



Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014: Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff

Approved by Academic Board 14 February 2012
Revised 22 October 2012

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Background

Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have a legislative duty to ensure that REF 2014 procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against individuals because of 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 birth¹.

As stated in *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions (REF 02.2011)*, this code demonstrates fairness to all members of staff by addressing the principles of **transparency, consistency, accountability, inclusivity**.

The code covers the following sections:

1. Equality and Diversity statement
2. Principles
3. Criteria for selection to take into account equal opportunities issues
4. Staff and Committees
5. Equality and Diversity training
6. Staff circumstances
7. Feedback
8. Appeals
9. Action plan leading up to REF 2014 submissions

1. Equality and Diversity Statement

The Vice Chancellor will be required to confirm that, in the preparation of the REF 2014 submission and the selection of staff for inclusion, the University has developed, adopted and documented an internal Code of Practice in which equality of opportunity and meeting our legal equality and diversity obligations are integral.

The University has agreed the following equality and diversity statement within the code:

'The University for the Creative Arts is committed to equality of opportunity and fulfilment of potential for all its staff (and students). It will ensure that in preparing submissions and selecting staff for REF 2014 equality and diversity issues will be fully taken into account. In implementing the Code of Practice the University will seek to ensure that staff are not treated unfairly on the grounds of age, disability (including carers of disabled people), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief including non-belief, sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave), sexual orientation, part-time and fixed-term employment status.'

¹ REF 2014 Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions.

2. Principles

All processes for the selection of staff for inclusion in the REF 2014 submissions will be based on the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity. The REF 2014 Code of Practice on the Submission of Staff will be approved by the Academic Board and will be published on the intranet with copies readily available to all staff. Emails will be sent to all staff in February 2012 and in December 2012, referring to the REF 2014 Code of Practice and explaining the stages of the selection and submission processes taking place within the institution. In December 2012, hard copies of the letter and the Code of Practice will also be posted to all academic staff including those on fixed-term, part-time and sessional contracts to their home addresses, including those absent from work. The Code of Practice will be presented and discussed during the REF 2014 road shows, which the Research Office runs bi-annually on each of the five campuses. The code will be published on the external web-site in due course.

All staff involved in the internal peer review process (for example the REF Task Group and the Forum for Professors and Readers) will be briefed on their responsibilities regarding equality and diversity and the respective impact assessment.

3. Criteria for selection to take into account equal opportunities issues

In line with existing HR policy, when considering staff for inclusion in REF 2014, the University for the Creative Arts will comply with the Equality Act 2010. The University will consider excellence in research as part of its strategy for submission², including those researchers, whose ability to produce four outputs or work productively throughout the assessment period had been constrained for the following reasons:

- i. Age
- ii. Disability (including carers of disabled people)
- iii. Gender reassignment
- iv. Marriage and civil partnership
- v. Pregnancy and maternity
- vi. Race
- vii. Religion and belief including non-belief
- viii. Sex (including breastfeeding and additional paternity and adoption leave)
- ix. Sexual orientation
- x. Part-time and fixed-term employment status

In order to encourage staff to disclose their individual circumstances, all researchers potentially eligible for selection to REF 2014 will be required to complete a respective form about their individual circumstances. This form will be based on the data requirements

² In line with the strategy for REF 2014 submission, UCA will be looking at submitting potential 3* and 4* research outputs within the Unit of Assessment for Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory (UoA 34); therefore 'Excellence' in this context is defined as 'internationally excellent' and 'world leading' based on the definition in the REF 'Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions' (July 2011).

outlined in REF1b (REF 02.2011). The completed forms will be available to the Equality and Diversity Coordinator, who will be responsible for monitoring the data and making recommendations to the UCA Equality and Diversity Committee as necessary. The UCA Equality and Diversity Coordinator will ensure that the appropriate degree of confidentiality is applied when dealing with the information disclosed by the staff members.

At each selection stage, the UCA Equality and Diversity Coordinator will monitor the process for identifying individuals whose circumstances might need special consideration, and evidence decisions and actions.

In undertaking this task the UCA Equality and Diversity Coordinator will evaluate the equality profile of the submission against the overall equality profile for the University to determine whether there is any imbalance in terms of disability, gender, and ethnicity. The UCA Equality and Diversity Committee's role in this process will be to ensure that the University is able to justify why some groups/individuals have not been included and why there may be imbalances within the final submission.

4. Staff and Committees

The University Committees and sub-groups which have a designated REF 2014 responsibility are as follows:

- a) Research and Enterprise Committee (R+EC)
- b) REF 2014 Task Group
- c) Forum for Professors and Readers
- d) External Assessors
- e) Equality and Diversity Committee

a) Research and Enterprise Committee

The Research and Enterprise Committee is responsible, on behalf of the Academic Board, for: receiving and approving the strategy for REF 2014, decision making with regards to submitting outputs and overseeing the preparatory process leading to submission. It has also responsibility for approving full membership and associate membership of the Research Institute. The Research Institute brings together all research active staff and provides dedicated research support.

b) REF 2014 Task Group

The purpose of UCA REF 2014 Task Group is to receive and consider in full the criteria and working methods for REF 2014 and identify their strategic implications for the UCA submission including any equality and ethical issues. The REF 2014 Task Group will oversee the internal audit of staff research outputs for the period 2008–2013 and the respective selection of staff included in the submission. The REF 2014 Task Group will direct the identification and preparation of the impact statement and impact case studies and prepare the UCA research environment narrative. It will provide individual feedback to staff in respect of the decisions made regarding the institutional REF2014 submission. The group will also be responsible for selecting staff to the REF submission based on the data generated from the Individual Circumstances Disclosure forms.

c) Forum for Professors and Readers

The Purpose of the Forum for Professors and Readers is to:

- i. Evaluate outputs of individual researchers based on the assessment criteria and quality profiles outlined in the REF 02.2011 publication and subsequent publications on panel criteria and working methods.
- ii. Report decisions to REF 2014 Task Group
- iii. Prepare individual feedback to staff in respect to the decisions made regarding research output submissions

d) External Assessors

The purpose of the External Assessors is to evaluate and rate outputs produced by UCA research active staff between 2008–2013, and to provide strategic advice to the REF Task Group and Research and Enterprise Committee with regards to the institutional submission to REF 2014.

e) Equality and Diversity Committee

The Equality and Diversity Committee has overarching responsibility and oversight of equality and diversity issues for the University. The Committee will be responsible for ensuring staff are briefed on equality and diversity issues and for monitoring the equality profiling of staff within the draft REF 2014 submission against the annual equality profiling for all groups of staff.

f) Staff

In addition to the above, senior management and individual staff responsibilities can be summarised as follows:

- i. The Director of Research and Enterprise will be responsible for the development and implementation of institutional processes for the preparation of the REF 2014 submission with the support of the Research Office, the Executive Deans and the Heads of School or their nominees with responsibility for Research and Enterprise on behalf of the Research and Enterprise Committee. Included within this responsibility are the evaluation and compilation of staff research outputs, provision of data of the research environment and evidencing the impact within the institution. The Director of Research and Enterprise chairs the Research and Enterprise Committee and the REF Task Group.
- ii. Each member of academic staff has an individual responsibility to maintain an up-to-date record of their research activities and to make available evidence of research outcomes and their impact as part of the evaluation process and to notify the University of individual circumstances that may have had an impact on producing four research outputs or working productively between 2008–2013.
- iii. The Equality and Diversity Coordinator will be responsible for the evaluation process of the REF 2014 staff equality profile.
- iv. The Equality and Diversity Coordinator will be responsible for the appeals process.
- v. The university's responsibility for the authorisation of the REF 2014 submission rests with the Vice Chancellor.

5. Equality and Diversity Training

In March 2012, staff responsible for the development of the submission will be required to complete an online module in Equality and Diversity, which will cover the Equality Act 2010.

In November 2012, all staff with responsibility for the selection process for the UCA REF2014 submission will undergo equality and diversity training tailored towards the REF 2014 processes. The trainer will use the following materials as guidance when delivering the training:

- ECU Handbook for Trainers
- REF: Equality and diversity training pack available at ECU website www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF
- Institution's REF 2014 Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff
- Equality Act 2010: Implications for higher education institutions
- REF Assessment framework and guidance on submissions (REF 02.2011)
- REF Panel criteria and working methods

The Research Office bi-annual campus road shows for the academic year 2012–13 will have a specific focus on raising REF Equality and Diversity awareness using the REF: Equality and Diversity Training pack available at the ECU website www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/REF

6. Staff Circumstances

In July 2012 the Human Resources department will send a letter with an accompanying Staff Disclosure Form to all academic staff including those on fixed-term, part-time and sessional contracts and those absent from work, electronically and by post to their home addresses. The letter will invite staff to submit their personal circumstances which may have prevented them from producing fewer than four outputs within the REF assessment period. The letter as well as the form will be adapted from the template offered by ECU.

The data generated from the forms will be used to identify which staff with fewer than four outputs are eligible for submission. Summary level data collected may also inform the University for the Creative Arts monitoring of staff selection procedures at institutional level.

In determining whether eligible staff may be submitted to the REF 2014 with fewer than four research outputs, the University for the Creative Arts and REF 2014 Task Group will take into consideration clearly defined and more complex circumstances as detailed in the REF Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions. 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 www.ref.ac.uk under 'Publications'.

Data protection and confidentiality

Within the institution, the information provided by staff members will be seen by the Equality and Diversity Coordinator, the Research and Enterprise Manager for Staff Research, the Director of Research and Enterprise and the Assistant Director of Human Resources. Persons handling individual staff circumstances will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 when handling personal data.

If members of staff disclose their personal circumstances, their permission will be sought before the information is passed on or stored. Staff cannot be compelled to provide information about their circumstances or to give permission for it to be stored or passed on.

7. Feedback

In line with the strategy for REF 2014 submission, UCA will be looking at submitting research outputs that have the potential of achieving 3* (internationally significant) and 4* (world-leading) quality rating in terms of their respective originality, significance and rigour.

By 30 June 2012, all existing members of staff with research and scholarly activity in their contracts, including staff absent from work, will have received a letter providing information regarding the University's strategy for its REF 2014 submission in relation to their individual research outputs. Researchers may request a detailed individual feedback in respect of the decisions made with regards to the submission of their research.

8. Appeals

All academic staff including those on fixed-term, part-time and sessional contracts and those absent from work will receive notification regarding possible submission of their research outputs. The notifications will be sent electronically and by post to their home addresses. Staff have the right to appeal the decision within one month from receiving the respective notification. The appeal will be considered within two months from being received by the Appeals Panel, and in any case before the final submission is made.

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:

- i. 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
- ii. work pattern/absence that has not been fully taken into account.

However, staff should note that managerial decisions on which staff to submit on academic grounds are at the discretion of the University. Staff may wish to refer to the REF2014 document 'Guidance on Submissions' REF 02.2011 published in July 2011: www.hefce.ac.uk/ref

Therefore appeals may NOT be considered if they are concerned with the:

- i. validity or standing of the internal peer review process and judgements concerning individual staff research outputs and/or submissions; and/or
- ii. University strategy for submission in respect of the inclusion/exclusion of individual staff research outputs.

For any other issues, staff should refer to the existing 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.

Appeals which meet the criteria above will be heard by a REF 2014 Appeals Panel as a joint sub-group of the Research and Enterprise Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee. REF 2014 Appeals Panel will be chaired by the Equality and Diversity Coordinator and will comprise one member each of the Research and Enterprise Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee as well as an independent member of staff to observe.

The purpose of the REF 2014 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)

The Panel will also refer to the criteria and processes established by the REF team in accordance with document REF 02.2011 and subsequent publications on criteria and working methods.

In all cases, the decision of the Panel will be final.

9. REF Action Plan timetable

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| Autumn 2011 – establish REF 2014 Working Group |
| 5 October 2011 - institutional response to REF 2014 draft main panel criteria and working methods |
| Early October 2011 – start of internal audit of research outputs |
| December 2011 – prepare and approve Code of Practice on REF |
| February 2012 – communication to academic staff to describe the REF 2014 process including information concerning the disclosure of individual staff circumstances |
| February 2012 – Academic Board to approve Code of Practice |
| March 2012 – Online Equality and Diversity training module for all staff with responsibility for the UCA REF2014 submission |
| End of May 2012 – completed external verification of research outputs |
| End of May/June 2012 – identify impact case studies |
| June 2012 – letter to all academic staff explaining the process |
| Spring – Summer 2012 – refining output statements |
| Autumn 2012 – reply to HEFCE survey of submission intentions |
| October 2012 – write up impact case studies and identify indicators and evidence |
| November 2012 – Equality and Diversity training for all staff with responsibility for the UCA REF 2014 submission |
| December 2012 – external audit of research submission (mock REF) |
| July 2013 – compile draft submission/publish equality profile |
| September / October 2013 – submission approved by R+EC and Academic Board |
| November 29 th 2013 – submission to HEFCE |

Appendices

Appendix A: Terms of Reference of the committees and working groups involved in REF 2014 submission process

a) Research and Enterprise Committee

- 1 The Research & Enterprise Committee is responsible, on behalf of Academic Board, for:
 - i) developing, advising and communicating policy and strategy in support of research and knowledge transfer.
 - ii) considering and responding to developments and consultations undertaken by external agencies.
 - iii) promoting initiatives and activities to further a sustainable research and knowledge exchange culture, including collaborative research with industry and the commercial exploitation of intellectual property.
 - iv) monitoring and evaluating all research and knowledge transfer activities and developments across the University.
 - v) overseeing the University's Research Degrees provision.
 - vi) advising on internal and external funding of research and knowledge exchange related matters and overseeing the process and criteria for selective distribution of grant income.
 - vii) disseminating appropriate information about research and knowledge exchange to staff.

- 2 The Committee may establish and disestablish sub-committees to assist its work.

Constitution

- 3 The Constitution of Research & Enterprise Committee is as follows:

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| ▪ Director of Research & Enterprise | Chair | Ex officio |
| ▪ Asst. Director of Research + Enterprise - Enterprise | Deputy Chair | Ex officio |
| ▪ 2 Executive Deans | | Ex officio |
| ▪ 7 Heads of School or nominee | | Ex officio |
| ▪ Director Library & Student Services or nominee | | Ex officio |
| ▪ 1 academic member of staff nominated by each Executive Dean in consultation with the Chair | | Nominated |
| ▪ 1 member of staff from the Research Office | | Nominated |
| ▪ Up to 2 - co-opted members nominated by the Chair and agreed by the Committee | | |
| Staff Research Manager or nominee | | Secretary |

- 4 Normally the member nominated by the Head of School will be the Professor or Reader with primary responsibility for School research culture.

b) REF 2014 Task Group

Reporting

This Group reports to the Research and Enterprise Committee.

The purpose of the UCA REF2014 Task Group is to:

- i) Receive and consider in full the criteria and working methods for REF2014 and identify their strategic implications for the UCA submission including any equality and ethical issues.
- ii) Advise the Research and Enterprise Committee on strategic decisions in relation to point i.
- iii) Oversee the internal audit of staff research outputs for 2008 – 2013.
- iv) Identify and prepare the impact statement and impact case studies.
- v) Assess and describe the UCA research environment.
- vi) Report their decisions to the Research and Enterprise Committee
- vii) Ensure that all decisions made in relation to submissions for the UCA REF2014 are consistent with the UCA Research and Enterprise Strategy and the institution's Strategic Plan.
- viii) Maintain effective communication with staff in the Research Institute regarding the requirements, strategic decisions and process for REF2014.
- ix) Prepare the REF2014 submission

Constitution

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| ▪ Director Research and Enterprise | Chair | Ex Officio |
| ▪ Assistant Director Research and Enterprise | | Ex Officio |
| ▪ Research and Enterprise Manager (Staff Research) | | Ex Officio |
| ▪ 7 Academic members of staff with responsibility for Research and Enterprise nominated by their Heads of School | | Ex Officio |
| ▪ Director of Library and Student Services | | Ex Officio |
| ▪ Planning and Development Manager, VADS | | Ex Officio |
| ▪ 4 Professors | | Ex Officio |
| ▪ co-opted member as required and identified by the group | | Ex Officio |

c) Equality and Diversity Committee

The Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for:

1. Promotion of equality and diversity
 - i) Acting as a forum in which significant equality and diversity opportunities (age, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or any other relevant distinction), implications and issues are discussed.
 - ii) Promoting awareness of equality and diversity opportunities and practices across the whole University and disseminating information regarding the Equality and Diversity Policy and related issues.
 - iii) Promoting opportunities and mechanisms which will enable all constituencies within the University to voice their views and concerns, regarding issues relating to equality and diversity opportunities.
 - iv) Ensuring that all members of the University receive appropriate training or instruction in equality and diversity issues and that new staff receive induction training in the promotion of good relations and elimination of all forms of discrimination.
 - v) Monitoring changes in relevant legislation to ensure compliance and the promotion of best practice within the University..
2. Monitoring, evaluation and review.
 - vi) Reviewing and making recommendations to the Leadership Team, using appropriate benchmarking, on all current and draft University policies and procedures to ensure equality of opportunity across the whole range of University activities.
 - vii) Monitoring progress towards reaching equality and diversity targets within the University and against the Race Equality Action Plan.
 - viii) Reviewing termly reports on the number, type and outcomes of complaints of discrimination and/or harassment made by members of staff and students.
 - ix) Considering annual monitoring reports from Academic Board and Human Resources in respect of students and staff respectively and providing the Leadership Team with an annual overview report on equality and diversity for submission to the Board of Governors.
3. Advice and consultation
 - x) Providing advice on equality and diversity opportunity issues as and when required, and investigating all equality and diversity opportunity issues that are brought to the Committee's attention.
 - xi) Ensuring that appropriate consultation on equality and diversity issues is conducted with managers, staff and students within the University and with the wider community.

Constitution

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| ▪ Deputy Vice-Chancellor | Chair | Ex officio |
| ▪ Director of Human Resources | Deputy Chair | Ex officio |
| ▪ Independent Member of the Board of Governors | | Ex officio |
| ▪ Director of Marketing & Communications | | Ex officio |
| ▪ Head of Student Administration | | Ex officio |

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| ▪ Director of Library and Student Services | Ex officio |
| ▪ University Secretary/Clerk to Governors | Ex officio |
| ▪ Heads of School, 1 from each Faculty nominated by the Executive Deans | Nominated |
| ▪ 5 members of University Staff appointed by the Chair | Appointed |
| ▪ 1 local UCU representative | Nominated |
| ▪ 1 local UNISON representative | Nominated |
| ▪ Chief Executive of the Students' Union | Ex officio |
| ▪ 1 representative of the Students' Union | Nominated |

Assistant Director of Human Resources

Secretary

d) Forum for Professors and Readers

The Purpose of the UCA Forum for Professors and Readers is to:

- i) To strategically foster and promote academic leadership in research, enterprise and cultural provision and its positive effects on the inter/national profile and reputation of UCA
- ii) To enhance cross-campus communication and initiative in the area of research and enterprise across campuses
- iii) To contribute to and enhance the UCA research culture by:
 - providing a forum for the development and exchange of research related ideas and initiatives
 - organising and delivering the annual UCA Staff Research and Enterprise conference
 - producing research related publication / publicity
 - leading dedicated staff development in the area of research and enterprise
- iv) To inform the preparation of the UCA REF 2014 submission by:
 - receiving and considering in full the criteria and working methods for REF 2014 and identifying their implications for the evaluation of staff research outputs and their respective impact between 2008–2013;
 - informing the individual feedback to members of staff regarding the evaluation of research outputs and inclusion in the UCA REF 2014 submission
 - informing the development of the impact case studies and institutional impact statement
 - contributing to the development of the research environment narrative
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Constitution

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| • Director of Research and Enterprise | Convener |
| • All UCA Professors and Readers | |

Appendix B:

Research Institute Membership Criteria (2011–2013)

Minimum Criteria for Academic Staff Membership of the Research Institute

To become a full member of the UCA Research Institute (RI) a research active member of staff must normally be able to demonstrate a track record of inter/nationally excellent publications such as peer reviewed or non-peer reviewed journal articles and exhibitions, chapters in books, monographs, or other forms of public output including performance, public intervention or screening, registered design, patent, software etc.. Normally, **evidence will be required of an average of one significant output per annum.**

Additionally, full members must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Be a named supervisor to at least one successful PhD student or, for staff holding academic appointments of less than 5 years' duration, at least one currently registered research student; or be named supervisor of a member of contract research staff over at least a one-year period. This criterion will be strictly applied where there is an established practice of PhD supervision. In areas where the practice of PhD supervision is not well established the criterion should be operated in a manner which promotes PhD supervision but it need not be applied in instances where a nominee's research record would augment the profile of the RI.
2. Be a named holder of external funding or a named co-investigator in an externally funded project, or have been in receipt of editorial subvention from publishers or commissions or support from other external bodies. **Evidence of such awards or support needs to be submitted with the application for membership.**
3. Be able to provide evidence of inter/national effects, benefits and impact of their research on academic and non-academic users. Examples may include but are not restricted to:

Reviews of publications / public disseminations, footfall at exhibitions, installations, interventions, screenings, income generated through public display and related public engagement activities, commissions of related or new bodies of work, invitation to advisory and editorial roles, invitations to present the research to academic and non-academic users of research, enterprise activities such as commissioning of consultancy, media exposure/resonance, approaches by businesses and industries or through spin-in/spin-out ventures to commercialise the respective IP etc. or through engagement in knowledge transfer projects.

Notes:

1. In addition all members of research staff (Assistants, Associates, Fellows and Senior Fellows), and all research students (MPhil and PhD) will be full members of the RI relevant to their research area. This will require all students to have at least one supervisor who is a RI member.
2. Staff, who have not yet met the minimum criteria for full membership but who show potential to do so in the future, may be identified by the Heads of Schools to become an Associate Member of the RI with access to internal research support. These staff also have to submit a membership application.
3. Based on the PDR process of individual staff, the membership of the Research Institute will be reviewed once annually by a panel consisting of the Executive Deans and the Director and the Assistant Director of Research and Enterprise. Evidence

through which staff have maintained or gained their RI membership status should be presented to the Research and Enterprise Committee for approval as part of the periodic review of the Research Institute and Annual Research Monitoring process.

4. Candidates should note that membership of the RI does not imply automatic inclusion in any of the University's submissions to the Research Excellence Framework or other relevant submissions.