

**Heriot-Watt University
Code of Practice on the
Selection of Staff
for the
Research Excellence
Framework
REF2014**

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Part 1: Overview, purpose and guiding principles

Overview

- 1.1 The Research Excellence Framework 2014, (hereafter referred to as REF2014), is the new system for assessing the quality of research in higher education institutions in the UK, and replaces the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), last conducted in 2008. The purpose of the exercise is to assess the quality of UK research and inform the selective allocation of research grants to institutions by the four UK higher education funding bodies with effect from 2015-16.

A culture of inclusivity

- 1.2 At Heriot-Watt University, REF2014 will be governed by five overarching principles: equity, equality, transparency, inclusivity and application. Heriot-Watt University embraces these principles and in doing so we strive to build a culture which supports inclusion, celebrates difference, challenges prejudice and promotes fairness (see Appendix A). It is recognised that individuals contribute to the goals of the University in different ways and not all eligible staff will be expected to be included in the REF2014 submission. There will be individuals performing roles which support fully the objectives of their School or Institute, but whose primary focus will not be directly research-oriented. However, non-inclusion in the REF2014 submission will not affect a person's career opportunities within the University. We aim to create a university community where all individuals are able to develop to their full potential so that they can contribute to the success of the University as a world-leading centre of academic excellence.

The purpose of the Code of Practice

- 1.3 The REF2014 Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions (Guidance on Submissions) provides the basis for the detailed advice contained in this Code. The purpose of the Code of Practice is to ensure the fair, equitable and transparent selection of staff for inclusion in the REF2014 submission based on the excellence of their research. This Code will provide staff with clear guidance about the process through which individuals will be selected for inclusion in the University's REF submission, and provide those staff involved in the decision-making processes with clear guidance and advice about how to apply the selection criteria in terms of equality and diversity. This information will be supplemented by tailored development and briefing sessions for all staff involved in the selection process (see Appendix B). To this end, it is the purpose of this Code to **promote the principles of equality and diversity, and to comply with all relevant employment legislation.**
- 1.4 The University will therefore ensure that the criteria, policies and procedures that support the REF2014 process will be subjected to equality analysis¹ to test their fairness. The outcome of the University's final Equality Analysis will be made openly available along with the actions taken to address any issues that arise.
- 1.5 The Code has been developed in light of Guidance published by the REF2014 (www.ref.ac.uk) and in consultation with the University's Equality and Diversity Advisory Group, Trades Unions, the Research & Knowledge Exchange Board (RKEB), the REF Steering Group (REF SG), and University Executive (UE).
- 1.6 The University will submit its Code of Practice to the UK REF Team by 27 April 2012 as required. The Code of Practice will be made available nationally by the UK REF Team as part of the University's submission, after the conclusion of REF2014.

¹ The term 'equality analysis' will be used throughout the document in place of the term 'equality impact assessment'. This is to avoid any potential confusion with the wider concept of 'impact' with the REF process.

Guiding principles

1.7 This code is underpinned by five guiding principles:

(a) Transparency: All information governing the processes that will determine the selection of staff for inclusion in the REF submission will be available in an easily accessible format and publicised to all academic and other relevant staff across the institution. This information will be available on the University web-site and drawn to the attention of those staff who are absent from work. The processes setting out how staff will be selected for submission are set out in Part 3. The Code is supported by a clear programme of communication to explain the selection process, which is attached at Appendix C.

(b) Consistency: The University is committed to ensuring that its staff selection policy is consistent across the institution and that the Code of Practice is implemented uniformly. The Code therefore sets out the principles (1.7) and criteria (3.1.1) that will be applied at all stages of the process where decisions will be made.

(c) Accountability: Individuals and bodies appointed to make decisions with respect to the selection of staff for the REF submission will have clearly defined terms of reference and responsibilities. These are outlined in Appendices D.

Staff inclusion decisions will be clearly recorded. These will not be published in the interests of confidentiality, but will be available to the individual staff members to whom the decision applies. All staff involved in the decision-making process will be briefed in the use and application of the code and related equalities legislation. The programme of development that all designated staff will undertake can be found at Appendix B.

(d) Inclusivity: The University is firmly committed to fostering and promoting an inclusive environment and will apply this code across all Units of Assessment (UoAs), enabling the University to identify all eligible staff who have produced excellent research for submission to the REF.

(e) Application: The processes defined in this Code of Practice and the outcomes of the selection decisions are only to be applied in the context of the REF. Being excluded from the REF submission will not in itself impact on status, pay or conditions of service. The University stresses that submission to REF2014 is only one indication of the contribution made by that individual to HWU.

Part 2: Management and decision-making structures

Management of the University's REF2014 Submission: Designated Staff and Committees

- 2.1 The submission will be overseen by the Deputy Principal (Research & KT) and the REF Manager (the Head of Research & Legal Services), with support from Research and Enterprise Services and identified individuals across the University.
- 2.2 The REF Steering Group (REF SG) will play a key role formulating the University's REF2014 submission strategy and policy (see Appendix D for Membership and Terms of Reference). REF SG will be the main forum for REF discussions and will report its decisions to RKEB who will review these and recommend them to PME for confirmation.
- 2.3 Each School or Institute will identify local staff that will act as a REF SG representative (usually the Director of Research), a REF Administrative Coordinator and Academic Champions for each UoA as a minimum, who together will be responsible for the management and administration of the REF2014 submission process in their area. These individuals will meet regularly to review progress and enable the REF SG representative to report at its meetings. Schools or Institutes may identify others to support these individuals in developing their REF submissions.
- 2.4 The group of School Administrative Coordinators, along with representatives for other key sections (see Appendix D) will form the REF Administrative Group (the REF Admin Team), chaired by the Information and Planning Officer, to oversee the administrative arrangements for REF2014. It will provide operational support to UoA Champions, the Deputy Principal and the REF Manager in the exercise of their responsibilities relating to the REF.

University REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group

- 2.5 The University has appointed a REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group (EDSC), to advise the Deputy Principal, REF Manager, REF SG, and UoA Champions on matters relating to equality and diversity in the REF. The Group have been selected based on their experience and expertise with equality and diversity issues, as well as their knowledge of the REF2014 guidance (see Appendix D for membership and remit).
- 2.6 This Group will give particular advice on the application of this Code and highlight any relevant employment legislation that must inform decisions regarding staff inclusion in the University's REF2014 submission. The Group will also review the University's REF2014 Equality Analysis at appropriate stages in the submission preparation process, consider complex cases of special circumstances (see Part 3, Section 4) and make recommendations on whether these would meet those identified by the REF as leading to an acceptable reduction in the number of outputs required.
- 2.7 The University REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group will not make recommendations on whether individuals should or should not be included in the University's REF submission.

Part 3: The selection of staff for submission

Section 1: Criteria for Selection

- 3.1.1 The criteria that will be applied at each level (as defined above) of the decision-making process will be as follows:
- (i) eligibility for submission as defined in the REF2014 guidance (Guidance on Submissions Part 3. Section 1, www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02).
 - (ii) the quality of an individual's research compared to the Unit of Assessment threshold
 - (iii) the quantity of their research taking into account any individual staff circumstances that may have affected the volume of a person's research or their ability to work productively during the assessment period.

Section 2: The process by which submission quality thresholds will be set

- 3.2.1 School Research Committees or equivalent will consider guidance from the REF SG, target REF performance, Joint submission arrangements (see Part 5 for further information), RAE2008 performance, and other information to identify threshold quality standards for each UoA.
- 3.2.2 Quality thresholds proposed by the Schools will be reviewed and agreed by the REF SG and submitted via RKEB for approval by UE. Thresholds will be freely and openly published and communicated to staff as part of the wider REF communications.
- 3.2.3 Staff will be advised of the thresholds set via Heads of School/Institute and UoA Champions.
- 3.2.4 All staff to be included within the same Unit of Assessment will be expected to reach the same quality threshold.

Section 3: The Process by which selection decisions are made

- 3.3.1 The process for identifying and agreeing individuals to be selected for the University's REF submission is as follows:
- (i) List of Eligible Staff: the Schools/Institutes will draw up a list of all staff who are eligible for submission according to the published REF2014 guidelines with the assistance of the REF Admin Team who will keep a record of these staff.
 - (ii) UoA-level Proposed Selection List: the UoA Champion will draw up a list of the staff they propose to submit to the REF and the rationale for this. This will be based on the best and most recent evidence in relation to the criteria (identified above). The selection and the evidence will be recorded by the School/Institute's REF Administrative Coordinators. The REF SG Representative of each School / Institute where the proposed selected staff are drawn from will be informed.
 - (iii) Selection Approval Meetings: in meetings Chaired by the Vice Principal, the list will be reviewed and discussed involving as a minimum the Deputy Principal (Research & KT), Head of School / Institute, UoA Champion, School REF Steering Group representative, and the REF Manager; in exceptional circumstances the Chair may approve substitutions for these attendees. This group will either approve the proposals made at these meetings or request further information or changes (which will include confirming output selection decisions). The REF Administrative Team member will record decisions and recommendations made at these meetings. The REF Data Team will check to ensure all eligible staff are accounted for in these meetings.

Selection approval meetings will result in individual staff being placed in one of three Selection Categories:

- a) The member of staff has met the criteria for selection for a specific UoA and is very likely to be included in the University's REF2014 submission.
 - b) The member of staff has met some of the criteria for selection to be included in the University's REF2014 submission for a specific UoA but some criteria remain to be met. This will usually be the confirmed publication of a research output meeting quality thresholds but other criteria may also be applied as long as these meet the University's Code of Practice for selection.
 - c) The member of staff is not expected to meet the criteria for selection and is very unlikely to be included in the University's REF2014 submission.
- (iv) Reporting Selection Approval Meetings: The outcomes of these meetings will be reported to the REF Steering Group, Research & Knowledge Exchange Board and University Executive.
- (v) Informing Staff: All eligible members of staff whose status in relation to REF selection was changed at these meetings will be informed in writing of their status within 5 working days of the meeting, usually by the Head of School / Institute. Staff will be informed of the rationale for the decision and given an opportunity to meet to discuss this further.

3.3.2 The guiding principle that will inform decisions regarding which staff will be submitted is that of the quality of their research. In making these assessments, the University will take due consideration of all the REF2014 guidance available including the Guidance on Submissions; the relevant Panel Criteria and Working Methods; and this Code of Practice.

3.3.3 Recording decisions at each level or selection stage: in the interests of consistency and in order to monitor the process effectively for identifying individuals whose circumstances might require special consideration, REF Administrative Coordinators should record information systematically and securely.

Units of Assessment Crossing More than One School / Institute

3.3.4 In circumstances where the Unit of Assessment Champion is proposing to include individuals from another School / Institute, the REF Steering Group representative, Head of School / Institute as well as any relevant UoA Champions from the latter will be invited to be a member of the Selection Approval Meetings. The REF Admin Team Members will ensure that outcomes from these meetings are stored consistently and appropriately.

Joint Submissions

3.3.5 Selection of staff for Units of Assessment involving Joint Submissions will be made in the context of the entire Unit of Assessment submission. A common set of criteria for each Joint Submission and a joint selection process which adheres to the principles of both institutions Code of Practice for Selection will be agreed.

Timetable of Selection Approval Meetings

3.3.6 Formal Selection Approval Meetings will take place according to the outline schedule below.

- Spring 2012: Initial decisions made on Selection of Staff for REF2014. It is expected that many individuals will be in Selection Category b) at this point.
- Autumn/Winter 2012: Selection decisions for all staff reviewed based on the results of further assessments of each UoA in 2012
- Spring/Summer 2013: Selection decisions for all staff reviewed based on the results of further assessments of each UoA in 2013
- Autumn 2013: Final selection decisions. Selection Category b) will not be used at this point.

Section 4: The process by which individual staff circumstances can be taken account of in selection decisions

- 3.4.1 The REF2014 Guidance stipulates a minimum number of outputs to be listed against each member of staff included in the institution's REF submission; this is normally 4.
- 3.4.2 However, as a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, the REF Guidance permits individuals to be returned with fewer 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**. The REF Guidance divides such circumstances into either 'clearly defined' or 'more complex'; a) and b) below are extracts from the Addendum to the Guidance on Submissions (www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02) on these two categories:
- (a) Clearly defined circumstances, which are:
- Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (as defined at paragraphs 85-87 of the Guidance on Submissions and paragraph 72 of the Addendum www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02).
 - Absence from work due to working part-time, secondments or career breaks.
 - Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
 - Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6.
- (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:
- Disability. This is defined in 'Guidance on Submissions' Part 4, Table 2 under 'Disability' (www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02).
 - Ill health or injury.
 - Mental health conditions.
 - Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances made in paragraph 75 of the Addendum to the Guidance on Submissions (www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02 and reproduced in Appendix E below).
 - Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - Gender reassignment.
 - Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed at paragraph 190 of the Guidance on Submissions (www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02) or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.
- 3.4.3 For clearly defined circumstances, the University will refer to and be guided by REF2014 and Equality Challenge Unit guidance documents which will provide tariffs to determine the number of outputs that an individual may submit without penalty in the assessment. The indicative tariffs to be applied are provided in Appendix E.
- 3.4.4 For more complex circumstances, the University's REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group will make a judgement on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs submitted, referring to and guided by REF2014 guidance documents (as per Appendix E). As far as is practicable, the impact of these circumstances on an individual's ability to work productively throughout the assessment period will be equated to the impact of clearly defined absences, and the number of outputs reduced in line with Appendix E. The University will also draw upon advice from the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) who will provide worked examples of complex circumstances, indicating the appropriate reduction in outputs for a range of particular circumstances (www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF).

- 3.4.5 Where the University decides to include a combination of clearly defined and more complex circumstances relating to an individual, it will return these as 'complex' so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances.
- 3.4.6 The University has developed this Code and its guidance on dealing with complex individual staff circumstances in accordance with REF2014 guidance published by the REF2014 Team and ECU.

Disclosure Form

- 3.4.7 All staff that are potentially eligible for selection according to the REF2014 guidelines will be invited to complete a form to bring forward any individual circumstances covered by equality legislation that they may wish to be taken into consideration (Appendix F). Disclosure Forms are to be submitted directly to the University's REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group who will make decisions on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs that can be submitted without penalty. They will inform the UoA Champions of the tariff levels and these will be recorded along with selection information about staff members. This approach will ensure consistency of practice across the University by giving everyone eligible for consideration in the REF the opportunity to raise any individual circumstances that they consider to have had an impact on their ability to produce four outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period. Heads of School/Institutes (or nominee) may also take this opportunity to raise potentially applicable individual circumstances that have not been raised by the individual themselves.
- 3.4.8 It is recognised that this is about achieving a balance between an individual's right to confidentiality and ensuring that those staff in formal decision-making roles are fully informed about circumstances requiring special consideration. Therefore, the Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group will not reveal the nature of individual circumstances unless this is required to produce the evidence in the event of an audit by the REF.
- 3.4.9 In order to ensure that such recommendations are made in a timely fashion, the Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group will consider any such circumstances immediately upon receipt, and will provide a recommendation to the UoA Champion within 10 working days.

Feedback and Review

- 3.4.10 Following agreement of UoA selection lists (and at each revision) by the Heads of School/Institute will inform eligible staff as follows:
- a) The member of staff has met the criteria for selection for a specific UoA.
 - b) The member of staff has met some of the criteria for selection to be included in the University's REF2014 submission for a specific UoA but some criteria remain to be met. This will usually be the confirmed publication of a research output meeting quality thresholds but other criteria may also be applied as long as these meet the University's Code of Practice for selection.
 - c) The member of staff is not expected to meet the criteria for selection and will not be included in the University's REF2014 submission.

These meetings will include a review of any staff development issues arising as a result of these intentions.

- 3.4.11 If it is proposed that a member of staff is not selected and if this decision is based on criteria other than those identified in Section 1 above, then the University's REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group will be informed of this along with the rationale for the exclusion. The Group will consider each case in order to ensure that no member of staff is excluded from the submission on the grounds of circumstances that are covered by equalities legislation or any other relevant personal circumstances that may have significantly adversely affected his/her contribution to the submission. The Group will communicate its findings and recommendations to the relevant Head of School/Institute for further discussion with the relevant UoA Champion.
- 3.4.12 The University's Performance and Development Review (PDR) process will be used to discuss an individual's research performance and consideration of the quality of their research output. These

discussions may be complemented and informed by other related people management processes, such as probation for early career staff or promotion procedures.

Section 5: Appeals

3.5.1 Section 4 describes the process where selection decisions are fed back to individuals. Staff will have the opportunity to raise any concerns with the decision at that point (as well as through PDR and other or equivalent such meetings).

3.5.2 The University has developed a bespoke appeals process to support the REF2014 exercise in order to facilitate **equality-related appeals** to be dealt with expeditiously within the timeframe for the final REF submission.

Grounds for appeal

3.5.3 Any person who is dissatisfied, on the grounds of equality, with a decision that s/he is not to be submitted may lodge an appeal to the Principal, care of the Equality & Diversity Advisor, setting out the grounds for appeal. The appeal must be evidence-based and refer to this Code of Practice.

3.5.4 An appeal brought under this Code can only be on grounds of equality or failure by the University to follow the processes laid out in this Code. Appeals regarding the **quality** of an individual's research will be considered under the University's normal Grievance Policy which may be found at www.hw.ac.uk/hr/p_grievance.php and not under the terms of this Code.

Timing of appeals

3.5.5 Staff should inform the Equality & Diversity Officer as soon as possible of their intention to submit an appeal.

3.5.6 For staff in post prior to 30th June 2013, all appeals must be lodged 5th July 2013 at the latest. For staff appointed on 1st July 2013 or after, the appeal must be lodged within 5 working days of being informed of the decision on their selection status for REF 2014. The Equality & Diversity Officer will also inform the REF Manager and the relevant Head of School / Institute that an Appeal has been lodged.

3.5.7 The Principal will convene a special University level group, the REF Appeal Panel. The Panel will comprise of at least 3 additional independent senior managers not directly involved with the REF selection process that the Principal may deem as appropriate. The Panel Membership will be published at least 20 working days in advance of its meetings. The REF Appeal Panel will be clerked by the University's Equality & Diversity Advisor who will record their recommendations and the reasons.

Outcomes from the appeal

3.5.8 The REF Appeal Panel may make one of two recommendations:

(a) The Appeal is successful and the appellant and the REF Manager are notified within 1 working days of the Appeal hearing and directed to work with the relevant UoA Champion and Head of School/Institute to re-assess the case for inclusion of the member of staff making the appeal.

(b) The selection decision is upheld and the status of the member of staff in relation to selection for REF 2014 is unchanged. The appellant and the REF Manager are notified within 1 working days of the Appeal hearing.

3.5.9 A written confirmation of the Appeal Panel's decision will be sent in writing to Appellants, their Heads of School/Institute within 10 working days of the Appeal hearing.

3.5.10 The decision of the Principal is final.

Section 6: Confidentiality

- 3.6.1 Where the selection status or special circumstances of named individuals are discussed, meetings of all Groups, Board and Committees identified in this Code of Practice will keep formal confidential records to show the purpose of the meeting, the decisions taken and the reasons for those decisions. When individual performance is discussed and the individual is absent, committees should be made aware of all the facts relating to the individual.
- 3.6.2 Individual staff circumstances will be reported, as appropriate, to the REF2014 Assessment Panels using confidential Form REF1b. The REF2014 Panels require sufficient explicit information about how the circumstances have adversely affected an individual's contribution, but they do not require significant details about the circumstances. The University will make use of Equality Challenge Unit REF1b templates in preparing these statements. The information provided must be agreed upon by the individual and their Head of School/Institute with advice from the REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group.
- 3.6.3 Information submitted in form REF1b will be kept confidential to the UK REF Team and the UK REF Panel members (for clearly defined circumstances) and the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) and main panel chairs (for complex circumstances), who are all subject to confidentiality undertakings in respect of all information contained in submission. 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.
- 3.6.4 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.

Part 4: Monitoring arrangements

Equality Analysis

- 4.1 As part of the Equality Impact Assessment process the University will conduct Equality Analyses (EAs) at critical points over the course of the REF2014 submission preparation period. These will provide a thorough and systematic analysis of the staff selection policy to determine whether this may have a differential impact on particular groups. The analysis will cover all eligible staff and will, where possible, engage and involve staff from protected groups to inform an EA. The EAs will analyse data on all the protected characteristics for which sufficient / reliable information is available. The findings from these exercises will be used to inform this Code of Practice to ensure that it is improved and enhanced, if required, as submissions are prepared.
- 4.2 The EA will be reviewed during the REF2014 submission preparation period to ensure that the University's decision-making processes are fair, transparent and equitable, specifically:
- when the REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group meet to consider inclusion decisions;
 - when the Principal considers appeals;
 - when preparing the final submission.
- 4.3 The University will take appropriate action to address areas of potential discrimination and will also promote good practice more widely across other areas of REF work, where these have demonstrated a positive impact on equality.
- 4.4 The University will publish the final Equality Analysis conducted as part of this exercise after the submissions have been made, in keeping with good practice.

Monitoring

- 4.5 The REF Steering Group will monitor the processes described in this Code for identifying individuals whose circumstances might need special consideration. In accordance with the five principles of this Code, the University will ensure that its decisions are evidence-based and that its reasons and actions are recorded formally.
- 4.6 In order to assess the equity and fairness of decisions, the REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group will prepare a report for RKEB (and then to UE) based on information and analysis derived from all Equality Analyses carried out so that they can be considered fully prior to any final decisions being made. A final report including any changes made to policies and processes will be prepared in November 2013 and will be made available on the University's REF website and to the REF team.

Part 5: Joint submissions

- 5.1 The University will share this Code of Practice with institutions with whom we make any joint submissions and will ensure that joint decision-making across institutions does not compromise adherence to the terms of this Code and its overriding principles.



Appendices

Appendix A: Equality & Diversity Policy

Heriot-Watt University Statement on Equality & Diversity

At Heriot-Watt University, we embrace a positive attitude towards the promotion of equality and diversity and take pride in our efforts to create a working, educational and social atmosphere which is inclusive of everyone.

Tackling inequalities is a major challenge. The University's Equality and Diversity Advisor takes a lead role in making sure that equality and diversity is a primary consideration throughout the University.

Heriot-Watt University takes a holistic approach to equalities, looking to establish and maintain an open and accessible working and learning environment where students and staff are able to reach their full potential.

Key National and University Policies, Guidance and Legislation

Legal Framework

Equality Act 2010:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act

REF Guidance

Equality Briefing for Panels, July 2011:

www.ref.ac.uk/pubs

Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions, July 2011 (with Addendum, January 2012):

www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02

Panel Criteria and Working Methods

www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2012-01

Equality and Diversity Related Guidance

Equality Challenge Unit:

www.ecu.ac.uk

www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF

Heriot-Watt University Policies

Human Resources at Heriot-Watt University:

www.hw.ac.uk/hr

Equality and Diversity at Heriot-Watt University:

www.hw.ac.uk/equality

The latter provides details on *inter alia*:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equal Opportunities Action Plan
- Equal Opportunities Committee

Appendix B: Development and training

Equality and Diversity

It is necessary that all those involved in the REF2014 process supported to effectively carry out their roles. All members of University Groups, Committees and panels, designated officers and staff involved in the selection of staff for the REF2014 will undertake REF specific equality and diversity training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in the process. This training will also be used to embed the principles of transparency, accountability, consistency, inclusivity and application.

Training will provide information about the Equality Act 2010, outline our legal obligations as HEIs, and demonstrate the lines of responsibility for individuals and institutions. The training will be built on information provided by the Equality Challenge Unit.

Case studies are to be made available from the Equality Change Unit, ECU in Spring 2012, and these will be used as an integral part of the development programme to offer staff the opportunity to practise implementation of the equality guidance.

The University sees particular benefit in designing and delivering provision that combines the expertise and insights of both academic and professional services colleagues from Human Resources and RES to embed good practice across the institution in support of the REF. Where possible, we will also work with other HEIs in the provision of dedicated training to ensure that wherever collaborative activities are underway we share the same foundations in our joint work.

Code of Practice

UoA Champions must offer external advisors appropriate briefing in the application of the Code when participating in University processes. In particular, guidance will be provided about the appropriate level of detailed comment by external advisors on individuals.

Development will be delivered through a range of different approaches including workshops, seminars briefing sessions and on-line provision. Details of the programme will be made available from RES.

Appendix C: Programme of communication

The University will devise an internal communications plan that will disseminate the details and purpose of the Code of Practice and to explain the processes relating to REF2014 and the selection of academic staff for submission.

Once the Code of Practice has been approved, Heads of Schools and Institutes will be asked to disseminate the Code to all eligible staff, with the expectation that the Code will be discussed at Staff Meetings as part of normal REF2014 discussions.

Possible channels of internal communications

The Code will be made available (in .pdf and .doc formats) on a University REF2014 website. REF Steering group, REF Administrative Team and Research & Knowledge Exchange Board will be fully briefed on the Code and its implication and further assist in dissemination. Other methods to raise awareness of the REF and the Code of Practice include:

Printed & Electronic Media

Internal Website: The University will establish a primary website for REF from which all the REF related documentation, processes and timings can be accessed. In addition, the University's Equality and Diversity website will carry information relevant to this Code of Practice. These two websites will cross refer.

Weekly e-news Emails: The REF Team will utilise the University's weekly e-news to announce new information regarding the REF and report on progress.

Other University Publications: The University's Corporate Communications will engage with the REF Manager in identifying articles on REF for its regular publications and outputs; such as the University's Network Magazine.

Ref Email: a new email will be established to help handle enquiries from staff on the REF, this will be accessible to several members of staff involved in the REF submission to ensure rapid response.

Events

School and Institute Level Events: Existing programmes of School and Institute Seminars and meetings will be used to advise staff on the Code of practice and how to engage with the REF. Additional REF-specific events will be arranged as required.

REF Seminars: RES will also run REF and Code-specific seminars throughout 2012 and 2013.

REF Surgeries: The REF Admin team will make a regular time available for staff to contact them with enquiries about the REF.

Reaching All Staff

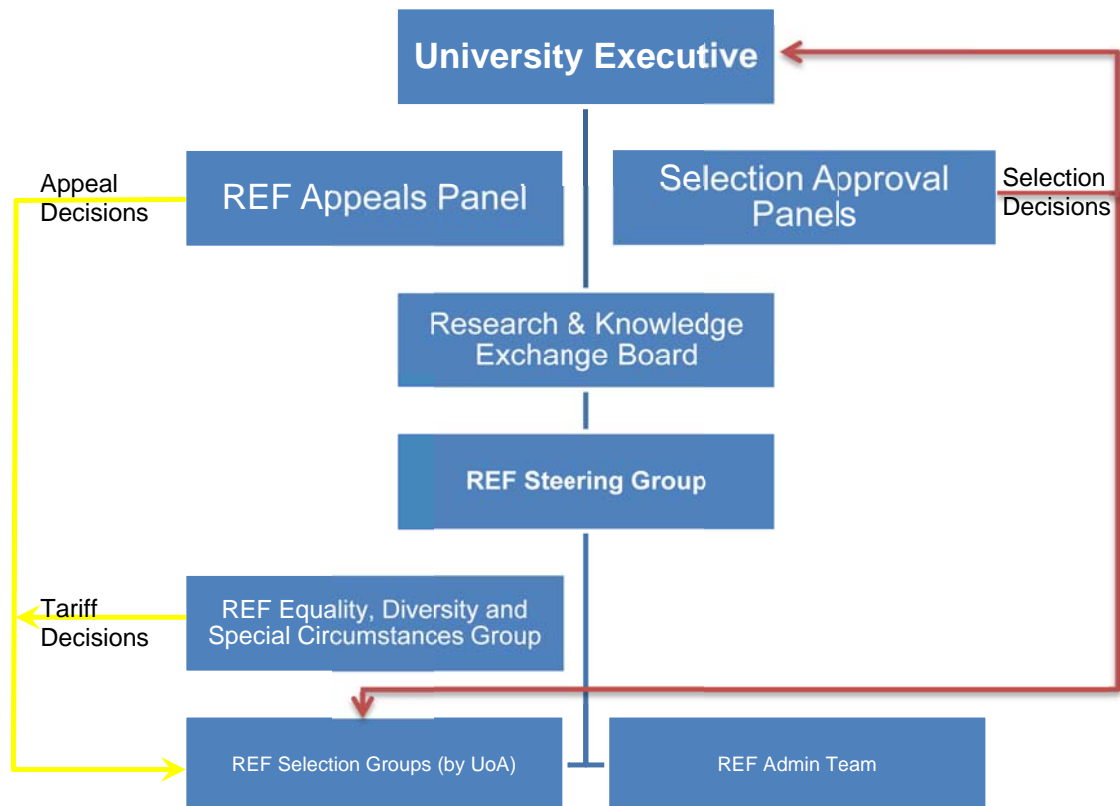
The University's REF Admin Team will work with Corporate Communications and HR to ensure that notification of the Code reaches eligible staff currently away from the University (e.g. on Maternity Leave or prolonged sickness).

Appendix D: University REF-Designated Groups, Committees and Individuals

University Officers with Responsibility for REF

Professor Alan Miller	Deputy Principal (Research & Knowledge Transfer)	Overall lead for the REF for the University
Dr Antony Weir	Head of Research & Legal Services	REF Manager
Dr Paul Thompson	Information and Planning Officer	Coordination of REF data collection & analysis and administrative support
Ms Sharan Virdee	Equality and Diversity Advisor	Coordination of equality and diversity issues in relation to the REF & carrying out Equality Analyses.
Professor Steve Chapman	Principal and Vice Chancellor	Final decision on appeals made through this Code of Practice.
Professor Julian Jones	Vice Principal	Chairing Selection Approval Meetings

REF Structure



University Executive

The University's primary management decision making body. With responsibility for The University's Mission, Vision, Values and Strategy, Financial arrangements, Risk management, and Governance. (For full remit and membership see: www.hw.ac.uk/committees/pme).

RKEB: Research & Knowledge Exchange Board

Remit

The Research & Knowledge Exchange Board reports to the Planning and Management Executive, and has close and effective communications with Senate. The function of the Board is to:

- support the Deputy Principal (Research & Knowledge Transfer) in providing research and related activity management, co-ordination and leadership across the University;
- advise PME on all issues relating to research and related activity across the University;
- act on behalf of PME to develop the necessary strategy, policies, structures and procedures for the enhancement and facilitation of research, including postgraduate research students, knowledge exchange or knowledge transfer.

Composition

- Chair: Deputy Principal (Research & Knowledge Transfer)
- Clerk: Head of Research & Legal Services, RES
- Director of Technology and Research Services
- Director of Planning
- Directors of Research in Schools and Postgraduate Institutes
- Director of Postgraduate Studies
- Deans
- Heads of Strategic Themes
- University Librarian

REF Steering Group

Remit

Support and advise the Deputy Principal (Research & Knowledge Transfer) in providing REF and related activity management, co-ordination and leadership across the University.

Composition

- Chair: Deputy Principal (Research & KT)
- Clerk: Head of Research & Legal Services (and REF Manager)
- School / Institute representatives (usually Directors of Research)
- Unit of Assessment representatives (usually the UoA Champion)
- Director of RES
- Director of Planning
- Information & Planning Officer

REF Administrative Team

Remit

Provide operational support to UoA Champions, the Deputy Principal and the REF Manager in the exercise of their responsibilities relating to the REF.

Composition

- Chair/Clerk: Information & Planning Officer
- REF Administrative Coordinators from Schools & Institutes

Representatives from:

- RGO
- Library
- Academic Registry
- Human Resources

REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group

Remit

Advise the Deputy Principal, REF Manager, and REF Steering Group, and REF UoA Champions on matters relating to equality and diversity in the REF. This Group will give particular advice on the application of this Code and highlight any relevant employment legislation that must inform decisions regarding staff inclusion in the University's REF2014 submission. In particular the Group will:

- review the University's REF2014 Equality Analysis;
- consider complex cases of special circumstances.

The Group will not make recommendations on whether individuals should or should not be included in the University's REF submission.

Composition

- Deputy Principal (Research & KT)
- Head of Research & Legal Services (and REF Manager)
- Director of Human Resources
- Head of Human Resources Services
- Equality & Diversity Officer

REF Appeal Panel

Remit

To review and take decisions on formal cases of appeal raised under the processes laid out in the Code of Practice for Selection of Staff for REF2014.

Composition

- Chair: Principal
- Clerk: Equality & Diversity Advisor
- Additional independent senior managers

Appendix E: Indicative Tariffs to be Applied

For clearly defined circumstances, the REF Panel Criteria and Working Methods (REF 01.2012, January 2012, www.ref.ac.uk) set out the indicative number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty in the assessment, depending on the duration of the circumstance (or combination thereof).

Early Career Researchers

Table 1 (page 11): 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

Absences from Work

Table 2 (page 11): Absences due to 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

Part-time working (REF Panel Criteria and Working Methods, p.11)

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 = $30 \times 0.4 = 12$.

Maternity leave

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

- 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.
- Additional paternity or adoption leave lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013.

Other Clearly Defined Circumstances

The University will accept any other output allowances arising directly from guidance produced by the UK REF Team.

Appendix F: Individual staff circumstances disclosure form

Fair processing

Heriot-Watt University is a public authority with a number of legal duties placed upon us to ensure that we eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equal opportunities. To help us meet these duties we are collecting information about our service users to help us plan activity for improving our services. Under the Data Protection Act the information you give us is voluntary and Heriot-Watt University will keep your personal details safe and secure with strict limits on who has access to the information and you may ask us to stop processing this data at any time. By filling in the form and returning it, you are consenting to your data being processed and looked after in this way. If you have any questions or queries about this please contact (Sharan Virdee, Equality & Diversity Advisor, 0131 451 3980, S.Virdee@hw.ac.uk).

Name	
Department	
Unit of Assessment	

Section one: Declaration of whether there may be individual circumstances

Please select one of the following:

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

Section two: Option to discuss individual circumstances with a member of HR

Please select as appropriate:

- I would like to be contacted by a member of human resources staff to discuss my circumstances and requirements and/or the support provided by Heriot-Watt University. My contact details for this purpose are:

Email	
Telephone	
Preferred method of communication	

- I do **not** wish to be contacted by a member of human resources staff

Section three: Details of personal circumstances

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

Please provide information required on relevant circumstance/s and continue onto a separate sheet of paper if necessary:

Circumstance	Information required
Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)	Date on which you became an early career research
Information	
Junior clinical academic staff who have not gained Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 October 2013 [Delete as appropriate: applies to specific units of assessment within Panel A]	Please place a tick in this box if the circumstance applies:
Part time employee	FTE and duration in months
Information	
Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector	Dates and duration in months
Information	
Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)	For each period of leave state which type of leave was taken and the dates and duration in months
Information	
Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	

Mental health condition	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Ill health or injury	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, paternity, adoption or childcare in addition to the period of maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave taken.	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Other caring responsibilities (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Gender reassignment	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	



Other exceptional and relevant reasons, not including teaching or administrative work	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	

Section four: Signature

Please select as appropriate:

- I confirm that the information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances.
- I recognise that the information provided will be used for REF purposes and will be seen by Heriot-Watt's REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group.
- I realise that it may be necessary to share information with the UK funding bodies' REF team, who may make the information available to REF panel chairs, members and secretaries and/or the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel.
- I recognise that if a joint submission is made, information may be shared with another institution.

Where permission is not provided Heriot-Watt University will be limited in the action it can take.

Signature:

Date:

(Staff member)

Completed forms should be marked as 'Confidential' and sent in hard copy or by email to:

Sharan Virdee,
 Equality & Diversity Advisor,
 Lord Balerno Building
 S.Virdee@hw.ac.uk



For official use only

Following consideration of the personal circumstances described above, the REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group:

Will progress the staff member's consideration for inclusion in the REF submission with [insert number] of research outputs¹. [Subject to specified institutional criteria]. Rationale for the proposed number of outputs:

e.g. this decision is based on the tariffs outlined in the panel criteria.

Requires further information of the circumstances described as follows:

e.g. please provide information from your occupational health assessment on the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments provided.

Does not feel that the staff member meets the criteria outlined within the REF 'Panel criteria and working methods' for submitting fewer than four research outputs. The reason(s) for this decision are:

e.g. circumstances detailed are not recognised within the assessment framework and guidance on submissions.

If [insert name of staff member] wishes to appeal against the decision of the REF Equality, Diversity and Special Circumstances Group they should confirm their intention to appeal as soon as possible with the University's Equality & Diversity Advisor. Details of the appeals process can be found in the University's Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff for the Research Excellence Framework REF2014.

Signature: Date:
([insert name of person/chair of committee responsible for decision])

Signature: Date:
(REF Manager)

¹ This does not constitute a recommendation that the individual either should or should not be included in staff selected for Heriot-Watt's submission to the REF.