



## **Research Excellence Framework 2014**

### **Code of Practice on the selection of staff**

(revised June 2013)

**GRADUATE SCHOOL**

## **Introduction**

1. Newman 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 equality and diversity policies.
2. This Code of Practice addresses specific matters concerned with the preparation of the University's submission to REF, including the selection of staff and research outputs for inclusion in the submission.
3. This Code of Practice applies to all members of Newman University staff involved in REF processes and to any external advisors engaged by the University.
4. This Code of Practice does not replace any of Newman University's existing policies or codes of practice.
5. The Equalities Challenge Unit (ECU) will provide advice to institutions on equality and diversity aspects of REF. This Code of Practice may be revised in accordance with advice received from the ECU and the final version of the REF Panel Criteria and Working Methods document published at the end of January 2012.
6. This Code of Practice will be submitted to the funding councils' REF Team and will be examined by the REF Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP). When REF 2014 is completed the Code of Practice will be published by the funding councils.

## **Legal responsibilities**

7. Newman 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 Newman University has a duty to have due regard for the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a relevant characteristic and people 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 eligible to make a submission to the REF 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. Newman 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:

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

### **Governance arrangements**

10. An outline plan for REF 2014 arrangements were discussed at a meeting for all members of staff in Spring 2009. Management and monitoring arrangements build on similar structures employed for RAE 2008.
11. REF Steering Group. The REF Steering Group will determine Newman University's submission strategy and approve the final submission to REF 2014. The Steering Group is chaired by the Vice Chancellor.
12. REF Review Groups. The Review Groups will support the REF Steering Group in achieving the best possible outcome from the Exercise for the University as a whole. The Review Groups are coordinated by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research and Scholarship.
13. Chairs of Units of Assessment are responsible for overseeing the development of the submission in their Unit of Assessment.
14. The Research Committee will advise on strategy and policy.

### **Equality and diversity training**

15. All members of the REF Steering Group and Review Groups, and Chairs of Units of Assessment, will be briefed on the equality and diversity implications of selection for submission to REF 2014.
16. The briefing will cover relevant legislation and this Code of Practice. It will be in addition to any training members of staff may have received in relation to other roles (for example recruitment and selection).
17. The training will be completed by the beginning of July 2012.

### **Guidelines**

#### *Confidentiality*

18. Details of the submission will be confidential.
19. Within the University Chairs of the Units of Assessment will necessarily consult with Deans of School, Heads of Subject, the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research and

Scholarship and members of the Review Groups and Steering Group. Developing submissions (with the exception of the data requirements for form REF1b, Staff details – individual staff circumstances) may be circulated to members of the Unit of Assessment.

20. All involved in assessing and developing the submission will have access to all relevant data concerning the submission, including assessment of individual outputs.
21. Details of any personal circumstances which may be cited in the submission will remain confidential to the Chair of the Unit of Assessment and the panel which will be set up to review any complex circumstances. In determining whether eligible staff with fewer than four research outputs may be submitted to the REF, the REF Steering Group 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.

Eligible staff will be invited to provide details if their research output has been affected by other circumstances, not including teaching and administration that are not listed above.

#### *External advisors*

22. In developing submissions, Chairs of Units of Assessment, Review Groups, or the Steering Group may wish to seek the opinions of external advisors with the appropriate knowledge and experience of research assessment or impact. The Steering Group will approve the commissioning and terms of reference of reviews by external advisors. External advisors will be selected on the basis of their experience of research assessment and their familiarity with excellent research in their field. External advisors will be invited to provide their views on the quality of the research outputs, the environment and impact in the submissions or parts of submissions on the basis of the published REF criteria. They could be invited to

assign ratings to individuals and make recommendations about the inclusion of work or individuals.

*Selection of staff responsible for deciding which work is to be submitted*

23. Final decisions on research outputs to be included will be taken by the Steering Group on the recommendations of Chairs of Units of Assessment and the Review Groups. Each Unit of Assessment will identify any other individuals involved in assessing and developing the submission and how they have been selected.

24. Chairs of Units of Assessment will make recommendations concerning the selection of staff and research outputs for submission in consultation with the Review Groups.

*Eligibility for inclusion*

25. The Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions 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).

26. The University expects that members of staff will normally have four research outputs to be eligible for submission to the REF, the overall quality level of which is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.

27. The final decision on the individuals to be included will be taken by the Steering Group. In making these decisions the 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 Unit of Assessment.

28. In making recommendations, Chairs of Units of Assessment will take account of the target quality profile for their Unit of Assessment, the contribution of the individual's output to the quality profile and any personal circumstances identified by the individual as having had an adverse effect on the quantity of their research output during the assessment period.

*Criteria used by Review Groups*

29. The Review Groups' role is to assess submissions as they develop, and to provide advice to the Steering Group on the final submission. Review Groups will base their assessments on the published REF criteria. This will be communicated via

the Chair of the Steering Group to Chairs of the Units of Assessment. Chairs are responsible for communication with their Unit of Assessment members. After draft submissions have been presented to them, Review Groups will provide brief feedback to assist Chairs of Units of Assessment in developing the submission. Feedback may be written and/or given in person.

### *Communication*

30. Chairs of Units of Assessment will be responsible for communicating with the members of the Units of Assessment. Meetings, open to all, will continue to be held, in order to provide updates on progress and a forum for questions and discussion relating to the submission. An item on the preparation for the submission will continue to be placed on the agenda for each meeting of the Research Committee. The Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff will be placed on the University's website and be available in hard copy format. Information on the processes for developing the submission will be made available to all members of staff on the University's intranet (SharePoint). The Director of Human Resources will communicate by post with members of staff who are absent or on leave from the University.

### *Unit of Assessment statement*

31. Each Unit of Assessment will produce a statement describing the process it intends to put in place and use to select its membership. Statements will be submitted to the Steering Group for approval and must include:
- Unit of Assessment timetable
  - Data to be used (including a justification for using any data not specified in the REF Guidance on Submissions or Panel Criteria and Working Methods publications)
  - Assessment criteria (including a justification for using any criteria not specified in the Panel Criteria)
  - Arrangements for assessing outputs: Indicating who assesses the outputs and how they have been chosen
  - Arrangements for feedback: indicating when and how members of staff will be kept informed of their inclusion status. Guidance will be given to Units of Assessment on timing of feedback, consistent with the timetable for developing the submission
  - Arrangements for recording disagreement.

### *Viewing of data*

32. Data required for the submission will only be viewable by the submitting member of staff. Staff will be asked to ensure that this data is accurate.

### *Compliance*

33. 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.

### **Equality impact assessment (EIA)**

34. Equality impact assessments will be carried out at key points in the process of selection of staff in order to ensure there is no differential impact on particular groups. The equality impact assessments will be informed by the data (at summary level) on protected characteristics provided by Human Resources.

Equality impact assessments will take place at the following key points:

- Following initial selection of staff
- Following final selection of staff
- Following use of the right to appeal

Newman University will follow best practice and use information gained through consultation with or involvement of staff from protected groups to inform its equality impact assessments during the process of preparing its submission to REF.

### **Complaints**

35. The University will attempt to resolve any complaints as quickly and as informally as possible. Any member of staff who wishes to complain of potential discrimination or who feels that they have not been dealt with in accordance with this Code of Practice should in the first instance raise the issue informally with the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research and Scholarship, who will investigate and attempt to resolve it.

### **Appeals**

36. Members of staff have the right to appeal the decision within one month from receiving written notification regarding the submission of their research outputs. The appeal will be considered by an Appeals Panel within two months of being received, and in any case before the final submission is made.

37. Appeals on the grounds of discrimination by staff concerning the inclusion/exclusion of research outputs within the REF submission can be made on the grounds of:

- a. Personal characteristic (age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation) or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth; or
- b. Work pattern/absence that has not been fully taken into account.

38. However, it should be noted that managerial decisions concerning which staff to submit on academic grounds are at the discretion of the University. Staff may wish to refer to the document 'Assessment framework and guidance on submissions' (REF 02.2011) published in July 2011 and available at [www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk) under Publications.
39. Therefore appeals may NOT be considered if they are concerned with:
- a. The validity or standing of the internal review process and judgements concerning individual staff research outputs and/or submissions, and/or
  - b. The University strategy for submission in respect of the inclusion/exclusion of individual staff research outputs.
40. For any other issues, staff should refer to the existing Newman University Grievance Policy which describes the means for dealing fairly and promptly with any grievance which a member of staff may have in the course of and/or connected with their employment.
41. Appeals which meet the criteria above will be heard by an Appeals Panel which will be chaired by the University Registrar and comprise one member each of the Research Committee (who shall not be a member of any of the University's Units of Assessment) and Equality and Diversity Committee. An independent member of staff will be present at all times in the role of observer.
42. The purpose of the Appeals Panel is to consider appeals and to make judgements based on its assessment of the strength of each case (taking into account the grounds stated) and having consideration for the impact of decisions on the University overall.
43. The Appeals Panel will also refer to the criteria and processes established by the REF 2014 team in accordance with the document 'Assessment framework and guidance on submissions' (REF 02.2011) and any subsequent publications on criteria and working methods.
44. In all cases the decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A: Committees and working groups involved in the REF 2014 submission process**

#### **1. Research Committee**

##### *Purpose and Scope*

The Research Committee advises the Academic Board on matters of policy and practice related to research and consultancy. The Committee is responsible for advising on the allocation of University resources for research.

##### *Terms of Reference*

- To advise Senate on research strategy and associated forward planning
- To consider and advise on organisational arrangements for the management and promotion of research
- To monitor the research activities of the University
- To publicise and promote the research activities of the University to the relevant external bodies
- To formulate policies and procedures for the fostering of research and consultancy work
- To manage the bidding process for the Research Committee budget and the allocation of funds
- To advise on the level of resources allocated centrally and on the distribution of such assigned resources for the stimulation of research
- To approve funding requests for presentation of papers at conferences and symposiums
- To exercise delegated responsibility from Senate for academic standards in programmes leading to research degrees
- To advise on policies and procedures for the protection of intellectual property rights and licensing agreements
- To monitor, develop and implement the University Research Strategy
- To co-ordinate the formulation of returns to outside bodies related to research and related research consultancy activities in the University
- To receive and approve or reject applications from both staff of the University and students for registration on research programmes, and to submit such approved applications to the University of Leicester for final approval
- To receive the minutes and any recommendations of the Research Ethics Committee
- To monitor the effectiveness of the Research Ethics Committee.

##### *Membership*

Ex officio:

- Pro Vice Chancellor – Research and Scholarship (Chair)
- Deans of School
- Vice Chancellor
- Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator
- Chair of the Research Ethics Committee

Elected/nominated:

- Up to three research active members of staff from each School, including at least one early career research staff member (nominated by the Schools for a three year term)
- One current full time research student from the University (elected for a one year term)
- Representative from the University of Leicester (nominated by the Dean of the Graduate School)
- Up to two readers representing the constituent areas of research within the University
- Up to two professors representing the constituent areas of research within the University.

## **2. REF 2014 Steering Group**

*Terms of reference*

- To receive and consider in full the criteria and working methods for REF 2014 and identify their strategic implications for the University's submission including any equality and ethical issues
- To advise the Research Committee on strategic decisions in relation to the REF 2014 submission
- To oversee internal audits of staff research outputs
- To identify and prepare the impact statement and impact case studies
- To assess and describe the University's research environment
- To report its decisions to the Research Committee
- To ensure that all decisions made in relation to submissions for REF 2014 are consistent with the University's Research Strategy and the institution's Strategic Plan
- To maintain effective communication with all members of staff regarding the requirements, strategic decisions and process for REF 2014
- To prepare the University's submission to REF 2014.

*Membership*

- Vice Chancellor (Chair)
- Members of the Professoriate
- External advisors (experts co-opted as required)

### **3. Equality and Diversity Committee**

#### *Purpose and Scope*

- To advise the Board of Governors, Senate and the Newman Management Group on issues of equality and diversity
- To support the development of a culture which values all individuals
- To assist with the positive promotion of equal opportunities through the dissemination of effective practice.

#### *Terms of Reference*

- To advise the University on the fulfilment of statutory requirements related to equality and diversity
- To ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are embedded in University documentation and practice
- To support the development of a fully inclusive and non-discriminatory learning and working environment
- To monitor the implementation of equality and diversity policies including the Single Equality Scheme
- To ensure that a regular review is undertaken in relation to all policies and processes and that any actions arising are followed through
- To monitor annual statistics with reference to equality and diversity issues
- To monitor recruitment and employment practice in relation to equality and diversity
- To discuss any issues arising from annual monitoring reports and make recommendations
- To ensure that appropriate staff development and training opportunities are developed and accessed and to monitor mandatory training
- To liaise with other committees or set up working parties to address specific issues as necessary
- To receive and action any recommendations resulting from any incidence of discrimination, victimisation or harassment and make recommendations for subsequent action
- To provide an annual report to the Newman Management Group, Senate and the Board of Governors
- To publish annually results of monitoring carried out.

#### *Membership*

- Vice Chancellor (Chair)
- University Registrar
- Director of Quality
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Student Services
- Chaplain
- Union representatives (two)
- Inclusion Coordinator

- Student member
- Academic staff member (two)
- Administrative staff member (two)
- IT Representative
- Head of Learning Development Unit

#### **4. Professoriate**

##### *Terms of reference*

The Professoriate is an informal, internal group which advises the Vice Chancellor primarily, but not exclusively, on matters of the Graduate School and research in general. The Professoriate in itself is not a decision making body in the institutional committee structure, but it may come up with suggestions and initiatives which are taken forward normally by the Vice Chancellor or his nominee through the relevant committees.

##### *Membership*

The Professoriate is chaired by the Vice Chancellor.

The body of full- and part-time professors employed by Newman University constitutes the Professoriate.

*Document revised in June 2013 (minor revisions) to reflect change to University status and subsequent alterations to titles and structures. No changes have been made to selection procedures or the terms of reference of a committee.*

## Appendix B

### Timetable

June 2012	UOAs submit draft processes to Steering Group
June 2012	Steering Group approval of UOA processes for REF 2014
June 2012	Determining of provisional UOAs for all staff wishing to be considered for eligibility
June 2012	Initial collection of individual staff circumstances complete
June 2012	Initial assessment of complex individual staff circumstances complete
July 2012	Equality and diversity training complete
31 July 2012	Institutions intending to make submissions to the REF submit their codes of practice on the selection of staff
September 2012	UOAs submit first draft submission to Review Groups
October 2012	Invitation to HEIs to make submissions; invitation to request multiple submissions; and start of survey of submissions intentions
October 2012	Deadline for any appeals arising from first draft submissions
December 2012	Review Groups complete feedback to UOAs on first draft submissions and report to Steering Group. Review Groups identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UOAs where drafts require major revision</li> <li>• UOAs where drafts require minor revision</li> <li>• UOAs that may proceed to final draft without interim review</li> </ul>
December 2012	Membership of UOAs confirmed
December 2012	Outcome of appeals (if any)
December 2012	Survey of submissions intentions complete and deadline for requests for multiple submissions
February 2013	UOAs submit revised drafts (major revisions only)
April 2013	Review Groups complete feedback to UOAs on major revisions
May 2013	UOAs complete second draft submission (minor revisions)
May 2013	Deadline for submission of individual staff circumstances
July 2013	Review Groups complete feedback to all UOAs on second draft
31 July 2013	Data finalised for:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research impacts</li> <li>• research environment</li> <li>• research income</li> <li>• research doctoral degrees awarded</li> </ul>
Late Summer 2013	UOAs complete final draft submission
August 2013	Final deadline for any appeals arising from second draft submissions
31 October 2013	Census date for staff eligible for selection
Early November 2013	Data for staff eligible for selection to be finalised
November 2013	Steering Group approves final version of submission
29 November 2013	Closing date for submissions