

University of Cambridge Research Excellence Framework 2014 Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff

Background

1. Since 1986, the four national UK Higher Education Funding Councils have run a series of Research Assessment Exercises (RAEs) to evaluate the quality and amount of excellent research being undertaken in UK HEIs. The last RAE took place in 2008 but has now been superseded by the Research Excellence Framework (REF), which has a staff census date of 31 October 2013. There are slight differences between the Funding Bodies' REF regulations, and this Code of Practice has been drawn up to reflect the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) specifications since the University of Cambridge falls within its remit.

Importance of the REF to the University

2. The 2014 REF outcomes are of the greatest importance to the University and its staff. Firstly, they will enable us to demonstrate the extent to which we have retained or enhanced our pre-eminent reputation as one of the world's leading research institutions since the 2008 RAE, essential if we are to continue attracting the very best students and staff to Cambridge. Equally importantly, the REF outcomes will have a very significant impact on funding allocations to HEIs since, if previous practice is followed, REF income will be formula driven, based on the quality ratings allocated by the Panels for the various elements within the Exercise and the full-time equivalent (FTE) staff submitted.

HEFCE REF2014 arrangements

3. 2014 REF constitutes a peer review of the UK research academy and, accordingly, discipline-based specialist Panels have been appointed by HEFCE to assess REF submissions. A list of Unit of Assessment (UoA) Panels is attached as Annex A.
4. The HEFCE will publish the REF2014 results on their REF website in February 2015. The University has the right to request that sensitive information be removed before publication of the REF submissions **but it is the responsibility of the researcher concerned** to check that their REF output has been marked as confidential before the University makes its REF submission in November 2013.

REF Documentation

5. The HEFCE's primary reference document for all aspects of the REF process, including staff selection, is *REF02/2011: Assessment framework and guidance on submissions*. Hard copies are available for consultation in each School Office and the document is also available on the HEFCE website: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/>
6. HEFCE's *Panel Criteria and Working Methods* for each REF Unit of Assessment have now been released and are available on the above website with hard copies being circulated to School Offices.
7. Unless marked as confidential, all subsequent HEFCE information will be circulated immediately to the lead University contact for each UoA, to School Offices and will be posted on the University REF website.
8. **Please note:** HEFCE have stated that they will only reply to communications received through the University's designated REF contact, who is Mrs Peta Stevens (pms1000@cam.ac.uk). It is therefore essential that any queries which cannot be resolved through the above information sources should be sent directly to her or to the appropriate member of the University's REF team, as identified on

the University REF website. The REF Office undertakes that all team members' e-mail accounts, including those absent on leave, will be checked daily to prevent delay.

9. For this REF the University has adopted the following Policy Statement: "Our aim is to show leadership in all UoAs, whilst seeking to increase the University's percentage income return from HEFCE relative to our RAE 2008 performance".
10. The University, together with all other submitting HEIs, face a very difficult situation in trying to put together their strongest submissions, in terms of the REF assessment criteria, against a background of such financial stringency that HEFCE have stated that, with effect from the 2012-13 financial year, research that was assessed as 2* quality, or lower in the 2008 RAE will no longer receive funding. (See http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlets/2012/cl03_12/). Annex B attached provides HEFCE definitions of the U-4* classifications for the various elements of assessment. Taking these factors into account, it is inevitable that the University will need to exercise academic judgement to achieve a fine balance between research excellence and the need to maximise volume.

Equality & Diversity Principles underlying the REF

11. As public bodies, both HEFCE and the University have a statutory obligation to promote equality and diversity and to avoid discrimination; this obligation extends to all aspects of the University's REF preparations, including the fair and transparent selection of staff. Compliance with equality legislation is an obligation for HEIs and the University fully supports this position with the HEFCE's underlying principles of equity, equality, accountability and transparency being enshrined in its own Equal Opportunities Policy (available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/policy/equal.html>). This policy incorporates the University's commitment to promote, and adhere to, all the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

University REF Timetable

12. A timetable governing the University's REF preparations has been approved by the University's REF Policy Committee (REFPC) – see paragraph 22 below – and circulated to School Offices for distribution to all Heads of academic institutions, and posted on the University's website. In the event of REFPC approving a change to this timetable, School Offices and Heads of UoA Committees will be notified immediately and an alert posted on the REF website.

University Code of Practice on the selection of staff

13. In accordance with the information outlined above, HEFCE requires that every HEI making a submission to the 2014 REF must establish a Code of Practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for inclusion in their submission. Each Code must be submitted for approval to the HEFCE's Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel by July 2012. This document therefore sets out the Code of Practice for the University of Cambridge, describes the governance arrangements and procedures which will be followed, and, in so doing, addresses HEFCE's principles for the REF which concern:
 - Transparency
 - Consistency
 - Accountability
 - Inclusivity
14. This Code will apply to all University staff whose conditions of employment meet HEFCE's criteria for the 2014 REF. Only staff with the requisite number of excellent research outputs will be included in the University's return. All academic decisions taken on staff for REF will be solely at the University's

discretion, provided that these accord with the University's published statement on the level of academic quality which research outputs must reach in order to be considered for REF inclusion. To facilitate this approach, the University will establish decision making structures as set out below.

Equality and Diversity arrangements

Legal context

15. The University is fully committed to the principles of equal opportunity, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and in its own Equal Opportunities Policy, which states that no person shall be treated less favourably than another because of their belonging to a protected group. The protected characteristics set out in the Act cover:

- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including Ethnic or National Origin, Nationality or Colour)
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Religion or Belief

16. In addition, the University fully accepts its obligations under the law to treat part-time employees no less favourably than full-time employees nor will those employed on fixed-term contracts be treated differently from those holding open-ended contracts of employment. Furthermore, for REF 2014, the University does not expect that there will be any discrimination during the assessment process on the grounds of overseas qualifications, the language in which research is published or the views promulgated in that research. Furthermore, the University welcomes the special arrangements made in the REF process by HEFCE to support early career researchers and intends to observe these fully.

17. The University considers that this Code of Practice is fully consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and its other obligations while, at the same time, upholding its commitment to maintain and enhance its international reputation for research excellence, while securing the best possible return in terms of funding.

Equality Information and Training

18. The processes set out in this Code will apply to all academic members of staff and to administrative staff involved in REF preparations. The University requires all members of staff who will participate in the selection of staff for REF purposes to adhere to, and to apply uniformly, the principles set out in this Code.

19. To support the University's expectations, copies of this Code of Practice, together with the University's own Equal Opportunities Policy will be circulated electronically to all members of UoA Committees and to other REF Committees concerned with the selection of staff.

20. In addition, it is mandatory for **all** members of staff involved in REF staff selection processes to complete the University's online *Equal Opportunities and Diversity Essentials* training module,

produced to incorporate the provisions of the 2010 Equality Act, before they engage in substantive consideration of staff for inclusion in the REF. This module addresses 2014 REF implications and includes case studies, produced by the national Equality Challenge Unit, which address various equality issues relevant to the REF. The module can be accessed at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/training/online/>. Staff who have completed the University's equal opportunities and diversity essentials module or the NHS equality training process subsequent to the implementation of the Equality Act 2010, will be exempt from being required to complete the University's Equality and Diversity training module but should undertake the new REF case study element. Those who completed either course prior to the Equality Act 2010 are required to undertake the "top-up" module available on the University website. The E&D Office will oversee and monitor the University's training activities throughout the selection process for the REF.

21. The HR Division will maintain a record of compliance for this requirement. A member of a UoA Committee, or of any other Committee with REF staff selection responsibilities, who does not complete this on-line training module by 30 June 2012 will be sent a reminder. If necessary, a further reminder will be sent by 31 October 2012. If the individual concerned has still not completed the session by 31 January 2013, and, in the view of the University REF Manager, there are no extenuating circumstances, (ill health for example) the person concerned will normally be disqualified from participating in staff selection procedures and stood down from their REF Committee(s). It will be at the discretion of REFPC as to whether Committee(s) affected in this way will be required to revisit any substantive decisions taken on staff selection to which the previous member was party. It will be for the Chair of each Committee(s) to decide whether a replacement member should be appointed, bearing in mind the University's requirement that the assessment of work in any subject area likely to be included in a REF submission must be undertaken by an University academic who has demonstrable evidence of academic excellence in that field.

Governance and decision-making arrangements

Decision making responsibilities

22.

A) Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research

In accordance with Statute D, III, 7 of the University's *Statutes and Ordinances*, the Vice-Chancellor has delegated responsibility for the compilation and submission of REF 2014 submission to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research). She, in turn, is required to report to the General Board of the Faculties, which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.

B) Heads of Schools

Under Statute C, II, 5 of *Statutes and Ordinances*, each Head of School is the principal academic officer of the School and is responsible for the overall running of the School.

C) University REF Officer and the Head of the University Strategy Office

A Principal Assistant Registry, designated Head of the University Research Office, and the Senior Assistant Registry, as Head of the Research Strategy Office, have been assigned duties by the Registry to act as Head and Deputy Head of the University REF Office and will oversee all administrative and support functions for REF2014.

- D) The REF Policy Committee (REFPC) comprises those listed under A, B and C above and is the body through which all REF policy decisions will be discussed and recommendations made.

23. All recommendations from the REFPC will be forwarded to the University Research Policy Committee (RPC), which is established in the University by the General Board of the Faculties under Statute K, 9(b). In accordance with University governance arrangements, RPC Minutes are submitted for approval to the General Board, which is the University's decision-making authority on academic matters, including the REF. The General Board will, in addition, receive regular reports on REF preparations from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research). In undertaking administrative preparations for the REF, the University REF Manager will seek the advice and support of two committees, which comprise representatives from across the University, selected on account of their specialist and/or widespread knowledge of University functions. These Committees, which will meet at least twice per Term, are the REF Technical Team (REFTT) and the REF University Users Team (REFUT).

Unit of Assessment Committees

24. Committees ("UoA Committees") must be established for each Unit of Assessment for which the RPC makes a recommendation to the General Board that the University should make a REF submission. Where HEFCE approves a case for a multiple submission, UoA committees will be established for each separate area within the approved multiple submission.
25. Selection of nominees for membership of UoA Committees will be the responsibility of the senior committee within each Faculty or Department or School, as appropriate. In addition to taking account of their equality and diversity obligations, in terms of national legislation and the University's own policies, Faculty Boards/ Departmental Committees should ensure that their proposed UoA Committee membership comprises members of staff who have sufficient academic authority in their specialist area, as recognised either through a senior academic appointment or through other widespread acclaim, which enables them to make a fair and transparent assessment of research work. Nominating bodies must ensure that their nominees are collectively able to assess the full range of academic work likely to be included in the final REF submission.
26. Nominations for membership of each UoA committee must be recommended for approval to the appropriate Council of the School by 31 March 2012. Councils of Schools' recommendations will then be forwarded to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research, for ratification. In the case of a UoA Committee covering more than one Faculty or Department, the authorities concerned must each agree to the other's recommendations for appointment before a submission is made to the School(s) concerned.
27. In parallel with the procedure outlined in paragraph 25 above, Departments, Faculty Boards or Schools must nominate one person as Chair for each UoA Committee. These nominations will be considered by the RPC, during Lent Term 2012, and ratified subsequently by the General Board's approval of the relevant RPC Minute. If a UoA Committee covers institutions in more than one School, it is open to that Committee to propose co-Chairs. A UoA Chair need not be a Head of Department or Chair of a Faculty Board, but the RPC require this important role to be undertaken by a senior member of academic staff who has a strong record in research and holds the respect of his/her academic colleagues.
28. The duties of each UoA Committee will comprise the consideration of individuals for inclusion in the REF return and overseeing the compilation of the return itself. At all stages throughout this process UoA Committees must take full account of the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and the University's own equality requirements and expectations. The duties will involve:
- An expert academic assessment of the research outputs for each individual eligible for consideration for inclusion, taking account of the University's criteria for submission (See paragraphs 44 and 45 below). Normally, the research information will be extracted from the University's electronic publications database and is likely to include an indication of an individual's assessment of her/his best publications. There is no obligation on a UoA Committee to accept an individual's judgement if, in its view, a different output should be submitted.

- Following this comprehensive examination to determine the quality of the research of eligible staff, and taking into account HEFCE eligibility criteria and also the implications for the number of outputs arising from the existence of any special circumstances (see paragraphs 46—54 below), the UoA Committee will select individuals and research outputs for inclusion in the submission. This will be an iterative process as individual circumstances may change and additional research outputs enter the public domain.
 - Selection of the requisite number of examples of research impact, input into the drafting of the research impact case studies and sign off the final versions.
 - Compilation of the impact narrative statement and the environment narrative template.
29. A list of staff and publications should be completed by no later than 30 June 2012. It is recognised that subsequent amendments may be necessary to reflect unexpected staff departures or decisions on inclusion as a result of, for example, changes to publication dates. Full drafts of the proposed final versions of impact case studies, impact templates and environment templates must be complete by 30 September 2012 for further consideration and sign-off by REFPC.
30. UoA Committees must ensure that all staff and outputs selected for return are entered into the University's electronic publications database and marked as being selected. If records of staff are missing, or in the case of any other technical difficulty, UoA Committees should contact the University REF office as soon as possible.
31. Each UoA Committee must, as a first step, circulate information on its proposed criteria and working methods. UoA Committees must comply with any reasonable request to circulate this information in a specific format. This must be circulated by not later than **31 May 2012** to all members of staff eligible for inclusion in the REF submission whose research might reasonably be expected to fall within the scope of each UoA. The University REF office will provide template criteria and working method documents for the use of UoA Committees.
32. In undertaking their duties, UoA committees will at all times adhere to their published working methods. When assessing the research work of a member of staff who, as a result of individual circumstance could be entitled to submit fewer than four publications, UoA Committees must adopt a consistent and non-discriminatory approach.
33. UoA Committees may need to consider cases where there is doubt whether research items meet the threshold of research excellence determined by the University as appropriate for inclusion (See paragraphs 44 and 45 below). Committees may, if they so wish, consult expert external assessment. Any such review must be limited to an assessment of the quality of the output(s) concerned and no advice should be sought on the suitability of the researcher(s) for inclusion in the REF return. If, having fully considered borderline cases, and taken advantage of independent peer review if appropriate, a UoA Committee remains unable to reach a decision on the inclusion of an eligible member of staff, the Chair of the UoA Committee should refer the matter to the Head of School. The Head of School may consult other experts and written advice returned to the UoA Committee as soon as possible since this Committee carries ultimate responsibility for the composition of the submission.
34. Where a UoA committee member is absent for at least three consecutive meetings, or is unable to attend for at least a Term due to leave arrangements, the Chair shall consult the Chair of the Faculty Board or Head of Department concerned to identify a replacement member with the necessary expertise.
35. If and when a need is identified, and at the discretion of the Chair of the UoA Committee, the School's HR Business Manager and/or one senior representative from the University's REF Office may

be invited to attend a particular Committee session, or sessions. Where appropriate, the UoA Chair should seek advice from the University Equality and Diversity Office.

36. The privacy of staff is paramount and members of UoA Committees will be required to give an undertaking that they will make every effort to prevent unauthorised or accidental access to, or disclosure of, personal information. HEFCE Guidance on Submissions sets out the personal data that the University must supply to verify staff eligibility for inclusion. In the University's case, this information will be extracted from the University's HR and payroll system and held within a secure University REF database to underpin each person's research output details.

The role of UoA committee chairs

37. The duties of the Chair will be to prepare, with the assistance of UoA Committee members, a REF submission for consideration by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and the Head of the relevant School and to then produce a final version incorporating any amendments deemed necessary. In doing so, the Chairs shall ensure that:

- Procedures adopted by their UoA Committee ensure that the research outputs of all those eligible for inclusion in the REF submission are assessed in a fair and transparent manner.
- No unfair discrimination, direct or indirect, takes place at any point within the assessment process.
- There is ongoing dialogue with all staff members falling within the scope of the UoA Committee to keep them informed in relation to set points within the University's REF timetable.
- Members of staff are kept informed about their position with regard to inclusion in the REF submission. There must be sufficient communication with staff members who have been advised that their inclusion is dependent on the production and / or publication of additional outputs. When a UoA Committee makes a substantive decision that a member of staff will not be included, a formal communication must be made in writing, and the individual concerned offered personal feedback by the UoA Chair as soon as possible and not later than **10 working days** after the conclusive decision has been taken by the UoA Committee.
- There is ongoing interaction with the University's REF officers in all matters relating to the form, content and compilation of the submission.

38. The University has the right to determine the most appropriate UoA to which an eligible staff member is returned. Where the UoA Committee considers that a member of staff might more appropriately be returned elsewhere, it will be the responsibility of the UoA Chair to initiate discussions with the Chair of a potential host UoA Committee. This position also applies when a UoA Committee identifies someone in another UoA whom they would wish to include. In both instances the approach should be made as early as possible in a Committee's deliberations. If resolution cannot be reached, the matter must be referred immediately to the Head(s) of the School(s) concerned for final decision. It is the responsibility of the UoA Chair to advise a staff member at the outset of the possible re-assignment and to keep them informed about the progress of the discussion.

Eligibility and criteria for selection

39. The REF is not considered by the University to be an assessment of individual staff members and, for example, criteria underpinning the University's Senior Academic Promotions Exercise do not take REF performance into account. Accordingly, collective academic judgement must determine the optimal presentation of the University's research capabilities for REF purposes and no staff member has an inherent right to be included in a submission. Equally, no eligible person has the right to refuse to be included in the University's return.

40. The selection process will be undertaken by the UoA Committees whose duties are outlined above. The fundamental principle underpinning each Committee's work will be that, in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy, no individual eligible for consideration for inclusion will receive less favourable treatment than another. In parallel, and in accordance with equal opportunities legislation and policy, in cases where supporting evidence can be made available, UoA Committees will be required to take full cognisance of HEFCE guidelines which allow for a reduced number of outputs under certain circumstances. (See also the paragraphs on "Individual circumstances" below).

Eligibility for selection

41. All researchers employed in the University on 31 October 2013, who work 20% of full-time or more and have an academic employment contract with the University specifying research or teaching and research as their primary employment function, are eligible for return as category A staff provided that their role meets the definition of independent researcher (see paragraph 42). Staff who will be on unpaid leave of absence on 31 October 2013 are eligible for consideration for inclusion in the REF provided that they have given a written agreement to return to their normal University duties within two calendar years from the start date of their leave period.
42. In order to be included in a REF submission, HEFCE requires individuals to be independent researchers, and if their primary employment function is described as "research only", they must be named as principal investigator, or equivalent, on a research grant or a significant piece of research work. For REF purposes only, the University has interpreted this as restricting eligibility to those who hold teaching and research appointments and research-only staff on the payroll on 31 October 2013 for at least 20% FTE and who meet the HEFCE definition above.
43. For the purposes of the 2014 REF, provided that their College contracts of employment specify research, or teaching and research, as their primary function, and they are paid through their College payroll, College Teaching Officers and Research Fellows, who are independent researchers (in terms of the conditions set out above), will be considered for return on the same basis as those paid through the University payroll. Staff who hold joint University/NHS appointments are eligible for inclusion for the FTE for which they are University employees.

Criteria

44. To qualify for inclusion in the REF, the University will expect researchers to have the requisite number of outputs for their situation which are of a quality of excellence that will enhance the relevant submission. In most circumstances, the HEFCE requirement is for each individual to submit 4 research outputs but UoA Committees must take full account of circumstances which HEFCE have specified as grounds which allow exceptions to this requirement (see paragraphs 49—54 below).
45. The University has welcomed HEFCE's encouragement to institutions to submit the work of all excellent researchers and it expects its UoA Committees to adopt this approach. As guidance to UoA Committees, and having taken advice from all its REF Committees, the General Board have agreed that excellence in terms of research outputs for each researcher should normally equate to a majority of outputs being assessed as 3* or 4* in the opinion of the UoA Committee concerned and with no outputs being less than 2*. This would normally imply that, for a submission of 4 or 3 outputs, not more than one can be judged to be of 2* quality or below, for 2 or 1 output(s) none can be 2*. Furthermore, the University will not normally expect any UoA submission to contain more than 15% of work judged by UoA Committees to be of 2* quality. In making these assessments, UoA Committees must take account of their REF Panel's specific criteria and working methods and the overall shape of their own submission.

Individual circumstances

46. Normally, the University will require each member of staff returned in the REF to submit four outputs which meet the above standard. However, HEFCE have set out a number of staff circumstances which entitle the University to include an individual with fewer than four outputs. These allowances are defined as either “clearly defined” circumstances or more “complex” circumstances. General information on these is set out below. Full information is also available from both in HEFCE’s *Guidance on Submissions*, in individual HEFCE Panels’ published criteria and on the University’s REF website.
47. In accordance with HEFCE’s REF Guidelines, a template form for completion by all University staff who may be eligible for consideration for the REF, together with a covering information sheet, will be sent out by the University’s REF Office before the **end of March 2012**. A Notice to this effect will also be published in *Reporter*. The covering letter will provide advice to staff of their rights under the Equality Act 2010, highlighting the potential implications of these for the number of high-quality research outputs that an individual may need to produce in order to qualify for REF inclusion. Completion and/or return of this form by 30 June 2012 is not mandatory but may well affect a UoA Committee’s decision if there has not been full disclosure of circumstances. Strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout this procedure
48. In all cases, personal information returned to the REF Office will be kept securely and nothing will be released or discussed without the prior consent of the staff member concerned. At the end of the HEFCE’s REF audit period, the information will be destroyed or returned, as determined by the individual concerned

Clearly-defined circumstances

49. “Clearly-defined circumstances”, apply to those defined by HEFCE as “early career researchers” i.e. not classified as independent researchers before **1 August 2009**, or those who took one or more periods of straightforward maternity/paternity or adoption leave during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013. Information stored in the University’s HR system, or provided by staff, will be entered by the University’s REF Office in accordance with the tariff set out below:

Circumstance	Tariff
Early-career researchers	If the employee became an ECR after 1 August 2011, a reduction of 3 outputs; if after 1 August 2010, 2 outputs; if after 1 August 2009, 1 output.
Part-time working	For the equivalent of 46 or more months reduction in work rate below full-time, a reduction of 3 outputs; if 28–45.99 months, 2 outputs, if 12–27.99, 1 output.
Maternity and adoption leave	A reduction of 1 output per period of leave
Additional paternity and additional adoption leave	A reduction of 1 output per period of leave, provided the leave lasts four months or more.
Secondments & career breaks outside the sector involving no research	For 46 or more months of absence, a reduction of 3 outputs; if 28–45.99, 2 outputs, if 12–27.99, 1 output.
Clinical academic staff who have not received a Certificate of Completion of Training before 31 October 2013.	A reduction of 2 outputs

50. If a staff member disagrees with the University's assessment of the number of research outputs required, the University's Deputy REF Manager, Simon Virr (sav25@admin.cam.ac.uk), should be contacted immediately. A decision will be taken on the basis of any supporting documentation which can be produced. If this is not available, and agreement cannot be reached, the matter will be referred to the University's REF Appeals Committee for consideration.

Complex circumstances

51. HEFCE's define complex circumstances as follows:

- Disability including mental health
- Ill-health or injury
- Constraints related to pregnancy or maternity, in addition to a clearly defined period of maternity leave (e.g. medical issues associated with pregnancy or maternity; health and safety restrictions in laboratory or field work during pregnancy or breastfeeding; constraints on the ability to travel to undertake fieldwork due to pregnancy or breast-feeding).
- Childcare or other caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment
- Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed in the introduction to this document

52. The Equality Challenge Unit (<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/>) have published examples showing the appropriate reductions in the number of outputs required which apply in these various circumstances.

53. HEFCE REF regulations require the University to determine on a consistent basis the reduction in the number of required outputs where complex circumstances occur. All cases concerning complex circumstances will therefore be referred to the Complex Circumstances Committee, which is a senior University Committee comprising the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Affairs), the Director of the HR Division, and the University REF Manager, with the Head of the University's Equality and Diversity Office in attendance. This Committee will seek professional advice where necessary, and, dependent on the case, may also consult the Head of the School concerned. The Committee will meet as necessary, commencing in late Easter Term 2012, and will be required to meet whenever the University REF Manager has received at least 10 cases. The dates of Committee meetings will be circulated to the Schools, UoA Committee Chairs and posted on the University REF website at least one week in advance.

54. The Committee will consider cases in the light of the information set out in ECU case study examples (see paragraph 52 above) and on the basis of a written submission from the individual concerned and from the individual's head of institution, if applicable. The staff member will be entitled to submit further documentary evidence and to attend the meeting, with a companion if they so wish. If the Committee recommends a reduction in outputs, HEFCE require a brief resume of supporting details to be included in a confidential section of the REF return. This information will be entered directly by the University's REF Manager or designated deputy and this area of the submission will not be accessible to any other staff member without the permission of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research). Appeals against the Committee's decisions must be made within **ten working days** to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), whose decision will be final.

Appeals

55. This section documents the process by which staff eligible for submission may appeal against a decision that they are not to be returned in the 2014 REF.

Grounds for appeal

56. Potential grounds for appeal are as follows:

- A) An appellant considers that there has been discrimination against them on the grounds of one or more of the protected characteristics identified in the 2010 Equality Act (see paragraph 15 above), or on the grounds of their working part-time or being employed on a fixed-term contract, or on other specific unfair grounds;
- B) That it can be demonstrated that a process or procedure detailed in this Code of Practice has not been followed correctly and that this has resulted in an unfair outcome;
- C) That a decision by a UoA committee or REFPC has been taken without the availability of full information that they could reasonably have been expected to have in front of them.

57. No appeal will be accepted if it is based solely on an appellant's view that the academic judgement of a UoA Committee on the quality of their research outputs was flawed;

Process of appeal

58. Any member of staff eligible for inclusion in a REF submission will have the right to submit a **written** appeal (or in any other format if circumstances make this necessary) on any of the grounds stated in paragraph 56 against a decision of non-inclusion made by a UoA Committee. Appeals, together with any supporting evidence, should be submitted to the UoA committee Chair within **fourteen days** of an individual receiving notification of the decision not to include them in the REF submission, unless they are prevented from doing so by illness or any other serious cause. In such cases, the University REF Manager should be alerted, either by e-mail (pms1000@cam.ac.uk) or by telephone (01223 339093). Where a written appeal is considered by the UoA committee, the Chair must acknowledge receipt of the appeal within **ten working days** and convene a meeting of that Committee within one calendar month of the receipt of the appeal. The Chair, having consulted the appellant, will be responsible for ensuring that the Committee receives before the meeting all the information that they consider necessary to support the appeal. Unless there are exceptional reasons that prevent this, the UoA Committee's decision must be conveyed to the appellant in writing within **ten working days** of the meeting at which the appeal is considered. The appellant may appeal further to the REF Appeals Committee.

59. A REF Appeals Committee constituted to hear one or more appeals shall consist of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Affairs), the Director of the HR Division, a Head of a School not involved in the decisions appealed against and the Head of the University Research Office. The Head of the University's Equality and Diversity Office will be in attendance to ensure that all matters are considered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the conditions set out in this Code of Practice. The decision of a REF Appeals Committee will be given, in writing, to the Chair of the UoA Committee and to the appellant within **fourteen days** of the meeting at which the appeal is considered.

60. During all stages of the appeals process, the appellant will have the right to be accompanied by one other person, who may, or may not, be a University staff member. The identity of the accompanying person must be sent to the Chair of the Committee at least one working day before the meeting is scheduled to take place.

Equality Assurance Assessment

61. An equality assurance assessment of this Code has been conducted. The assessment is available on the University's REF website at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/rso/cref/>. Further assessments will be undertaken once initial decisions on REF inclusion have been made, at the end of March 2013, when the shape of the submission will have been largely determined, , and during the preparation of the final version of the University's submission.

Compliance and monitoring

62. In accordance with HEFCE equality monitoring requirements and wherever the University holds a reliable amount of quantitative or qualitative data on, for example, protected characteristics, fixed-term or part-time working and early career researcher status, it will analyse the number of staff selected against the number it deems to have been eligible for selection. To ensure a meaningful analysis, it will do this at the level of the four HEFCE Main Panels. Further analysis will be conducted at Unit of Assessment level to find the source of any inexplicable disparities.

Communication of this Code

63. This Code of Practice will be published on the University's REF website at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/rso/cref/>.

It will also be available in other formats on request to the Deputy REF Manager, Research Strategy Office, The Old Schools (email sav25@cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 332295).

64. The members of UoA Committees, School Committees and appeal committees will be given copies of this Code. Heads of Departments and Chairmen of Faculty Boards will be expected to circulate this Code to all eligible staff in their institution. The University will write to eligible staff on parental leave, sick leave and secondment when this code is issued to draw their attention to its existence and provide them a link to the University's REF website.

Annex A – Units of assessment

Main panel A

- 1 Clinical Medicine
- 2 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
- 3 Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
- 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
- 5 Biological Sciences
- 6 Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Main panel B

- 7 Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
- 8 Chemistry
- 9 Physics
- 10 Mathematical Sciences
- 11 Computer Science and Informatics
- 12 Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering
- 13 Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials
- 14 Civil and Construction Engineering
- 15 General Engineering

Main panel C

- 16 Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
- 17 Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
- 18 Economics and Econometrics
- 19 Business and Management Studies
- 20 Law
- 21 Politics and International Studies
- 22 Social Work and Social Policy
- 23 Sociology
- 24 Anthropology and Development Studies

- 25 Education
- 26 Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism

Main panel D

- 27 Area Studies
- 28 Modern Languages and Linguistics
- 29 English Language and Literature
- 30 History
- 31 Classics
- 32 Philosophy
- 33 Theology and Religious Studies
- 34 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
- 35 Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
- 36 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

Annex B – HEFCE classification definitions

This annex sets out the definitions that HEFCE are adopting for assessing the overall quality of a submission and the quality of outputs, impact and the research environment. It sets out to some extent the approach that HEFCE panels and sub-panels will adopt, but more details are available in the HEFCE document *Panel criteria and working methods*.

Overall quality profile

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.

Outputs sub-profile

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.

Impact sub-profile

The criteria for assessing impacts are 'reach and significance':

- In assessing the impact described within a case study, the panel will form an overall view about its 'reach and significance' taken as a whole, rather than assess 'reach and significance' separately.
- In assessing the impact template (REF3a) the panel will consider the extent to which the unit's approach described in the template is conducive to achieving impacts of 'reach and significance'.

Four star	Outstanding impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
Three star	Very considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
Two star	Considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
One star	Recognised but modest impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
Unclassified	The impact is of little or no reach and significance; or the impact was not eligible; or the impact was not underpinned by excellent research produced by the submitted unit.

Environment sub-profile

The research environment will be assessed in terms of its 'vitality and sustainability'. Panels will consider both the 'vitality and sustainability' of the submitted unit, and its contribution to the 'vitality and sustainability' of the wider research base.

Four star	An environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
Three star	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
Two star	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
One star	An environment that is conducive to producing research of nationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.
Unclassified	An environment that is not conducive to producing research of nationally recognised quality.