



REF 2021

CODE OF PRACTICE

University of Surrey

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Glossary

ADRI	Associate Dean (Research and Innovation)
Co-I	Co-Investigator
ECR	Early Career Researchers
EDAP	Equality & Diversity Advisory Panel
ED&I	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EDIC	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HoD	Head of School/Department/Centre
PCI	People, Culture and inclusion
PI	Principal Investigator
REF	Research Excellence Framework
T&R	Teaching and Research
ToR	Terms of Reference
UOA	Unit of Assessment

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction from the REF 2021 Executive Committee



The University of Surrey prides itself on being a global community, dedicated to life-changing education and research. Through our world-class research and innovation, we deliver transformational impact on society and shape the future economy through agile collaboration and partnership with businesses, governments and communities.

The REF 2021 Executive Committee welcomes the more inclusive REF guidelines related to staff and affirms that there is no advantage or disadvantage to being identified as eligible or not eligible for REF 2021. The Committee fully endorses the approaches outlined in this Code of Practice that seek to ensure that we conduct ourselves in a transparent, consistent, accountable and inclusive way and supports the principle that the selection of outputs for REF 2021 will have no bearing on any other university processes.

This Code has been developed by the University REF Team, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Team and Human Resources department ensuring that best practice and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) principles are respected through REF processes and promoting a closer working relationship with the University's Equality and Diversity Committee.

Final versions of the Code will be made available to internal and external audiences via the University website, with any new information, in the form of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) or updates, clearly highlighted. This will serve to ensure that preparation of the submission for REF 2021 at all levels; individual, department, Unit of Assessment (UOA), and university adopt these principles. Individuals in advisory or decision-making roles will be further supported by REF specific ED&I training.

We hope that you find the principles and processes set out in this Code of Practice, clear and consistent, but please contact the Team outlined below if you seek any further details or clarification on how the University will be developing the REF 2021 submission.



Key Contacts

Function in REF 2021	University Role	Contact Details
Head of REF 2021 Team, REF institutional contact	Head of Research Performance (REF)	g.fairbairn@surrey.ac.uk or ref2021@surrey.ac.uk
REF 2021 Management	Vice-Provost, Research & Innovation	d.sampson@surrey.ac.uk
REF 2021 ED&I Lead	Executive Board ED&I Lead	pci@surrey.ac.uk
REF HR Lead, including staff circumstances	Director Human Resources (services)	REF2021Staff@surrey.ac.uk
REF Appeals	Vice-Provost, Education	Ref2021Appeals@surrey.ac.uk

1.2 What is the Code of Practice and who is it for?

The 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the process for assessing research in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The REF is a process of expert peer review and will be undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies, to:

- inform the selective allocation of research funding to HEIs;
- provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks;
- provide accountability for public investment in research and demonstrate its benefits.

Expert sub-panels for each of 34 units of assessment (UOAs) will carry out the assessment, working under the guidance of four broad main panels. Institutions will be invited to make submissions to each UOA and each submission will be assessed in terms of the quality of research outputs, the wider impact of research and the vitality and sustainability of the research unit.

Each institution making a submission to REF 2021 is required to develop, document and apply a Code of Practice on identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence and the selection of outputs for their REF submission. Eligibility to make a submission to the REF requires that the Code of Practice is submitted for approval by the funding councils.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to communicate to our research community at the University of Surrey the procedural framework supporting the preparation of the University's submission to REF 2021 and in so doing to ensure that the process of identifying staff, determining research independence and selecting outputs aligns with the University's Equality and Diversity Strategy, associated policies and with all relevant legislation.

The Code also aims to assure staff that there is no advantage or disadvantage to being identified as being eligible or not eligible for REF 2021. The selection of outputs will focus on quality and optimising the submission and will have no bearing on an individual, nor will it be taken into account in any other University process.

1.3 How The Code of Practice relates to other policies and strategies

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out the University's approach to ED&I up until 2025. It outlines our ongoing work towards embedding equality at the heart of all of our activities and seeks to consolidate and build upon the progress that has already been achieved. It is more than a strategy, it is a commitment to operationalise the principles and values embedded in our previous strategy. It therefore sits within the context of the University of Surrey's mission, vision, core values and wider strategies. Staff and students' experience is at the heart of the strategy. It therefore sets out to promote equality across the full range of its activities, in employment, teaching and learning and as a partner working within local, national and international communities.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy provides a range of tools for the operationalization of key principles outlined in the University E&D policy and People, Culture and Inclusion Strategy. These principles apply to everyone who visits, works or studies with us and, more broadly, anyone associated with the University of Surrey. This includes staff, students, contractors, visitors and alumni, regardless of race or ethnicity, sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity status, marriage and civil partnership status or socio-economic background. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant University policies and strategies particularly the Corporate Strategy, HR Strategy, Education Strategy, Research and Innovation Strategy, Wellbeing Strategy and Estates Strategy.

The Executive Board Lead on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion works in close partnership with the People, Culture and Inclusion (PCI) Team in the delivery of the strategy's main objectives. We will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are mainstreamed into all areas and levels of our work.

1.3.1 Legislative Context

As both an employer and a public body, the University must ensure under the Equality Act 2010 that its REF 2021 procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against individuals because of the protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The University and funding bodies are also subject to the public sector equality duty, which requires that these organisations have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (a 'relevant protected characteristic' is any of the characteristics listed above other than marriage and civil partnership)
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Furthermore under the fixed-term employee and part-time workers regulations, fixed-term employees and part-time workers also have the right not to be treated any less favourably than the University treats comparable employees on open contracts or full-time workers. The relevant regulations are:

- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002

1.3.2 Impact on REF 2021

To support equality and diversity in research careers, all eligible individuals will be submitted, with flexibility in the number of outputs, within the minimum of one and maximum of five, with no detriment. We will introduce processes that will encourage staff to voluntarily disclose circumstances where these may have impacted on their ability to conduct research throughout the REF 2021 period. We will undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) on our Code of Practice and the processes described therein. Our approach to conducting EIAs is set out in Section 3.5.

1.3.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Surrey

The University is facilitated in meeting these legal requirements by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Team, which is part of the wider People, Culture and Inclusion Team based in Human Resources. The Team supports and promotes ED&I at the University of Surrey; developing the ED&I strategy, action plans and supporting the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC). The Team is also responsible for coordinating the applications for various ED&I charters including Athena SWAN, The Race Equality Charter Mark and the Stonewall Workplace Index. The University currently holds an Athena SWAN institution award at Bronze level and six departmental awards (five Bronze and one Silver). All sixteen other departments are in the process of applying for an award. The University achieved a ranking of 258 in the 2019 Stonewall Workplace Index and is currently preparing the 2020 submission.

The EDIC meets three times a year and is chaired by the Chief Operating Officer who is a member of the Executive Board. The Chairs of each Equality Working Group and the Chairs of the Faculty Equality and Diversity Committees also sit on the EDIC. Membership is composed of approximately twenty-five representatives across all services and functions, including Trade Union and Student Union representatives.

The REF 2021 ED&I Working Group (Annex C:4) will be working with the REF 2021 Team in conducting EIAs, and proposing corrective actions to the REF 2021 Management Group where required. Where the REF 2021 ED&I Working Group identifies issues that are fundamental in nature, and extend beyond the remit of REF, these will be escalated to the EDIC via the Chair of the REF 2021 ED&I Working Group, who is also a member of the EDIC. The EDIC will be kept informed of any corrective actions undertaken through REF 2021, to ensure that any best practice and learning can be shared beyond the REF 2021 Team.

1.4 Updates since REF 2014

Since REF2014 the University has made steady progress in the area of ED&I. It successfully renewed its Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional Award in 2018, and has since set about developing an ambitious ED&I work programme at institutional and departmental level. The appointment of an academic lead at institutional level (Director for EDI) and the creation of Faculty level Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committees are examples of the institutional commitment to this area of work.

The final internal University review undertaken by the REF 2014 Equality and Diversity Working Group following the REF 2014 submission, listed below, highlighted a number of positive observations, which we will emulate in REF 2021;

- Uniformity of the selection of staff across all UOAs, as prescribed in the Code of Practice. The sub-group noted that no local practices were adopted for staff selection and the University-managed process ensured that a fair and robust process was conducted throughout the period.

REF Team Comments: The University of Surrey welcomes the move away from selecting staff for REF, and will ensure that the processes articulated in this Code of Practice are applied consistently as demonstrated in REF 2014. 100% of REF eligible staff will be submitted to REF 2021.

- Staff circumstances were adopted and used extensively with 30% of staff in the REF 2014 submission submitting less than 4 outputs; in particular staff in the 25 to 34 age category, part time and female staff benefited from their introduction.
- It was noted that despite 33 complex circumstance cases being raised, only 6 received a recommended reduction of one output and 1 received a reduction of two outputs. The feedback from the Staff Circumstances Committee suggested that the culture of “carrying on” and not taking leave when perhaps an individual could have consequently led to it being difficult to evidence and justify a reduction in outputs for REF 2014. The group considered there was a need to better educate and clarify the support and options available to staff who are dealing with “complex circumstances”.

REF Team Comments: Subsequently the University of Surrey has increased its training provisions for Managers in identifying potential issues earlier, and extended its support for all staff through the Wellbeing Centre and HR initiatives.

- 0 appeals received based on Equality and Diversity grounds.

There were no negative impacts of note, but the following points were raised for consideration;

- Positively, there were a large number of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in the University’s submission. As a result these staff may have placed additional burden on existing staff and support services designed to mentor researchers. The University has an obligation to ensure these staff have access to the support needed in terms of developing as a researcher.

REF Team Comments: Subsequently the University of Surrey has increased its support for ECRs, and formed the Doctoral College, part of the remit of which is to provide better access and focused support to our ECR population. The Doctoral College is integral to researcher development across the piece – with a clear remit to administer the PGR progression component, and with an emphasis on researcher development at the early career stages of PGR, postdoc and ECR.

- It was noted that the percentage of eligible staff in the Over 64 category was relatively low (4%), for the REF 2014 exercise, however with the increasing retirement age it may be the case that this is considerably higher by REF 2021. The University needs to consider the 21% of REF eligible staff members aged 55 to 64 and how these staff can be kept motivated and engaged for REF 2021.

REF Team Comments: The University of Surrey will consider if this trend is apparent in the equality baseline data as part of its commitment to EIAs in REF 2021 and take appropriate action where required.

- There remained an under representation of women in the REF 2014 submission, with women making up 30% of the submission as opposed to 35% of the eligible pool. The areas that needed to be reviewed in terms of the under representation of women were Business, Tourism and Allied Health. These areas had a larger than average eligible pool of women, but not the same representation in their UOA submissions.

REF Team Comments: The University of Surrey will consider if this trend is apparent in the equality baseline data as part of its commitment to EIAs in REF 2021 and take appropriate action where required. It is worth noting that two departments that significantly contribute to the Allied Health submission are now in receipt of a Silver and a Bronze Athena SWAN award representing their proactive support of women; including tackling career progression barriers and representation on Committees.

1.5 Principles

The principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity (Guidance on Codes of Practice REF 2019/01) are embedded throughout the processes articulated in this Code of Practice, but have also been fundamental in forming our overall approach to REF 2021. The examples below are not exhaustive, but serve as key examples of where we believe the principles have applied;

Transparency

- The Code of Practice has been publicised widely and through a wide range of routes, for example through Faculty Executive Boards, Faculty Research Committees and local research meetings.
- The Code of Practice will be published on the University website (intranet for consultation stage and external website for final published version).
- We will ensure REF eligible staff who are away from campus have access to the Code of Practice.
- The Code of Practice is generally made available as a PDF file, however hard copies are available on request from the REF 2021 Team. Where staff need alternative ways of accessing the Code the REF 2021 Team will accommodate this.
- The Code of practice has been developed collaboratively with colleagues in ED&I, HR and faculty and has been subject to staff consultation and consultation with Union representatives.

Consistency

- The Code of Practice will be applied universally to all UOAs. Where there are justified deviations in practice these have been articulated in the Code, for example in the use of citation information in the output selection process.
- Sharing of best practice between UOA Leads in output selection process to ensure the same practices are being adopted and followed.
- The REF 2021 Team will advise and/or be present throughout output selection and research independence assessments to ensure the Code of Practice and wider Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria are followed and understood.

Accountability

- Clearly defined responsibilities are set out for both individual roles and Committees involved in the REF 2021 processes. Published Terms of Reference (ToR) are laid out below, and included in full as Annex C.
- A clear distinction is made between those committees/groups with decision making roles and those with advisory roles. Each of the bodies associated with this Code of Practice (Annex C) has had a briefing session from the REF 2021 Team about their responsibilities as part of an induction.
- REF 2021 specific ED&I training is detailed in the Code of Practice, with records of completion maintained. All the individuals involved in the bodies in Annex C will complete unconscious bias training and REF 2021 specific ED&I training.
- A formal appeals process has been developed and articulated in the Code of Practice.

Inclusivity

- Encouragement to all to participate in REF 2021 by ensuring reminders and updates to staff are issued frequently.
- Ensuring that output selection casts the widest possible net, offering opportunity for individuals to identify their strongest outputs.
- Ensuring that the declaration of staff circumstances is widely encouraged and clearly understood.
- Ensuring UOA Leads and representatives from across the University represent the diversity of the REF eligible population.
- Conducting EIAs to ensure processes promote inclusivity.

1.6 Communications

In order to deliver the principles set out in Section 1.5, a key activity is ensuring that staff are made aware of the development of the Code of Practice and the broader University plans for delivering the REF 2021 submission. The communications activities that have been undertaken, or are planned, are described in the phases below;

1.6.1 Phase 1: Developing the Code of Practice

The University's REF 2021 Management Group and University's Executive Board ED&I Lead have worked with the research community and professional services staff to develop the Code of Practice. Wider consultation has also been undertaken to ensure the Code meets the needs of the research community. Examples of the consultative activities undertaken in developing the Code include;

- All staff consultation (conducted in April/May 2019)
- Engagement with Union representatives
- Briefings to; Executive Board, Senate, University Research & Innovation Committee, UOA Leads Committees, HR Management Team, Doctoral College

1.6.2 Outcome of Consultation

The consultation activities undertaken resulted in feedback covering all aspects of the Code. The full set of feedback received and resulting actions are available on request to the REF 2021 Team. Table 1 summaries the main areas of feedback and the resulting changes to the Code.

Consultation Feedback	Action
More details on ED&I training, ED&I Working Group role in EIAs	Annex B.4 and Section 3.5 extended
Increase staff input to the output selection process and recognise biases in output assessment identified in EIA.	The opportunity for individuals to self-nominate outputs has been added to the output selection process (Section 4.2)
Responsibilities for completing research independence forms could be clearer	Research independence process made more inclusive, with focus on individual (Section 3.2.3)
Notifying former staff of inclusion of outputs	Will notify them of inclusion of outputs (Section 4.3.2)

Terminology and clarity of terms used	Glossary added
More communication welcomed	Section 1.6 expanded, Sections 3.3.2, 3.4.1, 3.5.5, 4.3.2, 4.4.6 added

Table 1 Summary of Consultation Feedback

1.6.3 Phase 2: Sharing the Code of Practice

The Code of Practice will be shared widely, using a variety of routes, as articulated in Table 2. The communication of the Code will be further complemented by broader REF updates provided throughout the REF period.

Method	Audience	Indicative Timing
Issue to all staff (electronically) and away from campus (i.e. maternity/paternity/shared parental/adoption leave, secondment or long-term sickness) as hard copy	REF eligible staff	June 2019
Bitesize briefing: all staff events which attract academic and professional services staff	All staff	June 2019, December 2019
Surrey Net article, Executive Blog	All staff	June 2019
Briefings to research community including; Doctoral College, Faculty Research Committees,	REF eligible Staff	June 2019
Briefing paper to accompany Code of Practice	UOA Leads	June 2019
Code of Practice published on external website	All staff	September 2019
EIAs, updates to feature on REF intranet pages	All staff	6 monthly from June 2019
Code of Practice emailed to new REF eligible staff joining the University after June 2019	REF eligible Staff	Throughout 2019 & 2020.

Table 2 Sharing the Code of Practice

It is recognised that members of the University's research community may be looking to access a specific part of the Code, such as the Staff Circumstances process and related form or the Research Independence process and related form, or the Appeals process and will therefore provide separate communications on these aspects of the Code, and ensure that these are clearly sign-posted via the REF 2021 intranet site. These aspects of the code will also be promoted through channels such as faculty and department research committees and will be distributed via email correspondence where appropriate.

Key Contacts for REF Communications

Function	Name	Contact Details
Head of REF Team	Gill Fairbairn	g.fairbairn@surrey.ac.uk
Senior Project Officer	Jasmine Fletcher	ref2021@surrey.ac.uk

2 Identifying staff with Significant Responsibility for Research

2.1 REF 2021 Guidance

Guidance on Submissions REF 2019/01 (January 2019) offers the following definitions to support institutions in identifying the eligible population to be submitted to REF 2021 (paragraphs 117 to 134). The extract from Paragraph 117 is included for ease of reference below.

117. Category A eligible staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date¹ whose primary employment function is to undertake either ‘research only’ or ‘teaching and research’². Staff should have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit. Staff on ‘research only’ contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher.

Guidance on Submissions REF 2019/01 (January 2019) also sets out the expectations for staff with significant responsibility (paragraphs 138 to 144). The extract from Paragraph 141 is included for ease of reference below.

141. Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom:
- a. ‘Explicit time and resources are made available’. Indicators of this could include:
 - a specific proportion of time allocated for research, as determined in the context of the institution’s practices and applied in a consistent way
 - research allocation in a workload model or equivalent.
 - b. ‘To engage actively in independent research’. Indicators of this could include (HEIs are also advised to refer to the indicators of independence, paragraph 130, as additional guidance on this aspect):
 - eligibility to apply for research funding as the lead or co-applicant
 - access to research leave or sabbaticals
 - membership of research centres or institutes within the HEI.
 - c. ‘And that is an expectation of their job role’. Indicators of this could include:
 - current research responsibilities as indicated in, for example, career pathways or stated objectives
 - expectations of research by role as indicated in, for example, job descriptions and appraisals.

Institutions submitting to REF 2021 are invited to identify where 100% of their Category A eligible population have significant responsibility for research, or where only a proportion do, this process is demonstrated in Figure 1.

¹ 31st July 2020.

² Individuals whose primary employment function is to undertake either ‘research only’ or ‘teaching and research’ are staff returned to the Higher Education Statistics Agency Staff Collection with an academic employment function of either ‘Academic contract that is research only’ or ‘Academic contract that is both teaching and research’ (identified as codes ‘2’ or ‘3’ in the ACEMPFUN field).

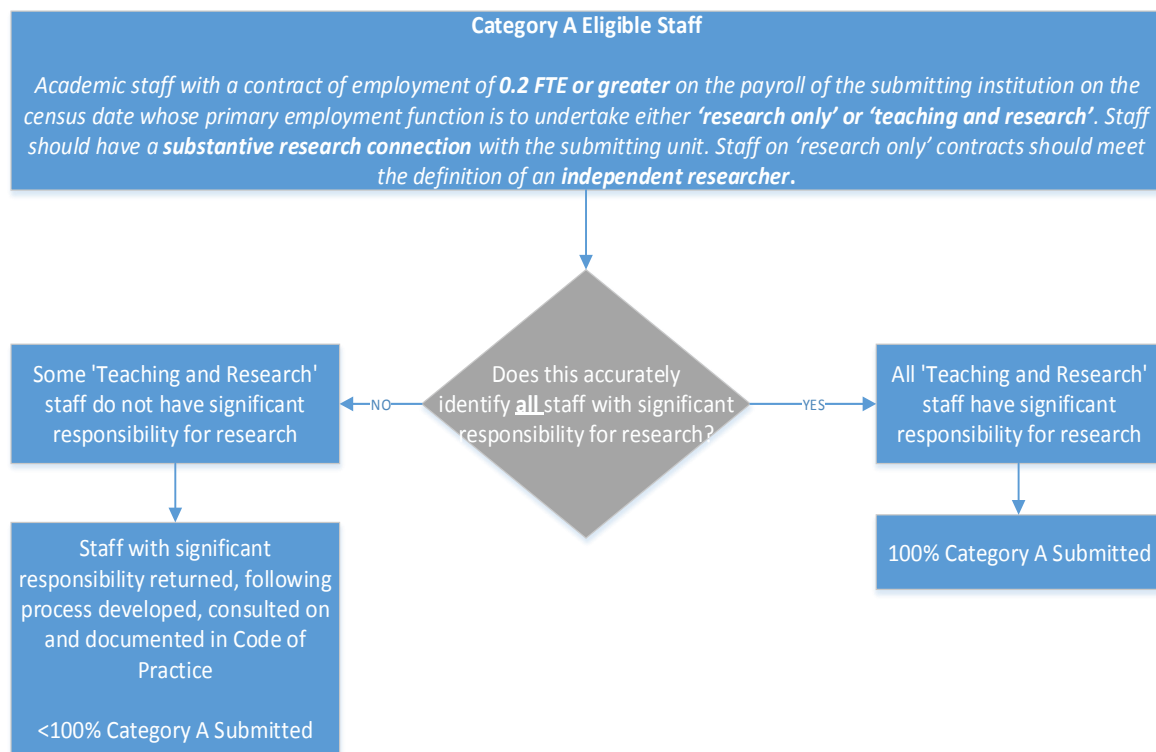


Figure 1 Category A eligible and submitted staff

2.2 Policies and Procedures

The University of Surrey has reviewed the definitions of Category A eligible staff, Category A submitted staff and the indicators regarding significant responsibility for research.

The definition for significant responsibility accurately reflects the Category A eligible staff population. Therefore the University will be submitting 100% of Category A eligible staff for all Units of Assessment.

Annex A.1 illustrates the process for identifying Category A submitted staff at the University of Surrey.

2.3 Staff, Committees and Training

Faculty UOA Leads Committee will approve Category A eligibility status of all current staff including approval of substantive connection statements (see terms of reference in Annex C.3 for full details of the committee, its formation, decision-making, training and procedures).

Summary of stages of approval for establishing significant responsibility are described in Table 2 below.

Staff/Committee	Role
Head of School/Department/Centre	Advisory
REF 2021 Team	Advisory
Faculty UOA Leads Committee	Decision-making
REF 2021 Management Group	Ratify decision-making

Table 3 Stages of Approval for establishing Category A eligible status

2.4 Appeals

As described in Section 3.4.

2.5 Equality Impact Assessment

As described in Section 3.5.

3 Determining Research Independence

3.1 REF 2021 Guidance

Guidance on Submissions REF 2019/01 (January 2019) offers the following guidance to support institutions in identifying staff that are research independent and therefore eligible for REF 2021. (paragraphs 128 to 133)

128. *Staff employed on ‘research only’ contracts must be independent researchers (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) to meet the definition of Category A eligible. All staff on ‘research only’ contracts who are independent researchers will have significant responsibility for research so should be returned as Category A submitted staff.*

129. *Research assistants (sometimes also described as postdoctoral research assistants, research associates or assistant researchers) as defined in paragraph 130, are not eligible to be returned to the REF unless, exceptionally, they meet the definition of an independent researcher (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) on the census date **and** satisfy the definition of Category A eligible staff in paragraph 117. They must not be listed as Category A submitted staff purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.*

130. *Research assistants are defined as academic staff whose primary employment function is ‘research only’, and they are employed to carry out another individual’s research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right (except in the circumstances described in paragraph 129). They are usually funded from research grants or contracts from Research Councils, charities, the European Union (EU) or other overseas sources, industry, or other commercial enterprises, but they may also be funded from the institution’s own funds.*

131. *For the purposes of the REF, an independent researcher is defined as an individual who undertakes self-directed research, rather than carrying out another individual’s research programme.*

132. *Possible indicators of independence are listed below. Institutions should note that each indicator may not individually demonstrate independence and where appropriate multiple factors may need to be considered. The main panels have set out in the ‘Panel criteria’ (paragraphs 187 to 189) the indicators they consider appropriate for their disciplines. The following indicators are considered appropriate by all main panels*

- *leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on an externally funded research project*
- *holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. An illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of independent fellowships can be found at www.ref.ac.uk, under Guidance*
- *leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package.*

133. *A member of staff is not deemed to have undertaken independent research purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.*

The main panels have set out in the 'Panel criteria and working methods' REF 2019/02 (January 2019) the indicators they consider appropriate for their disciplines (paragraphs 187 to 189) (articulated above in Guidance on Submissions extract) Main Panels C and D offer the following supplementary criteria for identifying independent researchers;

Main Panels C and D supplementary criteria – independent researchers

189. In addition to the generic criteria specified in the 'Guidance on submissions', Main Panels C and D also consider that the following attributes may generally indicate research independence in their disciplines:

- *Being named as a Co-I on an externally funded research grant/award.*
- *Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.*

3.2 Policies and Procedures

3.2.1 University career pathways and role profiles

The University has the career pathways and role profiles shown in Table 4.

Career Pathway	RESEARCH	TEACHING AND LEARNING		RESEARCH AND TEACHING
Roles within career pathways	Professorial Research Fellow	Professorial Teaching Fellow	Professor (practice)	Professor
	Principal Research Fellow	Principal Teaching Fellow		Reader
	Senior Research Fellow	Senior Teaching Fellow		Senior Lecturer
	Research Fellow B	Teaching Fellow B		Lecturer B
	Research Fellow A	Teaching Fellow A		Lecturer A

Table 4 University of Surrey Career Pathways

All roles within the 'Research and Teaching' career pathway are REF eligible based on the Category A eligible definition (Guidance on Submission pgs 117-134), with 100% having significant responsibility for research (as described in Section 2.) These individuals are not required to demonstrate research independence.

Professor (practice) roles are reviewed on a case by case basis and will be included where their contract type meets the REF 2021 requirements.

All roles in the 'Teaching and Learning' career pathway are not REF eligible, based on the Category A eligible definition (Guidance on Submission pgs 117-134).

All roles in the 'research' career pathway have been initially reviewed to establish if they will be included in the research independence process (Table 5).

3.2.2 Establishing Research Independence - Principles

The University of Surrey has adopted the following principles for establishing research independence. Firstly the University has considered all staff on "research only contracts" and concluded;

- Staff with role profiles of Research officer/assistant have been identified as meeting the “research assistant” definition and are not considered REF eligible, unless, by exception, they can demonstrate research independence.
- There are several role profiles within the research career pathway, where the requirements of the role clearly require staff to be research independent. These have been identified and are tabled below (Table 5).
- Research Fellows A and B will be invited to complete the research independence form (Annex A:3) in accordance with Table 5 below. Heads of Schools/Departments/Centres (HoDs) will be requested to support them in the completion of the form.

Research Pathway Role Profiles ³	Does the role profile include research independence ?	Are staff expected to complete research independence form?	Rationale
Professorial Research Fellow	Yes	No	Research independence is a pre-requisite for this role (as per published role profile). No further requirement to demonstrate research independence
Principal Research Fellow	Yes	No	Research independence is a pre-requisite for this role (as per published role profile). No further requirement to demonstrate research independence
Senior Research Fellow	Yes	No	Research independence is a pre-requisite for this role (as per published role profile). No further requirement to demonstrate research independence
Research Fellow B	<i>Potentially</i>	Yes	Research independence is implied in this role (see published role profile) but all staff must complete the research independence form to confirm research independence or not
Research Fellow A	No	Yes	Research independence is not anticipated in this role (as per published role profile) but staff must complete the research independence form to demonstrate research independence
Research Officer/ Assistant	No	No	Research independence is not anticipated in this role (as per published role profile) but staff <i>may select to exceptionally</i> complete the research independence form to demonstrate research independence

Table 5 Research independence principles

³ Alternative job titles are used across the University of Surrey, but roles fit into formal generic published role profiles

Applying the research independence criteria expressed in the Guidance on Submissions and Panel Criteria to the University of Surrey context, the approach outlined in Table 6 will be applied.

Research Independence Criteria	Evidence Anticipated	Acceptable criterion by itself?
Requirement of the role (published role profile) being undertaken	Role profiles	Yes
Leading or acting as principal investigator (PI) or equivalent on an externally funded research project	Copy of grant/award letter data must include individual's name as PI and funding source	Leading – yes Acting – should be accompanied by one or more of the other indicators
Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement List available at; https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1030/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-documents-final-guidance-for-live-site-list-of-research-fellowships.pdf	Copy of fellowship agreement data must include individual's name and fellowship scheme	Yes
Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package	Copy of grant/award letter or grant application and screenshot of Research finance entry data must include individual's name and group/work package, evidence of contribution to the development of the work package	No, should be accompanied by one or more of the other indicators
Following indicators are only applicable to UOA in Main Panel C and D		
Being named as a Co-I on an externally funded research grant/award	Grant application and screenshot of Research finance entry data must include individual's name and grant details	Yes
Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research	Grant application and supporting statement from PI of grant	No, should be accompanied by one or more of the other indicators

Table 6 Applying the research independence criteria

3.2.3 Establishing Research Independence - Process

The Research independence form will be made available to all researchers (see 3.3.2 for methods of communication).

Specifically, researchers in the roles of Research Fellow A and B will be invited to complete the research independence form. Individuals should liaise with their line manager, Head of Department/School/Centre to complete the form. Faculty HR may be consulted where necessary. Individuals will then submit the form to REF2021@surrey.ac.uk or as hardcopy to the REF 2021 Team (05SE06). Research Independence briefings will be held to support individuals in completing the form (see Section 3.3.2).

Submitted forms will then be subject to the following process;

- I. Where necessary, the REF 2021 Team will contact HR, Research Finance and follow up on any additional evidence required.
- II. The form will then be reviewed at the next applicable Faculty UOA Leads Committee Meeting.
- III. The review undertaken by the Faculty UOA Leads Committee will take into account the following when making their decisions;
 - i. Type of criterion met and relevance to their discipline
 - ii. number of criterion evidenced
 - iii. strength of evidence.

3.2.4 Feedback on Research Independence

The REF 2021 Team, on behalf of the Chair, will provide the outcome via email within 10 working days of the UOA Leads Committee meeting (as described in Annex C.3: Faculty UOA Leads Committee Terms of Reference). The outcome will include the offer of a meeting with the Head of Department/School/Centre if requested.

Where the Faculty UOA Leads Committee are unable to reach an agreed decision and require further information or escalation to REF 2021 Management Group, the member of staff will be notified of this additional stage via email, within the same timeframe as above. The individual will then be notified of the outcome via email within a further 10 working days.

Communications will reaffirm that there is no advantage or disadvantage to being identified as eligible or not eligible for REF 2021.

3.3 Staff, Committees and Training

Faculty UOA Leads Committee will approve research independence assessments (see Terms of Reference in Annex C.3 for full details of the committee, including its formation, decision making, training and procedures).

REF 2021 specific ED&I training will be provided to all staff and committees involved in decision making and advising on staff-related REF 2021 processes. The training schedule and outline of training provided is in Annex B.4.

The completion of the generic unconscious bias training will also be confirmed and recorded as part of the REF 2021 training records, alongside attendance at the REF 2021 specific training sessions outlined in Annex B.4.

3.3.1 Summary of Stages of Approval for Establishing Research Independence

Table 7 identifies the stages of approval and the bodies involved in establishing research independence.

Staff/Committee	Role
Head of School/Department/Centre	Advisory
REF 2021 Team	Advisory
Faculty UOA Leads Committee	Decision-making
REF 2021 Management Group	Ratify decision-making

Table 7 Stages of approval for establishing research independence

3.3.2 Communicating the Research Independence process

Researchers will be reminded and encouraged to complete the research independence form at regular intervals throughout the REF submissions preparations. The form will be available from June 2019 onwards with briefings taking place at the start of the semester in September 2019. Communications will sign-post the support available, and ensure the research independence form is easily accessible through a variety of routes, including via Heads of Schools/Departments/Centres and the REF 2021 intranet pages.

The REF 2021 Team will also offer briefings to staff across the faculties, through the Doctoral College and at any staff forums.

3.4 Appeals

Staff who are not considered to have significant responsibility for research, or to be independent researchers and are notified that they will not be submitted to REF have the right to appeal that decision.

The basis of the appeal must be on (one or more of) the grounds of (i) procedural irregularity, (ii) equality or (iii) new evidence.

3.4.1 Communicating the Appeals Process

Staff will be sign-posted to the Appeals process via the University REF 2021 intranet pages, and will be reminded of their right of appeal in correspondence regarding their eligibility.

3.4.2 Appeals Committee

The REF 2021 Appeals Committee has overall responsibility for reviewing and making decisions on all appeals related to REF 2021. The REF 2021 Appeals Committee terms of reference are provided in Annex C.6.

The members of the Committee are entirely separate from other aspects of the REF 2021 submission process associated with staff selection so as to ensure impartiality. The Committee will meet physically or virtually to consider the written appeal within 15 working days from receipt of the appeal by the Committee chair.

3.4.3 Grounds for Appeal

Staff who are not considered to have significant responsibility for research, or to be independent researchers and are notified that they will not be submitted to REF have the right to appeal that decision. The basis of the appeal must be on (one or more of) the grounds of (i) procedural irregularity, (ii) equality or (iii) new evidence.

There is no right of appeal on grounds of academic judgement. Guidance of how to make an appeal will be provided on the Staff intranet REF webpages (and also in printed form for those who request it). Details of where this guidance can be found will be included in the outcome emails mentioned in 3.2.4.

The appeals process does not negate any existing rights as contained within the University's policies and procedures.

3.4.4 Appeals Process

The appeals process is set out schematically in Annex E.1 and detailed below.

- I. Appeals must be made in writing to the Director of Human Resources (Services) within 10 working days of being informed of the decision. An appeal must include details of the grounds of appeal and any supporting evidence.
- II. In the first instance, staff who are considering making an appeal may discuss their grounds informally with their Head of School/Department/Centre or their Faculty Human Resources Manager or the University REF 2021 Team. These discussions will remain confidential and will not be used to inform any future action by the University. The intention is to enable the individual to best decide whether the grounds are appropriate before any formal appeal is made.
- III. The Director of Human Resource Services will inform the Chair of the Appeals Committee of an appeal within 2 working days of receipt.
- IV. The Committee will meet to consider the written appeal within 15 working days from the Chair being notified of the appeal.
- V. The Chair of the Committee may seek further clarification of the case, if this is thought to be necessary, through co-opting a senior academic from the Faculty to which the appellant belongs, who is not otherwise connected with the REF process in order to obtain a discipline specific perspective. The University has the right to make written representation to the Committee.
- VI. The Chair of the Committee may request a meeting with the individual making the appeal. At such a meeting the opportunity will be given to explain the case further and to explore in more detail the reasons why the individual was not considered REF eligible. This may also involve the UOA Lead or other relevant individual being asked to attend the meeting to clarify the basis on which the original decision to not submit was reached. The individual may be accompanied by a fellow employee of the University of Surrey who may or may not be a trade union representative.

3.4.5 Outcome of Appeals Process

The Committee's decision on every appeal will be either to uphold or not uphold. The REF 2021 Management Group and the relevant Faculty UOA Leads Committee will be informed in writing of the outcome of all appeals that are upheld.

3.4.6 Feedback on an Appeal

A written response to every appeal will be provided by the Chair of the Committee within 30 working days from receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final (as described in Annex C.6: REF 2021 Appeals Committee Terms of Reference).

3.5 Equality Impact Assessment

3.5.1 Equality Impact Assessment Principles

All HEIs are required to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) on their policy and procedures for submitting staff, selecting outputs, and taking account of staff circumstances for REF 2021. The aims of the EIA will be to ensure that the University of Surrey is fulfilling its responsibilities in respect of promoting ED&I, complying with legislation, and avoiding discrimination.

This means being able to demonstrate relevance and proportionality in respect of (i) the relevance of the policy to protected groups, (ii) the relevance of the policy to the public sector equality duty, (iii) the treatment of concerns previously flagged about a policy or practice, and (iv) any information indicating an adverse impact on a protected group. An EIA must be based on the evidence and data available and genuinely reflect on the possible ways to mitigate negative impacts the policy or practice may have on equality.

In order to promote ED&I in REF 2021 a REF 2021 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group has been created (Annex C.4). This group will review data associated with processes articulated in this Code of Practice. The group will also consider the EIAs of any contributory data, such as the EIAs carried out on the annual output reviews to date.

3.5.2 Equality Impact Assessment on Code of Practice

The REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Working Group has conducted an EIA on this Code of Practice under the guidance of the Director Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and reviewing this is an on-going commitment. The EIA is provided in Annex F. This has involved consideration of whether the processes articulated in this document pose a barrier to eligible staff from a particular group. It has also involved consideration of the most effective ways in which to communicate the selection policies to all eligible staff, including those who are currently absent from the University.

3.5.3 Future Equality Impact Assessments

EIAs will be carried out to review the impact of applying the technical requirements of REF eligibility including; identifying staff with significant responsibility for research and determining research independence as well as output selections, appeals and the final submission.

EIAs will be conducted on a UOA by UOA basis as well as at University level (a timeline is set out in Table 8 below). The REF 2021 Management Group and REF 2021 Executive Committee will be informed of the outcome. If corrective action is necessary it will be taken at this juncture and issued as an instruction to the REF 2021 Management Group. If however there appears to be more fundamental reasons for the inequality, such instances will also be presented to the University EDIC. This process will ensure that the University remains accountable for addressing these issues and taking corrective actions where necessary, beyond the remit of REF itself.

In December 2019/January 2020 and July 2020 further EIAs will be undertaken to review the outcomes of the output selection processes. The results will be referred to the REF 2021 Executive Committee to confirm that no further corrective action is necessary, or to initiate such action where appropriate.

If the Appeals process highlights any issues that have had a negative impact on a protected group, these will also be referred to the REF 2021 Executive Committee through the REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Working Group for consideration and possible action.

After the submission has been made a final EIA will be undertaken and an EIA statement will be published on the University's external website, including the outcomes of any actions taken to prevent discrimination and advance equality.

The EIAs rely on various sources of data and evidence. These include analysis of HESA staff data for staff who are eligible to be submitted to the REF, analysis of University HR records (including confidential data on gender, ethnicity, age, disability). It is recognised that HEIs do not necessarily have comprehensive data in relation to all the protected characteristics covered by the equality duty of the Equality Act 2010; where appropriate, qualitative data will also be considered. Data required to conduct EIAs shall be handled in accordance with Data Protection requirements.

3.5.4 Equality Impact Assessment Anticipated Timetable

Equality Impact Assessment		Timeline
Equality Impact Assessment on Code of Practice and baseline population		April/May 2019
EIA (1)	Undertaken on staff pool, output selection, appeals and the combination of all of the above.	December 2019/January 2020
EIA (2)		July 2020
EIA (3)		October 2020
Final EIA		December 2020

Table 8 Equality impact assessment timetable

3.5.5 Communicating Equality Impact Assessments

The Equality Impact assessments undertaken will be made available to all staff via the REF 2021 intranet website. The final EIA will also be published externally on the University of Surrey website.

4 Selection of Outputs

4.1 REF 2021 Guidance

Guidance on Submissions REF 2019/01 (January 2019) offers the following guidance to support institutions in selecting outputs for REF 2021 (paragraphs 153-154).

153. *Part 3, Section 2 of this document sets out the requirements for the submitted output pool. The total number of outputs returned from each submitting unit must be equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff included in the submission. A minimum of one output will be required for each Category A submitted staff member. There will be no minimum requirement for submitting the outputs of former staff. No more than five outputs may be attributed to any individual staff member (including former staff).*

154. *The decoupling of staff and outputs in REF 2021 is intended to provide increased flexibility to institutions 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. It is therefore not expected that all staff members would be returned with the same number of outputs attributed to them in the submission.*

4.2 Policies and Procedures

4.2.1 Approach to Selecting Outputs

Applying the REF 2021 Guidance in Section 4.1 to the University of Surrey context, the following principles for the output selection process will be applied;

- I. Procedures will be fair and transparent (i.e. published and will be applied across all UOAs).
- II. Development of the procedures are undertaken collaboratively with UOA leads and the ED&I Working Group.
- III. Stages of approval are clearly defined (see Section 4.3.1) and shared widely, as part of this Code of Practice.
- IV. The selection of outputs for the REF 2021 submission will have no bearing, nor be taken into account, in any other University process (e.g. in appraisal or promotion processes).

4.2.2 Principles for Selecting Outputs

- Output selection will be based on making the strongest⁴ possible submission to the UOA.
- Outputs will be selected on the basis of an overall judgement of the quality of the output informed by output data, including but not limited to the annual output review exercises undertaken from 2016 onwards.
- Ahead of Phase 1 of selecting outputs, REF eligible individuals will be invited to nominate up to 5 outputs as their strongest. These nominations will feed into the selection process, and will not automatically be included in a UOA submission.

⁴ Strongest is in relation to the REF 2021 output assessment criteria of originality, significance and rigour, described in Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01).

- The University's REF 2021 Team will be responsible for identifying all eligible outputs, and providing all associated data to the Panels. The associated data will include;
 - technical data; open access status, authorship
 - quality-related data; annual output review ratings and feedback, up to 5 strongest outputs nominated by individuals and, for UOAs 3, 9 and 11, citation counts, along with comparator data and
 - staff data; FTE of REF eligible staff, staff circumstance reductions and removal of the requirement for one output through staff circumstances.
- Annual output review ratings alone will not dictate inclusion in the UOA submission; but is expected to in a large number of cases provide a strong indicator of quality.
- Staff circumstances will be taken into account with regards individual expectations within the output selection process (see Section 4.4 for further details).
- The number of outputs attributed to an individual within the submission will not be a consideration in selection, and there will be no consequence or impact if individuals are attributed to the maximum of five outputs or the minimum of one output. An individual may appear as a co-author on more than five outputs within a submission, but within the submission itself, may only be attributed to up to five outputs.

4.2.3 Process for Selecting Outputs

Output selection will be conducted at UOA level output selection panel meetings held in accordance with guidance set by the University's REF 2021 Team. A member of the REF 2021 Team will be present, and ED&I Working Group members will be expected to attend panel meetings. Panel meetings will, wherever possible, include at least one other neutral observer (usually another UOA lead). Membership of the output selection panels will be made available to staff.

Membership of the output selection panels will include suitable representation from across the disciplines within the UOA and take account of the population characteristics of the UOA. Proposed attendance will be reviewed by the ED&I Working Group ahead of the meetings taking place. All attendees must have undergone REF 2021 ED&I training. Meetings will be chaired by the UOA Lead, and the following steps will be followed in establishing the output selection panels;

- Proposed panel membership provided to REF 2021 Team
- ED&I Working Group review proposed panel membership
- UOA Lead Committee approve panel membership
- Panel members receive ED&I training (detailed in annex B.4)
- Panel is convened (meeting commences with ED&I briefing) and follows the process outlined in **Figure 2** below.
- Where the same output could be attributed to multiple authors within the same UOA, decisions will be based on;
 - reaching individual submission requirements (minimum of 1)
 - alternative outputs available to all authors within the same UOA
 - authorship contribution conventions
- Once at least one output is assigned to all current members of staff, the remaining outputs, up to the volume required, will be identified. Where the selection panel identifies outputs of the same quality, the following decisions for selecting outputs will take into account;
 - Representativeness in terms of protected characteristics

- Representativeness in terms of discipline/research areas
- Only once at least one output is assigned to current members of staff, and the strongest outputs of current staff have been selected, will the panel consider the inclusion of former staff. Where it is considered to strengthen the submission, the outputs of former staff may be proposed by the panel for inclusion in the submission. The proportion of outputs associated with former staff will be included in the review undertaken by the REF 2021 Management Group.
- As output selection presents no procedural consequence to individuals, then there will be no right to appeal the selection of outputs.

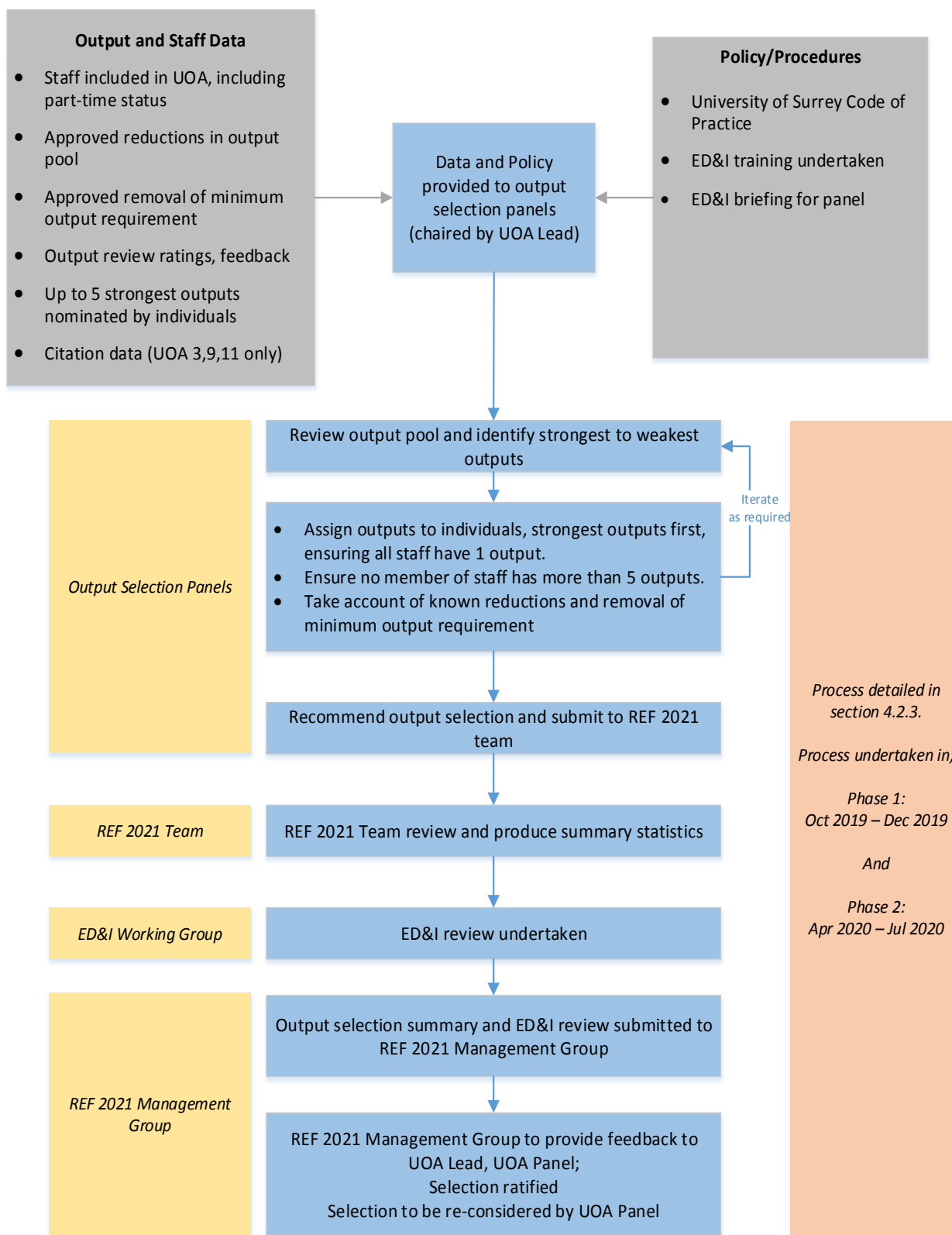


Figure 2 Output Selection Process

4.2.4 Indicative Timeline for Selecting Outputs

Table 9 describes the indicative timeline for selecting outputs, and sets out two key phases for output selection.

Phase 1 will take into account all data known as at October 2019, including the annual output review 2019, and all confirmed staff circumstance reductions and research independence assessments.

Phase 2 will take into account new information as at April 2020; including the annual output review 2020, new staff, new staff circumstance reductions and research independence assessments. The output selection panel will reconvene to consider this new data.

The final stage described as “Exceptions process”, will take account of outputs published in the final months of the REF publication period and any new staff circumstance reductions, and research independence assessments.

Where an individual identifies an exceptionally strong output that will be published by 31st December 2020, but has not been considered in earlier output selection panels, or in the annual output reviews, they should notify the UOA Lead in writing and propose it be considered for inclusion in REF 2021. These outputs will not be required to undergo an output review, but may be internally or externally reviewed. The output selection panel will reconvene to consider this new data.

Task	Timeframe
Development of output selection process	January to June 2019
Development of output selection guidance (in line with Code of Practice process)	August to September 2019
ED&I training of attendees of panel meetings	September 2019
Output selection process (Phase 1)	October to December 2019
<i>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) (1) undertaken</i>	December 2019 to January 2020
Refresher training for attendees of output selection meetings	April 2020
Output selection process (Phase 2)	April to July 2020
<i>EIA (2) undertaken</i>	July 2020
Exceptions Process – for outputs produced in later period of REF	July to September 2020
<i>EIA (3) undertaken (before submission)</i>	October 2020
<i>Final EIA (4) undertaken (after submission)</i>	December 2020

Table 9 Indicative timeline for selecting outputs

4.3 Staff, Committees and Training

UOA-level output selection panels will recommend the outputs to be submitted, with the Faculty UOA Leads Committee making the decision on the selection of outputs.

The REF 2021 Management Group will then ratify the selection of outputs, reflecting on the EIA data alongside the output profile anticipated.

Terms of Reference for the Faculty UOA Leads Committee and the REF 2021 Management Group are included in Annex C.3 and C.2 respectively and include full details of the committee, including its formation, decision making, training and procedures.

REF 2021-specific ED&I training will be provided to all staff and committees involved in decision-making and advising on staff-related REF 2021 processes, as detailed in Annex B.4.

4.3.1 Summary of Stages of Approval for Output Selection

Staff/Committee	Role in output selection
Output Selection Panel	Advisory
REF 2021 Team	Advisory
Faculty UOA Leads Committee	Decision-making
REF 2021 Management Group	Ratify decision-making

Table 10 Stages of approval for output selection

4.3.2 Communicating the Output Selection Process

Staff will be kept informed of output selection processes throughout the REF submission preparations. Communications will reinforce that the selection of outputs for the REF 2021 submission will have no bearing, nor be taken into account, in any other University process (e.g. in appraisal or promotion processes).

Post submission, in December 2020, REF eligible staff will be notified in writing of all the outputs affiliated with them that are included in the University of Surrey's REF 2021 submission, but not the attribution within the submission itself i.e., staff will know which outputs of theirs were submitted but not if they were attributed to them or another Surrey author.

Former staff will also be notified in writing, wherever possible, of all outputs affiliated with them that are included in the University of Surrey's REF 2021 submission.

4.4 Staff Circumstances

4.4.1 Staff Circumstances Principles

The University of Surrey will ensure that the staff circumstances process outlined in this section is promoted and conducted as described and fully adopts the principles of;

- Ensuring recognition of the effect circumstances can have upon an individual researcher's productivity
- Recognising the potential disparity in the available output pool for units in particular contexts, for example where there are high proportions of staff with circumstances

- Ensuring the University is taking appropriate responsibility to support staff with circumstances
- Empowering individuals to disclose their circumstances, and ensuring this is undertaken voluntarily and in a confidential manner
- Ensuring that units of assessment are taking account of any circumstances, and adjusting the expectations of a staff member's contribution to the output pool, as appropriate.
- All members of staff eligible for inclusion in REF 2021 will be invited to disclose any staff circumstances which may, in their view, have affected their ability to research productively throughout the period (1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020). Detailed guidance as to the types of circumstance that may be considered will be provided on the Staff intranet REF webpages (and also in printed form for those who request it) and are detailed in Annex D.3. Staff are also encouraged to discuss, in confidence with their HoD, any circumstances which they feel may apply to them as individuals. Staff members may also discuss matters in confidence with staff from Human Resources or Occupational Health.

4.4.2 Guidance on Staff Circumstances

As set out in REF 2019/01 Guidance on Submission (January 2019):

160. The funding bodies, advised by Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP), 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:

- Qualifying as an ECR (on the basis set out in paragraphs 148 and 149 and Annex L).*
- Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.*
- Qualifying periods of family-related leave.*
- Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6, as defined in paragraphs 162 to 163.*
- Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:*
 - Disability: this is defined in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1 under 'Disability'.*
 - ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.*
 - 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.*
 - Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).*
 - Gender recognition.*
 - 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.*

Full details of all applicable circumstances and the prescribed reductions are included in Annex D.3.

4.4.3 Voluntary Staff Circumstance Process

To support the voluntary disclosure of staff circumstances, a Staff Circumstances Reporting Form (Annex D.2) will be made available to all staff. The reporting form will be made available via Intranet webpages and promoted via UOA Lead meetings, faculty and school/department/centre meetings.

Once completed, the reporting form should be returned either electronically to REF2021Staff@surrey.ac.uk (bespoke email address, with restricted access to those supporting the Staff Circumstances Committee) or in paper form directly to the Chair of the Staff Circumstances Committee as part of an overall process designed to ensure confidentiality as far as is practicable.

Every completed reporting form will then be reviewed by the REF Staff Circumstances Committee (Annex C:5), whose members are entirely separate from other aspects of the REF submission process so as to ensure impartiality and to maximise confidentiality. The REF Staff Circumstances Committee will meet monthly throughout the REF preparation period.

For all cases where the committee decides that a reduction in outputs is appropriate a recommendation to that effect will be made to the Faculty UOA Leads Committee.

Where the removal of the minimum requirement is recommended by the Staff Circumstances Committee, the committee will draft a supporting statement suitable for inclusion in the REF6b form to explain clearly the nature of the impact on an individual's research capacity.

Where a reduction in outputs is recommended by the Staff Circumstances Committee, the committee will provide the information to the Faculty UOA Leads Committee to feed into the assessment of the effect on the overall output pool.

Where the Staff Circumstances Committee decides that no reduction of outputs is appropriate there will be no need to communicate with the Faculty UOA Leads Committee, who will assume unless told otherwise that there is no requirement to adjust the expectations of an individual's contribution to the output pool.

4.4.4 Feedback on Staff Circumstances

All staff voluntarily disclosing a staff circumstance will be reviewed at the next month's Staff Circumstances Committee. Staff will be informed through the Staff Circumstances Committee of the outcome via email within 10 working days of the Staff Circumstance Committee meeting at which a decision is reached.

4.4.5 Staff Circumstances Committee

Where personal and sensitive medical information is involved an Occupational Health Adviser will assess each case individually, including the offer of a face-to-face assessment. Occupational Health staff are bound by their own ethical codes of medical confidentiality and as such will seek to ensure that medical details are kept from the Staff Circumstances Committee as far as is practicable.

Members of the Staff Circumstances Committee will be required to sign a medical confidentiality agreement. In addition, the University is required to adhere to its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 to obtain, record, process, retain, use and

dispose of personal data. Further information is available on the University's REF 2021 intranet web pages.

At all stages of the REF 2021 staff circumstance process, information about an individual's staff circumstance, will be kept confidential and shared only amongst those who need to know. It is the University's responsibility to ensure that the information is submitted and treated in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and all other legal obligations, including legislation and medical ethics relating to confidentiality. This will require individuals to give explicit consent to their personal data being included in the University's submission (this consent must be given at the time of disclosure).

If the institution 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 has been disclosed about individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see Annex D.3 for more detail about reductions in outputs.

Submitted data will be kept confidential to the REF 2021 Team, the REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF 2021 Team will destroy the submitted data about individuals' circumstances on completion of the REF assessment phase.

4.4.6 Communicating the Staff Circumstances Process

Staff will be reminded and encouraged to consider applying for staff circumstances to be taken into account throughout the REF submissions preparations. Communications will signpost the support available, and ensure the staff circumstances form is easily accessible through a variety of routes, including via Faculty-based HR Managers, the REF 2021 intranet pages.

The Staff Circumstances Committee will also offer briefings to staff across the faculties, Doctoral College and any staff forums.

4.5 Equality Impact Assessment

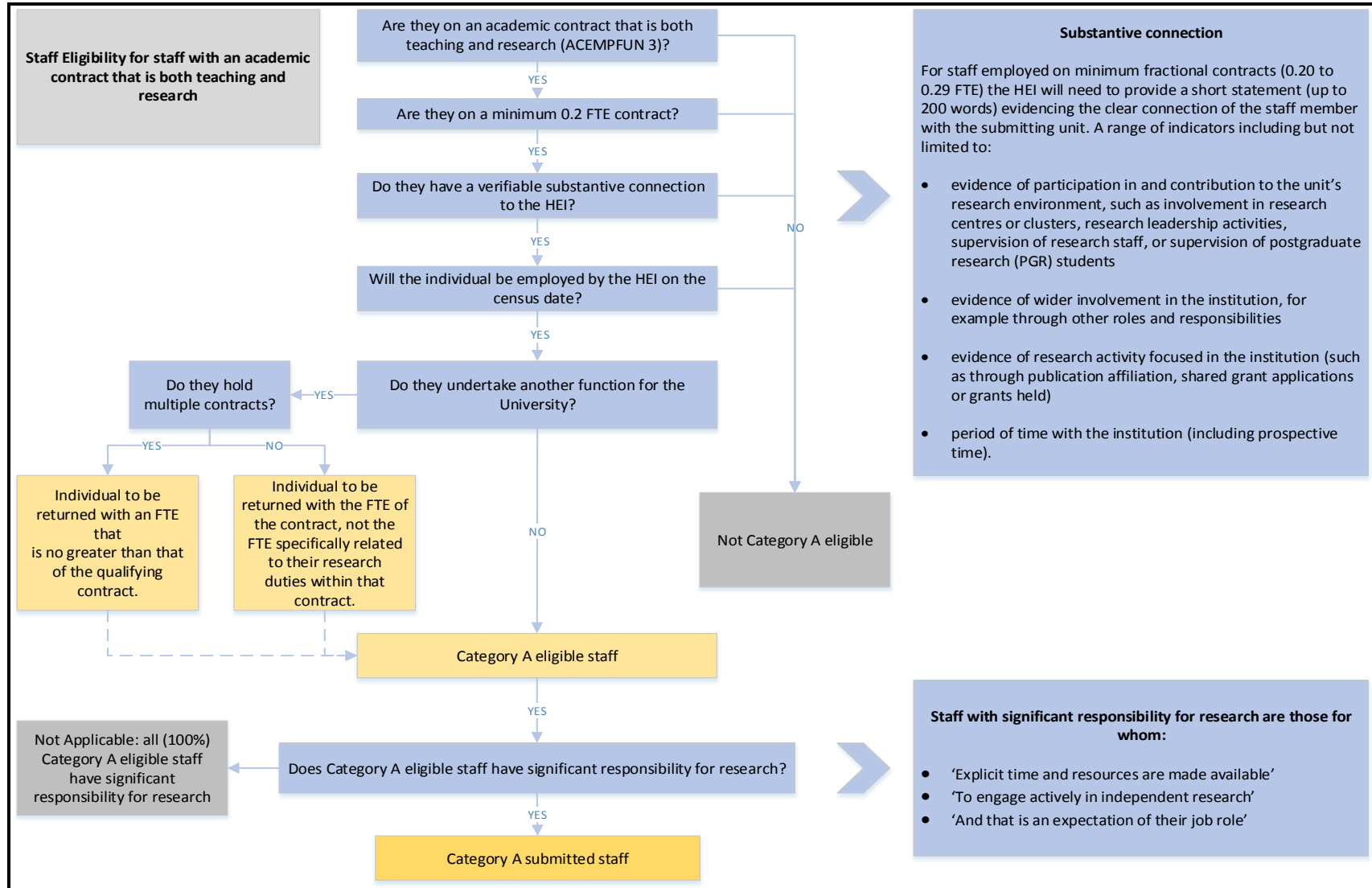
As described in Section 3.5.

Annexes

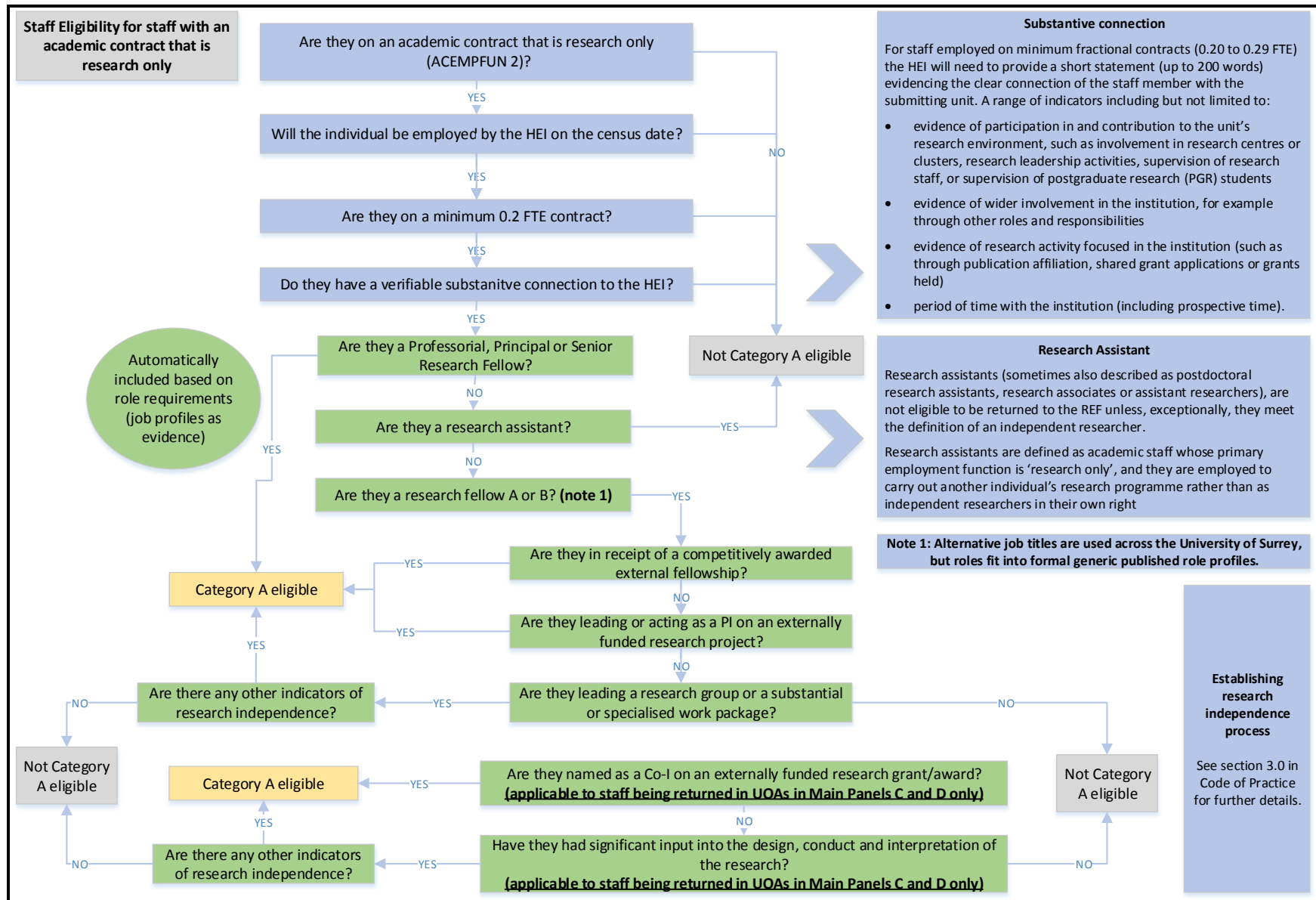
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5 Annex A: Category A Eligible Staff Flowcharts

5.1 Annex A.1: Establishing Category A Eligible Staff: Teaching and Research Flowchart



5.2 Annex A.2: Establishing Category A Eligible Staff: Research Independence Flow Chart



5.3 Annex A.3: Establishing Research Independence

Establishing Research Independence Form

Who should complete the form?

All staff in the roles; Research Fellow A and B⁵ are required to submit a research independence form. Individuals should complete the grey boxes on the form, and may approach their line manager or Faculty HR manager for support in doing this. Individuals should then liaise with their Head of Centre, School or Department, and their Head of Centre, School or Department must complete the orange boxes on the form.

Research Officers are invited to submit a research independence form, where they consider there may be grounds for them being an independent researcher. Individuals should complete the grey boxes on the form. Individuals should then liaise with their Head of Centre, School or Department, and their Head of Centre, School or Department must complete the orange boxes on the form.

To submit this form you should return it either electronically to REF2021@surrey.ac.uk or in paper form directly to the REF Office, 05SE08.

Who are the forms shared with?

Submitted forms will be managed by the University's REF 2021 Team, and shared with the UOA Leads Committee members, where necessary the form may also be shared with the members of the REF 2021 Management Group. The University's REF 2021 Team will destroy the submitted forms on completion of the REF assessment phase in 2021.

All staff completing an independence form will be informed of the outcome via email within 10 working days of the UOA Leads Committee at which a decision is reached.

Changes in status

The university recognises that research independence may change between completion of the form and the census date (31 July 2020). If this is the case, then staff should contact the University REF 2021 Team or email REF2021@surrey.ac.uk.

Research Independence Criteria	Evidence Anticipated	Acceptable criteria by itself?
Requirement of the role (published role profile) being undertaken	Role profiles	Yes
Leading or acting as principal investigator (PI) or equivalent on an externally funded research project	Copy of grant/award letter Data must include individual's name as PI and funding source	Leading – yes Acting – should be accompanied by one or more of the other indicators

⁵ Alternative job titles are used across the University of Surrey, but roles fit into formal generic published role profiles.

Research Independence Criteria	Evidence Anticipated	Acceptable criteria by itself?
Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement. List available at; https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1030/c-users-daislha-desktop-ref-documents-final-guidance-for-live-site-list-of-research-fellowships.pdf	Copy of fellowship agreement Data must include individual's name and fellowship scheme.	Yes
Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package	Copy of grant/award letter or grant application and screenshot of Research finance entry Data must include individual's name and group/work package	No, should be accompanied by one or more of the other indicators
Following indicators are only applicable to UOA in Main Panel C and D		
Being named as a Co-I on an externally funded research grant/award	Grant application and screenshot of Research finance entry Data must include individual's name and grant details, evidence of contribution to the development of the work package	Yes
Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research	Grant application and supporting statement from PI of grant	No, should be accompanied by one or more of the other indicators

Table 6 Applying the Research Independence criteria

Research assistants (sometimes also described as postdoctoral research assistants, research associates or assistant researchers) as defined in paragraph 130 are not eligible to be returned to the REF unless exceptionally they meet the definition of an independent researcher (defined in paragraphs 131 to 133) on the census date and satisfy the definition of Category A eligible staff in paragraph 117. They must not be listed as Category A submitted staff purely on the basis that they are named on one or more research outputs.

130. Research assistants are defined as academic staff whose primary employment function is 'research only' and they are employed to carry out another individual's research programme rather than as independent researchers in their own right (except in the circumstances described in paragraph 129). They are usually funded from research grants or contracts from Research Councils, charities, the European Union (EU) or other overseas sources, industry, or other commercial enterprises but they may also be funded from the institution's own funds.

Name of Individual	
Individual's Staff Number	
Department/School	
Anticipated UOA, if known	

<p>Please describe the grounds for being considered an independent researcher or not (addressing the criteria outlined in Table 5 above and Annex A.2)</p>	<p><i>Leading or acting as principal investigator (PI) or equivalent on an externally funded research project? Yes/No</i></p> <p><i>Holding an independently won, competitively awarded fellowship where research independence is a requirement? Yes/No.</i></p> <p><i>Leading a research group or a substantial or specialised work package? Yes/No</i></p> <p><u>Researchers in FASS only:</u></p> <p><i>Being named as a Co-I on an externally funded research grant/award? Yes/No</i></p> <p><i>Having significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research? Yes/No</i></p>	
Please describe the available evidence		
Please confirm if the candidate is being proposed as an independent researcher and therefore included in REF 2021	Yes / No	
Head of Department/School/Centre	<i>Please add any other comments.</i>	
Name and Signature		
Date (DD/MM/YYYY)		

Confirmation of grounds/evidence by REF Team	
Name and Signature	
Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	

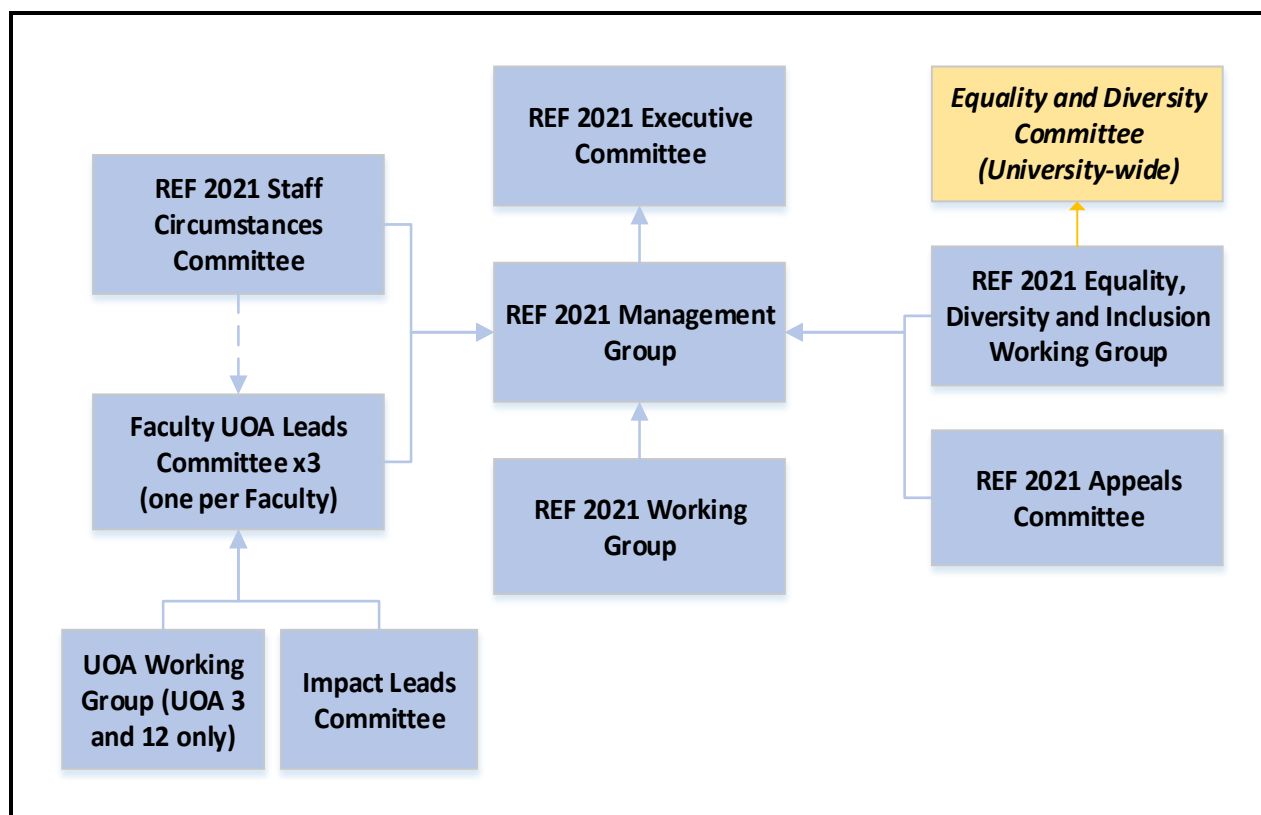
Decision of Faculty UOA Lead Committee	
Name and Signature	
Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	

Approval (only where decision cannot be agreed at Faculty UOA Lead Committee)

Decision of REF 2021 Management Group	
Name and Signature	
Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	

6 Annex B: REF 2021 Governance

6.1 Annex B.1: Governance Structure



6.2 Annex B.2: Summary of REF 2021 Committees

Committee Title and Chair	Brief Description (<i>annex reference provided where committee/group has a role in the processes included in this Code of Practice</i>)	Role in Staff Eligibility and output selection
REF 2021 Executive Committee Chair: Provost	(ANNEX C.1) Strategic oversight and overall responsibility for the REF submission	None
REF 2021 Management Group Chair: Vice Provost, Research & Innovation	(ANNEX C.2) Oversee the development, delivery of the REF 2021. Ensuring appropriate structures, support and processes are set out and followed	Ratifying decision-making
Faculty UOA Leads Committee Chair: Associate Dean, Research & Innovation	(ANNEX C.3) Approve staff eligibility, research independence assessments and output selection. Review progress of UOAs and final submissions, output selections and staff eligibility (including	Decision-making

	substantive connection, and research independence), consider UOA fit and optimisation. Act as a peer review forum for Environment statement development	
REF 2021 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Chair: Executive Board ED&I Lead	(ANNEX C.4) reports to the University ED&I Committee (EDIC) alongside REF 2021 Executive Committee. Ensuring the REF process fulfil the requirements for promoting ED&I, and compliance with ED&I legislation	None
REF 2021 Staff Circumstances Committee Chair: Director Human Resources (Services)	(ANNEX C.5) Considers and evaluates staff circumstance declarations and takes decisions on where a reduction will apply	None
REF 2021 Appeals Committee Chair: Vice-Provost, Education	(ANNEX C.6) To review and evaluate formal appeals submitted by members of staff	Decision-making
Impact Leads Committee Chair: Associate Dean (Research and Innovation)	Review progress of impact. Act as a peer review forum for impact case studies <i>No role in identifying staff or output selection</i>	None
UOA Working Group Chair: UOA Lead	Review and contribute to the development of a particular UOA, representing the core disciplines included within a UOA <i>No role in identifying staff or output selection</i>	None
REF 2021 Working Group Chair: Head of Research Performance (REF)	Review data requirements for REF 2021 and ensure delivery of all necessary data to support REF strategy and submission <i>No role in identifying staff or output selection</i>	None

6.3 Annex B.3: Designated Staff Summary

Individual Appointed	Role/position in REF 2021 structure	Procedure for appointment	Rationale
Provost	Chair of REF 2021 Executive Committee	Nominated by Vice-Chancellor	Chair of Senate, Executive Board member with significant experience of REF
Executive Deans	Members of REF 2021 Executive Committee	Nominated by Vice-Chancellor	Executive Board member, responsible for Faculty leadership and management
Vice-Provost, Research and Innovation	Chair of REF 2021 Management Group	Nominated by REF 2021 Executive Committee	Chair of the University Research and Innovation Committee, Executive Board member, responsible for institutional Research and Innovation strategy and REF
Senior academics	UOA Leads	Open expression of interest process (January 2019)	Criteria requested in expressions of interest: Senior academic working in a discipline relevant to the UOA, demonstrable leadership experience and REF experience (preferred) or at least understanding of REF. Expressions reviewed by ADRIIs, and appointed on basis of meeting criteria
ADRIIs	Chair of Faculty UOA Leads Committee	Nominated by REF 2021 Executive Committee	Member of the University Research and Innovation Committee, responsible for Faculty research agenda including REF
Deputy Director of HR	Chair of REF 2021 Staff Circumstances Committee	Nominated by REF 2021 Management Group	Senior member of HR, responsible for policies, and practices relating to Human Resources, with significant experience of REF
Executive Board Lead on ED&I	Chair of ED&I Working Group	Nominated by REF 2021 Management Group	Academic Lead for ED&I, responsible for policies, practices relating to ED&I with significant experience of REF
Vice-Provost, Education	Chair of Appeals Committee	Nominated by REF 2021 Management Group	Executive Board member, significant experience of REF, but not involved in REF 2021 development at the University of Surrey
Head of Research Performance (REF)	Chair of REF 2021 Working Group	Nominated by REF 2021 Management Group	University appointment, reporting to Director of Strategy and VP R&I, significant experience of REF

6.4 Annex B.4: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Training Summary

All ED&I training and materials will be developed by the University of Surrey's ED&I department, and reviewed by the ED&I Working Group. The training material will draw on existing University ED&I training and Advance-HE materials where appropriate. The University's REF 2021 Team will contribute to any REF specific elements.

Training	Description	Target Audience	Indicative earliest delivery date
ED&I training for REF Management	PowerPoint presentation, accompanied by scenarios to discuss as a group	REF 2021 Executive Committee, REF 2021 Management Group	July 2019
ED&I training for Faculty-based groups and ED&I Working Group	PowerPoint presentation, accompanied by scenarios to discuss as a group, extended to include specific research independence and output selection processes and to highlight areas of potential concern	Faculty UOA Leads Committee, ED&I Working Group	May/June 2019
ED&I training for REF related groups	PowerPoint presentation, accompanied by scenarios to discuss as a group, extended to include staff circumstances	Staff Circumstances Committee	July 2019
	PowerPoint presentation, accompanied by scenarios to discuss as a group	Appeals Committee	July 2019
ED&I training for REF (output selection specific)	PowerPoint presentation, accompanied by scenarios to discuss as a group, extended to include specific output selection process. ED&I briefing provided by UOA Lead at the start of each output selection panel meeting	Staff involved in output selection panels	September 2019

All staff involved in staff identification and/or output selection will be required to have undertaken the University's unconscious bias on-line training (within the last 2 years) and provide a record of completion to the REF 2021 Team.

7 Annex C: Terms of Reference

7.1 Annex C.1: REF 2021 Executive Committee

Name of Committee:	REF 2021 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Route of Formation:	Approved by Vice-Chancellor, 14 th Feb 2019
Membership:	<p>Provost – (Chair) Vice-Provost, Research and Innovation Executive Dean (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences) Executive Dean (Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences) Executive Dean (Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences)</p> <p>In attendance: Vice-Chancellor Head of Research Performance (REF) EA to the Provost (Secretary)</p>
Position in REF decision-making structure	Overall responsibility for REF. REF 2021 Management Group reports to it.
Record Keeping	Full minutes, and actions log maintained by EA to Provost. Minutes retained in REF 2021 folders located on University server, in accordance with the REF 2021 data asset register.
Steps taken to ensure members are aware of their own and the institutions legal obligations regarding equality and diversity	REF specific ED&I briefing delivered by University REF 2021 Team and Director/University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Annex B.4)
Terms of reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To define and oversee the University strategy for the REF submission To make the final decisions on which UOAs the University will make submissions to, based on recommendations from the REF 2021 Management Group To approve the Code of Practice To authorise the submission of the final documentation To ensure that the University has robust REF processes which, in the case of output selection, are fully in accordance with the Code of Practice <p>Quorum</p> <p>The quorum for the REF 2021 Executive Committee shall be half of the members with a minimum of two Executive Deans in attendance. Members remain a Member of the REF 2021 Executive Committee for the duration of the REF 2021 submission period.</p> <p>Frequency of Meetings</p> <p>Every 3-4 months until submission. Exceptional meetings may be held at the discretion of the Chair.</p>

	Decision making outside of meetings Decisions may exceptionally be taken by Chair's action. At the discretion of the Chair, decisions may also be passed by email circular, or similar electronic means, provided all members are copied into the electronic exchange.
Criteria applicable to this Committee	Not applicable.
The method and timescale by which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made	Not applicable.
Appeals process	Outlined in Section 4.4 and Annex E.1

7.2 Annex C.2: REF 2021 Management Group

Name of Committee	REF 2021 MANAGEMENT GROUP
Route of Formation	Approved by REF 2021 Executive Committee, 30 th April 2018
Membership	<p>Vice-Provost, Research and Innovation – (Chair)</p> <p>Associate Dean, Research and Innovation (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences)</p> <p>Associate Dean, Research and Innovation (Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences)</p> <p>Associate Dean, Research and Innovation (Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences)</p> <p>Senior Vice-President, Global</p> <p>Director, Research Strategy</p> <p>Head of Research Performance (REF)</p> <p>In attendance:</p> <p>Head of Planning</p> <p>EA to the Vice-Provost, Research and Innovation (Secretary)</p> <p>The Committee can co-opt internal members as required for specific purposes.</p>
Position in REF decision-making structure	Reports to REF 2021 Executive Committee.
Record keeping	Full minutes, and actions log maintained by EA to Vice-Provost. Minutes retained in REF 2021 folders located on University server, in accordance with the REF 2021 data asset register.
Steps taken to ensure members are aware of their own and the institutions legal obligations regarding equality and diversity	REF specific ED&I briefing delivered by University REF 2021 Team and Director/University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Annex B.4).
Terms of reference	<p>The REF 2021 Management Group oversees the day to day planning and preparation of the University's REF submission and is advisory to the REF 2021 Executive Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To oversee the day to day planning and preparation of the REF submission, including defining the timeline, governance, based on the University strategy for the REF • To develop and implement a Code of Practice for the University's REF submission • To ensure that individuals are given the opportunity to participate fully in the process of presenting their research activities for assessment, on an equitable and transparent basis, and that due consideration is given to Faculty research plans and strategies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide the necessary evidence and planning scenarios required by the REF 2021 Executive Committee to inform its decisions as to the choice of UOAs and output selection methodology • To ensure the timely and effective collection, review and submission of research outputs, impact case studies and the textual elements of the submission, together with the supporting data needed for the final submission • To develop and implement a communications strategy so that staff are kept fully aware of REF developments and have access to key REF information. <p>Quorum</p> <p>The quorum for the REF 2021 Management Group shall be half of the members with a minimum of two Associate Dean (Research & Innovation) in attendance. Members remain a Member of the REF 2021 Management Group for the duration of the REF 2021 submission period.</p> <p>Frequency of Meetings</p> <p>Every 2 months until submission. Exceptional meetings may be held at the discretion of the Chair.</p> <p>Decision making outside of meetings</p> <p>Decisions may exceptionally be taken by Chair's action. At the discretion of the Chair, decisions may also be passed by email circular, or similar electronic means, provided all members are copied into the electronic exchange.</p>
Criteria applicable to this Committee	<p>Staff eligibility criteria (detailed in Sections 2 and 3)</p> <p>Output selection (detailed in Section 4)</p>
The method and timescale by which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made	<p>REF 2021 Management Group will confirm its decisions in writing to the Faculty UOA Leads Committee, within one week of meeting.</p>
Appeals process	<p>Outlined in Section 4.4 and Annex E.1.</p>

7.3 Annex C.3: Faculty UOA Leads Committee

Name of Committee	Faculty UOA Leads Committee
Route of Formation	Approved by REF 2021 Management Group, 14 th Feb 2019
Membership	<p>Each Faculty UOA Leads Committee is chaired by the relevant Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) and comprises the UOA leads for the UOAs covered by the Faculty UOA Leads Committee. Where appropriate representatives of the disciplines within the UOA will also be appointed.</p> <p>In attendance; Committees are supported by the University's REF 2021 Team and/or the Faculty research support.</p> <p>Heads of the relevant Schools/Departments, Faculty HR Manager will be invited, where considered appropriate by the Chair.</p>
Position in REF decision-making structure	Reports to REF 2021 Management Group.
Record keeping	Key actions and decisions captured by REF 2021 Team and retained in REF 2021 folders located on University server, in accordance with the REF 2021 data asset register.
Steps taken to ensure members are aware of their own and the institutions legal obligations regarding equality and diversity	REF specific ED&I briefing delivered by University REF 2021 Team and Director/University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
Terms of reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review progress of UOAs and co-ordinate across UOAs, considering UOA fit and optimisation • To approve staff eligibility • To co-develop the output selection framework with University REF 2021 Team and appoint selection panels • To review output selections made by output selection panels. • To review and approve all research independence forms • To act as a peer review forum for development of the Environment narrative <p>Specifically the committee will hold decision making powers for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff eligibility</i> • <i>research independence assessments</i> • <i>Selection of outputs</i>

	<p>Quorum</p> <p>The quorum for the UOA Leads Committee shall be half the members. To further reflect the terms of reference, decisions related to a particular UOA will only be made when the appropriate UOA Lead is present.</p>
Criteria applicable to this Committee	<p>Staff eligibility criteria (detailed in Sections 2 and 3)</p> <p>Output selection (detailed in Section 4)</p>
The method and timescale by which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made	<p>Within 5 days of the Committee meeting, The Chair of the Faculty UOA Leads Committee will instruct the University REF 2021 Team to prepare (pre-approved) feedback and issue to the member of staff, copied to the UOA Lead and Head of Department/School. Initial feedback will be provided within 10 working days of the UOA Leads Committee meeting.</p>
Appeals process	<p>Outlined in Section 4.4 and Annex E.1</p>

7.4 Annex C.4: REF 2021 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

Name of Committee	REF 2021 ED&I Working Group
Route of Formation	Approved by REF 2021 Management Group, 14 th Feb 2019
Membership	Chair: Executive Board Lead on ED&I Members: Academic representation from each faculty In attendance; ED&I Adviser (secretary), Member of REF 2021 Team
Position in REF decision-making structure	Reports to REF 2021 Management Group (and to University ED&I Committee where appropriate)
Record keeping	Actions log and key decisions, EIAs and associated reports maintained by ED&I Team. Key actions and decisions retained in REF 2021 folders located on University server, in accordance with the REF 2021 data asset register.
Steps taken to ensure members are aware of their own and the institutions legal obligations regarding equality and diversity	REF specific ED&I briefing delivered by University REF 2021 Team and Director/University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
Terms of reference	<p>To review and advise on all ED&I issues in REF, and evaluate EIAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that ED&I considerations are fully integrated into the REF process at the University. • To arrange for the provision of ED&I training appropriate to the REF process for all staff who are involved, even if indirectly, with staff identification and output selection. • To contribute and review the Code of Practice and ensure that it is properly communicated to all members of academic staff, and all those engaged for the purposes of external assessment. • To carry out and review at key stages Equality Impact Assessments, making recommendations as appropriate to the REF 2021 Management Group. • Escalate any University wide ED&I issues to Surrey EDIC <p>The quorum for the ED&I Working Group shall be half the members.</p>
Criteria applicable to this Committee	Staff eligibility criteria (detailed in Sections 2 and 3) Output selection (detailed in Section 4)
The method and timescale by which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made	Feedback to be provided to the REF 2021 Management Group, within 10 working days of meeting.
Appeals process	Outlined in Section 4.4 and Annex E.1

7.5 Annex C.5: REF 2021 Staff Circumstances Committee

Name of Committee	REF 2021 Staff Circumstances Committee
Route of Formation	Approved by REF 2021 Management Group, 14 th Feb 2019
Membership	<p>Chair: Director of Human Resources (Services) Faculty HR Managers Occupational health (representatives) Academic representatives from each faculty</p> <p>In attendance; Member of REF 2021 Team (secretary)</p>
Position in REF decision-making structure	Reports to REF 2021 Management Group
Record keeping	<p>Full minutes, and actions log maintained by secretary. Minutes and actions log retained in REF 2021 folders located on University server with restricted access, in accordance with the REF 2021 data asset register. All medical information to be retained by Occupational Health.</p>
Steps taken to ensure members are aware of their own & the institutions legal obligations regarding equality & diversity	REF specific ED&I briefing delivered Director/University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, supported by the University REF 2021 Team.
Terms of reference	<p>To review and advise on all staff circumstance cases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive all staff circumstance disclosures made by eligible staff. • To evaluate each case, drawing on the relevant expertise of members from Human Resources & Occupational Health, ensuring at all times that every effort is made to protect confidentiality. • To decide on a case by case basis whether a reduction in outputs is warranted and, if so, by how many. • To inform the individuals concerned of the outcome in writing, and where it is felt a reduction in outputs is appropriate, to inform the Faculty UOA Leads Committee to that effect, together with the appropriate supporting statements. <p>Academic members of the committee will not participate or assess cases related to staff in their own faculty.</p> <p>The quorum for the Committee shall be half the members.</p>
Criteria applicable to this Committee	Staff circumstances criteria outlined in Section 4.4 and Annex D

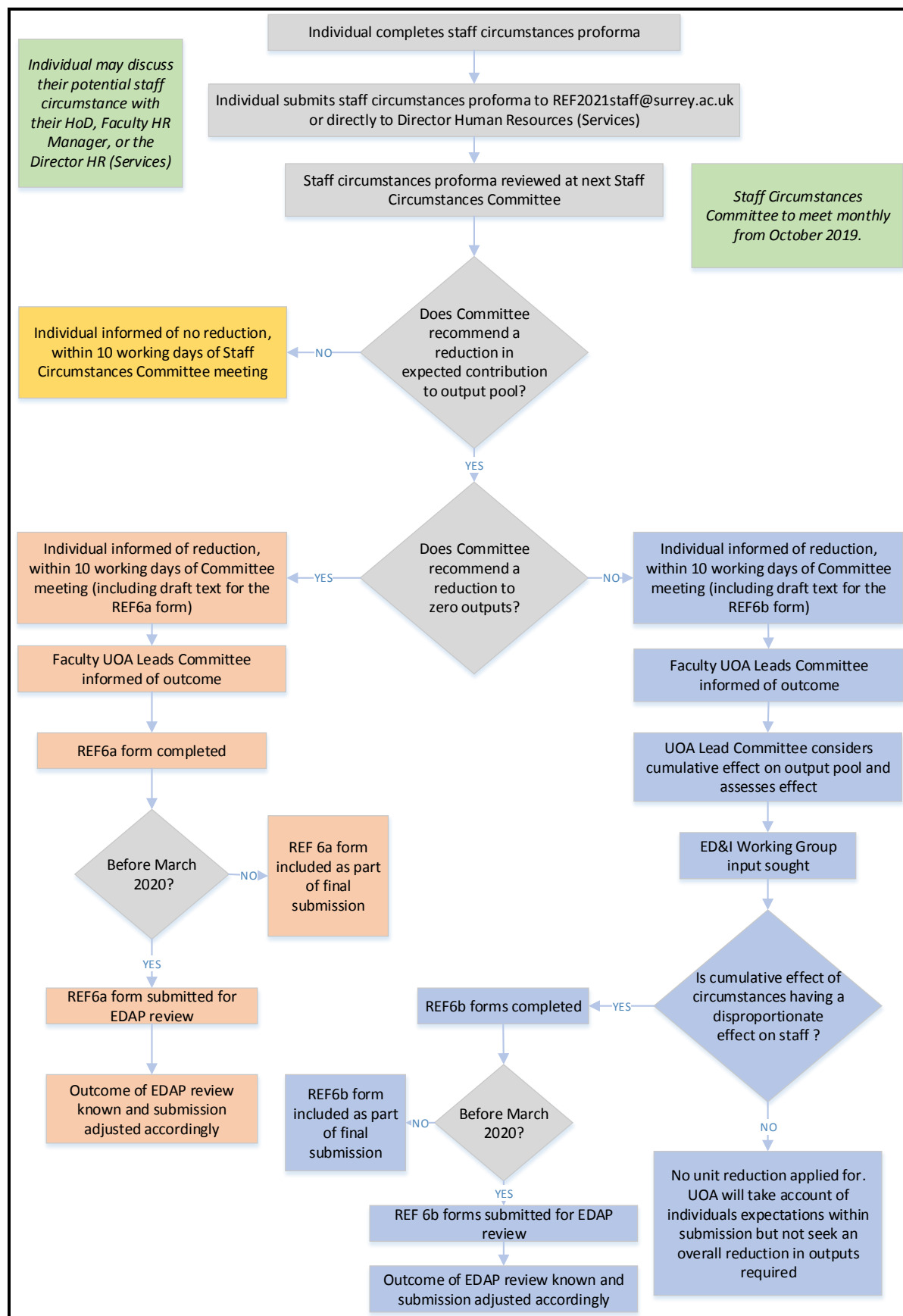
The method and timescale by which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made	Feedback to be provided to staff disclosing staff circumstances within 10 working days of the staff circumstances committee convening and reaching a conclusion of the case.
Appeals process	Outlined in Section 4.4 and Annex E.1

7.6 Annex C.6: REF 2021 Appeals Committee

Name of Committee	REF 2021 Appeals Committee
Route of Formation	Approved by REF 2021 Management Group, 14 th Feb 2019
Membership	Chair: Vice-Provost, Education Lay member of Council Two academic members of Senate In attendance; Director of Human Resources (Services) – (Secretary)
Position in REF decision-making structure	Reports to REF 2021 Executive Committee
Record keeping	Full minutes, and actions log maintained by Secretary. Minutes and actions log retained in REF 2021 folders located on University server with restricted access, in accordance with the REF 2021 data asset register.
Steps taken to ensure members are aware of their own and the institutions legal obligations regarding equality and diversity	REF specific ED&I briefing delivered by University REF 2021 Team and Director/University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
Terms of reference	To review and advise on all appeals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive all appeals made by eligible staff in respect of the decision to not submit them to REF 2021, or to not award a reduction in outputs as a result of a staff circumstances disclosure. • To evaluate each case, drawing where necessary on the relevant expertise of others, ensuring at all times that every effort is made to protect confidentiality. • To decide on a case by case basis whether the appeal is upheld or not upheld. • To inform the individuals concerned of the outcome in writing, and where it is decided that an individual meets the requirements to be submitted to instruct the REF 2021 Management Group to that effect.
Criteria applicable to this Committee	Appeals process set out in Section 4.4 and Annex E.1
The method and timescale by which feedback will be provided in respect of the decisions made	A written response to every appeal will be provided by the Chair of the Committee within 30 working days from receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final.
Appeals process	Outlined in Annex E.1

8 Annex D: Staff Circumstances

8.1 Annex D.1: Staff Circumstances Flow chart



8.2 Annex D.2: Disclosure of Staff Circumstances

Individual Staff Circumstances Form

This document is being sent to all Category A staff whose outputs are eligible for submission to REF2021 (see [‘Guidance on submissions’](#), paragraphs 117-122). As part of the University’s commitment to supporting equality and diversity in REF, we have put in place safe and supportive structures for staff to declare information about any equality-related circumstances that may have affected their ability to research productively during the assessment period (1 January 2014 – 31 July 2020), and particularly their ability to produce research outputs at the same rate as staff not affected by circumstances. The purpose of collecting this information is threefold:

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

Applicable circumstances

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

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

Ensuring Confidentiality

At all stages of the REF 2021 staff circumstance process, information about an individual's staff circumstance will be kept confidential and shared only amongst those who need to know. Completed forms will be seen by members of the Staff Circumstances Committee.

It is the University's responsibility to ensure that the information is submitted and treated in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and all other legal obligations, including legislation and medical ethics relating to confidentiality. This will require individuals to give explicit consent to their personal data being included in the University's submission (this must be given at the time of disclosure).

All staff voluntarily disclosing a staff circumstance will be informed through the Staff Circumstances Committee of the outcome via email within 10 working days of the Staff Circumstance Committee meeting at which a decision is reached.

If the institution decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), the University of Surrey 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 the REF 2021 Team, the REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs. All these bodies are subject to confidentiality arrangements. The REF 2021 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 their HR Manager to provide the updated information.

To submit this form you should return either electronically to REF2021Staff@surrey.ac.uk or in paper form directly to the Chair of the Staff Circumstances Committee, the Director of Human Resources (Services)

Name: Click here to insert text.

Department/School: Click here to insert text.

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

Yes ☐

No ☐

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

Circumstance	Time period affected
Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016). <i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i>	Click here to enter a date.
Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 July 2020.	Tick here <input type="checkbox"/>
Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector. <i>Dates and durations in months.</i>	Click here to enter dates and durations.
Family-related leave; <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. <i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i>	Click here to enter dates and durations.

<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>
<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p><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></p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p> <p><i>To include: 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>

Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement.

To include: Brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.

Click here to enter text.

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below
- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by members of the Staff Circumstances Committee.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF 2021 Team, the 2021 REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree ☐

Name: Print name here

Signed: Sign or initial here

Date: Insert date here

☐ I give my permission for an HR Manager or Occupational Health Professional, as a member of the Staff Circumstances Committee, to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation to these. (Please note, if you do not give permission the Committee may be unable to reach a decision based on the full information of your circumstances).

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

I would like to be contacted by:

Email ☐ Insert email address

Phone ☐ Insert contact telephone number

8.3 Annex D.3: Staff Circumstances tariffs

Extracted from Guidance on Submissions (January 2019) REF 2019/01 Annex L:

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

Early career researchers

2. ECRs are defined in the 'Guidance on submissions' (paragraph 148-149). Table L1 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment that HEIs may request for ECRs who meet this definition.

Table L1: Early career researchers: Permitted reduction in outputs

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

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks

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

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

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

4. The allowances in Table L2 are based on the length of the individual's absence or time away from working in HE. They are defined in terms of total months absent from work.

5. As part-time working is taken account of within the calculation for the overall number of outputs required for the unit (which is determined by multiplying the unit's FTE by 2.5), reduction requests on the basis of part-time working hours should only be made exceptionally. For example, where the FTE of a staff member late in the assessment period does not reflect their average FTE over the period as a whole.

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:
 - a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
 - b. Additional paternity or adoption leave⁶, or shared parental leave⁷ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020.
7. This approach to reductions for qualifying periods of family-related leave is based on the funding bodies' considered judgement following consultation in the previous REF exercise that the impact of such a period of leave and the arrival of a new child into a family is generally sufficiently disruptive of an individual's research work to justify the specified reduction.
8. While the above reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months shorter periods of such leave could be taken into account as follows:
 - a. By applying a reduction in outputs where there are additional circumstances, for example where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities.
 - b. By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other circumstances, according to Table L2.
9. Any period of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions in paragraph 6 above may in individual cases be associated with prolonged constraints on work that justify more than the defined reduction set out. In such cases, the circumstances should be explained in the request.

Combining circumstances

10. Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances that have a defined reduction in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of 1.5 outputs. For each

⁶ 'Additional paternity or adoption leave' refers to leave of up to 26 weeks which is taken to care for a child where the person's spouse, partner or civil partner was entitled to statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave, and has since returned to work. The term 'additional paternity leave' is often used to describe this type of leave although it may be taken by parents of either gender. For the purposes of the REF, we refer to this leave as 'additional paternity or adoption leave'

⁷ 'Shared parental leave' refers to leave of up to 50 weeks which can be shared by parents having a baby or adopting a child. This can be taken in blocks, or all in one go.

circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.

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

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6

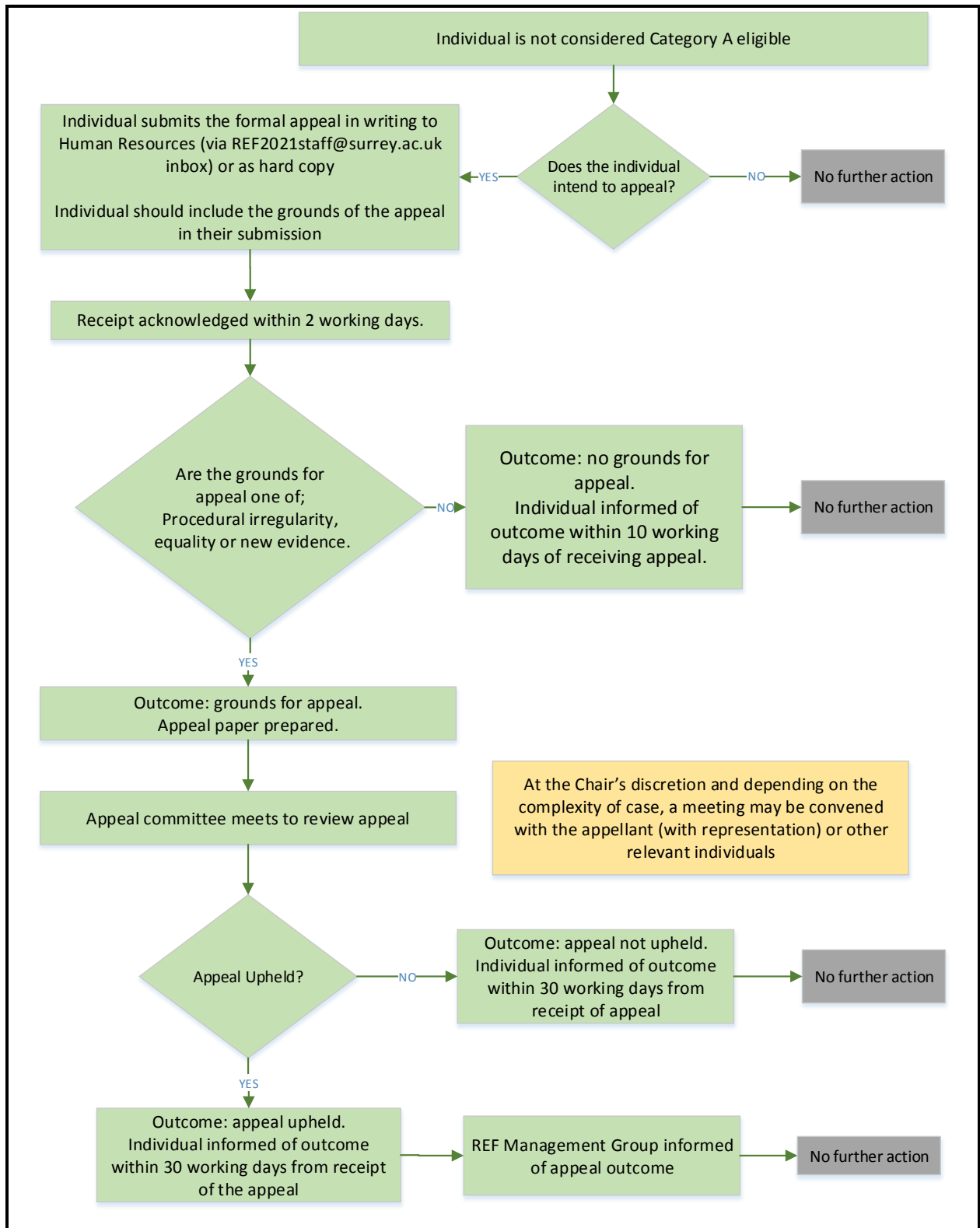
14. In UOAs 1–6, the number of outputs may be reduced by up to one, without penalty in the assessment, for Category A submitted staff who are junior clinical academics. These are defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have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

Circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions

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

9 Annex E: Appeals Process

9.1 Annex E.1: Appeals Flowchart



10 Annex F: Equality Impact Assessment of Code of Practice

	Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010	Advance Equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Foster Good relations between different groups through tackling prejudice and promoting understanding
	Does the University of Surrey's REF2021 Code of Practice have a positive, negative or no impact on the protected characteristics covered by the Act?	Does the University of Surrey's Code of Practice have a positive, negative or no impact?	Does the University of Surrey's Code of Practice have a positive, negative or no impact?
Age	<p>Positive – the University will be submitting all REF eligible staff</p> <p>Positive - The code of practice (CoP) applies the REF 2021 policies on individual staff circumstances. (see Section 4.4 and Appendix D)</p> <p>Positive – In drafting the CoP several Working Groups have been consulted including; the REF 2021 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Group, REF 2021 management group, Surrey's ED&I professionals and the Trade Unions.</p> <p>Positive – The code of practice (CoP) applies an Appeals process which is entirely separate from the REF2021</p>	<p>Positive - Early Career Researchers can follow Staff Circumstances process and request a reduction in outputs without penalty. (see Section 4.4 and Appendix D)</p>	<p>Positive – the REF2021 Code of Practice will be made available to all members of staff via SurreyNet and external website or by post. Ensuring all staff have access to the same information regarding REF 2021. (see Section 1.6.3)</p> <p>Positive – The Executive Board Lead on ED&I is named in the Code of Practice and is chair of the REF 2021 ED&I Working Group and available to advise eligible staff (see Section 1.1 and Annex C:4)</p>
Disability		<p>Positive – Staff Circumstances Process enable eligible staff to seek a reduction in outputs without penalty due to disability or mental health. (see section 4.4 and Appendix D)</p>	
Gender Reassignment		<p>Positive - Staff Circumstances process enable eligible staff to seek a reduction in outputs due to gender reassignment. (see Section 4.4 and Appendix D)</p>	
Marriage and Civil Partnership		<p>No impact - Eligible staff will automatically be included in REF2021</p>	

Pregnancy and Maternity	submission process – ensures impartiality (see Section 3.4) Positive – ED&I training (face-to-face where appropriate) for all REF Committees and Groups	Positive - Staff Circumstances process enable eligible staff to seek a reduction in outputs without penalty due to pregnancy/ maternity/ adoption/ childcare. (see Section 4.4 and Appendix D)	Positive – Appeals process (see Section 3.4) Equality impact assessments conducted as part of REF 2021 will be published and made available to all staff.
Race	Positive – Research Independence process open to all staff (see Section 3.2.3) No Impact - The University recognises that staff may have concerns related to discrimination on the grounds of their protected characteristic that are outside of the REF2021 process. For example there are opportunities to raise concerns or provided feedback on the annual output review process via the REF Team, or broader ED&I concerns to the ED&I Team. Where its deemed appropriate they can also be declared in accordance with the University of Surrey policies (including the Grievance Policy and Dignity at Work and Study Policy)	No impact - Eligible staff will automatically be included in REF2021	
Religion or Belief		Positive - Staff Circumstances process enable eligible staff to seek a reduction in outputs without penalty due to caring responsibilities. (see Section 4.4 and Appendix D)	
Sex		Positive – each individual will be able to submit their strongest 5 outputs to be considered as part of the output selection process (see Section 4.2.2)	
Sexual Orientation			
	Positive - All staff involved in the process of identifying eligible staff and selecting outputs for inclusion in the REF2021 will complete ED&I training (face-to-face where appropriate). They will also complete the online Unconscious Bias training. (see Section 3.3 and Annex B:4) Positive – Staff who have responsibility for conducting Equality Impact Assessments on the Code of Practice will undertake specific Equality Impact Assessment training. (see Annex B:4) The ED&I Working Group recognises that there are inherent biases in the way outputs are assessed, selected and therefore welcome the introduction of the opportunity for individuals to self-nominate outputs. The Group also intends to pay particular attention to the proportion of outputs attributed to particular characteristics throughout REF preparations.		