



Edinburgh Napier University  
Final Equality Analysis  
of the  
REF Code of Practice 2014  
on the selection of staff for the Research Excellence Framework 2014

Faculty/Service Area  <b>Office of the VP (Academic)</b>	Date of Assessment  16/12/13	Name of the proposal to be assessed  REF 2014 Code of Practice for the Selection of Staff	Responsibility for the assessment  Human Resources on behalf of the Office of the Vice-Principal (Academic)
Who participated in the EIA? Please list  Alistair Sambell (VP Academic) Alison McCleery (Director of Research Strategy & Practice) Alex Turnbull (REF Officer) Mohammed Hameed (Diversity Partner)	Is this a <b>new</b> or <b>existing</b> proposal?  Updated from initial and subsequent assessments	When will this proposal be reviewed?  n/a	
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the REF 2014 Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff	<p>The REF2014 Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff was produced in accordance with the guidance from the Higher Education Funding Councils, the Equality Challenge Unit and in consultation with the University's Senior Management and the Diversity Partner. The Code complements the University's established recruitment and selection policies and procedures, all of which have been Equality Impact Assessed. The completed impact assessments can be accessed at <a href="http://www.napier.ac.uk/diversity">www.napier.ac.uk/diversity</a></p> <p>The purpose of the REF2014 Code of Practice (the Code) was to ensure that all staff across the University were made aware of the possibility of eligibility for submission to REF2014 and that those subsequently eligible for submission to the REF were treated in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. This is consistent with the University's overall approach to equality and diversity, in that all policies are equality and diversity impact-assessed. The conduct of EIAs is normal practice across all areas of University activity as required. The Code for REF2014 was specifically designed to ensure that staff were selected on the basis of the quality of their outputs.</p>		

	<p>The Code was also designed to ensure that staff with special circumstances who wished to disclose these were eligible for mitigation with the possibility that they would not be required to submit the same number of outputs as those who were not bringing forward any mitigating circumstances.</p> <p>The Code reflects the guidance for public authorities of the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland. This guidance notes that the duty to impact assess is ongoing. Public authorities need to assess the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice against the needs of the equality duty by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring that the policy does not discriminate unlawfully</li> <li>- considering how the policy might better advance equality of opportunity</li> <li>- considering whether the policy will affect good relations between different groups.</li> </ul> <p><u>EIA Outcome</u></p> <p>The Code was uploaded to the University intranet where it was available to all staff. Information about the Code was also published in the all-staff REF bulletin and Unit of Assessment Champions were thoroughly briefed in order to cascade REF equality and diversity information.</p>
REF Accessibility	<p>The process for selection involved three stages for EIA scrutiny:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. eligibility for consideration for selection for submission;</li> <li>2. arrangements for actual selection for submission – <b>on the basis of quality alone</b> i.e. (disregarding any irrelevant characteristics);</li> <li>3. consideration for mitigation in appropriate circumstances.</li> </ol> <p>The University is committed to ensuring that all eligible staff are considered for submission without reference to irrelevant characteristics as outlined in the University’s Equality and Diversity Statement 2013 (<a href="http://www.napier.ac.uk/diversity">www.napier.ac.uk/diversity</a>). All staff - including those from groups demonstrating the characteristics listed below, some of which are neither discernible nor invariably disclosed - were encouraged to apply to be considered for submission to REF2014. No negative impact has been recorded on any one or more of the following groups relating to specified characteristics, as follows: sexual orientation; gender; disability; ECR status; maternity/caring circumstances; religious belief; ethnicity; age; transgender or</p>

transsexual status/circumstances.

The following process was used to ensure the maximum inclusion of all eligible staff with the necessary number and quality of outputs:

- all-staff email sent to invite staff to complete self-selection applications to be considered for submission, also informing them of their possible right to reductions in the number of required outputs;
- subsequent email sent to all self-selecting staff (see above) to complete an individual circumstances disclosure form backed up by information within the REF bulletin circulated to all staff;
- self and internal assessments of output quality completed for self-selected staff;
- feedback from equality and diversity-trained managers provided after internal assessment;
- external assessments conducted by appropriately briefed Critical Friends;
- feedback on reductions supplied in respect of any individual circumstances;
- decision-making meetings arranged to agree size and shape of final University submission. These meetings were chaired by the Vice-Principal (Academic) and included equality & diversity-trained staff from the REF Planning Group and the Diversity Partner;
- feedback to staff provided on the likelihood of being submitted and the eventual outcome of their application for submission throughout this decision-making process. (taking account of quality and number of outputs in the context of fit to a UOA being submitted).

#### EIA Outcome

It was made clear to all staff at the outset that they had the right to appeal the process employed to arrive at the decision on whether or not they were to be submitted if they felt it was unfairly implemented. Staff could also raise an appeal if they believed that the level of entitlement to a reduction in outputs to reflect individual staff circumstances was unfair. ENU received only one notification of a potential appeal. This was resolved through careful explanation from the UoA Champion to the staff members satisfaction before any formal process needed to be raised. The Appeals Panel, which had been duly constituted to deal with appeals, did not require to convene.

<p>Who is intended to benefit from the Code and in what way?</p>	<p>The Code existed to benefit academic staff and the University more generally. The open and transparent selection process stated within the Code was intended to encourage all academic staff members to submit an application for consideration. The clear guidelines on mitigation and the possibility of reductions was intended to benefit those staff members who considered that they could be at risk of disadvantage due to constraints limiting their ability to produce the required outputs.</p> <p><u>EIA Outcome</u>  34% of those staff who self-selected made it known to the ENU REF Team that they had individual circumstances which could result in a reduction in the number of outputs required. Not all of those individuals sought a reduction in outputs but felt confident enough to make the REF Team aware of their circumstances. Those staff members claiming a reduction in outputs due to their circumstances were dealt with following the Code. A full REF Equality, Diversity &amp; Complex Circumstances Group meeting was arranged as and when required to consider the evidence in the context of the REF mitigating circumstances guidelines. All were signed off by the Group, some of these following extensive considered discussion and occasionally referring back to the applicant for further information.</p> <p>Being submitted to REF2014 is beneficial to University from both a financial and reputational perspective; this benefits individual staff and/or research groups from a reputational and career-enhancing perspective. To this end, ENU worked hard to include as many staff as possible with the appropriate number and quality of outputs.</p>
<p>What outcomes are wanted from the Code?</p>	<p>The desired outcomes from the Code were maximum inclusion within the REF of staff with high-quality outputs, without reference to irrelevant characteristics. In relation to the EIA specifically the desired outcomes were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. to have a diverse group of staff submitting excellent outputs to REF2014 which is representative of the University staff profile;</li> <li>ii. to ensure that staff are confident about disclosing sensitive information (e.g. relating to protected characteristics) to HR staff and to a restricted number of certain other trained REF support staff, in the context of possible mitigation;</li> <li>iii. to ensure that the University complies with the requirements of the REF 2014 process;</li> <li>iv. to ensure that the University's equality and diversity principles are embedded within the selection process;</li> <li>v. to ensure that REF-specific equality and diversity training workshops and general</li> </ol>

	<p>awareness-raising of diversity matters will further embed the principles of fair and transparent selection and recruitment practices among staff;</p> <p><u>EIA Outcome</u>  The submitted staff profile closely mirrors the University profile which is seen as an endorsement of the Code and the University’s recruitment practice. A detailed breakdown of staff numbers submitted is provided below.</p>
<p>What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?</p>	<p>Factors which could contribute to the outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. robust selection methods based on quality in the context of number of outputs and fit to a UOA being submitted;</li> <li>ii. comprehensive communication strategy (staff briefings, emails, intranet postings, newsletters);</li> <li>iii. all decision-makers required to attend the REF-specific equality and diversity training workshops facilitated by the Diversity Partner up to and including the Principal and Vice Principals;</li> <li>iv. all claims for reductions verified by the Diversity Partner through a rigorous process of checking each claimants HR record;</li> <li>v. rigorous, robust and widely known and understood appeals process.</li> </ul> <p>Factors which could detract from the outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. staff not attending the required equality &amp; diversity training;</li> <li>ii. academic staff not coming forward with any known mitigating circumstances through concern for potential discrimination;</li> <li>iii. staff missing out on submission invitation/opportunities due to sickness or other absence;</li> <li>iv. staff reaction to not being selected for submission (and potential failure to be aware of the appeals process).</li> </ul> <p>Actions being taken to address any negative impacts outlined above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. staff not attending scheduled equality and diversity workshops to be trained at catch-up sessions or removed from decision-making roles;</li> <li>ii. limiting to a need-to-know basis the number of staff with access to sensitive information i.e. where this is essential for the purposes of mitigation;</li> <li>iii. managers instructed to ensure that staff on sickness or maternity leave are not left out of any such communications;</li> </ul>

- iv. sensitive de-briefing sessions with individuals offering development opportunities and/or letters ensuring 'REFable' quality outputs but which were not suitable for the overall University submission. There is also a formal appeals process;
- v. establishment of robust appeals process and wide dissemination across the University of information on how to appeal.

EIA Outcome

Due to the emphasis placed on Equality and Diversity, ENU (ultimately) had a 100% take-up of training sessions of all those staff involved in the decision-making process, up to and including the Vice-Principals and the Vice-Chancellor. (An excellent take-up of group training sessions was supplemented with two-to-one or one-to-one training in a very few exceptional cases). Line managers were asked to forward any REF communications to absent staff and late submissions were accepted beyond any cut-off date from those staff who were absent when the call went out. A programme of continuous de-briefing sessions ensured that staff were aware of any decisions as to the likelihood of them being submitted. This gave those staff who did not have an adequate number of outputs, at the required quality level, additional time to rectify their situation where this was possible. No formal appeals were lodged. Staff with individual circumstances were encouraged to disclose them throughout the REF process.

What is the diversity profile of the target group?

All academic staff (Headcount) as at 31 October 2013

	Male	Female	Total
All academic staff	446 (56%)	350 (44%)	796 (100%)
Disabled	12 (2.6% of male academic staff)	18 (5.1% of female academic staff)	30 (3.8% of 796)
White British	355 (80% of male academic staff )	276 (79% of female academic staff)	631 (79% of 796)
Minority Ethnic	92 (21% of m.a.s.)	73 (21% of f.a.s.)	165 (21% of 796)

EIA Outcome

Final numbers, by gender, of staff who self-nominated to be considered for submission to REF2014 are broadly consistent with the overall academic staff gender profile at 142 male and 103 female or 58% and 42% respectively. The final numbers of those selected for submission to REF2014 were approximately in line with both the overall academic staff gender profile and the self-nominated profile at 64 male and 43 female or 60% and 40% respectively.

Self-nominated academic staff (Headcount)

	Male	Female	Total
All self-nominated	142 (58%)	103 (42%)	245 (100%)
Number submitted	64 (60%)	43 (40%)	107 (100%)

84 staff, 34% of the total who self-nominated, made it known that they had individual circumstances for which they may have been eligible to claim a reduction in outputs; 56 (68%) were female and 27 (32%) male. Not all of those who made their circumstances known to the REF Officer claimed reductions. This openness reassured the University that staff were confident that they would not be discriminated against and nor would confidences be broken. A majority of claims for reductions by female staff are either for maternity-related absences or for part-time working (and in some cases both) and this is in line with expectations. (That having been said, a proportion of mitigation related to male staff on part-time contracts). The University's disability declaration rate among all staff currently stands at 4% which is slightly higher than the sector average.

Self-nominated staff who declared circumstances (Headcount)

	Male	Female	Total
All self-nominated staff	142 (58%)	103 (42%)	245 (100%)
Staff declaring circs	27(32%)	56 (68%)	84 (100%) (or 34% of 245)
Staff submitted with known circs	11 (28%)	29 (72%)	40 (100%) (48% of 84 total declared circs)
Staff submitted who claimed circs	5 (19%)	21 (81%)	26 (100%) (31% of 84 total declared circs OR 24% of 107 total ENU submission)

Analysis of the final disability and ethnicity breakdown was carried out. This information is restricted, in line with data protection guidance, as the small numbers could lead to the identification of individuals. There was no evidence of any one group of people being disadvantaged.

Monitoring and Evaluation

From the evidence of the EIAs undertaken, there is no reason to believe that there have been any inherent anomalies within the REF recruitment exercise. Interrogation of the staff data available took place at decision-making stages throughout the REF2014 process. The absence of any formal appeal is believed to be a good indication that all staff interested in being submitted to REF2014 were content with the fairness of the process. Feedback was given to staff throughout the process. Feedback from staff will be considered for any future assessment exercise.