

## **Code of Practice for the Selection of Staff for the Research Excellence Framework in 2014 (REF 2014)**

### **1. Preamble**

- REF2014 refers to the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs) which will be completed in 2014. REF2014 will be undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies. The exercise will be managed by the REF team based at HEFCE and overseen by the REF Steering Group, consisting of representatives of the four funding bodies.
- The 'Guidance on submissions' issued by the REF2014 Team sets out requirements for institutions to develop, document and apply a code of practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for their REF submissions. This Code of Practice will be reviewed by the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) for adherence of the codes with the published REF requirements.
- This Code may be subject to final amendment following review by the REF Equality and Diversity Panel.

### **2. Introduction and Purpose**

- The University is committed to the principle that the selection of staff for REF2014 should be on the basis of demonstrable research excellence only, in the context of the REF2014 and the University's REF2014 strategy.
- The University's REF2014 Strategy (Appendix A) defines the selection and quality criteria.
- This Code of Practice covers the selection processes associated with the REF2014 exercise.
- This Code of Practice operates within the context of relevant legislation (Appendix B) and the University's Equality and Diversity Policy (Appendix C).
- The University is committed to the implementation of this Code in all aspects of the REF2014 preparations in order to ensure equitable and transparent processes are followed.

### **3. Definitions**

**Appeal Panel** Chaired by a nominated Campus Director, the Appeal Panel will be responsible for the adjudication of all appeals submitted by staff on grounds of Eligibility, Quality Assessment, and Individual Circumstances. The Appeal Panel will have no locus in defining where the quality threshold is set within Units of Assessment returned by UWS. The membership and remit of the Group is listed at Appendix D.

**Eligibility**

The REF2014 Assessment framework and guidance on submissions ([http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02\\_11/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pubs/2011/02_11/)) 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'.
- The University expects that members of staff will normally have four outputs to be eligible for submission to the REF, the average quality level of which should meet or exceed a University-wide threshold, as defined in the REF2014 Strategy.
- Members of staff, for whom particular mitigating circumstances have adversely affected the quantity of their research in the assessment period, will be eligible for submission with fewer than four outputs but these would be subject to the same quality criterion. Further information is given below in the section on the Individual Circumstances Group.
- Members of staff who wish to challenge a decision of the REF2014 Working Group on grounds of Eligibility should use the Appeal Process.

**Excellence**

In making recommendations and decisions on which staff to submit, research 'excellence' will be interpreted according to the definitions and criteria set out by the Funding Councils and taking into account the University's strategy for its submission to any particular Unit of Assessment or to the REF2014 as a whole.

- Research Excellence in this context may take into account a range of factors including published outputs and other contributions made by staff in the form of research income, student supervision and other relevant performance measures such as research impact.
- In considering research outputs, the process will take account of REF2014 rules and guidance on jointly-authored work in assessing individual contributions.

**External Advisers** The University will seek to engage a range of External Advisers to review early drafts of the submission as part of a Mock Exercise. These advisers will be contracted by the University and will be required to operate within this Code of Practice.

**Principal**

The Principal and Vice Chancellor, the chief operating officer of the University, who will formally approve the REF 2014 submission.

**REF2014 Working Group**

Chaired by the Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation), the REF2014 Working Group will be responsible for the collation of each Unit of Assessment submission into a single coherent submission in

line with the REF2014 Strategy, ensuring that the pool of eligible staff has been presented to the maximum. The REF2014 Working Group will make a recommendation of the final submission for approval by the Principal. The membership and remit of the Group is listed at Appendix E.

**Mock Exercise** UWS will engage in a mock exercise to review the overall submission, as detailed in the Timetable, to establish the relative strengths of the Unit of Assessment narratives and quality of research outputs proposed. This exercise will use External Advisers to support the University's assessment mechanisms and the results of the Mock Exercise will enable the individual Unit's and/or the overall submission to be strengthened through the inclusion or exclusion of staff, the revision of narratives or the replacement of research outputs

#### **Individual Circumstances Group**

Chaired by the Vice Principal (Internationalisation), the Individual Circumstances Group will be responsible for the data collection, review and assessment of cases submitted for staff to have individual circumstances taken into account for REF 2014 purposes, and will advise the REF Working Group on the reduction in outputs required on an individual member of staff basis. The membership and remit of the Group is listed at Appendix F.

**Timetable** The timetable for the preparation of the UWS REF2014 submission is listed at Appendix G.

**UoA Panels** Chaired by the Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation), each Unit of Assessment Panel will be responsible for the initial drafting of the Unit of Assessment submission and will have a primary responsibility for defining the selection of staff to be returned. Appropriate assessment of quality of research outputs will be made by subject experts with advice from External Advisers. The membership and remit of UoA Panels is listed at Appendix H, and there will be one panel for each Unit of Assessment to be returned as identified in the REF2014 Strategy.

**URKTB** URKTB the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Board will approve the UWS REF2014 Strategy and will be invited to comment on the final submission but will have no direct decision-making role in the process. Equality Impact Assessment data will be considered by URKTB in order to inform future policy.

#### **4. Underpinning Principles**

In line with REF2014 Guidance, this Code of Practice seeks to demonstrate fairness to staff by addressing the following principles:

- a. Transparency:** All processes for the selection of staff for inclusion in REF2014 will be transparent.
- The Code will be easily accessible and will be publicised to all academic staff across the institution, including on the University web pages, the staff intranet, and drawn to the attention of those absent from work.
  - The Code will be actively disseminated and explained through relevant meetings of committees and groups involved in the selection of staff for REF2014.
- b. Consistency:** All processes for the selection of staff for inclusion in REF2014 will be consistent across the institution and implemented uniformly.
- The Code of Practice sets out the principles to be applied to all aspects/stages of the process at all levels within the institution where decisions will be made, including how individual staff circumstances will be taken into account.
- c. Accountability:** The responsibilities of those involved in REF 2014 processes will be clearly defined, and individuals and bodies that are involved in selecting staff for REF2014 submission will be identified by name or role.
- The Code identifies those that will be involved in the selection process and identifies what training those staff will be required to undertake in order to engage in the process.
  - The Code describes the operating criteria and terms of reference for individuals, committees, advisory groups and any other bodies concerned with staff selection.
- d. Inclusivity:** The University will promote an inclusive environment.
- The process of selection covered by the Code seeks to identify all eligible staff that have produced excellent research for submission to REF2014.

## 5. Governance, Accountability and Decision-Making

The University's Governance, Accountability and Decision-Making structure for REF2014 is shown at Appendix I

### 5.1 Governance

The University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Board (URKTB) shall be responsible for the REF2014 arrangements and shall establish the following Groups to manage the REF2014 process:-

- REF2014 Working Group
- Appeals Panel
- Individual Circumstances Group
- UoA Panels,
- and shall approve the appointment of External Advisers

### 5.2 Accountability

The University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Board (URKTB) shall report to Senate on REF2014 progress.

The University Principal and Vice Chancellor chairs Senate and shall be required to formally approve the REF2014 submission.

The Equality Impact Assessment will be reported to the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Board, but will also be reported by the University's Equality and Diversity Coordinator to the University Executive Committee.

### **5.3 Decision-making**

Decisions will be made at the appropriate point in the REF2014 structure:-

- Unit of Assessment Panels will identify eligible staff and will make decisions on inclusion based on assessment of whether they hold the required number of outputs at the required quality threshold.
- The Individual Circumstances Panel will review individual circumstances and make decisions on clearly defined and complex circumstances.
- The Appeal Panel will adjudicate on appeals by staff on UoA and REF2014 Working Group Decisions.
- URKTB will approve the REF2014 Strategy.
- The REF2014 Working Group will propose a University submission, balancing the presentation of each Unit of Assessment within the University to maximise the number of staff and the coherence of the individual narratives.
- The Principal and Vice Chancellor will approve the overall submission.

### **5.4 Communication**

The University will maintain clear and unambiguous communications with all staff engaged in REF preparations, as follows:-

- Initially communications will be sent to all academic staff and every member of staff will be invited to indicate whether they wish to be included for consideration for the REF.
- Thereafter communications will be directed to this self nominated group on a central basis up to the point where eligibility and any special circumstances are established.
- Once eligibility and special circumstances are established, all communications will be managed through the Unit of Assessment Panels.
- All staff who have nominated themselves for inclusion in REF2014 will be advised by individual letter of the outcome of the internal assessment process.

## **6. Other Considerations**

### **6.1 Confidentiality**

- Details of the submission will be confidential to UWS and any external advisers approved by the REF Working Group.
- Details of any personal circumstances which may be cited in the submission will remain confidential to the Individual Circumstances Group which will be

set up to review all staff requests to have individual circumstances considered to reduce the number of outputs required..

- Staff involved in assessing and developing the submission, or Units thereof, will have access to all relevant data concerning the submission, including assessment of individual outputs. Such staff will not have access to personal circumstances data, but will be informed of the existence of personal circumstances and expected number of outputs per academic member of staff.
- Staff will be informed when complex circumstances information has to be disclosed to the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP)

## **6.2 Training**

All staff involved in the REF2014 will receive training in Equality and Diversity, prior to the Mock Exercise commencing. Training will be mandatory, and an outline schedule is attached at Appendix J. A log of training will be recorded and retained.

The initial names of staff who will be engaged in the REF2014 process are attached at Appendix K, but this may be supplemented over the REF period.

## **6.3 Equality Impact Assessment**

- When the first draft submission is drawn up (Summer 2012) an equality profile, in terms of available data on age, disability, ethnicity, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation will be drawn up listing those who are eligible for submission and indicating those who are to be submitted and those who are not. This profile will be compiled by HR in line with data protection legislation to ensure that no individual can be identified.  
The profile will be examined for imbalances, taking advice from the University Equality and Diversity Coordinator. If imbalances are found then UWS will consider how to address these in future through its on-going equality and diversity initiatives. An equality impact assessment (EIA) will be carried out on the policy and procedures for selecting staff for REF2014 outlined in this Code. This will be undertaken under the auspices of the REF2014 Working Group and will include a thorough and systematic analysis to determine whether the staff selection policy for the REF2014 may have a differential impact on particular protected groups. The EIA will also review the outcome of consideration of requests on grounds of individual staff circumstances.
- An EIA of the 2012 REF Mock Exercise, and of the draft Code itself, will be carried out in the aftermath of the Exercise and, as noted above, will inform the development of the Code prior to its submission to the Funding Councils in July 2012. The EIA will be reviewed by the REF2014 Working Group at key stages of the selection process, up to and including the final submission process, to ensure that any necessary changes to prevent discrimination or promote equality are taken prior to the submission deadline.
- The EIA will be undertaken by a designated group reporting to the REF2014 Working Group (see Appendix E) and will be informed by an analysis of data on staff who are eligible for selection in respect of all the protected characteristics for which data are available. The analysis will cover all eligible staff and will, where feasible, involve consultation with eligible staff from protected groups.
- The final version of the REF EIA, including the outcomes of any actions taken to prevent discrimination or advance equality, will be published on the web after the submission has been made.

#### **6.4 Joint submission**

The Code of Practice will apply equally to single and joint submissions

#### **6.5 Late Arrivals**

Any staff joining the institution between 1 May 2012 and 31 October 2013 will be invited to put themselves forward for consideration for REF2014 and will be considered as soon as possible by the relevant UoA Leader. As a result they will either be recommended for inclusion to the REF2014 Working Group (for onward recommendation to the Principal) or given feedback regarding their exclusion. In this instance, the appeals process will be still be open to them provided an appeal is lodged by 31 October 2013.

Appendix A	REF2014 Strategy
Appendix B	Relevant Legislation
Appendix C	Equality and Diversity Policy
Appendix D	Membership and remit of Appeal Panel
Appendix E	Membership and remit of REF2014 Working Group
Appendix F	Membership and remit of Individual Circumstances Group
Appendix G	Timetable for REF2014
Appendix H	Membership and remit of Unit of Assessment Panels
Appendix I	Governance Structure
Appendix J	Training Schedule (to be supplied)
Appendix K	Initial Names for Training
Appendix L	Individual Circumstances Process Documents
Appendix M	Appeal Form



**University of the West of Scotland - REF2014 Strategy****Introduction**

***UWS supports research excellence across the breadth of its disciplines and actively fosters and promotes high quality, applied and near market research which can be exploited by key partners in industry, commerce, government and the professions for economic and social benefit.***

***The University seeks to support research to create credible groups of critical mass within the UWS academic environment.***

**REF 2014 Submission**

The University will submit to the Research Excellence Framework in 2014. It will seek to optimise the number of staff returned, within the target Units of Assessment listed below:-

- Unit 2 Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
- Unit 3 Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
- Unit 7 Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
- Unit 9 Physics
- Unit 11 Computer Science and Informatics
- Unit 13 Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials
- Unit 19 Business and Management Studies
- Unit 20 Law
- Unit 22 Social Work and Social Policy
- Unit 25 Education
- Unit 27 Area Studies
- Unit 36 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

The University will seek to achieve a 3\* and 4\* quality profile in each of the above Units through a robust staff selection process. Staff will be selected for inclusion where at least 50% of their submission is judged to be 3\* or above. The University will not submit 1\* or unclassified research outputs in the 2014 exercise.

**Notes:-**

1. The University will seek to return 10+ staff in each Unit, except in exceptional circumstances. Units submitted in 2008RAE will seek to submit at least a comparable number of staff (on a per star basis) to show maintenance and/or development of the research environment.
2. Where the number of staff potentially returnable exceeds 15, the University will return 14 staff unless very clear Impact statements can be evidenced. In such a case, a higher threshold of excellence may be applied, and members of the Unit with the least strong outputs may be excluded from the REF.
3. Groups of staff or individuals may be returned in any relevant UoA as defined by the University's Unit of Assessment Panels or the REF2014 Working Group.

4. In order to achieve the stated objectives above, the University may elect to make a nil return in one or more Units.

## **Appendix B                      Relevant Legislation - The University's legal responsibilities**

- The 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 reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. These obligations apply to REF selection procedures.
- Under the Equality Act 2010 the University has a duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not. This requires that the REF selection processes are assessed for their impact on staff with different protected characteristics by gathering data on staff with submissions 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.
- The 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

## Appendix C

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### Extract from the University's Equality Scheme 2011 "Respecting Diversity- Promoting Equality"

#### Equality Vision, Values and Principles

The University's commitment to equality, diversity and human rights should be seen in the context of its overall [Mission, Vision, Values and Dignity and Respect Statement](#)

The University prides itself as being inspirational, innovative, international and inclusive. It is our policy to celebrate and value the diversity of our student and staff populations and we are committed to providing Higher Education and employment opportunities to enable people of all backgrounds to fulfil their full potential. We encourage applications from potential students and potential and existing staff irrespective of age, disability, political belief, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, social background or any other protected characteristic. We will take steps to remove prejudice where it exists and tackle the underlying causes of inappropriate behaviours. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination on any grounds nor any bullying or harassment of any student, member of staff or visitor to the university.

## Appendix D

### Membership and remit of Appeal Panel

#### Membership

Chair – A nominated Campus Director

HR Representative for Appeals for issues of Eligibility and Individual Circumstances

Professor, Reader or other senior researcher from the subject discipline (excluding UoA Leader) for issues of Quality Assessment

#### Meetings

Meetings of the Appeal Panel will be convened immediately following the Appeal Periods outlined in the Timetable.

As many meetings of the Panel will be arranged as are necessary to deal with the volume of Appeals.

#### Remit

The Panel will consider the case for appeal as submitted by a member of staff on the Appeal form attached at Appendix M.

The Panel will only consider Appeals on the Grounds of:-

- the eligibility decision (on the basis of the number of outputs or the employment status),
- the quality rating of one or more outputs
- the allocation to a particular Unit of Assessment
- the Individual Circumstances decision. Only the Chair and the HR representative will see and decide on appeals relating to Individual Circumstances

No other Grounds for Appeal will be valid. There will be no Appeal or challenge on the grounds of the University's REF2014 Strategy.

## Appendix E

## Membership and remit of REF2014 Working Group

Membership	<p>Chair – Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation)</p> <p>Executive Deans of Faculties</p> <p>Faculty Research Leads</p> <p>REF Manager (IRO)</p> <p>Secretary (IRO)</p>
Meetings	<p>Meetings of the REF2014 Working Group will be convened as detailed in the Timetable</p>
Remit	<p>Chaired by the Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation), the REF2014 Working Group will be responsible for managing all aspects of the UWS REF2014 submission including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approval of the UWS REF2014 Strategy</li><li>• Approval of the Leadership arrangements for the UoA Panels</li><li>• Setting of the UWS REF2014 Timetable</li><li>• Collation of each Unit of Assessment submission into a single coherent submission in line with the REF Strategy</li><li>• Providing oversight of the UoA submissions to ensure that the pool of eligible staff has been presented to the maximum.</li><li>• The REF2014 Working Group will make a recommendation of the final submission for approval by the Principal.</li><li>• Ensuring arrangements for identifying and communicating Individual Circumstances conform to REF2014 Guidelines</li><li>• Ensuring arrangements for Appeals conform to REF2014 Guidelines</li><li>• Ensuring the integrity of the UWS datasets used for REF 2014.</li><li>• Oversight of the Equality Impact Assessment process</li><li>• Liaising with the Appeals Panel to reflect and appeals upheld.</li></ul>

## Appendix F

## Membership and Remit of Individual Circumstances Group

### Membership

Chair – Vice Principal (International)

Human Resources Nominee

Equality and Diversity Coordinator

### Meetings

Meetings of the Individual Circumstances Group will be convened as detailed in the Timetable

### Remit

Chaired by the Vice Principal (International), the Individual Circumstances Group will consider all requests for individual circumstances to be taken into account and will make judgements on each case:-

- The case has been accepted and a reduction in the number of outputs is approved, and the actual number of outputs reduced is stated.
- The case has been rejected and no reduction is approved
- Insufficient evidence has been provided and so additional information will be requested in order to form an accept/reject decision.

### Terms of Reference

The Group will consider all requests within the context of the Relevant Legislation

All information provided by staff will be held on a confidential basis, and only accept (with a stated reduction in papers) decisions will be communicated outwith the Group.

Where necessary and only with the permission of the employee, confidential information may be provided to the National REF Team, its sub panels or its Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel.

### Documents

Documents used to communicate with Staff regarding Individual Circumstances are attached at Appendix L.

## Appendix G

## Timetable for REF2014

Date	REF2104 Activities	UWS Activities	
<b>January 2012</b>	Publication of panel criteria and working methods	Jan-March 2012 Feb 2012  March 2012	UoA Meetings  Draft Code of Practice and REF Strategy to URKTB for approval. First call for Individual Circumstances. Onwards, Selection of External Advisers.
<b>31 July 2012</b>	Institutions intending to make submissions to the REF submit their codes of practice on the selection of staff	April 2012  April – June 2012  June 2012	Collation of Mock Exercise and Equality and Diversity Training CoP & REF Strategy to Senate for Approval Mock Exercise Appeal Panel, First Equality Impact Assessment.
<b>Autumn 2012</b>	Pilot of the REF submissions system	October – December 2012	Revision of UoAs, refining Impact Statements. Consideration of EIA Data.
<b>October 2012</b>	Invitation to HEIs to make submissions; invitation to request multiple submissions; and start of survey of submissions intentions	Further call for Individual Circumstances (to get 100% return from staff)	
<b>December 2012</b>	Survey of submissions intentions complete and deadline for requests for multiple submissions	December – Further Appeal Panel Jan – June 2013	Regular UoA Meetings to review Progress  Regular REF2014 Working Group
<b>January 2013</b>	Launch of submissions systems and accompanying technical guidance	June – October 2013  October 2013	Individual Circumstances Panel and Appeal Panel for Late Entrants  Final Draft of Submission Prepared for Principal Sign-off
<b>31 July 2013</b>	End of assessment period (for research impacts, the research environment, and data about research income and research doctoral degrees awarded)		
<b>Mid 2013</b>	Appointment of additional assessors to panels		
<b>31 October 2013</b>	Census date for staff eligible for selection		
<b>29 November 2013</b>	Closing data for submissions		
<b>31 December 2013</b>	End of publication period (cut-off point for publication of research outputs, and for outputs underpinning impact case studies)		



## Appendix H

## Membership and remit of Unit of Assessment Panels

### Membership

Chair – Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation)

Unit of Assessment Lead(s)

The appropriate Faculty Research Lead(s)

REF Manager (IRO)

Secretary (IRO)

### Meetings

Meetings of the Unit of Assessment Panels will be convened as detailed in the Timetable

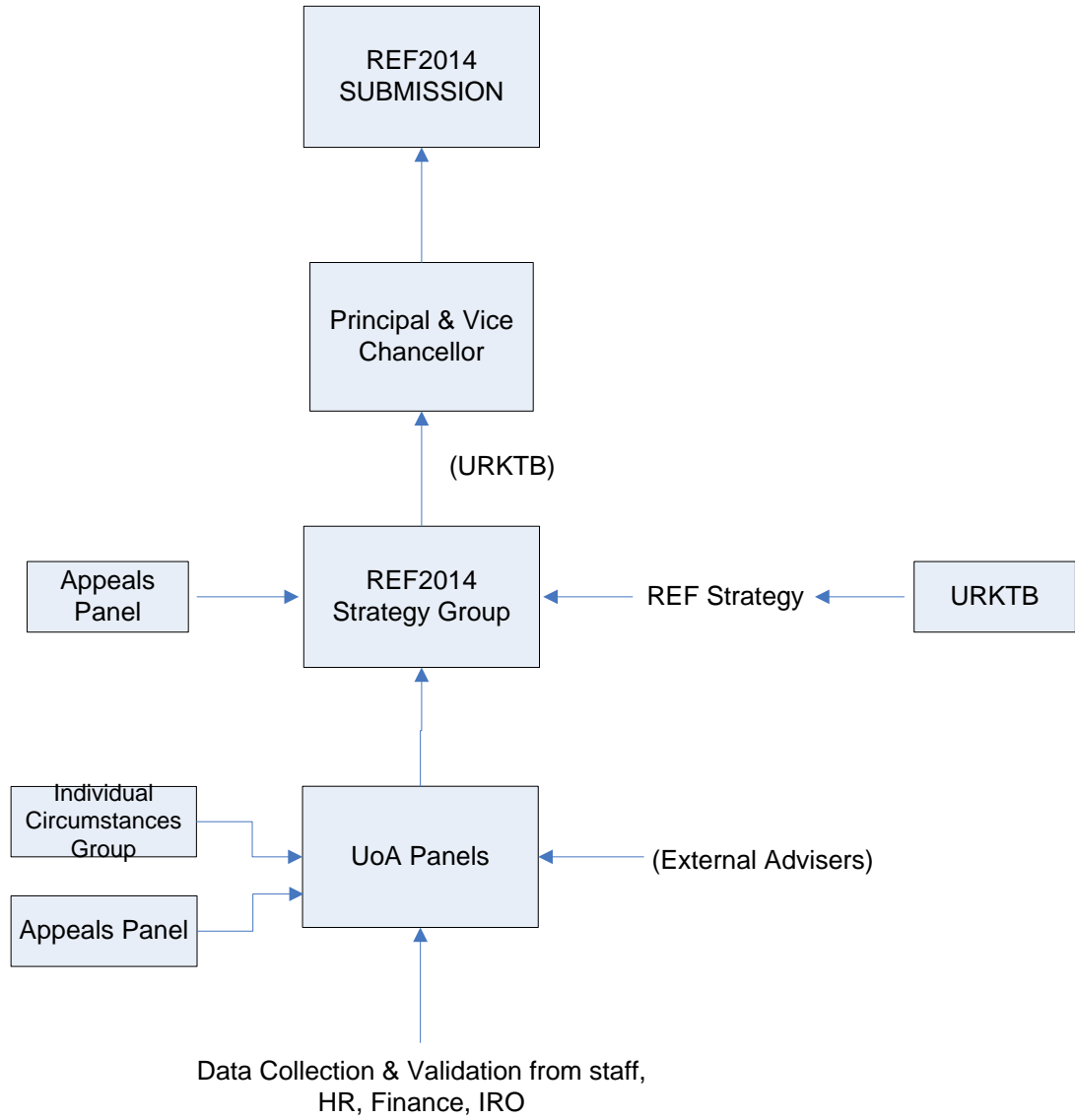
### Remit

Chaired by the Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation), the Unit of Assessment Panels will be responsible for preparing a Unit of Assessment submission to address the following:-

- Preparing a list of all staff eligible for inclusion in REF2014
- Collation of all metrics for the eligible staff
- Making initial recommendations about the inclusion of staff, based on the quality of their outputs within the context of the REF Strategy
- Drafting the UoA narrative, including impact statement
- Liaising with the Individual Circumstances Group and the Appeals Group to amend the initial recommendation of staff
- Liaising with External Advisers to gain supplementary inputs into output quality
- Proposing a final draft to the REF Working Group on the overall makeup and associated narrative for the Unit
- Reviewing in line with REF Working Group feedback and revising to form a final Unit submissions

Appendix I

Governance, Accountability and Decision-making Structure for REF2014



## **Appendix J**

## **Training Schedule**

Training will be arranged for all those involved in REF2014 decision making; a list is at Appendix K. The training will provide an overview of UWS Equality and Diversity practice, details of the equality issues around the REF2014 and will examine case studies relating to reduction in outputs for employees with individual circumstance.

The training has been developed nationally by the Equality Challenge Unit and tailored to meet UWS' specific needs.

Training will be available from April 2012 and is mandatory.

The indicative content is as follows:

1. Introduction, purpose and context
2. UWS and the REF
3. Why equality is important in the REF
4. Issues to be aware of since the RAE 2008
5. Identifying clearly defined and complex staff circumstances and using tariffs
6. Implications for staff responsible for selecting staff for submission to the REF
7. Handling complex staff circumstances

## Appendix K

## List of REF People to be trained.

Principal	Seamus McDaid
Depute Principal	John Anderson and Ian Patrick as Campus Directors acting in place of the Depute Principal
VP (R & C)	Roddy Williamson
VP (International)	Paul Martin
HR Representative	Sheila Ross
Equality & Diversity Coordinator	Chris Bradshaw
Appeal Professors	to be trained as required
Executive Deans	Malcolm Foley and as above (VPs)
Faculty Research Leads	Christos Grecos Bobby Pyper Heather Tarbert
REF Manager	Vacancy
Director, IRO	Ian Bishop
UoA Leaders	UoA 2      Avril Taylor / Colin Martin UoA 22     Jim McKechnie / Duncan Sim UoA 3      John Lockhart UoA 7      Andrew Hursthouse UoA 9      John Smith UoA 13     Frank Placido UoA 11     Thomas Connolly UoA 19 / 27   Martin Myant / Angus Duff UoA 20     Angus McAllister UoA 25     Ross Deuchar UoA 36     Andy Miah

## Appendix L Individual Circumstances Group - Process Documents

### Basis of Decision

Category A and C staff may be returned with fewer than four outputs without penalty in the assessment, if one or more of the following circumstances significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs or to work productively throughout the assessment period:

- a. Clearly defined circumstances, which are:
  - i. Qualifying as an Early Career Researcher
  - ii. Part-time working.
  - iii. Maternity, paternity or adoption leave. (Note that maternity leave may involve related constraints on an individual's ability to conduct research in addition to the defined period of maternity leave itself. These cases can be returned as 'complex' as described at sub-paragraph b below, so that the full range of circumstances can be taken into account in making a judgement about the appropriate number of outputs that may be reduced without penalty).
  - iv. Secondments or career breaks outside of the higher education sector, and in which the individual did not undertake academic research.
- b. Circumstances that are more complex and require a judgement about the appropriate number of outputs that can be reduced without penalty. These circumstances are:
  - i. Disability.
  - ii. Ill health or injury.
  - iii. Mental health conditions.
  - iv. Constraints related to pregnancy or maternity, in addition to a clearly defined period of maternity leave. (These may include but are not limited to: medical issues associated with pregnancy or maternity; health and safety restrictions in laboratory or field work during pregnancy or breastfeeding; constraints on the ability to travel to undertake fieldwork due to pregnancy or breast-feeding.)
  - v. Childcare or other caring responsibilities.
  - vi. Gender reassignment.
  - vii. Other circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed below:-
    - age
    - disability
    - marriage and civil partnership
    - race
    - religion or belief
    - sex
    - sexual orientation.

Letter to academic staff

To: All academic members of staff (by email and letter to home address)

From: Professor Roddy Williamson, Vice Principal Research

Subject: REF 2014: Consideration of Individual Staff Circumstances

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Dear Colleague

Research Excellence Framework

As you will be aware the University participates in national assessment exercises to determine the strength and volume of its research. The last assessment, the Research Assessment Exercise reported in 2008 and we are now working towards the 2014 Research Assessment Exercise.

All staff on eligible contracts with a range of research outputs may be considered for submission to the REF2014. I am writing to you today to invite you to nominate yourself for consideration for submission. At this stage, most full-time members of academic staff would be expected to have four high quality research outputs to contribute to the University's submission. However this will be reduced for staff on part-time contracts or for those who have a range of individual circumstances.

You will find enclosed with this letter a response form which should be returned to HR to indicate whether you would like to be included for consideration for REF 2014, and if you believe any individual circumstances may apply to you. This will be entirely confidential and only a very small group convened by HR will review the content of any submission. The internal REF team will only be made aware of the decisions of this group.

I would ask you to return this document, even to return a nil response, to assist the University in complying with its Equality and Diversity obligations.

I would also like to highlight that the University is currently finalising a refreshed Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy which seeks to engage all staff in research and knowledge exchange activities. If you have not yet had a chance to read this document, I would encourage you to access it at

[http://portal.staff.uws.ac.uk/docstore/staff/\\_academicadminis\\_/rkestrategy/\\_index.htm](http://portal.staff.uws.ac.uk/docstore/staff/_academicadminis_/rkestrategy/_index.htm)

I would like to thank you in advance for your support in this exercise. Should you have any specific questions about the REF2014, please contact Ian Bishop in the Innovation and Research Office

Professor Roddy Williamson

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Vice Principal (Research and Commercialisation) and Executive Dean (Faculty of Science & Technology)

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## REF 2014

UWS 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 is contained in the University's Code of Practice which can be found here

[http://portal.staff.uws.ac.uk/docstore/staff\\_/academicadminis\\_/rkestrategy\\_/index.htm](http://portal.staff.uws.ac.uk/docstore/staff_/academicadminis_/rkestrategy_/index.htm)

### Eligible staff are those on at least a 0.2 academic contract

If you are eligible you must complete the attached form (even if you have no individual circumstances) and return it to Sheila Ross, Human Resources Adviser, Witherspoon Building Storrie Street, Paisley, PA1 2BE or preferably by email to [sheila.ross@uws.ac.uk](mailto:sheila.ross@uws.ac.uk) before 30 April 2014.

### Individual Circumstances

To ensure that REF processes are fair, we are 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 our monitoring of staff selection procedures at the institutional level.

In determining whether eligible staff may be submitted to the REF with fewer than four research outputs, the University's REF Individual Circumstances Group 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
- = 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
- = Other exceptional and relevant reasons (not including teaching or administrative work).

If your research output has been affected by any of these circumstances, please detail them on “Individual staff circumstances disclosure form” enclosed with this letter and return it as described above.

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](http://www.ref.ac.uk) under ‘Publications’.

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

Within the institution, the information that you provide will be seen by the University’s REF Individual Circumstances Group, unless you advise on the form that you give permission for your line manager to be involved. Members of the Individual Circumstances Group will observe confidentiality and information will be stored securely in Human Resources and in line with Data Protection rules. The membership and remit of this panel is described in an Appendix F to the Code of Practice.

If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, you will be contacted by a representative from the University’s REF Individual Circumstances Group

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?**

UWS recognises that staff circumstances may change between now and 31 October 2013. If your circumstances change you can obtain a copy of the attached form from the Innovation and Research Office.

**How will I know the outcome?**

Any application will be considered by the REF Individual Circumstances Group and you will be informed of the outcome using the reply form attached to the individual circumstances disclosure form.

## Individual Circumstances Disclosure Form

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Unit of Assessment (complete if known)</b>	
<b>I wish to be considered for inclusion in the University's REF submission</b>	<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

### Section one:

**Please select one of the following:**

- I have no individual circumstances that I wish to be taken into consideration for the purposes of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).
- I have individual circumstances that I wish to make known but I am not seeking a reduction in outputs. (Please complete sections two and three)
- In completing this form I am seeking a reduction in research outputs. (Please complete sections two, three and four)

### Section two:

**Please select as appropriate:**

- I would like to be contacted by a member of the University's REF Individual Circumstances Group to discuss my circumstances and requirements and/or the support provided by UWS. My contact details for this purpose are:

<b>Email</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Preferred method of communication</b>	

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

### Section three

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

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

<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Information required</b>
Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009)	Date on which you became an early career research
<b>Information</b>	
Junior clinical academic staff who have not gained Certificate of Completion of Training by 31 October 2013	Please place a tick in this box if the circumstance applies:
Part time employee	FTE and duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector	Dates and duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)	For each period of leave state which type of leave was taken and the dates and duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Disability (including conditions such as cancer and chronic fatigue)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Mental health condition	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	

Ill health or injury	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding, paternity, adoption or childcare <b>in addition to</b> the period of maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave taken.	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Other caring responsibilities (including caring for an elderly or disabled relative)	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Gender reassignment	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	
Other exceptional and relevant reasons, not including teaching or administrative work	Impact on ability to fulfil contractual hours and other impacts on ability to undertake research. Duration in months
<b>Information</b>	

Please select all that apply:

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

I recognise that the information provided will only be used for REF purposes and will only be seen by the UWS REF panel for considering individual circumstances.

As part of this process I give permission for the UWS REF Individual Circumstances Group to consult.....

(Insert name of line manager or academic referee) regarding the impact of my circumstances on my research output.

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. [Delete if not applicable: I recognise that if a joint submission is made, information may be shared with another institution.] Where permission is not provided UWS will be limited in the action it can take.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

## Consideration of Individual Circumstances - Outcome

Following review of your individual circumstances the University's REF Individual Circumstances Group:

- Will forward your name for consideration in the REF submission with [insert number] of research outputs. 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 your circumstances described as follows:

*e.g. someone from the REF panel will contact you regarding the information required.*

- Has concluded that you do not meet 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 you wish to appeal against the decision of the panel you will need to do so by [insert date] and details of the appeals process can be found in the UWS REF Code of Practice.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Professor P Martin, chair REF Individual Circumstances Group

**Appendix M          Appeal Form**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Unit of Assessment (complete if known)</b>	

Further notification by the UWS REF Team of my inclusion status in the REF2014, I would wish to appeal this decision on the following grounds

- a.            The eligibility decision
  
- b.            The quality  
rating of one or more of my submit table outputs   
(Please be specific about the outputs in question)
  
- c.            The allocation to a specific unit of Assessment   
(Please be specific about the allocated unit and your preferred unit)
  
- d.            The Individual circumstances decision

Please outline the basis of your appeal, giving as much relevant information to support your appeal as possible.



Signed..... Date.....