

CODE OF PRACTICE ON THE SELECTION OF STAFF FOR REF 2014 SUBMISSIONS

PRINCIPLES

Leeds Metropolitan University will submit Units of Assessment for REF 2014 where the likely outcome will maintain and enhance our academic reputation and where there is a reasonable probability of a subsequent funded return.

In selecting individual staff, the overriding consideration is whether their outputs are suitable for a submission meeting the above criteria and that determined by the REF 'Assessment framework and guidance on submissions' (HEFCE, July 2011).

Our University is fully compliant with the current Equality Act (2010) legislation and will observe all aspects of this in staff selection. The procedures adopted for REF 2014 selection will be assessed for impact by Human Resources and the outcomes used to guide decision making and amend procedures where necessary.

Our University's approach demonstrates fairness and will meet the REF principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity.

MANAGEMENT OF THE REF PROCESS

The management of the REF process will be developed and overseen by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise supported by the REF Manager and the Equality and Diversity Manager. Each faculty will nominate from its senior academic staff a Faculty Research Director/Associate Dean, Research and Enterprise for the University REF sub-group. The Sub-Group will undertake the preparation of the university level materials for the REF submissions, and make recommendations to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise on the strength of the associated staff outputs; related documentation and the viability of each candidate unit of assessment.

The Sub-Group will assess the REF-readiness of established research groups and clusters. Based on the information collected, an initial assessment of likely areas of submission will be made. Impact statement exemplars and income data will be gathered for the groups likely to submit.

During April 2012 all academic staff received a request to self-nominate if they consider that they meet the full submission criterion of four outputs or the equivalent during the REF census period, or meet the various published criteria for staff with special circumstances. This enabled staff working in areas currently not part of an established group to be considered for submission and ensured that all staff within our University had the opportunity to signal their eligibility.

The draft REF submission will be evaluated using external expertise. Decisions as to final recommendations of submitted staff will occur after this point. The only criterion for determination of submission is the likely contribution to a positive outcome.

REF SUB-GROUP

The REF Sub-Group will be formed based on nominations of one senior research manager from each of the four Faculties and approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise.

The membership is:-

Professor Andrew Slade, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise
Professor Carlton Cooke (Carnegie Faculty)
Professor Richard Hogston (Faculty of Health and Social Sciences)
Professor Ruth Robbins (Faculty of Art, Environment and Technology)
Professor Pinki Sahota (Faculty of Health and Social Sciences)
Professor Kevin Hylton (Carnegie Faculty)
Dr Damian Ward (Faculty of Business and Law)
Kathryn Brown (REF Manager, University Research Office)
Ian Clarke (Equality and Diversity Manager)

The membership is based on research seniority and engagement in activities in our University research community.

Each member of the REF Sub-Group and Unit of Assessment Coordinators has undertaken our University's equality and diversity training programme and has additionally studied the training materials generated by HEFCE for REF taken from the Equality Challenge Unit website (www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF). Additional training based upon the Equality Challenge Unit resources will also be available to the REF Sub-Group and Unit of Assessment Coordinators. Our University will undertake a formal equality impact assessment of the REF selection process which will report to the REF Sub-Group and amendments to the process will be made as necessary.

CONSULTATION ON THE CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff for REF 2014 will be subject to consultation and will be presented at the University Research and Enterprise Committee before formal adoption by Academic Board. It will be placed on the portal for staff in general, including those in protected groups as defined by the Equality Act 2010, for anonymous comment. An option of confidential personal or group discussion with a member of the REF Sub-Group will be included to ensure full accessibility.

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF STAFF FOR ENTRY TO REF 2014

(a) Selection Criteria

Leeds Metropolitan University will submit Units of Assessment for REF 2014 where the likely outcome will maintain and enhance our academic reputation and where there is a reasonable probability of a funded return.

In selecting individual staff, the sole consideration is whether their outputs are suitable for a submission meeting the above criteria and that determined by the REF 'Assessment framework and guidance on submissions' (HEFCE, July 2011).

The working definition of maintenance and enhancement of academic reputation in this context will be regarded as suitable for achievement of REF 4* (world leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour) to REF 2* (recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour). Whilst such outcomes cannot be predicted perfectly prior to the REF 2014 process, this will be assessed through our University's internal REF audit process, a process of external expert review from subject specialists and a recommendation made by the REF Sub-Group.

(b) Communication of Criteria

Staff will receive an introduction to the REF process and criteria through a dedicated website and through regular updates from the UOAs.

All academic staff will receive a REF briefing note during April 2012 detailing the criteria and timings of REF, and notifying the opportunity for self-nomination. For staff on long term absence, the briefing will be sent to their registered home address in letter form. Human Resources Managers will liaise with the REF Sub-Group and verify the associated staff lists in order to ensure full coverage.

Regular REF updates will be presented at the University Research and Enterprise Committee and included in the staff news of our University staff portal home page.

(c) Timescales

Leeds Metropolitan University's REF timetable for selection of staff is laid out below:

Timescale	Action
March – June 2011	REF working group solicited initial position information from individuals and the UoAs previously submitted and those from previous University REF audits, interviewing individuals and meeting groups/clusters to establish formally the current situation. REF awareness sessions run by each faculty and our University.
March 2012	REF Audit for self-nomination – open call to all staff of the

	University to be put forward to units of assessments for submissions to the audit.
March 2012	Meetings with Unit of Assessment Co-ordinators/Faculty Research Director/Dean to discuss the proposed submitted units in depth and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of each submission.
June 2012	4 th REF Audit/feedback
September – December 2012	The REF manager will meet with the unit leaders during the period September - December to discuss the submissions and an updated version of submissions will be brought to the open meeting in January. These will include a draft equality impact assessment.
January 2013	Open meeting of Research and Enterprise Committee to receive and discuss draft submissions from unit coordinators.
January - June 2013	External advice taken on each prospective submission.
February 2013 – July 2013	Further refinement of proposals.
October 2013	Announcement of confirmed list of staff to be included in the REF 2014 Submission. Appeals to be lodged within two weeks of the announcement. Appeals to be heard and outcome know by early November.
August – October 2013	All staff appointed to the institution since the end of July 2013 will be assessed for inclusion in the REF2014 and the appeals panel convened, should it be necessary w/c 4 th November 2013.
31 st October 2013	Census deadline for selection of staff.
November 2013	University submission to REF.

(d) Feedback on Selection Decisions to Individual Staff Members

Members of the REF Sub-Group will feedback individually to staff putting themselves forward but not subsequently selected for REF submission.

(e) Appeals

Any staff member not selected for REF submission may appeal in writing to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise within two weeks of receiving the decision and associated feedback. These will be considered by a panel consisting of; (Chair) Professor Sally Glen, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student Experience; Professor Mohammad Dastbaz, Dean of Arts, Environment and Technology; the REF Manager; Dr, Roberta Bampton, Head of School, Accounting and Finance and the University Equality and Diversity Manager. The REF manager's role is to provide continuity of administration over all aspects of the REF. Apart from the REF manager only the University Equality and Diversity Manager is also on the main staff selection panel. This is to ensure that both panels receive consistent advice from the appropriate senior Officer of the university.

DISCLOSURE OF STAFF CIRCUMSTANCES

All staff eligible for submission will be asked to complete a confidential form detailing their individual circumstances in respect of REF ensuring that decisions about selecting staff for the REF are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner (Appendix A). These will be kept by Human Resources under confidential cover and considered by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise, REF Manager and the Equality and Diversity Manager. Our University will adopt the REF2014 recommendations on equality and diversity in the categorisation of clearly defined circumstances.

The set of circumstances needing special consideration are necessarily open ended and these will be considered on an individual basis at the request of the selected staff member.

Clearly Defined Circumstances
Qualifying as an early career researcher (ECR)
Part-time working
Maternity, paternity or adoption leave
Secondments or career breaks
Complex Circumstances Requiring Individual Consideration
Disability
Ill health or injury
Mental health conditions
Constraints related to pregnancy or maternity
Childcare or other caring responsibilities
Gender reassignment
Other exceptional and relevant reasons (not including teaching or administrative work)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBMISSION FOR FIXED TERM AND PART-TIME STAFF (0.2 FTE AND ABOVE)

The criteria for selection and other aspects of selection noted for full time staff will be applied without alteration to Fixed Term and Part-Time Staff, including communication, invitation for self-nomination, feedback and appeal processes. REF regulations on pro rata outputs will be applied where appropriate.

EQUALITY TRAINING FOR REF SUB-GROUP MEMBERS AND THE UNIT OF ASSESSMENT COORDINATORS

The REF Sub-Group and Unit of Assessment Coordinators have undertaken our University's internal equality and diversity training and have additionally studied the training materials generated by HEFCE for REF taken from the Equality Challenge Unit website (www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF). Additional training based upon the Equality Challenge Unit resources will also be available to the REF sub group and Unit of assessment Coordinators.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Our University will undertake a formal equality impact assessment of the REF selection process which will report to the REF Sub-Group and amendments to process will be made as necessary. The impact assessment will be maintained under review throughout the period in which the REF submission is developed. This process is to ensure that decisions about selecting staff for the REF are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.

APPENDIX A:

Template covering note and staff disclosure form

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

From: Professor Andrew Slade, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise

Subject: REF 2014, consideration of individual staff circumstances

Our Leeds Metropolitan University is committed to ensuring that decisions about selecting staff for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) are made in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. Information on how eligible staff will be selected for submission to the REF can be found in the Leeds Metropolitan University's Code of Practice which can be found at [insert web address].

To ensure that REF processes are fair, Leeds Metropolitan University is 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 the Leeds Metropolitan 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, Leeds Metropolitan University and the REF Sub-Group where appropriate will observe the definitions of individual staff circumstances provided in the published REF 'Panel criteria and working methods' (HEFCE, January 2012) available at www.ref.ac.uk. Our University will take the following circumstances into consideration:

Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)

Part time employment

Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector in which the individual did not undertake academic research

Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, and additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)

Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)

Ill health or injury

Mental health conditions

Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, adoption, paternity or childcare **in addition to** periods of maternity, statutory adoption or additional paternity leave taken. This could include for example, pregnancy related illness and health and safety restrictions in laboratory and field work.

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

Gender reassignment

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

What action do I need to take?

If you are eligible for REF submission you are encouraged to complete the attached form.

If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, you will be contacted by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise.

Who will see the information that I provide?

Within the institution, the information that you provide will be seen by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise Professor Andrew Slade, REF Manager and Equity and Diversity Manager.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise, REF Manager and Equity and Diversity Manager 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 in confidence 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. [Delete is not applicable: Where joint submissions are made it may be necessary to share the information provided with another institution.]

What if my circumstances change?

The Leeds Metropolitan 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 at <http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/staff/research-support>.

Individual staff circumstances disclosure form

Name	
School	
Unit of Assessment	

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 the DVC, Research and Enterprise/ REF Manager/Equality and Diversity Manager to discuss my circumstances and requirements and/or the support provided by Leeds Metropolitan University. My contact details for this purpose are:

Email	
Telephone	
Preferred method of communication	

- I do **not** wish to be contacted.

Section three

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

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

Circumstance	Information required
Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)	Date on which you became an early career research
Information	
Part time employee	FTE and duration in months
Information	
Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector	Dates and duration in months
Information	
Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)	For each period of leave state which type of leave was taken and the dates and duration in months
Information	
Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Mental health condition	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Ill health or injury	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity,	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other

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

Please select as appropriate:

I confirm that the information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances.

I recognise that the information provided will be used for REF purposes and will be seen by DVC, Research and Enterprise/ REF Manager/ Equality and Diversity Manager.

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.

Signature: Date:

(Staff member)

For official use only

Following consideration of the personal circumstances described above, the [insert name of responsible committee or individuals]:

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

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

- Requires further information of the circumstances described as follows:

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

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

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

If [insert name of staff member] wishes to appeal against the decision of the [insert name of the committee or individuals] they will need to do so by [insert date] and details of the appeals process can be found at [insert web address].

Signature: Date:

(Professor Andrew Slade, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise)

Signature: Date:

(Kathryn Brown, REF Manager)