

# REF Webinar: developing policy on staff and outputs

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Cyngor Cyllido Addysg  
Uwch Cymru  
Higher Education Funding  
Council for Wales

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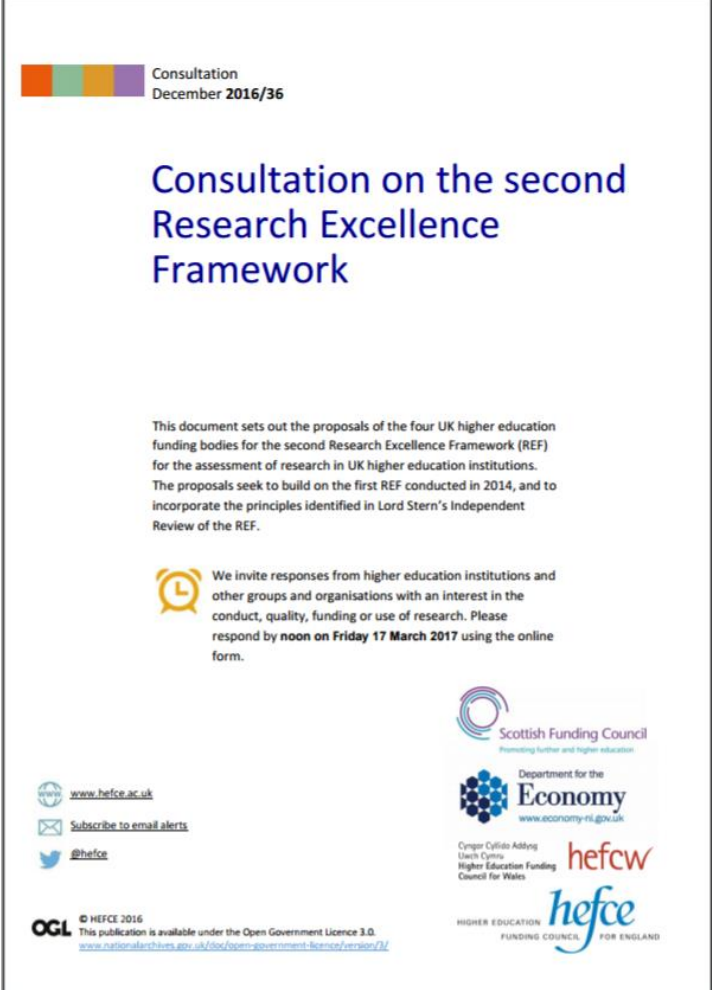


# Introduction

- Structure
  - Identifying staff who have a significant responsibility to undertake research
  - Output portability
- Feedback
  - Webinar questions
  - Blog post comments
  - Email [researchpolicy@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:researchpolicy@hefce.ac.uk)

# REF consultation responses


- 391 responses; 147 from HEIs
- Clear consensus in many areas...
- ...but also differences of opinion
- Trade-offs in implementing the 'Stern principles'





Consultation  
December 2016/36


## Consultation on the second Research Excellence Framework


This document sets out the proposals of the four UK higher education funding bodies for the second Research Excellence Framework (REF) for the assessment of research in UK higher education institutions. The proposals seek to build on the first REF conducted in 2014, and to incorporate the principles identified in Lord Stern's Independent Review of the REF.


 We invite responses from higher education institutions and other groups and organisations with an interest in the conduct, quality, funding or use of research. Please respond by **noon on Friday 17 March 2017** using the online form.


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## Research Staff and the REF

*'It is important that all academic staff who have any significant responsibility to undertake research are returned to the REF.'*

- Reflecting on Stern's key aims:
  - Address negative consequences for individual staff
  - More rounded view of research activity

### Building on Success and Learning from Experience

An Independent Review of the Research Excellence Framework

July 2016



## Research Staff and the REF

- From the consultation responses:
  - Broad support for Stern recommendation to include ‘all staff with significant responsibility to carry out research’.
  - Proposal to use contract status alone not supported.
  - Broad support for limiting to independent researchers.
  - Strong concerns about use of cost centres to allocate to UOAs.
  - Support for weakening link between staff and submitted outputs.
  - Concern to consider E&D issues carefully.



## Research Staff and the REF

- Funding bodies' view:
  - Accept Stern's recommendation, and aim to address negative effects
  - Staff submission has changed – about staff activity, not judgement of performance
  - No clear alternative for *easily* identifying staff with a significant responsibility to undertake research
  - Seeking to address burden concerns in developing proposals for alternative



## Defining the staff pool

### Our starting point

- Teaching and Research or Research-only
- Independent researcher
- Minimum of 0.2 FTE
- Substantive connection



# Defining the staff pool

## Submission options

- 100 per cent submission
  - UOA level
  - Avoiding additional burden
- Institutional identification of staff in scope
  - Those required to carry out research – auditable documentation where there is no expectation of this (e.g. career pathway or workload model)
  - Require agreement between institution and staff
  - Process set out in Codes of Practice





## Decoupling

- Part of wider package of proposals around staff and outputs
- Average number and max to be determined
- Minimum of 1, in line with revised approach to identifying staff and in recognition of concerns about representativeness of submissions
- Measures to promote equality and diversity to include:
  - Codes of practice on applying criteria for identifying staff, and approach to output selection
  - Reductions in number of outputs required where circumstances apply
  - Data on representativeness of outputs in environment

# Questions





## Portability of outputs

- Stern aim to address
  - Distortion to investment incentives
  - Effects on staff recruitment and retention
- From the consultation responses
  - Significant concerns about:
    - effects of proposal
    - timing in cycle
    - practical issues of implementation



## Portability of outputs

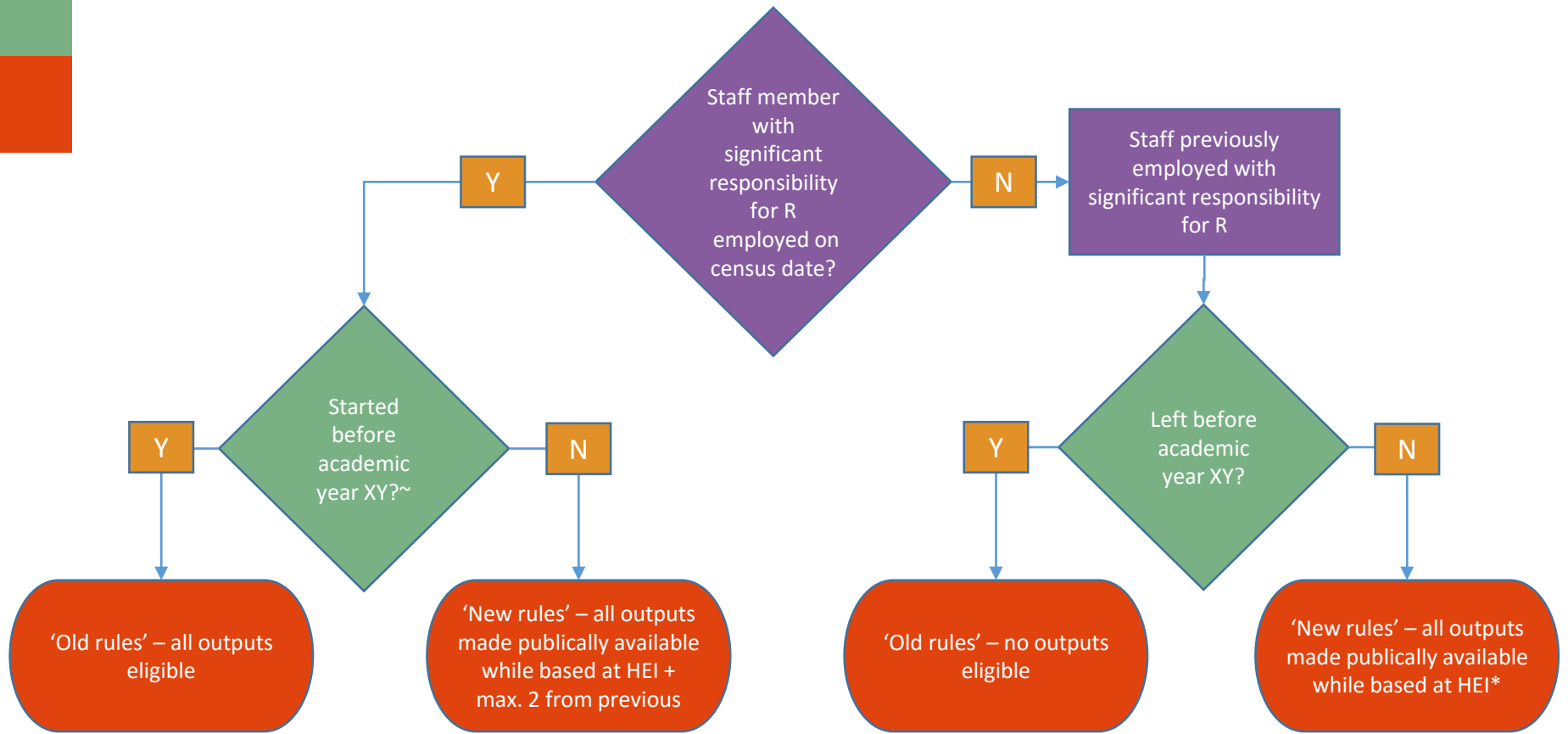
- Funding bodies' view:
  - Understand and accept Stern recommendation that credit is given to originating institution
  - Recognise concerns raised in consultation
  - Need for transitional arrangements
  - Subsequent engagement – hybrid models and trade off with complexity and burden



## Portability of outputs

- Simplicity and low-cost implementation
  - Both originating and new institutions eligible to submit
  - Taking account of Stern's concerns and sector responses to consultation
  - Some loss of precision

# Non-portability: hybrid model



~ To avoid lost outputs, transition window likely where both institutions can claim

\*For staff employed prior to AY XY, + all prior outputs

# Questions





## Next steps

- Further feedback, comments, questions:
  - Blog posts
  - Email [researchpolicy@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:researchpolicy@hefce.ac.uk)
- Further discussion, evidence and modelling
- Initial decisions on these issues – autumn
  
- Other aspects of the REF
  - Initial decisions: part I
  - Sub-panel chair recruitment
  - Detailed policy development



Thank you for listening

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