



Code of Practice on the Fair and Transparent Selection of Staff for Inclusion in REF2014

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Introduction

1. The University will conduct its preparation for REF 2014 in a transparent and consistent manner and in accordance with its values, existing policies and codes of practice, including the Policy on Equality and Diversity.
2. This Code of Practice addresses specific matters concerned with the preparation of the REF submission including the selection of outputs and staff for inclusion in the University's submission to REF2014.
3. This Code of Practice applies to all members of the University involved in REF processes and to any external advisers engaged by the University.
4. It does not replace any of the University's existing policies or codes of practice.
5. The Code of Practice takes account of advice issued by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) on equality and diversity aspects of REF and of the final Panel Criteria and Working Methods published in January 2012.
6. This Code of Practice will be submitted to the funding councils' REF Team in April 2012 and will be examined by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel. When the REF is completed the Code will be published by the funding councils.

The University's legal responsibilities

7. The University has legal responsibilities as an employer and as a public sector organisation under equality law. As an employer, the University needs to ensure that its policies do not directly or indirectly discriminate against its employees on the grounds of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or if they are pregnant or have recently given birth. These obligations apply to REF selection procedures.
8. Under the Equality Act 2010 the University has a duty to have due regard the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not. There is also a need to ensure that the REF selection processes are assessed for their impact on different protected characteristics by gathering data on staff submissions in relation to protected characteristics. It may also be helpful to be mindful of the duty to foster good relations when evaluating the research environment.
9. The University also recognises that under the fixed-term employee and part-time workers regulations, fixed-term employees and part-time workers have the right not to be treated by the University any less favourably than it treats a comparable 'permanent' employee.

The relevant regulations are:

- a. Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- b. Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002.

Governance arrangements

10. An outline REF2014 plan and governance arrangements were approved by Senate in Spring 2010. Management and governance arrangements build on similar structures employed for RAE2008 and are in the Appendix.
11. REF Steering Group (Appendix A) The REF Steering Group will determine the University's submission strategy and approve the final submission to REF2014. The Steering Group is chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation.
12. REF Review Groups (Appendix B) Four Review Groups will support the REF Steering Group in achieving the best possible outcome from the REF for the University as a whole. The Review Groups are chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation (Panels A and B) and the Pro-Dean for Research Evaluation with expertise in research assessment in the arts and social sciences (Panels C and D).
13. Unit of Assessment Leaders (Appendix D) are responsible for overseeing the development of the submission in their Unit of Assessment. They will report via Pro-Deans to the Review Group responsible for their Unit of Assessment. UOA leaders were nominated against criteria determined by the Research and Innovation Board and REF Steering Group.
14. Faculty Research and Innovation Committees will wish to monitor the development of REF2014 submissions in their area. They may be invited by the Unit of Assessment Leaders or Pro-Deans to comment on submissions. Faculty Research and Innovation Committees *per se* will not be involved in the assessment of an individual's contribution to the submission nor their inclusion or otherwise in the submission.
15. The Research and Innovation Board will advise on strategy and policy.

Training

16. All members of the REF Steering Group, Review Group, Unit of Assessment Leaders and Deputy Leaders will be briefed on the Equality and Diversity implications of selection for submission to the REF.
17. The briefing will cover relevant legislation and this Code of Practice and will reflect advice published by ECU. It will be in addition to any training members of staff may have received in relation to other roles (for example recruitment and selection). More in-depth briefing will be provided for the members of the complex circumstances panel, including consideration of example case studies provided by the Equality Challenge Unit.
18. The training will be completed by the end of May 2012. *Ad hoc* arrangements will be made for new UOA leaders or Group members.

Guidelines

Confidentiality

19. Details of the submission will be confidential to the University of Leeds and external advisers approved by the REF Steering Group.
20. Within the University UOA leaders will necessarily consult with Pro-Deans, Deans, Heads of School/Department, Directors of Research and members of the REF Review Groups and Steering Group. Developing submissions (excluding confidential section REF1b) may be circulated to members of the Unit of Assessment.
21. All involved in assessing and developing the submission will need to have access to all relevant data concerning the submission, including assessment of individual outputs.
22. The process for declaring individual staff circumstances is managed centrally. Arrangements for declaring individual staff circumstances are set out in a memo (based on the ECU model) sent by e-mail to all academic and research staff (Annex F). Details of any straightforward personal circumstances which may be cited in the submission will remain confidential to staff in the Equality and Research and Innovation Service and of complex circumstances to the central review panel which will be set up to review such circumstances (see paragraph 50 below). Declarations are submitted direct to a dedicated email address, or via internal mail, to an administrator on behalf of the central panel. UOA leaders and Review Group members reviewing a particular submission will be informed of the existence of personal circumstances and the expected number of outputs without reference to the reasons for any reduction in outputs.

External Advisers

23. In developing submissions UOA leaders, Review Groups or the Steering Group may wish to seek the opinions of external advisers with the appropriate knowledge and experience of research assessment or impact. The REF Steering Group will approve the commissioning and terms of reference of external reviews. External advisers will be selected on the basis of their experience of research assessment and their familiarity with world class research and/or impact arising from excellent research in their field. External advisers will be invited to provide their views on the quality of the outputs, the environment and impact in the submissions or parts of submissions on the basis of the published REF criteria. They will not be invited to assign ratings to individuals, nor will they be invited to make recommendations about the inclusion of work or individuals.

Transparent selection of staff responsible for deciding which work is to be submitted.

24. Final decisions on the work to be included will be taken by the REF Steering Group on the recommendations of UOA leaders and Review Groups. The method of appointment of the Steering Groups, Review Groups and UOA leaders are in the Appendices. Each UOA will identify any other individuals involved in assessing and developing the submission and how they have been selected.
25. Selecting staff, outputs and impact case studies for submission - UOA leaders will make recommendations, via their Pro-Dean to the Review Groups.
26. In autumn 2011 Pro-Deans were invited by the Steering Group to submit preliminary proposals for the configuration of the University's submission to REF2014, i.e. how the University's research should be distributed across the 36 Units of Assessment. This includes proposals for multiple submissions in some UOAs. These proposals will be reviewed by the Review Groups which will make recommendations to the Steering Group on which configuration should be adopted. Once this high level configuration has been agreed, the association of individual members of staff will be confirmed. The final decisions on the UOA to which an individual will be returned will be taken by the REF Steering Group on the recommendations of UOA leaders and Review Groups.

Eligibility for inclusion

27. The REF2014 Assessment framework and guidance on submissions REF02.2011 defines eligible staff as follows:
- Category A staff are defined as academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater and on the payroll of the submitting HEI on the census date (31 October 2013), and whose primary employment function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'.
 - Category C staff are defined as individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit on the census date (31 October 2013).
28. The University expects that members of staff will normally have four outputs to be eligible for submission to the REF, the average quality level of which should meet or exceed a University-wide threshold.
29. Members of staff, for whom particular mitigating circumstances have adversely affected the quantity of their research in the assessment period, may be eligible for submission with fewer than four outputs but these would be subject to the same quality criterion. Further information is given below in the section on Individual Staff Circumstances (paragraphs 49 – 57).
30. The final decision on the individuals to be included will be taken by the REF Steering Group. In making these decisions the REF Steering Group will aim to maximise the benefit of the REF to the University as a whole and take account of the overall predicted profile within each UOA.
31. The inclusion or otherwise of an individual and their work in the REF return does not of itself influence career progression. It will not directly influence their work load portfolio, promotion or career progression. Some data and analysis of outputs generated in the research reviews are used as inputs to REF preparation and other internal processes.
32. In making recommendations, UOA leaders will take account of the target quality profile for their Unit of Assessment, the contribution of the individual's work to the quality profile and the reduction in the number of outputs required, (given any personal circumstances identified by the individual via the centrally-managed, confidential internal process, as having had an adverse effect on the quantity of their research output during the assessment period).

Criteria used by Review Groups

33. The Review Groups' role is to assess submissions as they develop, provide feedback to UOA leaders and to advise the Steering Group on the final submission. They will base their assessments on the published REF criteria. This will be communicated via Pro-Deans to Unit of Assessment leaders. Unit of Assessment leaders are responsible for communication with their UOA constituency. After draft submissions have been presented to them, Review Groups will provide brief feedback to assist UOA Leaders in developing the submission. Feedback may be written and/or face-to-face.

Communication

34. This Code, and any changes, are being communicated through a variety of means
- Open meetings to which all staff were invited (late 2011 and early 2012)
 - The Code is available to all staff via the REF pages on the University's intranet and was brought to the attention of staff by an announcement on the "for staff" page, which is the default home page for University staff. This announcement will be repeated periodically.
 - A link to the Code is provided on the log-in page to the Symplectic publications database
 - Promotion of the Code via our all-staff e-mail bulletin and via the Reporter (our in-house newsletter). The e-mail bulletin is in a format which is accessible for those with adapted software and the Reporter can be made available in various formats on request.

- Promotion of the code via our internal committee structure, including the Joint Committee of the University and the UCU
- Personal emails have been sent to all academic and research staff to draw attention to the Code and in particular to the process for declaring personal circumstances
- Incorporation of the Code into presentations at University introductory meetings for new staff and into appointment letters for new staff
- As part of the communication, all staff are invited to return a form stating whether or not they wish to claim mitigating circumstances. The return rate will be monitored by staff in Research and Innovation Service with the aim of reminding non-responders of their rights under the Code.

35. Pro-Deans will be responsible for communication between the Unit of Assessment leaders and the Review Groups. Unit of Assessment leaders are responsible for communicating with their UOA constituency. The University web-site will be used to make information on the processes for developing the submission widely available to members of staff.

UOA statement

36. Each Unit of Assessment will produce a statement indicating the process it needs to carry out the selection. The statements will be submitted to the Review Groups for consideration and approval by the REF Steering Group and will include

- Local timetable
- Data to be used (including a justification for using any data not specified in the REF guidance on submissions or panel criteria statements)
- Assessment criteria (including a justification for using any criteria not specified in the panel criteria statements)
- Arrangements for assessing outputs. Who will make the assessment and how have they been chosen
- Feedback arrangements, indicating when and how members of staff will be kept informed of their inclusion status. Guidance will be given to UOAs on timing of feedback, consistent with the University's timetable for developing the submission
- Arrangements for recording disagreement.
- Reference to the centrally-managed process for declaring individual staff circumstances

Data

37. Data required for the submission will be viewable by staff via the University's REF Submission Planner. Staff will be asked to ensure that this data is accurate. In particular staff should ensure that records of outputs have been fully and correctly recorded in the University's Symplectic Publications database and that any additional statements required in relation to the outputs are provided.

Feedback

38. Arrangements for providing feedback to individuals will be set out in the UOA statement and will include details of the University-wide arrangements and timetable for making appeals.

Compliance

39. The Review Groups will be responsible for checking that submissions are developed in line with the declared selection procedures and criteria, by examining in detail a sample of draft submissions during 2012 and 2013.

Monitoring and impact assessment

40. This Code was developed in close collaboration with the University's Equality Service, using the University's Equality Impact Assessment framework as a guiding measure, to ensure that careful consideration was given to the potential impact on equality of all aspects of the selection process. To ensure that the process is free from discrimination, an initial profile for staff eligible for selection will be drawn up against which the profile of staff selected for submission can be measured. This will include analysis by age, disability, ethnicity, gender, maternity, sexual orientation and fixed or part-time contract status.

41. When the first draft submission is drawn up (September 2012) an equality profile, in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, maternity leave, sexual orientation and fixed or part time contract will be drawn up listing those who are eligible for submission and indicating those who are to be submitted and those who are not. The profile will be examined for imbalances by the Review Groups, taking advice from the Equality Service. If imbalances are found then UOA leaders will be asked to review them. A further profile will be drawn up before the submission is finalised. The Impact Assessment will also review the outcome of consideration of requests on grounds of individual staff circumstances. As part of the overall impact assessment an equality profile of the UOA leadership teams, Review and Steering Groups will also be drawn up.

Appeals

42. The University's general approach to complaints will be followed in that attempts will be made to resolve any complaints as quickly and as informally as possible. Any member of staff who wishes to complain of discrimination or who feels that they have not been dealt with in accordance with this code of practice should raise the matter informally in the first instance with the Dean of Faculty who will investigate and attempt to resolve the matter. Where the matter remains unresolved the appeal will be considered by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, the Chair of the University's REF Steering Group. The Dean of Faculty and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation may take advice from other appropriate staff in investigating the complaint. The member of staff raising the appeal may invite a union representative to attend appeals meetings.
43. A separate internal panel will be responsible for considering cases for complex individual circumstances. (see paragraph 52 below)
44. No appeals will be considered after 31 August 2013. While appeals may be raised at any time before this deadline, interim deadlines for appeals may also be set to ensure appeals are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.
45. If the matter remains unresolved through this informal approach the member of staff will have recourse to the University's formal staff grievance procedures as set out in Statute VII of the University's constitution.

Individual staff circumstances

46. This section of the Code has been updated following the publication of the final panel criteria and working methods (REF01.2012).
47. REF Panels have identified a common set of individual staff circumstances which they will take into account in assessing submissions. These circumstances are described in the Addendum to the Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions paragraphs 64-91, (which replace the Guidance on Submissions Part 3, paragraphs 88 – 100) and in the Generic Panel Criteria and Working Methods, Part 1 paragraphs 63 -91. These common circumstances may be clearly defined, or more complex as detailed below:

Clearly defined circumstances, which are:

- i. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (as defined at paragraphs 85-86 of the Guidance on Submissions and on the basis set out in paragraph 72 and Table 1 of the Addendum).
 - ii. Absence from work due to working part-time, secondments or career breaks (on the basis set out in paragraphs 73-74 and Table 2 in the Addendum).
 - iii. Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave (on the basis set out in paragraphs 75-81 of the Addendum).
 - iv. Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6, as defined at paragraph 86 in the Addendum.
48. **Circumstances that are more complex** and require a judgement about the appropriate number of outputs that can be reduced without penalty. These circumstances are:
- i. Disability. This is defined in Part 4, Table 2 of the Guidance on Submissions, under 'Disability'.
 - ii. Ill health or injury.
 - iii. Mental health conditions.
 - iv. Constraints related to pregnancy or maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances made in paragraph 75 of the Addendum
 - v. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member)
 - vi. Gender reassignment.
 - vii. Other circumstances relating to the protected equalities characteristics listed at paragraph 190 of the Guidance on Submissions or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

Process for dealing with personal circumstances

49. Guidance on the types of circumstances that would be eligible for remission and the acceptable reduction in number of outputs are detailed in Appendix E.
50. All members of staff eligible for inclusion in REF2014 will be invited to register any appropriate circumstances. This invitation will be issued in April 2012. Information will be collected via a form which reflects advice given by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) and covers the information required for the submission, ie the nature, timing and duration of the circumstances. In the case of complex circumstances, a description of the effect of the circumstances is also required. Thereafter staff may up-date their record as appropriate. In order to be taken into account circumstances must normally be notified no later than the end of May 2013.

51. The University is required to identify all Early Career Researchers irrespective of whether any reduction in the number of outputs submitted is sought.
52. For complex circumstances the circumstances will be assessed by a panel comprising representatives of the Equality Service and HR, along with an academic member from each REF main panel area. The panel will be chaired by the PVC for Staff and Organisational Effectiveness and will receive training in preparation for their work. This group will review the submissions and advise UOA leaders of the appropriate minimum number of outputs consistent with the circumstances described.
53. Information on staff circumstances will remain confidential to the panel described above. UOA leaders and members of the REF Review Group may be informed of the existence of the circumstances and the requisite number of outputs but not the specific details of the circumstances declared (the person responsible for entering data on REF software will necessarily have access to this information). The membership of the central panel is sufficiently broad to ensure that circumstances will not be dealt with by panellists from the member of staff's own School.
54. The existence of the personal circumstances identified above must be taken into account when the contribution of an individual to a submission is assessed.
55. If the person is returned in REF2014 then this information may be included in the confidential part of the submission (REF1b).
56. The information may be updated at any time up to 31 May 2013 by the member of staff concerned.
57. In the REF itself, any complex circumstances which require a judgement on the appropriate reduction in outputs will be judged at national level, in confidence, by the relevant main panel chair on the advice of an Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel which will include representatives from each main panel area.

Fixed term contract staff and part-time staff

58. The University is committed to the spirit (as well as the letter) of both the Fixed Term Employee and Part Time Worker Regulations. The requirement for equally favourable treatment has been University policy for many years. All members of fixed term and part-time staff are treated as favourably as those on permanent or full-time contracts for example in relation to pay, staff benefits, training, promotion and career development opportunities.

Joint submission

59. The Code of Practice will apply equally to single and joint submissions.

Appendix A

Terms of reference of the REF Steering Group

Terms of Reference

The Steering Group will be responsible for determining the University's submission strategy and for approving the final submission to the Research Excellence Framework. Four Review Groups will be formed to advise the Steering Group.

The Steering Group's Terms of Reference are:

- to interpret the REF Working Methods and Criteria for Assessment and the Guidance on Submissions and any other guidance published by the funding councils in relation to the REF;
- in light of its interpretation of the published guidance and criteria, prepare the University's submission strategy, including targets for the proportion of staff to be submitted and Grade Point Average for each Unit of Assessment (UOA);
- to develop a guide (including an Equality Code of Practice incorporating equality impact assessment arrangements) for preparing, reviewing and developing submissions and selecting staff for inclusion in the submission;
- to co-ordinate communication with staff and unions via its Communication sub-group;
- to approve the submission, the Units of Assessment to which submissions will be made, any joint or multiple submissions and the members of staff to be included in each Unit of Assessment's submission;
- to set terms of reference for the Review Groups and approve membership of Review Groups;
- to determine selection criteria for Unit of Assessment leaders and approve their appointment;
- to approve the commissioning and terms of reference of external reviews and benchmarking data;
- to co-ordinate responses to HEFCE REF consultations;
- to respond to other matters referred to the Steering Group by the Review Groups.

Appendix B

Terms of reference of the REF Review Groups

Terms of Reference

There will be four Review Groups aligned with the REF Main Panels. Their role is to support the Steering Group in achieving the best possible outcome from the REF for the University as a whole.

Review Groups will:

- report via the Chair to the Steering Group;
- co-ordinate the association of staff with UOAs and, where necessary, facilitate discussion between Unit of Assessment leaders on UOA transfers;
- review Units of Assessment submissions in detail and make recommendations to the Steering Group on the submissions;
- work closely with UOA leaders and Heads of School in developing all aspects of the submissions (outputs, environment and impact);
- ensure that submissions are in accordance with the University's code of practice on preparing, reviewing and developing submissions and selecting staff for inclusion in the submission;
- ensure that reviews are rigorous and independent.

Membership

Membership of each Review Group will comprise

- A Chair (Pro-Vice Chancellor Research & Innovation / Pro-Dean Research Evaluation).
- Members drawn from the Deans, Pro-Deans, and others with experience of research assessment or with expertise in impact.
- Additional members, who may be recruited during the later stages of submission preparation to provide advice on a particular submission or aspect of a submission.

Appendix C

Method of appointment of Research and Innovation Pro-Deans, Deans, Pro-Vice Chancellors, REF Steering Group and UOA Leaders

Research and Innovation Pro-Deans, Deans and Pro-Vice Chancellors are appointed by the University through open (internal) advertisement and standard HR appointment procedures.

Membership of the Steering Group was determined to reflect the University's top level commitment to the REF and was drawn from the Vice Chancellor's Executive Group, Faculty Deans and appropriate senior officers with a view to an acceptable gender balance.

Unit of Assessment leaders, deputies and impact experts were nominated by Pro-Deans against criteria identified below, Annex D ("Attributes of UOA leaders, deputy leaders and impact experts").

Appendix D

Terms of Reference for Unit of Assessment Leaders

Unit of Assessment leaders will have a pivotal role in the formulation of submissions.

UOA Leaders will:

- report, via the Pro-Dean, to the Review Group with responsibility for their UOA;
- liaise with Deans, Pro-Deans, Heads of School and Departments and Directors of Research to produce the RAE submission for their UOA;
- be responsible for communication with their UOA constituency concerning the development of the submission;
- have final authority to make recommendations to the Review Group on behalf of their UOA;
- work closely with Deputy UOA leaders/ impact experts and with other UOA leaders as necessary and make recommendations to the Review Group concerning the allocation of members of staff to UOAs;
- work with data teams and Faculty Research Managers to ensure the accuracy of data in their submission;
- be responsible for overseeing the drafting of textual parts of the submission and the impact statement and case studies, working closely with the impact expert;
- remain in the role of UOA leader for the duration of the Exercise, including any audit period.

Terms of Reference for Deputy UOA leaders

Deputy UOA leaders will support the UOA leader in developing the UOA's submission to REF, drawing on their knowledge of a particular discipline area or School and/or their expertise in impact.

Attributes of UOA leaders, deputy leaders and impact experts

Experience of previous Research Assessment Exercises shows that effective UOA leaders have the following skills, knowledge or experience:

- Senior member of staff (e.g. a member of the professoriate)
- An appreciation of the research assessment process and the degree of rigour required in preparing a submission for assessment (gained, for example, through recent experience of research assessment exercises or other research assessment processes, HEFCE RAE panel membership or senior role in a funder assessment panel)
- A track record of leadership
- Capable of liaising effectively with Heads of School, other UOA leaders, deputy UOA leaders, other members of staff, Deans and Pro-Deans
- Willing to act in a university capacity in order to create the return that is strongest for the institution as a whole, particularly in the case where UOAs cross school and faculty boundaries
- Willing to take part in training sessions and workshops organised for UOA leaders
- Have recognised expertise in impact (Impact expert only).

Appendix E

Paragraphs 63-91 of the Addendum to the Assessment framework and guidance on submissions (RE02.2011)

Staff and individual staff circumstances

Amendment to 'guidance on submissions': Following consultation on the draft panel criteria, the arrangements concerning maternity, paternity and adoption leave in 'guidance on submissions' have been amended, and are now superseded by the guidance as stated below.

For completeness, the full set of arrangements concerning individual staff circumstances are set out in paragraphs 64-91 of this document, which replace paragraphs 88-95 of 'guidance on submissions'.

63. The criteria for determining which staff are eligible to be included in institutions' submissions are common for all UOAs, and are set out in 'guidance on submissions' (paragraphs 78-83).
64. Up to four research outputs must be listed against each member of staff included in the submission. A maximum of four outputs per researcher will provide panels with a sufficient selection of research outputs from each submitted unit upon which to base judgements about the quality of that unit's outputs. Consultations on the development of the REF confirmed that this is an appropriate maximum volume of research outputs for the purposes of assessment.
65. As a key measure to support equality and diversity in research careers, in all UOAs individuals may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, where their individual circumstances have significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period. This measure is intended to encourage institutions to submit all their eligible staff who have produced excellent research.
66. HEIs are allowed to list the maximum of four outputs against any researcher, irrespective of their circumstances or the length of time they have had to conduct research. A minimum of one output must be listed against each individual submitted to the REF.
67. In order to provide clarity and consistency on the number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty, there will be a **clearly defined** reduction in outputs for those types of circumstances listed at paragraph 69a. Circumstances that are more **complex** will require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs; these are listed at paragraph 69b.

Arrangements have been put in place for complex circumstances to be considered on a consistent basis, as described at paragraphs 88-91.
68. Where an individual is submitted with fewer than four outputs and they do not satisfy the criteria described at paragraphs 69-91 below, any 'missing' outputs will be graded as 'unclassified'.
69. Category A and C staff may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, if one or more of the following circumstances significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period:
 - a. Circumstances with a **clearly defined** reduction in outputs, which are:
 - i. Qualifying as an early career researcher (on the basis set out in paragraph 72 and Table 1 below).
 - ii. Absence from work due to working part-time, secondments or career breaks (on the basis set out in paragraphs 73-74 and Table 2 below).
 - iii. Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave (on the basis set out in paragraphs 75-81).
 - iv. Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6, as defined at paragraph 86.

- b. **Complex circumstances** that require a judgement about the appropriate reduction in outputs, which are:
- i. Disability. This is defined in 'guidance on submissions' Part 4, Table 2 under 'Disability'.
 - ii. Ill health or injury.
 - iii. Mental health conditions.
 - iv. Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – the allowances made in paragraph 75 below.
 - v. Other caring responsibilities (such as caring for an elderly or disabled family member).
 - vi. Gender reassignment.
 - vii. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed at paragraph 190 of 'guidance of submissions' or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

Clearly defined circumstances

70. Where an individual has one or more circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs, the number of outputs that may be reduced should be determined according to the tables and guidance in paragraphs 72-86 below. All sub-panels will accept a reduction in outputs according to this guidance and will assess the remaining number of submitted outputs without any penalty.
71. In REF1b, submissions must include sufficient details of the individual's circumstances to show that these criteria have been applied correctly. The panel secretariat will examine the information in the first instance and advise the sub-panels on whether sufficient information has been provided and the guidance applied correctly.

The panel secretariat will be trained to provide such advice, on a consistent basis across all UOAs. Where the sub-panel judges that the criteria have not been met, the 'missing' output(s) will be recorded as unclassified. (For example, an individual became an early career researcher in January 2011 but only one output is submitted rather than two. In this case the submitted output will be assessed, and the 'missing' output recorded as unclassified.)

Early career researchers

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

Table 1 Early career researchers: permitted reduction in outputs

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

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

73. Table 2 sets out the permitted reduction in outputs without penalty in the assessment for absence from work due to:
- a. part-time working
 - b. secondments or career breaks outside of the higher education sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.

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

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

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

Qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave

75. Individuals may reduce the number of outputs by one, for each discrete period of:
- Statutory maternity leave or statutory adoption leave taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013, regardless of the length of the leave.
 - Additional paternity or adoption leave¹ lasting for four months or more, taken substantially during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 October 2013.
76. The approach to these circumstances is based on the funding bodies' considered judgement that the impact of such a period of leave and the arrival of a new child into a family is generally sufficiently disruptive of an individual's research work to justify the reduction of an output. This judgement was informed by the consultation on draft panel criteria, in which an overwhelming majority of respondents supported such an approach.
77. The funding bodies' decision not to have a minimum qualifying period for maternity leave was informed by the sector's clear support for this approach in the consultation; recognition of the potential physical implications of pregnancy and childbirth; and the intention to remove any artificial barriers to the inclusion of women in submissions, given that women were significantly less likely to be selected in former RAE exercises.
78. The funding bodies consider it appropriate to make the same provision for those regarded as the 'primary adopter' of a child (that is, a person who takes statutory adoption leave), as the adoption of a child and taking of statutory adoption leave is generally likely to have a comparable impact on a researcher's work to that of taking maternity leave.
79. As regards additional paternity or adoption leave, researchers who take such leave will also have been away from work and acting as the primary carer of a new child within a family. The funding bodies consider that where researchers take such leave over a significant period (four months or more), this is likely to have an impact on their ability to work productively on research that is comparable to the impact on those taking maternity or statutory adoption leave.
80. While the clearly defined reduction of outputs due to additional paternity or adoption leave is subject to a minimum period of four months, shorter periods of such leave can be taken into account as follows:
- 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.
 - By combining the number of months for shorter periods of such leave in combination with other clearly defined circumstances, according to Table 2.
81. Any period of maternity, adoption or paternity leave that qualifies for the reduction of an output under the provisions in paragraph 75 above may in individual cases be associated with prolonged constraints on work that justify the reduction of more than one output. In such cases, the circumstances should be explained using the arrangements for complex circumstances.

Combining clearly defined circumstances

82. Where individuals have had a combination of circumstances with clearly defined reductions in outputs, these may be accumulated up to a maximum reduction of three outputs. For each circumstance, the relevant reduction should be applied and added together to calculate the total maximum reduction.
83. Where Table 1 is combined with Table 2, the period of time since 1 January 2008 up until the individual met the definition of an early career researcher should be calculated in months, and Table 2 should be applied.
84. When combining circumstances, only one circumstance should be taken into account for any period of time during which they took place simultaneously. (For example, an individual worked part-time throughout the assessment period and first met the definition of an early career researcher on 1 September 2009. In this case the number of months 'absent' due to part-time working should be calculated from 1 September 2009 onwards, and combined with the reduction due to qualifying as an early career researcher, as indicated in paragraph 83 above.)
85. Where an individual has a combination of circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs **and** complex circumstances, the institution should submit these collectively as 'complex' so that a single judgement can be made about the appropriate reduction in outputs, taking into account all the circumstances. Those circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs should be calculated according to the guidance above (paragraphs 72-84).

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

Other circumstances that apply in UOAs 1-6

86. In UOAs 1-6, the number of outputs may be reduced by up to two, without penalty in the assessment, for the following:
- a. Category A staff who are junior clinical academics. These are defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or its equivalent prior to 31 October 2013.
 - b. Category C staff who are employed primarily as clinical, health or veterinary professionals (for example by the NHS), and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit.
87. These allowances are made on the basis that the staff concerned are normally significantly constrained in the time they have available to undertake research during the assessment period. The reduction of two outputs takes account of significant constraints on research work, and is normally sufficient to also take account of additional circumstances that may have affected the individual's research work. Where the individual meets the criteria at paragraph 86, and has had significant additional circumstances – for any of the reasons at paragraph 69 – the institution may return the circumstances as 'complex' with a reduction of three outputs, and provide a justification for this.

Complex circumstances

88. Where staff have had one or more complex circumstances – including in combination with any circumstances with a clearly defined reduction in outputs – the institution will need to make a judgement on the appropriate reduction in the number of outputs submitted, and provide a rationale for this judgement.
89. As far as is practicable, the information in REF1b should provide an estimate – in terms of the equivalent number of months absent from work – of the impact of the complex circumstances on the individual's ability to work productively throughout the assessment period, and state any further constraints on the individual's research work in addition to the equivalent months absent. A reduction should be made according to Table 2 in relation to estimated months absent from work, with further constraints taken into account as appropriate. To aid institutions the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) will publish worked examples of complex circumstances, which will indicate how these calculations can be made and the appropriate reduction in outputs for a range of complex circumstances. These will be available at www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF from February 2012.
90. All submitted complex circumstances will be considered by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP), on a consistent basis across all UOAs. The membership and terms of reference of the EDAP are available at www.ref.ac.uk under Equality and diversity. The EDAP will make recommendations about the appropriate number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty to the relevant main panel chairs, who will make the decisions. The relevant sub-panels will then be informed of the decisions and will assess the remaining outputs without any penalty.
91. To enable individuals to disclose the information in a confidential manner, information submitted about individuals' complex circumstances will be kept confidential to the REF team, the EDAP and main panel chairs, and will be destroyed on completion of the REF (as described in 'guidance on submissions', paragraphs 98-99).

Appendix F

Memo to eligible staff about the consideration of individual staff circumstances in REF2014

The University of Leeds
REF2014

To: All members of staff eligible for return in REF 2014
From: Chair REF Steering Group
Subject: REF 2014, consideration of individual staff circumstances

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The University of Leeds 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 University's Code of Practice on the Fair and Transparent Selection of Staff for Inclusion in REF2014, which is Section 5 of our Guide to REF2014 (on the web via the "For staff" page or on request from leedsref@leeds.ac.uk).

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. Summary level data collected may also inform University's monitoring of staff selection procedures at the institutional level. In determining whether eligible staff may be submitted to the REF with fewer than four research outputs, the following circumstances will be taken into consideration:

- Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)
- Junior clinical academic staff who have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 October 2013 (UOAs 1 – 6 only).
- 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
- Trade Union Activity

If your research output has been affected by other circumstances, not including teaching and administration that are not listed above, please detail them on this form as they may be considered.

In determining the number of outputs staff are required to submit, we 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 under 'Publications'.

What action do I need to take?

If you are eligible for REF submission you are encouraged to complete the attached form - also available electronically at:

http://researchsupport.leeds.ac.uk/index.php/academic_staff/research_assessment/ref/

If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, you will be contacted by the Research and Innovation Service (RIS) Performance and Governance Manager, who is responsible for administrative aspects of REF2014.

Who will see the information that I provide?

As stated in our Code the information that you provide will be seen by the central panel convened to consider complex circumstances. UOA leaders and members of the local REF Review Groups will be informed of the existence of the circumstances and the requisite number of outputs (the person responsible for entering data on REF software will necessarily have access to this information).

Members of staff handling individual staff circumstances 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.

The REF Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions 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.

What if my circumstances change?

The University recognises that staff circumstances may change between 1 January 2008 and 31 October 2013. If your circumstances change you can download a copy of the attached form via the "For staff" page or request a copy from leedsref@leeds.ac.uk. In accordance with our Code, disclosure forms may be submitted at any time up to the end of May 2013.

Where do I send my completed form?

Completed forms should be sent to the Performance and Governance Manager, Research and Innovation Service. Please mark the envelope "Confidential, addressee only". Responses may also be sent by email to risrefc@leeds.ac.uk (Please note this address is for the return of forms only. Any queries should be sent to leedsref@leeds.ac.uk)

Confidential: Individual staff circumstances disclosure form

Name

School/Institute

REF2014 Unit of Assessment (UOA) (if known)

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. My contact details for this purpose are:

Email

Telephone

Preferred method of communication

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

Section three

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:

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Please provide information required on relevant circumstance/s and continue onto a separate sheet of paper if necessary. Where dates are requested please give day, month and year:

Circumstance	Information required
Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)	Date on which you became an early career researcher
Information	
Junior clinical academic staff who have not gained Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 October 2013 (UOAs 1- 6 only)	Please place a tick in this box if the circumstance applies:
Part time employee	FTE and duration in months
Information	
Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector	Dates and duration in months
Information	
Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)	For each period of leave state which type of leave was taken and the dates and duration in months
Information	
Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Mental health condition	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	

Confidential

Ill health or injury	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, paternity, adoption or childcare in addition to the period of maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave taken.	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Other caring responsibilities (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Gender reassignment	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Other exceptional and relevant reasons, not including teaching or administrative work	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	

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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 as described in the University's REF Code of Practice
- 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 central panel to assess complex circumstances/RIS Performance and Governance Manager:

- Will confirm the minimum number of research outputs required for the REF submission in the circumstances described. Rationale for the proposed number of outputs:
- Requires further information of the circumstances described as follows:
- 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:

Any appeals should be made in accordance with the arrangements set out in the University's REF Code of Practice (paragraphs 42-45).

Signature: **Date:**
Chair (Central panel to assess complex circumstances)

Signature: **Date:**
RIS Performance and Governance Manager

The on-line version of this form is linked from the penultimate paragraph of the following web page:

http://researchsupport.leeds.ac.uk/index.php/academic_staff/research_assessment/ref/



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