

How do you solve a problem like: Ethics for APPs

Robyn Long
Head of APP Research & Evaluation

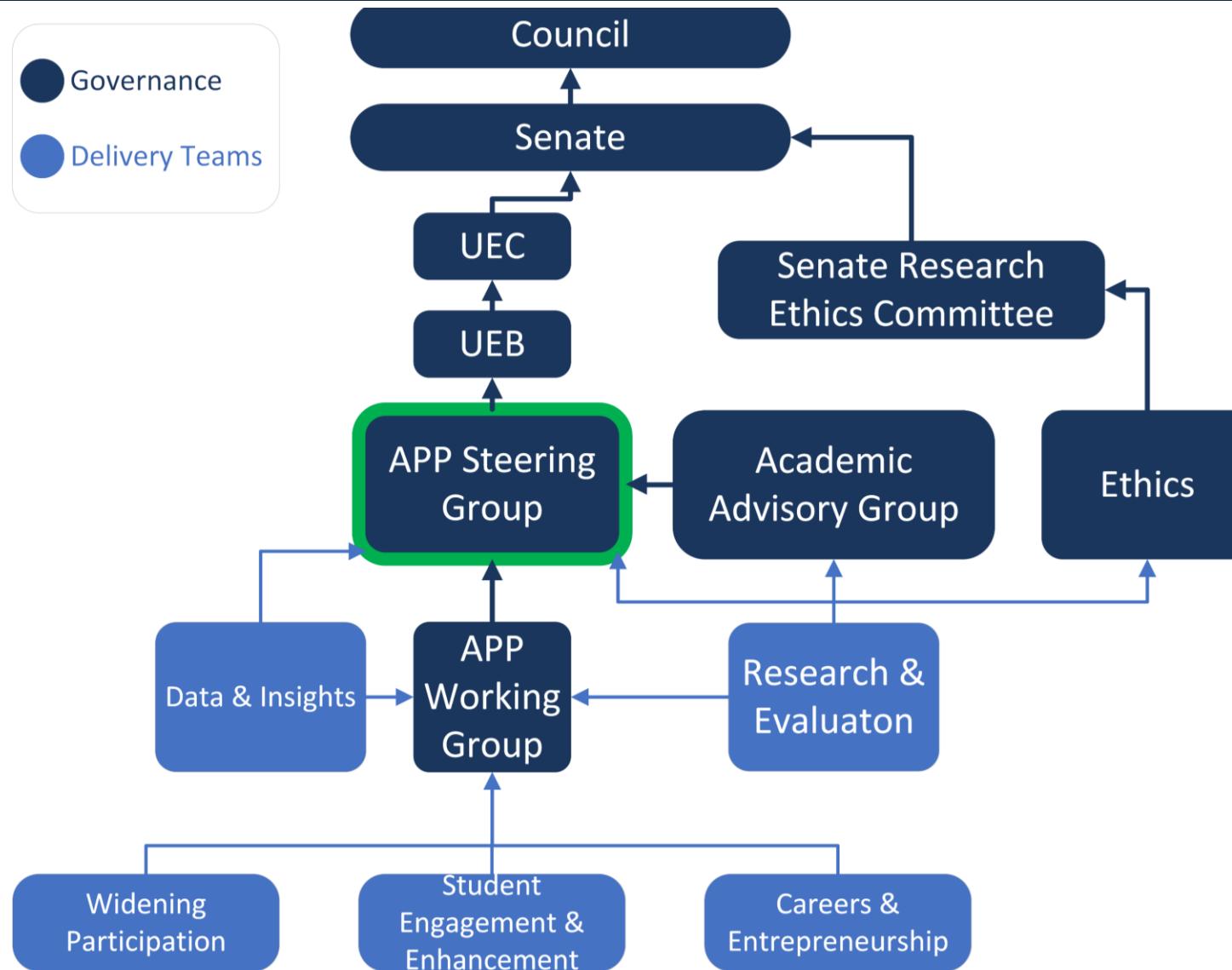
OfS Expectations

Dimension 4: Evaluation implementation			Does it exist?		How is it demonstrated?
			Response (choose from list)		
Data collection	Expected	Have you identified how you will access the data required to measure outcomes and impacts?	Yes		You can point to reliable and robust data sources used to collect data on the outcomes (changes) you are making and the impact (the difference this makes for higher education access and participation). This could include the application of qualitative or quantitative research methods to collect new data or the use of existing data sources where relevant (e.g. higher education progression data). Examples could include having a schedule in your evaluation frameworks which sets out when and how data will be collected.
	Commended	<i>Do you work in partnership with other stakeholders (e.g. schools, data providers) to maximise evaluation data and results?</i>	Emerging or in development		<i>Examples could include data sharing protocols being put in place.</i>
	Expected	Does your approach to data comply with the requirements on data collection and data sharing?	Yes		For example, an audit of existing administrative and naturally occurring data used and assessment of compliance against current data protection legislation requirements and good practice.
	Expected	Are procedures in place for addressing ethical considerations?	Yes		Use of an agreed research protocol. Approval through your institution's ethical approval process.
	Commended	<i>Do your participant data collection arrangements allow for measurement of individualised change (as well as cohort or subgroup analyses)?</i>	Emerging or in development		<i>Systems for holding and analysing data at an individual participant level capable of capturing changes in the outcomes of individuals.</i>
	Commended	<i>Have you established a methodology to track the outcomes of your participants over time?</i>	Yes		<i>Examples could include use of follow-up of participants, tracking using partner data (where available) or linking to administrative data sources.</i>
	Commended	<i>Do you obtain data using validated or sector-standard tools and techniques?</i>	Emerging or in development		<i>You can demonstrate a critical understanding of the limitations of self-report data, especially from questionnaires (e.g. cognitive biases), and are putting in place measures to overcome these such as piloting and cognitive testing of survey instruments, pre-validation tools, systematic administrative data sources.</i>

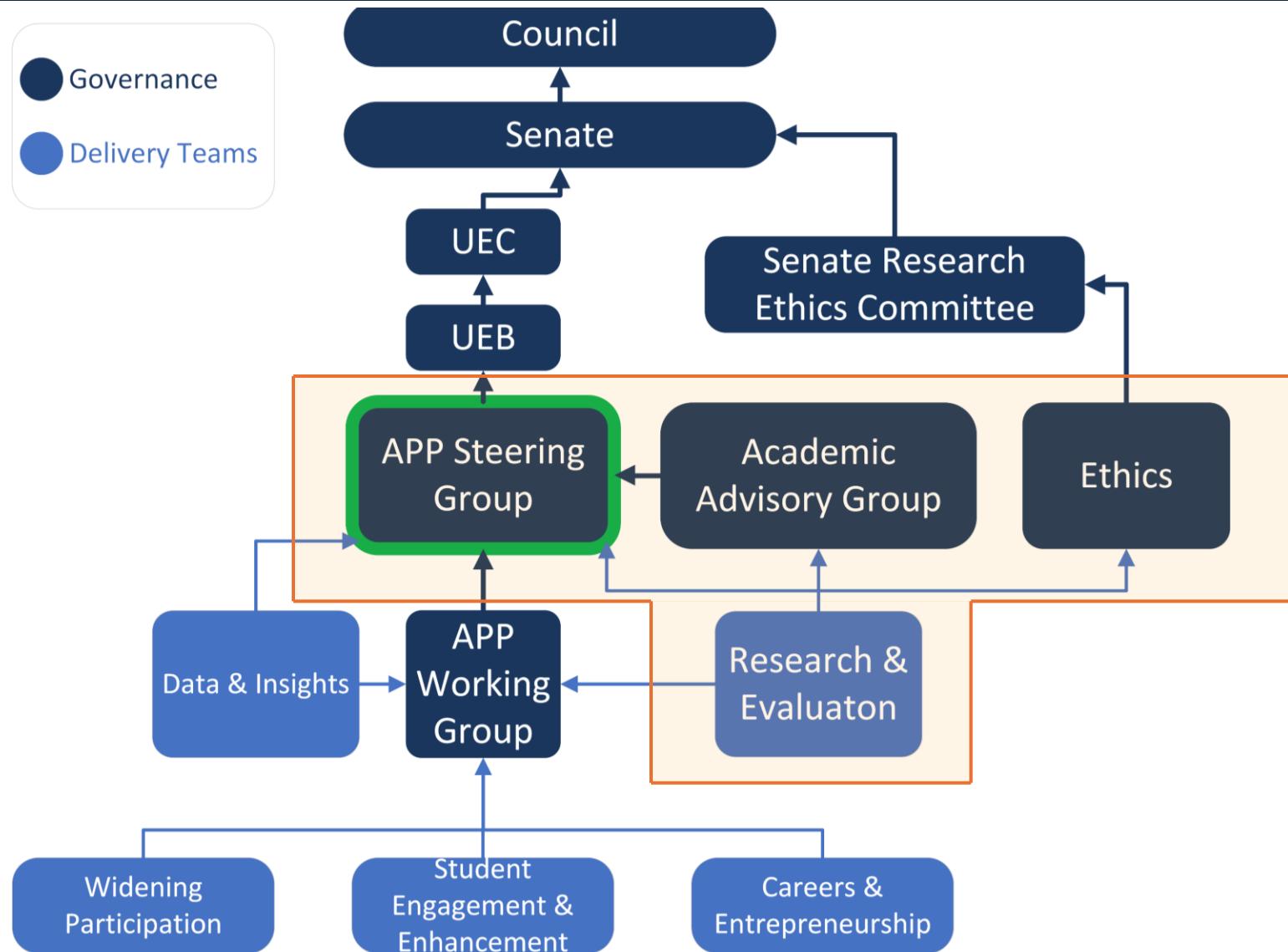
Evaluation across the lifecycle



APP Governance



APP Governance



Understanding the challenges (22/23)

- Lack of understanding of OfS expectations
- Evaluation seen as service audit
- Evaluation not seen as research,
despite requirement to publish
- Resourcing for evaluation was a live debate...



Sussex Ethics Requirements

- Evaluation design and methods
- Sampling and recruitment strategies
- Data collection plan
- Anonymisation / pseudonymisation strategy
- Data storage and management plan
- Data analysis plan
- Records management plan
- Copies of consent forms, information sheets
- Survey and interview (etc) questions

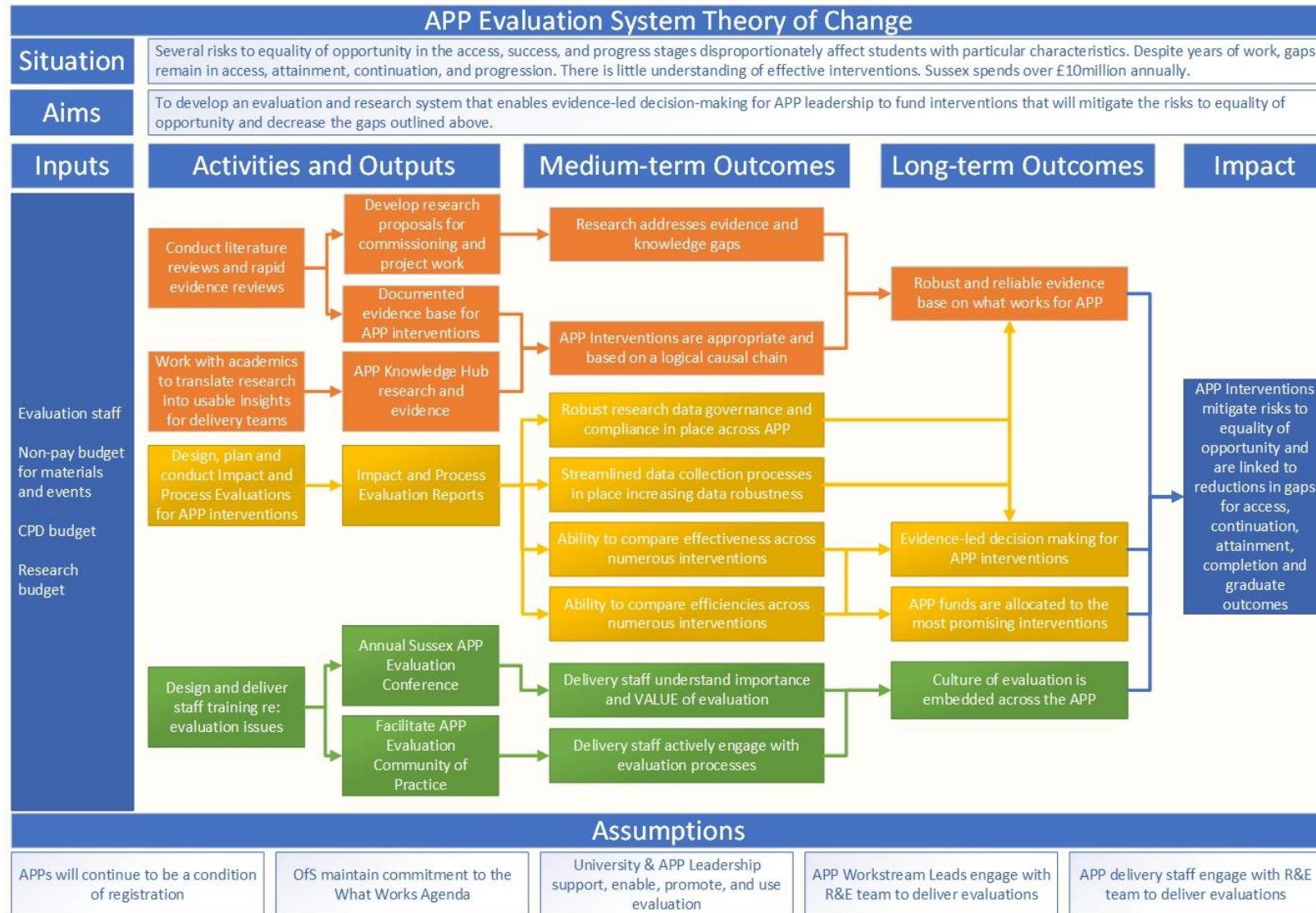


Setting off (22/23)

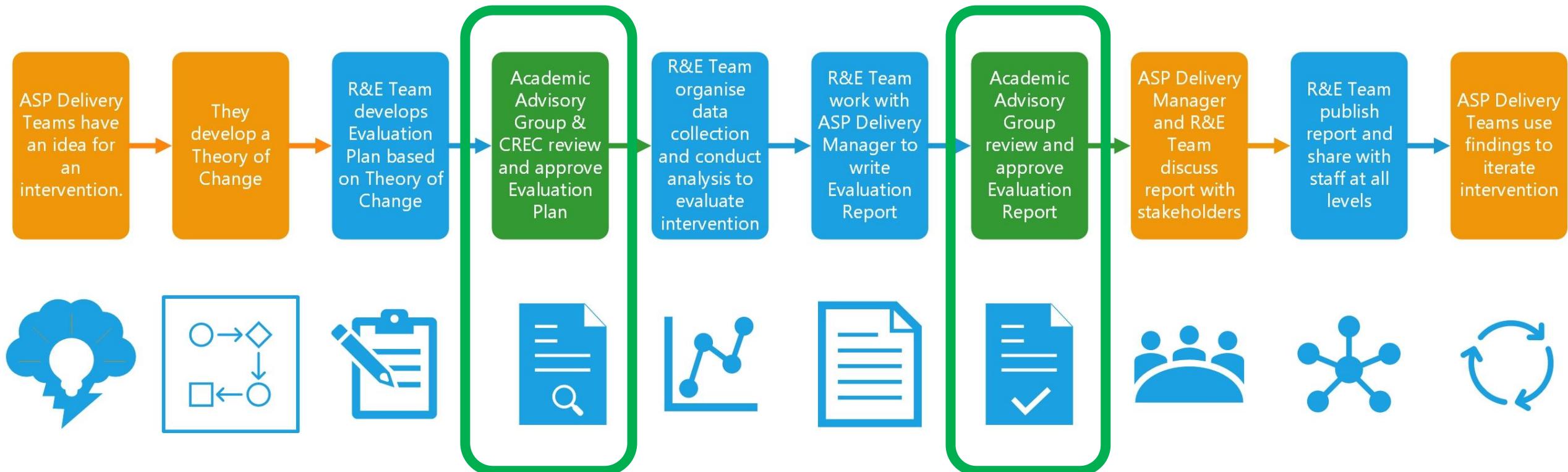
- Different roles across APP
- JD review
- Legacy ethics approaches
- R&E ToC
- Operating model
- RACI



R&E ToC



R&E TOM



RACI Matrix

Responsible

This team member does the work to complete the task. Every task needs at least one Responsible party, but there may be more.

Accountable

This person delegates work and is the last one to review the task or deliverable before it's deemed complete.

Consulted

Consulted parties are typically the people who provide input based on either how it will impact their future project work or their domain of expertise on the deliverable itself.

Informed

These people simply need to be kept in the loop on project progress, rather than engaged with the details of every deliverable.

X1
MAX

R&E RACI (D4)

Project task or deliverable	Head of R&E	R&E Managers (G7)	Intervention Managers (G7)	Intervention Owners / Deputy Heads (G8)	ASP Leads (G9)	APP Working Group	APP Steering Group	Academic Advisory Group	Head of Data	APP UPE	APP SRO	Dir. SX	Dir. UOSP
EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION													
Identify how you will access the data needed to measure outcomes and impacts	A	R	R	C		I		C	C				
Ensure the use of reliable and robust data sources used to collect data on the outcomes and impact, including use of existing data sets and the appropriate methods for collection of new or missing data	A	R	C	C		I		C	C				
Establish a schedule within the evaluation plan to specify what, when, and how data will be collected and who will be responsible for this	A	R	R	C	I	I		C	C				
Establish an audit of existing administrative and naturally occurring data used, and assess compliance against current data protection legislation requirements, any data sharing agreements, and good practice	A	R		R	I	I			C				
Ensure appropriate ethical approval is in place for interventions	A	R	R	R	I	I	I	C					
Use agreed research protocols	A	R	R	R	I	I	I	C					
Establish evaluation workplan and specify resources required (including people, skills, specialist knowledge, data collection and analysis tools, subscriptions)	A	R	C	C		I	I		C	C	C	C	C
Ensure the use of reliable and robust data sources used to collect data on the outcomes and impact, including use of existing data sets and the appropriate methods for collection of new or missing data	A	R	R	R	I	I	I	C	C				

Moving on (23/24)

- APP leadership onboard, but Ethics Committee still a challenge...
- Technical systems issues
- Programmes of activity, not standalone research projects



Working together (23/24)

- Workshop between R&E, PS ethics team and Chair of ethics committee
- Mapping workflows ***by role***
- Deep dive on ethical issues
- Ethics Protocols approach agreed



Reaching the summit (24/25)

- 15 Protocols developed, including:
 - Interviews (pre & post 16)
 - Focus groups (pre & post 16)
 - Dosage response
 - Pre/Post surveys
 - Propensity score matching
 - Difference in difference



Examples of protocols

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Evaluation Ethics Protocol Propensity Score Matching (PSM)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION

Protocol code: R&E-PSM-01
Method: Propensity Score Matching (PSM)

DOCUMENT CHANGES

Date	Version	Changes	By	Status
15/04/2024	0	First Draft	MR	Draft
26/04/2024	1	Final version for C-REC	MR	Submitted to C-REC
04/11/2024	2	Revisions made in response to comments from C-REC	MR	Submitted to C-REC

REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

Date	Version	By	Status
11/06/2024	1	Cross-School Research Ethics Committee C-REC	Reviewed – changes requested
07/11/2024	2	Cross-School Research Ethics Committee C-REC	Approved

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Evaluation Ethics Protocol Interviews with Children Under 16

INFORMATION

Protocol code: R&E-INT-Pre-16-02
Method: Interview

DOCUMENT CHANGES

Date	Version	Changes	By	Status
	0	First draft	JD	Draft
14/01/25	1	Final version for C-REC	JD	Submitted to C-REC
25/01/25	2	Minor Correction as requested by C-REC	JD	Approved

REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

Date	Version	By	Status
20/02/25	1	Cross-School Research Ethics Committee C-REC	Approved