

Falmouth University

**Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff for the Research
Excellence Framework 2014**

Version: 9 January 2013

Approved by HEFCE on 21 December 2012

This document is available in Microsoft Word, PDF, large print or audio. Please contact the Equality Engagement and Development Manager for more information, or if you require an alternative format.

Introduction

1. It is a requirement of the Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF2014) that Falmouth University ('Falmouth') establishes a Code of Practice for the selection of staff which operates within the context of all relevant equality legislation as well as the University's own equality and diversity policy.
2. This Code was subject to approval by the UK Funding Bodies and earlier drafts remained provisional until formal approval was received on 21 December 2012. We have used all the available guidance for REF2014 and drawn on our approach for the Research Assessment Exercise in 2008, and we will take the opportunity to test and inform the development of the Code in our REF2014 Reviews (see 26-37.).
3. This Code has been written in the context of significant developments at Falmouth since the Research Assessment Exercise in 2008, including the incorporation of Dartington College of Arts which has produced a step change in research activity, but also a period of some uncertainty, integration and consolidation. In 2010 the existing three schools were replaced by a simplified two-School structure, Art & Design and Media & Performance, within which the Schools enjoy greater devolved responsibility. New Deans of School have been recruited, with strong research portfolios, and each School now has an Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) (ADR&I).
4. Falmouth has a genuine commitment to equality and values the diversity of its staff and students. Falmouth's Equality and Diversity policies, Equality Schemes and Reports are published on its web site/Intranet. (See <http://www.falmouth.ac.uk/1629/the-university-college-8/equality-and-diversity-190.html>).
5. This Code of Practice has been approved by the University's Management Board after consultation with the Research & Innovation Committee, the Equality & Diversity Committee and the Joint Consultative & Negotiating Committee. HEFCE formally approved the Code on 21 December 2012.
6. An area of Falmouth's intranet has been established where all relevant strategies, guidance, presentations, forms and templates and background reference material which can be accessed by all staff. (See <https://sp.falmouth.ac.uk/sites/re/REF2014/default.aspx>) A copy of this Code will be made available there and on Falmouth's public website. Copies in alternative formats will be made available if requested. Attention will be drawn to the Code of Practice during internal staff briefings and workshops relating to the REF2014. The UK Funding Bodies also maintain a website for the REF2014 where all relevant documentation is published. (See <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/>)

The purpose of the Code of Practice

7. Falmouth is committed to the principle that the selection of staff for the REF2014 should be on the basis of demonstrable research excellence, and that the process of selection is carried out in a fair and transparent manner. This Code outlines the process by which that selection will take place. Falmouth's aim is to ensure that the optimum number of eligible staff are included in its REF2014 submission, taking into account the published

procedures and criteria of the REF2014 (see 6.), Falmouth's Research & Innovation Strategy and its broader academic strategy.

Principles

8. In line with REF2014 Guidance, the Code of Practice seeks to demonstrate fairness to staff by addressing the following principles:
 - a. **Transparency:** All processes for the selection of staff for inclusion in REF2014 submission should be transparent.
 - b. **Consistency:** The policy in respect of staff selection will be consistent across the institution and implemented uniformly.
 - c. **Accountability:** Responsibilities should be clearly defined, and individuals and bodies that are involved in selecting staff for REF2014 submission should be identified by name or role.
 - d. **Inclusivity:** The code should promote an inclusive environment.

Implementation of Principles

9. The implementation of this Code takes account of these principles in the following ways:
 - a. **Transparency**
 - The Code is easily accessible and publicised to all academic staff across the institution, including on Falmouth's web pages, the staff intranet, and drawn to the attention of those absent from work.
 - The Code is actively disseminated and explained through relevant meetings of committees and groups involved in the selection of staff for the REF2014.
 - b. **Consistency**
 - The Code sets out the principles to be applied to all aspects/stages of the process at all levels within the institution where decisions will be made, including how individual staff circumstances will be taken into account.
 - c. **Accountability**
 - The Code will identify who will be involved in the selection process and identifies what training those staff will have undertaken.
 - The Code describes the operating criteria and terms of reference for individuals, committees, advisory groups and any other bodies concerned with staff selection.
 - d. **Inclusivity:**
 - The process of selection covered by the Code seeks to identify all eligible staff who have produced excellent research for submission to the REF2014.

Falmouth's Research Strategy and criteria for submission to REF2014

10. Preparations of REF2014 submissions will be guided by Falmouth's Research & Enterprise Strategy 2010-15 and by any new research strategy subsequently approved by the Research & Innovation Committee. The Strategy's stated objective is 'to establish a profile of international excellence in selected areas of research through strategic and targeted investment'. It is recognised that the external environment is challenging and that Falmouth needs to prepare for the REF2014 while also ensuring that research supports

its teaching programmes and underpins its commercial activity and community links.

10. In making recommendations and decisions on which staff to submit, research 'excellence' will be interpreted according to the definitions and criteria set out by the UK Funding Bodies and by the relevant REF2014 panels and sub-panels (see 6. and Annex B). Research excellence in this context may take into account both published outputs and other contributions made by staff in the form of research impact, research income, student supervision and other relevant performance measures. In considering published outputs, the process will take account of the REF2014 rules and guidance on jointly-authored work in assessing individual contributions (see 6. and Annex B).
11. Falmouth's primary consideration underpinning all decision making in relation to the REF2014 will be to ensure that submissions are of the highest possible quality. Falmouth will aim to maximize its performance in terms of number of FTEs submitted and quality profile where the proportion of three and four star quality is maximised. However, it will be necessary to make decisions that are strategic and in Falmouth's best interests. Falmouth will aim to submit the work of as many of its researchers as possible, however, any decision not to include a member of staff should not be read as an indication that Falmouth considers the research carried out by those staff to be unsatisfactory.
12. All decisions on whether to include individual members of staff in the submission will be made on the basis of the quality of their research outputs and their contribution to the research environment. Account will be taken of the weightings given to elements which make up the submission and to REF2014 Panel Criteria and Working Methods (see 6. and Annex B).
13. Only academic staff in post on the census date (31st October 2013), with a contract of 0.2 FTE or greater, and whose primary employment function is to undertake 'Research' or 'Teaching and Research', can be considered for inclusion in the submission.
14. The submission criteria are the same for all REF2014 Units of Assessment (UoAs).
15. Falmouth's Research & Innovation Strategy, criteria for submission and related reference material have been published on the intranet and are available to all staff, and this will be referenced in all formal notifications to staff on their submission status (see 6.).

The decision-making process and those involved

16. Ultimately, the decision on which staff are to be submitted to the REF2014 rests with the Vice Chancellor.
17. The Vice Chancellor will be informed in this decision by Falmouth's Research Excellence Framework 2014 Steering Group (REFSG), chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation), whose membership includes the Deans of School (see Annex A for terms of reference and full membership of the REFSG).
18. In making recommendations, the REFSG will be informed by external advisors (see 24.), and any formally appointed internal UoA Coordinators (it is

not envisaged these will be needed, but this will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary).

19. An important element of this exercise is staff development and mentoring to ensure the highest quality and volume of submissions. The refinement of individual cases will continue to be carried out principally by ADR&Is in consultation with Deans and Heads of Department up to submission in 2013. In most cases the process will involve discussions with the individual members of staff concerned who will have been asked to identify their 'best' outputs to form a portfolio of work for possible inclusion in the REF2014 submission.

Key roles

20. As Chief Executive Officer of Falmouth with responsibility for all activities, including research, the Vice Chancellor has ultimate responsibility for deciding which staff will be included in Falmouth's REF2014 submission.
21. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is the most senior Falmouth officer with specific responsibility for research and reports directly to the Vice Chancellor. As Chair of the REFSG, the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the University's REF2014 strategy, including the application of this Code with respect to the selection of staff. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) will report to the Management Board and the University's Research & Innovation Committee on the process of preparation for REF2014, including the emerging equality profile of the submission and the outcome of equality impact assessments.
22. Staff recommended for selection to the REF2014 will be proposed by Deans of School via an iterative process of draft submissions compiled under the leadership of the ADR&Is. Deans of School are responsible for all activities in their Schools, including research. The ADR&Is are the most senior staff in the Schools with specific responsibility for research. They report to the Deans and are tasked with ensuring that the process for the selection of staff for consideration by the REFSG is undertaken in a transparent manner and in line with the principles of this Code of Practice. This should include taking account of individual circumstances as described in this Code.
23. The Head of the Research & Innovation Office is the most senior administrator at the University with responsibility for research. He reports to the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and will act as the REF2014 Manager. This includes acting as the institutional contact for REF2014 with HEFCE, managing access and use of the submission software and any physical outputs. He will also be involved in the design and delivery of equal opportunities and diversity training. (See 25.)
24. As part of the preparations for Falmouth's REF2014 submission, Falmouth is taking, and will continue to take, external advice on the quality of outputs being put forward for inclusion in the submission. External advisors have been selected by the REFSG on the basis of their relevant experience, eg. membership of an RAE Panel. External Advisors have been given guidance as to the appropriate level of detailed comment they should provide on individual outputs. Comments made by external advisors will be viewed alongside other evidence about the quality of outputs and appropriateness of

draft submissions. All external advisors are made aware of the Code of Practice. External advisors will not decide which staff are to be submitted to the REF2014 nor will they be given any information relating to individual staff circumstances.

Equality Training

25. All staff with specific decision-making responsibilities in the process of selection will undertake appropriate equality and diversity training which has been tailored to the REF2014 process. This will include the REFSG, REF Staff Appeals Review Group members and the Vice Chancellor. Use will be made of training material made available on the Equality Challenge Unit web site. Attendance at this REF2014 specific training will be compulsory. Adherence to this policy will be monitored and attendance at all training recorded on individual staff records.

Overview of the timetable for selection of staff

26. The process of selection process outlined above will comprise an iterative process of draft submissions led by ADR&Is. They will work closely with Deans to identify appropriate staff, outputs and case studies to be included in draft submissions. The process will normally involve talking on a one-to-one basis with individual staff, taking into account any published guidance from the UK Funding Bodies on, for example, panel criteria and working methods (see 6. And Annex B). The timetable for these draft submissions and decision-making points is detailed below, including initial assessments taken prior to the definition and confirmation of this Code. A summary of the timetable and key dates can be found at Annex C.

2010/11 First REF2014 Review

27. In March 2011 a sub-group of the Research & Innovation Committee was formed to prepare Falmouth's initial approach to the REF2014. This drew on members of the Committee with ex-officio responsibility for research, viz. the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Chair at the time, now the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation)), ADR&Is in each School and the Head of the Research & Innovation Office. This sub-group was reviewed in February 2012 and formally re-constituted as the REFSG (see 17.).
28. Information about the REF2014 and about plans and preparations for submissions are available on the Falmouth's intranet and staff have been notified through meetings, events and briefings (see 6.). Staff have been encouraged to participate in discussions about the issues relating to the REF2014 and to raise any concerns they may have with members of the REFSG, their line manager or Falmouth's Equality Engagement and Development Manager.
29. An invitation was made in April 2011 to all academic staff to put themselves forward for consideration in the REF2014 by completing a REF Review Form (see 6.) which forms the basis of identifying existing outputs and monitoring progress towards potential outputs based on the REF2014 submission requirements. These have been kept under review on an on-going one-to-one basis by the ADR&Is. The list of respondents was cross-checked against central records for all staff who were eligible using the HEFCE definition, and

those staff who had not responded to the invitation were approached individually to ensure all eligible staff had had the opportunity to be considered for submission, including those who are part-time and fixed-term.

30. Use of the REF Review form by individual staff in the standing annual Professional Development Review (PDR) procedure was encouraged.

2011/12 Second REF2014 Review

31. A more detailed REF2014 invitation to staff took place in 2011/12 with a deadline for submissions to be made to the REFSG in May 2012. Within this process, ADR&Is were tasked to assess staff outputs and categorise them as 'probable', 'possible' or 'unlikely', being guided in their selection by this Code.
32. The assessments were then considered by the REFSG in a series of meetings throughout May and June 2012. Following these meetings, the REF2014 Manager wrote to all eligible staff to confirm their provisional status, and ADR&Is were tasked with following this up with individualised feedback with an expectation this would be completed by the end of July 2012.
33. The outcome of this review has provided an early indication of staff 'readiness' for the REF2014, whilst acknowledging that there was still a significant amount of time to go before the REF2014 census date. No firm decisions had been made at that point, that a Code of Practice had yet to be finalised and further opportunities and iterations would take place to enable all eligible staff to be considered prior to final submission.

2013 Final REF2014 Review

34. Following confirmation of Falmouth's Code, taking account of any feedback from the UK Funding Bodies, all staff not considered 'probable' or 'possible' for inclusion after the 2011/12 REF Review will be given a final opportunity to put themselves forward for consideration for inclusion in the REF2014. The deadline for this will be 31 January 2013.
35. In parallel, ADR&Is will be invited to compile final draft submissions, with a deadline of 28 February 2013, including firm recommendations on the staff to be included, and in accordance with the confirmed version of this Code. These will be considered by the ADR&Is who will then relay recommendations to their Dean of School for consideration by the REFSG. Final recommendations will be made to the Vice Chancellor by 31 March 2013.
36. The REF Manager will notify all staff who are to be included in REF2014 by 30 April 2013. Any eligible staff who have put themselves forward but who are not considered suitable for inclusion in REF2014 will also have this confirmed by 30 April 2013, and feedback provided on the reason for this decision.
37. From 1 May 2013, the REF Staff Appeal procedure will be available for staff to use (see 52.-56.).

Equality impact assessment

38. An initial equality impact assessment (EIA) was done for this Code in March 2012. Alongside internal consultation, this has informed the development of

the Code prior to submission. This has been undertaken under the auspices of the REFSG using the University's standard process to determine whether the staff selection policy for the REF2014 may have a differential impact on particular protected groups.

39. A full EIA will be carried out once the formalised selection process has begun, ie. the Second and Final REF2014 Reviews. This will include an equality analysis of selected staff compared with the pool of eligible staff for which data are available. The full EIA will be reviewed at each of these key stages to ensure that any necessary changes to prevent discrimination or promote equality are taken prior to the submission deadline.
40. The full EIA will be undertaken by the REF2014 Manager working closely with Falmouth's Equality Engagement and Development Manager. Results will be reported to the REFSG and, where feasible, will involve consultation with eligible staff from protected groups.
41. The final version of the REF2014 EIA will be published on Falmouth's website after the submission has been made, including the outcomes of any actions taken to prevent discrimination or advance equality.

Individual staff circumstances and their disclosure

42. The UK Funding Bodies have produced detailed guidance on how REF2014 panels will deal with individual circumstances that have constrained an individual's ability to produce four outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period - see paragraphs 88 to 100 of REF02.2111 *Assessment framework and guidance on submission* and paragraphs 63 to 91 of REF 01.2012 *Panel Criteria and Working Methods, Generic statement of assessment criteria and panel procedures*. These documents are available on the REF2014 website and Falmouth's website (see 6.) these are summarised in Annex B.
43. Such circumstances include, but are not restricted to, being an Early Career Researcher, part-time working, maternity, paternity or adoption leave, secondments or career breaks, disability, ill health or injury, childcare or other caring responsibilities.
44. In considering staff for inclusion in the REF2014, all staff involved in the process should be aware of, and adhere to, the guidance on individual circumstances (see 6. and Annex B).
45. The approach to the treatment of individual circumstances will be consistent with the range of circumstances and procedures set out in the guidance and will be consistent across all UoAs.
46. The REF2014 Manager wrote to all eligible academics in April 2012 to ask them to indicate if there were any individual circumstances which may have constrained their ability to produce four outputs by completing the Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form. Every effort was made to communicate with any member of staff absent from the University on, for example, long term sick leave, maternity leave, including writing to their home address.
47. To enable individuals to disclose circumstances *in confidence*, the form could, at the request of the individual concerned, only be viewed in the first instance

by Falmouth's Equality Engagement and Development Manager. Any disclosure beyond that would only be by agreement with the individual concerned. The Equality Engagement and Development Manager will take a view, based on the guidance, of the extent to which the particular circumstances should be taken into account and will liaise with members of the REFSG as necessary, without breaching confidentiality if requested by the individual.

48. Staff may declare individual circumstances at any time but will need to do so in particular through the REF2014 Reviews when ADR&Is are compiling draft submissions in accordance with the timetable above, to ensure these are taken fully account of in the process of selection. This will be made clear to in the communication to staff in April 2012. (See 46.)

Fixed term and part-time staff

49. Falmouth systematically treats staff on fixed-term and part-time contracts on an equal and fair basis in all its policies and practices where appropriate. This includes determining their suitability for inclusion in the REF2014 which is in addition to those individual staff circumstances described above.

Feedback to eligible staff

50. As noted above, feedback will be given to staff at each stage of the selection process, that is, after the First, Second and Final REF2014 Reviews. Staff will be encouraged to speak to their Dean of School, ADR&Is or other members of the REFSG if they require clarification as to the reasons why they are being selected or not selected
51. As noted above, all staff who are to be included in REF2014 will be notified by 30 April 2013. Any eligible staff who have put themselves forward but who are not considered suitable for inclusion in REF2014 will also have this confirmed by 30 April 2013 and feedback provided. Details of the how to make an appeal against this decision will be included (see below).

REF Staff Appeal procedure

52. From 1 May 2013, the REF Staff Appeal procedure will be available for staff to use, and details will be included in notifications to staff. The deadline for appeals to be lodged, to enable sufficient time for an appeal to be considered and any outcomes implemented, will be 31 July 2013.
53. Staff who feel that the decision to select/not select them for inclusion in the REF submission should be reconsidered will be asked to outline their case in writing and send it, in confidence, to the REF Manager. A template for this purpose will be made available.
54. A REF Staff Appeals Review Group will meet to consider any appeals. This Group will be independent of the REFSG (the original selection body). The Group will be chaired by a member of the Board of Governors and will, in addition, consist of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), the Registrar & Secretary, a Representative of the Professoriate with relevant experience, and the Director of Human Resources. Appeals will only be

allowed on the basis of procedure not being followed, not on the judgements made about research quality. The Group will receive appropriate training.

55. The Chair of the REF Staff Appeals Group will request any information deemed relevant to the case and a meeting of the appeals panel will be arranged to consider this information along with the member of staff's appeal statement. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days from the date of the appeal being submitted. Following the meeting, the Appeals Panel will write to the appellant detailing their reasons for a) supporting the case of the appellant, or b) upholding the decision of the REFSG.
56. Where the REF Staff Appeals Group supports the case of the appellant then it will make an independent recommendation for inclusion of the appellant in the University's submission direct to the Vice Chancellor.

Late arrivals

57. Any staff joining the institution between 1 May and 31 October 2013 will not be treated differently to existing staff, but the timeline will be adapted. They will be invited to put themselves forward for consideration for the REF2014 and considered using the process outlined in this Code. They will either be recommended for inclusion by the REFSG (for onward recommendation to the Vice Chancellor) or given feedback regarding their exclusion. In this instance, the appeals process will still be open to them provided an appeal is lodged by 31 October 2013.

Further Information and Guidance

REF2014 Manager – Ian McCormick, ian.mccormick@falmouth.ac.uk, ext 5829

This document is available in Microsoft Word, PDF, large print or audio. Please contact the Equality Engagement and Development Manager for more information, or if you require an alternative format.

ANNEXES

Annex A – Research Excellence Framework 2014 Steering Group terms of reference

Annex B - Guidance on individual staff circumstances

Annex C - Summary of Timetable for Selection of Staff

ANNEX A

Research Excellence Framework 2014 Steering Group Terms of Reference

The Research Excellence Framework Steering Group is responsible for overseeing Falmouth's preparations for, and submission to, the Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF2014). In particular it aims to optimise the submission the University makes. The Group reports to the Vice Chancellor who will take the final decision on the REF2014 submission and on the selection of specific staff.

Membership:

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Chair)
Dean of School of Media & Performance
Dean of School of Art & Design
Associate Dean for Research & Innovation, School of Media & Performance
Associate Dean for Research & Innovation, School of Art & Design
Head of Research & Innovation Office (Secretary)

Purpose:

- a) Make strategic decisions and recommendations about which particular Units of Assessment the University will make returns to and about the assignment of staff to particular units of assessment.
- b) Make strategic decisions and recommendations about the standards of excellence expected for staff to be included in the submission.
- c) Make strategic decisions and recommendations about the inclusion of members of staff in submissions consistent with equal opportunities guidance and equal opportunities legislation.
- d) Will be advised by relevant committees and external advisors on which staff should be included and on the suitability of draft submissions.
- e) Receive reports from external advisors appointed to carry out a review of outputs and to provide feedback on draft submissions.
- f) Will make decisions and recommendations on how to accommodate any circumstances declared by individuals with regards to the submission of fewer than the required number of outputs.
- g) Receive recommendations from the University REF2014 Staff Appeals Review Group to reconsider provisional decisions made with regard to the inclusion of particular staff the submission.

Operation:

The Group will meet regularly in the lead up to the REF2014 submission deadline. This is likely to be at least three times per term, and may be more frequent nearer the submission deadline.

All discussion will take place in confidential formal meetings and the reasons for decisions will be recorded in writing.

Annex B – Extract from REF02.2111 *Assessment framework and guidance on submission*

Individual staff circumstances

88. Up to four research outputs must be listed against each member of staff included in the submission. A maximum of four outputs per researcher will provide panels with a sufficient selection of research outputs from each submitted unit upon which to base judgements about the quality of that unit's outputs. Consultations on the development of the REF confirmed that this is an appropriate maximum volume of research outputs for the purposes of assessment.

89. HEIs are allowed to list the maximum of four outputs against any researcher, irrespective of their circumstances or the length of time they have had to conduct research.

90. 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. This measure is intended to encourage institutions to submit all their eligible staff who have produced excellent research.

91. Where an individual is submitted with fewer than four outputs and their research has not been constrained by circumstances as described in paragraphs 92-95, any 'missing' outputs will be graded as 'Unclassified'.

92. Category A and C staff may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, if one or more of the following circumstances significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period:

- a. Clearly defined circumstances, which are:
 - i. Qualifying as an ECR (as defined at paragraphs 85-86).
 - 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. These cases can be returned as 'complex' as described at subparagraph b below, so that the full range of circumstances can be taken into account in making a judgement about the appropriate number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty).
 - iv. Secondments or career breaks outside of the higher education sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.
- b. Circumstances that are more complex and require a judgement about the appropriate number of outputs that can be reduced without penalty. These circumstances are:
 - i. Disability. This is defined in Part 4, Table 2 under 'Disability'.
 - ii. Ill health or injury.
 - iii. Mental health conditions.
 - iv. Constraints related to pregnancy or maternity, 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 laboratory or field work during pregnancy or breastfeeding; constraints on the ability to travel to undertake fieldwork due to pregnancy or breast-feeding.)

- v. Childcare or other caring responsibilities.
- vi. Gender reassignment.
- vii. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed at paragraph 190.

93. For clearly defined circumstances, the panel criteria statements will provide tariffs to determine the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty in the assessment, depending on the duration of the circumstance (or combination thereof).

94. For more complex circumstances, the institution will need make a judgement on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs submitted, and the REF EDAP will consider these cases on a consistent basis across all UOAs. ECU will provide worked examples of complex circumstances, indicating the appropriate reduction in outputs for a range of particular circumstances. These will be available at www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF from September 2011.

95. Where an institution wishes to include a combination of clearly defined and more complex circumstances relating to an individual, the institution should return these as 'complex' so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances.

Individual staff circumstances data requirements (form REF1b)

96. For each member of staff returned with fewer than four outputs, submissions must include the following information in REF1b:

- a. **Staff with clearly defined circumstances** (maximum 200 words): For ECRs, institutions must state the date at which the individual became an early career researcher (meeting the definition at paragraph 85); provide brief details of their research career history, specifically identifying the point at which they became an independent researcher, and the number of outputs returned. For staff with other clearly defined circumstances, institutions must provide brief details about the nature of the circumstance(s), their timing and duration, a calculation of the total absence over the period 1 Jan 2008 to 31 Oct 2013, and the number of outputs returned.
- b. **Staff with complex circumstances** (maximum 300 words): Institutions must:
 - describe the nature and timing of the circumstances
 - explain the effects on the individual's contracted working hours or ability to fulfil their contracted working hours
 - explain any other effects on the individual's ability to work productively
 - provide a calculation for the reduction in outputs and the number of outputs returned.

We recommend that in preparing REF1b institutions use the template for complex circumstances available on www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF.

97. The information returned in REF1b for any type of circumstances must be based on verifiable evidence.

98. Information submitted in form REF1b will be kept confidential to the REF team and the panel members (for clearly defined circumstances) and the EDAP and main panel chairs (for complex circumstances), who are all subject to confidentiality undertakings in respect of all information contained in submissions. REF sub-panels will know that there are complex circumstances and will receive a decision about the appropriate number of outputs to reduce without penalty, but will not have access to further information about the circumstances. These arrangements will enable individuals to disclose the information in a confidential manner, and enable consistent treatment of complex circumstances across the exercise.

99. Information submitted in REF1b will be used only for the purposes of assessing the REF submission in which it is contained, will not be published at any time and will be destroyed on completion of the REF.

100. It is the responsibility of the HEI to ensure that the information in REF1b is submitted in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and all other legal obligations.

Annex B – Extract from REF 01.2012 Panel criteria and working methods, Generic statement of assessment criteria and panel procedures

63. The criteria for determining which staff are eligible to be included in institutions' submissions are common for all UOAs, and are set out in 'guidance on submissions' (paragraphs 78-83).

64. Up to four research outputs must be listed against each member of staff included in the submission. A maximum of four outputs per researcher will provide panels with a sufficient selection of research outputs from each submitted unit upon which to base judgements about the quality of that unit's outputs. Consultations on the development of the REF confirmed that this is an appropriate maximum volume of research outputs for the purposes of assessment.

65. As a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, in all UOAs individuals may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, where their individual circumstances have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. This measure is intended to encourage institutions to submit all their eligible staff who have produced excellent research.

66. HEIs are allowed to list the maximum of four outputs against any researcher, irrespective of their circumstances or the length of time they have had to conduct research. A minimum of one output must be listed against each individual submitted to the REF.

67. In order to provide clarity and consistency on the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty, there will be a **clearly defined** reduction in outputs for those types of circumstances listed at paragraph 69a. Circumstances that are more **complex** will require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs; these are listed at paragraph 69b. Arrangements have been put in place for complex circumstances to be considered on a consistent basis, as described at paragraphs 88-91.

68. Where an individual is submitted with fewer than four outputs and they do not satisfy the criteria described at paragraphs 69-91 below, any 'missing' outputs will be graded as 'unclassified'.

69. Category A and C staff may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, if one or more of the following circumstances significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period:

- a. Circumstances with a **clearly defined** reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Qualifying as an early career researcher (on the basis set out in paragraph 72 and Table 1 below).
 - ii. Absence from work due to working part-time, secondments or career breaks (on the basis set out in paragraphs 73-74 and Table 2 below).
 - iii. Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave (on the basis set out in paragraphs 75-81).
 - iv. Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6, as defined at paragraph 86.
- b. **Complex circumstances** that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Disability. This is defined in 'guidance on submissions' Part 4, Table 2 under 'Disability'.

- ii. Ill health or injury.
- iii. Mental health conditions.
- iv. 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 paragraph 75 below.
- v. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
- vi. Gender reassignment.
- vii. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed at paragraph 190 of ‘guidance of submissions’ or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

Clearly defined circumstances

70. Where an individual has one or more circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs, the number of outputs that may be reduced should be determined according to the tables and guidance in paragraphs 72-86 below. All sub-panels will accept a reduction in outputs according to this guidance and will assess the remaining number of submitted outputs without any penalty.

71. In REF1b, submissions must include sufficient details of the individual’s circumstances to show that these criteria have been applied correctly. The panel secretariat will examine the information in the first instance and advise the sub-panels on whether sufficient information has been provided and the guidance applied correctly. The panel secretariat will be trained to provide such advice, on a consistent basis across all UOAs. Where the sub-panel judges that the criteria have not been met, the ‘missing’ output(s) will be recorded as unclassified. (For example, an individual became an early career researcher in January 2011 but only one output is submitted rather than two. In this case the submitted output will be assessed, and the ‘missing’ output recorded as unclassified.)

Early career researchers

72. Early career researchers are defined in paragraphs 85-86 of ‘guidance on submissions’. Table 1 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment for early career researchers who meet this definition.

Table 1 Early career researchers: permitted reduction in outputs

Date at which the individual first met the REF definition of an early career researcher:	Number of outputs may be reduced by up to:
On or before 31 July 2009	0
Between 1 August 2009 and 31 July 2010 inclusive	1
Between 1 August 2010 and 31 July 2011 inclusive	2
On or after 1 August 2011	3

Absence from work due to part-time working, secondments or career breaks

73. Table 2 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment for absence from work due to:

- a. part-time working;
- b. secondments or career breaks outside of the higher education sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.

Table 2 Part-time working, secondments or career breaks: permitted reduction in outputs

Total months absent between 1 January 2008 and 31 October 2013 due to working part-time, secondment or career break:	Number of outputs may be reduced by up to:
0-11.99	0
12-27.99	1
28-45.99	2
46 or more	3

74. The allowances in Table 2 are based on the length of the individual's absence or time away from working in higher education. They are defined in terms of total months absent from work. For part-time working, the equivalent 'total months absent' should be calculated by multiplying the number of months worked part-time by the full-time equivalent (FTE) **not** worked during those months. For example, an individual worked part-time for 30 months at 0.6 FTE. The number of equivalent months absent = $30 \times 0.4 = 12$.

Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave

75. Individuals may reduce the number of outputs by one, for each discrete period of:

- a. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013, regardless of the length of the leave.
- b. Additional paternity or adoption leave¹ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013.

76. The approach to these circumstances is based on the funding bodies' considered judgement that the impact of such a period of leave and the arrival of a new child into a family is generally sufficiently disruptive of an individual's research work to justify the reduction of an output. This judgement was informed by the consultation on draft panel criteria, in which an overwhelming majority of respondents supported such an approach.

77. The funding bodies' decision not to have a minimum qualifying period for maternity leave was informed by the sector's clear support for this approach in the consultation; recognition of the potential physical implications of pregnancy and childbirth; and the intention to remove any artificial barriers to the inclusion of women in submissions, given that women were significantly less likely to be selected in former RAE exercises.

78. The funding bodies consider it appropriate to make the same provision for those regarded as the 'primary adopter' of a child (that is, a person who takes statutory adoption leave), as the adoption of a child and taking of statutory adoption

¹ 'Additional paternity or adoption leave' refers to leave of up to 26 weeks which is taken to care for a child where the person's spouse, partner or civil partner was entitled to statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave, and has since returned to work. The term 'additional paternity leave' is often used to describe this type of leave although it may be taken by parents of either gender. For the purposes of the REF we refer to this leave as 'additional paternity or adoption leave'.

leave is generally likely to have a comparable impact on a researcher's work to that of taking maternity leave.

79. As regards additional paternity or adoption leave, researchers who take such leave will also have been away from work and acting as the primary carer of a new child within a family. The funding bodies consider that where researchers take such leave over a significant period (four months or more), this is likely to have an impact on their ability to work productively on research that is comparable to the impact on those taking maternity or statutory adoption leave.

80. While the clearly defined reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months, shorter periods of such leave can be taken into account as follows:

- a. By seeking a reduction in outputs under the provision for complex circumstances, for example where the period of leave had an impact in combination with other factors such as ongoing childcare responsibilities.
- b. By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other clearly defined circumstances, according to Table 2.

81. Any period of maternity, adoption or paternity leave that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions in paragraph 75 above may in individual cases be associated with prolonged constraints on work that justify the reduction of more than one output. In such cases, the circumstances should be explained using the arrangements for complex circumstances.

Combining clearly defined circumstances

82. Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances with clearly defined reductions in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of three outputs. For each circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.

83. Where Table 1 is combined with Table 2, the period of time since 1 January 2008 up until the individual met the definition of an early career researcher should be calculated in months, and Table 2 should be applied.

84. When combining circumstances, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously. (For example, an individual worked part-time throughout the assessment period and first met the definition of an early career researcher on 1 September 2009. In this case the number of months 'absent' due to part-time working should be calculated from 1 September 2009 onwards, and combined with the reduction due to qualifying as an early career researcher, as indicated in paragraph 83 above.)

85. Where an individual has a combination of circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs **and** complex circumstances, the institution should submit these collectively as 'complex' so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances. Those circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs should be calculated according to the guidance above (paragraphs 72-84).

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6

86. In UOAs 1-6, the number of outputs may be reduced by up to two, without penalty in the assessment, for the following:

- a. Category A staff who are junior clinical academics. These are defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or its equivalent prior to 31 October 2013.
- b. Category C staff who are employed primarily as clinical, health or veterinary professionals (for example by the NHS), and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit.

87. These allowances are made on the basis that the staff concerned are normally significantly constrained in the time they have available to undertake research during the assessment period. The reduction of two outputs takes account of significant constraints on research work, and is normally sufficient to also take account of additional circumstances that may have affected the individual's research work. Where the individual meets the criteria at paragraph 86, and has had significant additional circumstances – for any of the reasons at paragraph 69 – the institution may return the circumstances as 'complex' with a reduction of three outputs, and provide a justification for this.

Complex circumstances

88. Where staff have had one or more complex circumstances – including in combination with any circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs – the institution will need to make a judgement on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs submitted, and provide a rationale for this judgement.

89. As far as is practicable, the information in REF1b should provide an estimate – in terms of the equivalent number of months absent from work – of the impact of the complex circumstances on the individual's ability to work productively throughout the assessment period, and state any further constraints on the individual's research work in addition to the equivalent months absent. A reduction should be made according to Table 2 in relation to estimated months absent from work, with further constraints taken into account as appropriate. To aid institutions the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) will publish worked examples of complex circumstances, which will indicate how these calculations can be made and the appropriate reduction in outputs for a range of complex circumstances. These will be available at www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF from February 2012.

90. All submitted complex circumstances will be considered by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP), on a consistent basis across all UOAs. The membership and terms of reference of the EDAP are available at www.ref.ac.uk under Equality and diversity. The EDAP will make recommendations about the appropriate number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty to the relevant main panel chairs, who will make the decisions. The relevant sub-panels will then be informed of the decisions and will assess the remaining outputs without any penalty.

91. To enable individuals to disclose the information in a confidential manner, information submitted about individuals' complex circumstances will be kept confidential to the REF team, the EDAP and main panel chairs, and will be destroyed on completion of the REF (as described in 'guidance on submissions', paragraphs 98-99).

ANNEX C - Summary of Timetable for Selection of Staff

2010/11 First REF2014 Review

2011

April 4 Invitation issued to all eligible staff to be considered for REF2014

May 18 Deadline for receipt of responses

2011/12 Second REF2014 Review

2012

May 25 Deadline for submission of information on which staff considered to be 'probable', 'possible' or 'unlikely' at this stage to be submitted to REFSG

Deadline of return template for eligible staff to disclose of any individual circumstances they wish to be taken into consideration

July 31 Deadline for feedback to staff on current REF status

2012/13 Final REF2014 Review

2013

January 31 Deadline for staff to be re-considered in relation to inclusion the REF2014

February 28 Deadline for final draft submissions to be submitted to REFSG

March 31 Decision point for the Vice Chancellor on staff to be included

April 30 Deadline for feedback to staff on REF2014 status

Appeals process

May 1 Appeals process open

July 31 Deadline for appeals to be lodged

September 30 Deadline for appeal outcomes to be confirmed

Submission

October 31 Census date for staff eligible for selection

November 29 Closing date for submissions