputs will comprise all eligible outputs of submittable members of staff, up to a maximum of 5 for any one individual. Outputs with co-authors within the same Unit of Assessment will only be counted once within the total pool.

An initial indication of the outputs likely to be selected from the total will be generated as an outcome of the Mock REF being conducted in summer/autumn 2019. However the final selection will take place following implementation of the Code of Practice and after the census date of 31 July 2020 when the FTE of submittable staff and the exact number of outputs required will be known, including any reductions agreed by the Funding Bodies.

Given the requirement for eligible outputs to have at least two internal or external reviews as part of the selection process, the deadline by which outputs have to be available for review will be 31 October 2020. This may include outputs not yet publicly available but which can be reviewed in pre-published form, provided they are expected to be publicly available by the REF deadline of 31 December 2020, or where the appearance of the final version in the public domain has been delayed due to the effects of COVID-19, and it meets the eligibility criteria for delayed outputs set out in 'Guidance on Revisions to REF2021' (REF2020/02).

Outputs for submission will be chosen as follows, by unit of assessment:

- For each Category A submitted member of staff, their most highly rated output will be selected for submission.
- After that, the remaining number of outputs required to be submitted will be chosen on the basis of quality, up to a maximum of 5 outputs per Category A submitted member of staff, including eligible outputs by staff who have left the institution over the assessment period.
- Co-authored outputs will be notionally allocated to one Category A submitted member of staff but will be reviewed if that member of staff reaches the maximum of 5 outputs, and may be re-assigned if any further outputs with that author are selected on the basis of their quality scores
- If it is necessary to choose between outputs of the same quality in order to reach the required number, account will be taken of the distribution of outputs between individuals and across the subject areas of the submission.
- The final selection of outputs will be agreed by the REFSIG.
- Staff will be informed which of their outputs have been selected for submission once the final selection has been agreed. The notional attribution of co-authored outputs will not be indicated to staff.

4.2 Decision-making process

As with all aspects of the REF preparation, the process for selecting outputs is the responsibility of the REFSIG, working with UoA Leaders. The rationale for the process is to ensure that the submission best reflects the excellent research generated by staff in the unit over the assessment period. As noted, there is no expectation about the number of outputs any particular individual may contribute to the submission, and so the decision-making process will not take individual circumstances into account, with the exception of an individual who has made a successful case to be included with zero outputs (see 4.4 below). The eligible outputs of Category A staff who have left the institution during the assessment period will be treated in the same way as those of staff identified as submittable on the census date.

The eligible outputs of staff who have been made compulsorily redundant, where they are the sole UWE author, will only be included with the written permission of the person concerned. Where they are co-authors, and the output is co-authored by a current Category A submitted member of staff, the output may be submitted without requiring the permission of the former staff member who has been subject to redundancy.

(See Appendix 9 – Output selection process).

4.3 Staff, committees and training

The process of selecting outputs for the REF will be governed by the same committees described in Part 1 above. The important principle underpinning the selection process - that there will be no expectation of how many outputs any particular individual will contribute - will be impressed on staff involved in the selection process through the mandatory training provision.

4.4 Staff circumstances

The University will implement the guidance published by the Funding Bodies in taking into account staff whose circumstances have affected their ability to research productively throughout the period in relation to the unit's total output requirement, including any exceptional effects on the ability of an individual staff member to research productively throughout the period so that they do not have the required minimum of one output. In doing so it will be reinforced that the University has no expectation about the number of outputs that staff have produced over the assessment period that may be included in the pool of submitted outputs. In the context of the REF, the information will therefore only be used in a situation where a submitted member of staff has no research outputs as a

consequence of their circumstances, or where the cumulative impact of staff circumstances has had a disproportionate effect on the unit (see 4.8 below).

(See Appendix 10 - Guidance on Individual Circumstances)

4.5 Disclosure process

As part of the REF Mock in 2019, all staff identified provisionally as Category A submitted will be invited to disclose any individual circumstances that are covered by the above guidance, if they wish this to be taken into account. Staff subsequently identified as Category A submitted will also be invited to disclose any individual circumstances. There will be no requirement to disclose such circumstances and it will be made clear to staff how the information will be treated and who will have access to it.

In inviting staff to disclose their circumstances, they will be informed of the reasons for doing so in the context of the University's REF strategy and submission process but will also be given the opportunity to discuss their circumstances in confidence with someone from the HR Advice Hub. It will therefore be an opportunity for staff to raise issues and seek advice and support irrespective of any impact on the REF process.

Disclosure forms with supporting evidence as appropriate, will be submitted and considered in strict confidence by an Individual Circumstances Panel comprising the University's Deputy REF Manager and representatives of Human Resources and the Equality & Diversity Unit. The panel will decide on whether the circumstances clearly meet the requirements of the guidance. **(See Appendix 11 - individual Circumstances Disclosure Form).**

4.6 Decision-making process

Where such circumstances are not straightforward and a judgment is required, the Individual Circumstances Panel will make an anonymous and confidential recommendation to REFSIG as the decision-making body. This will include taking account of exceptional effects that staff circumstances may have had upon an individual's ability to research productively throughout the period and where there may be a case to submit zero outputs. Where the REFSIG accepts the case that an individual has been unable to generate the minimum requirement of one output over the period, this will be submitted to the Funding Bodies for consideration.

4.7 Communication with staff

In all cases, the member of staff making the disclosure will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible. Where there are straightforward circumstances and the Individual

Circumstances Panel is able to reach a decision itself, the person will be given feedback within 15 working days. Where such circumstances are not straightforward and a judgment is required by REFSIG, including taking account of exceptional effects that staff circumstances may have had upon an individual's ability to research productively throughout the period, the person will be given feedback within 20 working days. This will include, where relevant, an indication that a case will be made on their behalf to the Funding Bodies for consideration to be given for the person to be submitted with zero outputs. The decision of the Funding Bodies will be conveyed to the individual as soon as it is known.

Where such circumstances could form the basis of a reduction in the number of outputs to be submitted to a particular unit, whether due to one or more individuals being included with zero outputs and/or where the cumulative impact is considered sufficient to make a case for a reduction, the REF Manager will inform the relevant Associate Dean (Research) and UoA leader, without disclosing the nature of any individual circumstances or who they apply to.

4.8 Reduction in outputs

The University will not routinely request reductions to the number of outputs required to be submitted by a submitting unit. However, where, as a consequence of the cumulative effect of staff circumstances, the available pool of outputs within a particular unit is disproportionately affected, the University may seek a reduction to the total number of outputs required. In doing so, the REFSIG will consider the size and quality of the available output pool compared to the number of outputs required in the unit and make a judgment as to whether the number required prior to any reduction is sufficient to reflect the excellent research generated over the assessment period, or whether a reduction should be sought to allow it to do so. The decision on whether a reduction should be sought sits with the REFSIG.

4.9 Early Career Researchers

Early Career Researchers (ECRs) will be identified in accordance with the REF guidance and their outputs considered alongside those of all submitted staff and assessed against the same quality criteria.

ECRs are defined as members of staff who meet the definition of Category A eligible on the census date, **and** who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016.

For the purposes of the REF, an individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which:

- they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, **and**
- they first met the definition of an independent researcher

At the same time as collecting information about individual circumstances, all Category A eligible staff with at least one published output on the institutional repository will be invited to indicate whether they consider themselves to meet the definition of an ECR noted above, including the date at which they consider themselves to have met the definition of an independent researcher. Category A eligible staff with no published output on the institutional repository will be assumed not to meet the definition of an ECR. The data provided will be cross-checked with HR records where appropriate. This process will be overseen by the REF Manager reporting to the REFSIG. As with all aspects of the submission, the decision on defining staff as ECRs sits with REFSIG.

All staff who meet the definition of an ECR will be identified as ECRs in the submission through the HESA staff record - the HESA staff return for 2019/20 will include a field to identify all eligible academic staff who meet the REF definition of an ECR. The identification of ECRs will be undertaken initially as part of the Mock REF in the summer of 2019 and again in 2020, to inform the HESA return that year which will be reflected in the REF submission.

In identifying ECRs, the process for determining independence will be that covered in Part 3 above, using the definition of independence given at paragraph 3.1.

4.10 Equality impact assessment

As noted in Part 1 above, a detailed, equality analysis will be undertaken following the Mock REF in autumn 2019, which includes an analysis of the equality profile of the designated authors of provisionally selected outputs compared to the profile of the designated authors of the total pool of selectable outputs. This analysis will include ECRs as an equality category.

Following analysis and publication of the outcome, REFSIG will consider what, if any, actions should be taken in relation to the process and criteria for selecting outputs and advise the Vice Chancellor accordingly. Any significant changes to the Code will need to be agreed with the Funding Bodies.

A final equality impact assessment and analysis will be undertaken on the final submission early in 2021 to inform the University's future thinking in relation to the process and criteria

for selecting outputs within its wider inclusivity objectives, including its approach to future REF exercises.

4.11 Data Collection and Privacy

UWE Bristol needs to process certain information about its employees for various employment related purposes, including the preparation and compilation of its submission to the REF. In doing so, we are committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal data in accordance with our Staff Data Privacy Notice. Personal data will only be processed in a way which is compatible with UWE Bristol's policies and procedures.

(See Appendix 13 - Staff Data Privacy Notice)

The Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR also require institutions to inform their staff as to how data about them that are submitted to the REF will be used by the Funding Bodies. To ensure that staff whose outputs are included in our submission are aware of these uses, we have provided a staff data collection statement for REF 2021, adapted from a model statement provided by the Funding Bodies.

In brief, all information submitted by UWE to the REF will be collected, stored and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Information will be submitted to the REF via a secure website. UWE will only be able to access our own data. Information will be processed for the purposes of conducting and evaluating the REF. Information may be shared with other organisations to facilitate this, and will be shared with panel members (comprising panel chairs, members, assessors, advisers, secretaries and observers) for the purpose of assessing submissions. Panel members are all bound by confidentiality and data security arrangements.

(See Appendix 14 - Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021)

University of the West of England, Bristol

Code of Practice for REF2021

Part 5 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Committee structures, membership and terms of reference

Appendix 2 - Reporting lines

Appendix 3 – Unit of Assessment role descriptor

Appendix 4 – Details of the REF E&D Training Programme

Appendix 5 - Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 6 – Definition of Key REF Terms

Appendix 7 – Overview of process for identifying staff who are eligible and submitted for REF 2021

Appendix 8 – Guidance for Reviewers

Appendix 9 – Output eligibility and selection process

Appendix 10 - Guidance on Individual Circumstances

Appendix 11 - Individual Circumstances Disclosure Form

Appendix 12 – REF Timetable **(revised in response to the effects of COVID 19, September 2020)**

Appendix 13 - Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021

Appendix 14 – UWE Staff Data Privacy Notice

Appendix 15 – REF Guidance Publications

Appendix 1 – Committee structures, membership and terms of reference

Academic Board

Terms of Reference

Purpose

Academic Board is the University's senior academic authority and is authorised by the Board of Governors to oversee academic governance arrangements across the University.

Membership

The Membership of Academic Board aims to engage and reflect the Universities wide ranging academic community ensuring the Board has the diversity of skills, knowledge and experience needed to ensure Academic Board is effective. The term of office for elected members of Academic Board will not normally exceed 3 years. A list of members is below:

Executive members

Vice-Chancellor (chair)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor/Provost (Deputy Chair)
Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience
Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Business Enterprise
Pro Vice-Chancellor/Executive Deans (4)
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Hartpury University (for 18/19 only)
Director of Learning and Teaching
Director of Graduate School
Representative Heads of Department (1 per Faculty)
Vice-Chancellor's Nominees:
Representative Associate Dean L&T (rotated on annual basis)
Representative Associate Dean Research (rotated on annual basis)
Total: 17

Non-Executive members:

Representative Professor elected from each Faculty (4)
Representative from those with responsibility for L&T Management elected from each Faculty (1 per Faculty)
Representative from Associate Faculty Board (1)
Representative of Teaching Staff (1 per Faculty)
Representative from Professional Services (1)
President of Student Union at UWE
Vice President of Student Union at UWE
Elected Student Representatives (normally 2UG, 1PGT, 1PGR)
Total: 20

In attendance:

Director of Student and Academic Services

Director of Student Success Services
Director of ITS
Director, Marketing and Future Students
Clerk & Deputy Clerk of Academic Board
Clerk & Deputy Clerk of Board of Governors

Aims and Objectives

Academic Board aims to ensure the University meets and exceeds, national and international, academic standards and delivers a student experience that matches expectations and is subject to continuous improvement.

Subject to the requirements of statutory and accrediting bodies, Academic Board advises the Board of Governors and the Vice-Chancellor on:

- the University's Academic Strategy
- the suitability of the University's academic experience to enable all students to achieve awards and credits
- Academic risks – reputational and regulatory - and the management of those risks
- the University's mission, vision and strategic plans in relation to current and planned educational partnerships
- future challenges facing the academic governance system which the University will need to address to remain effective
- the overall effectiveness of services in support of the academic endeavour.

Responsibility

Academic Board is responsible for:

- ensuring and maintaining effective communication with the Board of Governors providing them with an annual assurance report and associated action plan relating to the continuous improvement of services in support of the academic endeavour
- reviewing its own performance and the performance of any committees it creates to ensure academic governance arrangements enhance institutional performance and add value. Any performance evaluation will include a cost benefit analysis
- effective communication with all stakeholders which promotes and supports the Universities core values
- ensuring any Committees and task-and-finish groups it creates can discharge their functions, having Terms of Reference with clear responsibilities and delegated authority
- regularly reviewing its Committees Terms of Reference to ensure they are fulfilling their intended purpose and are still relevant
- reviewing data on complaints, conduct and other appropriate policy-related data; and ensuring the appropriate actions are taken.

Accountability

Academic Board is accountable to and reports to the Board of Governors:

- statements of the University's academic standards and how they are set and applied
- new University awards
- Honorary awards

- Regulations for the conduct of the taught and research provision the University makes available to its students
- Codes of academic conduct and ethics for students and staff
- criteria for, and the appointment of, external examiners identifying and appointing external examiners and other external peer reviewers and their conditions of service

Administration

Academic Board will normally meet five times a year. The duration of meetings will be approximately three hours. The Quorum for meetings is one-third of members eligible to attend.

Academic Board will also have an opportunity to meet with the Board of Governors annually to support strategic planning and appropriate oversight.

Review

The Terms of Reference for Academic Board will be reviewed every two years to ensure they are still relevant, decision-making structures are effective and Academic Board can effectively discharge its duties.

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

Purpose

To be responsible to Academic Board for the development and implementation of the University's academic strategies for research and knowledge exchange. The Committee monitors Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committees, the Graduate School, the University Research Ethics Committee and the Human Tissue Sub-Committee.

Composition

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Business Engagement) (Chair)
Associate Deans (Research & Knowledge Exchange/ Innovation) (4)
Nominees from the Faculty Professoriate, responsible for leading a Centre or Institute in each of the Faculties, as nominated by the Executive Dean (4)
Chair of the Graduate School Committee (or nominee)
Chair of University Research Ethics Committee (or nominee)
Chair of Human Tissue Sub-Committee
Representative of Research-only staff (1)
Representatives of Professional Services
Head of Research, Business and Innovation (or nominee)
Head of Library Services (or nominee)
Director Academic Services (or nominee)
Director of Strategic Communications and Engagement
Representative of Hartpury University
Research administrator (1)
Research student representative (1)
Co-options as appropriate
Officer - Nominee of Head of Research, Business and Innovation

Terms of Reference

1. To exercise, on behalf of Academic Board, oversight of the development and implementation of the University's academic strategies for research and knowledge exchange, including strategies for research, consultancy, CPD, technology transfer, community and public engagement and enterprise.
2. To develop and monitor policies and practices for the enhancement of quality and standards in research and knowledge exchange, including the development and implementation of robust and effective research and knowledge exchange governance arrangements.
3. To specify the requirements for, and receive annual reports from, Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committees, the Graduate School Committee, the University Research Ethics Committee and the Human Tissue Sub-Committee including the identification and monitoring of key performance indicators.

4. To specify the requirements for, and receive reports from, University Centres of Excellence and Research and Knowledge Exchange Institutes.
5. To report annually to Academic Board on the implementation of the University's research and knowledge exchange strategies and priorities, highlighting significant areas of achievement and issues for further consideration.
6. To advise on the operation of the University's professional services in order to provide efficient and effective support for the implementation of the research and knowledge exchange strategies.
7. To promote the University's research and knowledge exchange activity, internally and externally, ensuring that it is recognised as a central component of the University's mission.
8. To monitor the policies and practices of key external organisations ensuring that the University is alert to, and responds to, national and international developments in research and knowledge exchange, including the Government's research assessment and resource allocation process.
9. To promote effective partnerships with external organisations in pursuit of the University's research and knowledge exchange strategies.
10. To recommend to Academic Board the terms of reference and priorities of sub-groups intended to support delivery of the Committee's terms of reference, and to monitor their effectiveness.
11. To advise Academic Board on the matters or priority areas referred to it by the Vice-Chancellor.

Minimum number of members that must be present to constitute a valid meeting

(Quorum): One-third of the members eligible to attend.

Frequency of meetings: Four per year

Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (one per Faculty)

Purpose

To be responsible to the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee for the development and implementation of the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange strategies within the Faculty. The Committee monitors research and knowledge exchange performance within the Faculty, including reports on the outcome of submitted research bids.

Terms of Reference

1. To develop and implement the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange strategies within the Faculty;
2. To monitor the Faculty's research and knowledge exchange performance;
3. To make regular reports, including recommendations, to the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee on Research and Knowledge Exchange strategies;
4. To receive an annual report and regular updates from the Faculty Research Degree Committee;
5. To receive an annual report and regular updates from Faculty Research Ethics Committee;
6. To receive regular reports on research bids submitted and outcomes.

Composition

Associate Dean (Research and KE) (Chair)

Associate Head of Departments (Research) or equivalent individuals as defined by the Faculty Executive

Directors of recognised Faculty Research Centre/Institutes as appropriate

Head of Library Services (Nominee)

Chair of Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Chair of Faculty Research Degrees Committee

Director RBI (Nominee)

Research Administration Manager

Up to two Postgraduate Research Student Representatives (Elected by Student Representation Council)

Co-options as appropriate

Minimum number of members that must be present to constitute a valid meeting (Quorum):

One third of members.

Frequency of meetings: Four per year

Research Excellence Framework Strategy Implementation Group

Composition and Terms of Reference

Composition

- Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), Chair
- Associate Deans (Research) for each Faculty (4)
- Assistant Directors (Research, Business & Innovation) (2)

Notes

- One Associate Dean (Research) is also Co-Chair of the UWE Athena SWAN Working Group
- One Assistant Director (Research, Business & Innovation) is also the UWE REF Manager

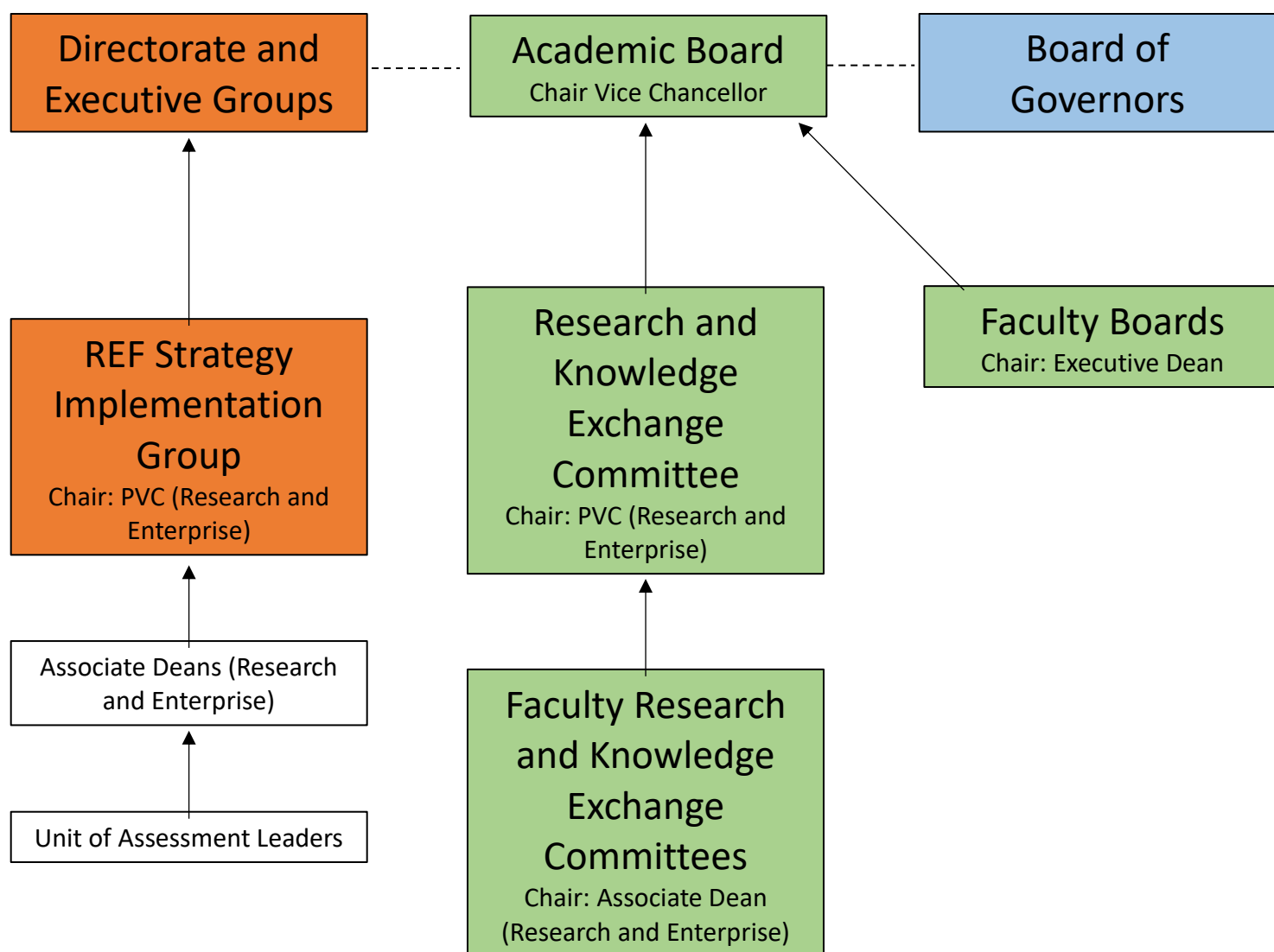
Terms of Reference

To:

- advise the Vice Chancellor's Executive on the University's policy and strategy in relation to REF2021 in accordance with the aims of the UWE Research 2021 Strategy
- develop a Code of Practice setting out the processes to be used in making the University's submission to REF2021 in accordance with guidance provide by the Funding Bodies, taking account of the University's commitment to inclusivity by reflecting its equality and diversity policies, and including an effective process of consultation and communication with staff
- oversee the dissemination and implementation of the University's Code of Practice for REF2021
- oversee the development of REF submissions in Faculties through the work of Associate Deans (Research) and through the appointment of Unit of Assessment leaders to lead and coordinate the preparation of submissions in specific units
- advise and support Associate Deans (Research) and Unit of Assessment leaders on the development of REF submissions including the communication and interpretation of published REF guidance and criteria
- guide the REF team in Research, Business and Innovation, and other professional services as appropriate, on the preparation and administration of the REF submission

- make regular reports to the Vice Chancellor's Executive, Academic Board and the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee on progress with preparations for REF2021
- **Frequency of meetings:** Monthly

Appendix 2 - Reporting lines



Appendix 3 – Unit of Assessment Leader role descriptor

Unit of Assessment Leaders for Research Excellence Framework 2021

The role of the Unit of Assessment (UoA) leader is to lead the preparation of draft submission to the REF and in particular to make recommendations to the University's Research Excellence Framework Strategy Implementation Group, via the Associate Dean (Research) of the relevant Faculty, on the content of the submission, including the outputs proposed for inclusion in the REF.

This role will comprise;

- making proposals for the inclusion of outputs on the basis of the quality of the research outputs of staff with significant responsibility for research, taking into account internal and external peer review, and in accordance with the University's REF objectives and its Code of Practice for the REF.
- compiling and drafting the narrative sections of submissions including the coordination of Impact Case Studies and acquiring relevant information from staff on their outputs, impact and other research activities
- in liaison with the Associate Dean (Research), providing feedback to staff regarding their inclusion or exclusion of outputs
- overseeing, with Research Business and Innovation (RBI), the compilation of required research data for the unit submission
- receiving and responding to feedback from the Associate Dean and from REFSIG on draft submissions
- attending training, development and other activities designed to support UoA leaders
- liaising with other faculties, in relation to the outputs of staff in that faculty which may be eligible for inclusion in the relevant Unit of Assessment
- with RBI, monitoring the development of official REF guidance and panel criteria in relation to the relevant Unit of Assessment
- gathering intelligence on the REF from colleagues and from the wider academic community in relation to the relevant Unit of Assessment

Unit of Assessment Leaders will be appointed via an open recruitment process. The role, and workload, will be reviewed annually. Account will be taken on decisions made on the shape and rules of the next REF as they emerge.

Appendix 4 – Further information about the REF E&D Training Programme

Based on the model provided by AdvanceHE

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and the Research Excellence Framework 2021

This session aims to explore:

- the legislative and policy drivers and context for embedding consideration of equality and diversity in all aspects of decision-making in REF2021;
- appropriate embedding of equality in all decisions on REF2021, at the level of individuals, Units of Assessment (UoAs), and institutionally, including in:
 - selection of staff
 - selection of outputs
 - the institutional and UoA environment statements;
- the concepts of conscious and unconscious bias and how these can play out in any decision-making around REF 2021;
- how a culture and process in which individuals are able, but not compelled, to disclose circumstances that may entitle them to a reduction in research outputs can be created;
- the management at unit level of the effects of individual circumstances on the total output pool;
- how individual and institutional actions and strategies to minimise the potential for bias in REF decision-making might be developed.

Programme:

9.00-9.20	Introduction: UWE's Code of Practice and embedding equality and diversity in REF2021	Richard Bond, REF Manager
9.20-9.40	Equality and diversity: the legal and policy context	Valerie Russell Emmott, Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (EDI)
9.40-10.00	Bias and Unconscious bias <i>(including discussion on what kinds of bias might be relevant in the REF processes)</i>	Richard Bond and Valerie Russell Emmott

10.00-10.20	Significant Responsibility for Research, Research Independence <i>(with respect to implementing the UWE Code of Practice)</i>	Richard Bond
10.20-10.45	Review and selection of Outputs <i>(including peer review process, choosing between outputs of similar quality, expectations of staff whose outputs are included, feedback to staff)</i>	Richard Bond
10.45-11.10	Break	
11.10-11.30	Individual staff circumstances <i>(process for requesting these and how they will be dealt with)</i>	Alison Vaughton, Deputy REF Manager
11.30-11.50	Output reductions <i>(what the Guidance permits us to do, and how UWE plans to deal with these)</i>	Alison Vaughton
11.50-12.10	Equality impact assessments/equality analyses <i>(update on EIAs, the stage reached, the analyses being planned and how these will be used)</i>	Alison Vaughton
12.10-12.30	Environment statements <i>(guidance on what is expected on E&D in the statements)</i>	Richard Bond
12.30 onwards	Open Q&A with EDU and REF teams (optional)	

Appendix 5 - Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Please follow link [here.](#)

Appendix 6 – Definition of Key REF Terms and Quality Criteria

Research Excellence Framework (REF)

The REF is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. The threefold purpose of the REF is:

- to provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment.
- to provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks, for use within the HE sector and for public information.
- to inform the selective allocation of funding for research.

For each submission, three distinct elements are assessed: the quality of **outputs** (e.g. publications, performances, and exhibitions), their **impact** beyond academia, and the **environment** that supports research.

Funding Bodies

The REF is undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies: Research England, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), and the Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland

Units of Assessment (UoAs)

The REF is a process of expert review, carried out by expert panels for each of 34 subject-based units of assessment (UoAs), under the guidance of four main panels. Expert panels are made up of senior academics, international members, and research users.

REF-eligible staff

Academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) or greater, on the payroll on the census date, whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'. Staff should have a substantive connection with the submitting institution. For staff on 'research only' contracts, the eligible pool should only include those who are independent researchers.

Substantive connection

The Funding Bodies have identified a range of indicators that are likely to evidence a substantive connection, including but not limited to:

- evidence of participation in and contribution to the unit's research environment, such as involvement in research centres or clusters,
- research leadership activities, supervision of research staff, or supervision of postgraduate research (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 HEI)
- periods of time with the institution (including prospective time, as indicated through length of contract).

REF submitted staff

Those from among the total pool of eligible staff who have been identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date, and in particular, those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role.

Research Independence

This may include those staff:

- leading or acting as a principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work (including internally funded competitive schemes such as the VC's Early Career Research Awards or Interdisciplinary Research Challenge Fund awards) .
- holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement.
- acting as a co-investigator on an externally funded research project
- leading a research group or a substantial work package
- making significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research

Early Career Researchers (ECRs)

ECRs are defined as members of staff who meet the definition of REF-eligible staff on the census date, **and** who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016.

For the purposes of the REF, an individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which:

- they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, **and**
- they first met the definition of an independent researcher

Quality criteria

Outputs: Criteria and definitions of starred levels

The criteria for assessing the quality of outputs are 'originality, significance and rigour'.

4*	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
3*	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
2*	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
1*	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

Appendix 7 Overview of process for identifying staff who are eligible and submitted

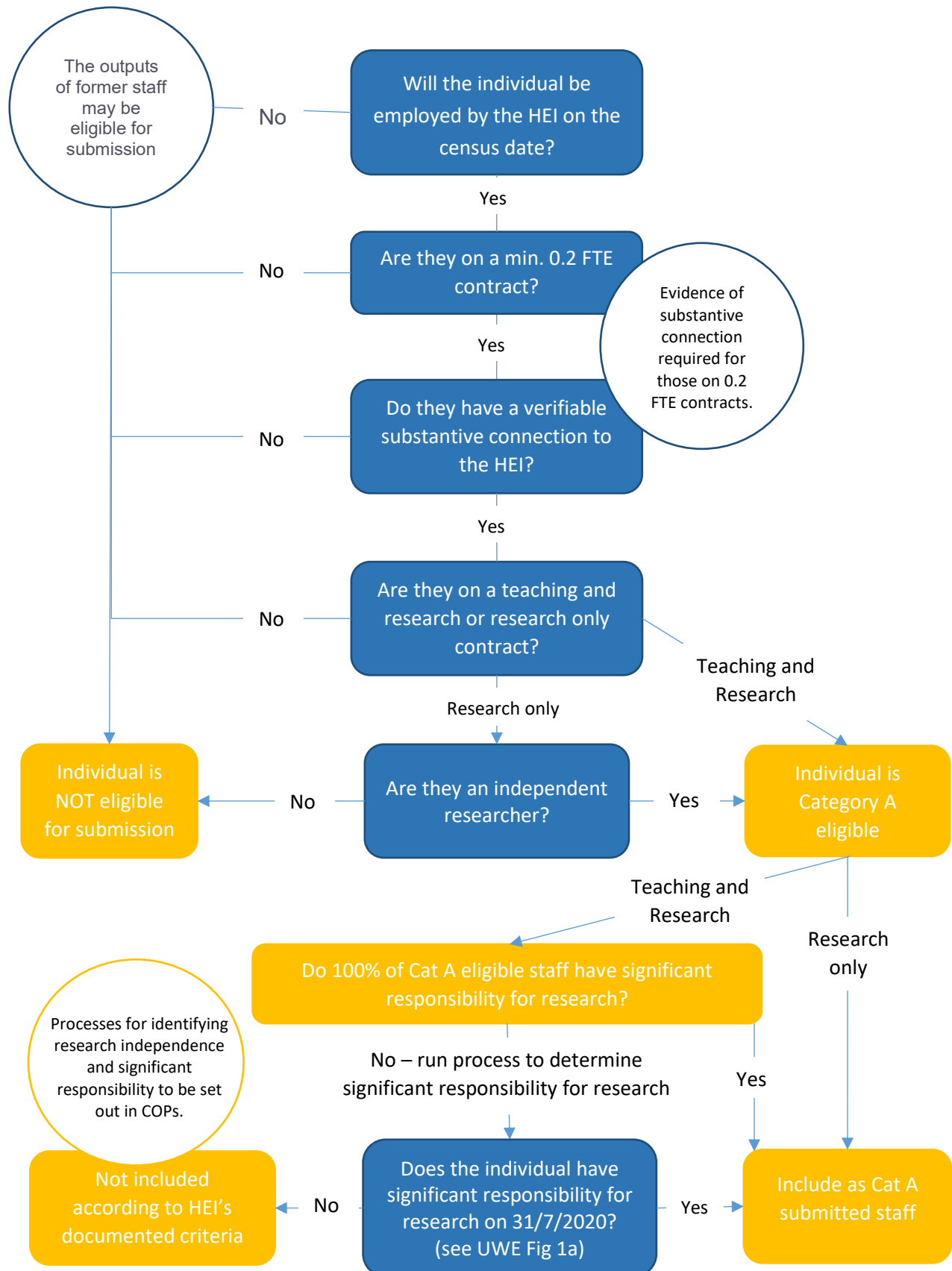
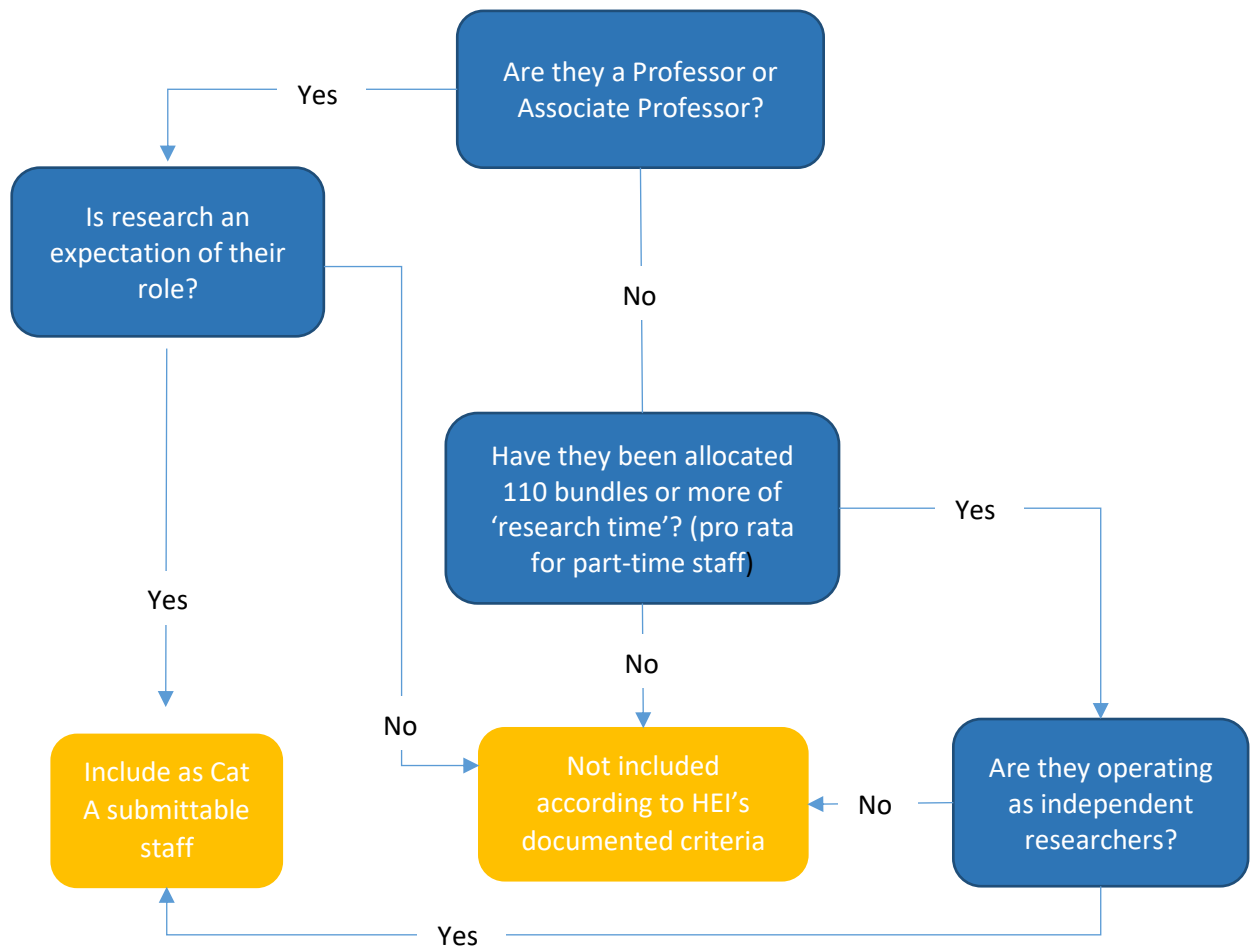


Fig 1a UWE process for identifying individuals with significant responsibility for research – on the Census Date of 31 July 2020



Appendix 8 – Guidance for Reviewers

Guidance for Reviewers

Deciding whether a REF output is 4*, 3* or less (as used in the REF 2014)

Criteria for assessing outputs

1. The criteria for assessing outputs will be interpreted as follows:

- **Originality** will be understood as the extent to which the output introduces a new way of thinking about a subject, or is distinctive or transformative compared with previous work in an academic field.
- **Significance** will be understood as the extent to which the work has exerted, or is likely to exert, an influence on an academic field or practical applications.
- **Rigour** will be understood as the extent to which the purpose of the work is clearly articulated, an appropriate methodology for the research area has been adopted, and compelling evidence presented to show that the purpose has been achieved.

2. Where appropriate to the output type, subpanels may consider editorial and refereeing standards as part of the indication of rigour, but the absence of these standards will not be taken to mean an absence of rigour.

Interpretation of generic level definitions

3. In assessing outputs, the sub-panels will look for evidence of originality, significance and rigour and apply the generic definitions of the starred quality levels as follows:

- a. In assessing work as being **four star** (quality that is world leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:
 - agenda-setting
 - research that is leading or at the forefront of the research area
 - great novelty in developing new thinking, new techniques or novel results
 - major influence on a research theme or field
 - developing new paradigms or fundamental
 - new concepts for research
 - major changes in policy or practice
 - major influence on processes, production and management
 - major influence on user engagement.

- b. In assessing work as being **three star** (quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:
- makes important contributions to the field at an international standard
 - contributes important knowledge, ideas and techniques which are likely to have a lasting influence, but are not necessarily leading to fundamental new concepts
 - significant changes to policies or practices
 - significant influence on processes, production and management
 - significant influence on user engagement.
- c. In assessing work as being **two star** (quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:
- provides useful knowledge and influences the field
 - involves incremental advances, which might include new knowledge which conforms with existing ideas and paradigms, or model calculations using established techniques or approaches
 - influence on policy or practice
 - influence on processes, production and management
 - influence on user engagement.
- d. In assessing work as being **one star** (quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour), sub-panels will expect to see evidence of, or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics:
- useful but unlikely to have more than a minor influence in the field
 - minor influence on policy or practice
 - minor influence on processes, production and management
 - minor influence on user engagement.
- e. Research will be graded as '**unclassified**' if it falls below the quality levels described above or does not meet the definition of research used for the REF.

Review Sheet for REF 2021 Outputs of _____

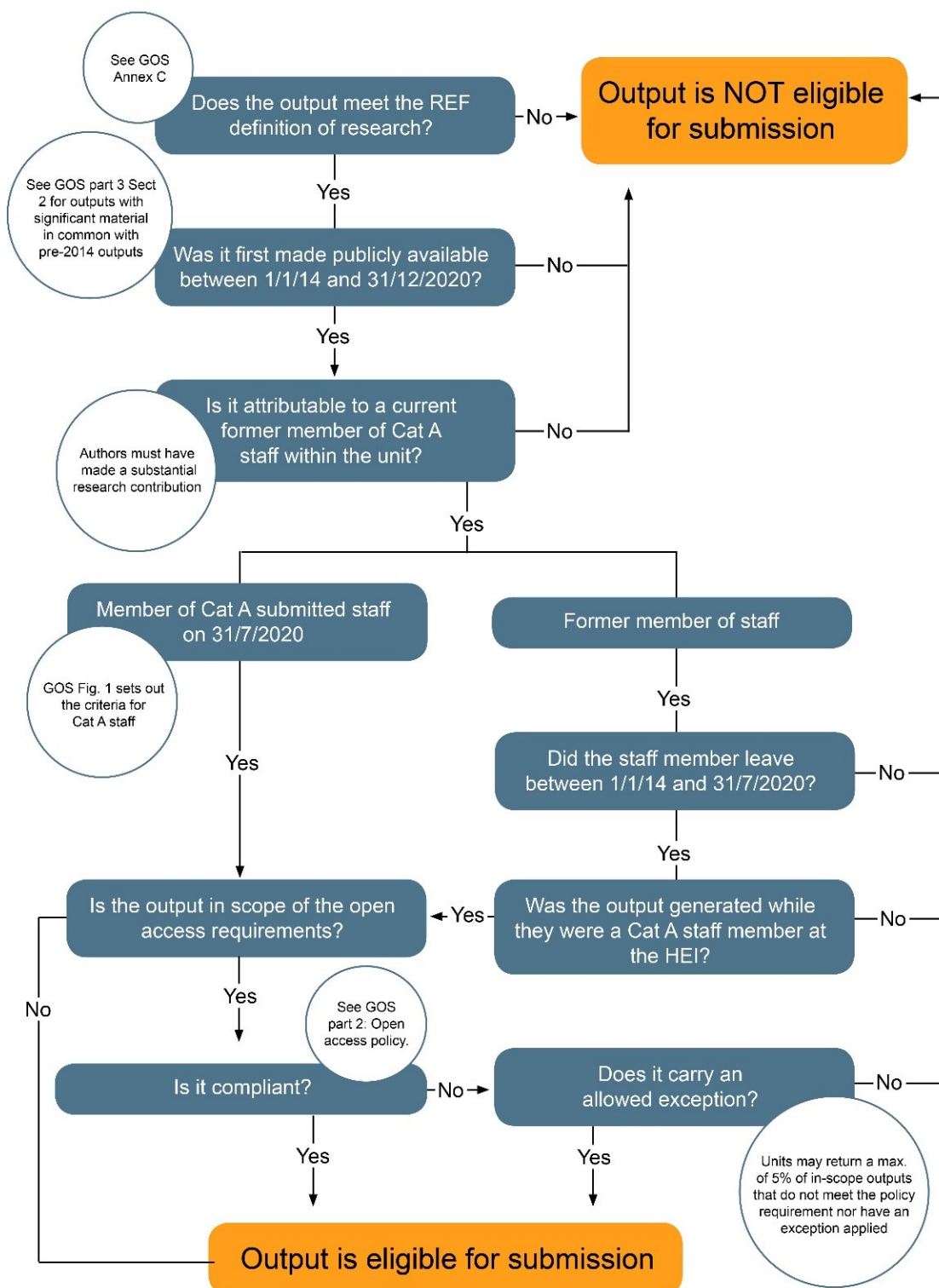
Assessed by <insert name> (<insert UoA> external reviewer)

Author(s)-Year and Repository ID of Output	Originality 1* - 4*	Significance 1* - 4*	Rigour 1* - 4*	Overall 1* - 4*	Comments
How confident are you in your ability to assess the material in these outputs? Use 1 (low) – 5 (high)					

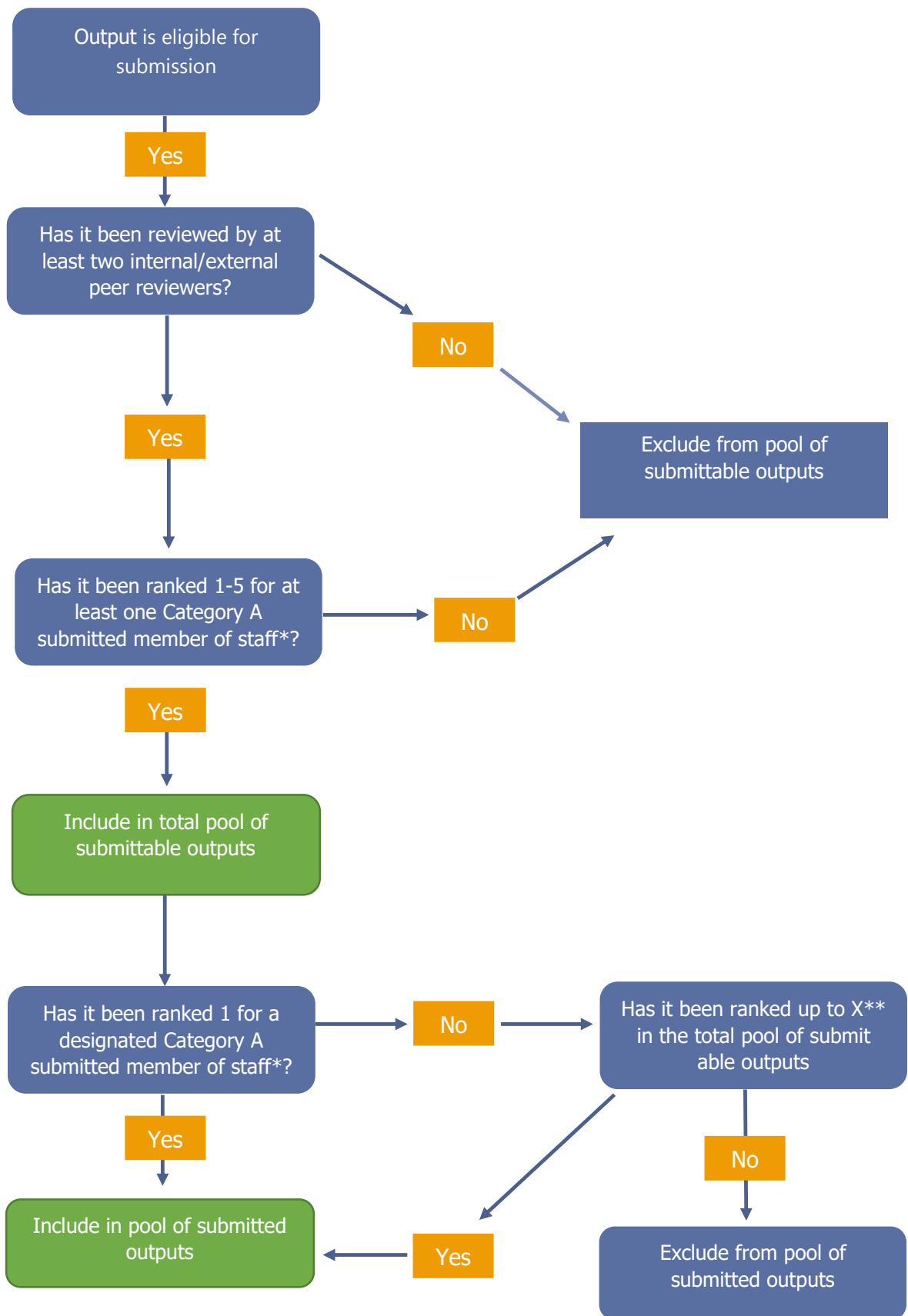
Appendix 9 – Output eligibility and selection process

Output eligibility for REF 2021

REF2021 Research Excellence Framework



UWE Process for Selection of Outputs



Notes:

*Outputs authored by submitted members of staff will be ranked 1 to 5 in order of quality, following review. Co-authored outputs will be notionally designated to one Category A submitted member of staff. This may be changed if an author's contribution reaches the maximum of five in the selection process.

**X = Total number of outputs required to be submitted to the Unit of Assessment (=2.5 X FTE of Cat A submitted).

Appendix 10 - Guidance on Individual Circumstances

The University is committed to supporting and promoting equality and diversity in research careers. As part of this commitment, measures have been put in place to recognise the effect that individuals' circumstances may have on research productivity, in line with the guidance provided by the Funding Bodies (*Guidance on Submissions* paragraphs 151 – 172 and Annex L).

The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2021 is intended to provide increased flexibility in building the portfolio of outputs for submission. There are many reasons why an excellent researcher may have fewer or more outputs attributable to them in an assessment period. As required in REF2021, a minimum of one output will be required for each Category A submitted staff member and no more than five outputs may be attributed to any individual staff member (including former staff). That aside, the University has no expectation about the number of outputs attributed to any Category A submitted staff member.

As indicated in paragraph 4.4 of the Code, in the context of the REF, information about individual circumstances will only be used in a situation where a submitted member of staff has no research outputs as a consequence of their circumstances, or where the cumulative impact of staff circumstances has had a disproportionate effect on the unit as a whole.

Summary of applicable circumstances

The Funding Bodies, advised by the Equality & Diversity Advisory Panel, have identified the following equality-related circumstances that, in isolation or together, may significantly constrain the ability of submitted staff to produce outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period (details of the permitted reductions are set out in Annex L of the *Guidance on Submissions*):

1. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (on the basis set out below).
2. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.
3. Qualifying periods of family-related leave, including statutory maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave.
4. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Disability (this is defined in the *Guidance on codes of practice*, Table 1 under 'Disability').
 - ii. Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.

- iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances set out in Annex L.
- iv. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
- v. Gender reassignment.
- vi. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in the *Guidance on codes of practice*, Table 1, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

Part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5).

Early Career Researchers (ECRs)

ECRs are defined as members of staff who meet the definition of Category A eligible on the census date, **and** who started their careers as independent researchers on or after 1 August 2016. For the purposes of the REF, an individual is deemed to have started their career as an independent researcher from the point at which:

- a. they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HEI or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas, **and**
- b. they first met the definition of an independent researcher (see Part 3 of the Code of Practice and Annex L of the *Guidance on Submissions*).

Appendix 11 - Individual Circumstances Disclosure Form

Individual Circumstances Disclosure Form

This form is being sent to all Category A staff provisionally identified as being 'submitted' for REF2021 and whose outputs are likely to be eligible for submission to REF2021 (see '[Guidance on submissions](#)', paragraphs 117-122).

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 such 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
- 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

If your ability to research productively during the assessment period has been constrained due to one or more of the following circumstances, you are invited to complete the attached form.

- Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (i.e. 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, including statutory maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more.
- Disability (including chronic conditions)
- Ill health, injury or mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of the standard allowances
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment

Please note that that part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit, which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5.

Completion and return of the form is entirely 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.

You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply *and* you are willing to provide the associated information.

Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01).

Ensuring Confidentiality

Paragraph 4.5 of the Code of Practice sets out the process for declaring circumstances ensuring confidentiality and providing feedback. Disclosure forms with supporting evidence as appropriate, will be submitted and considered in strict confidence by an Individual Circumstances Panel comprising the University's Deputy REF Manager and representatives of Human Resources and the Equality & Diversity Unit. The panel will decide on whether the circumstances clearly meet the requirements of the guidance and the member of staff making the disclosure will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible.

If the University 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 data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the '[Guidance on submissions](#)' document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to UWE's Individual Circumstances Panel and, if submitted to the funding bodies, to the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The Individual Circumstances Panel and the REF team 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 the Deputy REF Manager to provide the updated information as soon as possible.

Individual Circumstances Disclosure Form

To submit this form you should complete and submit on-line at... or to Alison Vaughton, the Deputy REF Manager, Research, Business & Innovation.

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). Please note that further information may be requested to confirm the details of your circumstances.

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p> <p><i>(see Code of Practice Part 3 for a definition of an 'independent' researcher. Further clarification is available from the REF Team in RBI)</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>
<p>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</p> <p><i>Dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>

<p>Family-related leave;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statutory maternity leave • statutory adoption leave • additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more. • <p><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter dates and durations.</p>
<p>Disability (including chronic conditions)</p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Mental health condition</p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Ill health or injury</p> <p><i>To include: Nature / name of condition, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

Caring responsibilities <i>To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	Click here to enter text.
Gender reassignment <i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	Click here to enter text.
Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement. <i>To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	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 the HR representative on the Individual Circumstances Panel to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation to these (please note, if you do not give permission the University may be unable to put in place appropriate support for you).

☐ I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the REF Manager, the relevant Unit of Assessment Leader and Associate Dean (Research). Please note that where you are happy for your circumstances to be shared it may assist in the process of selecting outputs, particularly if it is agreed that you can be included with zero outputs. However, there is no requirement or expectation that you do so.

I would like to be contacted by:

Email ☐ Insert email address

Phone ☐ Insert contact telephone number

Appendix 12 – REF Timetable (revised in response to the effects of COVID 19, September 2020)

Timetable (Funding Bodies)

January 2019	Publication of final 'Guidance on submissions', 'Panel criteria', and 'Guidance on codes of practice'; appointment of additional EDAP members
Spring/summer 2019	Institutions intending to make submissions to the REF submit codes of practice; invitation to request multiple submissions, case studies requiring security clearance, and exceptions to submission for small units (staggered deadlines in May, September and December 2019); beta versions of the submission system will be available in both test and live environments for institutions to use
Autumn 2019	Pilot of the REF submission system; survey of submissions intentions opens; proposed date for inviting reduction requests for staff circumstances
December 2019	Survey of submissions intentions complete; final deadline for requests for multiple submissions, case studies requiring security clearance, and exceptions to submission for small units; publication of approved codes of practice
Early 2020	Formal release of the submission systems and technical guidance; invitation to HEIs to make submissions; invitation to nominate panel members and assessors for the assessment phase; deadline for staff circumstances requests
Mid 2020	Appointment of additional members and assessors to panels
31 July 2020	Census date for staff; end of assessment period (for the research environment, and data about research income and research doctoral degrees awarded)
31 December 2020	End of publication period (cut-off point for publication of research outputs, and for outputs underpinning impact case studies); end of impact assessment period
31 March 2021	Closing date for submissions
1 June 2021	Deadline for providing redacted versions of REF3 and REF5a/b templates and corroborating evidence held for impact case studies
30 July 2021	Deadline for submission of staff circumstances report, equalities impact assessment, and final codes of practice
May 2021 – March 2022	Panels assess submissions
April 2022	Publication of outcomes
Summer 2022	Publication of submissions, panel overview reports and sub-profiles

REF Timetable (UWE Bristol)

November 2018 –	Consultation on Key Elements of UWE's REF Code of Practice - 30 January 2019
19 March - 30 April	Consultation on full Code of Practice
15 May 2019	Code of Practice submitted to Academic Board
2019	Code of Practice submitted to REF Equality & Diversity Advisory Panel
31 July 2019	Census date for UWE Mock REF exercise
July – Sept 2019	Mock REF exercise
September/October 2019	Staff informed of provisional status for REF2021 Beginning of appeals process
Autumn 2019	Equality analysis of Mock exercise Collection and consideration of individual circumstances, including identification of early career researchers
November 2019	Final notification from EDAP on approval of Code of Practice Publication of Code of Practice
December 2019	Respond to survey of submissions intentions, and submit any exceptions to submission for small units
February 2020	Submit requests for reductions in output numbers based on individual circumstances
31 July 2020	Census date for staff; end of assessment period for research environment, data on research income and doctoral degrees awarded
September/October 2020	Confirmation of staff status for REF2021 Final appeals process Selection of outputs (provisional)
31 December 2020	Cut-off point for publication of research outputs, for outputs underpinning impact case studies, and end of impact assessment period
31 January 2021	Final selection of outputs
31 March 2021	Closing date for submission
April 2021	Equality analysis of submission

Appendix 13 - Staff Data Collection Statement for the REF2021

The purpose of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) is to assess the quality of UK research and to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research by the four UK higher education funding bodies. The REF is managed by the REF team, based at Research England (RE), on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies. RE is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and under this arrangement UKRI has the role of 'data controller' for personal data submitted by us to the REF.

If you are a researcher who has been included as part of our submission to the REF 2021, in 2021 we will send some of the information we hold about you to UKRI for the purpose of the REF2021. The information will not be in coded form and your name and details such as your date of birth, research groups, and contract dates will be provided along with details of your research. If you are submitted with individual circumstances that allow a reduction in the number of outputs submitted, without penalty, some details of your personal circumstances will be provided.

You can find further information about what data are being collected on the REF website, at www.ref.ac.uk in particular publication 2019/01, 'Guidance on submissions'.

Sharing information about you

UKRI may pass your data, or parts of it, to any of the following organisations that need it to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research and to carry out their statutory functions connected with funding higher education:

- Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland (DfE)
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
- Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

Some of your data (Unit of Assessment, HESA staff identifier code and date of birth) will also be passed to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to enable it to verify coded data returned to it as part of our HESA staff return (see www.hesa.ac.uk). Data returned to the REF will be linked to that held on the HESA staff record to allow UKRI and the organisations listed above to conduct additional analysis into the REF and fulfil their statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 (England, Wales and Scotland) or the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Northern Ireland).

UKRI and the organisations listed above will use the information to analyse and monitor the REF2021. This may result in information being released to other users including academic researchers or consultants (commissioned by the funding bodies), to carry out research or analysis, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection

Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679). Where information not previously published is released to third parties, this will be anonymised where practicable.

UKRI will require that anyone who has access to your data, held in UKRI's records, paper or electronic, will respect its confidentiality and will only process it in accordance with instructions issued for the purposes specified by UKRI.

Parts of your data will be passed to the REF expert panels and the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (whose members are independent of UKRI) for the purpose of conducting a systematic evaluation of submissions, in accordance with predetermined criteria and methods. Panels will make judgments about the material contained in submissions and will not form quality judgments about individuals. All panel members are bound by confidentiality arrangements.

Publishing information about your part in our submission

The results of the assessment exercise will be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, in April 2022. The published results will not be based on individual performance nor identify individuals.

Those parts of submissions that contain factual data and textual information about research activity will also be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, and will be made available online. Published information is likely to include **textual information including impact case studies in which you may be referenced**. Your name and job title may be included in this textual information. Other personal and contractual details, including your date of birth and all information about individual staff circumstances will be removed. UKRI will also publish a list of the outputs submitted by us in each UOA. This list will not be listed by author name.

Data about personal circumstances

You may voluntarily disclose personal circumstances to your submitting unit, which could permit us to submit your information to the REF without the 'minimum of one' requirement (without penalty), or to submit a reduced number of outputs without penalty. If (and only if) we apply either form of reduction of outputs, we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the 'Guidance on submissions' document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted and paragraph 4.5 of the UWE Code of Practice for further information about disclosure of circumstances.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF team, the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements (see

paragraph 4.5 of the UWE Code of Practice.) The REF team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the assessment phase.

As set out above, unless redacted, the information to be published by UKRI, on behalf of the four UK higher education funding bodies, will include a single list of all the outputs submitted by us. The list of outputs will include standard bibliographic data (including the author name) for each output, but will not be listed by author name.

Accessing your personal data

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, you have the right to see and receive a copy of any personal information that UKRI holds about you. Further information about the Act and GRPR, and guidance on making a subject access request, can be found on the RE website at <https://re.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards/foi-data-protection/>

If you have any concerns about your information being used for these purposes, please contact:

Data Protection Officer
UK Research and Innovation
Polaris House
Swindon, SN2 1FL

Email: dataprotection@ukri.org

For further details of UWE'S Staff Privacy Notice, see Appendix 14.

Appendix 14 – UWE Staff Data Privacy Notice

Introduction and purpose of this Privacy Notice

The University needs to process certain information about its employees, workers and contractors for various employment related purposes. UWE is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal data. This Privacy Notice describes how we collect and use personal information about you during and after your working relationship with us, in accordance with applicable data protection legislation.

UWE is a "data controller". This means that we are responsible for deciding how we hold and use personal information about you. We are required under data protection legislation to notify you of the information contained in this privacy notice.

This notice applies to current and former employees, workers and contractors. This notice is to provide you with information about how we process personal information, it does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services. We may update this notice at any time.

UWE Bristol will always comply with its legal requirement in processing your personal data. In particular, your personal data will only be processed in a way which is consistent with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as enacted and amended in UK law. Your personal data will only be processed in a way which is compatible with UWE Bristol's policies, procedures and collective agreements.

It is important that you read this notice, together with any other privacy notice we may provide on specific occasions when we are collecting or processing personal information about you, so that you are aware of how and why we are using such information.

What personal details do we hold

UWE collects and uses personal data (including "special categories" of more sensitive personal data). We will collect, store and use the following categories of personal information about you:

- Personal contact details including email and telephone numbers
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Marital status
- Dependents
- Emergency contact details

- National Insurance number
- Bank account details, payroll records and tax status information
- Salary, deductions, annual leave, pension and benefits information
- Start date (and if applicable end date)
- Recruitment information (including copies of right to work documentation, references and other information provided as part of the recruitment process)
- Employment records (including job titles, work history (with previous employers and UWE), leave and reasons for leave, working hours, training records and professional memberships and qualifications)
- Compensation history (if applicable)
- Lecture capture (sound and visual)
- Probation, performance and development review information
- Disciplinary and grievance information
- CCTV footage and other information obtained via electronic means such as swipecard records
- Photographs

We may also collect, store and use the following “special categories” of more sensitive personal data:

- Information about your race or ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation
- Membership of a recognised trade union. Please note that this information is only collected and processed for the purposes deducting and passing on union subscriptions directly from salary. UWE Bristol does not use this information for any other purpose.
- Information about your health, including any medical condition, health and sickness records; whether or not you have a disability for which UWE needs to make Reasonable Adjustments
- Information about criminal convictions and offences (this is not a “special category” but must be processed with appropriate additional safeguards)

How is your personal data collected

We collect personal information about employees, workers and contractors through the application and recruitment process, either directly from candidates or sometimes from an employment agency or background check provider. We may sometimes obtain your personal data from other third parties including former employers or the following external bodies:

- UKVI
- HMRC
- DBS

- Pension Providers
- SLC

How we will use information about you

We will only process your personal data when the law allows us to. We will always comply with UWE Bristol's policies and procedures in processing your personal data. Most commonly, we will use your personal information in the following circumstances (legal bases):

- Where we need to perform the contract we have entered into with you
- Where we need to comply with a legal obligation
- Where it is necessary for our legitimate interests (or those of a third party) and your interests and fundamental rights do not override those interests
- Where required to carry out a task in the public interest

Exceptionally, we may also use your personal data in the following situations:

- Where we need to protect your or someone else's vital interests

We need to process the data listed above primarily for entering into contracts of employment, and as necessary for the proper administration of the employment relationship (including meeting certain legal obligations as employers, such as administering income tax and national insurance), both during and after employment. The purposes and relevant legal bases for processing are listed in more detail in the table below:

Purpose	Legal basis/bases
Staff administration (including recruitment, appointment, training, promotion, performance assessment, disciplinary matters, grievance processes, absence records, leave records, occupational health advice, pensions, and any other employment related matters)	Fulfilment of contractual obligations or taking steps necessary to enter into contract Fulfilment of legal obligations and claims
Access to, and security of, University facilities (including library services, computing services, sports and conference facilities and welfare services)	Fulfilment of contractual obligations or taking steps necessary to enter into contract Legal obligations Legitimate interests of the University

Accounting and financial purposes including pay, workforce planning and other strategic planning activities	Fulfilment of contractual obligations or taking steps necessary to enter into contract Legal obligations
Internal and external auditing purposes and other business management and planning purposes	Legitimate interests of the University Legal obligations
Meeting health and safety obligations and equality of opportunity monitoring obligations	Legal obligations
Carrying out statutory duties to provide information to external agencies	Legal obligations Task in the public interest
Collection of CCTV images for the prevention/detection of crime and prosecution of offenders	Legitimate interests of the University and third parties Substantial public interest
Lecture capture for purpose of enhanced educational provision	Legitimate interests of the University Fulfilment of contractual obligations
To ensure network and information security, including preventing unauthorised access to our computer and electronic communications systems and preventing malicious software distribution.	Legitimate interests of the University

If you fail to provide personal information

If you fail to provide certain information when requested, we may not be able to perform the contract we have entered into with you (such as paying you or providing a benefit) or we may be prevented from complying with our legal obligations (such as our duty of care to ensure the health and safety of our workers).

Special categories of more sensitive personal data

"Special categories" of particularly sensitive personal information require higher levels of protection. We need to have further justification for collecting, storing and using this type of personal information. We have in place an appropriate policy document and safeguards

which we are required by law to maintain when processing such data. We may process special categories of personal information in the following circumstances:

1. In limited circumstances, with your explicit written consent.
2. Where we need to carry out our legal obligations or exercise rights in connection with employment.

Less commonly, we may process this type of information where it is needed in relation to legal claims or where it is needed to protect your interests (or someone else's interests) and you are not capable of giving your consent, or where you have already made the information public.

Our obligations as an employer

We will use your particularly sensitive personal data in the following ways:

- We will use information relating to leaves of absence, which may include sickness absence or family related leave, to comply with employment and other laws.
- We will use information about your physical or mental health, or disability status, to ensure your health and safety in the workplace and to assess your fitness to work, to provide appropriate reasonable adjustments, to monitor and manage sickness absence and to administer benefits.
- We will use information about your race, nationality or ethnic origin, religious, philosophical or moral beliefs, or your sexual orientation, to ensure meaningful equal opportunity monitoring and reporting.
- We will use trade union membership information to pay trade union premiums.

Do we need your consent?

We do not need your consent if we use special categories of your personal data in accordance with our written policy to carry out our legal obligations or exercise specific rights in the field of employment law.

In limited circumstances, we may approach you for your written consent to allow us to process certain particularly sensitive data (for example in relation to obtaining an Occupational Health report). If we do so, we will provide you with full details of the information that we would like and the reason we need it, so that you can carefully consider whether you wish to consent. You should be aware that it is not a condition of your contract with us that you agree to any request for consent from us.

Information about criminal convictions

We will only collect information about criminal convictions if it is appropriate given the nature of the role and where we are legally permitted to do so e.g. the role requires a DBS check. Where appropriate, we will collect information about criminal convictions as part of the external or internal recruitment process or we may be notified of such information directly by you in the course of you working for us. We have in place an [appropriate policy](#) and safeguards which are required by law when processing such data.

Automated decision making

You will not be subject to decisions that will have a significant impact on you based solely on automated decision-making, unless we have a lawful basis for doing so and we have notified you. We do not envisage that any decisions will be taken about you using solely automated means, however we will notify you in writing if this position changes.

How long do we keep your personal data?

Data is retained only for as long as is required to meet the purpose(s) for which it is collected and processed (for example to fulfil contractual obligations or meet legal requirements). We have retention schedules in operation across the University and more information if needed can be obtained from dataprotection@uwe.ac.uk.

Who may your data be shared with and why?

Disclosure to	Details
Government departments and other UK agencies with duties relating to the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension and prosecution of offenders, collection of a tax or duty, or safeguarding national security.	In order to meet statutory requirements and otherwise as necessary in the public interest, and with consideration of your rights and freedoms. (Includes HMRC, Department for Work and Pensions, Home Office UK Borders Agency, Passports and Immigration and the Police)

Office for Students and its agents.	Such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Quality Assurance Agency. You are advised to refer to the collection notices on the HESA website for further details.
NHS organisations	Where this is necessary for management purposes in connection with the performance of your contractual or honorary contract duties.
Professional bodies (e.g. General Medical Council, Royal Society of British Architects, SRA).	Where this is necessary for accreditation purposes and/or the performance of your contractual duties.
Potential employers or providers of education whom you have approached.	For the purposes of confirming your employment with UWE
Members of the public.	When required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the disclosure does not breach any of the Data Protection Principles.
Pension providers	Administration of pensions.
Consultants and training providers	Staff administration e.g. in context of staff training and development.
Professional legal advisors	Provision of relevant legal advice
Occupational Health providers	Provision of Occupational Health services

Your personal data may also be processed on UWE's behalf by third party software and other service providers. We require third parties to respect the security of your data and to treat it in accordance with the law. We do not allow our third-party service providers ("data processors") to use your personal data for their own purposes and only permit them to process your personal data for specified purposes and in accordance with our instructions. The University may from time to time make other disclosures without your consent. However, these will always be in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Data Protection legislation and your interests will always be considered.

Transfers to third countries

It may sometimes be necessary to transfer personal information overseas. When this is needed information may be transferred to countries or territories around the world depending on the circumstances. Any transfers made will be in full compliance with all aspects of the Data Protection legislation and with due regard to your rights and freedoms.

How do we keep your data secure?

Access to your personal data is strictly controlled on a need to know basis and data is stored and transmitted securely using methods such as encryption and access controls for physical records where appropriate.

Your rights

Under the General Data Protection Regulation you have the following qualified rights:

- (1) The right to access your personal data held by the University
- (2) The right to rectification if the information is inaccurate or incomplete
- (3) The right to restrict processing and/or erasure of your personal data
- (4) The right to data portability
- (5) The right to object to processing
- (6) The right to object to automated decision making and profiling

If you wish to exercise any of these rights please contact the Data Protection Officer (dataprotection@uwe.ac.uk). You also have an unreserved right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Appendix 15 – REF Guidance Publications

- **Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01)**

This document sets out the general framework for assessment in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF) and guidance to UK higher education institutions about making submissions to REF 2021. It includes guidance on procedures, the data that will be required, and the criteria and definitions that will apply. The deadline for submissions is midday, Friday 27 November 2020.

- **Panel Criteria and Working Methods (REF 2019/02)**

This document sets out the assessment criteria and working methods of the main and sub-panels for the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF).

- **Guidance on Codes of Practice (REF 2019/03)**

This document sets out the guidance to UK higher education institutions about submitting codes of practice in REF 2021. It is published alongside the ‘guidance on submissions’, and ‘Panel criteria and working methods’.

All Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance/>