



University of West London

**Research Excellence Framework 2021
Code of Practice**

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Glossary

AEF	Academic Employment Framework
Category A staff	REF Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01 paras 117-119) defines Category A eligible staff as academic staff with a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater on the payroll of the submitting institution on the census date [31 st July 2020] whose primary employment function is to undertake either “research only” or “teaching and research”. Staff should have a substantive research connection with the submitting unit. Staff on “research only” contracts should meet the definition of an independent researcher. The Guidance also states that the funding bodies recognise that staff on ‘teaching and research’ contracts cannot always be assumed to be independent researchers. Where this is the case, staff who are not independent researchers should be identified as part of the process for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research.
Census Date	The REF Census Date will be 31 st July 2020
EDAG	University Equality & Diversity Advisory Group
EDAP	The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) is a national group which advises the funding bodies, the REF team and the REF panels on the development of the full range of measures to promote equality and diversity in the REF.
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
HEI	Higher Education Institution
Independent Researcher	REF Guidance on Submissions says staff employed on “research only” contracts must be independent researchers in order to be Category A eligible. 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 (REF 2019/01, para 131). There is further detail in paragraph 3.15 of this Code of Practice.
JNCC	Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee
Output Pool	The total set of eligible outputs for each UOA from which those outputs to be submitted will be selected.
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
REF	Research Excellence Framework
UOA	REF units of assessment
URSEC	University Research, Scholarship and Enterprise Committee
UCU	University and College Union
UWL	University of West London

1 Introduction and purpose of REF 2021 Code of Practice

- 1.1 This Code of Practice is intended to support the University's commitment to submit all staff with significant responsibility for research to REF 2021. In developing this Code, the University of West London (UWL) has taken full account of the REF Guidance.
- 1.2 UWL has developed this Code of Practice to ensure that its REF 2021 policies and procedures are compliant with all relevant legislation and that they are fully consistent with the University's Equality and Diversity Statement, as well as ensuring that all its REF activity is underpinned by the principles of equality and diversity.
- 1.3 The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is a national exercise to assess the quality of research in UK higher education institutions conducted by the UK higher education funding bodies. Each institution making a submission to the REF is required to develop, document and apply a Code of Practice which describes how it will undertake the fair and transparent identification of staff with significant responsibility for research (where the institution is not submitting all of its Category A eligible staff); determine who is an independent researcher; and select outputs for submission.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure that the University's REF procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against, or otherwise have the effect of harassing or victimising individuals because of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexuality or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth.

Definition of Research Staff and Research Excellence

- 1.5 Staff with significant responsibility for research are defined in the REF Guidance on Submissions as:

'...those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role.' (REF 2019/01, para 138)

Within the above definition, the University includes those whose ability to produce research outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period has been constrained for reasons covered by equality legislation and identified via the Individual Staff Circumstances Declaration process as described in section 5 below.

- 1.6 In making recommendations and decisions on output submissions, research 'excellence' will be interpreted according to the definitions and criteria set out in the REF Guidance on Submissions and in the relevant REF panel and sub-panel criteria. It will also take account of the University's strategy for its submission to any specific Unit of Assessment (UOA) or to the REF as a

whole. Research excellence in this context may take into account both published outputs and other contributions made by staff in the form of research impact, research income, student supervision and other relevant performance measures. In considering published outputs, the process will adhere to the REF 2021 rules and guidance on co-authored work in assessing individual contributions. In this exercise, the University adopts the REF definition of research:

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

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

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

(REF Guidance on Submissions, 2019/ 01, Annex C)

2 Part 1 of the Code: Legal underpinning of the Code

- 2.1 The University has a public sector equality duty to eliminate discrimination and to advance equality of opportunity among those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 2.2 In recognition of this duty, UWL has developed an Equality and Diversity Statement that applies to all its operations, within the context of all relevant equality legislation. The statement includes an explicit commitment to:

‘[...] providing the highest quality study and working environment where all staff, students, visitors, contractors and stakeholders are welcomed. No one should experience less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age; any disability they may have; ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender, their gender identity or reassignment; marital or civil partnership status; being pregnant or recently had a baby; their religion or beliefs, their sexuality and sexual orientation. The University also recognises that students and staff members have

different needs and that these may also be shaped by their family responsibilities or their socio-economic backgrounds.’

- 2.3 The Code of Practice is also underpinned by the University’s legal requirement to ensure academic freedom as outlined in the Articles of Government:

‘[...] academic staff of the University have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy or losing their jobs or any privileges they may have at the University’

- 2.4 This Code of Practice also references UWL’s policy on Data Protection, its Code of Practice on Research Ethics and Code on Research Integrity.

Principles of the Code of Practice

- 2.5 The following principles underpin this Code of Practice to ensure a process fair to all staff:

Transparency: All processes for the identification of UWL staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence and selecting outputs for inclusion in REF submissions will be transparent.

Consistency: The principles governing the processes covered in this Code of Practice will be consistently applied across the institution.

Accountability: Responsibility for decisions are clearly defined, and individuals and bodies that are involved in advising or deciding any aspect of the submission are identified by name or role.

Inclusivity: The Code promotes an inclusive environment in relation to identifying staff with significant responsibility for research; determining research independence; and selecting outputs.

- 2.6 This Code of Practice has been designed to meet the requirements of the REF Guidance in regard to equality legislation and to take account of the published advice of the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel. UWL will ensure that its REF 2021 policies and procedures provide equality for fixed-term (relative to permanent) and part-time (relative to full-time) contracts, including contract research staff. These policies will also take account of those who have taken parental leave (maternity and paternity) and those with a disability.

Actions taken since REF 2014

- 2.7 Since 2014, the University of West London has regularly reviewed policies and codes of practice related to its research framework. The latest updates are:

Revised Codes of Practice: Research Ethics Code of Practice – last updated and approved by Academic Board on 12 December 2018

Revised Policies: Research Governance Policy – last updated and approved by Academic Board on 12 December 2018

New Codes of Practice/Procedures - Research Integrity Code of Practice –approved by Academic Board on 12 December 2018

Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in Research – approved by Academic Board on 12 December 2018.

In respect of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, since 2014 UWL has introduced a new Equality and Diversity statement, two central themes of which are relevant, these being:

‘To foster awareness around diversity and equality through new policy, guidance and staff training, with a view to the promotion of an inclusive and positive working environment;

Appraise all promotion processes to ensure that UWL maximises the opportunity for diversity and equality in talent management, promotion and appointments, especially with regard to promotion and senior-level appointments’

As a direct result of these UWL has delivered Unconscious Bias training as well as introducing Dignity at Work and Transgender policies. The promotion and progression processes have been reviewed and our data shows that 38% of our Professors and Associate Professors are female and 41% are from BME backgrounds; 40% of our Research Academics are female.

Since 2014 UWL has continued to hold regular university wide and school based events to introduce research practice, share good practice and offer mentoring support.

- 2.8 The University introduced an ‘Academic Employment Framework’ (AEF) in December 2014. The underpinning approach for the AEF is to offer flexibility in academic career pathways. The rationale for the introduction of the AEF was:

‘This model focuses on outputs for the whole academic role, rather than taking a narrow view of only formal scheduled teaching responsibilities. It is designed to protect time for staff in each stream so that an academic is clear about how their work is allocated and distributed and the proportion of time spent on all their varying duties and responsibilities.’ (AEF, p.23)

UWL recognises and celebrates the diverse ways in which its academic staff can contribute to the excellence of the University. It does not consider that submission of outputs to REF is the only marker of excellence. The AEF is used to promote, reward and record scholarship and knowledge exchange /

enterprise activities that support the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), alongside research that feeds into the REF and into the TEF. Thus, this Code of Practice must be read in the context of the University of West London AEF which clearly recognises and rewards in equal measure research, scholarship and knowledge exchange / enterprise activities.

- 2.9 Academic staff in the AEF framework are located within one of three career families: Research Academic, Teaching Academic and Academic Practitioner. The allocation of time for the key academic tasks to staff in each career family is shown in the table below.

AEF: Career Family and Key Task time allocation

Career Family	Key Task – time allocation (%)		
	Teaching (maximum)	Research, scholarship or knowledge exchange / enterprise (minimum)	Administration and academic leadership (remainder)
Research Academic	33	33	33
Teaching Academic	60	10	30
Academic Practitioner	90	5	5

Development and approval of the UWL REF 2021 submission

- 2.10 The Pro-Vice Chancellor (PVC) (Academic) will have overall responsibility for the direction and development of the University’s REF submission on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.
- 2.11 The PVC (Academic) has established a University REF Task Group to manage the practical development of the submission. Membership consists of the PVC (Academic), a senior academic representing UOA Leads and the academic community, the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, a Library representative, the Chair of the EDAG Committee, the Head of Research and Enterprise Operations, with the REF Submission Coordinator as clerk. The rationale for those members of staff being members of the Task Group are set out in the table below.

Membership of UWL REF Task Group

University Role	Rationale for inclusion in REF Task Group
PVC (Academic)	Chair of Group and responsible to VC for UWL’s overall REF preparation
University Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer; Chair of EDAG	Will ensure REF preparations are in line with all University policies and duties, including Equality and Diversity
Director of Research, College of Nursing, Midwifery and Healthcare; UOA3 Lead	Will represent the views of UOA leads and the academic community at the REF Task Group

Head of Research and Enterprise Operations	Will ensure REF preparations are in line with UWL's research and enterprise policies and activities
Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development	Will provide advice on HR issues and staff roles and responsibilities, and on Equality and Diversity
Head of Content and Scholarly Communications	Will provide advice on REF outputs in terms of Open Access
REF Submission Co-ordinator Head of Research and Engagement	Secretary to the REF Task Group

2.12 The remit of the REF Task Group is to:

- oversee the planning and co-ordination of the University's REF submission
- develop and submit the University's REF Code of Practice
- ensure the REF Code of Practice is in line with the Equality and Diversity Statement of the University
- report to the University Research, Scholarship and Enterprise Committee on developments with the University's REF submission, and to carry out actions requested by the Committee
- implement the requirements of the national REF Guidance
- consider reports on the Units of Assessment
- consider and respond to other issues raised, as appropriate.

The Terms of Reference of the REF Task Group are attached as Appendix 1.

2.13 The REF Submission Coordinator will be responsible for the day-to-day development of the University's submission on behalf of the REF Task Group and this will include the pro-active management of processes and procedures for the final selection of outputs, impact case studies and environment statements.

2.14 The University will nominate UOA Leads who will have an advisory role in developing the submission for each submitting unit. The Leads will co-ordinate activity in each UOA, foster a rich research environment and mentor individual academic staff where appropriate.

2.15 Where it deems necessary, the University will commission suitably-qualified external reviewers to provide an independent assessment of the quality of individual outputs and impact case studies against published REF criteria. This feedback will form part of the decision-making on the selection of outputs for the submission (see section 5 below).

2.16 The REF Task Group will compile draft submissions for each UOA. These will be put forward for approval to University Research, Scholarship and Enterprise Committee (URSEC) in the first instance. Subject to URSEC

agreement, the proposed submission will be considered by Academic Board for final approval prior to submission.

- 2.17 A planned timeline for this process is included as Appendix 2.
- 2.18 Consultations and development sessions on all aspects of REF2021 will take place through the period to submission; this will include information sessions on REF Guidance, meetings with UOA leads and with individual staff to discuss publication plans and monitor outputs

Consultation and internal approval of the Code of Practice

- 2.19 This Code of Practice has been developed by the REF Task Group. URSEC agreed that the Code be issued for consultation with University staff at its meeting on 13 February 2019. The Code was also reviewed by the University's Equality and Diversity Advisory Group (EDAG) at its meeting on 29 March.
- 2.20 The Code was published on the University intranet for consultation with staff on 1st March 2019 with consultation open to 20th March 2019. There was an all-staff email drawing attention to the consultation. The University wrote to all academic staff who were on long term sickness, maternity or parental leave, sabbaticals, or otherwise remote from the University to inform them of the consultation and sent a copy of the proposed Code
- 2.21 Relevant trade unions were consulted through the Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee. The University and College Union (UCU) Branch submitted comments from its members. These were initially discussed at the JNCC meeting on 20th March and then in more detail at a subsequent meeting with UCU on 3rd April 2019.
- 2.22 Following consideration by URSEC and EDAG and the consultation period, the Code of Practice was approved for submission to Research England by Academic Board its meeting on 3rd April.
- 2.23 For reference, the consultation and internal approval timeline is shown in Appendix 3.
- 2.24 The version of the Code of Practice submitted to Research England in June 2019 will be made available to staff on the UWL intranet along with information on the approval process.

3 Part 2 of the Code: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research

- 3.1 As required by the REF Guidance on Codes of Practice, this section of the Code sets out how UWL plans to identify staff with a significant responsibility for research. It also sets out how these proposals were agreed with staff,

using appropriate staff representation mechanisms and the evidence of agreement.

- 3.2 Each HEI participating in REF 2021 is required to include all Category A eligible staff with a significant responsibility for research at the census date in their submission.
- 3.3 At UWL, Category A staff include some staff who have a significant responsibility for research, and others who do not have this responsibility. The latter have responsibilities with equivalent significance, as detailed in the UWL AEF, or as a result of their academic management roles.
- 3.4 UWL will, therefore, be including in its REF submission the sub-set of its Category A staff who have a significant responsibility for research on 31 July 2020. This will be less than 100% of its Category A staff.
- 3.5 UWL's approach to identifying which staff have a significant responsibility for research will be based on the AEF and the career families described in paragraphs 2.8 and 2.9. This will be applied consistently across all UOAs.
- 3.6 All staff in the Research Academic career family will be identified as having a significant responsibility for research.
- 3.7 Staff in the Teaching Academic career family will only be designated as having a significant responsibility for research where they have an explicit 'research' remit confirmed through workload allocations and research-related appraisal objectives. This will be based on evidence of independent research from the current REF period, beginning 1 January 2014, underpinned by the 2019/20 appraisal objectives.
- 3.8 Staff in the Teaching Academic career family predominantly undertaking scholarship and knowledge exchange / enterprise activities confirmed through workload allocations and appraisal objectives will not be identified as having a significant responsibility for research.
- 3.9 Staff in the Academic Practitioner family will not be identified as having a significant responsibility for research as their role is 'teaching focused'.
- 3.10 Staff on Academic Management contracts are normally focused on academic leadership and management roles. However, staff on these contracts will be identified as having a significant responsibility for research where this is confirmed through research-related appraisal objectives.
- 3.11 There are also a very small number of academic staff on contracts that pre-date the AEF. In these instances, staff will be designated as predominantly undertaking scholarship and knowledge exchange / enterprise activities unless they have an explicit 'research' remit confirmed through workload allocations or research-related appraisal objectives.

3.12 The table below summarises these proposals and the rationale for them:

Matrix for identification of staff with a significant responsibility for research by career family and contract type

Career Family and Contract Type	Default designation as significant responsibility for research?	Rationale
Research Academic	Yes	Staff in this category will be <u>automatically designated</u> as Research Academics are employed on the basis that they have a significant responsibility for undertaking independent research.
Teaching Academic	No <i>Designation where staff have a workload allocation for Research (and not Scholarship or Knowledge Exchange /Enterprise activities)</i>	Staff in this category will <u>not be automatically designated</u> on the basis that Teaching Academics may not have a significant responsibility for undertaking independent research as part of their employed duties. Designation will be where a significant responsibility for research is identified and confirmed through workload allocations and research-related targets.
Academic Practitioner	No	Staff in this category will <u>not be designated</u> on the basis that Academic Practitioners do not have a significant responsibility for undertaking independent research as part of their employed duties. Annual appraisal allows individuals to apply to transfer to the Teaching Academic or Research Academic family.
Academic Management	No <i>Designation where staff have a workload allocation for Research (and not Scholarship or Knowledge Exchange/ Enterprise activities)</i>	Staff in this category will <u>not be automatically designated</u> on the basis that Academic Management staff will not normally have a significant responsibility for undertaking independent research as part of their employed duties. Designation will be where a significant responsibility for research is identified

		and confirmed through research-related targets.
Academic contracts that pre-date the AEF	No <i>Designation where staff have a workload allocation for Research (and not Scholarship or Knowledge Exchange / Enterprise activities)</i>	<i>Staff in this category will <u>not</u> be automatically designated</i> on the basis that staff on these contracts may not have a significant responsibility for undertaking independent research as part of their employed duties. Designation will be where a significant responsibility for research is identified and confirmed through workload allocations and research-related targets.

3.13 The University provides regular opportunities for staff to apply to change career family. This takes place annually as part of the progression and promotion process.

3.14 Where a decision is required on whether a member of staff has a significant responsibility for research this will be made by the REF Task Group. Decisions will be evidence-based using evidence from workload allocations and/or appraisal objectives for the academic year 2019/20 and the 2019 appraisal cycle and whether staff are responsible for undertaking independent research.

3.15 When identifying whether a member of staff is an independent researcher, the REF Task Group will apply the definitions given in the REF Guidance on Submissions. The REF Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01, paragraphs 131-133) defines an independent researcher as follows:

‘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.'

Main Panels C and D have set out supplementary criteria and consider that the following attributes may generally indicate research independence in their disciplines (Panel criteria and working methods, REF 2019/02, para 189):

- '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.'

There were no supplementary criteria set out by Main Panels A and B.

- 3.16 All academic staff in post on 1 October 2019 will be sent written confirmation of whether they have been identified as having a "significant responsibility for research" in terms of REF 2021 by 30 November 2019. Staff who are not considered to have a significant responsibility for research will be informed of the reason for the decision and will be notified of the appeals process when the decision is made. Details of the appeals process are given below.

Development of identification process

- 3.17 The process for identifying staff with a significant responsibility for research has been consulted on and confirmed with staff representative groups through the JNCC meeting on 20 March 2019 and a subsequent meeting with UCU on 3 April 2019. Agreement by staff representative groups to the approach to identifying staff with a significant responsibility for research will be evidenced through the minutes of the JNCC to take place on 12 June 2019.
- 3.18 The process for identifying which staff have a significant responsibility for research will be communicated to staff through posting of the updated Code of Practice on the University intranet following approval. The University will write to all academic staff who are on long term sickness, parental leave, sabbaticals, or otherwise remote from the University to inform them of this.

Equality and Diversity training

- 3.19 Training on equality and diversity has been provided for those engaged in the identification process, either in an advisory or decision-making capacity. This includes the REF Task Group, REF Leads and those staff hearing appeals, when appointed.

- 3.20 A half-day training session on “Unconscious bias for REF decision making” was held on 7 May 2019 for REF Task Group members and REF leads. The agenda for the session is attached as Appendix 4.
- 3.21 All individuals engaged in these processes will be familiar with the REF guidance through review of documentation, internal briefings and attendance at external events

Appeals

- 3.22 The appeal process will open in January 2020 and staff will have three weeks in which to submit their appeal. The University will aim to conclude all appeals no later than 15 May 2020. Exceptional arrangements will be made to extend these periods, if necessary, for staff who are appointed to the University after 1 October 2019, and for any staff away from the University, such as those on parental leave or sick leave.
- 3.23 The appeal process will only be open to staff identified as not having a significant responsibility for research. Staff will be advised to seek advice from the REF Coordinator on all aspects of the REF submission process and criteria before embarking upon the appeals process.
- 3.24 The appeal will be required to be in writing, detailing the reasons for the appeal, which must be based on either (or both) of the following criteria:
- procedural irregularities (including bias)
 - potential breaches of REF guidance.
- 3.25 Appeals will be chaired by a senior member of the University staff who has not been involved in the process of identifying staff with a significant responsibility for research.
- 3.26 The Chair will convene and chair a REF Appeal Panel within ten (10) working days comprising of at least a Head of School (or equivalent) from an unrelated area and a senior member of the HR department who has not been previously involved in the process.
- 3.27 Prior to the panel convening, the Chair of the Appeal Panel will request a written statement from the Chair of the REF Task Group detailing the reasons for the decision that the staff member did not have a significant responsibility for research.
- 3.28 In all cases the appellant has the right to appear before the REF Appeal Panel and to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a colleague in the University
- 3.29 The outcome of the appeal will be a recommendation to either:
- support the case of the appellant **or**
 - uphold the decision of the REF Task Group.

The outcome will be delivered in writing to both the appellant and the Chair of the REF Task Group within five (5) working days of the panel having met.

3.30 The decision of the appeal panel will be final.

Equality Impact Assessment of the Identification of Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research

3.31 The University will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment of the identification of staff with a significant responsibility for research. This will be a three stage process with comparative, quantitative data and analysis on the diversity characteristics of those staff who are and are not identified as having a significant responsibility for research.

3.32 The Director of HR and the University Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer (as equality and diversity leads within the REF task group) will initially review the EIA data. If they identify under/ over representation, in conjunction with the wider REF task group, they will review the process to ensure it is not, in itself, discriminatory and make any amendments as necessary. If the data suggests that there is a more fundamental problem of restricted opportunity or support for research development, then the issues will be referred to EDAG.

3.33 Stage 1 will be based on the three AEF career families and consider the proportion of staff in each family in the protected characteristic categories; this will provide a baseline position. Stage 2 will be conducted in Autumn 2019 when it is known which of these staff has been identified as having a significant responsibility for research; the outcomes of this will be considered before final recommendations on the submission are made, allowing time for any re-appraisal of the position if justified. Stage 3 will be based on the final submission and be used to inform future equality and diversity strategies.

4 Part 3 of the Code: Determining research independence

4.1 The University is required to determine research independence for staff on “research only” contracts. 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. Research assistants are not normally deemed eligible to be returned to the REF.

4.2 Staff on “research only” contracts who are determined to be independent researchers and who meet the definition of Category A eligible will be included.

4.3 In practice, the University does not normally employ staff on “research only” contracts to undertake self-directed research. At the time of writing (May 2019) it had no staff employed on this basis.

4.4 If there are staff employed on this basis in academic year 2019/20, the REF Task Group will ask the relevant Head of School to provide information on the role of these staff by 31 October 2019. The Task Group will use this information to determine research independence on the terms given in the REF Guidance (see paragraph 3.15 above).

- 4.5 The outcomes of this determination will be provided in writing to the staff member and their Head of School by 30 November 2019, along with details of the appeals process.

Equality and Diversity training

- 4.6 Staff and groups advising and making decisions on research independence will also be amongst those determining significant responsibility for research and therefore will be trained on equality and diversity.

Appeals

- 4.7 If the REF Task Group determines that a member of staff on a “research-only” contract is not an independent researcher, there will be a right of appeal on the same basis as described in regard to identifying staff with significant responsibility for research.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.8 The equality impact assessment of decisions on determining research independence will be encompassed within the EIA of staff with significant responsibility for research as the processes will follow a similar timeline.

5 Part 4 of the Code: Selection of Outputs

- 5.1 Each HEI is required to decide which outputs to select for submission in accordance with REF guidance and the institution’s code of practice.
- 5.2 To ensure UWL promotes equality, complies with legislation and avoids discrimination it will apply a fair and transparent process for the selection of outputs. This process will document how UWL will take into account equality and diversity considerations, and any equality-related circumstances affecting staff ability to research productively during the period.
- 5.3 UWL is committed to ensuring that decisions about selecting outputs for the REF are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner

Submission requirements

- 5.4 Submissions must include a set number of research outputs equal to 2.5 times the combined FTE of Category A submitted staff in each unit of assessment (rounded to the nearest whole number). The number will be adjusted as appropriate to take account of any successful requests by the University to the national REF team for the application of individual staff circumstances (see below).
- 5.5 The REF Guidance provides a definition of a research output and this definition will be strictly applied by UWL. Outputs which do not fulfil this definition will not be submitted.
- 5.6 In some cases, outputs will only be eligible for submission where they meet the Open Access requirements set out in the REF Guidance. UWL will carefully check that an output complies with the REF 2021 Open Access

requirements and may need to set aside outputs that are not compliant with these stipulations.

- 5.7 The REF Guidance defines when an author can be said to have made a substantial research contribution to a co-authored output. UWL will only associate such outputs with a specific author in its submission where this threshold is reached.
- 5.8 All submissions must include a minimum of one output by each Category A submitted staff member (unless exceptional circumstances apply). Further outputs need to be selected for submission by the HEI up to the total required for the unit of assessment.
- 5.9 In REF2021, HEIs are allowed to submit the outputs of former staff where the output was first made publicly available while the staff member was employed by the University as a Category A eligible member of staff. UWL will use this provision where there is evidence that this is likely to improve the quality of the submission.
- 5.10 As a relatively small HEI, UWL is likely to make submissions to a limited number of UOAs reflecting the focus of its activities. Eligible staff and their associated outputs will be submitted to the UOA where the evidence is that there is the “best fit” of the outputs with the REF unit of assessment descriptors and boundaries. Recommendations on this aspect will be made by the REF Task Group, and subject to approval by URSEC and Academic Board as part of the submission internal sign-off process.
- 5.11 UWL will make its best endeavour to include all staff with a significant responsibility for research into one of the UOAs to which it makes a submission. However, there is provision in the REF Guidance for an HEI to apply to the national REF team for permission to be excepted from making a submission to a particular UOA where it has a very small number of staff with a significant responsibility for research in the relevant academic discipline. This can only be done where specific conditions detailed in the REF Guidance are applicable. These conditions are that the FTE of staff employed with significant responsibility for research in the unit is lower than 5 FTE, and where the research focus of these staff:
 - falls within the scope of one UOA and;
 - is clearly academically distinct from other submitting units in the institution; and
 - the environment for supporting research and enabling impact of each proposed submitted unit is clearly separate and distinct from other submitting units in the institution (REF 2019/01, para 69).

The REF Task Group may propose to URSEC that the University applies for permission in this way for a particular UOA, if appropriate. If it does so, this should not be viewed as reflecting any negative perspective on the quality of research by staff in that UoA.

UWL approach to identifying potential outputs

5.12 Potential outputs for submission from current staff are being identified on the following basis:

- 1) an initial call for outputs by staff was made in 2016
- 2) a second call for outputs was made in 2018
- 3) a third call for outputs will be made by 1 May 2019 for response no later than 30 June 2019
- 4) a final call for any remaining outputs to all staff will be made by 1 March 2020 for response by 31 March 2020. This will include outputs in the public domain by that point, as well as outputs due to do so by 31 December 2020, which is the end of the REF 2021 publication period.

It is envisaged that the vast majority of outputs which will be published in time for potential inclusion in the submission will be available for the third call, either as published or accepted items.

- 5.13 The REF Submission Co-ordinator will work with UoA Leads and Library Services to identify any research outputs by former staff which could potentially be submitted and are eligible under the REF Guidance and put these forward to the REF Task Group to be considered for submission. Where these outputs have been produced by former staff who subsequently took voluntary redundancy, the outputs will be considered by the University as part of the output pool. Outputs produced by any former staff subsequently made compulsorily redundant will only be considered for submission by the University if the staff member had been in post at the University for at least four years before a redundancy occurred.
- 5.14 The REF Submission Co-ordinator, in conjunction with Library and UoA leads, will check whether outputs put forward meet the various eligibility requirements in the REF Guidance, to include publication dates, Open Access stipulations, the definition of research and the extent of author contribution to the research. If suggested outputs appear not to meet any of these requirements, the Submission Co-ordinator will consider the relevant issue with the author (for current staff) and the UoA Lead, and provide an assessment to the REF Task Group. The Task Group will come to a decision on whether a suggested output would appear to be eligible for assessment under the REF Guidance. The Group will not recommend an output for submission if it believes there is a significant risk that it will be determined as ineligible or “unclassified” by the REF Panel.
- 5.15 The total pool of potential outputs for submission to each UOA will be those identified through the calls for outputs from current staff (para 5.12) and the identification of those from former staff (para 5.13), subject to any exclusions of non-qualifying outputs (para 5.14).

- 5.16 The REF Submission Co-ordinator will also request that authors provide any additional information in support of an output where this is required by the relevant REF Panel. This information will form part of UWL's quality assessment process for outputs. Requirements for additional information by each Main Panel are summarised in the table in Appendix 5.
- 5.17 A list of the potential outputs for each UOA, and any associated additional information required as part of the submission, will be built up by the REF Submission Co-ordinator during the submission development, working in conjunction with the Library and UOA Leads.

UWL approach to assessing the quality of potential outputs for submission

- 5.18 The Task Group will ensure that there is a quality assessment of all outputs in the output pool. This will be wholly based on the published REF criteria.
- 5.19 The REF Task Group may also arrange, at its discretion, for any outputs to be reviewed a second or subsequent time if it deems that necessary to gauge quality.
- 5.20 Any external assessors engaged after this Code of Practice has been issued will be sent a copy of it for their reference.
- 5.21 For transparency, authors will be provided with full information on the quality assessment of their proposed outputs. This will be done in 1:1 feedback, normally from the PVC (Academic) or another member of the University's senior staff.

UWL approach to selecting outputs for submission

- 5.22 The REF Task Group will propose which of the outputs in the output pool should be submitted for each UOA. These proposals will be put forward to URSEC and Academic Board for their approval. Academic Board will have the final responsibility for approving the submission.
- 5.23 In determining which of the potential outputs for a UOA should be submitted, UWL will apply the following criteria:
- best quality outputs based on internal and external assessment applying the published REF criteria, following a self-selection of outputs by eligible staff in the calls for outputs
 - compliance with REF Open Access requirements.

The University will take account of the equality and diversity implications of its application of these criteria.

- 5.24 These criteria will be applied at all stages of the selection process.
- 5.25 The stages will be:
1. REF Task Group ranks outputs in the output pool in terms of their quality against the criteria in para 5.23, taking account of external assessment where available.

2. REF Task Group selects for submission the highest ranked output for each current staff member included in the submission (except in an instance where the individual can be entered with zero outputs).
3. REF Task Group selects the next ranked outputs in the output pool, including those of former staff, up to the total needed to be submitted for each Unit of Assessment.
4. URSEC and Academic Board consider REF Task Group recommendations for output submission.
5. Academic Board approves the submission.

The planned timeline for these decisions is shown in Appendix 2.

Staff training

- 5.26 Staff and groups advising and making decisions on research outputs will be amongst those determining significant responsibility for research and therefore will be trained on equality and diversity.

Declaration of Individual Circumstances

- 5.27 The University will put in place safe and supportive processes to enable staff to declare their individual circumstances voluntarily.
- 5.28 All Category A staff with a significant responsibility for research will be given the opportunity to self-identify themselves as within the applicable circumstances for constraints on productivity and to submit a declaration form on a confidential basis. A series of all-staff emails will be used to draw the attention of staff to this procedure. Staff will be provided with information about the applicable circumstances and how the declaration process will operate at UWL. They will also be made aware that they are not required to complete and return this form where they do not wish to do so.
- 5.29 The University will not place staff under any pressure to declare their circumstances. It will only take account of individual circumstances that staff have declared voluntarily. The REF Task Group will ensure that staff involved in the REF submission process and managers across the University are made aware that no pressure should be placed on individuals to declare any individual circumstances for REF purposes.
- 5.30 The applicable circumstances for reductions are set out in the REF Guidance on Submissions. In summary these are:
- 1) Qualifying as an early career researcher on the basis defined in the REF Guidance on Submissions
 - 2) Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks on the basis defined in the REF Guidance on Submissions
 - 3) Qualifying periods of family-related leave on the basis defined in the REF Guidance on Submissions
 - 4) Other circumstances that apply to junior clinical academics in UOAs 1-6 on the basis defined in the REF Guidance on Submissions
 - 5) Circumstances equivalent to absence that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs which are defined in the REF Guidance

on Submissions: disability; ill health, injury or mental health conditions; constraints related to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside – or justifiably in addition to – allowances for family related-leave; other caring responsibilities such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member; gender reassignment; other circumstances related to defined protected characteristics or related to activities protected by employment legislation.

- 5.31 For circumstances 1-4, there are defined reductions in the number of outputs required published in REF Guidance on Submissions, (Annex L), and these will be applied by UWL.
- 5.32 In circumstance listed under 5, UWL will make a judgement about the reduction required based on the effect of the circumstances in terms of the equivalent period of time absent, and apply the reductions as set out in the REF Guidance on Submissions.
- 5.33 REF 2021 requires that all submitted staff returned must normally have at least one associated output in the return. However, where an individual's circumstances have had an exceptional effect on their ability to work productively throughout the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020 so that the individual has not been able to produce an eligible output the University may make a request to the national REF team for the minimum of one output to be removed. The University will collect details of any such circumstances through its declaration process and make a request on this basis where justified on the basis set out in the REF Guidance.
- 5.34 Individual Declaration forms completed by UWL staff will be dealt with confidentially by the University and in full compliance with data protection legislation. The University will pay particular attention to ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive issues such as ongoing illness or mental health conditions. Declaration forms will be submitted to the University's Human Resources service where they will be assessed confidentially. Staff who submit individual declaration forms will receive information back from Human Resources on the reductions applicable in their circumstances. Any information supplied will be destroyed once the national REF 2021 programme is completed, which is expected to be at the end of December 2021.
- 5.35 The REF Task Group will be provided with anonymised information on the number of outputs which could be reduced for each unit of assessment based on the declarations.
- 5.36 Based on this information, the UWL REF Task Group will consider the cumulative effect of staff circumstances on a unit's overall output pool. The Task Group will determine whether a request to the national REF team is justified for a reduction in the overall number of outputs required for a unit of assessment, Where the available output pool for a unit has been disproportionately affected by equality-related circumstances, the REF Task

Group may recommend that the University apply for a reduction. The REF Task Group will take account of the overall size of the output pool available to a unit and the proximity to the total number of outputs to be submitted in coming to its view.

- 5.37 Any requests for reductions for a unit will need to be submitted to the national REF team by UWL, drawing on information provided on declaration forms. The REF team will provide a secure submission system for this purpose. The University will only submit information strictly required by the REF team in order to maximise confidentiality as far as possible. The REF team's approach to handling these requests is described in the REF Guidance on Submissions.

Adjustment of Expectations on Individuals where Circumstances are Declared

- 5.38 The University's expectation is that the contribution of staff with a significant responsibility for research to the output pool should be commensurate with their grade and role. The University recognises that there may be many reasons why individuals publish at different rates, and does not expect every eligible staff member to contribute equally to the volume of outputs submitted. The University will consider the effect on individuals of equality-related circumstances that have an impact on their ability to research productively. In order to give effect to this, staff completing the Declaration of Individual Circumstances will have the option of consenting to a discussion with the Director of Human Resources about their circumstances and their requirements in relation to these. The Director of Human Resources will then facilitate any appropriate measures required as a result of this, such as through the allocation of workloads or through offering additional support to the staff member. These measures will only be taken in consultation with the staff member. This approach will be taken consistently across the University as a whole.

Equality Impact Assessment on Selection of Outputs

- 5.39 The University will undertake an EIA of the spread of outputs across staff in relation to their protected characteristics which will inform the final selection of outputs. This EIA will take place in two stages.
- 5.40 Stage one will take place when the REF Task Group has a draft set of planned outputs to be submitted for each UOA, it will request an assessment of the equality implications. This is expected to be in spring 2020.
- 5.41 The findings of this EIA will be formally discussed by the REF Task Group with EDAG to identify if any adjustments to REF output selection policies or procedures are needed to avoid unintended discrimination in terms of any protected characteristics. If any adjustments are needed, the REF Task Group will proceed to make these changes before it submits proposed outputs to URSEC or Academic Board.

5.42 A final EIA will be made once the submission has been made to identify any on-going equality-related issues which need to be addressed as part of the University's research strategy or procedures.

Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Task Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose and remit

The main functions of the REF Task Group are:

1. To oversee the planning and co-ordination of the University's REF submission.
2. To develop and submit the University's REF Code of Practice.
3. To ensure the REF Code of Practice is in line with the Equality and Diversity policies of the University.
4. To report to the University Research, Scholarship and Enterprise Committee on developments with the University's REF submission, and to carry out actions requested by the Committee.
5. To implement guidelines announced by the external REF Team.
6. To consider reports on the Units of Assessment.
7. To consider and respond to other issues raised, as appropriate.

Membership

PVC (Academic) (Chair)

University Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer

Academic Representative

Head of Research and Enterprise Operations

Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Research Support Manager, Library Services

REF Submission Co-ordinator (Secretary)

Quoracy

A minimum of four members.

Attendance

Members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings will be regarded as having relinquished their membership of the REF Task Group.

Reporting Lines

The REF Task Group reports into the University Research, Scholarship and Enterprise Committee.

Effectiveness & Lifespan

The REF Task Group will meet until the University's REF submission has been completed.

Actions that may be taken by the REF Task Group

The REF Task Group may:

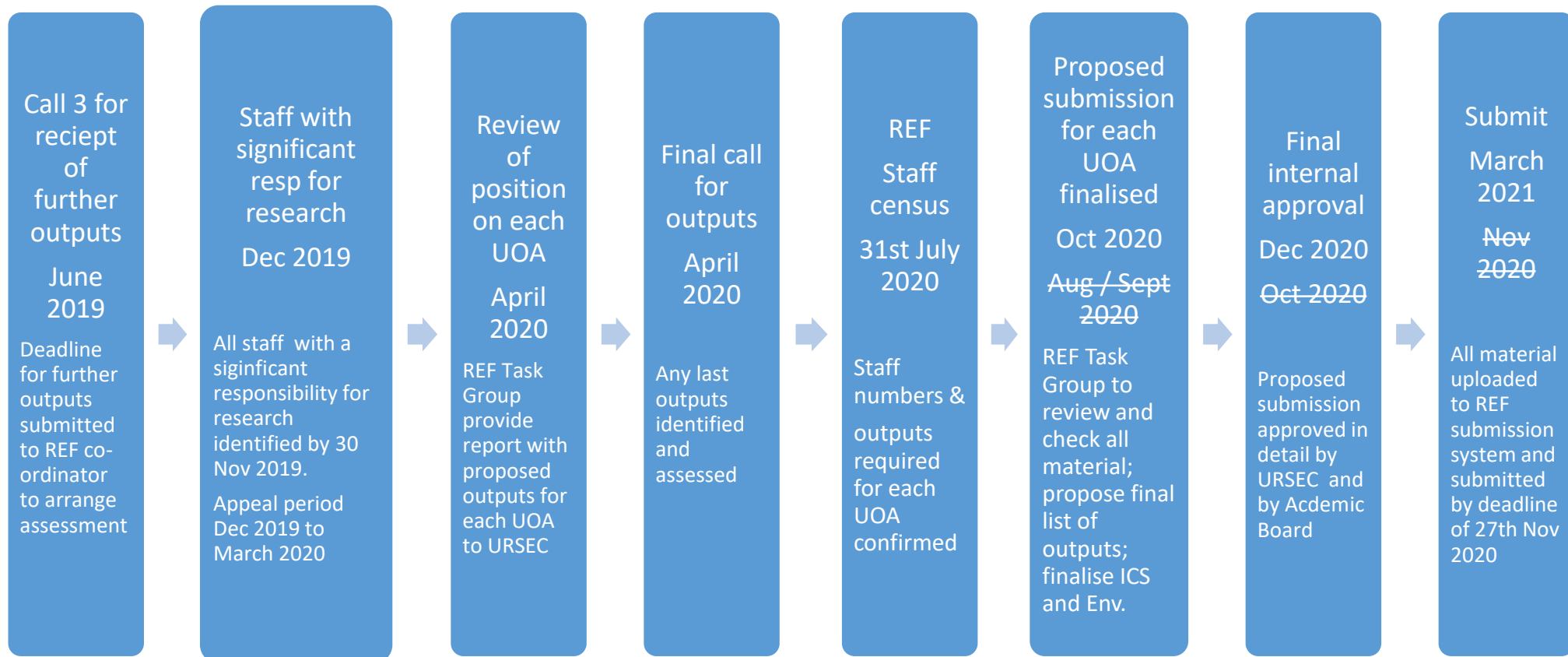
- Note
- Receive
- Consider
- Request
- Reject
- Support
- Endorse
- Recommend

Most appropriate minuting style

Notes

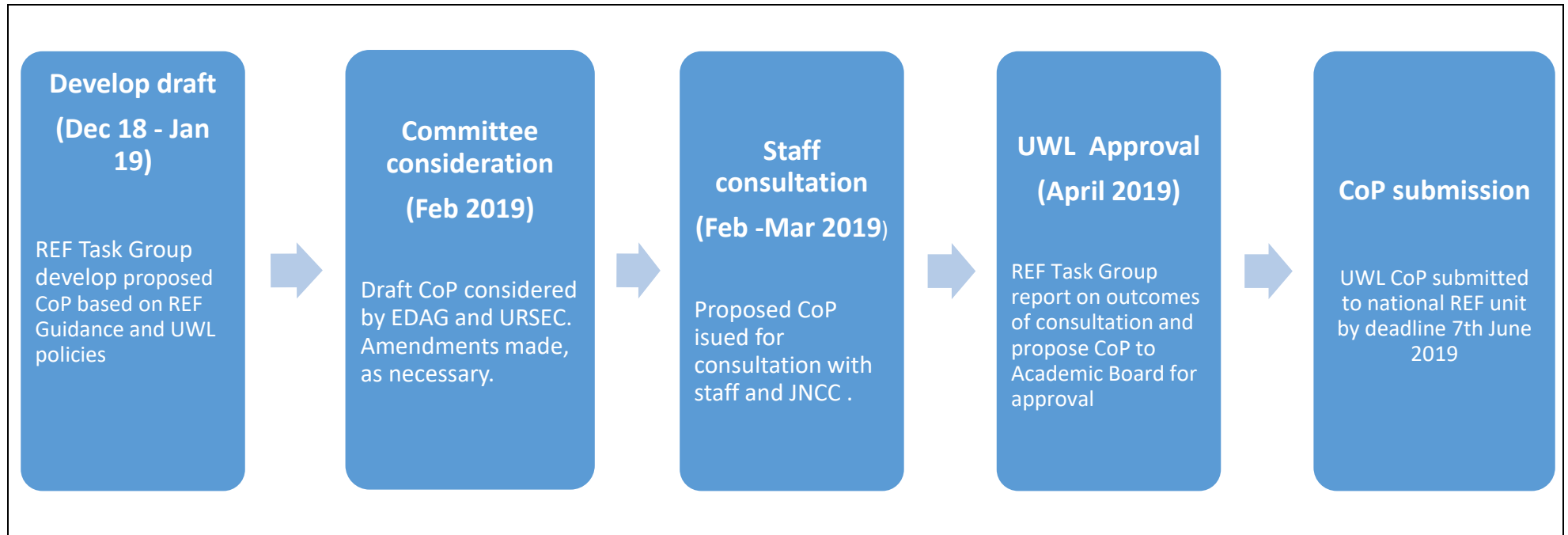
Appendix 2

Outline flowchart (2019 to 2020) for decision making



Appendix 3

Code of Practice Approval stages flow chart



TIMELINE	
URSEC – consideration of draft CoP	Meeting date – 13 th Feb 2019
EDAG – consideration of draft CoP	Meeting date - 29 th March 2019
Staff consultation period	22 nd Feb 2019 – 20 th March 2019
Academic Board – consideration of proposed CoP for approval	Meeting date - 3 rd April 2019
Deadline for submission of CoP to national REF team	7 th June 2019

Appendix 4

Training Session

Unconscious bias for REF decision making

Introduction

Despite a commitment to meritocracy in our Higher education institutions national and institutional evidence shows that there can be a miss-match between individuals' values and intentions and the impact of their behaviour when making decisions about people from diverse backgrounds. This workshop has been designed to introduce unconscious bias (UB) and other relevant behavioural science insights to help participants understand how this can occur and to identify practical, evidence-based approaches for managing and mitigating unconscious bias and for supporting fair decision making.

Objectives

On this workshop participants will:

- Learn how UB arises from our cognitive and neurological processes
- Understand how UB and stereotyping affects perception, behaviour, and judgement
- Gain clarity on why our commitment to guard against bias may not work and may even be counter productive
- Understand how privilege, advantage and positive people preferences undermine meritocracy in our institutions
- Understand what practical personal and organisation actions can be taken to manage and mitigate bias and support fair decision making

Programme

Pre-course IAT

Many of you will already have completed the gender/science implicit association test. If you have not, please try and find time to complete this test. It will only take 10 minutes. We will be inviting you to pool results, anonymously using your smart phone or tablet, onto an online poll to aid discussion but you will not have to disclose your results individually.

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/Study?tid=-1>

Workshop outline

Time	Item	Activity
2.00pm	Coffee and registration	
2.15pm - 2.30pm	Welcome, introductions, training objectives, outline of the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles for respectful inquiry • Hopes and expectations
2.30 -3.00pm	The neurological and psychological explanation for unconscious bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associations exercise • Everyday associations reflection • Presentation on psychological and neurological basis of unconscious bias • Gender /science association
3.00 - 3.30 pm	Bias blind spots, confirmation bias and the myth of meritocracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias blind spot video • Confirmation bias in academia • The myth of meritocracy in academic careers • In-equity in the REF
3.30 – 3.45 pm	Break	
3.45 – 4.15 pm	Checking Bias case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias that affect people decisions • Identifying bias case study
4.15 -5.00 pm	Bias mitigation, action planning and next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and institutional strategies for managing and mitigating bias • Identifying risk in the REF decision making process • Planning to implement strategies

Appendix 5

Additional information requirements on outputs as part of submission (derived from REF 2019/02, Annex B)

	Main Panel A	Main Panel B	Main Panel C	Main Panel D	Statement length (max)
Outputs that include significant material published prior to 1 January 2014	All Main Panels: Statement on how far the earlier work was revised to incorporate new material				100 words
Researcher's contribution to a co-authored or co-produced output	Affirmation of the author's contribution to the output (selected from the statements provided) only where the author is not the lead or corresponding author and the output has 15 or more co-authors.	Sub-panels 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12: None Sub-panel 9: Affirmation of the author's contribution to the output (selected from the statements provided) only where the author is not the lead or corresponding author and the output has 15 or more co-authors	None	None	100 words
Request to double-weight an item	A supporting statement to justify the request				100 words
Abstracts for outputs in languages other than English	All Main Panels: a short abstract to describe the nature and content of the work.				100 words
Information about the research process and / or content	Statement where this is not evident within the	Statement where this is not evident within the	Statement where this is not evident from the	Statement for any output where the	300 words

	Main Panel A	Main Panel B	Main Panel C	Main Panel D	Statement length (max)
	output (for non-text or practice-based outputs)	output (for non-text or practice-based outputs). Identification of the original research or new insights reported (for reviews)	output itself (for any type of output). For practice-based outputs, an explanatory presentation in paper format should be included. For software and datasets, a full written description with details how to access.	research role of the researcher, or research process, is not evident within the output. Statement on the contribution of the attributed author to translations, anthologies, edited books, special editions of journals and curatorial projects. Rationale for grouping short items as a single output.	
Factual information about the significance of the output	None	In UOAs, 11 & 12. Factual statement wherever available. None in UOAs 7, 8, 9 and 10	None	None	100 words