

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

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1.1 The University of Huddersfield inspires and supports outstanding contributions to research, innovation and engagement within an inclusive and enabling environment that promotes excellence with impact at every level of endeavour.
- 1.1.2 Accordingly, the University is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and seeks to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant primary and secondary legislation.
- 1.1.3 This Code of Practice is designed to support the University's goal of submitting the maximum number of staff who are conducting excellent research to the Research Excellence Framework 2014. In securing this goal the Code of Practice addresses individual circumstances that constrained an individual's ability to produce four outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period. In so doing the University seeks to address issues of detrimental policy impact and/or indirectly discriminatory outcomes.
- 1.1.4 The Code of Practice embodies the basic principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity in line with the guidance given in *REF02.2011*.
- 1.1.5 The Code of Practice is informed by and conforms with the University's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and is consistent in meeting our public sector duties, under the Equality Act 2010, with respect to the REF submission.

### **2. Responsibilities and Role**

#### **2.1 The Unit of Assessment Panel (UoA Panel)**

- 2.1.1 The UoA Panel will consider all submissions in the UoA and make recommendations to the University REF Committee (URefC). In making its recommendations the UoA Panel will:
  - i. Recommend the selection of staff from the UoA
  - ii. Apply the findings of the Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP).
  - iii. Raise any issue of dispute between the UoA Panel and ICP for referral to the Independent Appeals Panel
- 2.1.2 The UoA Panel will be chaired by the Director of Research and Enterprise (or nominee) and will consist of the relevant Dean(s), UoA Co-ordinator, the Deputy UoA

Co-ordinator, the Director(s) of Research from the School(s) where any staff being considered are based, and a professor selected by the academic staff in the UoA

2.1.3 The UoA Panel will receive administrative support from the Research and Enterprise Directorate.

2.1.4 External advisors may be appointed to the UoA Panels where there is a demonstrable lack of expertise in the Panel or where serious workload issues or conflict of interest for existing panel members have been identified requiring an additional panel member for a particular UoA. External advisors should not decide which staff should be submitted to the REF nor should they be given any information relating to individual staff circumstances. Advisors should be asked to comment on the quality of an individual's research only. Requests for externals must be made to the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise.

## **2.2 The University REF Committee (URefC)**

2.2.1 The oversight and co-ordination of the process of selection and submission and approval of the final submission is the responsibility of the URefC. In determining the final submission the Committee will:

- i. Oversee the process of selection
- ii. Determine the final selection of staff for the REF2014
- iii. Ensure that any reduction in outputs in response to defined individual circumstances have been applied in accordance with *REF 01.2012*
- iv. Ensure that any reduction in outputs in response to complex circumstances have been applied consistently
- v. Review EIA for selection recommendations from UoA Panels and decision made by the URefC

2.2.2 The Committee will be chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise, and will have a membership of Director of Research and Enterprise and two members of academic staff elected by the University Research Committee. The recommendations of the UoA Panels will be presented by the Director of Research and Enterprise (or nominee). The application of defined circumstances tariffs and complex circumstances judgements will be presented by the Director of HR (or nominee).

2.2.3 The URefC will receive administrative support from the Research & Enterprise Directorate.

## **2.3 The Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP)**

2.3.1 The ICP will review the information provided by individual circumstances forms for all staff submitted to the REF2014 and:

- i. Apply the defined circumstances tariff to determine the number of outputs that will be reduced
- ii. Make an appropriate judgement based on complex circumstances on any reduction in the number of outputs submitted
- iii. Notify the UoA Panels of reductions to apply
- iv. Refer appeals against initial ICP determination for resolution by the Independent Appeals Panel

2.3.2 The ICP will be chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning and will have a membership of Director of Human Resources (or nominee), Head of Strategy, Policy and Engagement, Personnel Manager/Officer.

2.3.3 The ICP will receive administrative support from Human Resources.

## **2.4 Conflict of Interest**

2.4.1 All staff operating on any panel or Committee must be conscious of any potential conflict of interest and declare any interest that could lead a reasonable observer to doubt the impartiality of that individual's assessment. All staff must declare any major or minor interests.

2.4.2 A major interest is where the Panel/Committee member would be asked to assess the work of a partner, immediate family member or someone they are engaged in substantial collaboration with. Panel/Committee members would not take part in any assessment of submissions or assessment on individual circumstances for individuals where a major interest occurs.

2.4.3 A minor interest would include:

- i. Supervision or co-supervision of the doctoral studies of an individual under consideration by a Panel/Committee member
- ii. A Panel/Committee member receiving supervision as a doctoral student by an individual under consideration
- iii. The Panel/Committee member, their partner or immediate friend is employed by a "user" organisation that is the focus of an impact case study.
- iv. The Panel/Committee member has acted during the assessment period as a member of a selection/appointment committee regarding the recruitment and/or promotion of an individual under consideration.

2.4.4 Declarations of minor interest should be made to the relevant Panel/Committee chair and the Chair will decide what effect the existence of a minor interest shall have on a panel member's participation. All declarations shall be notified and recorded.

## **2.5 Confidentiality**

2.5.1 The management of all information in the REF exercise is covered by the University's policies on data protection. For further information please consult the intranet on <http://www2.hud.ac.uk/cls/it/recordsmgt/dataprotection.php>

2.5.2 Information provided as part of the consideration of individual circumstances is "personal sensitive data".

2.5.3 The information provided on the Individual Circumstances form will be seen by the members of the ICP and staff within Human Resources and the Research and Enterprise Directorate in order to process and complete the REF return. The UoA Panel will know what reductions in outputs have been approved and under what category. Where reductions have been made in response to complex circumstances the UoA Panel will know the level of reduction but not the details of the circumstances. The URefC will have access to all information and may refer to this if there are any appeals against the decision of the ICP or any questions relating to the consistent application of criteria that emerge in the process and impact assessment.

- 2.5.4 Where a reduction in outputs has been approved this will be included on the form REF1b (and form REF1c in the case of category C staff). Individual circumstances will be listed and factual information provided to support the judgement made e.g., dates, career history, duration of absence. Complex circumstances will be recorded in terms of the nature and timing of those circumstances, the impact on the individual's ability to work productively and how the reduction has been calculated.
- 2.5.5 These forms will be submitted to the national REF Team. Information submitted in these forms will be kept confidential to the REF Team. Panel members will have details of individual circumstances. The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel and the main panel chairs will have access to details of complex circumstances.
- 2.5.6 Information submitted in the REF forms will be used only for the purposes of assessing the REF submission and will not be published at any time. Such information will be destroyed on completion of the REF.
- 2.5.7 A copy of the individual circumstances form completed and submitted by individual members of staff will be held on the individual's personal file held in Human Resources as part of their employment record. Other copies used by the Panel/Committee will be destroyed on completion of the REF.

### **3. Selection Criteria and Appeals**

- 3.1.1 Selection of staff for inclusion in the REF submission is the prerogative of the institution (as stipulated in para. 77 of *REF02.2011*) and will be based on a consideration of the following,
- i. the number of outputs meeting the REF definition of research as stated in Appendix C of *REF02.2011* required after taking into account individual circumstances
  - ii. the quality of the potential submission relative to the REF criteria
  - iii. the compatibility of the submission with the assessment descriptors and boundaries declared by the relevant main panel and sub-panel(s)
- 3.1.2 Any member of staff nominated but not selected for inclusion in the REF submission by the UoA Panel or URefC will have the right of appeal to an independent Appeals Panel consisting of the Deputy Vice Chancellor and two members of the University Research Committee who will not have been involved in any prior decisions relating to selection of the appellant. The Panel will also consider appeals against the decisions of the Individual Circumstances Panel. The panel will investigate the matter in accordance with the principles set out in this Code of Practice. The panel will consult as widely as necessary to reach an informed judgement, which will be communicated in writing to the appellant, the UoA Panel and URefC for action.
- 3.1.3 In all cases the appellant will have the right to appear in person before the Appeals Panel and to be accompanied by a friend, colleague or representative.

### **4. Individual Circumstances**

A maximum of four outputs per employee will be listed. 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 work

productively throughout the assessment period.<sup>1</sup> A minimum of one output must be listed for any employee submitted. Outputs may be reduced in response to clearly defined circumstances or response to more complex circumstances where a judgement will be required about the appropriate reduction to be made.

#### 4.1 Qualifying as an early career researcher

4.1.1 Early career researchers are members of staff who are employed on the census date (31 October 2013) and started their careers on or after 1 August 2009. Reductions will be applied as follows:

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

#### 4.2 Part time Working and Absences due to Career Breaks and Secondments

4.2.1 For part time working, the equivalent 'total months absent' is calculated by multiplying the number of months worked part time by the full time equivalent (FTE) not worked during those months. For example, if an employee worked at 0.6FTE for 30 months the equivalent months absent will be  $30 \times 0.4 = 12$ . Reductions will be applied as follows:

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 – 45.66	2
46 or more	3

4.2.2 Gaps between fixed term contracts during the assessment period will be treated as career breaks and the tariff above applied.

<sup>1</sup> Panel Criteria and Working Methods REF01.2012

### **4.3 Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave**

- 4.3.1 Employees may reduce the number of outputs by one for each discrete period of:
- i. Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially in the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013 (regardless of length of absence)
  - ii. Additional paternity leave or adoption leave lasting four months or more taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013. Additional paternity/adoption leave refers to leave of up to 26 weeks which is taken to care for a child where that employee's civil partner, partner or spouse was entitled to statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave and has since returned to work. Leave may be taken by parents of either gender.
- 4.3.2 Shorter periods of leave may be taken into account by either seeking a reduction in outputs under the complex circumstances consideration or by combining the number of months absence under the criteria covering absence from work.

### **4.4 Category C Staff**

- 4.4.1 Category C staff who are employed primarily as clinical or health professionals may have their outputs reduced by 2 to take account of the significant time constraints they normally face in undertaking research.
- 4.4.2 The reduction in two outputs would normally be sufficient to account of additional circumstances that may have affected the individual's research work. Where there are significant additional circumstances these would be considered as complex circumstances.

## **5. Complex Circumstances**

- 5.1.1 Complex circumstances are such that they impact on the individual's capacity to work productively. Such circumstances might include:
- i. Disability
  - ii. Ill health or injury
  - iii. Mental health conditions
  - iv. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare which fall outside the tariff allowances (para 3.3)
  - v. Other caring responsibilities
  - vi. Gender reassignment
  - vii. Other circumstances related to protected characteristics or related to activities protected by employment legislation.
- 5.1.2 A reduction in the outputs required will be calculated against an assessment of each individual case.

## **6. Process, Dates and Communication**

- 6.1. The outline process is as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
July 2012	<p>Submission of Code of Practice to the national REF team on 31 July along with letter from the Vice Chancellor confirming that the submitted code has been developed by and will be applied by the University</p> <p>Procedures published and disseminated within University</p>
August 2012	<p><b>Mock Exercise:</b> Panel/Committee Members details are published.</p> <p>All Panel and Committee Members are asked to notify the relevant Panel/Committee Chairs of any major interests they have and any minor interests that they are aware of (the requirement to update any minor interests is the responsibility of the individual)</p> <p>Interests published</p> <p>Staff provided with opportunity to raise any issues of interest with the Panel/Committee Chairs.</p>
August-September 2012	Panel/Committee training
September 2012	<p><b>Mock Exercise</b> All potentially eligible staff requested to submit an individual circumstances form</p>
October 2012	<p><b>Mock Exercise</b> ICP consider individual circumstances form and determines any reduction in outputs that are awarded.</p> <p>ICP notified individual of the decision. The individual has the opportunity to appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel</p> <p>ICP informs UoA of the reductions to be applied</p>
October 2012	<p><b>Mock Exercise</b> UoA Panel selects staff for inclusion</p>
November 2012	<p><b>Mock Exercise</b> ICP Appeals deadline</p> <p>Submission of the amended Code of Practice</p>
14 December 2012	<p><b>Mock Exercise</b> UoA submits to URefC and the Independent Appeals Panel considers ICP Appeals</p>
January 2013	<p><b>Mock Exercise</b> Equality Impact Assessment</p>
February/March 2013	URefC assesses mock submissions and provides feedback to

	each Unit of Assessment making amendments to process as appropriate
March/April 2013	Training Updates
April 2013	Staff invited to submit/update individual circumstances  ICP consider individual circumstances form and determines any reduction in outputs that are awarded.  ICP notified individual of the decision. The individual has the opportunity to appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel  ICP informs UoA of the reductions to be applied
May 2013	UoA Panel selects staff for submission  Appeals and feedback
June 2013	UoA makes final submission to URefC
July 2013	URefC decisions on UoA submissions and feedback to members of staff not selected
August 2013	Appeals against URefC decisions considered
September 2013	Equality Impact Assessment
November 2013	Independent Appeals Panel considers ICP Appeals  URefC approves final submission to the REF
29 November 2013	REF Submitted
February 2014	Equality Impact Assessment published on University website
December 2014	Outcome of REF 2014 published

## 6.2 Communication

- 6.2.1 The University will undertake a thorough programme of communications activity to disseminate and explain this Code of Practice throughout the timetable for the mock and final exercises detailed in 6.1.
- 6.2.2 The Code of Practice will be published prominently on the staff intranet and will be circulated by email to all academic staff during both the mock and final exercises. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research & Enterprise and the Director of Human Resources will invite all staff to read and discuss the Code and the supplementary materials used in training during the final exercise commencing in April 2013.
- 6.2.3 Human Resources will ensure contact is made to all staff who are absent from work to provide access to the Code of Practice, ensure they are regularly updated and to invite them to submit an Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form. All information and forms relating to Individual Circumstances Disclosure is published on the HR web site.



- 6.2.4 All constitutional research committees and forums at University and School level will have a standing item to discuss dissemination of the Code of Practice during the period up to the final submission on 29 November 2013.
- 6.2.5 The Research & Enterprise Directorate will provide guidance and briefings on the Code of Practice and on processes related to the Research Excellence Framework more broadly at University, School and Departmental level as required.

## 7. Training for Panel Members

7.1.1 The Training Plan is listed as follows:

Audience	Training Requirement	Purpose
All staff engaged in any stage of assessment	E-learning Diversity Programme completed and 'passed' since April 2010	To ensure <u>all</u> those associated with selection of staff for REF at any stage have clear understanding of legislative requirements
	Briefing on the impact of equality issues on REF and the research environment	To secure a specific appreciation of impact of equality issues on the research agenda
ICP /URefC Members	Training Programme (using ECU programme and materials) covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Issues and Research</li> <li>• Understanding the Role of the ICP</li> <li>• Understand the Role of the URefC</li> <li>• To understand clearly defined circumstances and the tariffs operating</li> <li>• To understand what complex circumstances are</li> <li>• To understand the assessment of complex circumstances</li> <li>• To apply to assessment of complex circumstances on a consistent basis</li> <li>• To practice assessments</li> </ul>	The ICP will make assessments of the individual circumstances. The URefC will need to manage any appeals against the IP decisions and will need sufficient understanding of complexity to assess that the evaluations of complexity have been applied consistently.
UoA Panels	Training Programme (using ECU programme and materials) covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Issues and Research</li> <li>• Understanding the Role of the UoA</li> <li>• To understand clearly defined circumstances and the tariffs operating</li> <li>• To understand what complex circumstances are</li> <li>• To understand the assessment of complex circumstances</li> </ul>	Although not directly involved in consideration of individual circumstances, the UoA Panels need a good understanding of the individual circumstances/ complex circumstances

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1.1 An initial EIA has been drafted as part of general consultation on this policy where potential or likely impact has been highlighted and any impact assessed. An initial assessment has been made on eligibility based on required output. This results in a negative impact on the proportional representation of female staff (from 45.5% of academic staff population to 36% of potentially eligible staffing). There is no significant impact on BME representation, representation of staff with disability or LGBT representation. In applying criteria of excellence using numbers of outputs the proportional representation of female staff again falls to 30.4% and a slight fall in the proportional representation of staff with disabilities. Representation from BME and LGBT staff increases (although actual numbers are small). In line with national expectations it would appear that the output based process has an adverse affect on females and staff with disabilities. Therefore the provision to take account of maternity and adoption leave absences and other carer related absences will assist in mitigating against the gender adverse impact. Complex circumstances may assist in addressing the potential adverse impact on staff with disabilities. This is less certain since the actual numbers involved are very small and there is less evidence of direct causal links between any adverse impact and absence.
- 8.1.2 Further impact assessments will be conducted to monitor and address (where relevant) negative impact, ensure the process is managed fairly and the application of individual circumstances is consistent and purposive. EIA will be conducted as part of the mock exercise and its results fed into the evaluation. EIAs will be completed throughout the final exercise and results fed back to inform the on-going process.



## Research Excellence Framework 2014

To: All members of staff eligible for return in REF 2014

From: Julie McClelland

Subject: REF 2014 – consideration of individual staff circumstances

---

The University is committed to ensuring that decisions about selecting staff for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.

Information on how eligible staff will be selected for submission to the REF can be found in the Code of Practice at under the REF section of 'Information for Staff' on the Research and Enterprise Intranet at <http://intranet.hud.ac.uk/re/>.

To ensure that REF processes are fair, we are collecting data on individual circumstances from all staff eligible for submission. The data will be used to identify which staff are eligible for submission with fewer than four outputs. In determining whether eligible staff may be submitted to the REF with fewer than four research outputs, the Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP) and the University REF Committee URefC) will take the following circumstances into consideration:

- = Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)
- = Part time employment
- = Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector in which the individual did not undertake academic research
- = Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, and additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)
- = Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)
- = Ill health or injury
- = Mental health conditions
- = Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, adoption, paternity or childcare **in addition to** periods of maternity, statutory adoption or additional paternity leave taken. This could include for example, pregnancy related illness and health and safety restrictions in laboratory and field work.
- = Other caring responsibilities (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative)
- = Gender reassignment

If your research output has been affected by other circumstances, not including teaching and administration that are not listed above, please detail them on the Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form as they may be considered.

In determining the number of outputs staff are required to submit, the institution will observe the definitions of individual staff circumstances provided in the published REF 'Panel criteria and working methods' (January 2012) available at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) under 'Publications'.

If you are eligible for REF submission you should complete the Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure and return it to HR by **15 April 2013** (Final REF submission). If you submitted a form during the Mock Exercise and there are no additional circumstances to report then you need not complete another form during the final exercise.

If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, your factual employment history may be referred to and/or you will be contacted by a HR representative.

Within the University the information you provide will be seen by the members of the ICP and members of the URefC. A copy of the information you provide will be held on your personal file in HR. All other copies will be destroyed after the process is completed in line with REF Data Protection processes.

Information provided on the form may be shared externally for the purposes of evidencing any reduction in the number of research outputs. For clearly defined circumstances information will be seen by the relevant REF sub-panel, the REF panel secretariat and the UK funding bodies' REF team. This will be information about early career researcher status, part-time working, career breaks or secondments, and periods of maternity, additional paternity or adoption leave taken. For complex circumstances, information will be seen only by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, the REF Main Panel Chairs and the UK funding bodies' REF team. This will be information to explain the impact on your research of circumstances such as disability, ill health, injury, mental health conditions, gender reassignment, caring responsibilities or constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, adoption and paternity (in addition to the period of leave taken). This information will not be seen by the REF sub-panel.

All REF panel members, chairs and secretaries are bound by confidentiality requirements, and acceptance of the confidentiality requirements is a condition of their appointment to the role. No information relating to identifiable individuals' circumstances will be published by the funding bodies REF Team. All data collected, stored and processed by the UK funding bodies REF Team will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The REF Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions [www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02\\_11/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02_11/), requires all higher education institutions participating in the REF to ensure appropriate confidentiality in handling individual staff circumstances.

We recognise that staff circumstances may change and if there are any changes between the date you submitted the form and 31 October 2013 you need to notify Mrs Yvonne Harding, Head of Personnel, in Human Resources immediately.

# Guidance to Staff on Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure (Mock Exercise)

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University is committed to ensuring that decisions about selecting staff for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.
- 1.2 Information on how eligible staff will be selected for submission to the REF can be found in the Code of Practice at under the REF section of 'Information for Staff' on the Research and Enterprise Intranet at <http://intranet.hud.ac.uk/re/>. This Code of Practice is designed to support the University's goal of submitting the maximum number of staff who are conducting excellent research to the Research Excellence Framework 2014. In securing this goal the Code of Practice addresses individual circumstances that constrained an individual's ability to produce four outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period. In so doing the University seeks to address issues of detrimental policy impact and/or indirectly discriminatory outcomes.
- 1.3 This guidance document provides advice to staff on the process that will be followed in considering individual circumstances, how staff may inform the panel of individual circumstances and what happens to the information submitted.

## 2. Individual Circumstances

- 2.1 The University will collect data on individual circumstances from all staff who are eligible for submission to the REF. That data will be used to identify those staff who are eligible for submission with less than four impacts.
- 2.2 Based on employment records, Human Resources will automatically collate some data. However, where a member of staff has been employed by another University during the relevant assessment period staff will need to provide further details using the Individual Circumstances Disclosure Form (disclosure form).
- 2.3 Individual submission of the disclosure form is recommended in the following circumstances as this information may not be held as part of the employment record:

Category	Who Should Complete Disclosure Form
Early career researchers	Anyone who started employment at the University after 1 August 2009 who believes they meet the definition
Part Time Working	Anyone who started employment at the University after 1 January 2008 who worked on a part time basis for a previous employer in a research/teaching and research capacity
Career breaks/Secondments	Anyone who started employment at the University after

	1 January 2008 who took a career break or a secondment outside of higher education when no research was undertaken prior to starting work here
Breaks between fixed term contracts	Anyone who is employed on a fixed term contract who has had any break in service (periods where they have not worked as academic or researcher) from 1 January onwards
Maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave	Anyone who started employment at the University after 1 January 2008 who took a period of leave after this date prior to starting work here

- 2.4 **In determining the number of outputs staff are required to submit, the institution will observe the definitions of individual staff circumstances provided in the published REF 'Panel criteria and working methods' (January 2012) available at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) under 'Publications'.**
- 2.5 Where individuals believe that their research outputs have been affected by specific individual factors (other than teaching or administrative duties) the section on complex circumstances must be completed. Such factors may include (as illustration):
- Disability
  - Ill health or injury
  - Underlying health issues, including mental health conditions
  - Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, adoption, paternity or childcare, for example pregnancy related ill health or health and safety restriction in laboratory or field work
  - Other caring responsibilities
  - Gender reassignment
- Individuals must provide details of any issues that have impacted upon their ability to work their contractual hours and on their ability to undertake research. It is important or individuals to explain why the issue had an impact on their ability to work productively.
- 2.6 If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, individual employment records will be considered and individuals may be contacted by Human Resources.

### 3. Process

- 3.1 Individuals requesting individual circumstances to be considered must complete the disclosure and return to Julie McClelland, Director of HR, by **5pm Friday 21 September 2012.**
- 3.2 The disclosure forms and data collated by Human Resources will be considered by the Individual Circumstances Panel on 3 October 2012. The decisions of the ICP will be passed to the UoA for implementation.

- 3.3 Where disclosure forms have been submitted individuals will be notified on the decision by Tuesday 9 October 2012. If individuals wish to appeal the decision of the ICP they must submit their grounds of appeal in writing to Julie McClelland, Director of HR, by **5pm Friday 9 November 2012**. If further information is required about any aspects of the appeal, individual employment records will be considered and individuals may be contacted by Human Resources
- 3.4 Appeal evidence will be considered by the University REF Committee at its December meeting. Individuals will be notified of the outcome of their appeal after this meeting.

#### 4. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- 4.1 The information provided on the disclosure forms will be seen by the members of the ICP and members of the URefC and by staff in Human Resources and Research and Enterprise who process the data and papers.
- 4.2 Members of the UoA will be aware of reductions to outputs made for clearly defined circumstances. This will be information about early career researcher status, part-time working, career breaks or secondments, fixed term working and periods of maternity, additional paternity or adoption leave taken. Members of the UoA will be aware of the level of reduction made for any complex individual circumstances but will not know the reasons for the reduction.
- 4.3 The disclosure forms, submitted in the mock exercise, will be “rolled forward” into the final REF exercise unless individuals state they do not want this to happen. Individuals will have the opportunity to submit a disclosure form or amend any disclosure form submitted in the mock exercise before the final assessment is made.
- 4.4 A copy of the information you provide will be held on your personal file in Human Resources. All other copies will be destroyed after the REF process is completed in line with REF Data Protection processes
- 4.5 Information provided on the form may be shared externally for the purposes of evidencing any reduction in the number of research outputs. For clearly defined **circumstances** information will be seen by the relevant REF sub-panel, the REF panel secretariat and the UK funding bodies’ REF team. This will be information about early career researcher status, part-time working, career breaks or secondments, and periods of maternity, additional paternity or adoption leave taken. For **complex circumstances**, information will be seen only by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, the REF Main Panel Chairs and the UK funding bodies’ REF team. This information will not be seen by the REF sub-panel.
- 4.6 All REF panel members, chairs and secretaries are bound by confidentiality requirements, and acceptance of the confidentiality requirements is a condition of their appointment to the role. No information relating to identifiable individuals’ circumstances will be published by the funding bodies REF Team. All data collected, stored and processed by the UK funding bodies REF Team will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.



## 5. Further Information

- 5.1 If individuals wish to discuss their individual circumstances in further detail or require any clarification regarding the process they should contact Julie McClelland, Director of Human Resources [j.mcclelland@hud.ac.uk](mailto:j.mcclelland@hud.ac.uk) ext 2224, Yvonne Harding, Head of Personnel [y.harding@hud.ac.uk](mailto:y.harding@hud.ac.uk) ext 2099 or Dr Ian Pitchford, Head of Strategy Policy and Engagement, [i.pitchford@hud.ac.uk](mailto:i.pitchford@hud.ac.uk) ext 3831.

# Individual Staff Circumstances Disclosure Form

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Unit of Assessment</b>	

## Section one:

**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:

**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 the University of Huddersfield. My contact details for this purpose are:

<b>Email</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Preferred method of communication</b>	

### Section three

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

**Please provide information required on relevant circumstances:**

<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Information required</b>
1. Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)	On what date did you become an early career researcher?
2. Part time employee	<b>What is your FTE?</b>  <b>What period of time (dates) were you part time working?</b>
3. Career break or secondment <u>outside of the higher education sector</u>	<b>Please provide the details of any career breaks or secondments ?</b>  <b>How many months were you absent each time?</b>

<p>4. Breaks between fixed term contracts during the assessment period</p>	<p><b>Please provide the dates of any breaks between fixed term contracts when you have not been employed in HE?</b></p> <p><b>How many months was each gap?</b></p>
<p>5. Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)</p>	<p><b>What type of leave have you taken?</b></p> <p><b>Please provide dates for each period of leave</b></p>

## Complex Circumstances

Please provide the details of any issues in the categories below that have impacted on your ability to work your contractual hours and other impacts on your ability to undertake research.

In providing information please give dates, an estimate of how long the impact lasted (in months) and clear details of the impact on your ability to conduct research and work productively.

Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)

**Information**

Mental health condition

**Information**

Ill health or injury

**Information**

Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, paternity, adoption or childcare in addition to the period of maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave taken.

**Information**

Other caring responsibilities (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative)

**Information**

Gender reassignment

**Information**

Other exceptional and relevant reasons, not including teaching or administrative work

**Information**

## Declaration

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** the members of the Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP) and staff within Human Resources and the Research and Enterprise Directorate in order to process and complete the REF return. The UoA Panel will know what reductions in outputs have been approved and under what category. Where reductions have been made in response to complex circumstances the UoA Panel will know the level of reduction but not the details of the circumstances. The University REF Committee (URefC) will have access to all information and may refer to this if there are any appeals against the decision of the ICP or any questions relating to the consistent application of criteria that emerge in the process and impact assessment.
  
- 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. Where permission is not provided the University will be limited in the action it can take.**

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

## For official use only

Following consideration of the personal circumstances described above, the Unit of Assessment Panel:

- Will progress the staff member's inclusion in the REF submission with [insert number] of research outputs. [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 Individual Circumstances Panel (ICP) they will need to do so by 9 November 2012 (Mock Exercise) or 31 October 2013 (Final REF submission) and details of the appeals process can be found in the Code of Practice under the REF section of 'Information for Staff' on the Research and Enterprise Intranet at <http://intranet.hud.ac.uk/re/>.

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
(Professor T J Thornton, Chair, ICP)

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
(REF Manager)