

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Step 1 – Identify the policy

The term *policy* is interpreted broadly in equality legislation, and refers to anything that describes what we do and how we expect to do it. It can range from published University policies and procedures to the everyday customs and practices – sometimes unwritten – that contribute to the way our policies are implemented and how our services are delivered.

Published statements of policy are a useful starting point for equality impact assessments, as they establish the overall purpose of particular activities. Please use this form to document the assessment of the likely impact of this policy on people with Protected Characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Policy title	Code of Practice Governing the Selection of Staff for Inclusion in Submissions to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014
Faculty / Support Service carrying out the assessment	Research, Development and Commercial Services (RDCS)
New or previously approved policy?	New (although it is derived from our equivalent Code of Practice Governing the Selection of Staff for Inclusion in Submissions to the Research Assessment Exercise 2008
Date of approval / last review (if known)	Not previously EIA reviewed and approved
Name and role of Assessor(s)	Dr. Tim Brooks (REF Manager, RDCS) Prof. Caroline Strange (Assistant Director, RDCS)

Step 2 – Further information

1. Who is responsible for the policy that is being assessed?	The policy was developed by Prof. Caroline Strange (Assistant Director, RDCS) and Dr. Tim Brooks (REF Manager, RDCS) in consultation with members of the REF Strategy Group. It is derived from an equivalent policy document that governed our selection of staff for RAE 2008, and follows various guidance materials prepared by the REF team based at HEFCE, working on behalf of the four Higher Education funding councils in the UK, and by additional best practice material developed by the Equality Challenge Unit, which exists to promote equality and diversity in higher and further education.
2. Describe the main aims, objectives and	The purpose of the policy is to set out the

purpose of the policy	<p>processes and criteria which our University will adopt in preparing its submissions for REF 2014, and in particular the selection of staff for submission to REF. The aim is to ensure that staff are selected on the basis of the eligibility, quality and fit of their research outputs only, with due regard having been taken of any individual circumstances that might have constrained productivity during the REF period, and to ensure that staff are not discriminated against on the basis of any personal characteristics, both those defined as protected characteristics by the Equality Act 2010 and the regulations of the REF 2014. The intention is to ensure that these processes are transparent and fair. It is worth emphasising that the purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of opportunity to be submitted to the REF, not equality in submission to the REF.</p>
<p>3. Are there associated objectives of the policy? If so, please explain. <i>Examples include statutory requirements, sector initiatives, etc.</i></p>	None
<p>4. Who is expected to benefit from this policy?</p>	<p>The beneficiaries will be staff eligible for submission to the REF, as the implementation of the policy sets out the basis for their consideration for inclusion in submissions very clearly, and explains how we will take account of any individual circumstances that may have constrained productivity. This will enable consistent treatment across the institution and will enable us to ensure that selections are made on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit alone, thereby maximising the possible size of the submission.</p> <p>The institution will clearly also be a beneficiary as by making the best possible submission, the institutional return in terms of reputational gain (league tables) and income (QR funding) will be maximised.</p>
<p>5. Who has been consulted on this policy?</p>	<p>The policy was developed by Prof. Caroline Strange and Dr. Tim Brooks (RDSCS), in consultation with the members of the REF Strategy Group (chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, with Faculty Directors of</p>

	<p>Research and representation from HR Services). It was circulated for comment and endorsement by the Chair of the Equality and Diversity Group, by the members of our Research Committee, by our Research Training and Ethics Manager, and by representatives of UCU. It was sent to our Professors and Readers, to Deans and Deputy Deans, and UoA Convenors, who had the opportunity to comment. It has also been reviewed and approved by CMT and is presently in the process of submission and approval at Senate.</p>
<p>6. How has the policy been explained to those who would be directly or indirectly affected by it?</p>	<p>The policy has not yet been widely explained, and has been circulated only to those individuals who are listed above under 'consultation'. It is intended that once the REF Equality and Diversity Panel has approved it, we will circulate it to all staff eligible for submission to the REF, i.e. those who will be affected by it, including to eligible staff absent for an extended period at that time. It will be available via our intranet until at least the beginning of 2015, after which it will be published externally both by ourselves and by the REF team at HEFCE. We will provide training sessions, mandatory for 'designated staff' (i.e. those involved in making selections of staff for submission) but which other interested staff are welcome to attend. We expect all designated staff to promote the Code within their areas of responsibility.</p>
<p>7. What outcome(s) are meant to be achieved from this policy?</p>	<p>Firstly, to ensure that all eligible staff are considered for submission solely on the basis of the eligibility, quality and fit of their outputs, rather than on the basis of personal characteristics. Secondly, to ensure that where research productivity has been constrained due to recognised individual circumstances, these circumstances are taken into account in calculating the required number of outputs an individual must submit. This will influence the results of the REF exercise which in turn will have impact in terms of league table positions and funding.</p>
<p>8. What factor(s) could contribute to the outcome(s)?</p>	<p>Ensuring that the process of assessment is open and transparent, to encourage all eligible staff to engage with and provide</p>

	sufficiently detailed information to enable the effective assessment of their portfolio of research and consideration of any individual circumstances that might be taken into account.
9. What factor(s) could detract from these outcome(s)?	Failing to be open and transparent, giving the impression that selection is in some way based on personal characteristics rather than on the eligibility, quality and fit of outputs, and/or not considering any reductions due to individual circumstances. This may mean some individuals failing to engage and to provide sufficiently detailed information to allow the effective assessment of their portfolio of research.

Step 3 – Assess the impact on different groups of people

10. The Equality Act 2010 lists nine Protected Characteristics: gender; race, including nationality; disability; sexual orientation; religion or belief; age; transgender; maternity / pregnancy; and marital / civil partnership status (for employment policies).
In the table below, please indicate the kind of impact the policy is expected to have on people in the following equality target groups, and explain the reason(s) for your choice.

Positive impact: a policy or practice where the impact on a particular group of people is more positive than for other groups, e.g., accessible website design. It can also include legally permitted positive action initiatives designed to remedy workforce imbalance, such as job interview guarantee schemes for disabled people.

Negative impact: a policy or practice where the impact on a particular group of people is more negative than for other groups (e.g., where the choice of venue for a staff social occasion prevents members of a particular religion or belief from taking part).

Neutral impact: a policy or practice with neither a positive nor a negative impact on any group or groups of people, compared to others.

Equality Target Group	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral impact	Reason(s)
Gender - Men			X	The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. Typically men are over-represented by comparison to women in research assessment exercises and the selection of men is not seen to be problematic. It is unlikely that men will be positively impacted upon by the emphasis in the policy on equality of treatment

				<p>purely on the basis of gender. However, the policy will not have a negative impact upon them. (Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity take into account circumstances resulting from gender such as paternity leave, which will have a positive impact on men in this position).</p>
Gender - Women	X			<p>The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. Typically women have been under-represented by comparison to men in research assessment exercises, and the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit (not on the basis of gender) will have a positive impact. Secondly, elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity take into account the various constraints that affect the productivity of female staff, thereby having a positive impact. (See also pregnancy and maternity, below).</p>
People from black and minority ethnic communities	X			<p>The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. Typically, people from BME communities have been under-represented in research assessment exercises, and the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit (not on the basis of race, which is in any case illegal) will have a positive impact. . (Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances do not, of course, take race directly into account; but do regard the impact of racist behaviours on an individual as a potential constraint upon</p>

				productivity, enabling their selection and thereby having a positive impact on affected individuals).
Disabled people	X			The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. Typically, disabled people have been less likely to be selected in research assessment exercises than non-disabled people, and the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research eligibility, quality and fit (rather than on the basis of a disability) will have a positive impact. Secondly, elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances take disability into account, thereby having a positive impact.
Lesbian, gay, or bisexual people	X			The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. No comparative information is available to show if there is any correlation between sexual orientation and the likelihood of selection in research assessment exercises. Nonetheless, the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit rather than on the basis of a personal characteristic, will have a positive impact. (Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances do not, of course, take sexual orientation directly into account; but do regard the impact of homophobic behaviours on an individual as a potential constraint upon productivity, enabling their selection and thereby having a positive impact on affected individuals).

Transgender people	X			<p>The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. No comparative information is available to show if there is any correlation between transgender people and the likelihood of selection in research assessment exercises. Nonetheless, the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit, rather than on the basis of a personal characteristic, will have a positive impact. Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances take account of the process of gender reassignment. It is also the case that transgender people may be particularly uncomfortable about making their position known, and the policy makes it clear that the information presented as part of the necessary REF requirements will be held securely thereby having further positive impact on this group.</p>
Age - Older people			X	<p>The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. Typically previous research assessment exercises have tended to favour older people, equating experience with quality, It is unlikely that people will be positively impacted upon by the emphasis in the policy on equality of treatment purely on the basis of age. However the policy will not have a negative effect.</p>
Age - Younger people (17 – 25)			X	<p>The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. However, given the realities of the research career path it is unlikely that colleagues in the specific age range will be in a position to be returned to REF</p>

				2014, regardless of the equality measures provided in this policy. The policy is not therefore going to be of benefit to this group; at the same time, it is not going to impact negatively. (Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances make allowances for the contributions made by “early career researchers”, who may be younger colleagues).
Religion or belief groups	X			The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. No comparative information is available to show if there is any correlation between religion or belief and the likelihood of selection in research assessment exercises. Nonetheless, the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit, rather than on the basis of a personal characteristic, will have a positive impact. (Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances do not, of course, take religion or belief directly into account; but do regard the impact of prejudicial behaviours on an individual as a potential constraint upon productivity, enabling their selection and thereby having a positive impact on affected individuals).
Pregnancy / maternity	X			The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. No comparative information is available to show if there is any correlation between pregnancy and maternity and the likelihood of selection in research assessment exercises, though in terms of gender, women aged between 30 and 50 are

				<p>particularly unlikely to be selected, in which pregnancy and maternity may be a factor. Nonetheless, the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit, rather than on the basis of a personal characteristic, will have a positive impact. Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances set out special arrangements relating to pregnancy and maternity, thereby having a positive impact.</p>
<p>Marital / civil partnership status (employment policies)</p>	X			<p>The purpose of the policy is to ensure equality of treatment. No comparative information is available to show if there is any correlation between marital or civil partnership status and the likelihood of selection in research assessment exercises. Nonetheless, the emphasis in the policy on selections being purely on the basis of research output eligibility, quality and fit, rather than on the basis of a personal characteristic, will have a positive impact. (Elements of the policy designed to recognise constraints on productivity due to individual circumstances do not, of course, take marital or civil partnership status directly into account; but do regard the impact of prejudicial behaviours on an individual as a potential constraint upon productivity, enabling their selection and thereby having a positive impact on affected individuals)</p>

Step 4 – Promoting equality

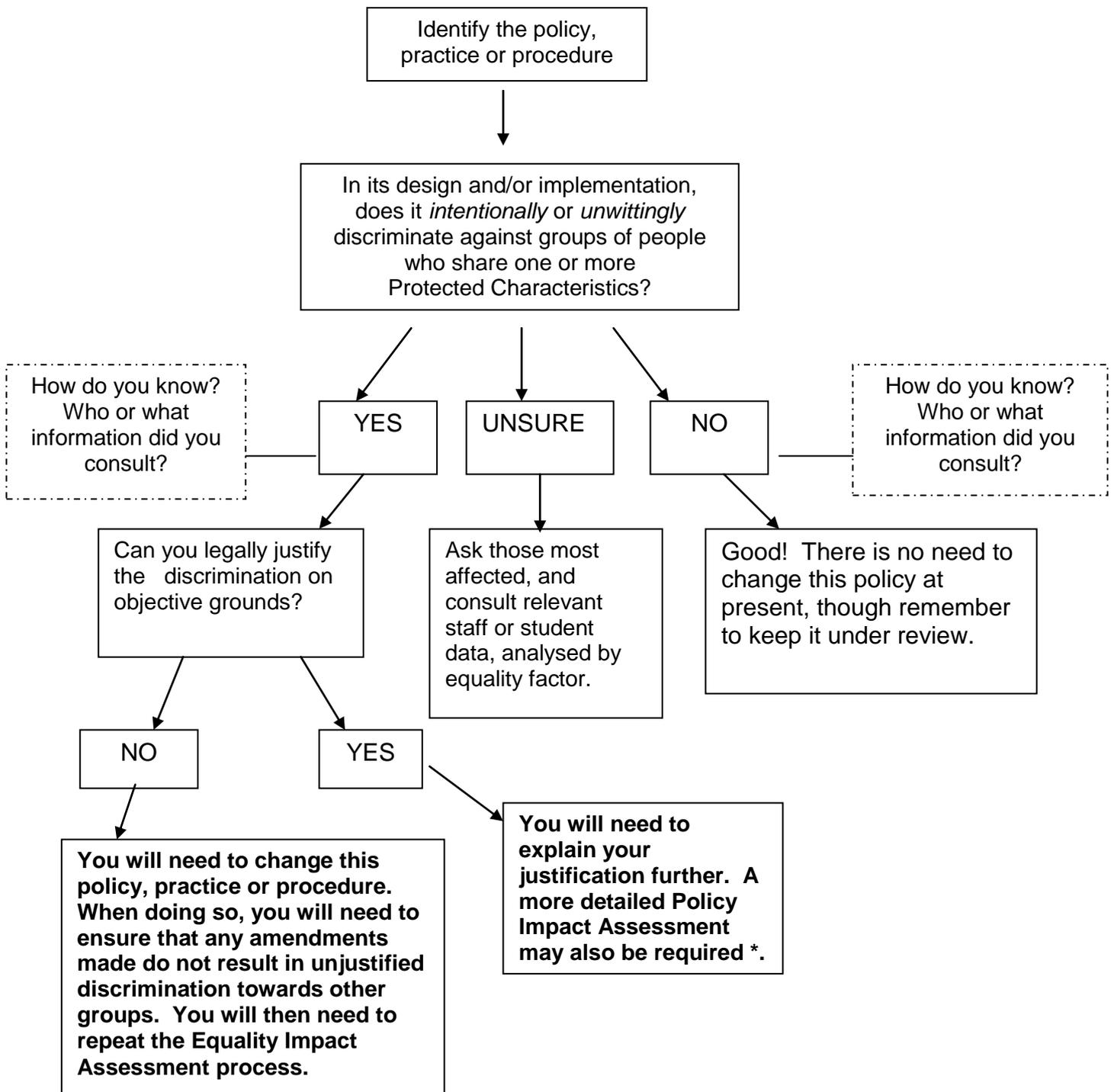
<p>11. Please give a brief description of how this policy advances equality or equality of opportunity.</p>	<p>Analysis by HEFCE of the last research assessment exercise, RAE 2008, demonstrated that by comparison to the known demographics</p>
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	<p>of academic staff in the UK, certain groups had been over- and under-represented in the selection of staff. For example, 67% of male permanent academic staff were selected, by comparison with 48% of female permanent academic staff. In response to this, the guidance developed for the REF emphasised and embedded equality and diversity issues. In particular processes were provided to allow institutions to recognise the constraints under which various groups of staff had been working, to enable their submission with fewer than the “normal” expectation of outputs, thereby providing institutions with the confidence to select these staff without fear of being penalised for “missing” outputs. This policy, developed on the basis of REF and ECU guidance, takes these processes and explains how they will be put into practice in our selection processes. Implementation of the policy will therefore advance equality of opportunity.</p>
<p>12. If there is no evidence that the policy advances equality, what changes, if any, could be made to achieve this?</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>13. If there is a negative impact on any equality target groups, can this impact be legally and objectively justified? If yes, please explain how. (If no, then a full Equality Impact Assessment should be completed*).</p>	<p>No negative impact on any equality target groups has been identified.</p>

Step 5 – Monitoring effectiveness

<p>14. How will you demonstrate that this policy or procedure, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? <i>In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this.</i></p>	<p>We will undertake equality analyses at various stages of our preparations for REF 2014, starting with the “dummy run” undertaken in early 2012. Individuals submitted for assessment were self-selected. As our preparations continue and we implement this policy while refining our selection of staff on the basis of the eligibility, quality and fit of their research outputs, we will repeat the equality analyses and compare, not less than once (on the basis of our final selection in November 2013), though we will consider further monitoring at other key stages. This should allow us to track the success of this policy. It is important to note that the aim of the policy is to ensure equality of opportunity to be submitted</p>
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Equality Impact Assessment Flowchart



*** Recommended reading:**

Conducting Impact Assessments for Equal Opportunities in Higher Education. September 2007, HEFCE and Equality Challenge Unit. This publication is available online in .pdf and text format at: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/>

Note: The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are: gender; race, including nationality; disability; sexual orientation; religion or belief; age; transgender; maternity / pregnancy; and (for employment policies) marital / civil partnership status.