



Keele  
University

## KEELE UNIVERSITY'S REF CODE OF PRACTICE

### Introduction to the Research Excellence Framework at Keele University

Keele University has a particular identity combining a commitment to research, especially interdisciplinary research, with a pioneering approach to the principle of breadth in undergraduate education. In the University's Strategic Plan 2010-2015 its strategic aim is to deliver international excellence and impact in focused areas of research. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is therefore extremely important to the University's reputation as a research-led University in those fields where it has sought to focus research effort. Along with this, Keele also receives a significant proportion of its recurrent income from funding relating to this exercise (just under £6.5m QR funding in 2011/12 from RAE2008).

The success of Keele's submission to the REF will also have a significant impact on various other aspects of the University, such as: student (particularly PGRs) and staff recruitment, external profile in league tables, ability to successfully bid for external research grants, contribution to the region and society/UK economy, commercial spin outs and intellectual property, catalyst for enterprise activities, development of career young researchers, development of interdisciplinary research, research linkages with teaching.

Keele's submission and performance in the REF2014 will have a significant impact on the University, and therefore its REF strategy has to be one of maximising the outcome for the institution, whilst continuing to support the development of its staff. This means that a systematic and thorough approach will be taken to the submission in all its aspects. In this context, non-selection does not mean staff are not research-active nor does it prejudice selection for future REF submissions. The Keele Code of Practice sets out the processes for selection of individuals to be submitted to the REF, which takes into account the legislative context and 'principles for selection.' This is only one aspect of preparing the submission; the Code does not cover aspects other than the selection of individuals.

*Further details on Keele's preparations for the REF will be continually updated on the website:*

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/ref/>

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## 1. REF requirement for a code of practice

(taken from Part 4 of 'Assessment Framework & Guidance on Submissions' [REF 02/2011](#))

To support institutions in promoting equality and diversity when preparing submissions to the REF, Keele is required to draw up and implement a code of practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff. This will aid institutions in including all their eligible staff in submissions who are conducting excellent research, as well as promoting equality, complying with legislation and avoiding discrimination.

Each institution making a submission is required to develop, document and apply a code of practice on selecting staff to include in their REF submissions. An equality impact assessment will also be carried out on the code of practice, to ensure the selection process for staff has no adverse differential impact on any protected groups. On making submissions, the head of institution will be required to confirm adherence to this code. The funding bodies require that institutions' codes of practice be submitted to the REF team by 31 July 2012. The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) will examine these in advance of the submission deadline, and all institutions' codes will be published with the rest of the submissions at the end of the assessment process.

Further support on developing and applying a code of practice can be found on the ECU web-site [www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF). ECU will also prepare guidance and examples on complex circumstances that reflect the final panel criteria. These materials will be published in **March 2012**. Please note that this is different to the dates set out in the consultation itself (paragraph 57).

The Keele Code of Practice will address its responsibilities under equality and diversity legislation as well as clearly describing Keele's process and 'principles for selection' of individuals to be submitted to the REF 2014.

## 2. The Legislative Context

The Keele Code of Practice acknowledges the legislative context relevant to the selection of individuals for submission to the REF. The Equality Act 2010, (which shall be referred to as the Act from hereon in), harmonised and consolidated previous anti-discrimination legislation. The Act covers the protected characteristics of:

- a. age
- b. disability (including carers of disabled people)
- c. gender reassignment
- d. marriage and civil partnership
- e. pregnancy and maternity
- f. race
- g. religion or belief
- h. sex
- i. sexual orientation.

In addition, employees on part-time and/or fixed-term employment contracts have the right not to be treated by an employer any less favourably than the employer treats comparable employees on open contracts or full-time workers. The relevant regulations are:

- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

- Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002

The Act places requirements on both funding bodies and on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as public sector organisations, and in their capacity as employers. Most of the Act, as it relates to public functions and employment, came into force in October 2010. The Act covers England, Scotland and Wales. Apart from minor provisions, Northern Ireland is not covered by the Act.

As well as prohibiting direct discrimination, harassment and victimisation, the Act prohibits indirect discrimination – following a policy that, although applied equally to everyone, is harder for those with a protected characteristic to comply with. Indirect discrimination is not a breach of the Act if the aim of the provision, criterion or practice represents a real objective consideration and is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Direct discrimination on the grounds of age will not be unlawful if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

With the exceptions of marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity, protection from discrimination extends to people who are perceived to have or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. For example, if a researcher is treated less favourably because they care for their disabled parent or are perceived to be disabled (regardless of whether they are disabled or not), that could be unlawful disability discrimination.

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when you treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and cannot justify such treatment. It is different from direct and indirect discrimination as it is not necessary to compare the treatment with a non-disabled person or prove less favourable treatment.

Similarly to previous legislation, it is lawful to treat a disabled person more favourably than a non disabled person, and public bodies including HEIs are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid any substantial disadvantage (something that is more than minor or trivial), that may occur as a result of a provision, criterion or practice, or physical feature of the buildings or facilities. This duty is anticipatory and ongoing.

However, if the HEI is not made aware of the disabled person's disability and could not have reasonably been expected to know, then the unfavourable treatment does not amount to discrimination arising from disability. Therefore the promotion of staff disclosure of disability is necessary to ensuring reasonable adjustments are appropriately identified for disabled staff.

The public sector equality duty of the Act came into force in April 2011. Under this duty, the higher education funding bodies and HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales, in carrying out their functions, must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(In this context a 'relevant' protected characteristic is one other than marriage and civil partnership.)

### **Funding bodies' legal responsibilities**

In order to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, the higher education funding bodies need to consider and understand the impact of their policies on equality. The funding bodies have considered the equality impact of the RAE in the development of the REF, and equality has been embedded into all relevant elements of the REF. The funding bodies will analyse the selection rates by staff characteristics at sector level to inform their future work.

### **HEIs' legal responsibilities**

As both employers and public bodies, HEIs need to ensure that their REF procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against individuals because of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth.

As public sector organisations, in order to show compliance with the requirements of the public sector equality duty of the Equality Act 2010, HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales need to consider and understand the effect of their REF policies on equality. Equalities legislation in Northern Ireland and Wales places a specific duty on HEIs to conduct equality impact assessments on new and existing policies. Consequently, the funding bodies require all HEIs to conduct equality impact assessments on their policies for selecting staff for the REF.

### **Summary of legislation**

A summary of the equality legislation with which institutions have to comply generally, and which Keele will take into account when preparing REF 2014 submissions is included in Annex G. REF Panel chairs, members and secretaries have received a briefing about this legislation (see 'Equality briefing for REF panels' available at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) under 'Publications'). The briefing instructs them to develop working methods and assessment criteria that encourage HEIs to submit the work of all of their excellent researchers, including those whose ability to produce four outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period had been constrained for reasons covered by equality legislation.

Keele University will ensure it takes into consideration any individual staff circumstances, related to a protected characteristic or part-time or fixed-term working arrangements, that have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period, (further details of individual staff circumstances in Annex C). Throughout all stages of the submission process, the University will ensure compliance with the REF 'Assessment Framework & Guidance on submissions' and 'Panel criteria and working methods' guidelines for individual staff circumstances.

### **3. Basic Principles of the Code of Practice**

It is essential that practice in respect of REF submissions is **consistent** across all Units of Assessment to which Keele will submit and the Code is implemented uniformly. Therefore, the basic **principles** on which Keele's Code of Practice are based are as follows:

- All the processes concerned with the selection of staff for inclusion in REF2014 submissions will be **transparent**.
- **Consistency** - A universal/uniform process will be followed for all Units of Assessment.
- The Code of Practice will set out the principles to be applied to all aspects/stages of the process and should promote an **inclusive** environment, enabling the University to identify eligible staff who have produced excellent research for submission to the REF.
- **Accountability** - Responsibilities will be clearly defined (see Annex A for details of responsibilities at each stage and terms of reference for each group)

- All individuals and bodies involved in selecting staff for REF submission will have undergone training on equality and diversity which has been specifically tailored to the REF process (see details in annex A)
- All information on the process will be made available in an accessible format upon request, for example documents made available in larger font size.
- The code of practice will be well publicised throughout the institution (including to those absent from work) and published on the website following the communication strategy (see below)
- To minimise the risk of any adverse impacts on protected groups, an equality impact assessment will be carried out on the development of the University REF code of practice and the resulting REF submission. This assessment will be informed by an analysis of data on staff that are eligible for selection in respect of all the protected characteristics for which data are available. Full details of the process are described in item 6 below.

#### 4. Summary of process

1. All research active staff are members of Research Institutes (RI) at Keele and are eligible for submission to the REF2014. They must also meet the definition in Part 3, section 1 of the 'Assessment Framework & Guidance on Submissions' [REF 02/2011](#). All members of RIs will be considered for submission.
2. All academic and research staff in the University are eligible to apply for Research Institute membership, and should contact their relevant RI for further details. <http://www.keele.ac.uk/research/>. Anyone who is not a member of an RI will not be considered for submission.
3. Human Resources will proactively encourage all RI members to complete a form about their individual staff circumstances which might have adversely affected their potential contribution to the REF submission. See details of relevant individual staff circumstances in Annex C, and the individual staff circumstances reporting form in Annex F.
4. If appropriate (i.e. protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010), information on individual staff circumstances will be confidentially fed through to the Unit of Assessment (UoA) submission group(s).
5. All staff involved in selecting staff for REF submission will undergo training on equality and diversity which has been tailored to the REF process.
6. The Research Institute will ensure information on RI members' research profiles is up to date. RI members will be required to provide this information to their Research Institute and the information will be made available to all groups involved in the process.
7. For each Unit of Assessment (UoA) that the University is considering submitting to in the REF 2014, a **UoA Submission Group** will be formed. These groups will consider the potential for each RI member to be submitted to the REF2014 based on:
  - a. **Volume** – how many outputs are required for this RI member (taking into account any individual staff circumstances), do they have the required number of outputs
  - b. **quality** of their potential submission relative to the [REF panel criteria and working methods](#), and their
  - c. **fit** with Keele's REF submission within that UoA.

Details of group membership, remit and terms of reference and also the principles for submission can be found in Annexes A and B, respectively. The UoA Submission Groups (which include the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), the Faculty Deans and RI Directors (Annex A)), will resolve any issues across RIs or across Faculties, and will ensure consistency across the Institution. They will make the final decision on UoAs and RI members to be submitted in the REF, with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) making the ultimate decision if that is necessary.

8. After a final decision has been made feedback will be given to RI members.
9. Individuals can initiate an appeal (see Annex E) if they feel that due process has not been followed, or feel they have been discriminated against (see section 2).

## **5. Communication**

Keele University is committed to a programme of communication activity to disseminate the code and explaining the processes related to selection of staff for submission, as follows:

- The Code of Practice and its annexes will be made widely available throughout the University. These documents will be published on Keele's REF web page <http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/ref/> once it has been finalised.
- An email from the PVC Research & Enterprise and Director of Human Resources, Organisational Development & Student Support, will be circulated via the campus staff email facility in February 2012 to all staff to disseminate the Code of Practice and to request they complete the HR form. All RI members will be encouraged to read this document.
- For those staff unable to fully access email communication or who are located off campus, or are absent from work, to ensure access to information HR will write to them directly regarding the REF Code of Practice
- The launch of the Code of Practice will also be announced in the staff wide Week at Keele (as another mechanism to ensure staff are made aware of the code).
- The final outcome of this process will be communicated to individual RI members (see Annex B).

To support this process Human Resources (with support from the REF Manager) will also offer staff drop in sessions or targeted briefings to explain the REF Code of Practice, for example definitions of complex cases or early career researchers.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

The University is committed to assessing the impact of its policies on protected groups and has in place comprehensive arrangements for the management and completion of equality impact assessments, including the purchase of an online system and a package of training. The EIA process should help to identify both positive and negative outcomes and can help ascertain where outcomes can be prevented or justified within the permits of the law.

The Keele EIA process involves a thorough and systematic analysis of all University policies, practices and decisions on equality and in particular those groups protected by equalities legislation;

- Age
- Disability (including caring responsibilities)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

For the purposes of the REF COP, the EIA also considers the impacts on individuals falling into the following additional groups:

- Paternity and adoption
- Part-time and fixed-term employment status
- Early Career Researcher
- Junior Clinical Academic status

The Keele EIA process has seven stages which include;

#### Stage 1 – Initial Screening

This stage identifies whether there is any potential for differential impact on each equality target group.

#### Stage 2 – Analysis

This section provides analysis of quantitative and qualitative data relevant to the issues of equality identified at stage 1.

#### Stage 3 – Assessment

The section provides an approach to assessing the impact in the light of evidence. The consequences or impact for each group is identified as positive, neutral, or negative with an explanation.

#### Section 4 – Mitigation and Changes

This section examines the possibilities and implications of changes to the policy to reduce any negative impact and build on any positive effects

#### Section 5 – Consultation

This section lists the views of groups that may be impacted. For example, whether other obstacles are perceived by the groups involved and whether alternative solutions might be available.

#### Section 5b – Outcomes of consultation

This section sets out the final decisions as a result of the impact assessment

#### Section 6 – Publication

This section outlines the status of the assessment and date it will be published.

#### Section 7 – Monitor and Review

This section set a date for when the EIA will next be monitored or reviewed.

**The University has undertaken a full initial equality impact assessment on its REF code of practice and submission in line with the Keele EIA procedure outlined above.** The EIA aims to ensure the fair selection of staff, identify any possible barriers to participation in the REF 2014, and explore opportunities to advance equality. The EIA has so far included analysis of the following data and information which has helped to inform the development of a fully inclusive and accessible Keele REF COP:

- Keele RAE 2008 Code of Practice
- Keele RAE 2008 submission data by race, gender and disability
- Keele RAE 2008 Individual Circumstances data
- Feedback from consultation with staff equality networks and Trades Unions (UNISON, UNITE, and UCU)
- Equality Challenge Unit briefings and information



The EIA is ongoing and will be monitored at key stages of the REF 2014 selection process. The EIA will be reviewed at the following points;

- When identifying eligible staff who are likely to be selected
- When considering appeals
- When preparing the final submission

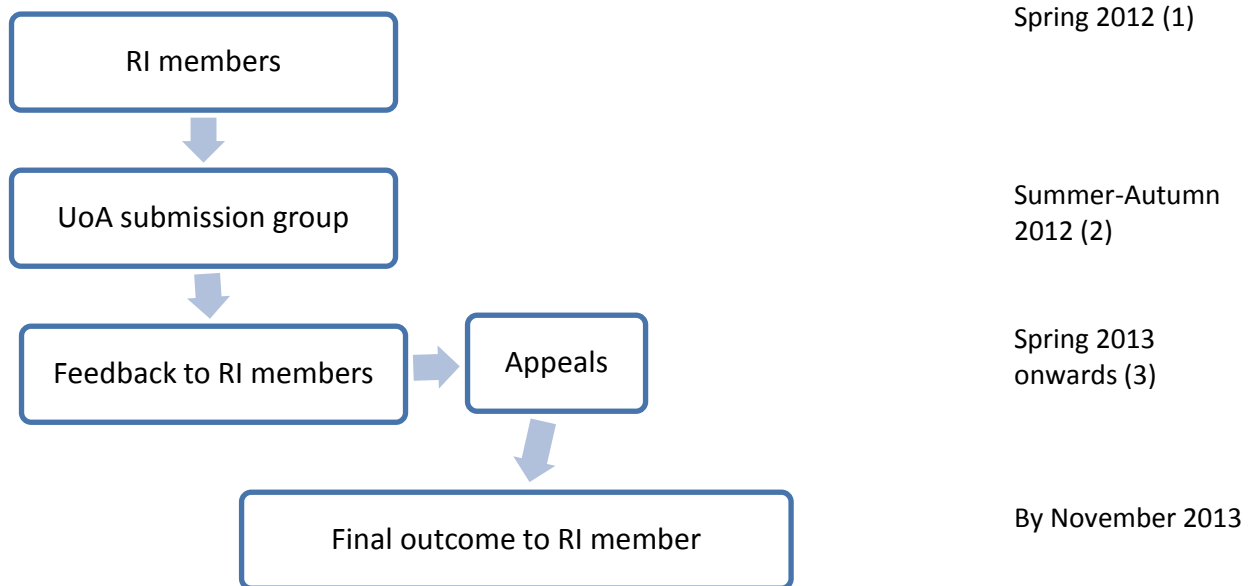
The University will analyse the following data as part of its EIA:

- Workforce profile data of eligible staff for REF 2014 by race, gender, disability, age, and where possible sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender identity.
- REF submission data by race, gender, disability, age, and where possible sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender identity.
- Individual circumstances data (in a non-identifying way)
- Appeals data by race, gender, disability, age, and where possible sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender identity.

In addition, the University will actively seek to ensure it has in place adequate and valid equality monitoring information on its staff which reflects the 2011 census codes. A data disclosure activity will be carried out during 2012 and 2013 in consultation with staff and their representatives, on the enhanced personal data collected on staff, based on the following equality characteristics: Race, Gender, Disability, Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion or belief, Transgender. This is subject to a comprehensive programme of staff engagement and briefings on the application and usage of this data.

Following the REF 2014 submission the EIA will be published on the University REF web pages this will include a detailed description of the assessment findings at each of the seven stages of the University's EIA process, including information on the outcomes of any actions taken to prevent discrimination and advance equality.

## 7. Timetable



### Notes

- (1) RI members asked by HR to complete a form about their individual staff circumstances (Annex F)
- (2) Prior to the UoA submission group meetings, RI members will be asked to update their research profile (with Research Institute)  
All staff involved in selecting staff for REF submission (i.e. UoA submission group members) will undergo specific REF training (Annex A).
- (3) Appeals must be made within one month after notification of decision (Annex E)

### The ongoing process

By Spring 2013 the majority of the decisions about RI member's inclusion in Keele's REF2014 submission will have been made. However, there will be some exceptions where a final decision has not been made, for example, new staff who join the University towards the end of the REF period, or where the groups were unable to come to a final decision about an RI member's fit with Keele's UoA strategy (for example, because this depends on whether particular publications are in the public domain before the deadline).

## **Annex A - UoA Submission Group(s): Terms of Reference**

### **1. Scope**

UoA Submission Group(s) will decide whether an RI member should be submitted to that UoA in the REF 2014. The Groups will consider eligible staff for submission to the REF, and assess them in relation to the 'principles for selection' (see Annex B), taking into account relevant reported individual staff circumstances (see Annex C for further details).

### **2. Membership**

A UoA Submission Group will be formed for each UoA under consideration and will consist of:

- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) (Chair)
- Dean(s)
- Research Institute Director(s)
- Research Institute Manager(s)
- Unit of Assessment (UoA) expert(s) as nominated by the RI Director(s)
- Secretary: Research & Enterprise Services

There is provision for more than one Dean, Director or Manager to cover circumstances where a UoA includes members from more than one RI and/or Faculty.

The following chart shows how these roles fit into the institutional management framework

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/media/keeleuniversity/vcoffice/Academic%20Structure.pdf>

**External input** – will be involved in the process where appropriate, to comment on the quality of an individual's research only. They will not decide which staff are to be submitted to the REF nor will they be given any information relating to individual staff circumstances.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities of Members**

- The PVC R&E's role in the process is to provide a University strategic perspective and to ensure consistency across RIs, Faculties and cross-institutional UoA submissions. Together with the Deans, the PVC will be responsible for resolving any strategic issues in relation to the potential UoA submissions.
- The Dean's role is to provide a Faculty strategic perspective, to ensure consistency across the Faculty and RIs.
- The RI Director's role will be to provide a Research Institute strategic perspective and to ensure consistency within the RI (and to nominate UoA experts). When a final decision is made they will be responsible for ensuring feedback is given to RI members.
- The RI Manager will be responsible for ensuring robust and consistent research profile information is available to the group.
- The UoA expert(s) role will be to provide a UoA perspective and to ensure consistency within the UoA. The RI Director will nominate UoA experts.
- The Secretary will be responsible for keeping clear and consistent records of the meeting and ensuring consistent application of the Code of Practice.

- When a possible UoA submission spans more than one RI (and/or Faculty) the UoA submission group must contain all relevant RI Directors, Faculty Deans and RI Director nominated UoA experts.
- When a UoA submission group is set up, this does not imply that University will definitely submit to that UoA; it means that UoA is under consideration. The UoA submission groups must ensure that potential UoA submissions are viable and sustainable and will meet the University's requirements for a strong high quality submission.

Each member of the UoA Groups will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this Code of Practice, the principles for selection (see annex B) and particularly in relation to equality and diversity legislation following individual staff circumstances reported by the RI member (see Annex C for further details). The Groups must ensure they comply with the REF 2014 'Assessment Criteria & Guidance on submissions' [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02\\_11/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02_11/) and 'Panel criteria and working methods' guidelines [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/03\\_11/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/03_11/) for individual staff circumstances.

Prior to the meeting, each member of the UoA Groups will have received specific equality and diversity training on REF 2014 (provided by Human Resources by the end of May 2012), to ensure they are well informed about their own and the institution's obligations regarding equality and diversity in this submission process. The training outcomes will include:

- An understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty
- An understanding of how unlawful discrimination can occur and how to avoid it within the context of the REF
- An understanding of how to apply reasonable adjustments and make objective considerations within the context of the REF
- Application of the REF code of practice in the assessment of case studies and scenarios based on individual staff circumstances, to ensure the fair selection of staff for the REF.

## Annex B – Process for considering RI members for submission to REF 2014

Keele's UoA Submission Groups will consider all members of RIs for submission to the REF 2014. This process will be based on the 'principles for selection' that are detailed below. Prior to the start of this process, Human Resources will proactively ask each RI member to voluntarily complete a confidential form that asks them to detail any individual staff circumstances that have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. (see Annex C for details and Annex F for the form). **The submission groups will take only individual staff circumstances that are reported in the form into account.** This information will, where possible, be validated by HR.

RI Directors should ensure that RI members are aware of the need to complete the forms which will also be available on the REF web page <http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/ref/>.

### 1) Principles for selection

Each RI member will be assessed for submission to REF 2014, based on the following principles:

- Research which meets the REF published **definition of research**.
- **Volume** – how many research outputs are required for this person, taking into account any reported individual staff circumstances (further details in annex C) or part time working.
- **Quality** of the individual's potential submission relative to the REF criteria in the particular UoA.
- **Fit** with the submission to the particular UoA and with the University's strategy for research.

It should be noted that non-selection does not mean staff are not research-active nor does it prejudice selection for future REF submissions

*Please note individuals cannot opt out of being submitted as part of the REF. Decisions regarding submission of individuals to the REF is a decision for the University only.*

#### a) Volume

Submissions must include up to four items of research output for each person submitted. The UoA submission group will take into account any reported individual staff circumstances, and where appropriate make a reduction in the required number of outputs. For the clearly defined circumstances (e.g. early career researchers), they will adhere to the panel criteria tariffs (detailed in Annex C).

For the more complex circumstances the UoA submission group will make a judgement on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs submitted. They will do this by following the approach of the worked examples provided by the [Equality Challenge Unit](#). It should be noted that the REF EDAP will also consider these cases on a consistent basis across all UoAs.

#### b) Quality

Quality will be assessed on the basis of the RI member's potential contribution to a submission, relative to the REF [criteria and working methods](#). This will be assessed using evidence that the RI has collected on the RI member's research performance along with the UoA Submission Group's knowledge of the RI member's potential contribution to a submission.

Throughout all stages of this process, the Groups will ensure compliance with the REF 'Guidance on submissions' and 'Panel criteria and working methods' guidelines for individual staff circumstances.

### **c) Fit**

RI members who are deemed by the REF submission group(s) as submissable based on their assessment of quality, will then be assessed for fit with Keele's REF 2014 submission strategy for UoAs. If an RI member is not recommended to be submitted on the basis of quality, the groups will not discuss their potential fit.

Fit with the University's strategy for research will be judged in relation to strategic aim 3 of the University's Strategic Plan (2010-2015): To deliver international excellence and impact in focused areas of research, and its underpinning strategic objectives:

- To focus our research effort in areas of theoretical, applied, and practise-based research where we can achieve the highest levels of quality and impact
- To foster innovation and enterprise with partners

The PVC Research & Enterprise has regular discussions with RI Directors, Managers and Deans, which have provided an indication of the University's potential UoAs submissions. The list of UoAs under consideration by the University will be continually reviewed and may be revised up to the final submission date in relation to the overall University REF strategy.

The UoA submission group(s) will decide which UoA the RI member should be submitted.

### **2) Feedback**

Feedback will be provided to each RI member, following the final decision at the UoA submission group. The relevant RI Directors will be responsible for ensuring feedback is given to RI members. The feedback will indicate whether that member will be submitted to the REF (and if so, which UoA) or whether the RI member is not going to be submitted to the REF (a short explanation will be provided). If a decision is outstanding, the RI member will be informed of the progress made and when a final decision is likely to be.

### **3) Appeals process**

The appeals procedure can be found in Annex E.

### **4) New members of Staff**

Staff will be appointed to posts in the University after the process for considering RI members for submission to REF 2014 has been completed, and before the census date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013. In such cases, the new members of staff who want to be considered for submission, should apply for membership of an RI in the normal way. Once they have been accepted as a member of the RI, it is the responsibility of the Research Institute Director (with the new member) to gather information on their research profile and reconvene the UoA submission group(s) relevant to that RI member. HR will be responsible for collecting the individual staff circumstances information. The group will then consider the RI member for submission to the REF, following the process outlined above. The group's recommendation will follow the normal approval process.

## Annex C – Individual staff circumstances

### a) Reporting individual staff circumstances

When considering an RI member for submission to the REF 2014, the UoA submission groups will take into account circumstances that have significantly constrained the RI members' ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period.

Human Resources will ask RI members to voluntarily provide details of any individual staff circumstances that have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. This will be collected through the individual staff circumstances reporting form (see annex F).

This form will be distributed to all members of RIs, and will also be available on the internal REF website. RI Directors should ensure that RI members are aware of the need to complete the form, as **only individual staff circumstances that are reported in the reporting form will be taken into account**. Human Resources and the UoA panel secretary will liaise with and advise the UoA submission group, on any appropriate action that needs to be taken, although the UoA submission group will make the final decision on any reduction in number of outputs.

### b) Definition of individual staff circumstances

The panel criteria generic statement, clearly details individual staff circumstances [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01\\_12/01\\_12\\_1.pdf](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01_12/01_12_1.pdf). As a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, in **all UOAs** individuals may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, where their individual circumstances have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. This measure is intended to encourage institutions to submit all their eligible staff who have produced excellent research.

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

The following provides a **list of applicable circumstances**, followed by the procedures and criteria for determining the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty in the assessment.

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

- a. **Clearly defined circumstances**, which are:
  - i. **Qualifying as an early career researcher (ECR)** (as defined at paragraphs 85 and 86 of 'guidance on submissions').
  - ii. **Absence from work due to working part-time, secondments or career breaks** (on the basis set out below and Table 2 below)
  - iii. **Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave** (on the basis set out on page 15)

iv. **Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6:**

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

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

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

**Early career researchers**

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

**Table 1 Early career researchers: permitted reduction in outputs**

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The funding bodies consider it appropriate to make the same provision for those regarded as the 'primary adopter' of a child, that is a person who takes statutory adoption leave, as the adoption of a child and taking of statutory adoption leave is generally likely to have a comparable impact on a researcher's work to that of taking maternity leave.

As regards additional paternity or adoption leave, researchers who take such leave will also have been away from work and acting as the primary carer of a new child within a family. The funding bodies consider that where researchers take such leave over a significant period (four months or more), this

is likely to have an impact on their ability to work productively on research that is comparable to the impact on those taking maternity or statutory adoption leave.

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

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

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

Combining clearly defined circumstances

### **Complex circumstances**

More complex circumstances that require a judgement about the appropriate number of outputs that can be reduced without penalty. These circumstances are:

- i. **Disability.** This is defined in 'guidance on submissions' (Part 4, Table 2 under 'Disability').
- ii. **Ill-health or injury.**
- iii. **Mental health conditions.**
- iv. **Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare** that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances made on page 15
- v. **Other caring responsibilities.**
- vi. **Gender reassignment.**
- vii. **Other circumstances relating to the relating to the protected characteristics** listed at paragraph 190 of 'guidance of submissions' or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

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

As far as is practicable, the information in REF1b should provide an estimate – in terms of the equivalent number of months absent from work – of the impact of the complex circumstances on the individual's ability to work productively throughout the assessment period, and state any further

constraints on the individual's research work in addition to the equivalent months absent. A reduction should be made according to Table 2 in relation to estimated months absent from work, with further constraints taken into account as appropriate. To aid institutions the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) will publish worked examples of complex circumstances, which will indicate how these calculations can be made and the appropriate reduction in outputs for a range of complex circumstances. These will be available at [www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF) from February 2012.

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

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

#### **Decisions about individual staff circumstances**

Where the submission does not include sufficient evidence or meet the stated criteria, or if particular circumstances do not merit the full proposed reduction in outputs, the missing outputs will be recorded as unclassified. For example, an individual became an ECR in January 2011 but only one output is submitted rather than two. In this case the submitted output will be assessed, and the 'missing' output recorded as unclassified.

#### **Data Protection Act 1998**

The information submitted on the Individual Staff Circumstances Reporting Form will be used within the terms of the University's registration under the Data Protection Act 1998.

#### **What action do I need to take?**

If you are eligible for REF submission you are encouraged to complete the form in Annex F and return it to Human Resources by email at [REF2014@keele.ac.uk](mailto:REF2014@keele.ac.uk) by 30th April 2012.

If you have no individual circumstances to report please state this in an email to Human Resources at [REF2014@keele.ac.uk](mailto:REF2014@keele.ac.uk) by 30th April 2012.

If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, you will be contacted by Human Resources

#### **Who will see the information that I provide?**

Within the institutions, the information that you provide will be seen by Human Resources and UoA submission groups who will observe confidentiality and information will be stored securely.

Information provided on the form may be shared externally for the purposes of evidencing any reduction in the number of research outputs:

- For circumstances with a **clearly defined reduction in outputs**, 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 **more 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.

## **Annex D – The role and responsibilities of the Academic Strategy Sub-Committee**

### 1. Membership - This group consists of:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
  - Pro Vice-Chancellors (3)
  - Deans & Pro Vice-Chancellors (3)
  - Director of Planning & Academic Administration
  - Director of Marketing and Communications
  - Secretary: Executive Support Manager
- Total = 9

### 2. Remit and responsibilities

To consider the Equality Impact Assessment on the like REF submissions, to enable the University to identify where discrimination may inadvertently occur within the REF processes. Where potential discrimination is identified the University will need to justify the policy or practice within the constraints of the law or they will need to take actions to change the policy or practice

Human Resources and Research & Enterprise Services will provide the Committee with an Equality Impact Assessment on the likely REF submission, once all the appeals have been held.

### 3. Formation & obligations regarding equality

The University Executive meets fortnightly and includes all of the Senior Management Team. Details of the Committee, its objectives, membership and Sub-committees can be found at [Executive Committee Organisation](#).

## Annex E – Appeals procedure

In the event of an RI member not being selected to submit their research to REF 2014, an appeals process has been developed which allows the RI member the opportunity to make an appeal against the decision on the following basis:

- i) The appeal is on procedural grounds;
- or
- ii) The appeal is on the grounds of potential discrimination (see section 2 of the Code of Practice);

For example:

- A personal characteristic (such as gender or disability)
- A work pattern/absence that has not been fully taken into account.

or

- iii) The appeal is on the grounds of academic fit

For example:

- Submission to a particular Unit of Assessment has not fully taken into account all areas of possible academic fit.

## PROCESS

The Human Resources and Student Support Directorate will manage the appeal process, as it is independent of the UoA submission groups.

- Any RI Member wishing to appeal, must submit a written request to Human Resources within one calendar month of the notification of the decision. This request should detail the grounds for appeal (see i, or ii above).
- Human Resources will convene an appeals panel, within ten working days of receipt of the appeal request. The appeals panel will comprise:
  - (a) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
  - (b) a Dean from a different faculty (to the appellant)
  - (c) a Research Institute Director from a different Institute (to the appellant)
  - (d) a HR representative.

All individuals involved in the appeals process will have received specific REF equality & diversity training relevant to the REF submission process.

- The HR representative (on behalf of the appeals panel) will request a written statement from the Director of the appealing members Research Institute, which should give details of the grounds for recommending not to submit the RI member to the REF (this must be done within five working days).
- The appeals panel will duly consider the RI Directors' statement along with the RI members' appeal statement.
- In all cases the appellant has the right to appear before the appeals panel and to be represented by a trade union representative or a colleague in the University.

- The appeals panel may invite the RI Director or other appropriate expert(s) to appear before the panel, (the appeals panel must inform the HR representative in advance of the meeting).
- If the appeals panel upholds the appeal, it will then make the final decision on the appellant's inclusion as part of Keele's REF submission. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will then inform the appellant and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), the relevant Dean(s) and RI Director(s) of the final decision on REF submission.
- If the appeals panel rejects the appeal, then the HR representative will report the outcome to the appellant and the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research & Enterprise and the relevant Dean(s) and RI Director(s).
- The appeals panel will produce a written report detailing their reasons for (a) supporting the appeal, or (b) upholding the decision of the UoA submission group. The written report will be produced within ten working days of the final decision of the appeals panel.

**Annex F – REF individual staff circumstances reporting form, available [here](#)**

**Annex G - Summary of Equality Legislation** (taken Part 4 of ‘Assessment Framework & Guidance on Submissions’ REF 02/2011) **and Fixed Term and Part-Time Staff**

**Table 2: Summary of equality legislation**

Age	<p><b>All employees within the higher education sector are protected from unlawful age discrimination in employment under the Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or if they are associated with a person of a particular age group. (These provisions in the Equality Act 2010 are partially in force, but should be fully in place by April 2012.)</b></p> <p>Age discrimination can occur when people of a particular age group are treated less favourably than people in other age groups. An age group could be for example, people of the same age, the under 30s or people aged 45-50. A person can belong to a number of different age groups.</p> <p>Age discrimination will not be unlawful if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. However, in the context of the REF, the view of the funding bodies is that if a researcher produces excellent research an HEI will not be able to justify not submitting them because of the their age group.</p> <p>It is important to note that early career researchers are likely to come from a range of age groups. The definition of early career researcher used in the REF (see paragraph 85) is not limited to young people.</p> <p>HEIs should also note that given developments in equalities law in the UK and Europe, the default retirement age will be abolished from 1 October 2011 in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p>
Disability	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (Northern Ireland only) and the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 prevent unlawful discrimination relating to disability. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to have a disability or if they are associated with a person who is disabled, for example, if they are responsible for caring for a disabled family member.</b></p> <p>A person is considered to be disabled if they have or have had a physical and/or mental impairment which has ‘a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. Long-term impairments include those that last or are likely to last for at least 12 months.</p> <p>Cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis and progressive/degenerative conditions are disabilities too, even if they do not currently have an adverse effect on the carrying out of day-to-day activities.</p> <p>The definition of disability is different in Northern Ireland in that a list of day-to-day activities is referred to. There is no list of day-to-day activities for England, Scotland and Wales but day-to-day activities are taken to mean activities that people, not individuals, carry out on a daily or frequent basis.</p>

	<p>While there is no definitive list of what is considered a disability, it covers a wide range of impairments including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensory impairments</li> <li>• impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, depression and epilepsy</li> <li>• progressive impairments, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, HIV and cancer</li> <li>• organ-specific impairments, including respiratory conditions and cardiovascular diseases</li> <li>• developmental impairments, such as autistic spectrum disorders and dyslexia</li> <li>• mental health conditions such as depression and eating disorders</li> <li>• impairments caused by injury to the body or brain.</li> </ul> <p>It is important for HEIs to note that people who have had a past disability are also protected from discrimination, victimisation and harassment because of disability.</p> <p>Equality law requires HEIs to anticipate the needs of disabled people and make reasonable adjustments for them. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment constitutes discrimination. If a disabled researcher’s impairment has affected the quantity of their research outputs, they may be submitted with a reduced number of outputs (see paragraphs 90-100 and the panel criteria).</p>
Gender reassignment	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 protect from discrimination trans people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex. Staff in HE do not have to be under medical supervision to be afforded protection because of gender reassignment and staff are protected if they are perceived to be undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. They are also protected if they are associated with someone who has proposed, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.</b></p> <p>Trans people who undergo gender reassignment will need to take time off for appointments and in some cases, for medical assistance. The transition process is lengthy, often taking several years and it is likely to be a difficult period for the trans person as they seek recognition of their new gender from their family, friends, employer and society as a whole.</p> <p>The Gender Recognition Act 2004 gave enhanced privacy rights to trans people who undergo gender reassignment. A person acting in an official capacity who acquires information about a person’s status as a transsexual may commit a criminal offence if they pass the information to a third party without consent.</p> <p>Consequently, staff within HEIs with responsibility for REF submissions must ensure that the information they receive about gender reassignment is treated with particular care.</p> <p>Staff whose ability to work productively throughout the REF assessment period has been constrained due to gender reassignment may be submitted with a reduced number of research outputs (see paragraphs 90-100, and the panel criteria).</p>



	<p>Information about the member of staff will be kept confidential as described in paragraph 98.</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p><b>Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 as amended, individuals are protected from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership status. The protection from discrimination is to ensure that people who are married or in a civil partnership receive the same benefits and treatment in employment. The protection from discrimination does not apply to single people.</b></p> <p>In relation to the REF HEIs must ensure that their processes for selecting staff do not inadvertently discriminate against staff who are married or in civil partnerships.</p>
<p>Political opinion</p>	<p><b>The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protects staff from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of political opinion.</b></p> <p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their political opinion.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p><b>Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 women are protected from unlawful discrimination related to pregnancy and maternity.</b></p> <p>Consequently researchers who have taken time out of work or whose ability to work productively throughout the assessment period because of pregnancy and/or maternity, may be submitted with a reduced number of research outputs, as set out in paragraphs 90-100 and in the panel criteria documents.</p> <p>In addition, HEIs should ensure that female researchers who are pregnant or on maternity leave are kept informed about and included in their submissions process.</p> <p>For the purposes of this summary it is important to note that primary adopters have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave.</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 and the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination connected to race. The definition of race includes colour, ethnic or national origins or nationality. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular race.</b></p> <p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their race or assumed race (for example, based on their name).</p>
<p>Religion and belief including non-belief</p>	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 and the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination to do with religion or belief. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with a person of a particular religion or belief.</b></p>

	<p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their actual or perceived religion or belief, including non-belief. 'Belief' includes any structured philosophical belief with clear values that has an effect on how its adherents conduct their lives.</p>
<p>Sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave)</p>	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 and the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination to do with sex. Employees are also protected because of their perceived sex or because of their association with someone of a particular sex.</b></p> <p>The sex discrimination provisions of the Equality Act explicitly protect women from less favourable treatment because they are breastfeeding. Consequently the impact of breastfeeding on a women's ability to work productively will be taken into account, as set out in paragraph 90-100 and the panel criteria documents.</p> <p>From 3 April 2011, partners of new mothers and secondary adopters will be entitled to up to 26 weeks of additional paternity and adoption leave. People who take additional paternity or adoption leave will have similar entitlements to women on maternity leave and barriers that exist to taking the leave, or as a result of having taken it, could constitute unlawful sex discrimination. Consequently researchers who have taken additional paternity and adoption leave may be submitted with a reduced number of outputs, as set out in paragraphs 90-100 and in the panel criteria documents.</p> <p>HEIs need to be wary of selecting researchers by any criterion that it would be easier for men to comply with than women, or vice versa. There are many cases where a requirement to work full-time (or less favourable treatment of people working part-time or flexibly) has been held to discriminate unlawfully against women.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p><b>The Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 protect HEI staff from unlawful discrimination to do with sexual orientation. Individuals are also protected if they are perceived to be or are associated with someone who is of a particular sexual orientation.</b></p> <p>HEIs should be aware of not making any judgements about the selection of staff for REF submissions based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.</p>
<p>Welsh Language</p>	<p><b>The Welsh Language Act 1993 places a duty on public bodies in Wales to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis. This is reinforced by the provisions of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.</b></p> <p>The arrangements for the assessment of outputs in the medium of Welsh by the REF panels are set out in paragraphs 128-130.</p>

## **Fixed Term and Part-Time Staff**

Keele University recognises the changing nature of work and the workplace, and will wherever feasible, offer sympathetic consideration to members of staff who require alternative working arrangements or are on non-standard contracts including fixed-term, part-time, and contract research staff.

This is also of particular benefit to staff with caring responsibilities, disabled staff who require alternative working arrangements as part of a reasonable adjustment, female staff returning to work following a period of pregnancy and maternity, and staff who are undergoing gender transition.

The University will endeavour to support staff through agreement on re-training, re-employment and/or alternative working arrangements or extended leave arrangements. The University has a Contract Research Committee that has the remit of pulling together a framework to facilitate the recruitment, retention, and development of Contract Researchers, whilst at the same time providing a forum in which they can develop their careers.

In addition the University holds a comprehensive suite of HR policies and services to support its staff in these circumstances. These are as follows and are available on the Keele University web pages:

- Fixed Term Working Policy and Procedures
- Parental Leave Policy
- Compassionate Leave Policy
- Emergency Leave
- Research Fellowship Scheme
- Learning and Teaching Leave Policy
- Maternity Leave and Pay Policy
- Paternity Leave Policy
- Adoption Leave Policy
- Sickness Policy
- Flexible Working Policy (incorporating reduced hours and working from home)
- Provision of campus child care facilities for staff and students and child care voucher scheme
- Occupational Health Service
- Equality and Diversity Policies and Procedures