

## PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY'S CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE SELECTION OF STAFF FOR THE REF 2014

### Introduction

1. The University is fully committed to being an equal opportunities employer and providing equality of opportunity to all its staff. The purpose of this code of practice is to ensure that the maximum number of staff who are conducting excellent research have their work included in submissions in the REF in accordance with the equality and diversity requirements. It also aims to make all the processes concerned with selection of staff for inclusion in REF 2014 submissions fair, transparent and consistent across the institution. The code has been drafted using the guidance provided in section 4 of the 'Assessment framework and guidance on submissions' document published by HEFCE in July 2011.
2. Relevant equality legislation and University policies are listed in Annex 1.

### Targets for REF 2014

3. The REF involves the rating of the research performance of staff grouped by subject Units of Assessment against world leading, international and national standards of research excellence<sup>1</sup>. The criteria to be used in this rating exercise are in the final published panel statements ([http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01\\_12/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01_12/)) (January 2012). The contribution individual staff can make to a submission includes their research outputs, external research income generated, PGR students' completions and supervisions, research impact, and their collaborations and contributions to the discipline. The University accepts that its highest quality research is still limited to certain Schools and research centres and groups.
4. In RAE 2008 the University submitted staff in 25 Units of Assessment which received ratings varying from 1\* to 4\* (NB since March 2011 only Units rated 3\* or above attract QR funding). As well as benefiting from the direct financial reward for RAE performance, the University recognises the importance of REF performance in establishing and maintaining its reputation. As HEFCE does not publish its post-REF research funding formula until after the exercise, any strategic or target led approach to submissions will to some extent be based on guessing the decisions HEFCE will take and how the post-REF league tables will present the outcome of the exercise. However the University expects individual Units of Assessment to establish a target star rating profile based on RAE 2008 performance and the Unit's development in the assessment period.

Examples of target profiles might be:

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<sup>1</sup> Research that does not meet these standards will be rated as unclassified (zero).

Unit of Assessment	FTE Cat A staff submitted for assessment	Percentage of research activity in the submission judged to meet the standard for:				
		4*	3*	2*	1*	0
X	50	15	25	40	15	5
Y	20	0	5	40	45	10

Note: In 2014, the overall quality profiles will be published in steps of 1 per cent.

### Staff and Committee responsibilities

5. Overall responsibility for the preparation and content of the University's submission in REF 2014 lies with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) post. The PVC Research is a member of the Chancellery team and has responsibility for the implementation of the University research strategy with particular focus on the REF 2014 submission.
6. For each Unit of Assessment (UoA) a coordinator has been / will be appointed by the appropriate Dean and Associate Dean (Research). Unit of Assessment Coordinator is considered to be a senior role normally undertaken by staff of Professorial or Reader level. In appointing staff to this role, Faculties will take into account ability to assess research quality across the discipline and aptitude for open and inclusive working with fellow academic staff. A list of UoA Coordinators (correct in January 2012) is in Annex 4.
7. UoA Coordinators will report as requested to the Research and Innovation Committee, REF Steering Group, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research, the Associate Dean (Research) and Dean of the lead Faculty. Communications to and from a UoA will normally be through the UoA Coordinator. UoA Coordinators will normally work through the existing School / Faculty committees to assist with the UoA planning process.
8. Each UoA Coordinator will agree a target star rating profile for the UoA with the PVC Research. Draft targets will be submitted to the Research and Innovation Directorate (R&I) and the Research and Innovation Committee according to a timetable published on the intranet at <http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ref>.
9. The Research and Innovation Committee has established a REF Steering Group as a subcommittee led by the PVC Research. The membership consists of Faculty-nominated representatives who are active members of staff with extensive experience of the RAE / REF environment. The aim of this subcommittee is to review research performance during the REF cycle and to consider what strategic decisions need to be taken to maximise ratings for the REF submission. Faculty representatives will liaise with UoA Coordinators in the drafting of the various sections of the submissions and will be the principal conduits between Faculty and R&I. They will work closely with ADRs (where this is not the same person) on specifically REF issues.
10. The Research and Innovation Committee is the lead Committee for REF strategy and policy through the REF Sub-committee. It has been established by and reports to the Academic Board. It is currently chaired by the PVC Research. The Committee's current membership (2011/12) and its terms of reference are attached as Annex 2. All policy papers are available to staff on the Intranet.

The Research Excellence Framework is coordinated by staff in R&I – the Head of Research Strategy and Development and REF Support Officer. These staff will disseminate the relevant documentation within the institution.

11. Whenever possible when making appointments to the above positions the University will seek to ensure representation of both genders on decision making bodies. The PVC Research must approve exceptions. All postholders / members will be required to undertake training in equality issues. Equality and Diversity will provide an appropriate staff development package which will be supported by documentation provided by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) (<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/>).
12. It is recommended that notes of any substantive meetings should be made available to staff (where requested). Relevant extracts from the REF Steering Group are available on the intranet.

### **The initial selection of staff included in the research output submission (Annex 5)**

13. The following Category A staff are eligible for inclusion in the REF:

- Academic staff with contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater and
- Staff whose primary employment function is to undertake ‘research only’ or ‘teaching and research’ and
- On the payroll on the census date of 31 October 2013.

At Plymouth University this will normally be positions with a staff category of Senior Manager Academic, Academic or Research (including Professors) which are normally returned to HESA with an Activity Code (AC) of 2a “Academic Professional” and an Academic Employment Function (AEF) of either a 2 (for Research) or a 3 (Senior Manager Academic or Academic).

14. There are also Category C staff who are eligible for inclusion. They are individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit on the census date. Their submitted outputs will inform the quality profiles awarded to submissions, but these staff will not contribute to the volume measure for funding purposes.
15. All staff involved in the initial and final selection of staff will have followed two relevant Equality and Diversity (E&D) e-learning packages:
  - a) E&D e-learning - provides an understanding of roles and responsibilities regarding the basics of E&D and equips all staff with the principles and legal aspects of E&D  
**and**
  - b) Recruitment and Selection e-learning - provides understanding of the principles and legal aspects of E&D and best practice in selection **or**

- c) Recruitment and Selection Chair's training – provides an understanding of fair selection and the role of the leader in ensuring the principles of E&D.

Training workshops that have been tailored to the REF processes and are supported by ECU documentation will be held for staff who assess and ratify reductions in required research outputs (see 19 below).

In addition, E&D training that has been tailored to the REF processes will be given to UoA Coordinators, ADRs and Deans and anybody else involved in selection of staff for the REF as well as in the appeal process. This will offer staff the opportunity to practice implementing the Code and further their understanding of equality issues.

16. During 2010/11 all ADRs were asked to undertake an output monitoring exercise in order to gauge possible staff to include in submissions and to identify appropriate UoAs. The groups identified as possible submissions will be subject to review and submission will only be permitted if it accords with the strategic and financial needs of the University as a whole. These considerations will also determine whether groups are divided or combined to make more strategic 'packages'.

It is intended that this exercise will aid Schools and Faculties in identifying mentoring and support needs to ensure optimum publication performance and to increase numbers. In some cases External Review will be used by Faculties to assess the viability of a submission. The outcome of these reviews will shape central decisions on the composition of UoA submissions.

Evaluation of the output census is closely related to general Faculty research planning and is best undertaken by Deans and ADRs operating through their Faculty Research Committees (or the relevant Faculty body). Faculties should regularly report on this area to the PVC Research.

17. Following the initial output monitoring exercise and the provisional identification of submissions ADRs and UoA Coordinators will decide who communicates decisions about REF output inclusion to individual staff so as to ensure appropriate line management and personnel issues are observed. Individual staff members will be provided with the code of practice and informed of their proposed inclusion (or otherwise) in the output submission to the REF. Staff should note that their work may still contribute to the assessment of impact or environment (or both of these).
18. Please note that staff must not be disadvantaged in the REF selection process on any of the following protected grounds (Equality Act 2010 and Part-time Workers Regulations 2000):
- Age
  - Disability (including carers)
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage & civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race

- Religion or belief
- Sex (including breast-feeding and childcare)
- Sexual orientation
- Part-term and fixed term status

19. In order to allow submissions from all excellent researchers, the national REF Team has published guidance on individual staff circumstances, which is summarised below. The REF Panel criteria allow for reduction of required research outputs in relation to:

a) Clearly defined circumstances

- Early career researchers
- Part-time working
- Maternity leave
- Paternity leave
- Adoptive leave
- Secondments
- Career breaks

b) Complex circumstances

- Disability
- Ill-health or injury
- Mental health conditions
- Constraints relating to pregnancy or maternity (in addition to leave period)
- Caring responsibilities
- Gender reassignment

For full details of the above circumstances and other circumstances that may apply, please refer to the '[Panel Criteria and Working Methods](#)' document (p. 9 onwards). Additional advice is available from R&I.

20. Staff who wish to seek a reduction in their research outputs should complete an electronic version of the Staff Disclosure Form (see Annex 7), which will be disseminated with the Code of Practice. The form is concerned with identifying circumstances that may affect the number of outputs that staff are able to submit but does not pre-empt academic judgement on the quality of outputs.

21. In order to maintain confidentiality, staff seeking a reduction in outputs should return the Staff Disclosure Form electronically to HR who have access to relevant records. HR, under the aegis of the Central Equality and Diversity Panel, will consult the Equality Challenge Unit tables about reduction tariffs and make a recommendation to the member of staff and R&I. Staff member and R&I will notify relevant UoA Co-ordinator(s) as staff's UoA allocation may not be finalised at this stage. Where appropriate, staff and UoA Co-ordinators will have an on-going dialogue about UoA allocation. (Information about individual circumstances will be kept confidential, but will be included in the return to the national REF team. See the '[Panel Criteria and Working Methods](#)' document for

details of who will have access to this information externally.) The decisions about the reduction will be collated by R&I and information required to complete the REF return will be disseminated only as necessary. Information about the Early Career Researcher Status will be recorded centrally. The REF Steering Group will receive and ratify the outcome by the end of June 2012.

22. If the grounds of an individual's case are based on equality, advice will be sought from the Equality and Diversity Unit.
23. Complex (including confidential) circumstances, as reflected by the Staff Disclosure Form, will be considered by a central E&D Panel consisting of the Head of Secretariat and Equality, HR representative, Head of Research Strategy and Development and PVC Research. Their recommendation will be forwarded to the relevant member of staff and R&I. Staff member and R&I will notify relevant UoA Co-ordinator(s) in the Faculty who will follow the steps outlined in paragraph 24. The E&D Panel will make a decision on the number of reductions but not on quality of outputs.
24. The ADR, in collaboration with the UoA Coordinator, will assess each individual's profile against the appropriate REF panel criteria statement, taking into account allowed reductions in output (see 19-23 above). When communicating their decision to staff (or other stakeholders) the ADR will place staff in one of the following categories:
  - Category 1 – Clearly on target to make sufficient contribution to the UoA's submission. Inclusion in the REF submission highly probable.
  - Category 2 - Not clearly on target to make sufficient contribution to the UoA's submission. Inclusion in the REF submission is expected to depend on significant additional outputs / achievements in the remainder of the assessment period.
  - Category 3 – Unlikely to be included in outputs but with potential for future REF: Not having made sufficient contribution to the REF 2014 submission but demonstrating potential to contribute to the following REF.
25. The ADR with the UoA Coordinator will provide all academic staff with a general statement of the outcome of the exercise described above. For staff in Category 3 this will generally be the only feedback they receive directly from the ADR and UoA Coordinator. Staff who are placed in Category 2 will be provided with feedback on why they have not be placed in Category 1 and what additional outputs / achievements are required in the remainder of the assessment period.
26. Staff who disagree with their categorisation should do so in writing to the UoA Coordinator setting out the grounds of their case within one month of being notified of the outcome. UoA Coordinators will not be involved in the decision making; they receive the appeals and forward them to the relevant panel for consideration.
27. The cases will be considered by different processes as specified below:
  - a) Disagreements on the basis of equality grounds (where advice will have been previously received from the Equality & Diversity Panel) will be considered by a

Deputy VC and Head of Resourcing and Diversity (or nominees). They will advise on appropriate levels of outputs and inform R&I.

- b) Disagreements on the grounds of scholarly outputs or appropriate UoA will be considered by the appropriate Dean who will inform R&I of the decision.
  - c) The recommendations from the above will be forwarded to the REF Steering Group (serviced by R&I) who will ratify the outcome and inform the staff member.
28. Staff who have made a case on one or more of the equality grounds listed in paragraph 19 to justify a reduced volume of output will be provided with additional feedback from the ADR / UoA Coordinator.

### **Final selection of staff (Annex 6)**

29. Between May 2012 and March 2013 there will be on-going discussions between all staff in categories 1 and 2 and the UoA Coordinator on progress towards targets. Mentoring will be provided where necessary within the relevant faculty.
30. New academic staff who join the University after May 2012 will be given the opportunity to submit details of their research outputs for consideration, as per the original output census conducted in faculties in 2010/11. They will also be invited to submit a Staff Disclosure Form to HR.
31. Staff who wish to seek reduction in research outputs should complete the Staff Disclosure Form (Annex 7). In order to maintain confidentiality, staff should return the Form electronically to HR who have access to relevant records. HR, under the aegis of the Central Equality and Diversity Panel, will consult the Equality Challenge Unit tables about reduction tariffs and make a recommendation to the staff member and R&I. Staff member and R&I will notify relevant UoA Co-ordinator(s). (Information about individual circumstances will be kept confidential, but will be included in the return to the national REF team. See the '[Panel Criteria and Working Methods](#)' document for details of who will have access to this information externally.) The decisions about the reduction will be collated by R&I and information required to complete the REF return will be disseminated only as necessary. Information about the Early Career Researcher Status will be recorded centrally.
32. Complex (including confidential) circumstances, as reflected by the Staff Disclosure Form, will be considered by a central E&D Panel consisting of the Head of Secretariat and Equality, HR representative, Head of Research Strategy and Development and PVC Research. Their recommendation will be forwarded to the relevant staff member and R&I. Staff member and R&I will notify relevant UoA Co-ordinator in the Faculty who will follow the steps outlined in paragraph 33. The E&D Panel will make a decision on the number of reductions but not on quality of outputs.
33. In April 2013 the UoA Coordinator will confirm the names of all staff recommended for inclusion in the submission and also all staff categorised as 1 or 2 who are not recommended for inclusion. Specific justification will need to be provided for excluding

any staff previously given category 1 status. This report will be considered and approved by the ADR and UoA Coordinator and submitted to the PVC Research and the REF Steering Group.

34. Staff who wish to appeal against their categorisation should do so in writing to the UoA Coordinator setting out the grounds of appeal within 5 working days of being notified of the outcome. UoA Coordinators will not be involved in the decision making; they receive the appeals and forward them to the relevant panel for consideration.
35. The cases will be considered by different processes as specified below:
  - a) Disagreements on the basis of equality grounds (where advice will have been previously received from the Equality & Diversity Panel) will be considered by a Deputy VC and Head of Resourcing and Diversity (or nominees). They will advise on appropriate levels of outputs and inform R&I.
  - b) Disagreements on the grounds of scholarly outputs or appropriate UoA will be considered by the appropriate Dean who will inform R&I of the decision.
  - c) The recommendations from the above will be forwarded to the REF Steering Group who will ratify the outcome and inform the staff member.
36. In June 2013 draft REF submissions will be considered by the REF Steering Group. The appropriate Dean(s), ADRs and UoA Coordinator will be invited to attend the meeting reviewing each UoA's submission. The final list of staff to be submitted will be approved at this meeting. The PVC Research will only approve changes to this list after this meeting in exceptional circumstances.
37. The Vice-Chancellor will be consulted at all stages of the process and will have final approval of all proposed submissions.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

38. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process is described below:
  - a) Stage 1: In July 2012 an initial EIA has been conducted on the REF Code of Practice (CoP) by the Equality and Diversity Unit. This has been done to ensure that the REF 2014 does not have a differential impact on particular groups and that developments at the University comply with the Equality Act 2010. The initial EIA has considered the findings of the impact assessment of the RAE 2008 and considered the current potential impact with regards to each protected characteristic in the Equality Act. The findings of the initial EIA, which include the further analyses and consultations required, have informed the CoP and will be reviewed as shown below.
  - b) Stage 2: In autumn 2012, after the initial selection of staff for submission, the Equality and Diversity Unit will produce an EIA of staff who are initially selected in comparison to those who are eligible. (This will also consider the effect of any



disagreements which may occur as outlined in the process in Annex 5.) This systematic analysis will show if the selection policy for the REF may have a differential impact on any of the protected groups for which data is available (ethnicity, gender, disability and age).

- The REF Support Officer and Human Resources will supply Equality and Diversity with the information required for the assessment.
  - The information from the previous RAE will be used to compare data although the findings at that time did not identify any specific barriers to participation.
  - Additionally, consultation will take place with the protected groups via the Equality and Diversity Committee and its consultative Sub-Committees (Disability, Race and Gender) and the LGBT Staff Forum and the findings will feed into the EIA in order to identify any barriers to participation or opportunities to advance equality.
- c) After the analysis of the initial selection of staff, the REF Steering Group will consider whether any adjustments to the final selection procedures are required in order to eliminate discrimination or advance equality. This may involve undertaking EIAs at lower levels, for example if findings indicate an imbalance for a given UoA. Any adjustments will be implemented before the final selection takes place in summer 2013.
- d) Stage 3: After the final submission (November 2013) there will be a further EIA of staff who were selected in comparison to those who were eligible. This will also consider the effect of appeals. The analysis of the final selection of staff will contribute to the review of the effectiveness of the final procedures and will help to address inequalities where possible in future exercises to assess research excellence.
- The REF Support Officer and Human Resources will supply Equality and Diversity with the information required for the assessment.
  - The information from the previous RAE will be used to compare data although the findings at that time did not identify any specific barriers to participation.
  - The results of the stage 2 analysis will be used.
  - Consultation will take place with the protected groups via the Equality and Diversity Committee and its Sub-Committees (Disability, Race and Gender) and the LGBT Staff Forum and any findings will feed into the EIA.
- e) The EIA will be published on the intranet and the extranet after the submission has been made. This will include the outcomes of any actions taken to prevent discrimination or advance equality.

## **Complaints**

39. Complaints should be raised through existing complaint reporting mechanisms.

## **Fixed term and part-time staff**

40. The University has a positive approach to promoting an inclusive culture throughout the REF exercise with regard to all the equality grounds. All staff development and career development opportunities available to full-time staff are also available to equivalent staff working part-time, flexibly and job-sharing. All fixed term and part-time members of academic staff who meet the REF's category A eligibility criteria are encouraged to apply for inclusion in the University's REF submission.

## **Notification to staff**

41. In early March 2012 the draft Code of Practice and Staff Disclosure Form were widely disseminated to UoA Coordinators, ADRs and all eligible staff. This was achieved via the targeted use of established and prominent communication channels consisting of email notification supplemented by an announcement on the front page of the Staff Portal (which is the default computer screen setting of all staff) and the REF intranet pages. This communication also highlighted the availability of a dedicated email address which was set up to prioritise any issues related to the Code, thus maintaining confidentiality and enabling staff to contact a dedicated member of the HR team for advice. Measures were also taken by HR to ensure that the communication was received in hard copy by any absent staff, or those without regular computer access for any reason, for example due to maternity, ill health, secondment or field work.
42. An appropriate communications strategy utilising all internal communications channels will ensure that the revised CoP will be widely communicated to all staff once HEFCE approval has been received. This will be done through the following channels in autumn 2012:
- Officially launched by the Vice-Chancellor in her monthly briefing that is issued to all senior leaders including Deans and Heads of Schools for cascade to their teams within each Faculty / School / Institute / Department.
  - Emailed to all academic staff including Deans, ADRs and UoA Co-ordinators through a 'News Alert', a University-wide system strictly reserved for communicating only the highest impact and most critical 'need to know' information.
  - Taking reasonable steps to ensure that staff absent due to maternity, ill health, secondment, etc. receive a copy. HR will send a letter (hard copy) with the revised CoP to absent staff.
  - Staff Announcement on the front page of the University intranet which is the default screen setting of all staff. For added prominence, this announcement will be 'pinned' as the top news item for a sustained period of time.

- Officially branded flyers / leaflets in communal academic areas / gathering places.
- A high level face to face meeting with UoA Co-ordinators hosted by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor (to be immediately followed by the aforementioned E&D training specifically tailored to the REF).
- Reminder to Faculty / Schools / Institutes via Deans' PAs.
- Publication of the code on the University's external facing website, as well as the intranet, to ensure complete transparency. The Code will be made available in accessible pdf format and in alternative formats on request.

**Relevant equality legislation**

**Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation**

Equality Act 2010

**Part-time Workers**

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

**Relevant University policies**

Equality and Diversity Policy

[www.plymouth.ac.uk/equality](http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/equality)

The Employment of Disabled Staff Policy and Procedures

<http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/perdev/policiesandprocedures>

**Further information**

<http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/equality>

[equality@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:equality@plymouth.ac.uk)

## **Research and Innovation Committee membership 2011/12**

### **Terms of Reference and Composition for Committee (2011-2012)**

These terms of reference have been produced following discussion within the existing Research and Innovation Committee. They have been phrased in terms of key statements in the University's Research and Innovation Strategy, with appropriate and consistent amplification. Issues specific to knowledge transfer activities have not been included in these Terms of Reference as they will be carried forward through other mechanisms.

There will be four meetings in each academic year (with an option for additional *ad hoc* meetings if required). The minutes of the Committee should be reported to the Academic Board, and to SMT, rather than sending an Annual Report as at present.

### **Terms of Reference**

The Committee is responsible to the Academic Board for the governance and strategic enhancement of research within the University, in accordance with the Research and Innovation Strategy. It is to promote the activities of staff as innovators and entrepreneurs in a culture of discovery. Its specific objectives are:

- To advance the achievement of world-leading, international excellence in research through scholarly peer publication and through dissemination to the mass media and the local and national community.
- To encourage an enterprise-based approach in research through identifying and fostering the means by which the University can respond to emerging research opportunities.
- To encourage and facilitate the identification of opportunities to secure income and support for research through the pursuit of competitive funding, with the aim of increasing research income.
- To promote research with high impact and engagement among diverse communities of users, beneficiaries, and audiences, including the indirect contribution of research through reputation building and synergies with teaching.
- To ensure an open, friendly, caring and inclusive research community and culture which promotes equality and values diversity.
- To sustain effective support for post-doctoral and early career researchers through identifying and promoting good practice in Faculties, Schools, Research Institutes, and Research Centres.
- To work with the Graduate Committee to foster and develop a vibrant and growing community of research students.

In relation to the resource responsibilities of CEG/SLT, the Committee shall:

- Monitor and review research performance across the University and so to advise on the allocation of funds to support the research strategy, including the physical infrastructure requirements necessary to support excellent research.
- Guide the establishment and development of University Research Centres and Research Institutes, reviewing their performance against agreed targets.

The Committee will oversee preparations for submissions to HEFCE's Research Excellence Framework through:

- Promoting an understanding of REF requirements in relation to Outputs, Environment, and Impact.
- Establishing a Research Excellence Framework Sub-Committee to advise on the preparation of REF submissions.
- Establishing and overseeing a Technical Implementation Group for the electronic repository and publication management information systems.

### **Composition of Membership**

The Committee is to include a mixture of delegated representatives of those involved in research management and elected representatives of those active in high quality research. The aim has been a balanced membership that is small enough to act as an effective 'working' committee. It is recommended that the Committee has the power to co-opt up to three additional members to ensure that the full range of research paradigms and activities are represented.

#### **Ex Officio Members**

PVC Research (Chair)  
Head of Graduate School  
Director of R & I  
Director of Estates and Facilities Management  
Director of Information and Learning Services

Chair of Faculty Research Committee, Associate Dean for Research or equivalent:

Faculty of Science & Technology

Chair of Faculty Research Committee, Associate Dean for Research or equivalent:

Plymouth Business School

Chair of Faculty Research Committee, Associate Dean for Research or equivalent:

Faculty of Health, Education and Society

Chair of Faculty Research Committee, Associate Dean for Research or equivalent:

Faculty of Arts

Chair of Faculty Research Committee, Associate Dean for Research or equivalent:

Peninsula College of Medicine & Dentistry (Plymouth staff)

Director of the Institute of Health and Community (IHC)

Director of the Marine Institute (MI)

Director of the Pedagogic Research Institute and Observatory

Director of the Sustainability Institute

Members of the REF Steering Group (who are not already members of the Committee)

## Elected Members

Five Professors (one from each Faculty)

Two Early Career Researchers elected by and from the Early Career Researchers' Forum

Two full-time Post-Graduate Research Students.

Two nominees of the Academic Board

## In attendance

Head of Research Strategy and Development (Committee Secretary)

Representative of the Project Finance Team nominated by the Director of Research and Innovation

Committee Administrator

## Membership 2011/2012

Position	Status	Name
PVC Research (Chair)	Ex Officio	Professor John Scott
Head of Graduate School	Ex Officio	Professor Mick Fuller
PVC Regional Enterprise	Ex Officio	Professor Julian Beer
Director of R&I or nominee	Ex Officio	Dr Rebekah Southern
Director of Estates and Learning Facilities	Ex Officio	Chris Bunce
Director of Information and Learning Services	Ex Officio	Geoff Bouch
Chair of Faculty Research Committee	Faculty representative – Science and Technology	Professor Neil James
Chair of Faculty Research Committee	Faculty representative Business	Professor Phil Megicks
Chair of Faculty Research Committee	Faculty representative – Health, Education and Society	Professor Graham Sewell
Chair of Faculty Research Committee	Faculty representative - Arts	Professor Dafydd Moore
Chair of Faculty Research Committee	Faculty representative – Peninsula College of Medicine & Dentistry	Professor Angela Shore <i>whom failing Professor Noel Morgan</i>
Director of the Institute of Health and Community (IHC)		Professor Gayle Letherby
Director of the Marine Institute (MI)		Professor Martin Attrill

Director of the Pedagogic Research Institute and Observatory (PedRIO)		Professor Pauline Kneale
Director of the Sustainability Institute (SI)		Professor David Wheeler
REF Steering Group member		Professor Linda la Velle
REF Steering Group member		Professor Roberta Mock
REF Steering Group member		Professor Simon Handley
Six Professors (one from each Faculty)	Science and Technology	Professor Angelo Cangelosi
	Business	Professor Kerry E Howell
	Health Education and Society	Professor Jocey Quinn
	Arts	Professor Michael Punt
	Peninsula College of Medicine & Dentistry	Professor Noel Morgan
Two full-time postgraduate students		Amit Motwani (School of Marine Science and Engineering) Vacancy
Two Post-Doctoral or Early Career Researchers		Dr Tim Daley Dr Rebecca Barnes
Two members nominated by Academic Board		Professor Georgy Shapiro Vacancy

In attendance:

Committee Secretary		Dr Bridget Sealey
Representative of the Project Finance Team		Linda Worsfold
Committee Administrator		Emma Hellingsworth



**REF Steering Group membership 2011/12**

<b>Name or Position</b>	<b>Status</b>
Professor John Scott (Chair)	Ex Officio
Professor Simon Handley	Faculty representative - Science & Technology
Professor Kerry E Howell	Faculty representative - Business
Professor Linda la Velle	Faculty representative – Education, Health and Society
Professor Roberta Mock	Faculty representative – Arts
Professor Noel Morgan	Faculty representative – PCMD
Dr Bridget Sealey (Secretary) / Ewa Thompson (maternity cover)	Head of Research Strategy and Development / RSD Project Manager

**Terms of Reference**

The aim of the REF sub-committee will be to review research performance during the REF cycle and to consider what strategic decisions need to be taken to maximise ratings for the REF 2012 submission. The sub-committee will engage with Faculties, Schools, Centres and other constituencies to coordinate guidance, advice and resource to oversee the UoA preparations made by academic units and agree draft submissions, star targets and other activities with UoA coordinators. Members of the sub-committee are research active or have experience of the research assessment process and have been nominated by Faculties to contribute to the following work programme.

**Generic Objectives:**

- To prepare the University's submission to the Funding Council consultation exercise on the REF.
- To ensure that the timetable for the introduction of REF is disseminated among all academic staff so that data collection and analysis needs can be anticipated and appropriate support offered.
- To ensure that all academic units begin to prepare draft submissions as soon as the shape of the REF is finally announced and to offer advice on the redrafting and refinement of these submissions.
- To identify the internal research management capabilities and key gaps and risks for the University's performance under the new framework and also to identify areas of central support required by academic units.

## **Specific Objectives**

- To review and act upon the information available from REF consultations, including the outcomes from bibliometrics and impact REF pilot investigations.
- To organise awareness events and meetings to advise on the shape of REF and to discuss internal planning and information needs with Faculties, Schools and Research Centres.
- To liaise with the Working Party responsible for the information management systems appropriate for REF (including the University's electronic repository (DSpace) and publication management system (Symplectic).
- To ensure UoA Coordinators (appointments coordinated through the Research Committee), Faculties, Schools, and Research Centres, adopt appropriate strategies for publication and impact, decided with reference to the published criteria for each UoA.
- To identify statistics and other metrics that may be useful for Faculties, Schools, and Research Centres to monitor the situation of the research environments established in UoAs (especially for research outputs for staff, PGRs numbers and completions, grant applications and awards, impact measures etc.).
- To consider establishing an intranet facility (such as regular News Alerts or longer newsletters) to communicate developments in the REF, to maintain awareness of the importance of REF, and to give examples of good practice

## **Membership**

To include research active members or staff with extensive experience of the RAE/REF environment comprising: the Chair (PVC Research); senior management from R and E; and academics representing each of the Faculties. Members will be expected to take an active role in the sub-committee; assisting with the roll out of projects and supporting REF dialogues within (and outside) the University.

## **Meeting Schedule**

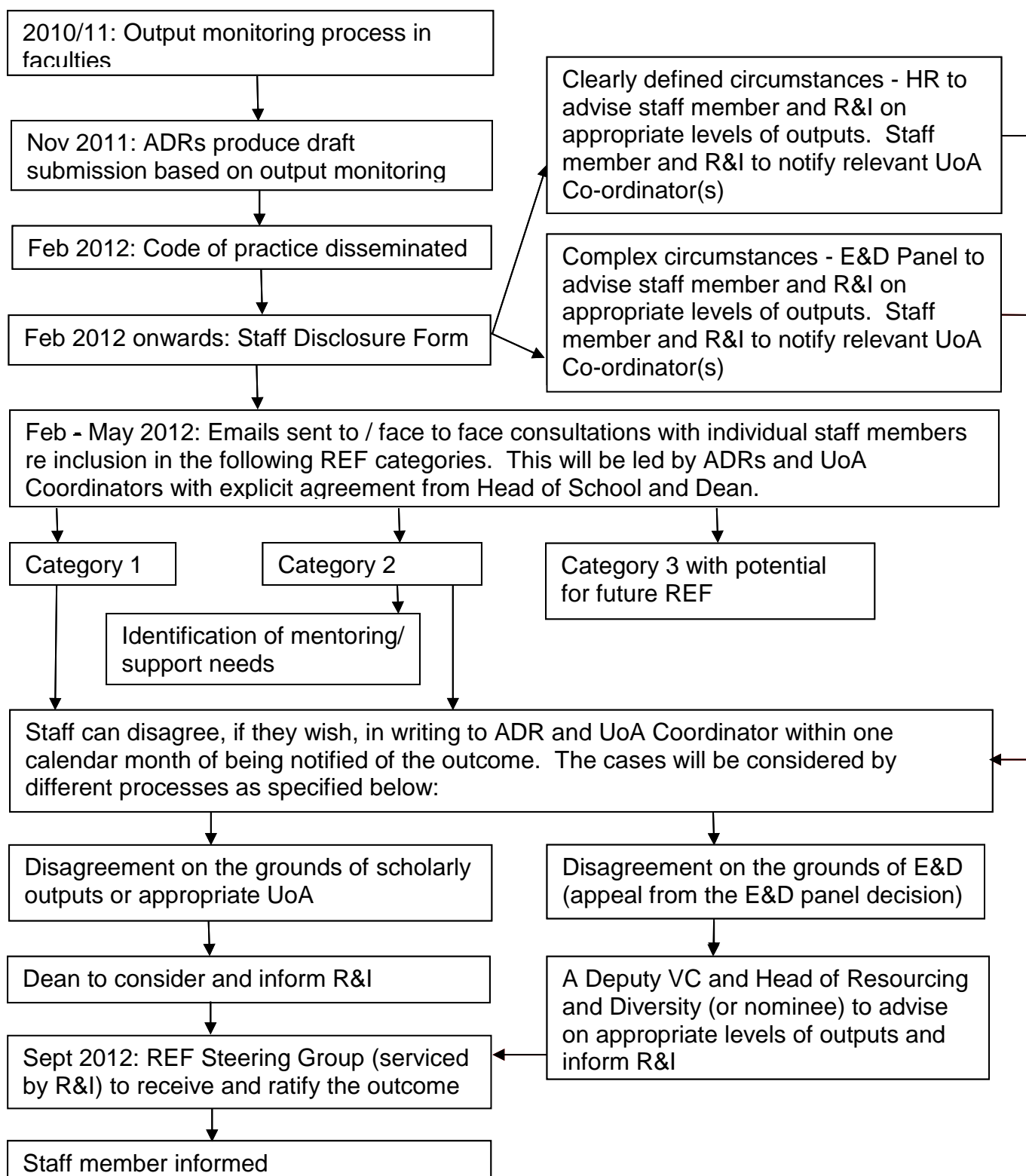
Quarterly meetings to be held in the academic year with most work being undertaken in smaller project groups and through one-to-one meetings with UoA Coordinators. As REF approaches these will increase and membership will need to be flexible to the changing needs of the process (e.g. including research, business and impact editors to review submissions at the end of the process).

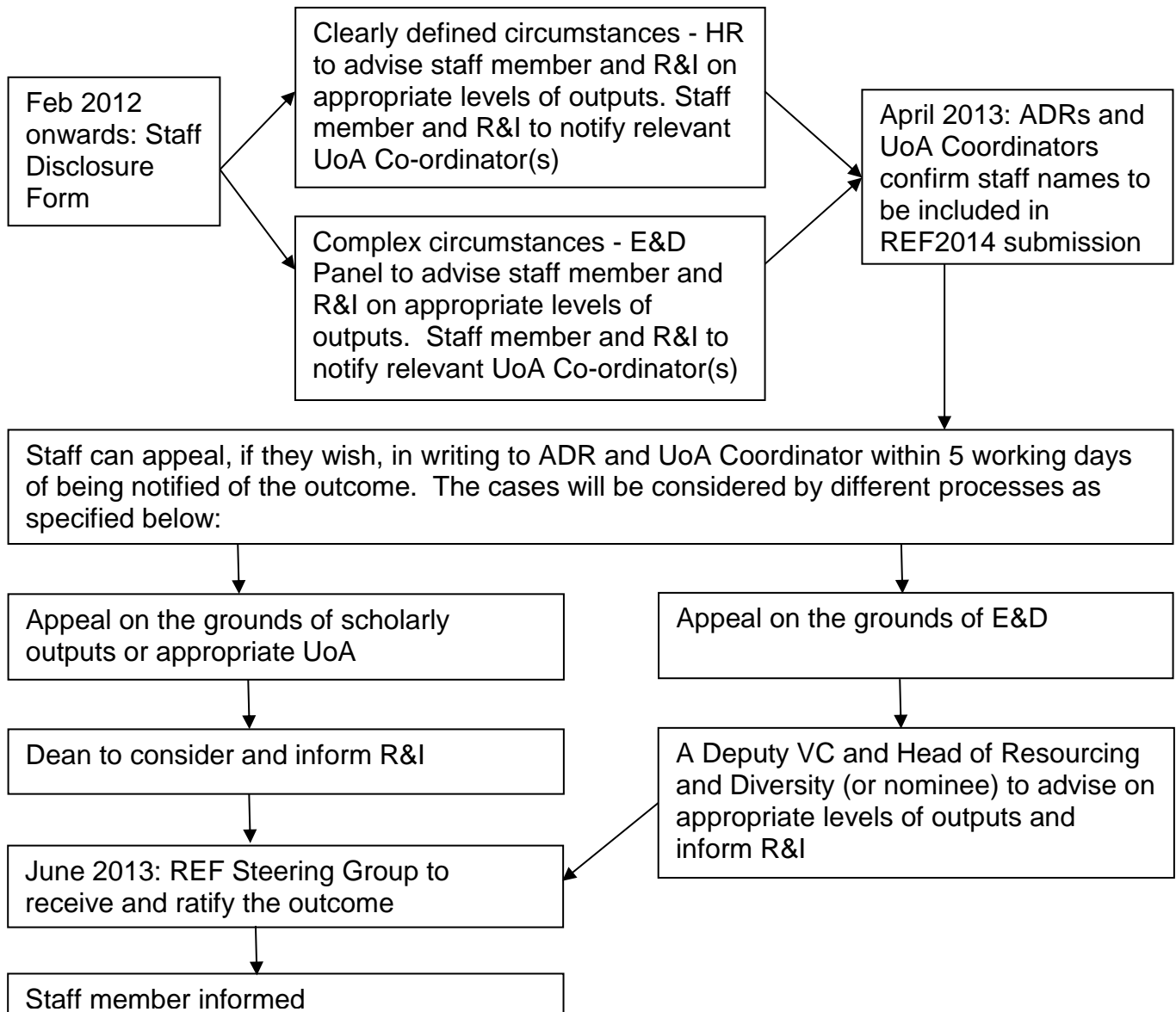
Minutes and reports from the meetings to be provided to the Research and Innovation Committee.

List of UoA Coordinators (as of November 2013)

UoA	UoA name	Leading	Assisting
1	Clinical Medicine	Janusz Jankowski	
3	Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy	Graham Sewell	Simon Jackson, Ruth Endacott, Jon Marsden and David Moles
4	Psychology	Tim Perfect	
6	Agriculture	Mick Fuller	
7	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences	Paul Worsfold	
10	Applied Maths	Kurt Langfeld	
11	Computer Science	Angelo Cangelosi	
13	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	Mohammed Zaki Ahmed	
15	General Engineering	Deborah Greaves	Huirong Le
16	Architecture, Built Environment and Planning	Daniel Maudlin	
17	Geography, Environment Studies and Archaeology	Neil Roberts	Geoff Wilson
19	Business and Management	Kerry E Howell	
22	Social Work and Social Policy	Gayle Letherby	Harry Blagg
25	Education	Linda la Velle	
29	English Language and Literature	Anthony Caleshu	
30	History	James Daybell	
34	Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory	Alan Schechner	
35	Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts	Roberta Mock	

### Initial selection of staff for inclusion in the research outputs section of the REF



**Final selection of staff for inclusion in the Research Excellence Framework**

**Staff Disclosure Form**

**Research Excellence Framework 2014  
Staff Disclosure Form**

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

From: John Scott (PVC Research) and Lynn Tincler (Head of HR Operations)

Subject: REF 2014 - Selection of outputs and consideration of individual staff circumstances

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Plymouth 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 University's Code of Practice which can be found at <http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ref>.

To be eligible for submission as a Category A, academic staff should have a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, their primary employment function should be to undertake 'research only' or 'research and teaching' and they should be on the payroll on the census date of 31/10/13. Please note that Research Assistants are not normally eligible.

To ensure that REF processes are fair, the 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 Plymouth University's monitoring of staff selection procedures at the institutional level.

**Individual circumstances**

In determining whether eligible staff may be submitted to the REF with fewer than four research outputs, the University, under the aegis of the Central Equality and Diversity Panel, will take the following circumstances 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 (applies to specific units of assessment within Panel A)
- 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.

In determining the number of outputs staff are required to submit, the institution will observe the definitions of individual staff circumstances provided in the published REF 'Panel criteria and working methods' (January 2012) available at [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01\\_12/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2012/01_12/) under 'Publications'.

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

You are encouraged to complete the form below if you are eligible for REF submission and you have circumstances that you wish to be considered. If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, you will be contacted by a member of the Human Resources (HR) team.

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

Within the institutions, the information that you provide will be seen by the Central Equality and Diversity Panel and relevant HR staff. Information about Early Career Researcher status will be stored in a HR database. Information about individual circumstances will be kept confidential but the decisions about the reduction will be collated by Research and Innovation (R&I) and shared with your Associate Deans (Research) and UoA Coordinators. Information required to complete the REF return will be disseminated only as necessary.

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/](http://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. Where joint submissions are made it may be necessary to share the information provided with another institution.

#### **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 at <http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ref>.



## INDIVIDUAL STAFF CIRCUMSTANCES DISCLOSURE FORM

Please email this form to [REFHRStaffDisclosureForm@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:REFHRStaffDisclosureForm@plymouth.ac.uk)

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Faculty</b>	
<b>School</b>	
<b>Unit of Assessment (if known)</b>	

### Section one

Please select if this applies to you (click on box):

I have individual circumstances that I wish to be taken into consideration in relation to my eligibility for the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

### Section two

Please select one of the following (click on box):

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 Plymouth 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:

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

Circumstance	Information required
<b>Early career researcher<sup>2</sup></b> – did you undertake independent research, in Plymouth or elsewhere, leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work on or after 1 August 2009, at 0.2 FTE or above?	Please enter 'YES' if the circumstance applies  Date on which you became an early career researcher:  Institution name where you first met the criteria:
Any further information (if applicable)	
<b>Junior clinical academic</b> staff who have not gained Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 October 2013 [ <i>applies to specific units of assessment within Panel A</i> ]	Please enter 'YES' if the circumstance applies
Information	
<b>Part time employee</b>	FTE and duration in months
Information	
<b>Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector</b>	Dates and duration in months
Information	
<b>Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave</b> (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	

<sup>2</sup> For a full definition of early career researcher, see paragraphs 85-86 in 'Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions', available at: [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02\\_11](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02_11)

<b>Disability</b> (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	
<b>Mental health condition</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
<b>Ill health or injury</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
<b>Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, paternity, adoption or childcare <u>in addition to</u> the period of maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave taken</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
<b>Other caring responsibilities</b> (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	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
Information	
<b>Other exceptional and relevant reasons</b> , 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 all that apply (click on box):*

- 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 relevant staff as specified in this form.
  
- 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. I understand that where permission is not provided Plymouth University will be limited in the action it can take.

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
(Staff member)

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Faculty</b>	
<b>School</b>	
<b>Unit of Assessment (if known)</b>	

**For official use only**

Following consideration of the personal circumstances, HR and R&I, under the aegis of the Central Equality and Diversity Panel:

- Will progress the staff member's consideration for 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:  
[insert relevant information]
- 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 disagree with the decision of the Central Equality and Diversity Panel they will need to do so by April 2013 and details of the appeals process can be found in the Final Selection of Staff section of the Code of Practice at <http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ref>.

Print HR representative's name: ..... Date: .....

Print R&I representative's name: ..... Date: .....