



**Leeds Trinity  
University**

**Code of Practice for the Research  
Excellence Framework 2014**

## **Introduction**

This code of practice [CoP] aims to address the internal institutional requirements of REF 2014 (*Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions REF 02.2011* and *Panel Criteria and Working Methods REF 01.2012*), by ensuring a fair and equitable approach when preparing submissions to the REF. It also sets out procedures to ensure that the selection of staff for submission to the REF 2014 will be transparent, consistent, accountable and inclusive.

## **REF Panels**

Leeds Trinity will utilise existing working structures within the institution for research to manage the REF selection process. The following panels will be formed:

- REF Working Group
- Appeals panel

Please see Appendix A for details of panel formation, membership, roles of individuals and role of panel in the selection process. The REF Working Group will be formed from relevant representatives of Leeds Trinity's Research Committee (see Appendix B for institution structure).

Selection decisions will be made by the REF Working Group and referred to the Research Committee and Academic Board to verify that the selection process has been implemented as outlined in this code.

## **Training**

Members of the REF Working Group will be informed of the legal obligations regarding equality and receive training in the Equality Act 2010. This training will use materials published by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) designed for this purpose. The Appeals panel, if formed (see later section on appeals), will also receive this training. The Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) has attended the relevant REF training event on equality and diversity and will lead the training of the panel members. All materials used in training will be placed on staff intranet pages for panel members to refer back to.

## **Eligibility**

Eligibility for REF 2014 is determined principally by criteria and definitions surrounding research, outputs, impact, environment and other matters as set out in the *Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions (REF*

02.2011) and the *Panel criteria and working methods (REF 01.2012)*. The main guiding principle underpinning this CoP is to establish working practices which encourage the selection and submission of all relevant work of all staff including those whose ability to produce four outputs which meet definitions and interpretations of research provided throughout the assessment period has been constrained for reasons covered by equality legislation.

As such, and in accordance with the CoP, this institution will endeavour to submit all eligible staff in post by the census date (31 October, 2013). Consideration of eligibility will extend to all full-time, part-time and fixed-term staff who meet basic requirements of being in possession of up to four items of research output produced during the REF period as defined (1 January, 2008 to 31 December, 2013) or as qualified with personal disclosures of individual staff circumstances.

No minimum staff limit will be considered for any particular UOA provided that outputs, impact and environment are of an acceptable academic standard.

### **Selection, location (UOA) and the decision-making process**

The eligibility and selection of staff for the REF will essentially build upon the annual research reports compiled by the Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) and published by Leeds Trinity. Heads of departments are also aware of all research outputs and activities by individual members of academic staff through our annual Professional Development Review process. Departmental research leaders also keep a record of research activity within their departments. Staff selected for submission to the REF will be done so based on the quality of research and will not take account of any personal characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation).

#### *Decision making process*

All eligible staff identified by the Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) as having met the criteria for eligibility will submit their outputs to their departmental research leader, in the first instance. If there is no research leader within a department, individuals will report directly to the Director of Academic Enhancement (Research).

Staff with personal disclosures of individual circumstances will be invited to make themselves known to the Director of Academic Enhancement (Research). The Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) will then have a confidential meeting with the member of staff who must provide independent evidence to corroborate their application for reduced outputs to

the REF. Where appropriate (e.g. maternity leave) this evidence will then be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources to verify the individual circumstances being claimed. However this will not be forwarded in cases where the member of staff has disclosed information in strictest confidence that they do not wish to reveal to Human Resources. The Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) will brief the Director of Human Resources about the REF and individual circumstances well before any evidence is provided for scrutiny.

Leeds Trinity will conduct a Mock REF during December 2012 – January 2013 with external assessors for every potential panel submission. This information will be used by the departmental research leader to select staff for the REF who have qualifying outputs, impact and environment of an acceptable academic standard. The Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) will inform the departmental research leader of any staff who will be submitting less than four outputs owing to acceptable individual circumstances. The REF Working Group will read the results of the Mock REF and make the final decisions about inclusion of staff in early February 2013. They will report back to the Research Committee on 20 February 2013. The chair of the Research Committee will then submit a full REF report to Academic Board on 21 March 2013 (see Appendix C for Selection Timeline).

### **Personal disclosure of individual staff circumstances**

All staff, having been informed about the REF and who may qualify for special consideration (constraints leading to the reduction in research outputs), will be invited to submit details to the Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) in the first instance. Individual staff circumstances which allow only for the submission of fewer than four outputs without penalty are clearly specified in the *Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions (REF 02.2011)* and the *Panel criteria and working methods (REF 01.2012)* and include:

1. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher (ECR)
2. Part-time working
3. Secondments or career breaks during which no academic research was undertaken
4. Maternity, statutory adoption leave or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)
5. Complex circumstances including disability, ill health, mental health conditions, pregnancy, maternity, childcare or other caring responsibilities, gender reassignment, and other caring circumstances related to the *Equality Act 2010* (e.g. religious observance)

The Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) will liaise with the Director of Human Resources, on an anonymous basis, to determine whether or not the circumstances leading to a reduction in outputs are valid under the terms of the CoP and the REF.

### **Appeals**

After the final selection process is completed there will be a right of appeal for any staff who were not selected. The member of staff may appeal in writing directly to the Vice Chancellor of Leeds Trinity University, who is independent from the original selection process.

The Vice Chancellor will review cases on an individual basis, in consultation with the Director of Human Resources (who is the Equality and Diversity manager).

This appeal must be submitted within six weeks of the Academic Board meeting on 21 March 2013. If the Vice Chancellor considers the appeal to be a prima facie case an independent REF Appeals Panel will be convened and chaired by the Vice Chancellor (see Appendix A for details of panel formation).

Appeals at any point in the process outlined above will only be possible in the case of exclusion from the REF and on the basis of 'fairness' or 'personal disclosure'.

The outcomes of appeals will be made known in advance of the REF census date (31 October, 2013). Where a prima facie case of 'unfairness' has been demonstrated, the member of staff making the appeal will be entered normally in the REF without prejudice.

Staff whose work is not entered for the REF will remain unaffected by the REF and its outcomes and will still be eligible to apply for all forms of research and staff development support across the institution in the normal manner.

### **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken of this code of practice. Further EIAs will be undertaken following the Mock REF (where the initial selection of staff will occur), of the final selection of staff and of any appeals.

These assessments will be informed by data provided by human resources on protected characteristics (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) to ensure there

is no differential impact on particular groups. We will follow best practice guidelines and use information gained from engaging, consulting or involving staff from protected groups to inform the EIAs. An equality profile will be collated of eligible and then chosen staff at each stage of the selection process (i.e. after Mock REF and final staff selection).

### **Communication of Information relating to the REF**

Eligibility criteria outlined in *Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions (REF 02.2011)* has been circulated to research active staff and available on the Leeds Trinity staff intranet research page since 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

All staff will be informed of further developments regarding the REF, its timelines and its significance via the staff intranet research page and by open research meetings advertised via the intranet announcements page and by heads of department. Staff on leave or otherwise absent from work will be sent e-mails and information by post. Any policies and information regarding the REF will be made available in alternative formats (such as large print) as requested by staff.

This code will be published on Leeds Trinity's external website once approved by HEFCE.

### **Data protection**

The institution has an obligation to provide information as part of the REF which will be accessed by those individuals in the REF Working Group together with the REF administrator. All personal data relating to the REF will be processed fairly and lawfully and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Data subjects will be notified in advance that personal data will be submitted to the REF. Individuals have a right to check or amend the data held; to know what it is being collected for and how it will be used, and due care will be taken to ensure confidentiality. The data collected for the REF will only be used to inform the REF and to inform future research strategy.

### **Further reference**

Any member of staff at Leeds Trinity University seeking further information, clarification or guidance surrounding eligibility and selection for REF 2014 are invited to contact the Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) in the first instance. Other useful sources of information may be found at:

- HEFCE (2012) *REF 2014: Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions (REF 02.11)*. [Available at: [www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/)]
- HEFCE (2012) *Panel Criteria and Working Methods (REF 01.12)*. [Available at: [www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01\\_12/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01_12/)]
- Leeds Trinity University Equality Strategy and their Equality and Diversity Policy [Available at: <http://intranet.leedstrinity.ac.uk/StaffServices/HR/equality/default.aspx>]
- Equality Challenge Unit (2012) REF 2014 materials. [Available at: [www.ecu.ac.uk/documents/ref-materials](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/documents/ref-materials)]

Created: (June 2012)

Revised: (October 2012)

Updated with new institution name and job titles: (6<sup>th</sup> March 2013)

Equality Impact Assessment of the code: (31<sup>st</sup> October 2012)

## Appendix A

### Panel Details

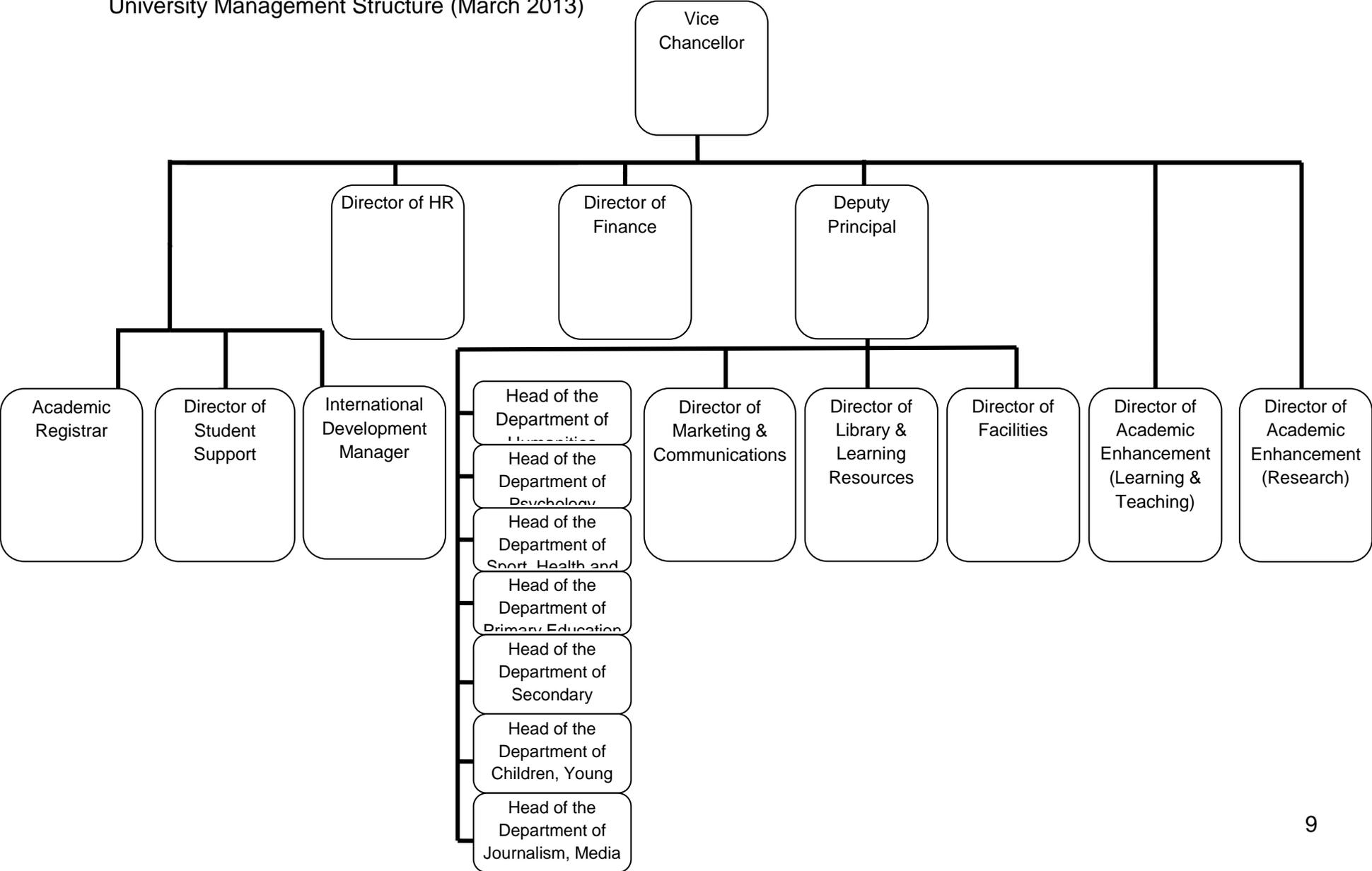
<b>REF Working Group</b>			
<b>Committee formation</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Position within selection process</b>
Formed from key representatives within the Research Committee who are actively involved in managing research activity and undertaking research.	Director of Academic Enhancement (Research)	Chair, responsibility for selection decisions for the institution. Strategic responsibility for research activity across the institution.	Receive recommendations from departmental research leaders and make strategic decisions on UOAs and staff to be submitted.
	Senior research staff (3)	In-depth knowledge of research activity across faculties.	Responsibility for generic issues related to REF process including quality thresholds and timetable for selection process.
	REF administrator	Administrative support including minute taking, advice on REF guidelines and consistent application of the Code.	Assess feasibility of submissions to relevant UOAs based on quality of research. Consider appropriate placement of individuals with interdisciplinary work.

<b>Appeals Panel</b>			
<b>Committee formation</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Position within selection process</b>
<p>Panel formed from impartial individuals with knowledge of research who have not been directly involved in the selection process. Includes the Equality and Diversity manager to ensure adherence to Equality Act 2010.</p>	Vice Chancellor	Chair, independent from original selection process, responsible for ruling on whether any complaints should be upheld.	<p>Panel will be formed if any written appeals are received by the Vice Chancellor. Cases for appeal will be considered ahead of the final selection for submission.</p>
	Director of Human Resources (Equality and Diversity manager)	Expertise in the Equality Act 2010	
	Director of Academic Enhancement (Research)	Knowledge of how the selection procedure took place	
	Union representative	Academic representative	
	REF administrator	Knowledge of REF guidelines, Code of Practice, and to provide administrative support.	

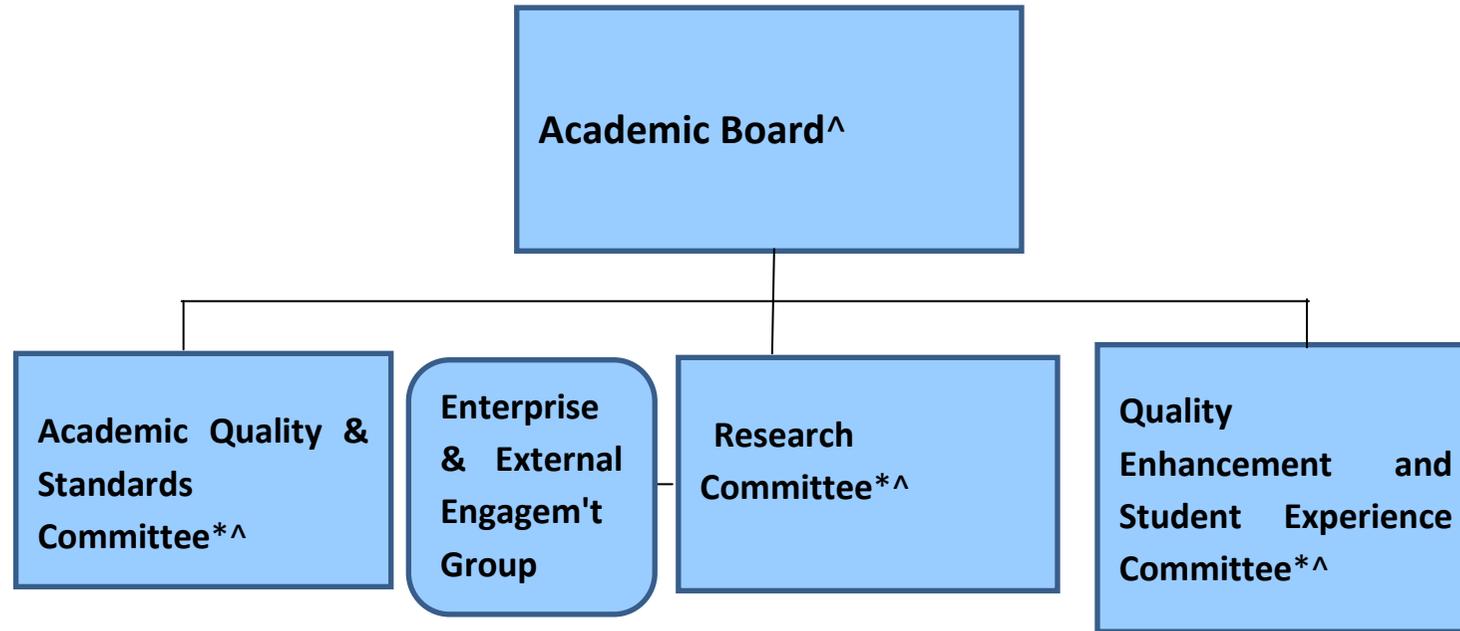
Appendix B

Leeds Trinity University Management Structure

University Management Structure (March 2013)



Relevant Section of Academic Deliberative Structure



**\* = includes University of Leeds membership**

**^ = includes student membership**

REF Working Group to form a temporary sub-group of the Research Committee

## Appendix C

### Selection Timeline

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Panel training (REF Working Group and appeals panel)	All panel members to attend	Nov 2012
Completion of survey of submission intentions	REF Working Group	5 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2012
Mock REF	REF Working Group	Dec 2012 – Jan 2013
EIA of Mock REF	REF administrator	Early Feb 2013
Identification of staff and UOAs to submit	REF Working Group	Early Feb 2013
Selection of staff and UOAs reported to Research Committee	REF Working Group	20 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2013
Selection of staff and UOAs reported to Academic Board	Chair of Research Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2013
EIA of selection of staff submitted	REF administrator	April 2013
Appeal deadline	All research staff to note	3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2013
EIA of any appeals	REF administrator	May 2013
Appeals panel meeting	Appeals panel	June 2013
Final selection for submission following any appeals	REF Working Group	July 2013
Review of Research Environment data and impact case studies	REF Working Group	June – Jul 2013
Uploading of data into REF submission system	REF administrator	Sept – Oct 2013
Submission	REF administrator	By 29 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2013

## Appendix D

### Terms of Reference 2011/12 – Research Committee

#### 1 Purpose

Subject to the overall determination of policy by the Academic Board, the Research Committee is responsible for the development, enhancement and oversight of activities relating to research and scholarship and related external engagement.

#### 2 Terms of Reference

2.1 To advise the Academic Board on matters of policy relating to research and related external engagement.

2.2 Subject to the determination of overall policy by the Academic Board, and taking account of requirements of appropriate external bodies and the requirements of the relevant operating statements in the accreditation agreement with the University of Leeds, to act on behalf of the Board in taking responsibility for:

2.2.1 the formulation, review and updating of institutional strategies relating to research and scholarship and the co-ordination and monitoring of related activities

2.2.2 the promotion of research and scholarship within the institution and the development of a supportive and proactive environment for these activities, including the informing and reviewing of staff development in this area.;

2.2.3 quality assurance and enhancement matters in relation to research degree programmes in accordance with the Research Degrees Operating Statement of the Accreditation Agreement between the University College and the University of Leeds;

2.2.4 the management of any submission to the research assessment exercise (or equivalent) and the results thereof;

2.2.5 the development and monitoring of institutional engagement with appropriate external bodies, ensuring that cognisance is taken of local, regional and national developments within and outside the sector and that appropriate responses and actions are set in place;

2.2.6 the oversight of activities relating to enterprise, knowledge transfer and external engagement;

2.2.7 oversight of matters relating to intellectual property rights;

2.2.8 oversight of matters relating to ethical issues arising from staff and student research.

- 2.3 To liaise with other relevant committees of the Academic Board to secure an appropriate interface, effective processes and efficient use of resources.
- 2.4 To be aware of equal opportunities issues and implications in all its deliberations and actions.

### **3 Constitution**

Director of Academic Enhancement (Research) (*ex-officio*) (Chairperson)

PG Research Tutor (*ex officio*)

Chairperson of the Enterprise & External Engagement Group

1 Professor appointed by the Academic Board

1 Reader appointed by the Academic Board

2 Heads of Academic Department appointed by the Academic Board

3 members of lecturing staff appointed by the Academic Board

1 University of Leeds member appointed by the University

1 research student nominated by the research student community

### **4 Quorum**

Six members