

Solent University Code of Practice for REF2021

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Part One

Introduction

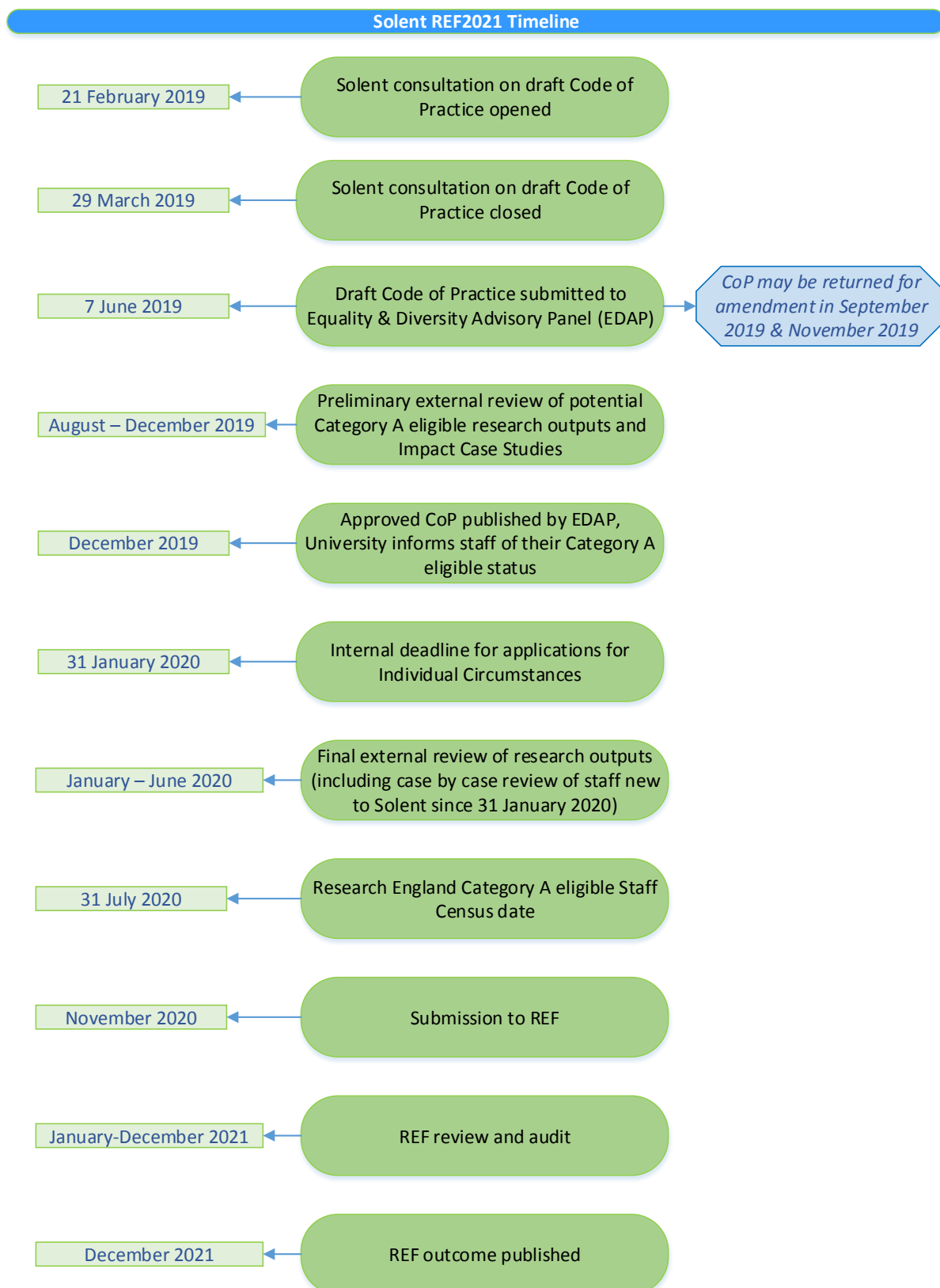
1. The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure that the principles of fairness and transparency in REF processes are upheld. It is a requirement of the REF2021 that the University establishes a Code of Practice for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research (SRR), determining research independence, and on the selection of research outputs which responds to all relevant equality legislation as well as the University's own policy statement on equality and diversity. (Appendix 1)
2. All universities making a submission to the REF2021 will submit their Codes of Practice to Research England by 7 June 2019 for approval. Research England's REF2021 Equality and Diversity Panel (EDAP) will review all the submitted codes to ensure that they adhere to the REF2021's guidance on submissions. A university whose Code is not approved will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit by the final deadline. A university whose Code is not approved by December 2019 will not be able to make a submission to the REF2021. All universities' Codes will be published on the REF2021 website in December 2019. Solent University's Code will also be available on the University's own REF2021 webpage. A timeline of key stages of the REF process at Solent University is included below at Fig. 1.
3. Solent University is committed to the principle that selection of staff for the REF will meet the requirements of the REF Guidance on Submissions and meet the standards of the Equality legislation.
4. This Code of Practice is informed by and builds on Solent's REF2014 code. This code places the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity at the centre of the processes designed for preparation of the University's REF2021 submission. A communication plan incorporating a variety of formats for ensuring staff are informed about the REF and the associated selection processes is included in appendix 2. The communication plan outlines institutional communication about the REF exercise at Solent since 2015 including the reflections on the 2014 exercise and the iterative process of preparation for REF2021.
5. The consultation process encompasses all relevant committees and upholds the principles of inclusivity and transparency by including a period of institution-wide consultation. A dedicated email (ref@solent.ac.uk) has been set up for staff to submit individual responses and staff can also feedback in confidence through their School Research Lead representatives on the REF Working Group. The composition of the REF Steering Group and REF Working Group also ensures a wide range of institutional voices may be included. In addition the membership of the REF Appeals Panel and REF Individual Circumstances Panel is given careful consideration to ensure confidentiality, independence and impartiality.

REF2014

6. Since 2014 the University has augmented its collection of data across the protected characteristics through the People & Development office and is therefore better situated to enhance its monitoring and take appropriate action. The University has focused on recruitment of early career researchers and monitors the relevant EIA data (see Appendix 5). The University also has an Equality and Wellbeing Committee who have been consulted on this code of practice and maintain oversight of equality and

diversity policies at the University. The Research, Innovation & Enterprise Committee maintain oversight of the EIA data outlined above.

Figure 1



Principles

7. In line with REF2021 Guidance, this Code of Practice demonstrates the University's adherence to the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity as follows:
 - **Transparency**
All processes for identifying eligible staff who have significant responsibility for research, determining who are independent researchers, and for selecting research outputs for inclusion in the REF2021 submission are aligned to the Guidance on Submissions. The communications plan includes multiple formats for ensuring staff have an opportunity to contribute to the consultation and to remain informed throughout the University's preparation of the REF2021 submission.
 - **Consistency**
The University selection processes will be undertaken in accordance with this Code as illustrated in the workflow diagrams included on pages 12 and 16 which will be consistent across the University and implemented uniformly.
 - **Accountability**
Responsibilities are clearly defined, and individuals and groups involved in the selection of staff and outputs for the REF submissions are identified by name or role. The membership and terms of reference for the REF Steering Group and REF Working Group are appended as Appendices 3 and 4.
 - **Inclusivity**
The Code will promote an inclusive environment by establishing, maintaining and updating an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) at all key stages of the process.

Equality and Diversity

The Legislative Context

8. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits direct and indirect discrimination and covers the protected characteristics of:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion and belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
9. In 2011 the public sector duty of the Act came into effect. Under the public sector equality duty, universities in England, Scotland and Wales must have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the act

- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
10. Universities need to ensure that their REF2021 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, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth. In addition universities need to be mindful that fixed-term and part-time employees have the right to be treated equally with comparable employees on open contracts or full-time contracts.
 11. The University is committed to upholding these principles. The University has a policy statement on equality in employment which is appended at Appendix 1.

Equality Impact Assessment

12. An initial equality impact assessment (EIA) undertaken at Solent informs the drafting of the Code of Practice as a baseline to consider and understand the implications for equality and diversity as the University applies its processes for selection of staff for inclusion in the REF submission. At each key stage of REF selection the University through the REF Working and Steering groups is reviewing its EIA and iteratively updating its findings for consideration by People and Development (P&D), the Equality and Wellbeing Committee and the Research, Innovation & Enterprise Committee (RIEC) to identify where appropriate action may be indicated to promote and optimise inclusivity, equality & diversity.
13. Solent University's P&D department captures information on the following protected characteristics; age, disability, race, religion & belief, sex, sexual orientation and pregnancy & maternity. Notification of a protected characteristic is not mandatory, and staff are not obliged to disclose this information. Solent does not currently record statistics relating to gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnerships. Details provided by P&D of academic staff on REF Category A eligible contracts and employed on 2 January 2019, provide the baseline EIA data available in Appendix 5. This is to be updated iteratively as described in paragraph 14.
14. All members of the REF Steering Group and REF Working Group and the Vice-Chancellor undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity Training and REF specific Equality and Diversity Training.
15. The EIA data is revisited with regard to the protected characteristics at the following key stages and the results and actions are continuously reviewed within Appendix 5:
 - when identifying staff with significant responsibility for research and determining research independence
 - when selecting outputs for submission
 - when considering appeals regarding the identification of staff who do not have significant responsibility for research
 - when preparing the final submission
16. The University gives careful consideration to the impact of the REF selection processes on both the protected characteristics and on fixed-term and part-time staff and

engages to map the results of the iterative EIA to actions where mitigation is indicated by its findings.

Communication Plan

17. In accordance with the principle of transparency, the REF Steering Group have approved a programme of communication and consultation with staff which is appended as Appendix 2. A dedicated email address (ref@solent.ac.uk), monitored by Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) for responses to the consultation and for any queries related to the REF at Solent, is in place and is included in all REF communications with staff.
18. This Code of Practice is published on the University's external research pages and a programme of consultation and awareness raising is undertaken through staff emails and internal news items. P&D will ensure that all communications in the plan are also made available to staff who are absent from work and in all necessary formats to ensure that the information is accessible to all staff. P&D undertake to review at each communication point if alternative accessible formats are indicated by staff-declared circumstances to ensure the University's REF preparation continues to uphold the principles of transparency and inclusivity.
19. A draft of the Solent Code of Practice was published on the external research webpages of Solent University on 21 February 2019. All staff were contacted by the Vice Chancellor on 21 February 2019 inviting comments on the draft during a period of consultation from 21 February 2019 to 29 March 2019. Staff absent from the University during this period were contacted by post as well as email. The consultation was also advertised through the University's staff newsletter and intranet news page. A reminder of the closing date was issued on 21 March 2019 in the University's staff newsletter and publicised on the intranet news page.
20. In addition to the above the draft Code of Practice was circulated to the following institutional representative groups who were all invited to contribute a response.
 - Solent University union representatives at both UCU and Unison (20 February 2019)
 - University Equality & Wellbeing Committee (19 February 2019). The Code of Practice was also included as an agenda item at the committee's meeting of 8 April 2019. The committee's membership includes staff from across the University's Schools and Services and is chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor.
 - RIEC included the Code of Practice as an agenda item on 19 February 2019. The Committee membership includes representation by academic staff from all the University's Schools and postgraduate research student representation and is chaired by the Director of Research, Innovation & Enterprise
 - A meeting of the REF Working Group on 25 March 2019 included consideration of staff feedback on the consultation directed to School Research Leads as an agenda item
21. RIE hosted three REF Code of Practice lunch-time drop-ins during the consultation period on 8 March, 19 March and 27 March 2019.
22. All feedback received via the above consultation formats is saved in the dedicated REF folder and given consideration in the composition of the final draft Code of Practice which is presented to the REF Steering Group for approval in May 2019. All feedback from individuals received a personal response.

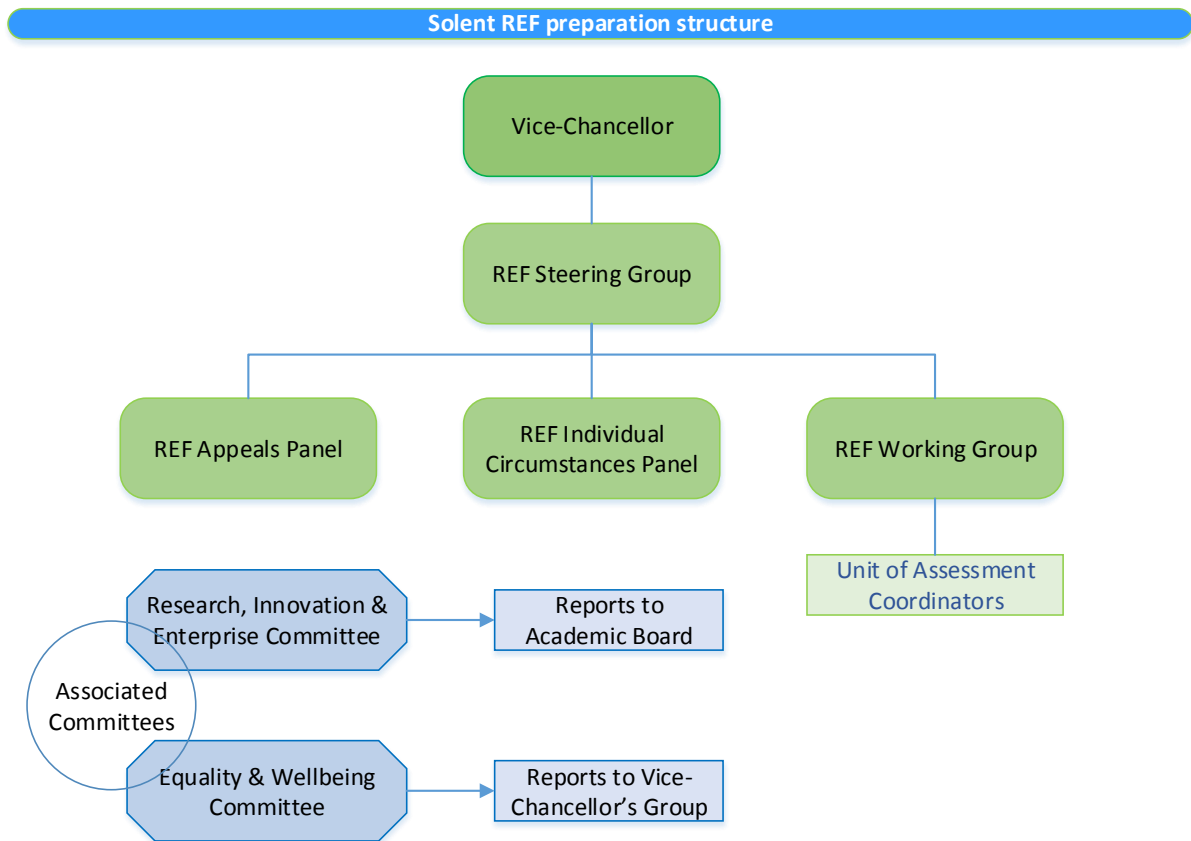
Roles and Responsibilities

23. In accordance with the principle of accountability, the Code of Practice identifies who will be involved in the selection process and identifies the training those staff have undertaken (see paragraph 13). See also Appendices 3 and 4 for the terms of reference of the REF Steering Group and REF Working Group and Part 4 of this Code of Practice for the working criteria for external reviewers.
24. As described in fig. 2, the Vice-Chancellor has final approval of the Code of Practice and makes final decisions on the University's REF Units of Assessment (UoA) for submission, in consultation with the REF management structure outlined below.
25. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor chairs the REF Steering Group which maintains oversight of the REF2021 preparations, makes recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor on Solent's REF2021 Code of Practice and UoA submissions, monitors that the processes of the Code are applied appropriately and that the principle of inclusivity is upheld through ensuring that the EIA and Solent's policies on equality and diversity are applied.
26. The REF Steering Group receives outcomes of any appeals from staff who are not satisfied that the process of identification for inclusion has been applied appropriately in their case. The appeals process is outlined in Part Two of this Code of Practice below.
27. The REF Steering Group membership includes a senior member of P&D, an active researcher, a representative of the School Deans and the Director of RIE, providing a cross section of research interests at the University.
28. The REF Working Group is chaired by the Director of RIE and its members include the School Research Leads as representatives of the academic staff in all the Schools, and a representative of early career researchers. The Working Group identifies the roles of Unit of Assessment Coordinators who implement the criteria for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, determining research independence, and on the selection of research outputs set out in this Code. The Unit of Assessment Coordinators are responsible for liaising with academic staff, ensuring appropriate communication and feedback is given to individuals at each stage and advising them of the process of appealing decisions on inclusion or exclusion. The Working Group receives the updates to the EIA and refers to the University's Equality and Diversity policies. The Working Group is also responsible for the implementation of the communications plan and ensuring, in accordance with the principles of transparency and inclusivity, that staff feedback through the consultation on the Code is received and reviewed.
29. A REF Appeals Panel, comprised of a membership independent of the REF management structure outlined above, considers appeals following the implementation of the selection criteria and informs the REF Steering Group of its findings. The impartiality of the panel reflects the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity.
30. A REF Individual Circumstances Panel is chaired by the Director of RIE and includes a senior representative from P&D. The panel considers all applications in confidence. All

staff involved in the process for reviewing individual staff circumstances must undertake the REF-specific equality and diversity training. The membership of this body and the training undertaken by it will reflect the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity.

31. The University’s research staff will maintain full and accurate records in Pure of published research outputs made publically available and meeting open access criteria within the REF period (1 January 2014 - 31 December 2020).
32. The University’s REF preparations structure is outlined below (Fig.2):

Figure 2



Part Two

Identifying Staff with Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR)

Policies and Procedures

33. Where an institution is not submitting 100% of its staff on Teaching and Research (T&R) and Research contracts Research England requires universities to include in their Codes the policy and procedures governing the process for identifying staff with SRR. In accordance with the principle of consistency the Code of Practice sets out the criteria to be applied by the University to all aspects of the process, including how individual staff circumstances will be taken into account. This is based on the REF Guidance on Submissions and was subject to a period of consultation commencing 21 February 2019. Following the communications plan, all academic staff can respond directly to the consultation via the dedicated ref@solent.ac.uk email address, or via their School Research Leads who are members of the REF Working Group. The Equality and Wellbeing Committee are included in the consultation process. The consultation closed on 29 March 2019.
34. Staff on research only contracts, where they meet the criteria for independent research as outlined in the REF Guidance on Submission and are employed on a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater, will be Category A submitted staff, see Part 3 of this Code of Practice for the process of identification of independent researchers.
35. Staff who are employed on teaching and research contracts of 0.2 FTE or greater must demonstrably meet the criteria for having SRR. SRR comprises ‘those for whom explicit time and resources are made available’, ‘who actively engage in independent research’, and where research ‘is an expectation of their job role’¹.
36. The determination of SRR for staff on T&R contracts is staff who are on the Research Career Pathway and have a baseline of 300 hours or greater approved in their Academic Work Planning (AWP) beyond the 185 hours assigned to all academic staff for Research and Scholarly Activity. Instances where greater than 300 hours may be approved could include where external funding is obtained or a sabbatical period has been agreed. The application of the baseline will be proportional across FTE such that 0.5 FTE SRR will be determined at 150 hours or greater beyond the assigned RSA appropriate to the FTE of individual staff.
37. The University introduced the Academic Career Pathways in June 2018. The pathways provide an agile route to progression on three pathways, Teaching and Scholarship, Research, and Knowledge Exchange. The Academic Career Pathways provide opportunities to recognise and develop the talents, skills and experience of employees and enable them to fulfil their potential. Appendix 6a includes the letter to all academic staff outlining the purpose, implementation and career mobility of the academic career pathways, the introduction to the academic career pathways and the research career pathway criteria originally circulated to staff and made available on the University’s Portal in June 2018 is included in Appendix 6b and 6c for information.
38. The current AWP was developed in conjunction with the UCU and implemented in 2018. The allocation of minimum hours to aspects of professional development in research including support for staff studying towards a doctorate, preparing bids for funding or pursuing publications is outlined in the AWP. The AWP and the academic

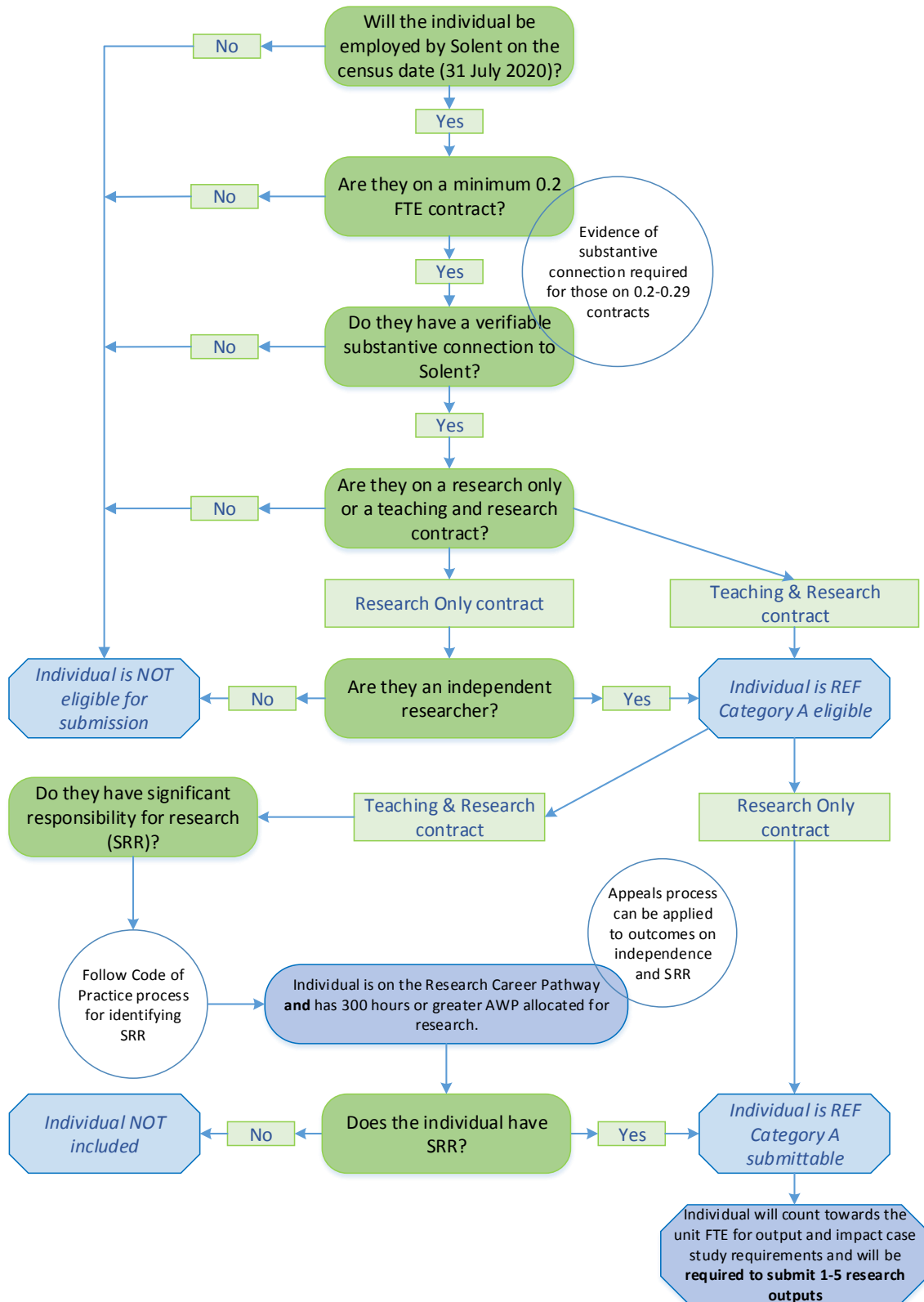
¹ REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions: Part 3, section 1, page 34.

career pathways outline a formative structure with clear criteria for a developmental trajectory on each of the three pathways. The AWP and research career pathway support professional development of research staff and therefore form a baseline mechanism for REF identification of staff with SRR. Final REF selection will be on the basis of approved research time of no less than 300 hours. The AWP document can be found in Appendix 7.

39. The REF2021 Guidance on Submission requires that all staff meeting the submitting institution's individual criteria for SRR must be submitted to the REF. Staff meeting the above criteria will all be returned to the REF and will be required to contribute between one and five research outputs (excepting in cases where individual circumstances have been approved and/or as outlined below). See Appendix 8 for the 'REF Guidance on Submission' information on the circumstances, including early career researchers, where an application for a reduction in output tariff may be submitted to Research England for consideration. See also Part Four of this Code of Practice for how to make an application.
40. Where staff identified by the above process whose areas of research do not fully cohere with the University's evolving research areas of expertise, consideration will be given to the REF mechanisms of cross-referral between sub-panels (please refer to REF2021 Panel Criteria & Working Methods guidance included within appendix 9) or if appropriate make a request to except a small unit from submission (please refer to the REF2021 Guidance on Submissions information included within appendix 10).
41. The University's workflow for the SRR selection process is outlined below (Fig. 3).

Figure 3

Solent workflow aligned to Research England criteria for staff eligibility for submission to REF2021



Modes of operation in relation to identifying SRR

42. All staff will be advised in writing by the REF Working Group by the end of 2019, in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020, whether they meet the SRR criteria and of the appeals process. The Unit of Assessment Coordinators will be available for discussion throughout the REF preparation period.
43. The REF Working Group will review the EIA conducted following the application of the criteria for identification of staff with SRR and, where appropriate, identify actions arising from this process and report to the REF Steering Group.
44. It will be the responsibility of the REF Steering Group to review the University's position in respect of small submissions (see paragraph 40 above) and to make appropriate recommendations to the Vice Chancellor.
45. The Terms of Reference, Composition and Modes of Operation of the REF Steering Group and REF Working Group are attached as Appendix 3 and 4

Appeals Process

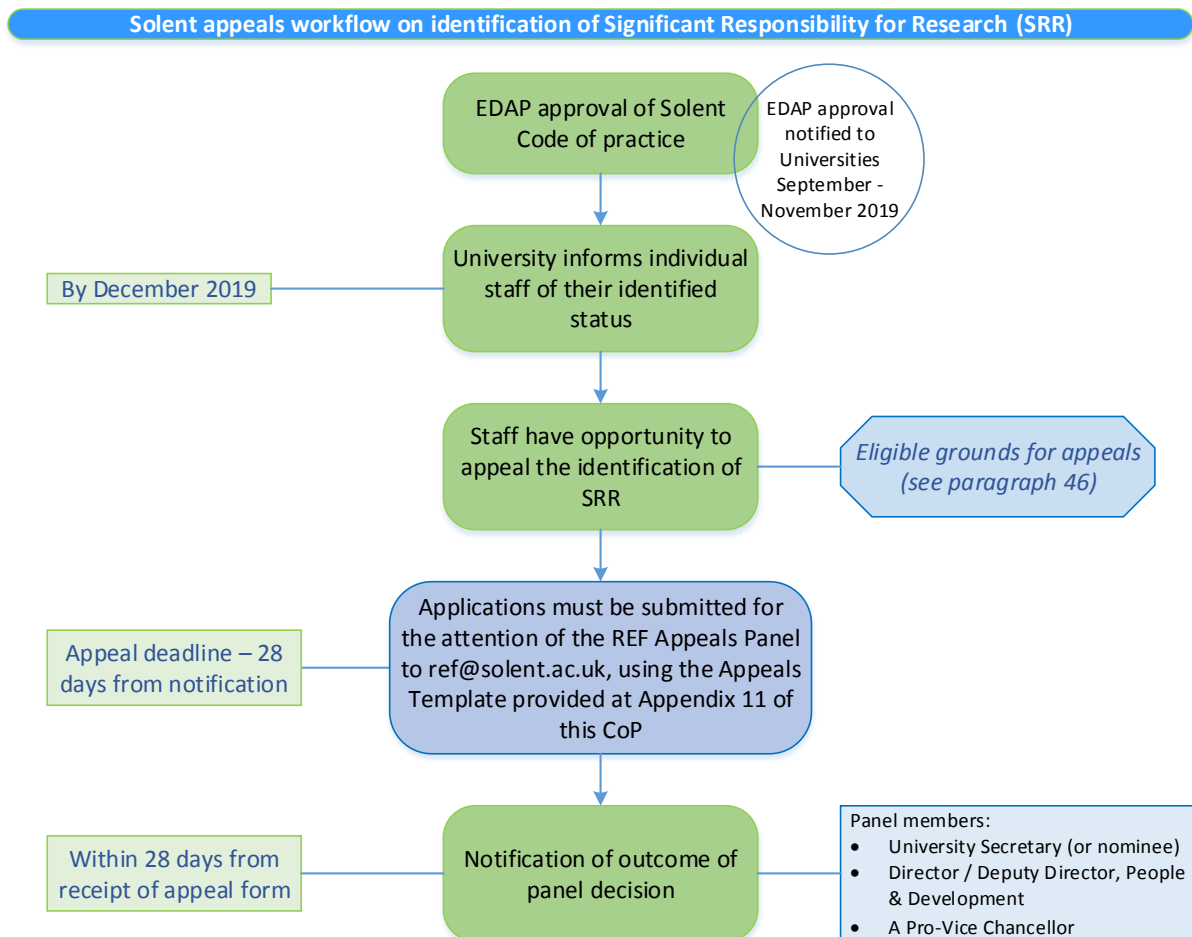
46. During the selection process staff may informally request clarification and feedback from the Unit of Assessment Coordinators at any stage. All affected staff will be informed of the outcome of the selection process and advised of the opportunity and process to appeal the decision in advance of the REF census date of 31 July 2020.
47. The appeals process is included here in the Code of Practice and is also published on the University's REF section of its research webpages. Information about the appeals process will also be included in all communication with individual staff about outcomes of the selection process for SRR and identification of researcher independence. The REF Appeals Process workflow is outlined below at Fig. 4.
48. Individual staff wishing to appeal after the outcome of the process for selection of staff with SRR must forward their appeal on the template provided (Appendix 11) within 28 days of receiving their notification of the decision. Appeals must be addressed to the REF Appeals Panel.
49. Appeals may be considered on the following grounds that:
 - i. criteria for selection of SRR or independent research were not applied in accordance with this Code, or
 - ii. there was a material error in the data used by the Working Group in applying the criteria
50. Appeals cannot be made on the basis of the quality evaluation process for selection of research outputs by identified REF submittable staff. The University has instituted a robust process of external review of the quality of all research outputs that are put forward by staff for consideration for the REF. External reviewers have been selected on the basis of their scholarly standing, familiarity with the REF evaluation scale, and are independent from the University. It is therefore not considered appropriate that the academic judgement of external reviewers should be subject to appeal.
51. Appeals must be made in writing and include all relevant supporting evidence. Appeals cannot be made by a third party except in cases of incapacity where evidence is provided. In accordance with data protection legislation written authorisation to correspond with a third party from the individual must be submitted.

52. The REF Appeals Panel comprises:
 - The University Secretary, or nominee
 - The Director or Deputy Director, P&D
 - A Pro Vice-Chancellor

53. The composition of the REF Appeals Panel is wholly independent from the REF Steering Group and REF Working Group membership ensuring impartiality.

54. The review panel will investigate and forward a written response within 28 days. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

Figure 4



Part Three

Determining Research Independence

55. The University identifies independent researchers according to the REF definition as ‘Category A’ eligible staff on research only contracts or teaching and research contracts where the staff meet the University’s criteria for significant responsibility for research as outlined in Part Two of this Code of Practice above.
56. The University, in accordance with the REF Guidance on Submission does not recognise research assistants or research associates as independent researchers where the primary employment function is research only and they are employed to carry out another individual’s research programme.
57. The University’s approach to recruitment of post-doctoral researchers forms part of an initiative to drive growth in emerging areas of research at the University. Where the University has employed post-doctoral researchers, except where these appointments are the direct result of a funded project managed by a principle investigator, the post-doctoral researcher is considered to meet the criteria of independent researcher, as it is a feature of these roles that they seek external funding for their own projects, act as principle investigator or co-investigator where appropriate and have significant input into the design, conduct and interpretation of the research.

Modes of operation in relation to determining research independence

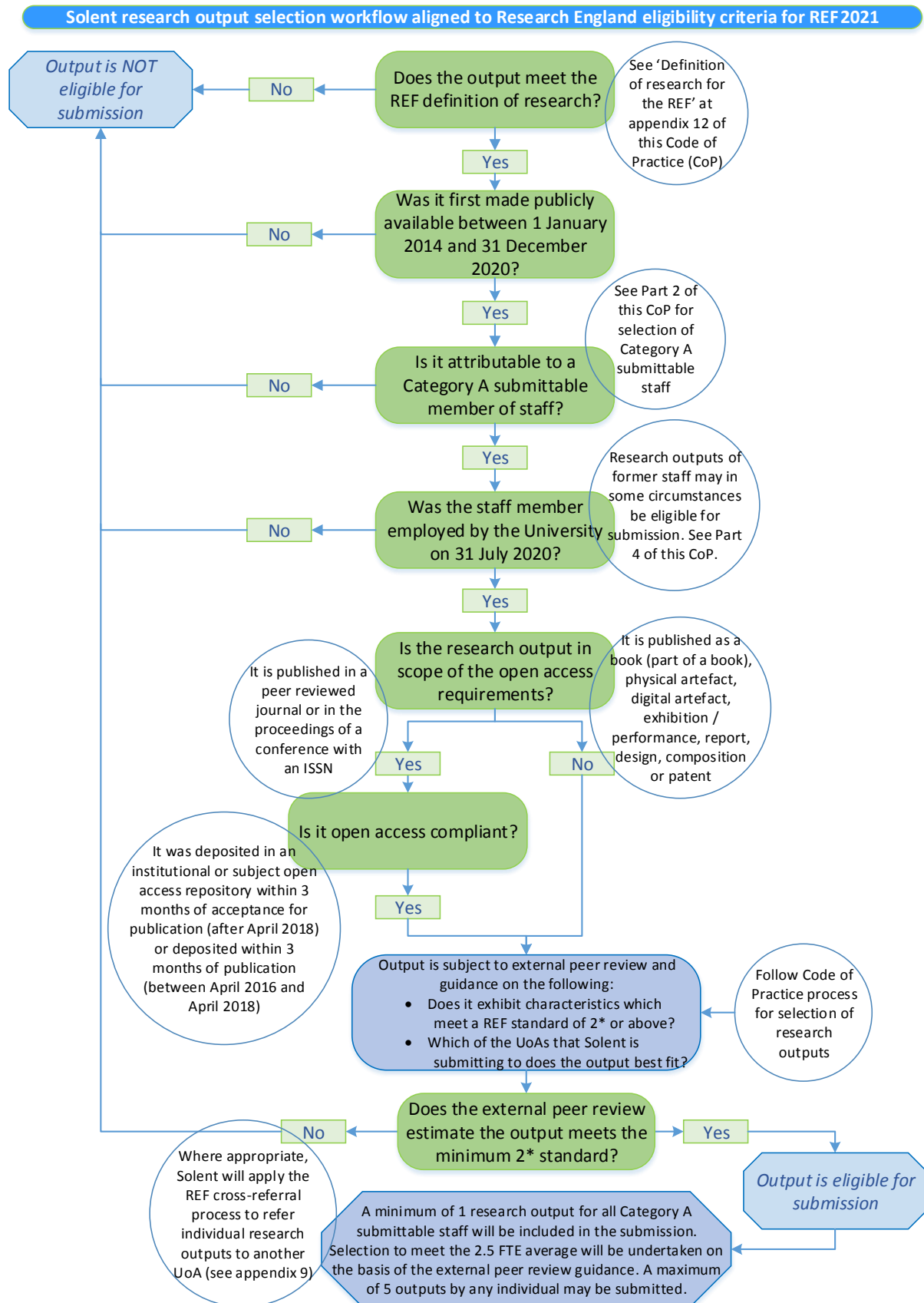
58. The REF Working Group will review the EIA conducted following the application of the criteria for determining research independence and, where appropriate, identify actions arising from this process (See REF Working Group Terms of Reference, Appendix 4).
59. For details of responsibilities for communication of outcomes for REF eligibility, stages of approval and the appeals process, see relevant sections within Part Two of this Code of Practice, including Fig. 3.

Part Four

Research Output Selection

60. The University has set an aspirational baseline of estimated 2* rating or above for inclusion of research outputs in the REF2021 submission. All staff who meet the criteria for SRR and research independence outlined in Parts Two and Three of this Code of Practice will, in liaison with the UoA Coordinators, identify a minimum of one and an average of three research outputs meeting the REF definition of research (see Appendix 12) to submit for external review for selection of outputs.
61. Where a staff member has one research output and this falls below the 2* baseline, it must be submitted in accordance with the REF2021 Guidance on Submission unless the staff member believes they have individual extenuating circumstances and wishes to make an application for individual circumstances.
62. The University will adopt the following workflow (Fig. 5) to identify research outputs for consideration by external review.

Figure 5



63. External reviewers with previous experience of REF reviews and with experience in the broad UoA subject area are appointed to undertake peer review of the selected outputs. Each reviewer is asked to review an average of three outputs per staff member identified through the processes outlined in Parts Two and Three of this Code of Practice above.
64. External reviewers are asked to
- review the outputs against the REF star rating system
 - state their opinion on the UoA appropriate to the outputs submitted for review
65. The University will apply the following criteria to selection of outputs for submission to REF2021
- i. a minimum of one research output per submitted staff member will be submitted (with a view to maximising the quality of the submission overall) and except where procedures taking into account the effect of individual circumstances have been applied. Former staff may, in some circumstances, be eligible for submission. A maximum of five may be submitted by any submitted staff.
 - ii. research outputs with the highest star rating in accordance with the external reviewers' guidance will be submitted, taking into account the requirement to submit at least one output per staff member and, the total number of outputs must equal 2.5 times the summed FTE of the submitted staff across the UoA.
 - iii. where the total required outputs is exceeded by available outputs, consideration will be given to the external reviewers' guidance as to best fit with the UoA and to inclusivity, equality and diversity where selecting from outputs of equal quality and fit in the assessment of the external reviewers.
 - iv. where the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel has accepted an application to reduce the total required outputs for the UoA in recognition of staff circumstances, these will be applied such that the affected staff will be required to submit a minimum of one output, or zero outputs as described by the Guidance on Submission in Appendix 13.
 - v. staff on part-time or fixed term contracts and staff whose contract of employment has included a period of part-time or fixed term contracted employment across the REF cycle will be considered in relation to their contribution of outputs, while the minimum of one research output will continue to be applied except where (as above) staff have made application for consideration of individual circumstances.
66. The University may consider submitting to REF2021 the research outputs of former staff who, while employed at Solent, met the criteria for SRR outlined in fig.3. This will not include research outputs of any former staff who left the University as the result of a severance or redundancy process.
67. The University is undertaking the following schedule:
- Summer 2019
An initial identification of potential REF eligible Category A staff following the process outlined in Part Two
 - Autumn 2019
A preliminary external review of research outputs and impact case studies
 - Spring 2020
Final identification of staff following the EDAP approval of the process outlined in Part Two and ongoing external review of research outputs.
 - Ongoing identification and review of new appointments

- 31 July 2020 - REF Census Date

68. The assessment by the external reviewers will not form part of internal progression, promotion or performance review by Solent University but will be applied to REF research output selection only.

Modes of operation in relation to selection of outputs

69. The REF Working Group will review the reports of the external reviewers and make recommendations to the REF Steering Group in accordance with the criteria above (paragraph 65).

70. The REF Working Group will review the EIA conducted following the application of the criteria for selection of research outputs in the context of the research environment and, where appropriate, identify actions arising from this process.

Consideration of Individual Staff Circumstances and Confidentiality

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

72. The approach to the treatment of individual circumstances will be consistent with the range of circumstances and procedures set out in the REF Guidance on Submission and will be consistent across all UoAs. In consideration of staff circumstances, all staff involved in the process should be aware of, and adhere to, the guidance on individual circumstances in respect to confidentiality and sensitivity.

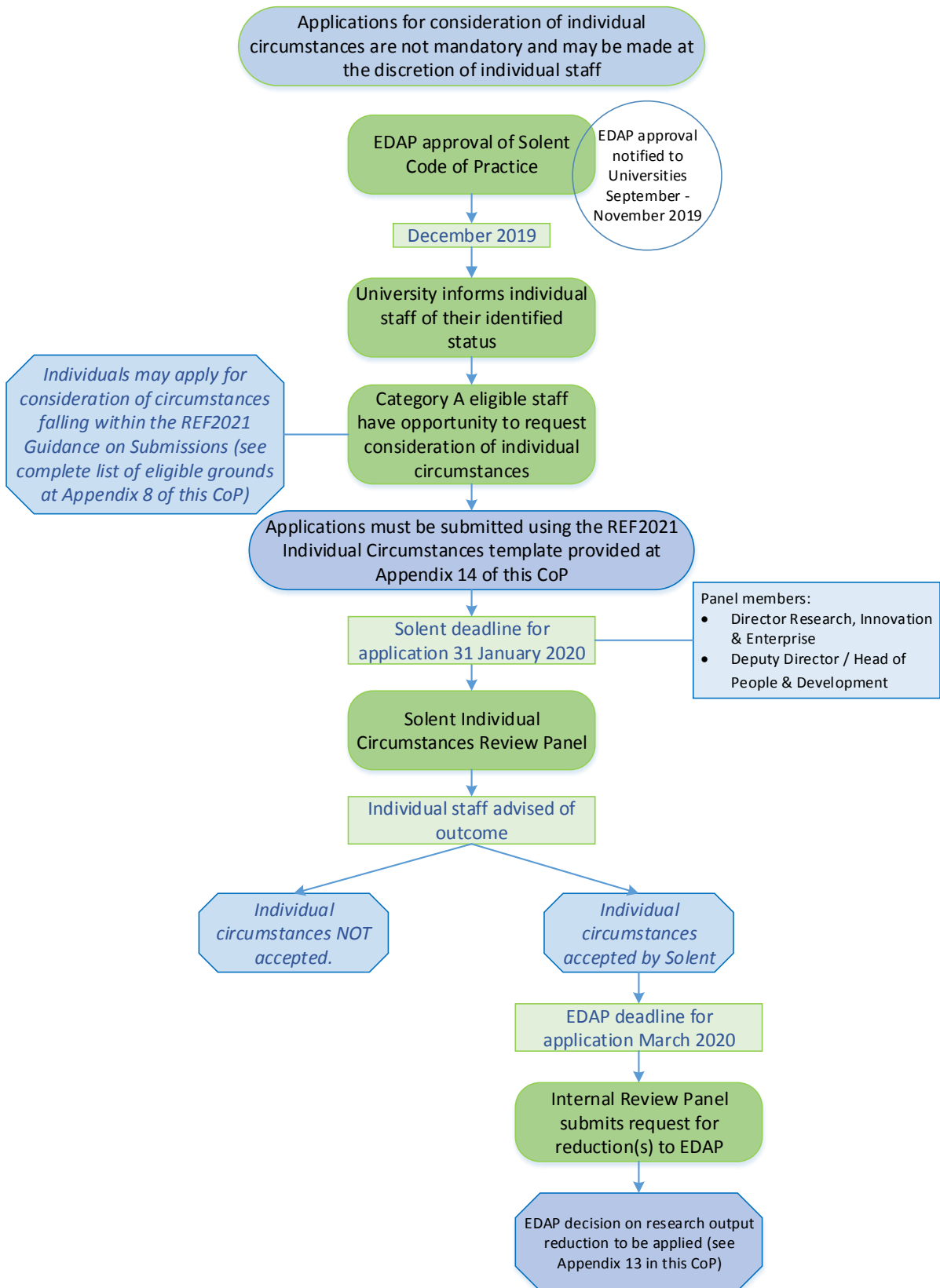
73. The University supports staff through its 'My Wellbeing' services which are accessible via the University's online Portal. Responsibility for oversight of this provision is held by the University's Equality and Wellbeing Committee. Access to support for issues including stress, mental health, physical health including musculoskeletal health, extended absence, work-life balance and financial wellbeing are all available in confidence and are supported by a telephone counselling service and the Solent Health Services.

74. Solent's Individual Circumstances Review Panel is the Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise, and a senior representative of People and Development. The panel reviews requests submitted on the template provided by Research England for reduction in outputs on the basis of individual circumstances, and communications with all staff include notification of the procedure to request consideration of circumstances (Appendix 14). Requests must be based on the circumstances defined by the REF2021 (see appendix 8) and must be supported where appropriate by further information/evidence.

75. Applications for consideration of individual circumstances are entirely voluntary and staff are under no obligation to declare individual circumstances if they do not wish to do so.
76. The Solent deadline for submitting requests for staff circumstances for the REF2021 is 31 January 2020. The Individual Circumstances Review Panel will submit requests via the REF secure submission system and the outcome of such requests will be provided before the census date of 31 July 2020. The information submitted in the request must include sufficient details about the effect of the individual(s) circumstances to show that these criteria have been applied correctly, and for any type of circumstance must be based on verifiable evidence. Supporting documentation may be requested by REF2021 for audit.
77. All requests applying defined reductions only will be examined in the first instance by the Research England REF Audit and Data Verification Team, who will advise EDAP on whether sufficient information has been provided and the Guidance on Submission has been applied correctly. These requests may be referred to EDAP if a judgement is required.
78. All requests for reductions including either circumstances requiring a judgement about reductions, or requests to remove the minimum of one research output on an individual, will be considered by EDAP, who may seek advice on submitted requests from main panel chairs. EDAP will make recommendations about the appropriate number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty. EDAP will provide a written explanation where a request is not accepted in full, or in part.
79. Information submitted in requests will be kept confidential to the Research England REF Team, EDAP and the main panel chairs, who are all subject to confidentiality undertakings in respect of all information contained in submissions. REF sub-panels will know where a reduction in the overall number of outputs in the submitting unit has been agreed without penalty on the basis of individual circumstances, but will not have access to further information about the circumstances. These arrangements will enable individuals to disclose the information in a confidential manner, and enable consistent treatment of individual circumstances across the exercise.
80. Circumstances in which an application may be made for a reduction in the total number of submittable outputs to a UoA are outlined in the REF Guidance on Submissions: Summary of applicable circumstances, see appendix 8. Details on how these reductions are calculated are demonstrated in Appendix 13.
81. Fig. 6 below outlines the workflow for this process.

Figure 6

Solent workflow aligned to EDAP Individual Circumstances process for REF2021



Part Five

Appendix 1

Solent Policy Statement: Equality in Employment with the University

Southampton Solent University
People and Development

Equality in Employment with the University

The policy

- 1 One of Southampton Solent University's enduring values is its commitment to social justice. The University's policy is to continue working towards an environment free from discrimination and intolerance in all forms and one in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The policy in practice

- 2 The University's Equality Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Scheme provides the practical means to translate the policy statement into action to support and promote equality diversity and inclusivity. The EDI Scheme covers all protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010, these being; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 3 The EDI Scheme is maintained by the University Employee Equality Forum, responsible to the Management Board, and including partnership with UCU and UNISON.
- 4 Alongside effective communication the EDI Scheme includes arrangements to support participative engagement in the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusivity. Importantly the EDI Scheme integrates equality, diversity and inclusivity into the University's planning arrangements. The scheme also provides for specialist training to fulfil the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (and related legislation) and to support the promotion of equality diversity and inclusivity as an integral part of the University's policy.
- 5 The monitoring and evaluation of progress to achieve the aims set out in the policy statement and the objectives set out in the EDI Scheme is coordinated by the University Employee Equality Forum. This includes the preparation of an annual report that is published externally and to all staff. The University also has a standing commitment to undertake an equal pay review no less frequently than every two years. The outcome of this review is also published externally and to all staff.
- 6 On-going development of this policy, the objectives set out in the EDI Scheme and the supporting arrangements are informed by -
 - Legislative developments
 - Specialist expert guidance, including that produced by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), and the HE sector's Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)
 - Feedback and contributions from the internal and external consultation that underpins the preparation and updating of the University's EDI Scheme

- Monitoring information arising from the annual equality report, the equal pay review, and other benchmark and evaluative arrangements
- 7 The University maintains a range of employment policies that complement its commitment to social justice and equality and diversity set out in this policy statement. These policies include -
 - Behaviour at work, including bullying and harassment
 - Employee appraisal scheme
 - Flexible working
 - Holiday, special leave arrangements, and retirement procedures
 - Job grading review procedure
 - Personal relationships at work
 - Whistleblowing
- 8 The University also recognises that some aspects of its activities require particular attention as part of an active equality, diversity and inclusivity programme. These include -
 - Staff recruitment, including selection and appointment arrangements
 - Staff profile, with particular reference to the *protected characteristics* set out in the Equality Act 2010
 - Staff training and learning
 - Religion or belief, as one of the *protected characteristics* set out in the Equality Act 2010 - please see the **Appendix A** to this policy statement
 - Gender reassignment and trans* equality, as one of the *protected characteristics* set out in the Equality Act 2010 - please see **Appendix B** to this policy statement.

Equality in Employment with the University - Appendix A

Religion or belief - a practical note

Religion or belief is one of the *protected characteristics* prescribed in the Equality Act 2010. This note provides practical guidance to complement the over-arching commitments set out in the Equality in Employment with the University policy statement.

Additional advice and guidance is available from People and Development, members of the Equality Forum, and UCU and UNISON.

The University welcomes the diversity of religions and belief systems represented by employees and students and it actively supports the freedom of belief and practice enshrined in law. It recognises that many students and staff have associated commitments and it will endeavour to honour these personal commitments. In its consideration of requests the university's aim is to adopt a fair and consistent approach, and to ensure that there is no discrimination based on religion, belief, or the absence of religion or belief.

Observance or worship

An employee should advise their manager if they have any particular observance requirements. The manager will endeavour to make appropriate provision and/or accommodation to support the observance requirements. More generally the university will endeavour to provide appropriate facilities to support observance requirements.

Hours of work

If an employee wishes to change their hours of work as a result of observance requirements this should be discussed with the manager at the earliest opportunity. The manager will assess the request with due regard to operational requirements and equity.

Special leave of absence

An employee may request special leave of absence (eg associated with religious or cultural festivals) using the arrangements set out in the University's holiday procedure. The employee will provide as much notice as possible in relation to any such requests. The manager will assess the request as positively as possible and with due regard to operational requirements and equity, and in accordance with the holiday procedure will advise their decision promptly.

In the majority of cases special leave of absence will be part of the employee's holiday entitlement. In some cases an application for special leave of absence may be considered on an unpaid basis.

Dress Code

The university accepts and respects the wearing of religious and cultural dress. This protocol is subject to an over-riding obligation to give appropriate regard to any relevant health and safety considerations, including any risks to other people.

Equality in Employment with the University - Appendix B

Gender reassignment and Trans*² equality - a practical note

Gender reassignment is one of the protected characteristics prescribed in the Equality Act 2010. This appendix provides practical guidance to complement the over-arching commitments set out in the Equality in Employment with the University policy statement. Further advice and guidance is available from People and Development, members of the Equality Forum and/or the LGBT Staff Network, and UCU and Unison. There is also a list of Trans* organisations and sources of support at the end of this document and these are also published on the portal under the Equality and Diversity pages.

The legal framework

The Equality Act 2010 offers protection from discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment and covers:

- A person who has proposed, started or completed a process to reassign their gender
- Trans* people who are not under medical supervision
- People who experience discrimination because they are perceived to be trans* (whether they are or are not)
- People subject to discrimination by association because of gender reassignment, including the partners, parents or children of trans people - for example it would protect the parents of a trans* child from being discriminated against because their child is transitioning.

² Trans* is used throughout this paper as an inclusive term used by those who identify as transgender, transsexual or transvestite. It may also be adopted by those who identify as non-binary gendered or gender queer.

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 allows trans* people to apply for full legal recognition of their acquired gender. If successful, applicants can be issued with a full or interim gender recognition certificate (GRC). A full GRC enables a person to obtain a new birth certificate which does not disclose that they have changed gender. The Gender Recognition Act makes it a criminal act to disclose to a third party the status of a trans* person without permission.

Record keeping and documentation

The University will ensure that any declaration of trans* status is kept confidential. Records of the person's former name/gender and any information related to a person's trans* status should be kept in a sealed envelope and clearly marked 'Confidential Business Partner only'. References for staff who have transitioned will make no reference to the person's former name/gender and will use the appropriate pronoun³.

Planning for transition - practical notes

A trans* person planning to transition during their employment at the University should contact the Chief People Officer. An initial meeting should be arranged at which point the Chief People Officer will reassure the employee of the University's support. A planning meeting should then be arranged to discuss and put in place an action plan to best support the employee.

The employee may bring a friend, colleague or a member or coordinator from the LGBT staff network to this meeting. Key issues that should be covered at this meeting include any important dates to plan around (for example when the employee intends to undertake hormone therapy or any surgical reassignment surgery) and the employee's wishes re: name/title changes. The meeting should agree the date at which the trans* person intends to officially transition at work (either to living full-time as, presenting as acquired gender at work or at a point agreed with the person).

Any concerns about other staff/student responses should be addressed. It is important to consider how the employee's line manager (if not already aware/involved) and (where appropriate) team are informed of the planned transition and enabled to best support the employee.

These decisions are to be made in consultation with the employee. Consideration should be paid to whether awareness raising / information sessions and/or training are needed for other staff or students to support the transitioning person. The LGBT staff network and/or the Equality Forum can help with this, as could the organisations listed at the end of this document.

Official transition at work date and record changing

At the agreed date the trans* person's name (and - where noted - gender) should be changed on all relevant records including staff campus card, email address, Portal and MyCourse profiles, formal records, website references, payroll and MyView records. This process is coordinated by People and Development. The employee should from this point on be referred to only by their new name and gender. As mentioned above, consideration should be given to any awareness raising/training sessions that might be required for other staff and/or students to facilitate a smooth transition.

³ Pronouns should be agreed with the person concerned. Some trans* people prefer to use a non-gendered pronoun such as Mx

Leave for medical appointments/hospital stays related to reassignment etc.

Medical appointments would be considered the same as for any other employee with paid time off given for hospital appointments.

Time off for gender reassignment treatment is recorded separately from sickness absence so as not to affect the employee's absence record. Absence from work for gender reassignment treatment will be recorded by People and Development as authorised absence.

The employee and employer should discuss in advance how much time off the employee is likely to need to undergo gender reassignment treatment to allow the employer to plan for the absence and arrange cover for the employee if necessary.

Single sex facilities

A person who has undergone gender reassignment, or who is living full-time as their acquired gender, or from the date agreed above, should have access to single sex spaces (such as toilets, changing rooms) according to the gender in which they present. They should also have access to any single sex activities where appropriate.

Further sources of information and support for trans* employees and those supporting them (these links are also available on the portal on the [LGBT resources page](#))

The Beaumont Society: Support network that promotes better understanding of the conditions of transgender, transvestism and gender dysphoria

www.beaumontsociety.org.uk

Chrysalis: Chrysalis is a charity with meeting centres for transitioning transgender adults. They provide counselling, support and life skills workshops. Meetings are held in the Portsmouth, Southampton and Bournemouth area

www.chrysalis-gji.co.uk

Depend: Offers free, confidential and non-judgemental advice, information and support to family members, partners, spouses and friends of trans people

www.depend.org.uk

Equality Challenge Unit: Has a range of useful resources and published guidance on trans staff and students on which this policy has drawn.

www.ecu.ac.uk

The Gender Trust: Offers help and support to all affected by gender issues including workplace advice and written information.

<http://gendertrust.org.uk/>

Gendered Intelligence: Focus on trans* youth, have a range of resources which might be useful for awareness raising with students.

<http://genderedintelligence.co.uk/>

The Mayflower Society: A Southampton based support group for trans* people and their partners. Offering socials gatherings, support meetings as well as a separate partner's

group. <http://mayflowersociety.org.uk>

Press For Change: Legal advice and lobbying organisation <http://www.pfc.org.uk/>

Solent University REF Communications and Process Management Plan

Date	Activity	Mode
24 February 2015	REF2014 report	Research Innovation and Enterprise Committee (RIEC)
15 April 2015	REF briefing (Units of Assessment)	Researcher Development Programme (RDP)
07 June 2015	REF Unit of Assessment review	RIEC
18 November 2015	REF briefing	RDP
06 April 2016	An Introduction to REF 2020	RDP
20 May 2016	Keynote speech on REF from Professor Judith Mottram, Professor of Visual Arts & Dean of the School of Material (Royal College of Art) and Professor George McKay, Professor of Media Studies (University of East Anglia)	Solent Research & Innovation Conference; Practice-Related Research
01 November 2016	REF progress report	RIEC
29 November 2016	REF briefing	RDP
07 February 2017	The REF webinar	RDP
09 February 2017	Staff and the REF webinar	RDP
13 February 2017	Environment and the REF webinar	RDP
15 February 2017	Introduction to the REF (Early Career Researcher (ECR) briefing)	RDP
21 February 2017	REF briefing on Stern Review REF Working Group Report	RIEC
22 February 2017	Impact and the REF webinar	RDP
03 - 04 May 2017	Keynote speeches from David Sweeny, Director for Research and Knowledge Exchange (HEFCE), Professor Andrew Chitty, Creative Economy Champion for the Arts and Humanities Research Council & Professor of Creative Digital Economy (Royal Holloway, University of London), Professor Mike Wilson, Associate Dean for Research and Professor of Drama (University of Loughborough) and a	Solent Research & Innovation Conference; Making an Impact

	REF impact workshop held by Dr Stephen Kemp (University of Southampton)	
October 2017	Staff Portal REF2021 page updated with detail of Initial Decisions	Internal Online Portal
25 October 2017	Introduction to the REF (ECR briefing)	RDP
31 October 2017	REF Update (Initial Decisions of the Funding Bodies)	RIEC
08 November 2017	REF briefing for School of Sports Health and Social Sciences	Research, Innovation & Enterprise (RIE)
09 November 2017	REF2021 Update	RDP
29 November 2017	Solent & REF2021 staff briefing	RDP
18 December 2017	Senior Management Team REF Briefing	RIE
17 January 2018	REF Drop in	RDP
14 February 2018	REF Impact Case Studies review and workshop	RDP
20 February 2018	REF Update	RIEC
21 February 2018	The Vice Chancellor's Conversation; REF update for all staff	RIE
28 February 2018	Presentation by Dr Kirstie Hewlett and Dr Kate Dunton (Kings College London) Impact and the REF 2021: The creative role of research	RDP
07 March 2018	Presentation by Dr Stephen Kemp (Research Funding and Impact Consultant) Impact and the REF	RDP
14 March 2018	REF Update to Academic Board	Academic Board
25 April 2018	REF Update to Board of Governors	Board of Governors (BoG)
05 June 2018	REF Update (Impact Case Studies & Code of Practice planning)	RIEC
August 2018	Launch of external website research pages including REF2021 staff briefing pages	Website
08 October 2018	Impact Case Study review and Code of Practice planning	REF Steering Group (REF SG)
19 October 2018	Introduction to the REF (ECR briefing)	RDP & RDP newsletter
30 October 2018	REF Update (draft REF 2021 Guidance)	RIEC
08 November 2018	Solent & REF2021 staff briefing	RDP & RDP newsletter
08 November 2018	REF Session with People & Development (P&D)	P&D Briefing
13 November 2018	REF Update to Vice-Chancellor's Group	Vice Chancellor's Group (VCG)

29 November 2018	Presentation by Dr Stephen Kemp (Research Funding and Impact Consultant) Impact Case Studies for REF	RDP
05 December 2018	REF Paper to Academic Board	Academic Board
18 December 2018	REF Update to Vice-Chancellor's Group	VCG
23 January 2019	REF 2021 staff briefing pages updated and REF 2021 staff news item	Solent Website and Solent Newsletter
24 January 2019	REF at Solent: initial all staff briefing on UoAs, Solent REF management structure and advance notice of Code of Practice consultation	Solent Newsletter and Portal news item
28 January 2019	Review of draft Code of Practice	REFSG
07 February 2019	Introduction to the REF (ECR briefing)	RDP & RDP newsletter
19 February 2019	REF Update (final REF 2021 Guidance & consultation on draft Code of Practice)	RIEC
21 February 2019	Launch of Code of Practice all staff consultation Notification of appeals process & notification of requests for individual circumstances process (to be included in all subsequent staff communications and the REF2021 staff briefing pages)	Solent Newsletter and Portal news item All staff email from the Vice-Chancellor Letter to all staff absent from work Circulated to UCU Circulated to Solent Equality & Wellbeing Committee
25 February 2019	REF Update to Vice-Chancellor's Group	VCG
14 March 2019	REF Presentation to Vice-Chancellor's Group and Deans	VCG and Deans
21 March 2019	Reminder to all staff of Code of Practice consultation closure	Solent Newsletter and Portal news item Letter to all staff absent from work School Deans email reminder
27 March 2019	REF Update to Vice-Chancellor's Group	VCG
April - May 2019	Review of responses to Code of Practice and circulation of final draft	REFSG Solent Newsletter and Portal news item Letter to all staff absent from work
April - May 2019	REF drop in sessions for all staff	RDP & RDP newsletter
01 May 2019	REF Update to Vice-Chancellor's Group	VCG
13 May 2019	Code of Practice final draft review	REFSG
22 May 2019	REF Code of Practice update	RDP

04 June 2019	REF Update (Code of Practice & UoA progress review)	RIEC
05 June 2019	REF Update to Vice-Chancellor's Group	VCG
June 2019	Publication of final draft Code of Practice on REF2021 staff briefing pages	Website
June 2019	Initial staff selection review	Individual staff emails Letters to staff absent from work
3 July 2019	REF Update to Academic Board	Academic Board
August - December 2019	Initial external peer review of submittable staff outputs	REFWG individual staff feedback
11 September 2019	Review of initial selection	REFSG Website update
October 2019	REF Update (initial selection)	RIEC
October - November 2019	REF sessions & staff drop-ins	RDP and RDP newsletter
December 2019	Research England approved Code of Practice published on REF2021 staff briefing pages	Website Solent Newsletter and Portal news item All staff email Letter to staff absent from work
22 January 2020	REF progress review	REFSG
31 January 2020	Internal deadline for review of requests for consideration of individual circumstances for submittable staff	Solent Newsletter and Portal news item Letter to staff absent from work
January - June 2020	Final staff selection review	Solent Newsletter and Portal news items Individual staff emails Letters to staff absent from work
Spring 2020	REF sessions & staff drop-ins	RDP and RDP newsletter
12 May 2020	Final staff selection review	REFSG
June 2020	REF Update staff selection	RIEC
31 July 2020	REF census date	Solent Newsletter and Portal news item Website
09 September 2020	REF submission	REFSG
October 2020	REF Update (submission)	RIEC
November 2020	Final Submission to REF	Solent Newsletter and Portal news item

Appendix 3

REF Steering Group

Remit of the REF Steering Group

Terms of Reference

1. The REF Steering Group is responsible for:
 - i. Maintaining oversight of preparations for REF2021 at Solent
 - ii. Making recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor on Solent's REF Code of Practice and Unit of Assessment submissions
 - iii. Monitoring the processes of Solent's REF2021 Code of Practice are applied appropriately, and
 - iv. Maintaining oversight of the Equality Impact Assessment working document and ensuring that Solent's Equality and Diversity policies are applied

Composition

2. The Vice Chancellor approves the membership of the REF Steering Group. The composition of the REF Steering Group shall be:
 - i. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
 - ii. Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE)
 - iii. An active researcher
 - iv. A Dean of School
 - v. A representative of People and Development
 - vi. Head of Research Office

Meetings

3. The REF Steering Group shall meet three times per academic year.

Quoracy

4. The quorum shall be 50% of the eligible membership in post.

Officers of the Committee

5. Research Information Officer appointed from RIE.

Mode of Operation

6. The REF Steering Group receives reports from the REF Working Group and, where relevant to its remit, from organisational units such as People and Development in relation to areas such as staff contracts, pathway and AWP, and from committees such as the Equality & Wellbeing Committee. The Group records actions arising from each meeting. A review of actions is a standing item on the Group's agenda.

Equal Opportunities Policy

7. All members of the REF Steering Group undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity Training and REF specific Equality and Diversity Training. In taking forward the remit

of the Steering Group, they shall have regard to the University's policies and strategies on Equal Opportunities.

Appendix 4

REF Working Group

Remit of the REF Working Group

Terms of Reference

1. The REF Working Group is responsible for:
 - i. Coordinating REF Units of Assessment, staff selection and research output selection in conjunction with Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE)
 - ii. Ensuring adherence to Solent's REF2021 Code of Practice
 - iii. Liaising with academic staff and ensuring appropriate communication and feedback to staff is given, and
 - iv. Updating the Equality Impact Assessment working document and referring to Solent's Equality and Diversity policies.

Composition

2. The composition of the REF Working Group shall be:
 - i. Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) (Chair)
 - ii. Head of Research Office
 - iii. School Research Leads or nominated School Unit of Assessment Champions to be appointed by the School Deans in consultation with the Director of RIE
 - iv. An early career researcher

Meetings

3. The REF Working Group shall meet as required.

Quoracy

4. The quorum shall be 50% of the eligible membership in post.

Officers of the Committee

5. Research Information Officer appointed from RIE.

Mode of Operation

6. The REF Working Group records actions arising from each meeting. A review of actions is a standing item on the Group's agenda.

The Unit of Assessment Coordinators are responsible for liaising with academic staff, ensuring appropriate communication, feedback and support is given to individuals at each stage and advising them of the process of appealing decisions on inclusion or exclusion, and the process for requesting consideration of individual circumstances. The Working Group receives the updates to the EIA and refers to the University's Equality and Diversity policies. The Working Group is also responsible for the implementation of the communications plan.

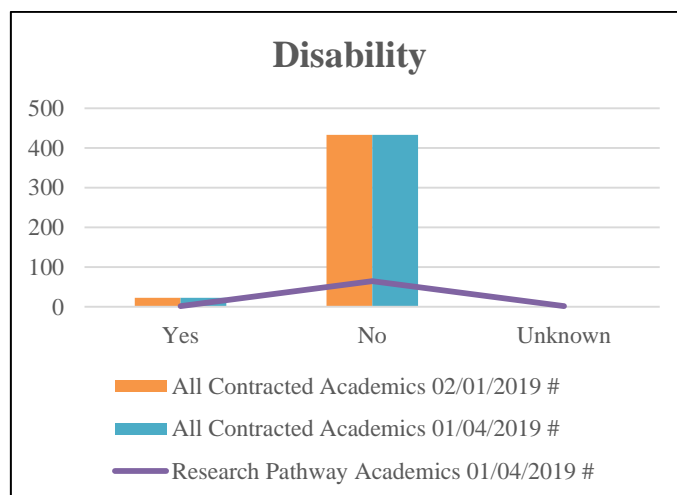
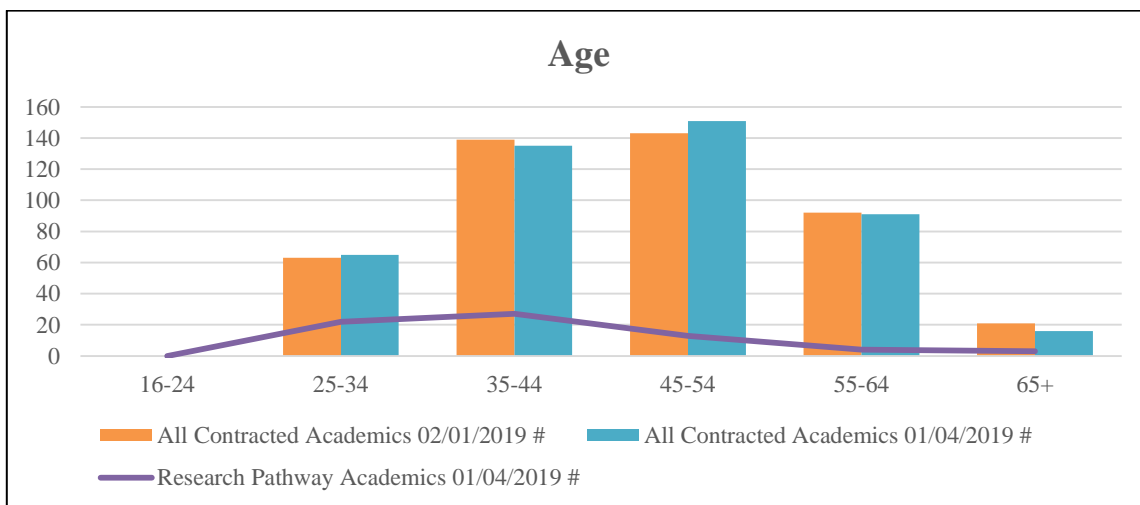
Equal Opportunities Policy

7. All members of the REF Working Group undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity Training and REF specific Equality and Diversity Training. In taking forward the remit of the Working Group, they shall have regard to the University's policies and strategies on Equal Opportunities.

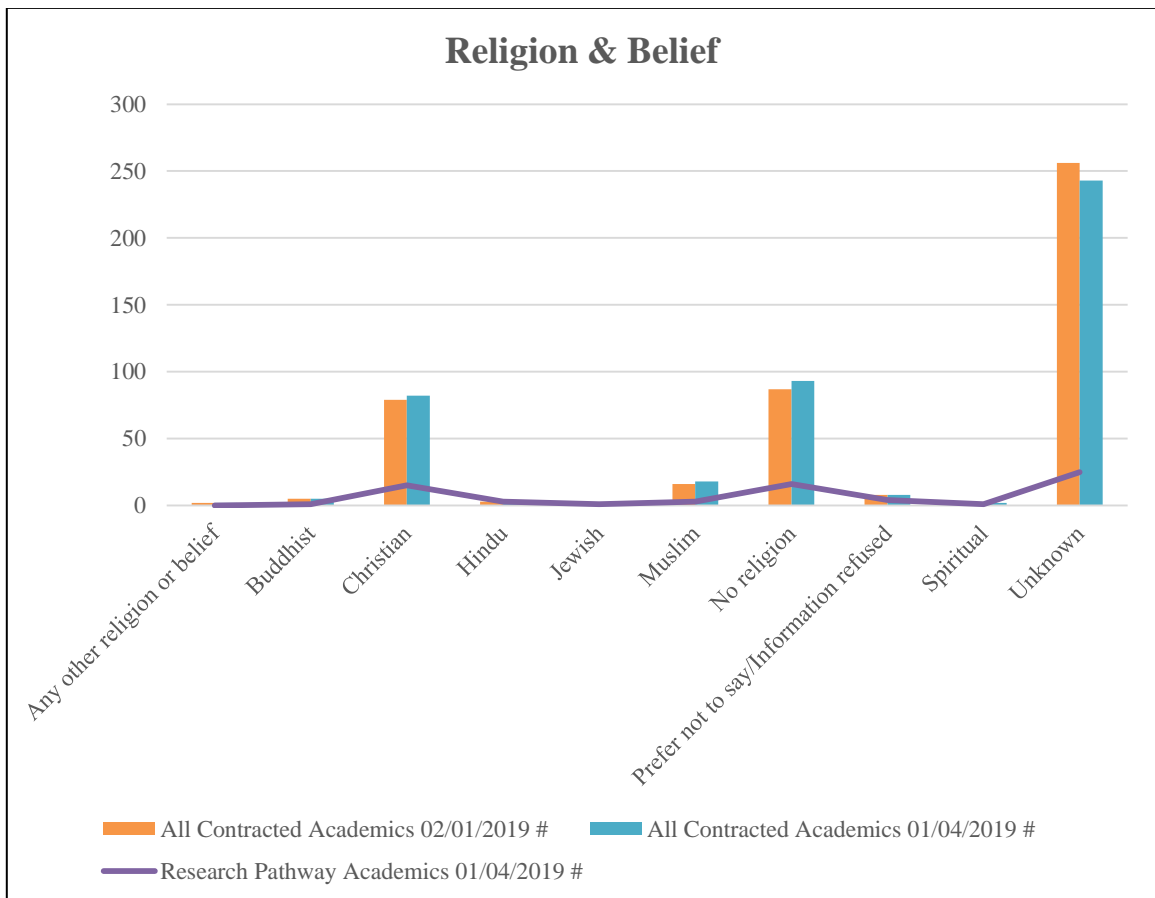
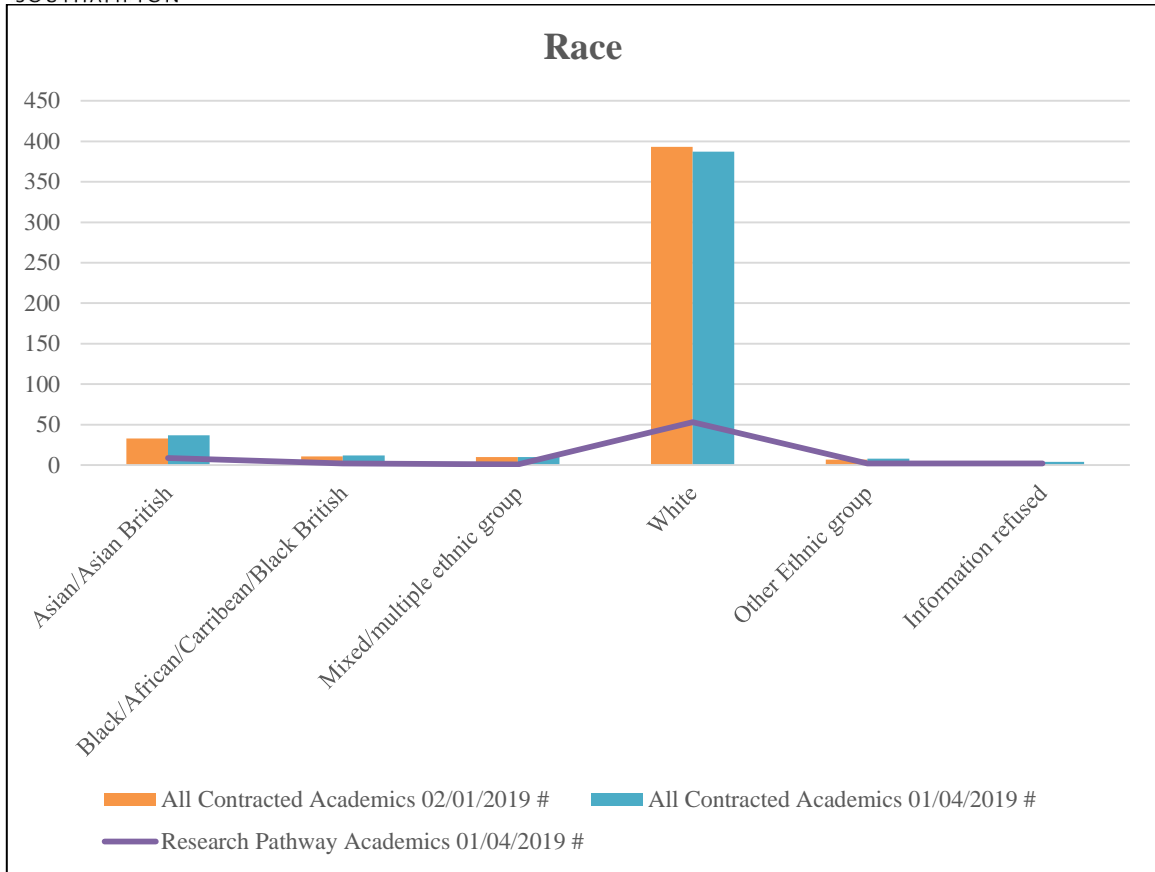
Equality Impact Assessment - Solent Academic Staff Data

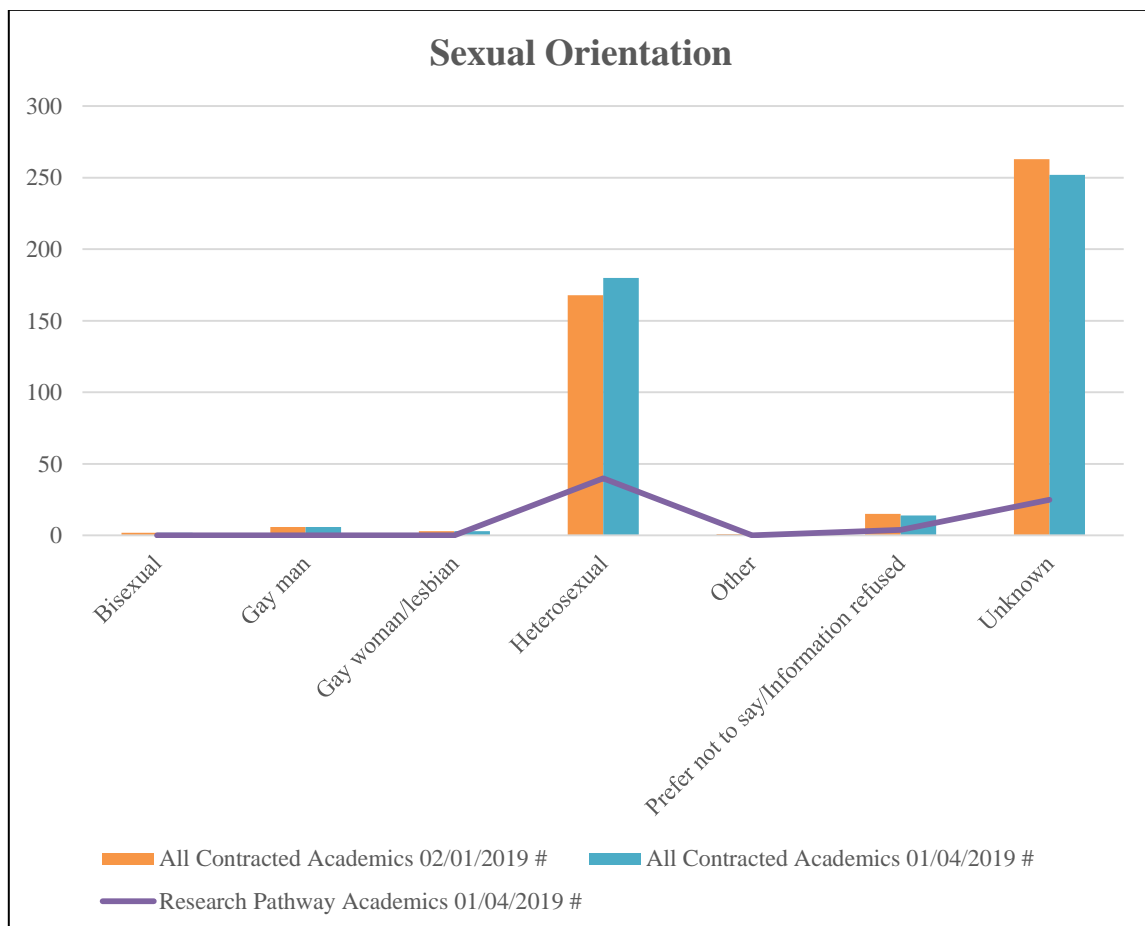
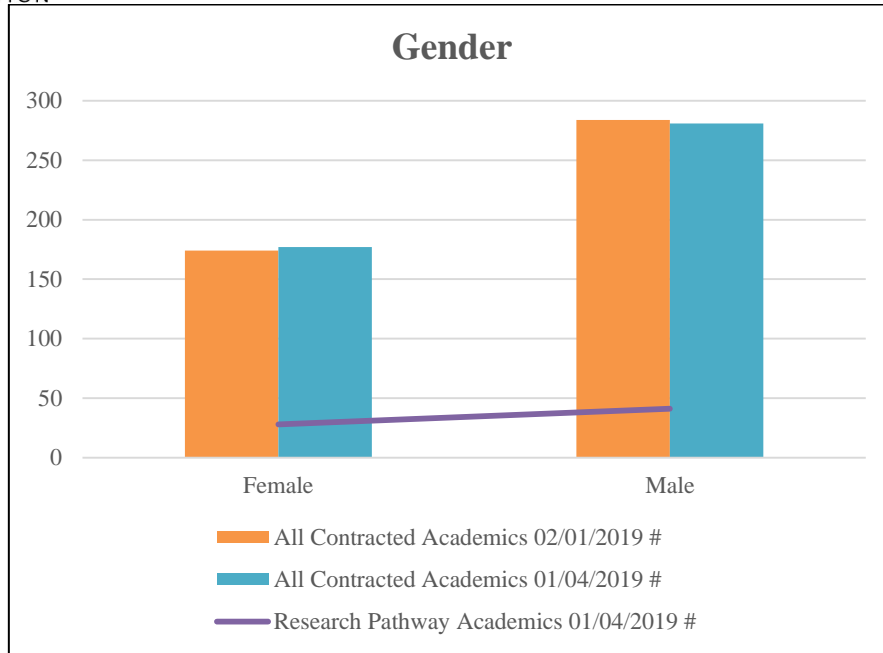
Solent University’s P&D department captures information on the following protected characteristics. Notification of a protected characteristic is not obligatory, and staff may choose not to declare information if they wish. The following details were gathered by P&D relating to all contracted academic staff on REF category A eligible contracts. The information collected at the following points has been used to create these continually updated charts to both anonymise data and to build the EIA at each key REF selection stage.

Date	Information Collated	% Part Time	% Fixed Term	% Pregnancy & Maternity	Reviewed by
02/01/19	Initial baseline; all contracted academic staff	15.5%	6.8%	1%	REFWG (25/01/19 & 19/02/19) & REFSG (28/01/19)
01/04/19	Secondary baseline; all contracted academic staff	14.4%	7.9%	0.9%	REFSG (13/05/19)
01/04/19	Initial indicator of SRR (Research Pathway)	15.9%	27.5%	0%	REFSG (13/05/19)



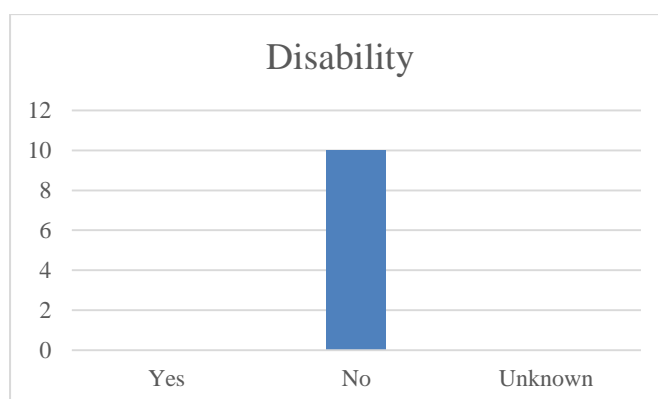
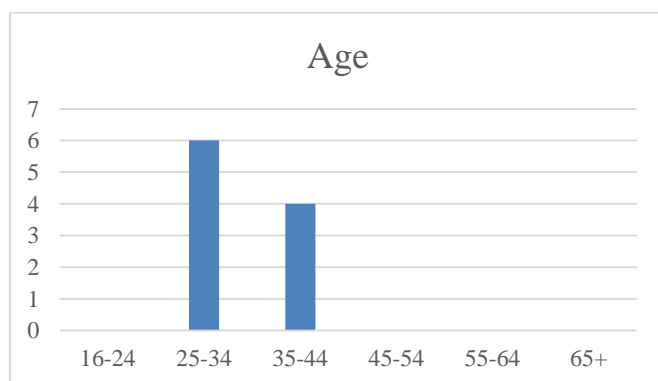
SOUTHAMPTON

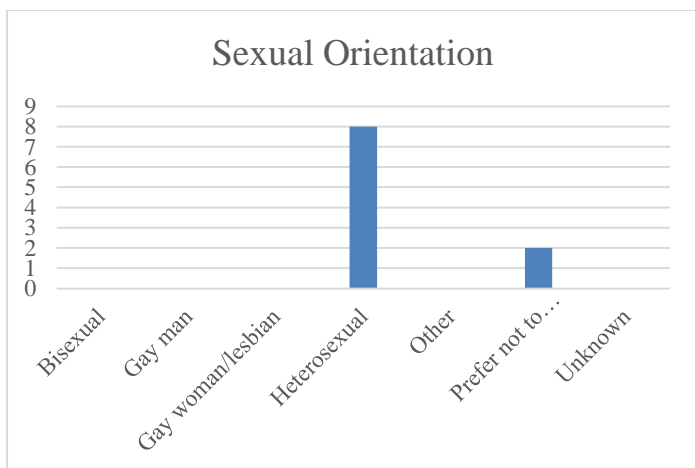
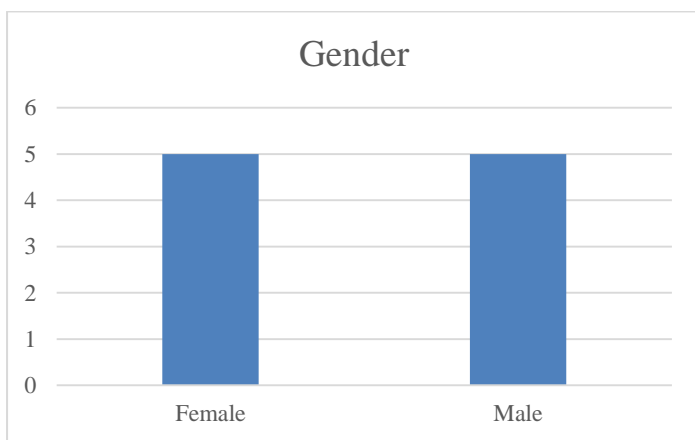
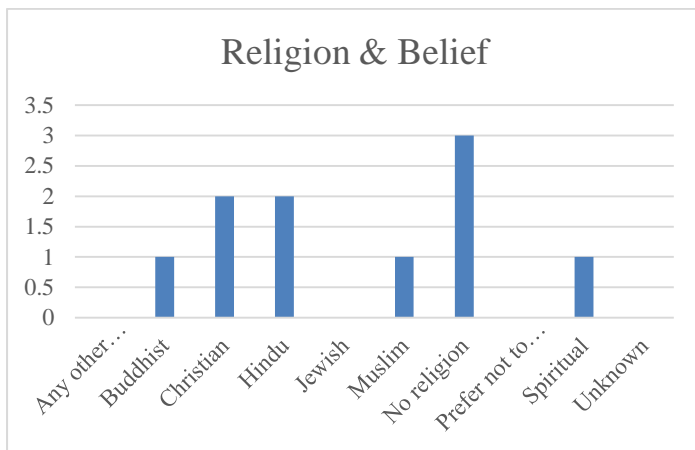
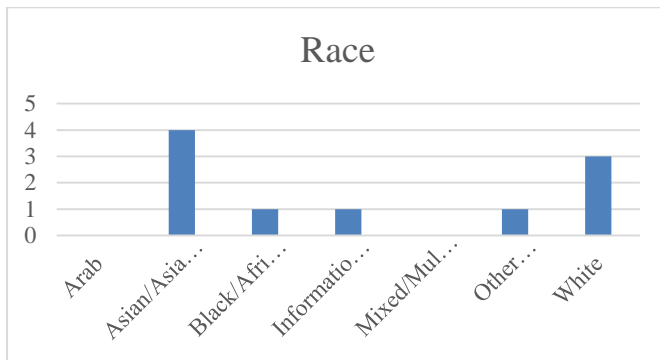




Date of review	Presented to:	Points for discussion	Mitigation / Action
13-May-19	REF Steering Group	A review of the baselines against an initial indicator of SRR (Research Pathway). REFSG noted the distribution pattern in general mirrored the baseline data. A higher proportion of 25-44 year-old staff was identified which reflects the University's emerging research profile. The REFSG noted the slightly improved gender balance than in the general baseline data, but that a discrepancy still exists. The Group noted that the data is also shared with the REF Working Group	The Equality & Wellbeing Committee is reviewing the University's equality strategy especially with regard to gender and race on its agenda for 1 July 2019
11-Sep-19	REF Steering Group	The Group reviewed the EIA of ECR recruitment and noted the age distribution as within the 25-44 age range. The Steering Group noted none of the ECR declared a disability. The Group noted that the data is also shared with the REF Working Group	The Steering Group will regularly review the EIA data for ECR and for the distribution of the University's QR funding.

Early Career Researcher EIA Data (2019/20)





Appendix 6a

Introduction to Academic Career Pathways

SOLENT
UNIVERSITY

East Park Terrace
Southampton
SO14 0YN
UK

Tel: +44 (0)23 8201 3000
www.solent.ac.uk

12 June 2018

Dear Colleague

Academic Career Pathways

As part of our People Experience Strategy, in particular developing people, we are pleased to confirm that the University has been working with UCU and has reached an agreement on Academic Career Pathways. There will be three pathways; Teaching and Scholarship, Research and Knowledge Exchange.

We are delighted that agreement has been reached on this important development for our academic colleagues and the University. Work on Professional Service Career Pathways is also underway and due for implementation later in 2018.

Career Pathways will provide opportunities to recognise and develop the talents, skills and experience of our people which will enable them to fulfil their potential and contribute to delivering our strategy [Building an excellent University](#). Academic Career Pathway replaces any previous progression arrangements including Lecturer to Senior Lecturer Progression, Academic Pathways and Career grade roles and the Conferment of Titles.

Full details of the Academic Career Pathways documentation, including dates of drop in sessions and frequently asked questions can now be found on the Portal under MyDevelopment.


Individual Career Pathway discussions will take place with all academic colleagues as part of the Performance Development Review (PDR) cycle which takes place between May to July of each year.


All academic colleagues will be written to during week commencing 11 June 2018 to confirm which pathway they have been mapped to by their Director of School. There will be an opportunity to apply for one of the other two pathways by demonstrating how they meet the criteria for that pathway, should individuals feel they should have been mapped to a different pathway (at the same grade). Full details will be in the letter.

Career pathways will introduce some new job titles, however there will be no change of job title for existing staff. The initial mapping will also not change grades, with opportunities for progression advertised on e-recruitment for internal applicants only, on an annual basis from Spring 2019.

If you have any queries about Academic Career Pathways, please contact your Head of Subject in the first instance or Jo Francis, Business Partner for Schools in People and Development.

Yours sincerely


Professor Julie Hall
Deputy Vice-Chancellor


Dr Mark Farwell
Chair, UCU

Academic Career Pathways Guidance



Academic Career Pathways
Building an excellent university

Scheme Guidance

This guidance is to be read in conjunction with the following documents found on the Portal:

- Solent Values
- Leadership Behaviours
- Performance and Development Review Scheme (PDR)
- Academic Work Planning (AWP)

People and Development

October 2017, updated May 2018

1. Introduction

- Our Career Pathways are designed to deliver an excellent People Experience by providing opportunities to recognise and develop the talents, skills and experience of our people which will enable them to fulfil their potential and contribute to delivering our strategy [Building an Excellent University](#).
- The pathways are designed to be agile, transparent and provide an indication of the thresholds required. Allowing for people to move both up and/or across pathways and between academic and professional service pathways. This is to reflect the requirement for our people to be flexible with a cross-University focus.
- It is based on a suitable role being identified via People Planning which usually takes place in April/May of each year, as part of the University's planning and budget cycle. Roles will be identified at an annual review by Vice-Chancellor's Group and will be based on strategic priorities and take into account operational requirements and will become available through normal turnover as well as some centrally funded roles. Roles identified via People Planning will be advertised internally only as a progression opportunity in line with the criteria as outlined in the pathways.
- The University offers development opportunities and experiences, which are linked to career pathways and more details can be found on the [My Development](#) pages on the Portal. Solent Learning and Teaching Institute (SLTI) and Research and Innovation Office (RIO) also offer development opportunities which support the academic career pathways link.
- There will be two core areas within the career pathways which will need to be demonstrated by applicants, these are:

a) Solent Values and Leadership Behaviours

Everyone must work to and demonstrate the Solent Values and Solent's leadership behaviours. For full information please refer to the [Values and behaviours descriptors](#) and the [leadership behaviour descriptors](#).

b) Key experiences

The University has identified five key experience areas which are critical to ensuring the University can deliver its strategy, [Building an Excellent University 2015-2020](#). As these experiences apply to the delivery of the University strategy, which is reviewed and updated every five years and is impacted by the external environment, these experiences may change or be added too.

Development activities and initiatives will be provided by People and Development, Solent Learning and Teaching Institute and Research and Innovation Office to support the acquisition of these experiences. You can find details of what is currently available on the Portal at [My Development and the Solent Learning and Teaching pages of the website](#).

The table below at section 2 provides examples of the types of experiences to be obtained under the various headings. These are not exhaustive, may change from time to time and people can discuss this with their manager at their annual PDR and other development discussions such as 1:1's.

- Career Pathway replaces any previous progression arrangements including Lecturer to Senior Lecturer Progression, Academic Pathways and Career grade roles and the Conferment of Titles.
- MyCareer on the Portal enables people to plan and direct their career

2. My Career Pathway Discussions

These discussions will take place between people and their managers, primarily as part of their PDR discussions which are completed between 1 May and 31 July each year. There should be a focus during these discussions on opportunities for development to assist individuals to meet their career aspirations and fulfil their potential.

3. How to apply

All employees who meet the following criteria can apply for advertised opportunities:

- successfully completed probation, essentials training and any associated development activities
- completed their PDR;
- achieved fellowship of the Higher Education Academy or higher and any other qualifications and professional memberships required in their current role

Roles available under career pathways will be advertised via the e-recruitment system and clearly marked as a progression opportunity. Directors of School and Service will short-list applications for referral to a panel. This will usually take place between April and July of each academic year.

If an applicant does not have the required qualification for a role as detailed in the job profile but believe that they have other equivalent qualifications and/or experience they should detail this in their application, fully explaining the rationale for equivalency.

Applicants will also need to demonstrate success in their current role and how they meet the expectations of the role they are applying for as described in the relevant pathway tables and key experiences table. Solent Values can be evidenced in Section A of the PDR.

Applications should include the following documentation:

- i) No more than two-sides of A4 detailing how the requirements of the role are met
- ii) CV or employee profile
- iii) Most recent PDR
- iv) Reference from manager

Applications will be reviewed by a Panel as follows:

- Member of Vice-Chancellor's Group (Chair)
- Director of School/Service
- Senior Manager from School/Service
- Chief People Officer or nominee
- Independent Panel member

The composition of panels will take into account equality and diversity characteristics and professional expertise/specialist knowledge. The independent panel member will normally be drawn from a group of trained employees. In some instances, the independent panel member may be external e.g. for a Professor or for a particularly specialist role. All panel members will have completed their Equality and Diversity training or suitable equivalent and uphold the Solent Values and Leadership Behaviours.

Decisions will be based on the criteria in the relevant pathway, the Solent Values and key experiences and communicated verbally to applicants by their Director or Senior Manager followed by written confirmation. Feedback will be provided to both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Unsuccessful applicants will be given the opportunity to request that the panel reconsider their application if evidence has not been fully considered or new evidence is available. The Panel will reconvene to do this and will invite the individual so they can present their evidence.

An annual report of applications and outcomes will be submitted to Academic Board.

4. Academic Career Pathways

To deliver its ambition to be an Excellent University, Solent needs people with the skills necessary to ensure that it can deliver excellence in teaching and learning, research and the wider student experience. Whilst all academic colleagues are expected to contribute to teaching, research and management, the Academic Career Pathways (ACP) scheme is designed to ensure that academic strengths whether in teaching and learning, research or the wider student experience, leadership or knowledge exchange, are all appropriately recognised, developed, valued, and rewarded.

New academic colleagues, who are in a probationary period, will be supported by their manager. Employees who have successfully completed their probation will be supported via the discussions they have with their managers at their Performance and Development Review (PDR) meetings.

Academic career pathways represent three areas of specialism: Teaching and Scholarship; Research; Knowledge Exchange. The career pathway will impact on the proportions of Teaching, Research, Knowledge Exchange and management an individual undertakes as reflected in Academic Workload Planning. The three academic pathways are shown in the table below:

Grade	Teaching & Scholarship Pathway	Research Pathway	Knowledge Exchange Pathway
10	Professor	Professor	Professor
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Professor • Head of Subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Professor • Head of Subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Professor • Head of Subject
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Lecturer • Course Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Research Fellow • Course Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Lecturer • Course Leader
7	Lecturer	Research Fellow	Lecturer
6	Associate Lecturer/ Teaching Fellow/Academic Apprentice	Postdoctoral Researcher/Academic Apprentice	Associate Lecturer/ Knowledge Exchange Fellow/Academic Apprentice

The criteria detailed in the three pathways at section 3 below represent the normal expectations for appointment. All academic colleagues are expected to engage with the HEA professional standards and belong to the appropriate category of fellowship for their role.

Evidence should be presented in relation to activity in the categories listed (Teaching and Learning; Research; Knowledge Exchange) and normal academic judgment will be exercised in the assessment of the profile presented.

The expectation is that applications for progression must provide evidence of excellence through one of the pathways.

Scholarship is an important component of any academic portfolio for all pathways, with an anticipated trajectory from local, national to international impact.

Everyone is expected to support academic administrative activity as part of their professional contribution and a level of good citizenship is assumed of everyone. It is expected that employees appointed to higher grades will assume greater levels of responsibility and input as they progress.

Appendix 6c

Research Career Pathway Criteria

Research

	Postdoctoral Researcher	Research Fellow	Senior Research Fellow	Associate Professor	Professor
Qualifications	Normally a completed doctorate	Normally a completed doctorate	Normally a completed doctorate	Normally a completed doctorate	Normally a completed doctorate
Outputs	Some published research outputs (including practice-based research outputs) and/or outputs in review, as a sole or a major author, at the forefront of current research, and of rigour, originality and significance at nationally or internationally excellent levels	Some published research outputs (including practice-based research outputs), as a sole and/or a major author, at the forefront of current research, and of rigour, originality and significance at internationally excellent levels	Regular production of research outputs (including practice-based research outputs), as a sole or a major author, at the forefront of current research, and of rigour, originality and significance at internationally excellent or world leading levels	Regular production and a substantial body of published research outputs (including practice-based research outputs), as a sole or a major author, at the forefront of current research, and of rigour, originality and significance at internationally excellent or world leading levels	Regular production and a very substantial body of published research outputs (including practice-based research outputs), as a sole or a major author, at the forefront of current research, and of rigour, originality and significance at internationally excellent or world-leading levels

Grant and funding activity	Participating in the submission of grant and funding applications	Submitting grant and funding applications with some success	Submitting successful grant and funding applications for more substantial grants	Submitting successful grant and funding applications for more substantial grants	Submitting successful grant and funding applications for more substantial grants
Research dissemination	Giving research presentations at conferences or in other appropriate forums	Regularly giving research papers or presenting research at conferences or in other appropriate forums	Regularly giving research papers or presentations at conferences or in other appropriate forums	Regularly giving research presentations at conferences or in other appropriate forums, including invited presentations	Regularly giving research presentations at conferences or in other appropriate forums, including plenary, keynote or other major invited presentations
Doctoral supervision	May have undertaken supervisory training and may be acting as advisor on a supervisory team	Undertaken supervisory training and may be acting as a doctoral supervisor or advisor	Undertaken supervisory training and be acting as a doctoral supervisor	Undertaken supervisory training and supervised doctoral students to successful completion, may have acted as a Director of Studies	Undertaken supervisory training, supervised doctoral students to successful completion, acted as Director of Studies, mentored less experienced supervisors
Impact	Engaging in activity that will demonstrate recognised but modest impact in terms of reach and significance as defined by the REF	Engaging in activity that will demonstrate recognised impact in terms of reach and significance as defined by the REF	Engaging in activity that will demonstrate considerable impact in terms of reach and significance as defined by the REF	Engaging or leading activity that will demonstrate considerable or very considerable impact in terms of reach and significance as defined by the REF	Leading activity that will demonstrate very considerable or outstanding impact in terms of reach and significance as defined by the REF

Research leadership	Engaging in activities to develop research leadership skills	Developing research leadership skills	Providing some aspects of research leadership	Providing research leadership	Providing significant research leadership
External recognition	May have external recognition of research esteem such as receipt of research-based honours or awards	May have external recognition of research esteem such as receipt of research-based honours or awards	Some evidence of external research esteem such as acting as external examiner for a doctorate in another HEI, receipt of research-based honours or awards	Evidence of external research esteem such as acting as external examiner for a doctorate in another HEI, working with a research council or funding body, receipt of research-based honours or awards	Substantial evidence of external research esteem such as acting as external examiner for a doctorate in another HEI, working with a research council or funding body, receipt of research-based honours or awards
External engagement	Some involvement with research-related networks or bodies, attending conferences, workshops etc.	Involvement with research-related bodies such as networks, professional societies or similar bodies, attending conferences, workshops etc.	Involvement with research-related networks, professional societies or similar bodies, attending and/or organising conferences, workshops etc.	Active involvement with research-related networks, professional or learned societies or similar bodies, for example organising conferences or workshops, serving on committees or working groups	Active involvement and leadership roles with research-related networks, professional or learned societies or similar bodies, for example organising conferences or workshops, serving in an executive role on committees or working groups
External contribution	May be making an external contribution to the research community such as by peer	Making an external contribution to the research community such as by peer reviewing of publications	Making an external contribution to the research community such as by peer reviewing of	Making regular external contributions to the research community such as by peer reviewing of publications or grant- awarding	Making substantial external contributions to the research community such as by peer reviewing of publications or grant-awarding bodies, and

	reviewing of publications		publications or grant-awarding bodies	bodies, and serving on editorial or other research advisory groups	serving on editorial or other national or international research advisory groups
Internal contributions	May be contributing to the University's research community and environment, for example by delivering researcher development workshops	Contributing to the University's research community and environment, for example by organising or delivering researcher development workshops and mentoring	Contributing to the vitality and sustainability of the University's research community and environment, for example by organising or delivering researcher development workshops, serving on School research-based committees or working groups, mentoring researchers	Regularly contributing to the vitality and sustainability of the University's research community and environment, for example by providing researcher development workshops or doctoral training sessions, serving on School or University Research-based committees or working groups, mentoring researchers	Making a substantial contribution to the vitality and sustainability of the University's research community and environment through leadership, for example by serving as research centre director, chairing School/University research-based committees or working groups, organising major research events, providing doctoral or employee training workshops, mentoring researchers

Academic Work Planning Document

3. Research and/or innovation and/or enterprise.

Academics will normally be expected to engage in research and/or innovation and/or enterprise. The nature and extent of this will vary with the nature of the subject(s) that s/he teaches and the full range and balance of his/her duties and other commitments. This includes contributions to books, articles and conference papers and is to be construed in the light of the common understanding of the phrase in higher education. There should be some discernible artefact or output from the research/innovation process as agreed through PDR.

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Solent University
Academics' Work planning

The research and innovation areas included within this category are described within the following two sub-sections.

1. Research

A further research allocation of 50-300 hours will be provided to those who are:

- a) pursuing publication of their research outputs in support of potential REF submission
- b) in receipt of external research funding
- c) bidding for externally funded research

This will be monitored and agreed with Research, Innovation and Enterprise.

Research may also include studying for a research degree - subject to satisfactory progress reports. Staff in this category should utilise RSA to support their studies.

2. Innovation

From the perspective of the whole year contribution approach to planning academic work, this area is noteworthy because it details a wide range of important activities that may not have been recognised by previous planning arrangements.

Innovation activities include:

- Consultancy / advisory work
- Commercialisation including technology transfer
- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs)
- Outreach, where not teaching or research
- Bidding for this type of activity

This will be monitored and agreed with Research and Innovation Office.

Solent University
Academics' Work planning

Appendix 5: Example academic work plans

The following provides examples of the work balance across the different categories of activities and their respective affordability. They are presented as just that, examples rather than specific targets to aim for. Examples that demonstrate the wide range of balances of contributions that academic staff can have.

Note that these examples are based on the plan as it would be at the start of the academic year and therefore provide for "headroom" of up to 10% of the whole year contribution.

The "typical academic" is one where their work fits the 2/3rd to 1/3rd balance of contributions, based on 450 formal scheduled teaching hours. This is a cost-effective balance which recognises the full contribution of the academic across all aspects of the role by providing a cross-subsidy from teaching for research and/or innovation and/or enterprise. This is justifiable in a University which wishes to promote research-informed teaching.

The example "Research-focused Lecturer" is unaffordable unless they have an appropriate level of external research funding to cover the shortfall on the baseline.

Example UG lecturer with significant responsibility for research / significant research focus

Activity	Hours allocation	Total hours
Teaching	13 hours a week for 25 weeks	325*
Teaching related prep/assessment	1:1	325
Induction/exam board prep/assessment weeks	10 hours a week for 6 weeks	60
RSA		185
REF research		300
Unit leader	2 units @10 hours a unit	20
Level leader		100
CPD		20
TOTAL		1335

Appendix 8

Research England's REF2021 Guidance on Submissions: Summary of Applicable Circumstances

Summary of applicable circumstances

160. The funding bodies, advised by 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:

- a. Qualifying as an ECR (on the basis set out in paragraphs 148 and 149 and Annex L).

- b. Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks outside the HE sector.
- c. Qualifying periods of family-related leave.
- d. Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1–6, as defined in paragraphs 162 to 163.
- e. Circumstances with an equivalent effect to absence, that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Disability: this is defined in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1 under 'Disability'.
 - ii. Ill health, injury, or mental health conditions.
 - iii. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances set out in Annex L.
 - iv. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - v. Gender reassignment.
 - vi. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in the 'Guidance on codes of practice', Table 1, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

161. 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.

Appendix 9

Research England's REF2021 Panel Criteria & Working Methods: Cross-referral of parts of submissions

Cross-referral of parts of submissions

399. The sub-panels' preferred approach is to assess work within the sub-panel to which it was submitted and, informed by the survey of submission intentions, to appoint further members and assessors where required to enable this. In cases where, in the sub-panel's opinion, the sub-panel and its appointed assessors do not have the required expertise to assess specific parts of submissions, those parts of submissions may be cross-referred to other sub-panels for advice.

400. The submitting HEI may request that specific parts of submissions should be cross-referred to another sub-panel for advice. The sub-panels will consider such requests and decide upon the most appropriate means of assessing the material in question:

- a. Where the sub-panel considers there is sufficient expertise within the sub-panel to reach a robust judgement, the work will be assessed within the sub-panel. The sub-panels expect that this will normally be the case, except where the UOA descriptors indicate specific arrangements for cross-referral.
- b. In those instances where the sub-panel does not consider it contains the appropriate expertise, it may cross-refer the work to an appropriate sub-panel for advice (whether within or outside the same main panel). The REF director will work with the main panels to ensure consistency of approach in cross-referring work across the sub-panels.

401. In addition to considering requests made by institutions, sub-panels may identify specific parts of submissions that it considers should be cross-referred to another sub-panel, and request that such work should be cross-referred.

402. The sub-panels' approach to cross-referral will be discussed within the main panels, to ensure an appropriate consistency of approach.

403. Entire submissions may not be cross-referred. Specific outputs may be cross-referred. The original sub-panel will specify the scope of advice that it is seeking. This will be limited to advice relating to the quality of outputs. It may not include advice on other matters such as the contribution of a co-author or double-weighting of outputs. In exceptional cases, sub-panels may cross-refer impact case studies for advice (including advice related to the quality threshold for the underpinning research).

404. Where parts of submissions are cross-referred, advice will be sought and given on the basis of any specific assessment criteria and procedures (including, for example, use or not of citation data) for the UOA in which the work was originally submitted; cross-referred parts of submissions will be assessed on the same basis as work which is not cross-referred. The original sub-panel will retain responsibility for recommending the quality profile for all work that was submitted in its UOA.

Appendix 10

Research England's REF2021 Guidance on Submissions: Requesting an exception from submission for small units

Requesting an exception from submission for small units

68. Institutions will normally submit all eligible staff they employ with significant responsibility for research, organised into submitting units as appropriate to the research structures within that institution. They may exceptionally, and only with prior permission from the REF director, request an exception from submission for very small units.

69. Requests can be made for an exception from submission where the combined FTE of staff employed with significant responsibility for research in the unit is lower than five 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.

70. The submitting institution will need to set out the case for an exception from submission for the unit, which would normally fall under one of the following circumstances:

- a. The research is in the scope of a UOA in which the institution has not previously submitted, and has not been an area of investment and growth for the institution.
- b. Where a previous REF submission has been made to this UOA, there has since been a change in the staff profile in the research area in the institution.

71. The REF director will decide on all such requests in consultation with chairs of the relevant main and sub-panels. We will invite institutions to make any requests for submission exceptions in early 2019. There will be three staggered deadlines for requests in May, September and December 2019. If an HEI wishes to request an exception for more than one unit, a separate application will be required for each request.

Appendix 11

REF 2021 Appeals Form Template

Appeals should be submitted to ref@solent.ac.uk and addressed to the REF Appeals panel.

1. Individual details

Name	
Role	
School/Service	
Date	

2. Grounds for appeal

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

The criteria for selection of academic staff with significant responsibility for research or for independent research were not applied in accordance with the University's REF Code of Practice in respect of my eligibility for inclusion in the University's REF submission.	
There was a material error in the data used by the REF Working Group to in applying the criteria to determine my eligibility for inclusion in the University's REF submission.	

3. Detail of grounds for appeal

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

Appendix 12

Research England's REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions: Annex C - Definition of Research for the REF

Definition of research for the REF

1. For the purposes of the REF, research is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.
2. It **includes** work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, culture, society and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship⁴; 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 embody original research.
3. It **includes** research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports.⁵

Definition of impact for the REF

4. For the purposes of the REF, impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.
5. Impact **includes**, but is not limited to, an effect on, change or benefit to:
 - the activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
 - of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals
 - in any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.
6. Impact **includes** the reduction or prevention of harm, risk, cost or other negative effects.

⁴ Scholarship for the REF is defined as the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines, in forms such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues and contributions to major research databases.

⁵ Confidential reports include any item produced for and lodged, in the publication period, with a company, government body or other research sponsor(s), but which has not been published because of its commercial or other sensitivity. A confidential report may only be submitted if the HEI has prior permission from the sponsoring organisation that the output may be made available for assessment. HEIs will confirm permission has been secured when they make submissions. If the REF team requests a confidential report for assessment, the HEI must make it available (REF2021 Guidance on Submission, 261)

7. For the purposes of the impact element of the REF:
 - a. Impacts on research or the advancement of academic knowledge within the HE sector (whether in the UK or internationally) are **excluded**. (The submitted unit's contribution to academic research and knowledge is assessed within the 'outputs' and 'environment' elements of the REF.)
 - b. Impacts on students, teaching or other activities both within and beyond the submitting HEI are **included** (see the Panel criteria', paragraphs 301 to 302).

Appendix 13

Research England’s REF2021 Guidance on Submissions: Annex L - Reductions for Staff Circumstances

Annex L: Reductions for staff circumstances

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

Early career researchers

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

Table L1: Early career researchers: Permitted reduction in outputs

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

Absence from work due to secondments or career breaks

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

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

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

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

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

Qualifying periods of family-related leave

6. The total output pool may be reduced by 0.5 for each discrete period of:

- a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2014 to 31 July 2020, regardless of the length of the leave.
- b. Additional paternity or adoption leave²², or shared parental leave²³ 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 circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.

22. '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'.

23. '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.

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.

Appendix 14

Research England's REF 2021 Individual Circumstances Information and Request Form

Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances

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 Solent'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 following circumstances, you are requested to complete the below form. Further information can be found paragraph 160 of the Guidance on Submissions (REF 2019/01).

Completion and return of the form is voluntary, and individuals who do not choose to return it will not be put under any pressure to declare information if they do not wish to do so. This form is the only means by which the University will be gathering this information; we will

not be consulting HR records, contract start dates, etc. You should therefore complete and return the form if any of the above circumstances apply and you are willing to provide the associated information.

Ensuring Confidentiality

Please refer to the Solent University Code of Practice for REF 2021, page 18.

If Solent decides to apply to the funding bodies for either form of reduction of outputs (removal of 'minimum of one' requirement or unit circumstances), we will need to provide UKRI with data that you have disclosed about your individual circumstances, to show that the criteria have been met for reducing the number of outputs. Please see the '[Guidance on submissions](#)' document (paragraphs 151-201) for more detail about reductions in outputs and what information needs to be submitted.

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

Changes in circumstances

Solent 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 P&D partner to provide the updated information.

Declaration of Individual Staff Circumstances Form

To submit this form you should forward this request to Catherine.Lee@solent.ac.uk (Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise).

Name: Click here to insert text.

Department: Click here to insert text.

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

Yes

No

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

Circumstance	Time period affected
<p>Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2016).</p> <p><i>Date you became an early career researcher.</i></p>	Click here to enter a date.
<p>Junior clinical academic who has not gained Certificate of completion of Training by 31 July 2020.</p>	Tick here <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Career break or secondment outside of the HE sector.</p> <p><i>Dates and durations in months.</i></p>	Click here to enter dates and durations.
<p>Family-related leave;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statutory maternity leave • statutory adoption leave • Additional paternity or adoption leave or shared parental leave lasting for four months or more. <p><i>For each period of leave, state the nature of the leave taken and the dates and durations in months.</i></p>	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</i></p>	Click here to enter text.

<i>at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	
Mental health condition <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>	Click here to enter text.
Ill health or injury <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>	Click here to enter text.
Constraints relating to family leave that fall outside of standard allowance <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>	Click here to enter text.
Caring responsibilities <i>To include: Nature of responsibility, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	Click here to enter text.
Gender reassignment <i>To include: periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	Click here to enter text.
Any other exceptional reasons e.g. bereavement. <i>To include: brief explanation of reason, periods of absence from work, and periods at work when unable to research productively. Total duration in months.</i>	Click here to enter text.

Please confirm, by ticking the box provided, that:

- The above information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances as of the date below

- I realise that the above information will be used for REF purposes only and will be seen by the Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise, and a Senior member of P&D.
- I realise it may be necessary to share the information with the REF team, the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, and main panel chairs.

I agree

Name: Print name here

Signed: Sign or initial here

Date: Insert date here

I give my permission for P&D to contact me to discuss my circumstances, and my requirements in relation this these.

I give my permission for the details of this form to be passed on to the relevant contact within my school. (Please note, if you do not give permission your school 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

Letter from the Vice-Chancellor

SOLENT
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SOUTHAMPTON

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10th September 2019

Dear Dr Hill

In reference to your letter of 16 August, I can confirm that Solent University has obtained agreement from staff representative groups for the processes established to identify staff with significant responsibility for research.

The University presented its draft Code of Practice to staff representative groups as follows:

1. UCU and Unison

20 February 2019: advance notice was given to the UCU Regional Support Official (Regional Office South), the Unison Regional Organiser (Thames Valley, Hampshire & Isle of Wight), the UCU Solent University Branch Chair and the Unison Solent University On-site Representative of the all staff consultation period (21 February - 29 March) for responses to the process outlined in the draft Code. A copy of the Code was circulated with this notice. Union representatives were asked to review the process and forward all union feedback to the University's dedicated REF email address (ref@solent.ac.uk).

14 March 2019: the Code of Practice was discussed at a Solent University Joint Staffing Group meeting attended by the UCU Branch Chair and the Unison On-site Representative and the Head of People and Development. It was agreed that the Union would review the process and indicate any concerns regarding the process for 'significant responsibility for research' to the dedicated Solent REF email address.

No concerns or requests for amendment were received from either Union. The University has accepted this as agreement with the process as outlined by the Code of Practice.

2. Solent University Equality & Wellbeing Committee

The Equality & Wellbeing Committee is chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor and its membership is comprised of nominated representatives of all the University's Academic Schools and Professional Services.

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UNIVERSITY

SOUTHAMPTON

19 February 2019: advance notice was given to all members of the Equality & Wellbeing Committee of the all staff consultation period (21 February - 29 March 2019) for responses to the process outlined in the draft Code. A copy of the Code was circulated with this notice. The committee members were asked to review the process and forward all feedback to the University's dedicated REF email address.

8 April 2019: The Equality & Wellbeing Committee meeting were invited to indicate any concerns regarding the process to the dedicated Solent REF email address.

No concerns or requests for amendment were received from the Committee. The University has accepted this as agreement with the process as outlined by the Code of Practice.

Details of the above communication with both these staff representative groups were retained and are available for audit.

Yours sincerely



Professor Graham Baldwin
Vice-Chancellor