

**REF 2014:  
Code of practice on the selection of staff**

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## Introduction

- 1 This document sets out UCL's general policy and process with respect to the selection of UCL staff for submission to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF2014) as Category A research active staff. It makes specific reference to UCL's obligations to the principle of fairness when making decisions and, in particular, references the relevant guidance provided by the UK higher education funding bodies in the publications 'REF 2014: Assessment framework and guidance on submissions' (<http://www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02/> - 'REF guidance' hereafter) and 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods' (<http://www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2012-01/> - 'REF panel criteria' hereafter).
- 2 The HEFCs' REF team requires that all HEIs who intend to make a submission to REF 2014 to submit their code of practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for submission to REF2014, endorsed by the head of the HEI and with explicit confirmation that the submitted code has been developed, and will be applied, by the institution concerned.
- 3 The structure of UCL's REF 2014 submissions will be decided by the UCL REF Strategy Group chaired by the Vice-Provost (Research). That group will also confirm both the list of eligible UCL staff selected for return to REF 2014 as research active and those members of staff who are not selected for submission. The membership and workings of the REF Strategy Group are described in paragraphs 37-38 below and in Annex 2.
- 4 The essential criteria for a member of UCL staff to be selected for submission to REF 2014 (see also paragraphs 15-22 below) are (i) the quality of her or his research activity and (ii) the quantity of her or his research outputs, bearing in mind the assessment criteria of the relevant REF Main Panel or UoA sub-panel.
- 5 Initial recommendations for selection or non-selection of eligible members of staff employed by UCL will be made by the academic lead or leads for each UoA in consultation with the Head of Department concerned. All leads are nominated by the Deans of relevant faculties and are charged by the Vice-Provost (Research) to oversee preparations for that UoA. All recommendations for selection will be referred to one of four staff selection review groups corresponding to each REF Main Panel (A to D) for consideration. The membership and workings of these groups – the Staff Selection Review Groups – are described in paragraphs 33-36 below and in Annex 2.
- 6 Prior to selection activity taking place, all eligible staff will be invited to disclose individual circumstances that may have affected their research during the assessment period. Disclosures will be made in confidence to a central panel – the REF Equality and Diversity Panel (REDP) – which will assess cases and make recommendations to the relevant UoA leads for reduction in the number of nominated outputs for each staff member concerned. The membership and workings of the REDP are described in paragraphs 25-28 below and in Annex 2.
- 7 A REF Appeals Panel will consider any appeals against non-selection. The Panel will not make judgments about the quality of research activity but will check that, where an appeal has been raised, all relevant evidence has been taken into account, including any special circumstances that may have affected the volume of research activity of the member of staff concerned. The membership and workings of the REF Appeals Panel are described in paragraphs 41-43 below and in Annex 2.

## Context

- 8 The Equality Act 2010 (covering England, Scotland and Wales) places requirements on the UK higher education funding bodies as public sector organisations and on HEIs as public sector organisations and employers. Most of the Act, as it relates to public functions and employment, came into force in October 2010. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Act came into force in April 2011. Under the PSED, the HEFCs and HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales, in carrying out their functions, must have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9 In order to demonstrate compliance with the PSED, the HEFCs need to consider and understand the impact of their policies on equality. The funding bodies have considered the equality impact of the RAE in the development of the REF, and equality has consequently been embedded into all relevant elements of the REF. The funding bodies will analyse the selection rates by staff characteristics at sector level to inform their future work.
- 10 As both employers and public bodies, HEIs need to ensure that their REF 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 birth. HEIs also need to be mindful 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 an employer any less favourably than the employer treats comparable employees on open contracts or full-time workers.
- 11 As public sector organisations, in order to show compliance with requirements of the public sector equality duty of the Equality Act 2010, HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales need to consider and understand the effect of their REF selection policies on equality.
- 12 Against this background, the HEFCs' REF team, in collaboration with the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), have developed guidance to HEIs in drawing up a code of practice that frames the decision-making processes of HEIs on the selection of staff for submission to REF 2014 in the context of the principle of equality of opportunity and the relevant legislation. This guidance is contained in part 4 of the REF Guidance and has informed the development of this Code of Practice.
- 13 The HEFCs have also provided an equality briefing for REF 2014 panels. The published equality briefing (<http://www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/equalitybriefingforpanels/>) instructed REF panel members to develop working methods and assessment criteria that encourage HEIs to submit in REF 2014 the work of all their excellent researchers, including those whose individual circumstances significantly constrained their ability to produce four outputs during the REF publication period. These circumstances include issues covered by equality and employment legislation.

- 14 UCL's Code of Practice has been drawn up in the context both of the above and of the 2011 UCL Research Strategy, *Delivering a Culture of Wisdom*. The latter includes, among the actions in the section 'Supporting Our Vision', ensuring robust processes for REF 2014 submission including appropriate consideration of equality issues in staff selection policy.

### Principles and criteria

- 15 UCL is committed to developing and maintaining an institution where staff and students from all backgrounds can flourish, and so we recognise the importance of taking a proactive stance in creating equality of opportunity and promoting diversity<sup>1</sup>. This commitment will be reflected in UCL's processes for selecting staff for submission to REF 2014. These processes will not have an adverse impact on staff on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or having recently given birth, nor will they treat part-time or fixed-term staff less favourably than staff on open contracts or full-time staff.
- 16 Subject to the conditions for eligibility set out in the REF Guidance, the essential criteria for a member of UCL staff to be selected for submission to REF 2014 are (i) that they are the author or co-author of up to four international standard research outputs and (ii) the quantity of their research publications or other outputs – the actual number of outputs required will be defined by any approved individual staff circumstances. In applying these criteria, all staff involved in making selection decisions will take account of:
- the definition of research for the REF, as set out in Annex C of the REF Guidance<sup>2</sup>;
  - the assessment criteria of the relevant main panel and, in case of significant deviation, any Unit of Assessment sub-panel - <http://www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2012-01/> - including any expectation that outputs cited in submissions for each member of research active staff must be unique within the submission or, in the case of multiple submissions, unique within all submissions to that UoA.
- 17 The definition of 'international standard' will be made at each individual UoA level by the UoA lead concerned, with advice as necessary and appropriate, and according to the individual characteristics of the discipline. Assessment of outputs based on the definition will be applied consistently across each submission. Depending on the panel

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<sup>1</sup> see UCL Equalities and Diversity Strategy 2011-14 - [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/corporate/Equalities\\_and\\_Diversity\\_Strategy.doc](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/corporate/Equalities_and_Diversity_Strategy.doc)

<sup>2</sup> 'Research' for the purpose of the REF is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship\*; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.

\* Scholarship for the REF is defined as the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines, in forms such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues and contributions to major research databases.

criteria and working methods of the UoA concerned, the criteria may additionally include that the approved number of outputs are unique in the submission, *ie* in the case of co-authored work outputs should not also be nominated by a UCL co-author selected in the same submission.

- 18 UCL is committed to the principles of confidentiality and consistency in the disclosure and treatment of individual circumstances that may have affected a researcher's volume of research activity during the REF 2014 assessment period. The framework that UCL has adopted allows eligible staff the opportunity to disclose any individual circumstances with an appropriate degree of confidentiality. Moreover, the consideration of individual staff circumstances is separated from the consideration of the quality of outputs which form the basis of the selection of eligible staff for REF. Individual staff circumstances will be considered by an appropriately trained central panel – the REDP – which guarantees not only confidentiality but also consistency. It would therefore be expected that such confidential information would not be provided to UoA leads and other staff undertaking selection activity, including Deans and the REF Strategy Group.
- 19 Those responsible for making decisions on the selection of UCL staff for REF 2014 will be advised where individual circumstances have been disclosed by an eligible member of staff and provided with a recommendation for a reduction on output volume based on the information provided in confidence by the member of staff concerned to the REDP. The information disclosed by the member of staff will not be provided to those making, or who are involved in contributing to, selection decisions unless the staff member concerned wishes to waive this right to confidentiality.
- 20 It is expected that any disclosure of individual circumstances by a member of staff will lead to a recommendation by the REDP that the number of outputs to be submitted to REF by that staff member may be reduced by a specific number. The panel will follow guidance published by the ECU when making its assessment of the individual circumstances although it may be expected that a significant majority of circumstances disclosed might be deemed 'clearly defined' as defined in paragraph 69 of the REF panel criteria and follow a simple tariff of reduction without penalty. Outcomes will be communicated to the relevant UoA lead who will conduct selection activity on the recommendations received.
- 21 Following a recommendation for reduction of output number by the REDP, if UoA leads believe, in spite of any individual circumstances, that the member of staff still has four international standard eligible outputs in the period which may be submitted to REF, they may decide to continue to submit the maximum number for the member of staff concerned. REF1b would consequently not be completed for the member of staff.
- 22 The following personal circumstances that may have affected an individual researcher's volume of research activity during the REF 2014 assessment period (1 January 2008 - 31 October 2013) may be taken into account<sup>3</sup>:

*Clearly defined circumstances*

- staff qualifying as early career researchers who first met the REF definition of early career researcher after 31 July 2009;
- absence from work due to part-time working or breaks in employment during the assessment period, *eg* career breaks and secondments, totalling more than twelve months in total in the assessment period;

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<sup>3</sup> As per paragraph 69 of the REF panel criteria.

- absence due to qualifying periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave (see also below);
- in UoAs 1-6 only, where staff are junior clinical academics<sup>4</sup>.

#### *Complex circumstances*

- disability;
- absence due to ill-health or injury;
- mental health conditions;
- other constraints relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption or childcare that fall outside of – or justify the reduction of further outputs in addition to – allowances considered as ‘clearly defined circumstances’;
- other caring responsibilities;
- gender reassignment;
- any other personal circumstances relating to the protected characteristics listed at paragraph 190 of the guidance on submissions, or relating to activities protected by employment legislation.

#### **Selection structures**

- 23 The body ultimately responsible for decisions on the structure of UCL submissions and the selection of staff for submission will be the REF Strategy Group, chaired by the Vice-Provost (Research). The selection process will follow a number stages:
- invitation to eligible staff to disclose confidentially individual circumstances affecting research in the assessment period;
  - consideration of cases of individual circumstances by the REDP and recommendations communicated to UoA leads;
  - recommendations on selection made by UoA leads;
  - consideration and endorsement of selection and non-selection decisions by Staff Selection Review Groups;
  - final sign-off by the REF Strategy Group.
- 24 A detailed description of the membership, terms of reference and *modus operandi* for the various committees is at Annex 2.

#### ***UCL REF Equality and Diversity Panel***

- 25 As indicated in paragraphs 18-19 above, all UCL members of staff eligible for submission to REF 2014<sup>5</sup> will be contacted by the UCL REF Manager and invited to disclose, in confidence, any circumstances which have affected their research during the REF assessment period. A proforma (at Annex 3) will be supplied to all eligible staff who will be asked to submit completed forms to the UCL REF Team along with evidence of the circumstances claimed. Where forms are not received by 6 June 2012, it will be assumed that those members of staff do not wish to make such a disclosure.
- 26 Once received, disclosure forms will be initially processed by the REF Team, verified against HR records where necessary and passed to the REDP for consideration. The REDP will determine where reductions based on the information provided should be accommodated with advice provided by the Equalities and Diversity Team as required.

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<sup>4</sup> Defined as clinically qualified academics who are still completing their clinical training in medicine or dentistry and have not gained a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or its equivalent prior to 31 October 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Eligible staff will be identified through a preliminary process in conjunction with the HR Information Office and UoA leads/Heads of Departments.

Further information will be sought by the REDP where anything is not clear from the proforma and requests made for any additional documentation that may be required.

- 27 The REDP will reach consensus on the outcome of the cases brought before it and agree the text to form REF1b in the submission in each case.
- 28 The Chair of the REDP will advise staff who submit a case to it of the outcome of the Panel's decision and will advise them of their right to appeal should they object to the Panel's decision and only where this leads to a recommendation for non-selection (see paragraphs 39-43 below). Subject to any appeals raised, UoA leads and relevant Heads of Departments will be informed of those members of staff that have submitted a disclosure of circumstances and of the recommended reduction in the number of required outputs for REF 2014.

### ***Role of UoA leads and Heads of Departments***

- 29 As indicated in paragraph 23 above, initial recommendations on staff selection for REF 2014 based on the quality threshold criterion will be made by the UoA lead concerned in consultation with the relevant Head of Department. In arriving at a recommendation as to whether a researcher should be selected for submission, as noted in paragraph 21, the UoA lead should be guided by the recommendation from the REDP with regard to minimum number of outputs following disclosure of individual circumstances but may still judge it appropriate that the maximum number should be submitted for that member of staff. The onus is placed upon the UoA lead to check with the member of staff that the details of research activity on the basis of which the UoA lead is to make her/his recommendation are complete and correct. Furthermore, the UoA lead will take into account the panel criteria of the UoA concerned with regard to listing of the same output against more than one member of submitted staff.
- 30 The UoA lead may consult, as s/he sees fit, with other members of staff within the unit and advisor experts in the relevant subject/discipline area and who are external to UCL. The role of external advisors will be to offer an informed and impartial view of the quality of the research activity on which the UoA lead seeks a view. External advisors will not be asked to express a view as to whether an individual member of staff should be selected for submission to REF 2014. Records of any such discussions should be kept by the UoA lead.
- 31 For cases where staff are recommended for non-selection, a proforma (template at Annex 4) will be completed by the UoA lead setting out the reasons for doing so. In preparing their recommendations for selection, UoA leads may also flag cases where they feel further advice is required from the Staff Selection Review Group.
- 32 The UoA lead will then communicate all decisions reached to the UCL REF Team which will prepare a consolidated report for the relevant Staff Selection Review Group.

### ***Staff Selection Review Groups***

- 33 Four Staff Selection Review Groups corresponding to each REF main panel<sup>6</sup> will consider the recommendations for selection made by the academic leads for the UoAs which are overseen by that panel. It is expected the group will formally endorse selected staff lists without discussion except for those cases noted in paragraph 31 above where further advice has been specifically requested by a UoA lead.

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<sup>6</sup> See REF guidance – Annex D.

- 34 The group will examine in detail cases where non-selection has been recommended. Cases will be thoroughly assessed and either recommended for reconsideration by the UoA with suggested options or non-selection formally endorsed. In considering the UoA leads' recommendations, the group may also consult, as it sees fit, with other members of staff within the faculty concerned – eg with the members of a faculty research committee. Any reports from such committees or designated staff will be recorded as part of the proceedings of the group.
- 35 Each Staff Selection Review Group will satisfy itself that the UoA lead has taken due account of all relevant factors in cases of non-selection, including the REDP approved reduction of output volume due to any personal circumstances affecting the volume of research activity of the member of staff concerned.
- 36 All endorsed recommendations will be communicated back to the UoA lead(s) concerned. Staff recommended for non-selection will then be invited to a meeting as soon as is practicable with the UoA lead and relevant Head of Department where their non-selection and the reasons for this will be confirmed orally to the member of staff including an indication that this will be formally confirmed in writing (see also paragraph 39 below regarding feedback).

### ***REF Strategy Group***

- 37 Following the procedure described at paragraphs 33-36, each Staff Selection Review Group will submit to the REF Strategy Group a report, drawn up by the secretary to the group on its behalf, which lists both the staff endorsed for selection as research active and those staff for whom non-selection is recommended. The REF Strategy Group will approve both lists of staff without discussion unless deemed necessary by the Deans, eg where circumstances may be potentially contentious and it is felt that further discussion is necessary. The Strategy Group may also, if it sees fit, request from the UoA lead concerned further evidence of the quality of the research activity of a member of staff.
- 38 Where the Staff Selection Review Group has indicated its satisfaction that the UoA lead has taken due account of all relevant factors for non-selected staff, including the REDP approved reduction of output volume, the REF Manager will write a letter within three working days to the researcher concerned on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Research), with a copy to the relevant Dean, UoA lead(s) and Head of Department concerned, formally notifying the decision and giving summary feedback on the reasons for the decision.

### **Feedback and appeals against decisions not to select researchers for submission**

- 39 As indicated at paragraphs 36 and 38 above, staff not selected for submission will be provided with informal feedback following endorsement of their non-selection by the relevant Staff Selection Review Group. Formal confirmation of their non-selection will follow once the REF Strategy Group has signed off the selection lists.
- 40 Where a decision is made not to return an eligible researcher to REF 2014 as research active Category A, the researcher will have the right to appeal against such a decision on the grounds of discrimination (eg on the grounds of race, sex or disability or of a work pattern/absence that is felt not to have been taken fully into account) and/or that personal circumstances affecting the volume of her/his research activity have not been properly taken into account. The member of staff will give written notice of appeal to the REF Manager.

- 41 Appeals will be heard by an Appeals Panel consisting of three members of UCL academic staff, nominated by the Vice-Provost (Research), who: (i) reflect an appropriate gender balance; (ii) are trained in Equalities and Diversity issues; (iii) have relevant expertise; and (iv) are not a UoA lead and have not otherwise been involved in either the consideration of individual staff circumstances or the staff selection process. This panel will consider appeals, with appropriate advice from HR, from staff who have been approved for non-selection.
- 42 Appeals will be limited to issues of potential bias – this could include the belief that there is prejudice against a particular field of research or methodology – and/or that individual circumstances have not been properly taken into account. Appeals on the grounds of academic judgment of selecting staff are not eligible although appeals based on process, *eg* if a UoA lead has not sought advice from an external expert in a case where the member of staff claimed there was no source of relevant expert advice within the department or elsewhere in UCL, may be valid.
- 43 The outcome of an appeal will be conveyed in writing to the appellant by the REF Manager within three working days of the appeal hearing taking place.

### **Category C researchers**

- 44 The lists of staff recommended for selection as research active and submitted by UoA leads to the REF Strategy Group, via the Staff Selection Review Groups (see paragraph 33 above), will include details of researchers proposed for return in both categories A and C. The list of any staff eligible for return to REF 2014 but whom the UoA lead recommends, endorsed by the relevant Staff Selection Review Group, should not be selected for return will include potential Category A staff only.
- 45 The appeal procedure outlined above will be available only to UCL employees, ie staff eligible for return as Category A<sup>7</sup>.

### **Training and dissemination**

- 46 Mandatory bespoke training on equality and diversity based upon the training materials to be provided by the ECU and this Code of Practice will be provided to all UCL staff responsible for its implementation. Training will be delivered by the Head of Equalities and Diversity and will be designed (i) to ensure that those responsible for implementing the Code are well informed about their own and UCL's legal obligations regarding equal opportunities and (ii) to enable them to attain a sufficient understanding of equal opportunities issues in order to implement the Code fairly and effectively. Training will accordingly be provided to: (i) UoA leads, Heads of Departments and any other staff whom the lead/Head will consult in making a recommendation on whether a researcher should be selected, (ii) academic Vice-Provosts and Deans of Faculties, (iii) the Appeals Panel and (iv) more tailored training, involving specific case studies, for the REDP considering individual circumstances.

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<sup>7</sup> Category C researchers are defined in the REF Guidance as 'individuals employed by an organisation other than an HEI, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting unit on the census date (31 October 2013)'. Category C staff may be employed by the NHS, a Research Council unit, a charity or other organisation except for an HEI.

- 47 This Code of Practice will be accessible to all UCL staff online via the intranet. A programme of communications to UCL researchers will be operated throughout preparations of submissions and, in particular, concentrated on the disclosure of individual circumstances from eligible staff.
- 48 A summary report on UCL's submission to the REF will be made available to all UCL staff in early 2014.

### **Equality impact assessment**

- 49 An EIA will be conducted at key stages in the selection process to monitor any differential impact on groups with protected characteristics as a result of the staff selection policy: (i) following identification of the bulk of all eligible staff; (ii) at the culmination of the main selection activity but ahead of the appeals process; and (iii) in summer 2013 when submissions are being finalised. The EIA will be carried out jointly by staff from the HR Policy and Planning Team and the REF Team. The development of this code has been duly informed by the initial findings of the EIA at Annex 5.
- 50 In the event that no prima facie imbalance is found in selection rates relative to the total potential pool of staff, but an imbalance is perceived in a particular UoA submission, the Vice-Provost (Research) may request the REDP to consider the matter.

### **Joint submissions**

- 51 In cases where UCL plans to make a joint submission to a UoA with another HEI, this Code of Practice will be made available to the collaborating HEI and the Code of Practice of the collaborating HEI will be made available to the UCL UoA lead, Head of Department, Dean of Faculty and relevant Staff Selection Review Group concerned, and to the REDP. UCL is committed to ensuring that joint decision-making across HEIs does not compromise adherence either to its own Code of Practice or to the code of practice of the collaborating HEI.

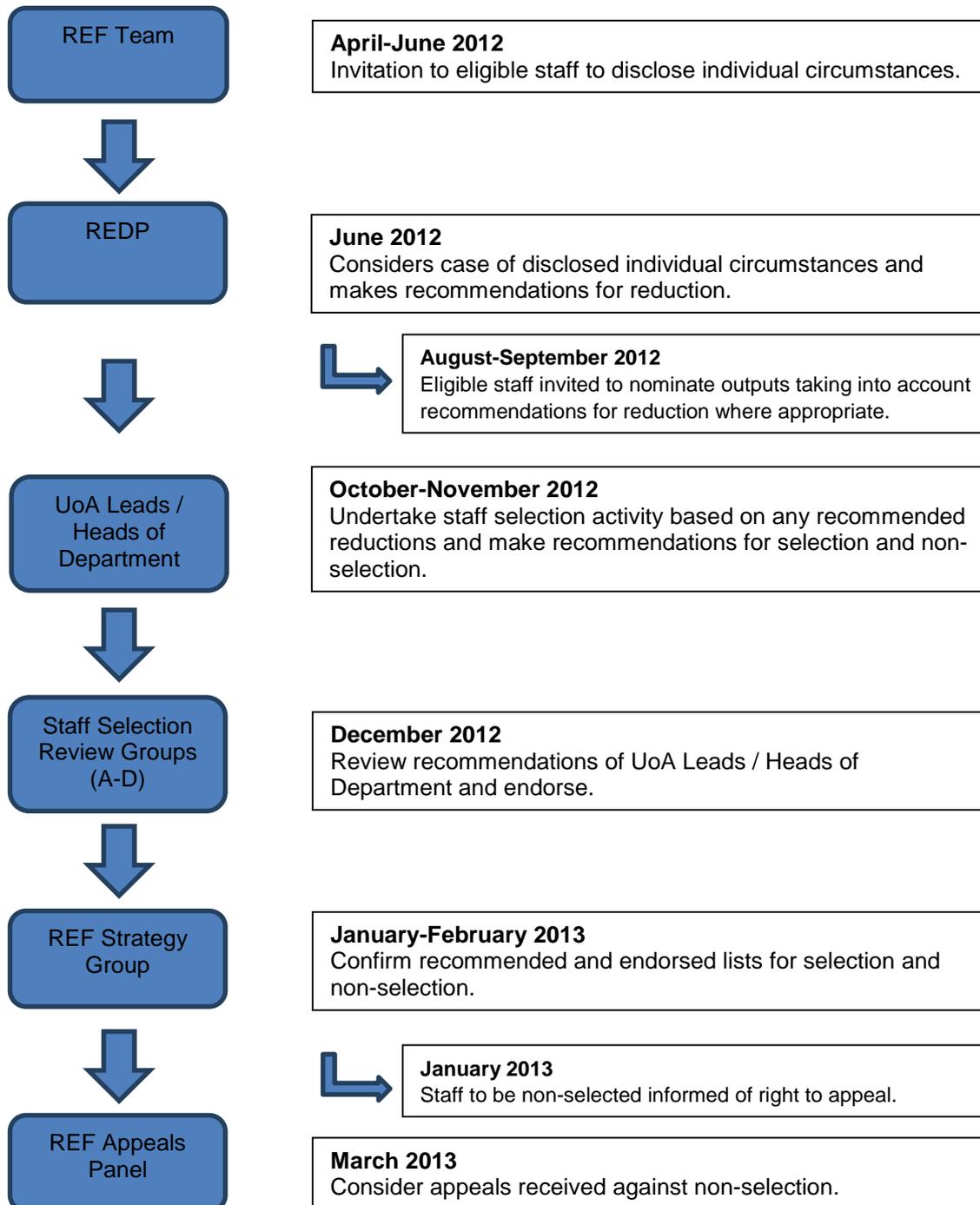
July 2012

*Key to abbreviations*

ECU	Equality Challenge Unit
HEFCs	UK higher education funding bodies
HEI	Higher education institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
REDP	UCL REF Equality and Diversity Panel
REF	Research Excellence Framework
UoA	Unit of Assessment

## Membership and Operation of Committees

Key steps and responsibilities





# REF Strategy Group

## 1. Constitution and Membership

*Ex officio*

Vice-Provosts:

Education

Enterprise

Health

International

Operations

Research [*Chair*]

Deans of Faculties:

Arts and Humanities

Brain Sciences

Built Environment

Engineering Sciences

Laws

Life Sciences

Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Medical Sciences

Population Health Sciences

Social and Historical Sciences

Director of SSEES

Director of Registry and Academic Services

Director of Research Planning

REF Manager

## 2. Terms of Reference

Subject to any particular direction that may be given by the Provost or the Vice-Provost (Research), the REF Strategy Group is charged:

- 1 to plan the structure of UCL's submissions to the UK higher education funding bodies' Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014;
- 2 to determine all aspects of policy and procedure in relation to UCL's REF 2014 preparations;
- 3 to define and monitor the implementation of a timetable for UCL's REF 2014 preparations;
- 4 to submit regular reports to the Provost's Senior Management Team on the work of the Strategy Group and the progress of UCL's planning and preparations for REF 2014.

## **Staff Selection Review Groups (SSRG)**

### **Terms of Reference**

- to review and endorse the selection of staff to be included in UCL's submissions to the UK higher education funding bodies' Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 exercise;
- to review cases where the Unit of Assessment (UoA) lead has requested further advice from the relevant SSRG;
- to review in detail cases where the selection of a member of staff has not been recommended and in particular to examine:
  - the grounds for the recommendation, in terms of the quality of the individual's research activity;
  - whether account has been taken of the criteria set out at paragraphs 16-17 of the code of practice, including any personal circumstances affecting volume of research activity as recommended by the REF Equality and Diversity Panel;
  - that the member of staff has been informed of the position;
  - whether the UoA lead and Head of Department have consulted with other staff of the department/faculty in arriving at their recommendation;
  - whether there are any other eligible staff in the department concerned whose research activity is considered to be at or below the quality level of the individual whom it is recommended should not be selected for submission but who themselves are being recommended for selection; and, if so, the grounds for their being recommended for selection (eg special circumstances which have affected their research activity);
  - whether the member of staff whom it is recommended should not be selected for submission is or has been (a) a co-author of a research publication or other output to be cited in the submission by a member of staff selected for submission or (b) has any links to impact material expected to be included in the submission;
- to endorse non-selection recommendations or refer cases back to the UoA lead concerned for reconsideration based on the evidence provided;
- to submit a report to the REF Strategy Group on all endorsements of staff selection.

## **Staff Selection Review Group (A)**

### **Constitution and Membership**

*Ex officio*

Academic leads for UoAs 1-5

Deans of Faculties [One of whom to be the Chair]:

Brain Sciences

Life Sciences

Medical Sciences

Population Health Sciences

## **Staff Selection Review Group (B)**

### **Constitution and Membership**

*Ex officio*

Academic leads for UoAs 7-15

Deans of Faculties [One of whom to be the Chair]:

Engineering Sciences

Mathematical and Physical Sciences

## **Staff Selection Review Group (C)**

### **Constitution and Membership**

*Ex officio*

Academic leads for UoAs 16-26

Deans of Faculties [One of whom to be the Chair]:

Built Environment

Laws

Social and Historical Sciences

## **Staff Selection Review Group (D)**

### **Constitution and Membership**

*Ex officio*

Academic leads for UoAs 27-36

Deans of Faculties [One of whom to be the Chair]:

Arts and Humanities

Social and Historical Sciences

Director of SSEES

# REF Equality and Diversity Panel

## 1. Constitution and Membership

*Ex officio*

Chair of Committee for Equal Opportunities [*Chair*]  
Three UCL Academic Equalities Champions

Nominated

Three academic members of staff – male and female – nominated by the Vice-Provost (Research), one from each of the three UCL Schools

## 2. Terms of Reference

- To consider personal circumstances cases and make recommendations to Unit of Assessment (UoA) leads on reduction of output volume;
- To ensure consistency in the treatment of personal circumstances across UCL;
- To ensure UCL avoids discrimination and complies with legislation;
- To promote Equalities & Diversity at every opportunity in the REF process;
- To agree the Code of Practice.

# **UCL REF Appeals Panel**

## **1. Constitution and Membership**

Nominated

Three academic members of staff – male and female – nominated by the Vice-Provost (Research), with appropriate training in Equalities and Diversity issues, having relevant discipline expertise and who are not either UoA leads and/or have otherwise been involved in the consideration of individual staff circumstances or the staff selection process.

## **2. Terms of Reference**

- To consider appeals against non-selection of staff for submission to REF2014 and in doing so:
  - a. ensure that the treatment of individual circumstances has been properly taken into account in reaching the decision not to select;
  - b. ensure that processes have been properly followed in reaching decisions.

# UCL REF staff disclosure form

To: All members of UCL staff eligible for return as Category A in REF 2014

From: Professor Stephen Smith, Chair of the UCL REF Equality and Diversity Panel

Subject: REF 2014 - consideration of individual staff circumstances

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UCL 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 UCL's Code of Practice which can be found at [www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014/cop](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014/cop).

To ensure that REF processes are fair, UCL is collecting data on individual circumstances from all staff eligible for submission as Category A. 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 UCL's 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 UCL REF 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
- = 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, UCL 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'.**

## What action do I need to take?

As you have been identified as being eligible for REF submission you are encouraged to complete and sign the attached form and return it under confidential cover to:

Andrew Cooper  
 UCL REF Manager  
 Registry and Academic Services  
 UCL

Staff without any individual circumstances to disclose are not required to complete this form but may confirm this by selecting option A in Section 1 of the form. **All forms must be received by the deadline of <insert date>**. If forms are not received by this deadline, it will be assumed that you do not have any circumstances to disclose at this stage.

Information provide in the form should be as succinct as possible and with a maximum of 500 words.

You should not provide any documentation with this form. If further information is required about any circumstances disclosed, you will be contacted by the UCL REF Team.

## Who will see the information that I provide?

### Internal to UCL

The information that you provide will be seen by members of the UCL REF Equality and Diversity Panel and the UCL REF Team only. All individuals handling individual staff circumstances will observe confidentiality and information will be stored securely.

Staff may also waive their right to confidentiality, particularly in cases of clearly defined circumstances which may already be well known to Heads of Departments and UoA Leads. In such cases, where this right is waived (see section two), the information will be made available to the relevant UoA Lead(s) and Head of Department only.

### External to UCL

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 UK higher education funding bodies' (HEFCs') 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

## What if my circumstances change?

UCL recognises that staff circumstances may change during the REF assessment period, ie between 1 January 2008 and 31 October 2013. If your circumstances change you can download a copy of the attached form at [www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014/cop/disclosure](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014/cop/disclosure).

# Individual staff circumstances disclosure form

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Unit of Assessment</b>	

## Section one:

**Please select one of the following:**

- (A) 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)
- (B) In completing this form I am seeking a reduction in research outputs. (Please complete sections two and three)

## Section two:

**Please select as appropriate:**

- I wish to waive the right to details of any circumstances I am disclosing in section three being withheld from both the UoA Lead(s) for the UoA in which I am to be considered for submission and my Head of Department.
- 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 UCL. 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 by a member of Human Resources staff.

## Section three

I wish to make UCL 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 (maximum 500 words per circumstance):

Please tick this box if, at the time of disclosure, your circumstances are ongoing.

Circumstance	Information required
Early career researcher (started career as an independent researcher on or after 1 August 2009) * "independent researcher" would be, eg a <b>first</b> appointment to an academic post such as a lectureship or the point at which the researcher <b>first</b> became a Principal Investigator or commenced a personal fellowship. Any queries on the criteria for this should be directed to <a href="mailto:uclref@ucl.ac.uk">uclref@ucl.ac.uk</a> or see <a href="http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014/cop/ecr">www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014/cop/ecr</a>	Date on which you became an early career researcher
<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: <input type="checkbox"/>
Part time employee	<b>FTE and duration in months</b>
<b>Information</b>	
Career break or secondment outside of the higher education sector	<b>Dates and duration in months</b>
<b>Information</b>	
Maternity leave, statutory adoption leave, or additional paternity leave (taken by partners of new mothers or co-adopters)	<b>For each period of leave state which type of leave was taken and the dates and duration in months</b>
<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 as appropriate:

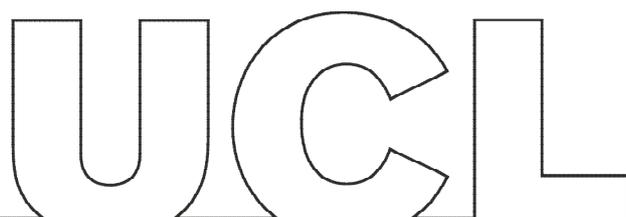
I confirm that the information provided is a true and accurate description of my circumstances.

I recognise that the information provided will be used for REF purposes and will be seen by the UCL REF Team and the UCL REF Equality and Diversity Panel.

I recognise that the information provided will also be seen by the relevant UoA Lead(s) and my Head of Department where I have waived my right to confidentiality in section two.

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 recognise that if a joint submission is made, information may be shared with another institution. Where permission is not provided UCL will be limited in the action it can take.

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


**REF2014 – recommendations for non-selection as Category A research active staff**

Employee Name:	Department:
Unit of Assessment:	Unit of Assessment Lead:
GROUNDS FOR THIS RECOMMENDATION, IN TERMS OF THE QUALITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S RESEARCH ACTIVITY	
HAS ACCOUNT BEEN TAKEN OF THE CRITERIA SET OUT AT PARAGRAPHS 16-17 OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE, INCLUDING ANY PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING VOLUME OF RESEARCH ACTIVITY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE REDP?	
HAS THE MEMBER OF STAFF BEEN INFORMED OF THE POSITION?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YES</li>   <li>• NO</li> </ul>	
HAS THE UOA LEAD/HEAD OF DEPARTMENT CONSULTED WITH OTHER STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT/FACULTY IN ARRIVING AT THEIR RECOMMENDATION?	
ARE THERE ANY OTHER ELIGIBLE STAFF IN THE UNIT CONCERNED WHOSE RESEARCH ACTIVITY IS CONSIDERED TO BE AT OR BELOW THE QUALITY LEVEL OF THE INDIVIDUAL WHOM IT IS RECOMMENDED SHOULD NOT BE SELECTED FOR SUBMISSION BUT WHO THEMSELVES ARE BEING RECOMMENDED FOR SELECTION; AND, IF SO, THE GROUNDS FOR THEIR BEING RECOMMENDED FOR SELECTION (EG SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH HAVE AFFECTED THEIR RESEARCH ACTIVITY)?	
IS/HAS THE MEMBER OF STAFF WHOM IT IS RECOMMENDED SHOULD NOT BE SELECTED FOR SUBMISSION BEEN (A) A CO-AUTHOR OF A RESEARCH PUBLICATION OR OTHER OUTPUT TO BE CITED IN THE SUBMISSION BY A MEMBER OF STAFF SELECTED FOR SUBMISSION OR (B) HAS ANY LINKS TO IMPACT MATERIAL EXPECTED TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SUBMISSION?	
UOA LEAD SIGNATURE	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT SIGNATURE
Name:	Name:
Date:	Date:

UCL EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM	
Name of Policy: REF 2014 Code of Practice	Is this New? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Or Existing? <input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment conducted by: Geoff Lang, Sarah Guise and Andrew Cooper	Date of Assessment: 27/06/2012
Department/Faculty:	Head of Department's signature:
<p>1. Evidence considered. What data or other information have you used to evaluate if this policy is likely to have a positive or an adverse impact upon protected groups when implemented?</p> <p>The code of practice was developed in line with guidance provided by the UK higher education funding bodies in the publications 'REF 2014 assessment framework and guidance on submissions' and 'Panel Criteria and Working Methods'. All HEIs are required to submit and then apply their code of practice on the fair and transparent selection of staff for submission to REF 2014.</p> <p>REF eligibility rules are largely outside UCL's control and so the selection of staff to be submitted for REF 2014 will not be completely within UCL's own control. Nevertheless, equalities data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability has been collected on eligible staff (Academic and Research staff) for each unit of assessment (Appendix A). These data will be compared against those selected during the preliminary and final selection phases at UCL. Impact Assessment results will be communicated to the REF Strategy Group prior to its ratification stage and will also be used to inform future policy and practice.</p> <p>No adverse equalities implications have been identified at this stage.</p>	
<p>2. Consultation. Have you consulted staff representatives including those from protected groups? What were their views?</p> <p>The draft Code of Practice was circulated to the UCL Equalities Groups and comments received were considered prior to the Code being finalised. The groups were in favour of the Code and suggested some helpful drafting suggestions in places, although the groups were content with its overall content. The Head of Equalities and Diversity was also involved in the development of the Code.</p>	
<p>3. Promoting equality. Does this policy have a positive impact on equality? What evidence is there to support this? Could it do more?</p> <p>The intention of the Code is to ensure the fair and transparent selection of staff for the 2014 REF. It has been written following an assessment of potential equalities issues, in consultation with UCL Equalities Groups. The code aims to raise awareness of equalities considerations and to ensure that prior to selection activity taking place, all eligible staff are invited to disclose individual circumstances that may have affected their research output during the assessment period. These are made in confidence to a central REF equality and diversity panel, who have had specialist Equalities and Diversity training, which assesses cases and makes recommendations to UoA leads. The REF Appeals panel will also check that, where an appeal is raised, all relevant evidence has been taken into account, including any special circumstances. The consideration of the quality of outputs has been separated from consideration of individual staff circumstances. The implementation of the code also supports objective 2 under UCL's Equality and Diversity strategy – 'to ensure greater understanding and engagement with equality and diversity issues throughout the university'. The Director of HR Policy and Planning and the Head of Equality and Diversity have provided specialist support to the REF Manager to ensure all relevant equality considerations are understood and reflected in drafting the code. In addition bespoke training on equality and diversity is provided to UCL staff involved in the code's implementation.</p>	

4. Identifying the adverse impact of policies

Identify any issues in the document which could have an adverse impact on the following protected groups:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 People from different age groups      | 6 Women who are pregnant or on maternity leave                       |
| 2 Disabled people                       | 7 People who are married or in a civil partnership                   |
| 3 Women and men                         | 8 Religious people or those with strongly held philosophical beliefs |
| 4 Transgender people                    | 9 Black and minority ethnic (BME) people                             |
| 5 Lesbians, gay men and bisexual people |  |

Issue Assessed <i>E.g. policy section or practice.</i>	Protected Group	Evidence <i>Refer to information gathered (1) and consultation (2) and any relevant research findings</i>	Justification <i>Can the issue be justified for academic or business reasons? Please explain.</i>	Proposed Action/Timeline <i>If the issue cannot be fully justified, identify the action(s) to be taken</i>	Person responsible for action(s)

5. Monitoring How will you monitor the impact of the policy on protected groups?

We will monitor equalities data at the culmination of the main selection process against the data already collected from the eligibility pool. Any significant issues will be highlighted and considered ahead of the appeals process. During the summer of 2013 there will be a further analysis when submissions are being finalised. The longer-term aim will be to highlight any areas for further investigation and to inform practice for future Ref-type exercises.