



REF 2014 Code of practice on the selection of staff

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 The Research Excellence Framework (hereafter referred to as REF 2014) is the new system for assessing the quality of research in higher education institutions (HEIs) in the UK, and replaces the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), last conducted in 2008. The REF is conducted jointly by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Scottish Funding Council (SCF), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and the Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland (DEL).
- 1.2 The primary purpose of REF 2014 is to produce assessment outcomes for each submission made by institutions in order to:
- a. inform the selective allocation of the four higher education funding bodies' grant for research to the institutions which they fund, with effect from 2015-16
 - b. provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefit of this investment
 - c. provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks for use within the higher education sector and for public information.
- 1.3 REF 2014 will be assessed through a process of discipline based expert review.
- 1.4 Given that the outcome of assessment achieved in REF 2014 will determine the allocation of funding to Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) for a period of several years, the University will endeavour to secure the best possible outcome from its REF 2014 submission. This will necessitate decisions by the University regarding which staff members and outputs will be selected for inclusion in its submission.
- 1.5 Each Institution making a submission to the Research Excellence Framework is required to develop, document and apply a Code of practice on the transparent selection of staff to include in their submissions.
- 1.6 This document sets out the Code of practice which will be used to identify those staff who are to be included in Arts University Bournemouth's submission for REF 2014. It is based on the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity in order to identify all eligible staff who have produced excellent research for submission to the REF 2014 and to ensure that all REF 2014 processes are fair from the outset. These principles will be implemented uniformly and applied to all aspects/stages of the process at all levels within the University where decisions will be made.
- 1.7 The Code of practice will be made available to all academic staff on the AUB Intranet pages when approved by Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee and will be published on the University website when approved by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP).

1.8 The United Kingdom Funding Bodies require that Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs') Codes of practice are submitted to them by 31 July 2012.

2.0 Arts University Bournemouth position

2.1 All members of the University's community including staff, students, visitors and contractors have a responsibility to treat others fairly and respectfully regardless of the characteristics which may define their identity, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

2.2 The University is responsible for providing a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where discrimination of any kind is treated with the utmost seriousness.

3.0 Eligibility for inclusion in the submission

3.1 All academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater and on the payroll of the University on the census date (31 October 2013), and whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'¹ are eligible for inclusion in the REF 2014 submission as Category A staff.

3.2 This also includes

- a. Pensioned staff who continue in salaried employment contracted to carry out research and who meet the definition above.
- b. Academic staff that are on unpaid leave of absence or on secondment on the census date **and** are contracted to return to normal duties up to two years from the start of their period of absence or secondment, provided that any staff recruited specifically to cover their duties are not also returned as Category A staff.
- c. Academic staff that are employed by AUB and based in a discrete department or unit outside the UK provided that the University can demonstrate that the primary focus of their research activity on the census date is clearly and directly connected to the submitting unit based in the UK.
- d. Staff whose salary is calculated on an hourly or daily basis are eligible **only** if they meet the definition at 3.1 **and** on the census date have a contract of employment of at least 0.2 FTE per year over the length of their contract.
- e. Staff that hold more than one contract for different functions within AUB are eligible if one of those contracts satisfies the definition of Category A staff.

3.3 Staff who are working on secondment as contracted academic staff at another UK higher education institution on the census date; staff who have a contract with and receive a salary from more than one HEI should contact the Research Office to discuss their return.

3.4 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) are also eligible for return as Category C staff.

¹ These are staff returned to the HESA Staff Collection with an activity code of 'Academic Professional' (currently identified as code '2' or '3' in the ACEMPFUN field).

3.5 Further information is contained within the publication REF 02.2011 (Assessment framework and guidance on submissions).

4.0 Assessment criteria

4.1 The University's return to REF 2014 will be considered by Main Panel D and its sub-panels who will apply the following criteria to assess the submission:

- **Originality:** an intellectual advance or an important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge. This may include substantive empirical findings, new arguments, interpretations or insights, imaginative scope, assembling of information in an innovative way, development of new theoretical frameworks and conceptual models, innovative methodologies and/or new forms of expression.
- **Significance:** the degree to which work has enhanced, or is likely to enhance knowledge, thinking, understanding and/or practice in its field.
- **Rigour:** intellectual coherence, methodological precision and analytical power; accuracy and depth of scholarship; awareness of and appropriate engagement with other relevant work.

4.2 The assessment will be made using the following quality levels:

Four star Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour. Sub-panels will expect to see evidence of or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics across and beyond its area/field:

- a primary or essential point of reference
- of profound influence
- instrumental in developing new thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- a major expansion of the range and the depth of research and its application
- outstandingly novel, innovative and/or creative

Three star Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence. Sub-panels will expect to see evidence of or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics across and possibly beyond its area/field:

- an important point of reference
- of lasting influence
- a catalyst for, or important contribution to, new thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- a significant expansion of the range and the depth of research and its application
- significantly novel or innovative or creative

Two star Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour. Sub-panels will expect to see evidence of or potential for, some of the following types of characteristics across and possibly beyond its area/field:

- a recognised point of reference
- of some influence
- an incremental and cumulative advance on thinking, practices, paradigms, policies or audiences
- a useful contribution to the range or depth of research and its application

One star Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour. Sub-panels will expect to see evidence of the following characteristics within its area/field:

- based on existing traditions of thinking, methodology and/or creative practice
- a useful contribution of minor influence

Unclassified A research output will be graded 'unclassified' if it is:

- below the quality level for one star
- does not meet the definition of research used for REF 2014
- a submission which represents a research output 'missing' for no justifiable reason.

4.3 It is anticipated that the University will submit to the sub-panel for Unit of Assessment (UoA) 34: Art and Design: history, practice and theory which includes research from all aspects of the history, theory and practice of art and design. The sub-panel will consider outputs, in whatever genre or medium that meet the definition of research given in Annex A.

Practice encompasses all disciplines within art and design, in which methods of making, representation, interrogation and interpretation are integral to their productions. History and theory encompass the history, criticism, theory, historiography, pedagogy and aesthetics of architecture, art, craft, and design in their widest chronological and geographic framework.

The following is an illustrative list of subject areas within practice, theory and history of art and design that the sub-panel expects to assess:

- animation
- architecture
- the study of materials and techniques
- creative and heritage industries
- critical, historical, social and cultural studies
- entrepreneurship and enterprise
- film and broadcast media
- fine arts
- museology and curatorship
- photography
- spatial, two and three dimensional design
- textiles, dress and fashion
- time-based and digital media
- visual and material culture

4.4 It is also expected that some outputs may be cross referred to UoA 35: Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts. The sub-panel will assess research from all areas of music, drama, dance, theatre, performance, live art, film and television studies, and anticipates that outputs will span a range of writings, edited publications and research-led creative practices, as well as artefacts and curatorial outputs. The sub-panel expects to evaluate research that encompasses analytical, applied, ethnographical, historical, pedagogical, practice-led, scientific, technological and theoretical approaches to the widest domains of dance, drama, music, performing and screen arts, and covers the broadest understanding of the subject disciplines within any cultural, geographical or historical context.

4.5 Further information is contained within the publication REF 01.2012 (Panel criteria and working methods).

5.0 Eligibility of research outputs

- 5.1 Submissions must include up to four items of research outputs listed against each staff member included in the submission. Each output must be:
- a) the product of research, briefly defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. (The full definition of research for the purposes of the REF can be found at Annex A.)
 - b) first brought into the public domain during the publication period, 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2013.
 - c) produced or authored solely, or co-produced or co-authored, by the member of staff against whom the output is listed, regardless of where the member of staff was employed at the time they produced that output.
- 5.2 The sub-panels will neither advantage nor disadvantage any type of research or form of output, whether it is physical or virtual, textual or non-textual, visual or sonic, static or dynamic, digital or analogue. No output will be privileged or disadvantaged on the basis of the publisher, where it is published or the medium of its publication.
- 5.3 Outputs may include, but are not limited to:
- books (authored or edited)
 - chapters in books
 - journal articles
 - published conference papers
 - electronic resources and publications
 - exhibition and museum catalogues
 - curatorship and conservation
 - dictionaries
 - digital and broadcast media
 - performance and other types of live presentation
 - artefacts
 - designs and exhibitions
 - films, videos and other types of media presentation
 - advisory reports
- 5.4 Reviews, textbooks or edited works may be included if they embody research as defined in Annex A. Editorships of journals and other activities associated with the dissemination of research findings and doctoral theses may not be listed as outputs.
- 5.5 Outputs may be double-weighted where the scale and/or scope of a research output required a research effort equivalent to that required to produce two or more single outputs and that may, in some cases, have limited the ability of an individual researcher to produce four substantial outputs within the assessment period. Reserve outputs may be included in the submission but will only be included if the request for double weighting is not accepted by the sub-panel.
- 5.6 Characteristics which might apply to the research effort associated with a double-weighted output include:

- The generation of a particularly extensive, complex concept or thesis
- The collection and analysis of a considerable body of material
- The use of primary sources which were especially extensive, complex or difficult to access
- The production of a research output which was contingent upon the completion of a particularly complex and extensive period of workshop/studio practice.

6.0 Individual staff circumstances as defined by REF 2014.

6.1 As a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, individuals may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, where their circumstances have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period.

6.2 Circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs are:

- qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)
- part-time working
- statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013; additional paternity or adoption leave lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013
- secondments or career breaks outside of the higher education sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research

6.3 Complex circumstances that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs are:

- disability
- ill-health or injury
- mental health conditions
- constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption, or childcare that fall outside of, or justify, the reduction of further outputs in addition to the allowances made in 6.2
- other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member)
- gender reassignment
- other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief including non-belief; sex; sexual orientation; or relating to activities protected by employment legislation

6.4 For clearly defined circumstances, the panel criteria statements provide a tariff system to determine the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty in the assessment. For complex circumstances, the University will need to make a judgement on the appropriate number of outputs to be submitted. In order to do so, a disclosure form (developed by the Research Office in conjunction with Human Resources, the Senior Officer (Equalities) and the Data Protection Officer using the template from the Equality Challenge Unit) will be sent to **all** eligible staff by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in September 2012. Staff will be encouraged to return the form to the Research Office as part of their response to the invitation to be considered for REF 2014 submission. Disclosure forms can be submitted up until 31 October 2013 to take account of later changes to an individual's circumstances.

6.6 It is a staff member's decision whether to disclose personal information or give permission for it to be stored or passed on but AUB may be limited in the action it can take if this is not submitted. Personal data on individual staff circumstances, some of which will be classed as sensitive personal data, will be handled in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and retained until December 2014, when REF 2014 outcomes are published.

6.7 REF 2014 Disclosure Panel

6.7.1 The Disclosure Panel will convene in early January 2013. The Disclosure Panel will consider all disclosure forms prior to the meeting of the Selection Panel and will match clearly defined circumstances to the published tariff reductions. It will also consider all cases of complex staff circumstances and confirm the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs to be submitted, seeking external advice from the Equality Challenge Unit and referencing the published guidance. The Disclosure Panel will monitor the process for identifying individuals whose circumstances might need special consideration, and will evidence its decisions and actions.

6.7.2 The Disclosure Panel will comprise the following:

- University Secretary (Chair)
- Assistant Director Research
- Senior Officer (Equalities)

The Senior Research and Knowledge Transfer Officer, as Secretary to the Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee, shall act as Secretary to the Panel.

6.7.3 All Panel members will be invited to declare any conflicts of interest to the Secretary in advance. Any member of the Panel declaring a conflict of interest (including being a candidate for submission) shall be required to withdraw from discussion of the relevant submission.

6.8 Information provided will be seen by AUB members of staff identified on the disclosure form who will observe confidentiality and the information will be stored securely.

6.8.1 Subsequently, it may be shared externally for the purposes of evidencing any reduction in the number of research outputs:

(i) for circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs, information will be seen by the relevant REF 2014 sub-panel, the REF 2014 panel secretariat and the UK funding bodies' REF 2014 team.

(ii) for more complex circumstances, information will be seen only by the REF 2014 Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, the REF Main Panel Chairs and the UK funding bodies' REF 2014 team.

6.8.2 All REF 2014 panel members, chairs and secretaries are bound by confidentiality requirements. No information relating to an identifiable individual's circumstances will be published by the funding bodies REF 2014 team. All data collected, stored and processed by the UK funding bodies REF 2014 team will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

7.0 Selection process

7.1 In September 2012, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor will invite all eligible staff to respond to an invitation to be considered for REF 2014 submission.

7.2 Eligible staff will be sent electronic copies of the following documents to inform them of the requirements for return to the REF:

- AUB REF 2014 Code of practice
- Disclosure Form
- Equalities Monitoring Form
- Assessment framework and guidance on submission (REF 02.2011)
- Panel criteria and working methods (REF 01.2012)

Absent eligible employees will be sent hard copies of the invitation and associated documents to their home address.

7.3 Eligible staff will also be invited to attend either one of two lunchtime meetings (to be held on different days to facilitate attendance by those on fractional posts) when processes related to the selection of staff and the Code of practice will be disseminated. Private, confidential meetings with the Head of HR and/or the Senior Officer (Equalities) can be arranged for anyone wishing to discuss their individual circumstances.

7.4 Eligible staff who wish to be considered will be invited to provide details of their anticipated outputs for the REF publication period (1 January 2008 to 31 December 2013) to the Research Office by 1 December 2012 and should include the following information:

- i) **Research outputs** (in formats that enable the Panel to consider them)
- ii) **Additional information for practice-based outputs** (statement of up to 300 words to describe the research imperatives, research process and the research significance of an output such as an artefact, curation, digital format, installation, performance or event, screening, textbook or video)
- iii) **Portfolio in either digital/physical form** for cases where the research output is ephemeral or one in a series of interconnected works. This might include complementary evidence about the processes and outcomes of the work, for example DVDs, video and audio tapes, photographs, sketchbooks, web-sites, catalogues, interviews or programme notes.
- iv) **Disclosure Form**
- v) **Equalities Monitoring Form** (for return to HR)

This will ensure that everything is ready in a timely fashion for consideration by the AUB REF Selection Panel and enable the University to make a return to the REF Survey of Submission Intentions.

8.0 REF 2014 Selection Panel

8.1 The Selection Panel will convene in late January/ early February 2013. The date of the Selection Panel meeting will be advertised on the Academic Calendar. Additional Disclosure Panel and Selection Panel meetings will be held should staff disclose additional individual circumstances before 31 October 2013. Dates for these meetings will be obtained from the Research Office.

- 8.2 The Selection Panel will have the following terms of reference:
- i) to consider all the submissions made against published criteria² in terms of eligibility of staff and research outputs
 - ii) to consider outputs against the REF 2014 published criteria of significance; originality; and rigour of the research
 - iii) after consideration of the above, to determine which staff and outputs will be returned to REF 2014
- 8.3 The Selection Panel will comprise the following, who are all members of the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
 - Assistant Director Research
 - Dean of Faculty of Art and Design
 - Dean of Faculty of Media and Performance
 - Two Heads of School, both members of Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee

The Senior Research and Knowledge Transfer Officer, as Secretary to the Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee, shall act as Secretary to the Panel.

- 8.4 All Selection Panel members will be invited to declare any conflicts of interest to the Secretary in advance. Any member of the Selection Panel declaring a conflict of interest (including being a candidate for submission) shall be required to withdraw from discussion of the relevant submission.
- 8.5 Written feedback to all staff considered by the Selection Panel in the form of a confidential letter from the Selection Panel Chair will be given within twenty working days of the meeting. This will also include confirmation of the decision reached by the REF 2014 Disclosure Panel.

9.0 Appeals process

- 9.1 AUB will operate an appeals process that is tailored to REF 2014 as the standard grievance process will not be sufficient due mostly to timing implications.
- 9.2 The professional academic judgement of the Selection Panel is not contestable.
- 9.3 However, all staff have the right to appeal against a decision to exclude them from submission to REF 2014 where they believe that:
- their submission did not receive due consideration due to administrative error
 - their non-submission relates to any protected characteristic defined under the Equality Act 2010, or to any of the individual staff circumstances detailed in the Assessment framework and guidance on submissions (REF 01.2012) and Panel criteria and working methods documents (REF 02.2011).
- 9.4 Appeals must be made in writing to the Chair of the Selection Panel, outlining the circumstances giving rise to the appeal and providing any supporting evidence; this must be received by the Chair of the Selection Panel within fifteen working days of the issuing of

² As summarised in the AUB REF 2014 Code of practice on the selection of staff; and detailed in the Assessment framework and guidance on submissions (REF 02.2011) and Panel criteria and working methods (REF 01.2012).

written feedback. The Chair in consultation with the Selection Panel will determine if the applicant meets the REF eligibility criteria for return (as defined in REF 02.2011 and REF 01.2012). Where it is determined that the case does not meet the REF eligibility criteria, the Chair will feed this back to the individual staff member concerned stating the reasons within ten working days of the appeal being received.

9.5 If the application is valid, an Appeals Panel will be constituted consisting of the following members:

- Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
- Assistant Director Human Resources
- Director of Academic Services

9.6 The Panel will meet separately with the appellant and the Chair of the REF 2014 Selection and Disclosure Panels. The Panel may also seek external advice where appropriate. In the event of an appeal being upheld the Selection Panel would be reconvened and the submission reconsidered.

9.7 The outcome of the Appeals Panel will be formally communicated in writing within ten working days.

10. Equalities Training

10.1 All AUB REF 2014 Disclosure Panel, Selection Panel and Appeals Panel members employed by AUB have received Equalities Training in respect of the Equalities Act 2010.

10.2 All members of staff on the AUB REF 2014 Disclosure Panel and the REF 2014 Appeals Panel will receive further training in December 2012 (prior to any selection being made). This will ensure that they are cognisant of the legislative context (i.e. the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector duty of the Act which came into force in April 2011) with which the University has to comply when preparing REF 2014 submissions and the implications of dealing with personal circumstances in the process of selecting staff for inclusion.

11.0 Equalities Analysis (EA)

11.1 An Equalities Analysis (formally known as an Equalities Impact Assessment) of these guidelines has been conducted by the Research Office and approved by the Equalities Scrutiny Group. AUB adopts the good practice of conducting EA as part of any policy development/review which includes all material pertaining to REF 2014.

11.2 The AUB REF 2014 Selection Panel Chair will monitor the data returned against an analysis of data on staff that are eligible for selection in respect of all the protected characteristics for which data is available and will request that the Panel reconvene if it is considered that the monitoring data gives cause for concern.

12.0 Development of the Code of practice

The Code of practice on the selection of staff was authored by the Research Office in consultation with the Head of HR; the Senior Officer (Equalities) and the Data Protection Officer. Drafts were considered by AUB Research Committee in February and May 2012. Following final revisions it was approved by the Research Committee on 3 July 2012.

Arts University Bournemouth is committed to the provision of a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where unfair discrimination of any kind is treated with the utmost seriousness. It has developed and implemented an Equalities Strategy and Action Plan to guide its work in this area. All the University's policies and practices are designed to meet the principles of dignity, respect and fairness, and take account of the commitments set out in the Equalities Strategy.

This policy has been subject to an equality analysis to ensure consideration with regard to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Date of last EA review: 16 January 2013

Annex A

Definition of research for the REF³

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; scholarship⁴; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.

It **excludes** routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that 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.

³ Annex C (REF 02.2011)

⁴ Scholarship for the REF 2014 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.

Annex B

Job roles of REF 2014 Disclosure Panel Members

University Secretary (Chair): Deputy Chair of Equalities Committee

Assistant Director Research: responsible for REF submission

Senior Officer (Equalities): member of Equalities Committee

Job roles of REF 2014 Selection Panel Members

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair): Chair of Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee

Assistant Director Research: as above

Dean of Faculty of Art and Design: responsible for research within Faculty

Dean of Faculty of Media and Performance: responsible for research within Faculty

Two Heads of School, both members of Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee

Research Professor: member of Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee

Job roles of REF 2014 Appeals Panel Members

Vice-Chancellor (Chair)

Assistant Director Human Resources

Director of Academic Services: Chair of Equalities Committee