

## The University of Lincoln

### Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff

February 2014

This is the final version of the REF2014 *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*, produced in accordance with the requirements set out in Part 4 of the REF2014 *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* (July 2011). It was originally submitted to the REF Team in July 2012 for examination by the REF's *Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel* (EDAP). During the ensuing period it has been updated, where necessary, in preparation for final submission in 2014 and publication in 2015 at the end of the REF's assessment process.

Following its first publication, any important changes to the *Code of Practice* were notified to all staff, as necessary. These and other changes are listed in Appendix H of this document. The original front page of the *Code of Practice* has been retained as part of this document.

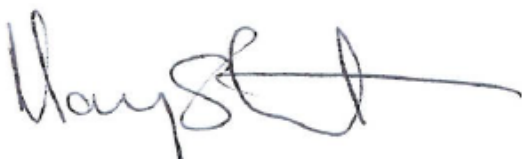
A copy of this *Code of Practice*, as submitted to the REF, has been published on the University's public website.

The *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff* has been approved by the *Research, Innovation and Enterprise Committee*.

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Lincoln hereby confirms the University's adherence to this *Code of Practice*:

Signed

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2014



Professor Mary Stuart

Vice Chancellor

## The University of Lincoln

### Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff

June 2012

This document has been produced in accordance with the requirements set out in Part 4 of the REF2014 *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* (July 2011). It will be submitted to the REF Team by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012 and will be examined by the REF's *Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel* (EDAP) and published, with the submissions, at the end of the REF's assessment process in 2015.

A copy of this *Code of Practice*, as submitted to the REF, will be published on the University's public website.

All names mentioned in this *Code of Practice*, as required by the REF guidance, are correct as of June 2012. These names, and any other information within this *Code of Practice*, may be updated, as necessary, during the remaining REF period and published accordingly.

This *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff* has been approved by the *Research, Innovation and Enterprise Committee*.

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Lincoln hereby confirms the University's adherence to this *Code of Practice*:

Signed

Date 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012



Professor Mary Stuart  
Vice Chancellor

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## 1. Introduction

This is the University of Lincoln's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff* for submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014. Under REF2014, this *Code of Practice* is mandatory and must be submitted to the REF for approval no later than 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012. Within the institution, the *Code of Practice* has been approved by the *Research, Innovation and Enterprise Committee*.

It is the responsibility of the University to ensure:

- i. that decisions on who will be submitted to REF2014 adhere to all current equality and diversity legislation and to the guidance given in REF2014 documentation;
- ii. that all processes to achieve this are demonstrably fair and transparent;
- iii. that everyone involved with the University's REF2014 submissions understands the University's criteria and procedures for the selection process.

### 1.1 Who is the *Code of Practice* for?

The *Code of Practice* applies to all Units of Assessments (UOAs) and individuals, whether as information for all those who might be submitted to the REF or as guidance for those involved in the support and decision-making processes of REF2014. Underlying it is a fundamental commitment to the research careers of staff.

### 1.2 What is the *Code of Practice*?

The REF encourages HEIs to "submit the excellent research of all their eligible staff". In order to do this, it is the University's responsibility to establish robust procedures within its *Code of Practice* so that all those involved with REF2014:

- i. understand and meet their responsibilities to promote equality and diversity;
- ii. adopt and put into practice effective processes and criteria designed to demonstrate fairness and meet the core principles of the REF, those of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity;
- iii. help to create an environment where people feel they are respected and valued;
- iv. draw on the talents, skills, experience, networks and different cultural perspectives of the diverse University community;
- v. communicate all relevant information and the results of any decisions made within appropriate timescales and in accessible formats;
- vi. contribute to an overall quality profile consistent with our vision of a University of quality and distinction.

For staff who have the potential to be submitted, the *Code of Practice* should allow the understanding of:

- i. the procedures that will be used for the selection of staff for submission and the people involved in data collection, assessment and decision-making;
- ii. the quality criteria that will be followed in order to make these decisions;
- iii. the appeals process;
- iv. how all relevant REF information and decisions will be communicated to them.

Many of these themes are expanded upon later in this document.

## 2. RAE2008 to Present Day University Learning and Equality Progress

In RAE2008, the University submitted 35% of its staff across fourteen UOAs. Ten out of the fourteen submissions had elements of world-leading research (4\*) and the vast majority had 50% or more outputs classified as internationally rated (2\*-4\*) in the overall research profile.

Following the successful outcomes of RAE2008, the University developed an RAE investment strategy for the future, which has been aligned with the implementation of the University Research Strategy, to prepare for the REF2014, which has replaced the RAE.

### 2.1 RAE2008 Equality Impact Monitoring and Assessment

As part of the University's equality impact monitoring and assessment activities, a post RAE2008 submission analysis was undertaken. This evidenced that:

- A higher percentage of male staff (39.7%) featured in the return compared to female staff (29.7%). The higher representation of males mirrors the findings of a national overview undertaken by HEFCE whereby 67 % of men were selected compared to 48% of women.<sup>1</sup>
- 'White British' were the underrepresented ethnic group within the return which is a complete reverse of the national picture.
- The numbers of staff declaring a disability were so small that no statistically meaningful conclusions could be drawn from the data.

In direct response to these findings the [Women into Research](#) network was established. The network has, since 2008, provided a peer support network, a programme of guest research speakers and development opportunities for female staff within the University, in an attempt to support and increase female representation within the University's research agenda.

The University has also worked to improve its disability disclosure rate amongst staff. The academic community disability disclosure has increased from 4.72% in 2008-9 to 5.43% in 2010-11.

## 3. Guiding Principles of the *Code of Practice*

Equality has been strengthened as a principle within REF2014 and, as such, the UOA panels will be guided by the national [REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel \(EDAP\)](#).

The REF2014 guidance on selection of staff has been informed by issues that arose from RAE2008, namely those of confidentiality; poor dissemination of the *Code of Practice*; inconsistent equality and diversity training and varied interpretations of the *Code of Practice* across UOAs within universities. This *Code of Practice* complies with the requirements of the UK HE funding bodies and the REF2014 Team, as set out in the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* (July 2011) document. The following principals have been established:

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<sup>1</sup> Selection of staff for inclusion in RAE2008, HEFCE 2009/34, pg. 25.  
[http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09\\_34/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_34/)

- i. Staff will be selected for submission to REF2014 in a demonstrably 'fair and transparent' way, adhering to all current legislation and the University's policies on equality and diversity, so that equality is embedded into all aspects of the REF within the University.
- ii. The University will submit all eligible staff who meet the research quality criteria and strategic research aims established by the University, with due regard to any circumstances that may have constrained their ability to meet the maximum number of outputs required by the REF.
- iii. Assessment and selection of staff for submission will be consistent across all Units of Assessment (UOAs).
- iv. Staff will be informed about all developments regarding the REF with particular emphasis on providing feedback on their involvement in the REF, using appropriate and comprehensive communication methods.
- v. Due regard will be given to the confidential nature of the data collected.
- vi. The University will conduct an equality impact assessment (EIA) on the University's policy and procedures for selecting staff (see the timetable in *Appendix C*, below) in order to minimise the risk of an adverse impact regarding all the protected characteristics (see section 4.1 for an explanation);
- vii. The University will ensure that all staff understand the responsibilities of those involved in the selection process.
- viii. The University will ensure that all those involved in the selection process have undertaken appropriate equality and diversity training (see Section 10 *Training in Equality and Diversity*, below).

## 4. Legislation

### 4.1 The Equality Act (2010)

Since the RAE2008, equalities legislation has been simplified by the introduction of the *Equality Act (2010)*. Within this legislation, the following are known as protected characteristics and therefore are protected from unlawful discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage/Civil Partnership
- Race (including nationality, national or ethnic origin, and colour)
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Religion/belief (or lack of)

**Appendix A** provides an explanation of how each of the above is relevant to this exercise.

The *Equality Act* imposes a general duty on HEIs to:

- i. eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the *Act*;
- ii. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic;

- iii. foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic .

#### 4.2 Law relating to mode and terms of employment

At all stages of the planning and implementation of the REF, HEIs must meet these legal requirements:

- i. under the *Fixed-term Employees Regulations (2002)*, a fixed-term employee has the right not to be treated by the employer less favourably than the employer treats a permanent employee. In addition, a part-time worker has the right not to be treated less favourably than a comparable full-time worker;
- ii. there are equalities considerations to mode and terms of employment. For example, a recent report shows that while on average<sup>2</sup> 35.3 per cent of academic staff are on fixed-term contracts, 70.9 per cent of academic staff aged 26 to 30 and 65.5 per cent of academic staff aged 66 and over are on fixed-term contracts. Part-time academic staff are more likely to be female than male, according to the report. One reason for this is that, due to childcare commitments, women are more likely than men to reduce their contractual hours after having children.

#### 4.3 Equality and REF2014

It is important that those involved in the support and decision-making process for REF2014 are aware of the impact of the individual circumstances of a researcher that may have significantly constrained their ability to produce outputs during the REF publication period. This links clearly to several key principles of Vitae's *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*<sup>3</sup>, namely:

- i. researchers are [recognised and valued](#) by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation's human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research;
- ii. researchers are [equipped and supported](#) to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment;
- iii. [diversity and equality](#) must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

### 5. Dissemination of the *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*

#### 5.1 Who will receive the *Code of Practice*?

This *Code of Practice* will be given to all members of staff who hold an academic contract with the University of Lincoln, regardless of its type, whether they are full-time or part-time, fixed term or permanent and regardless of how their salary is paid. The *Code of Practice* will also be given to any staff who meet the REF's definition of Category C staff, as stated in paragraphs 82-83 in the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document.

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<sup>2</sup> Equality Challenge Unit's 'Equality in higher education: Statistical report 2010'

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/505451/Key-principles-of-the-Concordat.html>

## **5.2 How will the *Code of Practice* be disseminated?**

This *Code of Practice* will be made available in a range of formats via email, the University intranet (University portal pages), Daily Alerts, the REF2014 and Research blogs and any other media deemed appropriate, in order to reach all members of staff referred to above and all opportunities to mention the *Code of Practice* to academic staff will be taken. A copy of the *Code of Practice* will be sent by post to any staff identified as working outside the University or absent from the University for any reason, where email contact is known to be a problem. The *Code of Practice* will also be made public on the University's website.

Members of the University REF Working Group will be available to explain any aspects of the *Code of Practice*, as requested. If sufficient requests are received, briefing sessions may be arranged.

## **5.3 Feedback**

Feedback on the *Code of Practice* is welcomed from all members of staff. Amendments to the *Code of Practice* will be considered at any stage of its life. If the *Code of Practice* is amended after it has received approval from the REF Team, the revised version will be sent to the REF Team.

# **6. Confidentiality and the Use of Staff Information**

## **6.1 The University's Responsibilities**

The University will adhere to all legislation referring to data confidentiality and the handling of data (Data Protection Act 1998). The University REF Working Group will continue to take advice on data protection from the University's Information Compliance Manager. All personal information will be treated with sensitivity and in confidence, with restricted access, as detailed in sections 6.2 and 7.5, below.

## **6.2 The REF Team's Responsibilities**

The REF's policy on confidentiality is set out in paragraph 73 of the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document, as shown below. Of particular importance in this statement is how the REF Team will use the information collected from HEIs. As with the University, the REF Team will restrict access to information supplied on complex staff circumstances, details of which are shown in section 7.5 *Confidentiality*, below. Other data will be treated, as follows:

"We will collect, store and process all information submitted by HEIs to the REF in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information will be processed for the purposes of conducting and evaluating the REF. Information may be shared with other organisations to facilitate this, and will be shared with panel chairs, members, assessors, secretaries and observers, who are all bound by confidentiality arrangements. As stated in paragraph 43, we will extract and pass some information to HESA to enable data verification. We will also publish parts of submissions on the internet (as described in paragraph 36). We will use information from HEIs to monitor the diversity of staff selected for the REF. **HEIs should ensure that individuals whose work is included in their submissions are aware of these uses, including the publication of submissions.**"



## 7. The Selection of Staff

The University has a declared obligation to ensure that it best meets the specific and generic requirements of REF2014 in terms of research quality in order to maximize the outcome for the University, but with due regard to equality and diversity for the 'fair and transparent selection of staff.' (REF 02.2011). The selection of staff (past, present or future) for inclusion within the University's REF2014 submissions will be based on criteria that are objective and non-discriminatory.

The main guiding principle is that the REF is an assessment of research quality and that individuals will be included on the basis of meeting the University's declared REF quality threshold for research outputs and its strategic research aims, as set out in the University's newly revised *Research and Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan*. All staff have been notified about the University's REF quality threshold for research outputs and will shortly have access to the revised *Research and Enterprise Strategy*.

The definitions for research outputs can be found in Part 3, sections 1 and 2 of the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document; some of this guidance has been superseded by paragraphs 42 to 44 and 64 to 91 in the REF's *Panel criteria and working methods* document. The REF criteria and definitions for quality ratings for outputs and the REF's definition of research are in *Appendix D* of this *Code of Practice*.

### 7.1 Decisions on selection

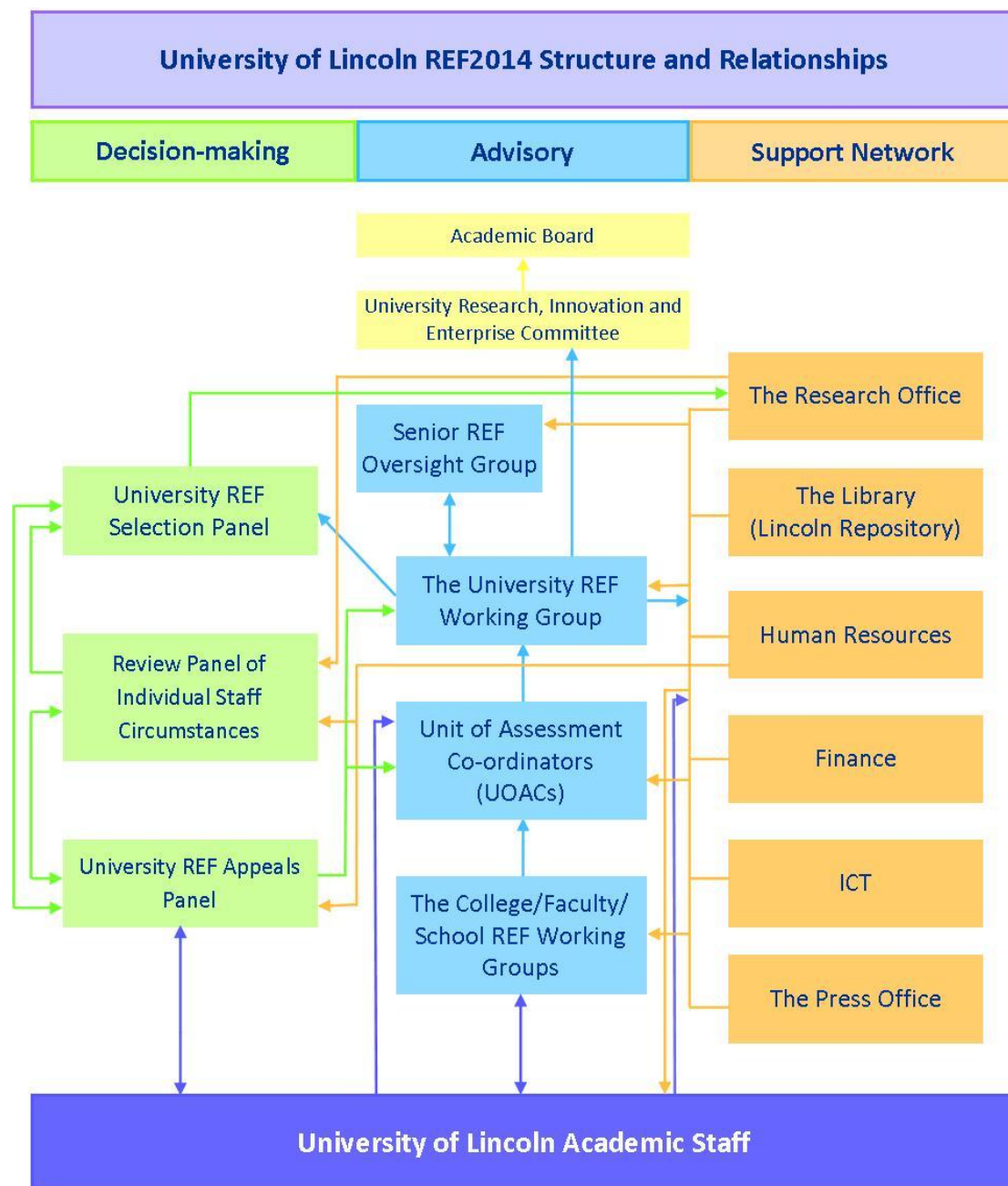
- i. Final decisions on who will be submitted to the REF will be made during 2013, by the University REF Selection Panel (see *Appendix C - Timetable for the Assessment and Selection of Staff for Submission to REF2014*, below, for more details).
- ii. Staff may appeal against a decision on selection using the appeals process in section 8 of this document.

### 7.2 Decision-making and advisory bodies within the University

There are a number of working groups and panels with a decision-making and/or advisory remit, as shown below. Details of their terms of reference and membership can be found in *Appendix B* of this document.

- i. The University REF Working Group
- ii. All College/Faculty/School REF Working Groups
- iii. The University REF Selection Panel
- iv. The Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances
- v. The University REF Appeals Panel
- vi. The Senior REF Oversight Group

The relationship between these working groups and panels is shown in the diagram below:



### 7.3 What does being submitted to the REF mean?

There are two main ways that a member of staff may be submitted to REF2014:

- i. as an individual, within a unit of assessment, with research outputs;
- ii. as part of an impact case study, within a unit of assessment.

In the main, the REF official criteria and guidance and this *Code of Practice* refer to selection through research outputs, but the principles can be applied to the selection of impact case studies. Staff can contribute to a REF submission through their inclusion in a case study or through being a contributor to the overall research environment of a particular unit of assessment; all members of staff should be made aware of this.

## 7.4 Factors affecting staff selection

There are two essential areas that must be taken into account in the selection of staff for submission to the REF:

- i. quality of outputs;
- ii. staff eligibility (contract type, staff circumstances, etc.)

Unless a member of staff already meets the REF criteria, their position regarding selection for submission will be reviewed regularly using the processes stated in this section.

Decisions on the selection of staff for submission to the REF will begin with the premise that all staff are eligible for inclusion until all internal and external assessments, in conjunction with the University's REF quality threshold and in compliance with all official REF documentation regarding eligibility and quality criteria, have been reviewed.

### Staff eligibility

The basic requirements for eligibility are:

- i. a member of staff must have an academic contract that specifies research as a primary requirement, ie. returned to HESA as research and teaching or research only;
- ii. category A members of staff must be employed by the University on the census date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013 (see the *Glossary* in Appendix G for an explanation);
- iii. an employment contract for at least 0.2 FTE or greater, regardless of whether they have permanent or fixed term contracts, or are paid hourly, weekly or monthly, etc..

More details regarding eligibility are in the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document, paragraphs 77 to 87. This includes information on Category C staff, who are staff not employed by the submitting institution, but whose research links with a unit of assessment within the institution may allow them to be included in the submission.

Factors that may have constrained a member of staff's ability to produce four outputs in the REF period, known as 'individual staff circumstances', listed in 7.5, below, may also determine whether or not a member of staff is returned to the REF.

### Quality of outputs

Outputs will be assessed externally (see 7.6, below, for details), within each unit of assessment, against the quality criteria specified by the REF (see *Appendix D* for the REF's quality ratings). The University's quality threshold for outputs will be applied to determine whether or not a member of staff meets the University's criteria for submission.

## 7.5 Staff assessment and review

Information will be collected on a staff member's eligibility for submission from a number of sources, co-ordinated by the Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators (UOACs) and the University's REF Co-ordinator, acting on behalf of the *University REF Working Group* (see section 7.2, above). Where data are of a confidential nature, access will be restricted to the members of the University's *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances* and, in the event of an appeal, the *University REF Appeals Panel* (see section 7.2, above).

## **The review process**

Assessments of a staff member's potential for inclusion in the REF will begin with a review of their eligibility. Lists of all staff with academic contracts, by School, will be sent to all UOACs by the REF Co-ordinator, using data supplied by Human Resources. The UOACs will report omissions, errors, etc. to the University's REF Co-ordinator. The aim of this process is to make sure that every member of academic staff, who has the potential to be eligible for submission to the REF, has been accounted for, so that the following can be ascertained:

- i. which staff already meet the eligibility criteria and have four published outputs or fewer, if individual staff circumstances have been taken into account (see below);
- ii. which staff are not on a research-based contract - this could be reviewed with the member of staff if they have outputs that could be considered;
- iii. which staff currently have insufficient outputs for a submission, but could be REF-able if outputs in the 'pipeline' or possible individual staff circumstances (see below) are taken into consideration,;
- iv. which staff have no possibility of achieving the required number of outputs in the REF timescale, with all outputs in the 'pipeline' and any known staff circumstances (see below) taken into account.

This review process will be repeated at intervals throughout the period preceding the submission deadline (29<sup>th</sup> November 2013). The staff lists will be updated regularly to reflect starters and leavers, contract changes, etc..

## **Taking individual staff circumstances into account**

The *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* and the *Panel criteria and working methods* documents explain the REF's overarching criteria for the eligibility and selection of staff and refer to a number of specific selection issues to do with individual staff circumstances (see references for this information in *What are staff circumstances?*, below). The University will adhere to this guidance and all subsequently published documentation from the REF Team.

There will be no difference in the assessment of the quality of publications of staff with individual staff circumstances from that of staff without these circumstances.

Each member of the University's academic staff, current and future, will receive an *Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form*, and accompanying notes, along with a copy of this *Code of Practice*, in order to declare any circumstances that they wish the University to take into account when making its decisions on selection. A list of individual staff circumstances is shown below. The *Disclosure Form* has been produced by the Equality Challenge Unit on behalf of the REF Team and customised by the University, as appropriate.

## **What are staff circumstances?**

In order to support equality and diversity, staff whose ability to produce four outputs during the REF period (1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013) has been constrained due to one or more of the circumstances listed below, may be returned with fewer than four outputs. Calculations to assess the number of outputs required are based on the guidelines in the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions*, paragraphs 88 to 100, and the *Panel criteria and working methods*, Part 1, paragraphs 63 to 91 (some of this information

supersedes that in the *Guidance on submissions* document). These two documents can be found on the REF2014 official website (<http://www.ref.ac.uk/>) and also on the University's REF2014 pages on the portal (<https://portal.lincoln.ac.uk/C9/C6/REF2014/default.aspx>). A reduction in the number of outputs submitted will not prejudice the quality ratings/profile given in the REF assessment. More than one individual staff circumstance can be taken into account.

The following are the individual staff circumstances that could be taken into account:

- i. qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (ECR);
- ii. part-time working;
- iii. maternity, paternity or adoption leave. Note that maternity leave may involve related constraints on an individual's ability to conduct research in addition to the defined period of maternity leave itself. Constraints related to pregnancy or maternity will indeed be considered in addition to a clearly defined period of maternity leave. These may include but are not limited to: medical issues associated with pregnancy or maternity; health and safety restrictions in field work during pregnancy or breastfeeding; constraints on the ability to travel to undertake fieldwork due to pregnancy or breastfeeding;
- iv. secondments or career breaks outside of the higher education sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research;
- v. disability;
- vi. ill health or injury;
- vii. mental health conditions;
- viii. childcare or other caring responsibilities;
- ix. gender reassignment;
- x. other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics described in the Equality Act 2010. (See *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions*, paragraphs 187-201.)

Circumstances (i) to (iv) are referred to by the REF as 'clearly defined' circumstances; the remainder are referred to as 'complex' circumstances.

### **Who will make the decisions on individual staff circumstances?**

Completed *Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Forms* will be sent to the University's *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*; the remit and membership of this Panel is shown in *Appendix B* of this *Code of Practice*. The *Review Panel* will make decisions on eligibility for a reduction in outputs based on the information in the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* and the *Panel criteria and working methods* documents and the guidance and worked examples from the Equality Challenge Unit on complex circumstances. All those who have submitted a *Disclosure Form* will be informed of the *Panel's* decision in writing. If you are entitled to a reduction in outputs, we will also enclose a written justification for the reduction with your submission to the REF.

### **Confidentiality**

The *Review Panel* will pay due regard to the sensitive and confidential nature of the information. Within the University, only *Panel* members will see this information, unless there is an appeal; it may then be necessary for the *University REF Appeals Panel* to see this information, also (see section 8, below). UOACs will also be notified of the decision, but

they will not be given any confidential information. If a staff member with individual staff circumstances is submitted to the REF, the University will have to include an explanation for their decision to reduce the number of outputs. The *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document, paragraph 98, states that the submitted information will be kept confidential to the REF team and the panel members for clearly defined circumstances and the EDAP and main panel chairs only for complex circumstances; they are subject to confidentiality undertakings in respect of all confidential information contained in submissions. REF sub-panels will be told that there are complex circumstances for an individual, and will receive a decision about the appropriate number of outputs to reduce without penalty, but will not have access to any information about the circumstances.

## **7.6 External assessment**

In the years preceding the REF submission date, each UOAC will engage an experienced external assessor to look at the research outputs of all staff, to gain a clearer understanding of the potential size and quality of all the units of assessment under consideration. The external assessor will present his/her assessment in one-to-one and group sessions to the staff concerned and submit a report to the DVC Research containing the following:

- i. an assessment of each output for that UOA against the published REF quality ratings;
- ii. an assessment of where the UOA stands, at that point, in relation to the REF;
- iii. an assessment of where the UOA may stand in the REF by the submission date, on the current trajectory;
- iv. suggestions for what could be done to enhance that UOA's REF return.

The role of the external assessor is to judge the quality of the work; they do not take individual staff circumstances into account. Ratings of external assessors are not the sole determinant of whether someone is submitted to the REF and it may be necessary to consult more than one external assessor to help determine the quality of an individual's output.

The information from the external assessors' reports will be used to help create a submission profile for each unit of assessment. This process will be repeated on a number of occasions, in particular to review new outputs and new staff.

## **7.7 Who will make the final decisions on staff selection?**

The final decision on who is submitted to the REF will be made by the *University REF Selection Panel* (see *Appendix B* for details). Decisions on selection will not be made by the *University REF Working Group* or any other University REF advisory or support body, but their advice and guidance will be sought. Decisions will be based on the criteria stated earlier in this document (see 7.4 *Factors affecting staff selection*). Initial decisions as to whom will be included in the submission will be made by the beginning of March 2013. Final decisions on the selection of staff for submission to the REF will be made in **September 2013**, following the procedures set out in this *Code of Practice*. **Staff changes and new publications may result in later decisions being made during October 2013**. Notification of selection decisions will be made within a timescale that permits any appeals to be resolved before the REF submission deadline of 29<sup>th</sup> November 2013. For more information, see the *Timeline* set out in *Appendix C*.

## 8. Appeals Against Decisions on Selection

The University will make decisions on submission to the REF based on quality of outputs and eligibility. Decisions on eligibility will be made by the University's *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*. Overall decisions on submission will be made by the *University REF Selection Panel*. The information in returned *Disclosure Forms*, along with the procedures and guidance in this *Code of Practice*, will inform the decision-making process for selecting staff and should be referred to by any member of staff when considering making an appeal.

### 8.1 Grounds for appeal

Members of staff may appeal against non-selection decisions, on the following grounds:

- i. quality of research;
- ii. related to protected characteristics (see section 4.1), defined in the Equality Act (2010).

### 8.2 The appeals process

An appeal against a non-selection decision should be made by letter and sent to the **DVC Research**, who will then appoint a senior researcher to Chair and convene a *University REF Appeals Panel* to consider the appeal (see 8.3, below).

The letter should state clearly the grounds of the appeal as noted at 8.1:

- i. **Quality of research** - if the appeal relates only to non-selection on grounds of the quality of the appellant's research, the letter should demonstrate that the quality of research *is* sufficient for inclusion in the UOA submission, stating any new information or evidence that may not have been taken into account during the selection process. The *Appeals Panel* Chair, in consultation with members of the panel, will give due consideration to the appellant's case. At the Chair's discretion, this may involve convening the *Panel* and/or meeting with the appellant (who may bring a supporter). The decision of the Chair is final and feedback will be provided to the appellant.
- ii. **Relating to a protected characteristic** - where the appeal relates to one or more protected characteristics, these should be clearly identified in the appellant's letter. It may be necessary, when considering this type of appeal, for the REF Appeals Panel to see confidential information that has previously only been seen by the University's *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*.

Once a decision on the appeal has been reached:

- iii. the REF Appeals Panel will compile a report stating the reasons for their decision in either supporting the appeal or upholding the original decision of the *REF Selection Panel* or the *University's Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*;
- iv. if the appeal is upheld, the Chair of the *REF Appeals Panel* will inform the appellant, in writing, and request that the appropriate *Panel* reconsiders its decision;
- v. if the appeal is not upheld, the Chair will inform the appellant, in writing, and report the outcome to the appropriate panels, with the recommendation that the decision of the *REF Appeals Panel* is final.

### 8.3 The University REF Appeals Panel

All appeals will be considered by a *University REF Appeals Panel*, which is independent of the University's REF decision-making body, the *University REF Selection Panel*. The *REF Appeals Panel* will comprise a senior researcher, who will chair the Panel, a Director of Research from

a College different to that of the appellant and an HR representative. All members of the *REF Appeals Panel* will have received equality and diversity training relevant to the REF selection process. See *Appendix B* for the *Terms of Reference* for the *REF Appeals Panel*.

## **9. REF2014 Support and Information for Staff**

### **9.1 What the University will do**

Although the primary task of the University is to carry out its strategy for the selection of staff for submission to the REF, it also has a responsibility to create an environment that gives the best opportunity for its staff to meet the quality levels required for submission to the REF. The University will:

- i. support and encourage its staff in their efforts to meet the quality standards and other requirements necessary in order to qualify for submission;
- ii. provide timely information about the REF and its implications for all staff at the University.

### **9.2 What support will be given?**

The University will use resources available internally and, where necessary, externally, to encourage the acquisition of the knowledge and skills necessary for high quality submissions to the REF, supported by the University's *CPPD Framework*.

Under the guidance of the *University REF Working Group* (see *Appendix B* for details of membership) and the *College/Faculty/School REF Working Groups*, a number of initiatives will be made available at various points in the REF lifecycle in order to raise the quality and quantity of submissions. Amongst these may be opportunities for sabbatical/research leave, buying out of teaching time, mentoring, attendance at REF support and information events, etc..

In addition to the above, each Unit of Assessment will either have a REF strategy document, or sections on the REF within College/Faculty/School research strategy documents, which will explain the policies and procedures that have been put in place to:

- i. encourage and facilitate high quality research, including creating and evidencing research impact;
- ii. maximise the opportunities for external research income;
- iii. develop early career researchers.

Each member of staff within the relevant unit of assessment will be notified about the relevant strategy document for their unit of assessment.

### **9.3 Informing staff about the REF**

The following sources of help and information on the REF are available to all staff:

- i. the University's intranet (portal) page for REF2014 contains all relevant official REF documentation, key dates, other useful documentation, both internal and external, and other information aimed at keeping all staff informed about the REF and the University's preparations for submission;
- ii. dedicated REF2014 (internal only) and research blogs;
- iii. REF-related events, such as workshops with internal and external contributors;



- iv. one-to-one sessions and external training opportunities;
- v. dissemination and feedback from UOA Co-ordinators, the College/Faculty Directors of Research, the PVC Research, the University REF Co-ordinator and other key staff;
- vi. links and references to all external, REF-related sources of information;
- vii. queries from staff on any aspect of the REF can be sent to the REF Co-ordinator.

## **10. Training in Equality and Diversity**

REF-specific equality and diversity training will be provided to all members of the panels involved in staff selection and in an advisory and data gathering capacity for REF2014.

### **10.1 Why is training necessary?**

HEIs may be open to external scrutiny and challenge regarding their operation of the law. The assessment criteria adopted by internal panels will need to be consistent with equalities and employment law. Panels and working groups will need to be aware of the extent and relevance of the law relating to personal characteristics when preparing their submissions.

### **10.2 Who will receive the training?**

The members of the REF working groups and panels shown below will receive training. All these people have a decision-making and/or advisory role within the University for the REF. The membership of these Groups and Panels is shown in Appendix B of this *Code of Practice*.

- i. The University REF Working Group
- ii. All College/Faculty/School REF Working Groups
- iii. The University REF Selection Panel
- iv. The Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances
- v. The University REF Appeals Panel
- vi. The Senior REF Oversight Group

### **10.3 What training will be provided?**

The content of the training will enable participants to understand the relevance of the equalities legislation to the exercise, including case studies exploring the implications of individual circumstances in staff selection.

## **11. Equality Impact Assessment and Monitoring (EIA)**

The equality impact assessment and monitoring process is a continual activity in the evolution of this *Code*. An initial assessment of the potential impact of this *Code* has been undertaken (see *Appendix A*, section 3). As noted in the *Timeline* (see *Appendix C*), the EIA and monitoring activities will be repeated regularly and will continually help to inform any future developments of this *Code* and its supporting activities. The EIA process will be concluded and reported on by the University following the REF submission in November 2013. As with the equality monitoring of RAE2008, all information will help support the University in meeting its obligations in paying 'due regard' to its legal duty to ensure there has been no inadvertent discrimination or differential impact, regarding any of the protected characteristics (see section 4.1), on staff and that the principle of promoting equality continues to be maintained.

## Appendix A - Legal Framework

### 1. Legislation

- i. Equality Act (2010)
- ii. The relevant regulations are:
  - a. Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
  - b. Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002

### Summary of equality legislation

(from *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* (July 2011))

Age	<p><b>All employees within the higher education sector are protected from unlawful age discrimination in employment under the Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or if they are associated with a person of a particular age group. (These provisions in the Equality Act 2010 are partially in force, but should be fully in place by April 2012.)</b></p> <p>Age discrimination can occur when people of a particular age group are treated less favourably than people in other age groups. An age group could be for example, people of the same age, the under 30s or people aged 45-50. A person can belong to a number of different age groups.</p> <p>Age discrimination will not be unlawful if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. However, in the context of the REF, the view of the funding bodies is that if a researcher produces excellent research an HEI will not be able to justify not submitting them because of their age group.</p> <p>It is important to note that early career researchers are likely to come from a range of age groups. The definition of early career researcher used in the REF (see paragraph 85) is not limited to young people.</p> <p>The default retirement age was abolished from 1 October 2011 in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p>
Disability	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 prevents unlawful discrimination relating to disability. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to have a disability or if they are associated with a person who is disabled, for example, if they are responsible for caring for a disabled family member.</b></p> <p>A person is considered to be disabled if they have or have had a physical and/or mental impairment which has 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Long-term impairments include those that last or are likely to last for at least 12 months.</p> <p>Cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis and progressive/degenerative conditions are disabilities too, even if they do not currently have an adverse effect on the carrying out of day-to-day activities.</p> <p>There is no list of day-to-day activities for England, Scotland and Wales but day-to-day activities are taken to mean activities that people, not individuals, carry out on a daily or frequent basis.</p>

	<p>While there is no definitive list of what is considered a disability, it covers a wide range of impairments including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensory impairments</li> <li>• impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, depression and epilepsy</li> <li>• progressive impairments, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, HIV and cancer</li> <li>• organ-specific impairments, including respiratory conditions and cardiovascular diseases</li> <li>• developmental impairments, such as autistic spectrum disorders and dyslexia</li> <li>• mental health conditions such as depression and eating disorders</li> <li>• impairments caused by injury to the body or brain.</li> </ul> <p>It is important for HEIs to note that people who have had a past disability are also protected from discrimination, victimisation and harassment because of disability.</p> <p>Equality law requires HEIs to anticipate the needs of disabled people and make reasonable adjustments for them. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment constitutes discrimination. If a disabled researcher's impairment has affected the quantity of their research outputs, they may be submitted with a reduced number of outputs (see paragraphs 90-100 and the panel criteria).</p>
Gender reassignment	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 protects from discrimination trans people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex. Staff in HE do not have to be under medical supervision to be afforded protection because of gender reassignment, and are protected if they are perceived to be undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. They are also protected if they are associated with someone who has proposed, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.</b></p> <p>Trans people who undergo gender reassignment will need to take time off for appointments and in some cases, for medical assistance. The transition process is lengthy, often taking several years and it is likely to be a difficult period for the trans person as they seek recognition of their new gender from their family, friends, employer and society as a whole.</p> <p>The Gender Recognition Act 2004 gave enhanced privacy rights to trans people who undergo gender reassignment. A person acting in an official capacity who acquires information about a person's status as a transsexual may commit a criminal offence if they pass the information to a third party without consent.</p> <p>Consequently, staff within HEIs with responsibility for REF submissions must ensure that the information they receive about gender reassignment is treated with particular care.</p> <p>Staff whose ability to work productively throughout the REF assessment period has been constrained due to gender reassignment may be submitted with a reduced number of research outputs (see paragraphs 90-100, and the panel criteria). Information about the member of staff will be kept confidential as described in paragraph 98.</p>

Marriage and civil partnership	<p><b>Under the Equality Act 2010 individuals are protected from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership status. The protection from discrimination is to ensure that people who are married or in a civil partnership receive the same benefits and treatment in employment. The protection from discrimination does not apply to single people.</b></p> <p>In relation to the REF HEIs must ensure that their processes for selecting staff do not inadvertently discriminate against staff who are married or in civil partnerships.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p><b>Under the Equality Act 2010 women are protected from unlawful discrimination related to pregnancy and maternity.</b></p> <p>Consequently researchers who have taken time out of work or whose ability to work productively throughout the assessment period because of pregnancy and/or maternity, may be submitted with a reduced number of research outputs, as set out in paragraphs 90-100 and in the panel criteria documents.</p> <p>In addition, HEIs should ensure that female researchers who are pregnant or on maternity leave are kept informed about and included in their submissions process.</p> <p>For the purposes of this summary it is important to note that primary adopters have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave.</p>
Race	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 protects HEI staff from unlawful discrimination connected to race. The definition of race includes colour, ethnic or national origins or nationality. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular race.</b></p> <p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their race or assumed race (for example, based on their name).</p>
Religion and belief including non-belief	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 protects HEI staff from unlawful discrimination based on with religion or belief. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular religion or belief.</b></p> <p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their actual or perceived religion or belief, including non-belief. 'Belief' includes any structured philosophical belief with clear values that has an effect on how its adherents conduct their lives.</p>
Sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave)	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 protects HEI staff from unlawful discrimination based on sex. Employees are also protected because of their perceived sex or because of their association with someone of a particular sex.</b></p> <p>The sex discrimination provisions of the Equality Act explicitly protect women from less favourable treatment because they are breastfeeding. Consequently the impact of breastfeeding on a woman's ability to work productively will be taken into account, as set out in paragraph 90-100 and the panel criteria documents.</p>

	<p>From 3 April 2011, partners of new mothers and secondary adopters will be entitled to up to 26 weeks of additional paternity and adoption leave. People who take additional paternity or adoption leave will have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave and barriers that exist to taking the leave, or as a result of having taken it, could constitute unlawful sex discrimination. Consequently researchers who have taken additional paternity and adoption leave may be submitted with a reduced number of outputs, as set out in paragraphs 90-100 and in the panel criteria documents.</p> <p>HEIs need to be wary of selecting researchers by any criterion that it would be easier for men to comply with than women, or vice versa. There are many cases where a requirement to work full-time (or less favourable treatment of people working part-time or flexibly) has been held to discriminate unlawfully against women.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 protects HEI staff from unlawful discrimination based on sexual orientation. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with someone who is of a particular sexual orientation.</b></p> <p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.</p>

## 2. National picture

- i. Selection rate for staff with declared disability lower than for staff without declared disability;
- ii. 67% of male permanent academic staff selected in comparison to 48% of women;
- iii. women aged 30 – 50 particularly low rate of selection;
- iv. selection rate of staff from the black ethnic group lower than for staff from other ethnic groups;
- v. little change in selection from RAE2001.

## 3. Equality assessment of potential impact and monitoring

In accordance with the requirements of REF2014, the EIA conducted using the final submission data will be sent to the HEFCE REF Team as a separate document as well as published, along with this final version of the *Code of Practice*, on the University's public website. The final EIA compares the actual submission data with the Mock REF EIA (2013) and RAE2008 data. The EIA shown in this *Code of Practice* uses data available at the time that this document was first written (and submitted for approval to the REF Team and EDAP).

In 2008 the academic establishment for RAE2008 was 465 members.

The 2012 data capture for the same academic profile for REF2014 activity as at 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 is 545 academic members. This will change between now and the census period.

There has been an increase of 80 academic members that meet the initial eligibility criteria for submission in REF2014. The initial criteria are 'contract type' i.e. teaching and research or research only and 0.2 FTE required.

## Equality data RAE2008 to current potential REF2014 eligible pool

Table One

<b>Gender profile</b>	<b><u>Academic Establishment at 31 October 2007</u></b>		<b><u>Academic Establishment at 3 May 2012</u></b>		<b><u>Increase</u></b>	
Female	175	37.63%	220	40.36%	45	25%
Male	290	62.37%	325	59.63%	35	12%
Total	465	100%	545	100%	80	17%

An increase of 45 (25% increase) of female academic members and 35 (12% increase) of male members.

We have increased the number of female academics who meet the initial eligibility criteria by 25% since RAE2008.

Table Two

<b>Disability profile</b>	<b><u>Academic Establishment at 31 October 2007</u></b>		<b><u>Academic Establishment at 3 May 2012</u></b>		<b><u>Increase</u></b>	
Declared Disabled	7	1.51%	30	5.5%	23	328.5%
Not Known to be Disabled	458	98.49%	481	88.3%	23	5%
Information not provided	0	0	34	6.2%	N/A	N/A
Total	465	100%	545	100%		

Since RAE2008 we have increased the disability disclosure rate of academics who meet the initial eligibility criteria from 1.51% to 5.5%.

Table Three

<b>Ethnicity profile</b>	<b><u>Academic Establishment at 31 October 2007</u></b>		<b><u>Academic Establishment at 3 May 2012</u></b>		<b><u>Increase</u></b>	
Other Ethnic background*	34	7.31%	52	9.54%	18	52.9%
White British background	377	81.08%	413	75.77%	36	9.5%
White Other background/Irish	54	11.61%	80	14.67%	26	48.1%
Total	465	100%	545	100%		

\* includes the following categories: Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi; Asian or Asian British -Indian; Asian or Asian British - Pakistani; Black or Black British - African; Black or Black British - Caribbean; Chinese; Mixed - White and Asian; Mixed - White and Black Caribbean; Other Asian background; Other Black background; Other Ethnic background; Other Mixed background.

Since RAE2008, we have increased the ethnicity profile (Other Ethnic background\* and White Other background/Irish) of academics who meet the initial eligibility criteria collectively by 50%.

Table Four

Age Profile	<u>Academic Establishment at 31 October 2007</u>		<u>Academic Establishment at 3 May 2012</u>		<u>Increase</u>	
20 to 24	0	0%	1	0.1%	1	-
25 to 29	25	5.38%	21	3.85%	(4)	-
30 to 34	26	5.59%	69	12.66%	43	165%
35 to 39	58	12.47%	62	11.37%	4	6.89%
40 to 44	71	15.27%	68	12.47%	(3)	-
45 to 49	85	18.28%	91	16.69%	6	7%
50 to 54	94	20.22%	86	15.77%	(8)	-
55 to 59	74	15.91%	83	15.22%	9	12.16%
60 to 64	24	5.16%	51	9.35%	27	112%
> 65	8	1.72%	12	2.2%	4	50%
Total	465		545	100%		

The age profile of the academics who meet the initial eligibility criteria has altered since the RAE 2008 activity. There has been a significant increase in the 30-34 age range; this may indicate a possible and anticipated high number of ECR submissions in the REF2014 activity due to the correlation of a typical academic age related research profile.

#### Additional Equality Monitoring Data

The University in late 2010 introduced the collection of equality data in relation to Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief.

Table Five

<b>Sexual Orientation Profile</b>	<b>%</b>
Prefer not to say	43.48%
Information not provided	2.2%
Gay/Lesbian	1.83%
Bisexual	0.36%
Heterosexual	52.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table Six

<b>Religion/Belief Profile</b>	<b>%</b>
Information not provided	2.01%
Prefer not to say	41.65%
Any other Religion/Belief	2.2%
Buddhist	0.55%
Christian	24.9%
Hindu	0.18%
Jewish	0.55%
Muslim	0.73%
None	27.15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Initial Assessment - Potential Impact and Testing of the Code**

### **Context**

The following information is based upon the ongoing E&D data collection and the current available quality research standards validation process data, which again is an ongoing process. This data is an early indication *only* and is clearly subject to change and further development from now until the census date. We will continue to review this to identify any trends on which action should be taken.

### **Overview of findings**

The early stage assessment appears to suggest that the application of the research quality standards may generate an overall reduction in the total percentage of staff being returned in the REF2014 activity as compared to RAE2008.

### **Gender**

Early stage analysis indicates that the application of both initial criteria and the quality of research standards could create a potential 5.74% gap between male and female returns. This indicates a potential closing of the gap from 9.94% in the RAE2008 to the potential 5.74% in the REF2014.

However, with the application of the *Code* and the full exploration and consideration of staff circumstances and/or support, e.g. secondment activities, the analysis indicates that there is the potential to close this gap further to 1.58% (see Table 1c).

### **Disability**

With regards to disability early stage analysis indicates that the application of both initial criteria and the quality of research standards could create a potential 10.86 % gap between declared disabled and not known to have a disability returns. This indicates a potential increasing of the gap from 7.45% in RAE2008 to the potential 10.86% in REF2014.

However, with the application of the *Code* and the full exploration and consideration of staff circumstances and/or support, e.g. secondment activities, the analysis indicates that there is the potential to close this gap to 4.53% (see Table 2c). This will improve the RAE2008 position by 2.92%.

### **Ethnicity**

With regards to ethnicity groupings early stage analysis indicates that the application of both initial criteria and the quality of research standards that the White British group would potentially remain the lowest represented ethnic group within the return.

However, compared to RAE2008, whereby representation equalled 44.11% Other Ethnic background, 31.29% White British background and 62.96%, White Other background/Irish, Table 3a indicates that the representation gaps have closed significantly since the RAE2008 return.

### **Age**

The age profile is fairly proportionally represented across the age ranges and follows the pattern expected in relation to age and research career pattern.

### **Sexual orientation and religion/belief**

Due to the significant number of returns of staff (average 50%) opting not to disclose this information the analysis has been limited to simple reporting of available data.



## Supporting data tables

### Gender

As at June 2012 the initial gender impact of the *Code* indicates the following:

Table 1a Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and that of the quality of research standards

Gender profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Female	31.81%	12.72%
Male	68.18%	18.46%

Table 1b Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and the potential impact of staff circumstances and/or additional support

Gender profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Female	53.65%	10.00%
Male	46.34%	5.84%

Table 1c Applying the initial criteria plus the combination of table 1a&1b

Gender profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Female	38.75%	22.72%
Male	61.24%	24.30%

### Disability

As at June 2012 the initial disability impact of the code indicates the following:

Table 2a Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and that of the quality of research standards

Disability profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Declared Disabled	2.27%	6.6%
Not known to be Disabled	95.45%	17.46%
Information not provided	2.27%	5.88%

Table 2b Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and the potential impact of staff circumstances and/or additional support

Disability profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Declared Disabled	9.75%	13.33%
Not known to be Disabled	82.9%	7.06%
Information not provided	7.31%	8.82%

Table 2c Applying the initial criteria plus the combination of table 2a&2b

Disability profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Declared Disabled	4.65%	20%
Not known to be Disabled	91.47%	24.53%
Information not provided	3.87%	14.7%

## Ethnicity

As at June 2012 the initial ethnicity impact of the *Code* indicates the following:

Table 3a Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and that of the quality of research standards

<b>Ethnicity profile</b>	<b>As a % of the return</b>	<b>As a % of initial eligibility criteria</b>
Other Ethnic background*	10.22%	17.30%
White British background	69.31%	14.76%
White Other background/Irish	20.45%	22.5%

Table 3b Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and the potential impact of staff circumstances and/or additional support

<b>Ethnicity profile</b>	<b>As a % of the return</b>	<b>As a % of initial eligibility criteria</b>
Other Ethnic background*	4.87%	3.8%
White British background	82.92%	8.23%
White Other background/Irish	12.19%	6.25%

Table 3c Applying the initial criteria plus the combination of table 3a&3b

<b>Ethnicity profile</b>	<b>As a % of the return</b>	<b>As a % of initial eligibility criteria</b>
Other Ethnic background*	8.5%	21.15%
White British background	73.64%	23%
White Other background/Irish	17.82%	28.75%

\* includes the following categories: Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi; Asian or Asian British - Indian; Asian or Asian British - Pakistani; Black or Black British - African; Black or Black British - Caribbean; Chinese; Mixed - White and Asian; Mixed - White and Black Caribbean; Other Asian background; Other Black background; Other Ethnic background; Other Mixed background.

## Age

As at June 2012 the initial age impact of the *Code* indicates the following:

Table 4a Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and that of the quality of research standards

	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Age Profile		
25 to 29	5.68%	23.80%
30 to 34	7.95%	10.14%
35 to 39	15.90%	22.58%
40 to 44	17.04%	22.05%
45 to 49	15.90%	15.38%
50 to 54	15.90%	16.27%
55 to 59	6.81%	7.22%
60 to 64	10.22%	17.64%
> 65	4.54%	33.33%

Table 4b Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and the potential impact of staff circumstances and/or additional support

	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Age Profile		
25 to 29	-	-
30 to 34	17.07%	10.14%
35 to 39	9.75%	6.45%
40 to 44	19.51%	11.76%
45 to 49	17.07%	7.69%
50 to 54	2.43%	6.97%
55 to 59	12.19%	6.02%
60 to 64	4.87%	3.92%
> 65	4.87%	16.66%

Table 4c Applying the initial criteria plus the combination of table 4a&4b

	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Age Profile		
25 to 29	3.87%	23.80%
30 to 34	10.85%	20.28%
35 to 39	13.95%	29.03%
40 to 44	17.8%	33.82%
45 to 49	16.27%	23.07%
50 to 54	15.50%	23.25%
55 to 59	8.52%	13.25%
60 to 64	8.52%	21.56%
> 65	4.65%	50%

\* No representation in the age range 20 to 24

### Sexual Orientation

As at June 2012 the initial sexual orientation impact of the code indicates the following:

Table 5a Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and that of the quality of research standards

<b>Sexual Orientation Profile</b>	<b>As a % of the return</b>	<b>As a % of initial eligibility criteria</b>
Prefer not to say	42.04%	15.61%
Information not provided	3.40%	23.07%
Gay/Lesbian	2.27%	20%
Bisexual	1.13%	50%
Heterosexual	51.13%	15.84%

Table 5b Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and the potential impact of staff circumstances and/or additional support

<b>Sexual Orientation Profile</b>	<b>As a % of the return</b>	<b>As a % of initial eligibility criteria</b>
Prefer not to say	46.34%	8.01%
Information not provided	-	-
Gay/Lesbian	2.4%	10%
Bisexual	-	-
Heterosexual	51.21%	7.39%

Table 5c Applying the initial criteria plus the combination of table 5a&5b

<b>Sexual Orientation Profile</b>	<b>As a % the return</b>	<b>As a % of initial eligibility criteria</b>
Prefer not to say	43.41%	23.62%
Information not provided	2.32%	25%
Gay/Lesbian	2.32%	30%
Bisexual	0.77%	50%
Heterosexual	51.16%	23.23%

## Religion/Belief

As at June 2012 the initial religion/belief impact of the code indicates the following:

Table 6a Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and that of the quality of research standards

Religion/Belief Profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Information not provided	3.40%	27.27%
Prefer not to say	42.04%	16.29%
Any other Religion/Belief	1.13%	8.33%
Buddhist	1.13%	33.33%
Christian	18.18%	11.76%
Hindu	-	-
Jewish	-	-
Muslim	-	-
None	34.09%	20.27%

Table 6b Illustrates results of the application of both initial criteria and the potential impact of staff circumstances and/or additional support

Religion/Belief Profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Information not provided	-	-
Prefer not to say	39.02%	7.04%
Any other Religion/Belief	4.87%	16.66
Buddhist	-	-
Christian	29.26%	8.82%
Hindu	-	-
Jewish	2.43%	33.33%
Muslim	2.43%	25.00%
None	21.95%	6.08%

Table 6c Applying the initial criteria plus the combination of table 6a&6b

Religion/Belief Profile	As a % of the return	As a % of initial eligibility criteria
Information not provided	2.32%	27.27%
Prefer not to say	41.08%	23.34%
Any other Religion/Belief	2.32%	25.00%
Buddhist	0.77%	33.33%
Christian	21.70%	20.58%
Hindu	-	-
Jewish	0.77%	33.33%
Muslim	0.77%	25.00%
None	30.23%	26.35%

## **Appendix B - The University REF Working Groups and Panels**

Membership of these working groups and panels may change during the course of the REF period, for a variety of reasons. Updated membership will be posted on the University's REF portal page and on the University's REF2014 blog.

### **1. The University REF Working Group**

#### **Terms of Reference**

- i.** To optimise the University's return in the REF2014 and future assessment exercises.
- ii.** To monitor the progress made towards the University's submission to the REF including oversight of REF action plan, key actions and milestones.
- iii.** To report and make recommendations to the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Committee regarding the wider REF strategy in the context of the University's Strategic Plan.
- iv.** To request information identifying strengths and weaknesses in submissions, advising on mitigation strategies.
- v.** To identify and advise on the preparation of impact case studies and their development.
- vi.** To assess the vitality of the research environment for UOAs.
- vii.** To advise on the thresholds for outputs.
- viii.** To monitor the equality and diversity/inclusion of staff and the REF submission, in line with the REF2014 requirements as set out in the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.
- ix.** To oversee and guide the University's submission of REF data to HEFCE.
- x.** To advise on strategic decisions when assigning members of staff to particular units of assessment and on the inclusion of members of staff in the Research Excellence Framework, consistent with the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.
- xi.** To ensure that information relevant to the REF is disseminated to all staff.
- xii.** To provide guidance on resourcing issues when allocating funds for targeted assistance (research sabbatical leave/teaching assistance etc) or providing assistance for external reviews of research outputs.
- xiii.** To co-opt members to the REF Working Group as and when specific expertise is required.

#### **Members of the University REF Working Group**

This Working Group comprises senior staff who have an existing responsibility for directing research, either within their respective UOAs or at Faculty/College level, and staff who have a strategic or operational responsibility for the REF within the University.

**Members of the REF Working Group for 2012 - 2013**

Dr Lisa Mooney	Pro Vice Chancellor Research (Chair)
Professor Ieuan Owen	Deputy Vice Chancellor - Research
Professor Andrew Hunter	Head of College of Science
Glen Bowness	Head of Research and Income Generation Support
Melanie Bullock	REF Co-ordinator

**College Directors of Research**

Professor Krista Cowman	College of Arts
Professor Ted Fuller	Business & Law / UOAC
Professor Shaun Lawson	Computer Science / UOAC
Professor Chris Bingham	School of Engineering / UOAC
Professor Hugh Bochel	College of Social Science
Professor Ann Gray	Media, Humanities & Technology / UOAC
Professor Nigel Allinson	College of Science

**UOA Co-ordinators (not duplicating names above)**

Dr Paul Eady	Agriculture, Food & Animal Sciences
Professor Belinda Colston	Applied Sciences
Dr Behzad Sodagar	Architecture
Professor Steve Dutton	Art
Professor Michael Healey	Art and Design

Professor Anne Chick	Design
Dr Mark O'Thomas	Drama
Professor Howard Stevenson	Education
Professor Gerrit Meerdink	Food Sciences
Professor Niro Siriwardena	Health Sciences
Professor Krista Cowman	History
Professor Richard Stone	Law
Dr Jacqui Briggs	Politics
Professor Tim Hodgson	Psychology
Professor Peter Somerville	Social Policy
Professor David Mullineaux	Sport Science

## 2. College/Faculty/School REF Working Groups

Within the University, Colleges, Faculties and Schools have used slightly different structures to oversee the REF submissions of their units of assessment (UOAs). They do, however, use a common set of terms of reference.

### Terms of Reference

The role of the College/Faculty/School REF Working Group is to:

- i. act in an advisory and data gathering capacity for the REF;
- ii. report to the University REF Working Group about any issues, causes for concern, etc., through the UOACs and the Directors of Research;
- iii. provide REF feedback to all staff within the College/Faculty/School, including through committees, acting in an educational role, where necessary;
- iv. help develop, evaluate and advise on impact and environment templates and impact case studies;
- v. to advise on the selection of external assessors and oversee their visits and receive reports.
- vi. encourage, and give advice on, the inclusion of REF objectives within College/Faculty/School research strategies;
- vii. have a role in the further development of research, including through recommending and helping implement research-focussed career development strategies, particularly for ECRs and those seeking to engage more fully with research;
- viii. take account of equality and diversity in all its workings and review its practices against the guidance in the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*;
- ix. monitor staff changes that could affect eligibility of staff and the viability of units of assessment and provide this information, in the first instance, to the University REF Co-ordinator, but, where appropriate, to the University REF Working Group;
- x. ensure that sufficient minutes/notes are kept.

### Members

For each College, Faculty or School REF Working Group, the membership will comprise:

- all relevant Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators (UOACs) from the College, Faculty or School, chosen as senior research staff within their respective UOA;
- all relevant Directors of Research from the College or Faculty;
- other senior research-active academics, as identified by the UOACs and Directors of Research;
- at least one Research Administrator and/or Manager, who has knowledge of the REF process and is part of the data gathering, collation and input processes.
- REF Co-ordinator and PVC Research - invited to all meetings



### 3. The University REF Selection Panel

#### Remit

- i. To make decisions on the final selection of staff for submission to the REF, by unit of assessment, based on data collected by the unit of assessment co-ordinators (UOACs) and the REF Co-ordinator, **following discussion with the Senior REF Oversight Group**.
- ii. To make decisions on selection of staff in compliance with the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.
- iii. To notify Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators (UOACs) of decisions made for their unit of assessment.
- iv. To supply information, if requested, to the REF Appeals Panel, as set out in the Appeals Process section of the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.
- v. Panel members must undertake equality and diversity training.

#### Members

- Professor Mary Stuart - Vice Chancellor
- **Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research**

The members of this Panel were selected because they have the ultimate authority within the University on matters of research and are, therefore, in the best position to make the final decisions on who should be submitted to the REF. They are also outside the academic, College structure of the University and all are active researchers. The composition of this Panel may change - all staff will be notified if this happens.

### 4. The Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances

#### Remit

- i. To review all returned *Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Forms*.
- ii. To treat all data received with sensitivity and ensure confidentiality.
- iii. To request additional information or clarification on complex circumstances from the staff concerned, if required.
- iv. To use the information and guidance set out in the REF documents *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* and *Panel criteria and working methods* and the guidance and worked examples from the Equality Challenge Unit on complex circumstances, to make decisions on:
  - a. whether there is a case for a reduction in outputs based on clearly defined and/or complex circumstances;
  - b. the number of reductions required for staff who meet the reduction criteria, using the tables and worked examples in REF and ECU documentation.
- v. To adhere to the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.
- vi. To notify all members of staff who submitted a *Disclosure Form* of the Panel's decision.
- vii. To notify the appropriate Unit of Assessment Co-ordinator (UOAC) of the Panel's decisions, simply stating the number of outputs required for all those individuals who qualify for a reduction in outputs, without revealing any confidential information for those with complex circumstances.
- viii. To prepare statements for members of staff who have complex circumstances **or who are Early Career Researchers (ECRs)**, as required in the REF1b section of the submission.

- ix. To supply information, if requested, to the University REF Appeals Panel, as set out in the *Appeals process* section (8.2 and 8.3) of the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.
- x. All Panel members to have undertaken the University's REF-specific equality and diversity training.

## Members

- **Dr Lisa Mooney – University Dean of Research (Chair)**
- **Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research**
- Claire Bell - Employee Engagement and Diversity Manager
- Melanie Bullock - REF Co-ordinator

**The REF Administrator is responsible for the papers for the Panel.**

The members of this panel were chosen for the following reasons:

- i. The **University Dean of Research** is leading the REF within the University and chairs the University REF Working Group.
- ii. The **DVC Research** has overall responsibility for research within the University and is a member of the University REF Working Group.
- iii. The Equalities and Diversity Manager has played a significant part in writing the *Code of Practice* and in offering support and advice on equality and diversity issues; she is also responsible for the REF-specific equality and diversity training.
- iv. The REF Co-ordinator, who has an overview of all things REF within the University, is responsible for managing all of the University's REF data and ensuring compliance with the *Code of Practice* as far as this data is concerned. She is a member of the University REF Working Group.

## 5. The University REF Appeals Panel

### Remit

- i. Consider appeals from members of staff against decisions on staff selection made by either the University REF Selection Panel or the Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances.
- ii. Consider appeals in a fair, impartial and consistent manner, following the procedures laid down in Section 8 *Appeals Against Decisions on Selection* in the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff* and adhering to the principles set out in the *Code of Practice*.
- iii. Consider the evidence supplied by the appellant in support of their appeal.
- iv. Consider the information supplied by one or both of the Panels in (i), above, in support of their decision concerning the appellant.
- v. Report decisions to the appellant and the Panels concerned, in writing, in the timescales set out in the *Code of Practice* (see the timetable in *Appendix C*, below).
- vi. Ensure confidentiality and treat all information with sensitivity.
- vii. Ensure that the composition of the REF Appeals Panel is completely independent of any REF selection or decision-making panel.
- viii. All Panel members to have undertaken University's REF-specific equality and diversity training.

## Members

The REF Appeals Panel will comprise:

- A senior researcher, who will chair the Panel
- A Director of Research from a College different to that of the appellant
- An HR representative

The members of this Panel will be appointed as and when a Panel is required, although staff in HR and the Directors of Research within the Colleges will be notified that they may be asked to fulfil this role. The membership has been designed to be fair and impartial, therefore the composition will vary according to which College the appellant belongs.

## 6. The Senior REF Oversight Group

### Remit

- i. To ensure adherence to the University's REF timetable.
- ii. To find solutions regarding major issues that are hindering progress in the University's REF submissions.
- iii. To adhere to the guidance set out in the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff* in all its deliberations.
- iv. **To provide information to, and advise, the University REF Selection Panel on staff submission and REF strategy.**

### Members

- Professor Mary Stuart - Vice Chancellor (Chair)
- **Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research**
- Professor Nigel Allinson - Director of Research, representing the College of Science
- Professor Hugh Bochel - Director of Research, representing the College of Social Science
- **Professor Krista Cowman – Director of Research, representing the College of Arts**
- **Dr Lisa Mooney – University Dean of Research**
- Melanie Bullock - REF Co-ordinator

The members of this panel have been chosen for their knowledge of the REF, its implementation within the University and their grasp of the current issues across the University or within the Colleges.

## Appendix C - Timeline for the Assessment and Selection of Staff for Submission to REF2014

These are the key activities for the selection of staff (outputs and individual staff circumstances), the appeals process and the associated equality and diversity training. The dates are subject to review and change.

	Activity	Responsibility
September 2011	Gather output information for all academic staff, by UOA - send to REF Co-ordinator for benchmarking	UOACs
Oct 2011 to May 2012	Second round of external assessor visits for each UOA (outputs and case studies)	UOACs
Jan 2012 onwards	Gather information on 'clearly defined circumstances' and E&D data as part of the EIA process	REF Co-ordinator/EE&D Manager
February 2012	Review ECU complex circumstances case studies - update UOACs	REF Co-ordinator
Feb to June 2012	Analyse data from external assessor reports to produce interim profile for each UOA	PVC Research/ REF Co-ordinator
May - June 2012	Revise <i>Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form</i> and accompanying letter	PVC Research and REF Co-ordinator
June 2012	Send approved <i>Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form</i> and letter to all academic staff	SDVC
June - July 2012	Equality and Diversity training for all Working Group and Panel members	Human Resources and REF Co-ordinator
31 July 2012	Submit <i>Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff</i> to the REF team (HEFCE)	University REF Main Contact
Sept 2012	Deadline for return of Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Forms	All academic staff
Aug to Oct 2012	Review of completed <i>Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Forms</i> - notify staff of decisions	Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances
November 2012	3 <sup>rd</sup> round of external assessments (outputs and case studies), as part of mock REF	UOACs
July 2012 to Nov 2013	Send out <i>Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form</i> and accompanying letter to new staff	SDVC
Nov 2012 - Nov 2013	Review of completed <i>Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Forms</i> - notify staff of decisions	Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances
<b>Feb to May 2013</b>	Mock REF (impact/environment templates); update the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	University REF Working Group
Feb - March 2013	Amend <i>Code of Practice</i> , if necessary, as a result of the ongoing EIA process - send new version to staff and to the REF Team. Repeat, as appropriate.	REF Co-ordinator
Feb - March 2013	Provisional selection of staff; initial feedback to University REF Working Group	University REF Selection Panel
Feb to Nov 2013	Periodic reviews of staff (staff changes, new outputs, etc.) - feedback to University REF Working Group	University REF Selection Panel
March 2013	Inform staff at risk of non-selection	UOACs
June to Nov 2013	Prepare statements for individual staff circumstances (REF1b); consult with relevant staff, as necessary	Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances
July 2013	<b>Initial selection of staff (subject to staff changes and new outputs) following Mock REF – Phase 1</b>	University REF Selection Panel
<b>September 2013</b>	Inform staff <b>selected and not selected</b> , in writing	University REF Selection Panel
<b>October 2013</b>	<b>Final selection of staff for submission – Phases 2 and 3</b>	<b>University REF Selection Panel</b>
<b>October 2013</b>	<b>Write to staff: Phase 2 - selected, pending and not selected; Phase 3 – final decision re 'pending' staff</b>	<b>DVC Research</b>
<b>31<sup>st</sup> October 2013</b>	Completion of Appeals process	University REF Appeals Panel
31 <sup>st</sup> October 2013	Census date for staff eligible for selection	
29 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2013	Deadline for all UOA submissions to the REF	<b>DVC</b> or Vice Chancellor
December 2013	Complete the Equality Impact Assessment	Human Resources

## Appendix D - Quality Ratings for Outputs

### REF2014 Criteria and definitions of starred levels for outputs

The criteria for assessing the quality of outputs are 'originality, significance and rigour'.	
Four star	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Three star	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
Two star	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
One star	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.

Notes on the definitions in the above table, taken from the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions*.

1. 'World-leading' quality denotes an absolute standard of quality in each unit of assessment.
2. 'World leading', 'internationally' and 'nationally' in this context refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the nature or geographical scope of particular subjects, nor to the locus of research nor its place of dissemination. For example, research which is focused within one part of the UK might be of 'world leading' standard. Equally, work with an international focus might not be of 'world leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised' standard.

### Definition of research for the REF (taken from *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions*)

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, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship<sup>4</sup>; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It **excludes** routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also **excludes** the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.
3. It **includes** research that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in the form of assessable research outputs, and confidential reports (as defined at paragraph 115 in Part 3, Section 2).

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

## Appendix E - Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form and Letter

Pro formas of these documents were provided by the [Equality Challenge Unit \(ECU\)](#) and have been customised for use by the University of Lincoln. All academic staff, and any other staff identified as potentially eligible for the REF, will be sent the form and an accompanying letter from the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor.

### Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form

To: All members of staff potentially eligible for return in REF2014

From: **Ieuan Owen, DVC**

Subject: **REF2014 - Consideration of individual staff circumstances affecting the number of research outputs required**

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The University of Lincoln is committed to ensuring that decisions about the selection of staff for the Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF) are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. Information on how eligible staff will be selected for submission to the REF is in the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*, which accompanies this letter and is also available at <https://portal.lincoln.ac.uk/C9/C6/REF2014/default.aspx>. This webpage also has a Q&A section on *Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure* (see below).

To ensure that the REF selection processes are fair, the University is collecting details of individual circumstances (listed below) from all staff potentially eligible for submission, where these may have **significantly** constrained a member of staff's ability to produce the requisite four outputs during the REF period (1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013). A reduced number of outputs may be allowed; we will calculate this using the rules (known as the tariff) supplied by the REF.

In order to do this, we encourage you to complete the accompanying *Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form*. The *Disclosure Form* has been produced by the [Equality Challenge Unit](#) on behalf of the *REF Team* and customised by the University, as appropriate. This process has no bearing on the quality of the outputs, which is still the main determining factor in whether or not a member of staff is returned in the REF; you can discuss this with your Unit of Assessment Co-ordinator (UOAC<sup>5</sup>). **You are not obliged to supply the University with information about your circumstances.** Summary level data collected may also inform the University's monitoring of staff selection procedures at institutional level.

To determine whether eligible staff may be submitted to the REF with fewer than four research outputs, the University has established a *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances* to look at all returned *Disclosure Forms*. This will be a confidential and restricted panel of four members who have been selected because of their roles in the REF process and within the University.

*The Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances* members are:

1. **Dr Lisa Mooney – University Dean of Research (Chair)**
2. **Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research**
3. Claire Bell - Employee Engagement and Diversity Manager
4. Melanie Bullock - REF Co-ordinator

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<sup>5</sup> A list of Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators can be found in the *Code of Practice* or on the UoL [REF2014 Portal](#).

*Panel* membership is restricted in order to safeguard any personal information disclosed by staff members and to ensure that, where sensitive data are disclosed, they are treated confidentially and remain restricted and respected in accordance with the eight principles of the Data Protection Act (1998). For more information, see the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*, section 6 *Confidentiality and the Use of Staff Information*.

We hope these measures will help reassure staff and encourage disclosure, so that output reductions can be applied to those staff who meet the required criteria. Such decisions may have a fundamental bearing on whether or not someone is submitted to the REF.

The *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances* will review each case and will take one or more of the following circumstances into consideration, as appropriate:

- Early Career Researcher (ECR). Please note that the term 'Early Career Researcher' is not a reference to someone's age. An ECR is someone who began their academic career as an *independent researcher* on or after 1 August 2009. A full description of an ECR is in the REF's *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions document*, paragraphs 85 to 87, available from the REF2014 website ([www.ref.ac.uk/](http://www.ref.ac.uk/)) or the University's REF2014 pages on the Portal;
- Part time employment;
- Career break or secondment outside the higher education sector, during which the individual did not undertake academic research;
- Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave and additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters);
- Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue);
- Ill health or injury;
- Mental health conditions;
- Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, adoption, paternity or childcare **in addition to** periods of maternity, statutory adoption or additional paternity leave taken. This could include for example, pregnancy related illness and health and safety restrictions in laboratory and field work;
- Other caring responsibilities (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative);
- Gender reassignment.

If your research output has been affected by other circumstances (not including teaching and administrative duties unless specifically mentioned above), please state them on the *Disclosure Form*, as they may be considered. The ECU has produced some case studies for the more complex circumstances, available on the REF portal pages at [University Of Lincoln Portal - REF 2014](#).

**Only circumstances, and/or their effects, that have occurred during the REF period, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013, will be taken into account.**

**In determining the number of outputs staff are required to submit, the University will follow the information in Section 1, paragraphs 63 to 91, in the REF's *Panel criteria and working methods* (January 2012) document available at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) under *Publications* and on the University's REF2014 Portal pages. This will give staff the opportunity to submit the number of outputs that is both necessary and sufficient, without penalty.**

Once we have looked at the *Disclosure Forms*, we will write to all of you who have declared a circumstance on the returned *Form*, notifying you of our decision, including, where appropriate, the number of outputs that you will need in order to be eligible for return in REF2014.

We will also notify your UOAC if you are entitled to a reduction in outputs. We will only state the number of outputs required for each individual - no other details will be provided to the UOACs, in order to maintain confidentiality. We will also provide, to the REF, a written justification for your entitlement to a reduction in outputs, if you are selected for submission.

If you have already discussed your circumstances with the REF Co-ordinator (Melanie Bullock) or your UOAC, it is still important that you complete the *Disclosure Form*, adding any information that you have not already mentioned.

Please complete and return the attached *Disclosure Form* by 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012, either in a sealed envelope marked 'private and confidential', to Melanie Bullock, REF Co-ordinator, Research and Enterprise Development, Enterprise@Lincoln Building, or by email to [mbullock@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:mbullock@lincoln.ac.uk). ***Please note that email is not a secure method of communication.*** Please update and re-send your *Form* if your circumstances subsequently change.



## Individual staff circumstances disclosure form

Name	
School	
Unit of Assessment	

### Section one:

#### Please select one or more of the following:

- ☐ I have no individual circumstances that I wish to be taken into consideration for the purposes of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).
- ☐ I have individual circumstances that I wish to make known but I am not seeking a reduction in outputs. (Please complete sections two and three.)
- ☐ In completing this form I am seeking a reduction in research outputs. (Please complete sections two and three.)
- ☐ I have already discussed my circumstances with the REF Co-ordinator, Melanie Bullock. (Please complete sections two and three.)

### Section two:

#### Please select as appropriate:

- ☐ I would like to be contacted by a member of the *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances* to discuss my circumstances and requirements.

My contact details for this purpose are:

Email	
Telephone	
Preferred method of communication	

- ☐ I do **not** wish to be contacted by a member of the *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*

**Section three:**

I wish to make the University aware of the following circumstances which have had an impact on my ability to produce four outputs or work productively between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013:

**Please provide the information required on relevant circumstance/s and continue onto a separate page, as necessary:**

<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Information required</b>
<b>Early Career Researcher (ECR)</b>  (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2009; a more detailed explanation can be found in the <i>Assessment framework and guidance on submissions</i> document, paragraphs 85 to 87)	Date on which you became an early career researcher
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Part time employee</b>	FTE and duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector</b>	Dates and duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave</b> (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)	For each period of leave state which type of leave was taken and the dates and duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Disability</b> (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Mental health condition</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	

<b>Ill health or injury</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, paternity, adoption or childcare <i>in addition to</i> the period of maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave taken.</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Other caring responsibilities</b> (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Other exceptional and relevant reasons, not including teaching or administrative work</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	

Please select as appropriate:

☐ **I confirm that the information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances**

- ☐ I recognise that the information provided will be used for REF purposes and will be seen by members of the *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*
- ☐ I realise that it may be necessary to share information with the UK funding bodies' REF Team, who may make the information available to REF panel chairs, members and secretaries and/or the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP). Where permission is not provided, the University of Lincoln will be limited in the action it can take. (For more information about who will have access to the information outside the University, please see the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*, section 7.5.)

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
(Staff member)

**For official use only**

Following consideration of the personal circumstances described above, the *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances*:

- ☐ has calculated that the staff member will require [X] number of research outputs for inclusion in the REF submission, subject to the University's specified criteria.  
Rationale for the proposed number of outputs:  
e.g. this decision is based on the tariffs outlined in the *REF Panel criteria and working methods* document.
- ☐ requires further information regarding the circumstances, as follows:  
e.g. please provide information from your occupational health assessment on the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments provided.
- ☐ does not feel that the staff member meets the criteria outlined within the *REF Panel criteria and working methods* for submitting fewer than four research outputs. The reason(s) for this decision are:  
e.g. circumstances detailed are not recognised within the *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document.

If [NAME] wishes to appeal against the decision of the *Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances* they will need to do so by [DATE] and details of the appeals process can be found in Section 8 of the University's *Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff*.

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
(**Professor Ieuan Owen**, Chair of the  
University REF Working Group)

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
(Melanie Bullock - REF Co-ordinator)

## Appendix F - Questions and Answers

Explanations for some of the terms referred to in these Q&As can be found in *Appendix G*, a glossary that relates to the *Code of Practice*.

1	<p><b>Why do I need to declare individual staff circumstances?</b></p> <p>If, during the REF period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013, there have been reasons why it has not been possible to produce the requisite four outputs for a REF submission, whether it is because you were not an academic researcher for some of this time, you work part-time, you have been on maternity leave or have had some form of illness (or have any other situation that has affected your ability to work to your full capacity) , then you could be allowed to submit fewer outputs without prejudicing the assessment and the quality rating for your work. This could decide whether or not you will be submitted to the REF.</p>
2	<p><b>Who will see my staff circumstances disclosure form?</b></p> <p>Within the University, the information that you provide will be seen by the <i>Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances</i>. This panel has a restricted membership of four. See section 7.5 <i>Staff eligibility</i> and Appendix B for the terms of reference and membership of the Panel. If you make an appeal against a decision about your inclusion in the REF, it may be necessary for information that you have disclosed about your circumstances to be viewed by the University REF Appeals Panel, also. If you are submitted to the REF with reduced outputs, a paragraph stating the reason for the reduction will be reviewed by the REF's EDAP (Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel) and their recommendations made to the Chair of the Main Panel to which you are submitting. Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators (UOACs) and UOA Panel members will simply be told what reduction in outputs you are entitled to, but not why.</p>
3	<p><b>How will my information be kept confidential?</b></p> <p>All paper and electronic data concerning staff circumstances will be kept in a secure place within the University and by the REF Team, ie. externally. Electronic data will be password protected and paper documentation will be kept under lock and key. See section 6 <i>Confidentiality and the Use of Staff Information</i>.</p>
4	<p><b>How long will the information about my staff circumstances be kept?</b></p> <p>The REF Team and the panels have indicated that they will audit a percentage of submissions with a reduction in outputs, as well as those about which it has doubts. It will be necessary to keep any data relating to this until the audits have finished. The University has taken, and will continue to take, the advice of the University's Information Compliance Manager - see Section 6 for more details.</p>
5	<p><b>Do I have to declare staff circumstances?</b></p> <p>No, you do not have to, but it may help your submission to the REF if you do. All ECRs have to be declared (if they are REF-able), even if they have four outputs.</p>
6	<p><b>Who should I contact if I have doubts about the process or if I have any questions?</b></p> <p>Obviously it should be someone whom you trust; it might be your UOAC or your Director of Research. If, however, you do not wish to talk to anyone in your College/Faculty/School, then you might consider speaking to the REF Co-ordinator (Melanie Bullock) who is a member of the <i>Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances</i> and who is very familiar with the staff disclosure process.</p>

7	<p><b>Will any information about me be published by the REF Team?</b></p> <p>Yes. When the submissions are published by the REF Team in 2015, it will be possible to see what outputs you submitted. The quality ratings for these outputs will not be published. For more information regarding what will be published see paragraphs 33 to 38 of the <i>Assessment framework and guidance on submissions</i> document, available on the University's REF portal pages or from the REF2014 official website (<a href="http://www.ref.ac.uk/">http://www.ref.ac.uk/</a>).</p>
8	<p><b>Is it possible to find out how a decision is made about what reduction a person with complex staff circumstances is entitled to?</b></p> <p>The <i>Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances</i> will send you a summary of their decision. It is likely, in the more complicated cases, that someone from the <i>Panel</i> will talk to you about your case before a decision is made. To find out how the REF Team makes their decision, see paragraphs 90-91 in the <i>Panel criteria and working methods</i> document, available on the REF2014 website (<a href="http://www.ref.ac.uk/">http://www.ref.ac.uk/</a>), the University's REF2014 portal pages and the University's REF2014 blog. You can also find some fictional case studies about staff circumstances (supplied by the Equality Challenge Unit) on the ECU website (<a href="http://www.ecu.ac.uk/documents/ref-materials/complex-circumstances-examples">http://www.ecu.ac.uk/documents/ref-materials/complex-circumstances-examples</a>) and on the University portal pages.</p>
9	<p><b>If I have had an academic contract, under which I was required to do research, before I came to Lincoln, can I still be an ECR?</b></p> <p>You are only an ECR if the first time that you were given a research only or a teaching and research contract, where you were required to do independent research, was after 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009, regardless of whether it was here at the University of Lincoln or at another institution, in the UK or abroad, public or private or whether you have had a long break since you last had such a contract.</p>
10	<p><b>Do I need to provide any proof that I am an ECR or that I have had circumstances that have prevented me from producing the required four outputs?</b></p> <p>Yes, the REF Team have indicated that they will audit a percentage of submissions with a reduction in outputs, as well as those about which it has doubts, and ask the submitting HEI to produce the evidence to back up their claims for reductions. It would be very helpful if you could keep any relevant information easily accessible, such as copies of old academic contracts, CVs, job descriptions, letters from previous institutions confirming your employment position, letters relating to absence, etc.. These documents may also help us when we are considering your situation.</p>
11	<p><b>What do I do if I disagree with the decision made about my circumstances?</b></p> <p>We hope that, through discussion with you about your circumstances, we can come to a mutually agreed decision. If this is not possible and you disagree with the decision of the <i>Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances</i>, you can lodge an appeal following the process set out in section 8 of the <i>Code of Practice</i>.</p>
12	<p><b>Can I appeal against a decision made about the quality of my outputs?</b></p> <p>Yes, you can make an appeal if you have not been submitted to the REF because your outputs were judged not to meet the quality threshold that the University set for inclusion. Follow the process set out in section 8 of the <i>Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff</i>.</p>

## Appendix G - Glossary of REF2014 Terms

Quotes are from REF2014's *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions* document (July 2011) which explains many of the terms shown below in greater detail - a link to the document is on the University's [REF2014 portal page](http://www.ref.ac.uk/) or can be accessed directly from the REF2014 website <http://www.ref.ac.uk/>.

<b>Category A staff</b>	A member of staff with an academic contract where one of the primary functions is research (ie. a research or research and teaching contract), employed as at least 0.2FTE, regardless of whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, permanent, hourly, daily, weekly or monthly paid.
<b>Category C staff</b>	"Individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit on the census date (31 October 2013)"
<b>Census date</b>	The date on which all staff who are being considered for entry to the REF must be employed by the submitting HEI, the date being 31st October 2013.
<b>Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff</b>	Mandatory document that each HEI submitting to the REF must create and implement, for the promotion of equality and diversity in their selection of staff for submission to the REF - the final document must be sent to the REF Team by 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2012.
<b>ECR</b>	Early career researcher - a member of staff who was given, for the first time, either in the UK or abroad, a research or research and teaching academic contract, working as an independent researcher, on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2009 and working at least 0.2FTE. An ECR is entitled to a reduction in the number of outputs required for a submission, based on a rising scale.
<b>ECU</b>	Equality Challenge Unit - the HE/FE body supporting staff and students on equality and diversity issues - is advising the REF on these issues and has helped develop the framework around the <i>Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff</i> .
<b>EDAG</b>	The REF's Equalities and Diversity Advisory Group that created the guidance for the development of <i>Codes of Practice</i>
<b>EDAP</b>	The REF's Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel which will review each HEI's <i>Code of Practice</i> and the claims for reductions in the number of outputs submitted by an individual.
<b>EIA</b>	Equality impact assessment - conducted to evaluate the efficacy of the University's <i>Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff</i> .
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent, where full-time staff contracts are expressed as 1.0FTE and part-time staff are shown as a proportion, eg. 0.2FTE.
<b>HEFCE</b>	Higher Education Funding Council for England, one of four bodies funding and overseeing REF2014.
<b>Outputs</b>	The product of research (meeting the REF definition of research), available in the public domain, where possible, most often in printed form, but also including items such as patents, devices, images, artefacts, performances, exhibitions, etc.. The publication deadline for eligibility in the REF is 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2013.



<b>Protected characteristics</b>	Under the Equality Act (2010), there are 9 protected characteristics and it is unlawful to discriminate against them. See section 4.1 in this document for a list.
<b>RAE</b>	Research Assessment Exercise - the predecessor to the REF - the last one was in 2008
<b>REF2014</b>	Research Excellence Framework, the successor to the RAE
<b>REF-able</b>	Describes an academic member of staff who satisfies the University and REF submission criteria or someone who is expected to do so by the relevant dates.
<b>REF Panels</b>	The UOAs are divided into 4 panels, A-D, each of which will set overarching and individual criteria for its UOAs - these criteria were published in January 2012.
<b>The REF Team</b>	Those who manage the REF on behalf of the UK HE funding bodies and have oversight of the whole process.
<b>University REF Working Group</b>	Comprises all UOACs (see below); College/Faculty Directors of Research; the Senior DVC Research, Innovation and Enterprise; members of the Research Office, including the REF Co-ordinator and chaired by the PVC Research. This Working Group is responsible for overseeing the REF process throughout the University, gathering data for submission and discussing, recommending and implementing processes for a successful set of submissions to the REF.
<b>Research</b>	The basic REF definition of research is “a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared”. Annex C of the <i>Assessment framework and guidance on submissions</i> document expands on this.
<b>Staff circumstances</b>	This is where a member of staff is unable to produce 4 REF-able outputs due to one or more particular work-related or personal circumstances, such as working part-time, just beginning academic career (see ECR), maternity leave or more complex situations such as physical or mental health problems, discrimination or bullying and so on. Using guidelines from the REF Team, based on the number of months during which the member of staff was affected, an academic may be entitled to a reduction in the number of outputs required.
<b>Submission</b>	The complete set of outputs and staff details of the authors, impact template, impact case studies and environment template for a specific UOA from an HEI.
<b>UOA</b>	Unit of assessment - submissions are made to one of 36 UOAs, which reflect research subject areas - see the REF portal page for a list: <a href="https://portal.lincoln.ac.uk/C9/C6/REF2014/default.aspx">https://portal.lincoln.ac.uk/C9/C6/REF2014/default.aspx</a>
<b>UOAC</b>	Unit of Assessment Co-ordinator - within the University, a senior academic in each School, who co-ordinates and oversees the REF submission for a particular subject/discipline (UOA). Some UOACs are responsible for more than one UOA - a list of all the current UOACs is available in <i>Appendix B</i> of this document.

## Appendix H – CoP Revisions

Changes are coloured **purple** in the text of the CoP

Revision	Location	Date of Change
New first page – original first page retained, also.	First Page	February 2014
‘PVC Research’ changed to ‘DVC Research’	7.6	December 2012
Change of date from ‘July 2013’ to ‘September 2013’	7.7	July 2013
Addition: ‘Staff changes and new publications may result in later decisions being made during October 2013.’	7.7	July 2013
‘Senior DVC’ changed to ‘DVC Research’	8.2	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Note about REF2014 submission EIA data and analysis added	Appendix A	February 2014
Addition of ‘following discussion with the Senior REF Oversight Group’.	Appendix B Section 3 Remit (i)	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
‘Professor Andrew Atherton - Senior DVC Research, Innovation and Enterprise’ changed to ‘Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research’	Appendix B Section 3 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Removed: ‘Professor Paul Stewart - PVC research and Chair of the University REF Working Group’	Appendix B Section 3 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Addition of ‘or who are Early Career Researchers (ECRs)’.	Appendix B Section 4 - Remit (viii)	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
‘Professor Paul Stewart - PVC Research’ changed to ‘Dr Lisa Mooney – University Dean of Research’	Appendix B Section 4 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
‘Professor Andrew Atherton - Senior DVC Research, Innovation and Enterprise’ changed to ‘Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research’	Appendix B Section 4 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Addition: ‘The REF Administrator is responsible for the papers for the Panel.’	Appendix B Section 4 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
‘PVC Research’ changed to ‘University Dean of Research’	Appendix B Section 4 – Members i.	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
‘Senior DVC’ changed to ‘DVC Research’	Appendix B Section 4 – Members ii.	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Additional item (iv) in ‘Remit’: ‘To provide information to, and advise, the University REF Selection Panel on staff submission and REF strategy.’	Appendix B Section 6 Remit (iv)	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
‘Professor Andrew Atherton - Senior DVC Research, Innovation and Enterprise’ changed to ‘Professor Ieuan Owen - DVC Research’	Appendix B Section 6 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Removed: ‘Professor Paul Stewart - PVC Research’	Appendix B Section 6 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013

Addition: 'Professor Krista Cowman – Director of Research, representing the College of Arts'	Appendix B Section 6 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
'Dr Lisa Mooney Smith - Director of Research, representing the College of Arts' changed to Dr Lisa Mooney – University Dean of Research'	Appendix B Section 6 - Members	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Changes made to timetable – see purple text	Appendix C	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Sender of Staff Circumstances letter changed from 'Andrew Atherton, Senior DVC' to 'Ieuan Owen - DVC'	Appendix E	December 2012
In Staff Circumstances letter, change to membership of the Review Panel of Individual Staff Circumstances: Dr Lisa Mooney replacing Professor Paul Stewart; Professor Ieuan Owen replacing Professor Andrew Atherton.	Appendix E	December 2012
<i>Individual staff circumstances disclosure form:</i> 'Professor Paul Stewart' changed to 'Professor Ieuan Owen'	Appendix E	December 2012