

Aston University

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Name of strategy, project or policy	Research Excellence Framework 2014 Code of Practice Version 1.3 (September 2013) which describes the arrangements for selecting staff for inclusion in REF2014		
2. What is the purpose of the strategy, project or policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that REF2014 selection processes are fair and transparent • To ensure that the University fulfils its legal responsibilities in relation to equality and employment law • To fulfil the requirements of the REF2014 Assessment Framework and Guidance on Submissions 		
3. Who does this strategy, project or policy affect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All academic staff • Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), Executive Deans, Associate Deans of Research • REF Convenors 		
4. What are the sources of the data you have used to undertake the impact assessment?	Source of data used	yes	no
	Survey(s)		√
	Statistical database(please specify)	√	
	Consultation results	√	
	Interviews	√	
	Academic publications		√
	Specially commissioned research		√
	Other		√
5. Please give details of sources where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trent (HR/Payroll system for data on protected characteristics of academic staff) • PURE (research information database for information on submissions) • Individual Circumstances Forms 		
6. What were the key stages/activities involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Code of Practice on the selection of staff for inclusion in the REF based on the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity. • Brief key staff involved in determining REF submissions on Code of Practice and equality duty • Identify the eligible pool of staff by reference to 		

	<p>REF2014 definitions of eligibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish base line quality data on the eligible pool by identifying proportions of eligible staff by age, disability, ethnicity and gender • Invite staff to declare circumstances which have significantly constrained their ability to work productively throughout the assessment period. • Assess the estimated permitted reduction in the number of outputs required for REF2014 • Communicate proposed reductions in outputs to relevant individuals and Unit of Assessment (UoA) leaders • Select staff for inclusion • Hear appeals against initial inclusion decisions • Communicate outcomes of appeals to relevant individuals and UoA leaders • Revise Code of Practice for Business and Management Studies Unit of Assessment (UoA 19) • Select staff for inclusion in UoA 19 • Hear appeals against initial inclusion decisions for members of staff in UoA 19. • Communicate outcomes of appeals for staff in UoA 19 to relevant individuals and UoA leaders • Review inclusion decisions – examine reasons for exclusion of eligible staff, checking for potential cases of discrimination • Finalise submission
<p>7. What are the main findings from your analysis of this data?</p>	<p>An initial analysis showed that the number of staff who had declined to state their sexual orientation or religion and belief were so great that no meaningful conclusions could be drawn from an analysis of these characteristics. We therefore decided to limit our analysis to Gender, ethnicity, disability and age.</p> <p>See Appendix 1 for a summary of key data.</p>
<p>8. Do the findings suggest that this policy or function has an adverse impact on particular groups,</p>	<p>The final analysis was carried out after the Code of Practice had been revised for Business and Management Studies Unit of Assessment (UoA) revising the tariff for UoA 19 from 11*s to 12*s. This had the overall result of increasing the total proportion of staff not submitted from 32.14% to</p>

<p>either directly or indirectly? If yes, please specify</p>	<p>39.62%.</p> <p>It also had a negative impact on females, with the proportion of eligible females not submitted to UoA 19 being 68.57% as compared with 50.63% males not submitted. An equality analysis carried out prior to the increase in tariff for UoA 19 predicted that the proportions of staff who would not be included in UoA19 would be 50% (female) and 41.03% (male).</p> <p>Out of all the staff eligible for inclusion in the REF, female staff, BME staff, disabled staff and staff under 31 and over 61 years of age were less likely to be submitted to the REF than their counterparts (see Appendix 1).</p>
<p>9. Do the findings suggest that this policy or function has a positive impact on particular groups? If yes, please specify</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>10. As a result of the assessment what action will you take, if any?</p>	<p>As a consequence of the scrutiny of the decisions taken within this process, despite their apparent negative impact we are confident that they were taken for reasons of research quality and while it put people of particular groups at a disadvantage, this was a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim and there does not appear to have been any less discriminatory alternative.</p> <p>However, we now need to investigate the reasons behind the proportionally lower levels of inclusion of female staff, BME staff, disabled staff and staff under 31 and over 61 years of age to improve their levels of inclusion for the next submission.</p>
<p>11. Where applicable, please list the key recommended changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to address the findings shown for the low inclusion of staff under 31 years of age which became apparent early in 2013, a review of the development of ECRs was undertaken by the PVC Research and presented to the University Executive. The consequence of this has been the formation of an ECR Forum, lowered teaching loads for ECRs during their first 3 years, a structured mentoring scheme involving the completion of a Career Development plan and a

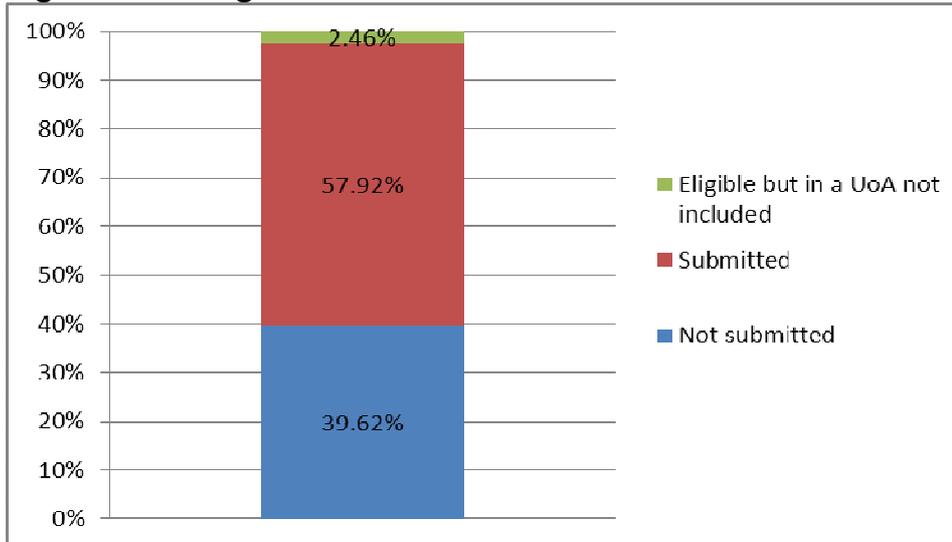
	<p>training needs analysis linked to their PDR. All ECRs will now also attend a new ECR development programme of short courses provided by Staff and Graduate Development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University Research Committee will review current practices in relation to support for staff in publishing and put in place a publication strategy linked to PDRs which support staff to publish at all stages of their careers. This will consider systematic support, training and development, and mentoring initially following on from our experiences gained with the new support programme for ECRs • To address the low inclusion of women, the University will continue to support the two STEM Schools with their Athena SWAN applications and Aston Business School with its ECU Gender Charter Mark application 	
<p>12. Committee or Panel to which any recommendations will be reported</p>	<p>School Research Committees University Research Committee Equality & Diversity Steering Group</p>	
<p>13. Impact Assessment Leader</p>	<p>Name and Position</p> <p>Jane Tyrrell Associate Director of HR</p>	<p>Signature</p> 

Summary of REF 2014 Equality Analysis

An initial analysis showed that the number of staff who had declined to state their sexual orientation or religion and belief were so great that no meaningful conclusions could be drawn from an analysis of these characteristics.

1. Overall Submission

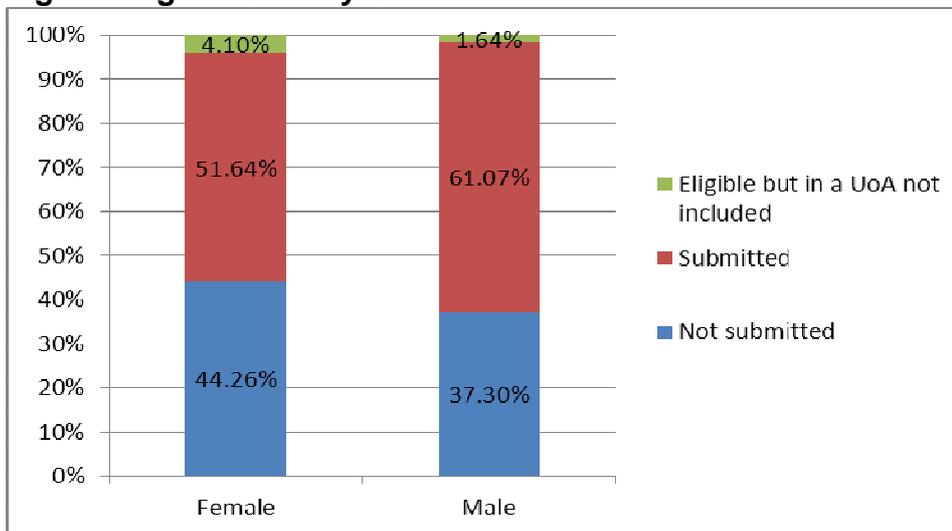
Fig 1 - Total Eligible Staff



- A total of 366 staff were eligible to be submitted, of whom 9 were not considered as the University did not submit to a Unit of Assessment (UoA) in which they could be included.
- 57.92% of eligible staff were submitted.

2. Gender

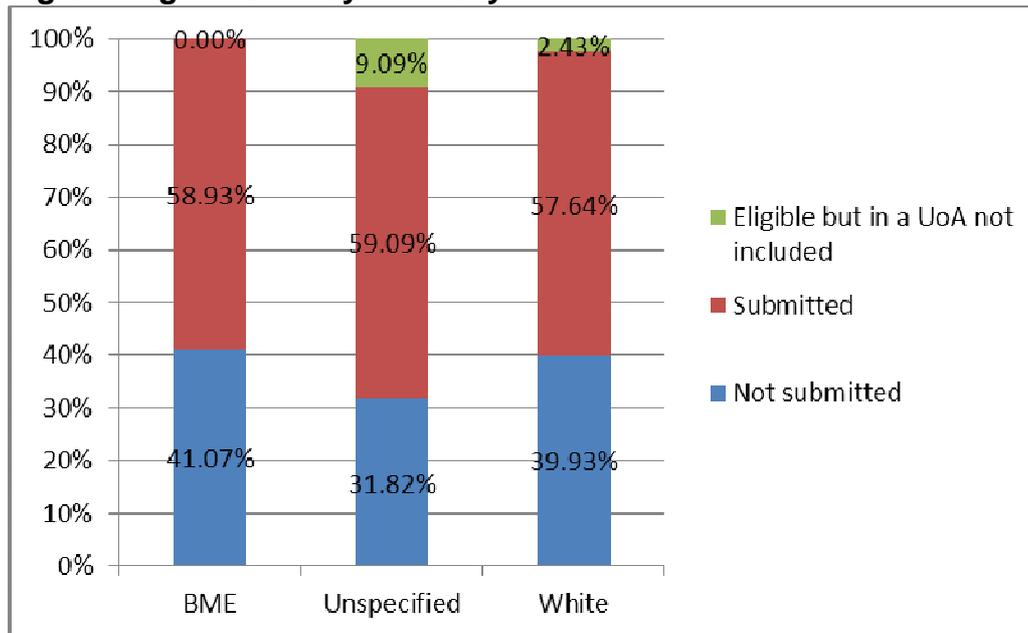
Fig 2 – Eligible Staff by Gender



- There were 122 eligible females and 244 eligible males.
- A greater proportion of female staff were eligible but not included (44.26%) compared to males (37.30%).
- A greater proportion of eligible females (4.1%) than males (1.64%) were not submitted as the University did not submit to a UoA in which they could be included.

3. Ethnicity

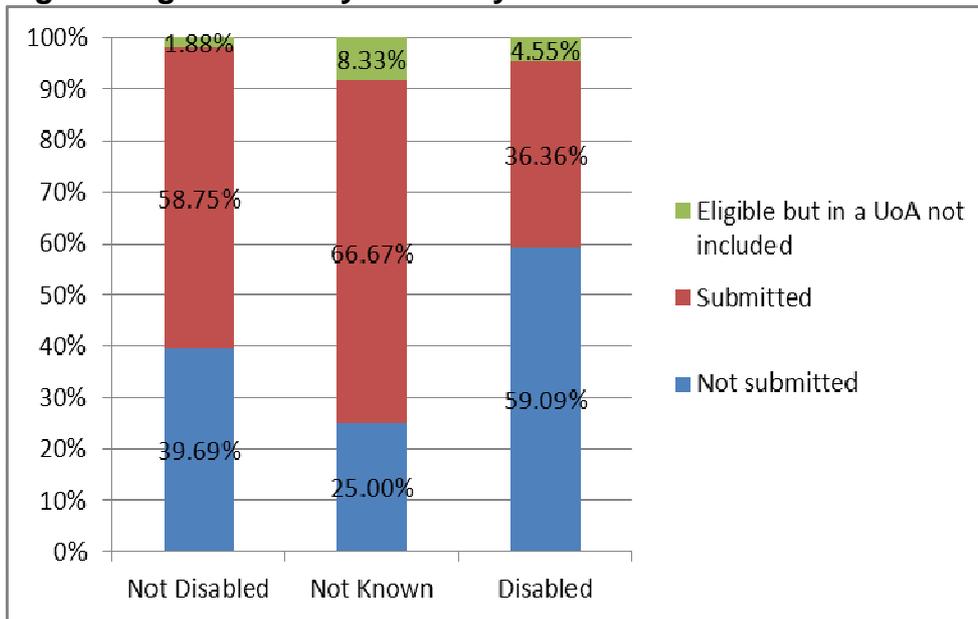
Fig 3 – Eligible Staff by Ethnicity



- There were 56 eligible BME staff, 22 eligible unspecified staff and 288 eligible white staff.
- Slightly more BME staff were eligible but not included (41.07%) than unspecified staff (31.82%) or white staff (39.93%)
- A greater proportion of unspecified staff (9.09%) than white staff (2.43%) were not submitted as the University did not submit to a UoA in which they could be included, but given the relatively small numbers of unspecified staff, this is not significant.

4. Disability

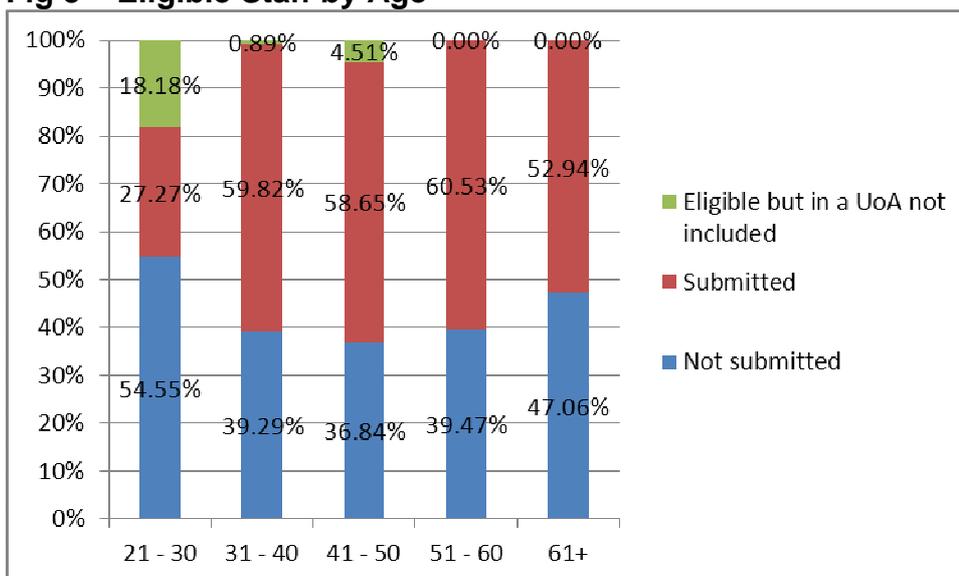
Fig 4 – Eligible Staff by Disability



- There were 320 eligible non-disabled staff, 24 eligible staff whose disability status was not known and 22 eligible disabled staff.
- More disabled staff were eligible but not included (59.09%) than not known staff (25%) or non-disabled staff (39.69%)
- A greater proportion of not known staff (8.33%) than disabled (4.55%) or non-disabled staff (1.88%) were not submitted as the University did not submit to a UoA in which they could be included.

5. Age

Fig 5 – Eligible Staff by Age



- There were 11 staff in the 21 to 30 age group, 112 in the 31 to 40 age group, 133 in the 41 to 50 age group, 76 in the 51 to 60 age group and 34 in the 60 plus age group
- More staff in the 21 to 30 age group were eligible but not included (54.55%) than in any other age group.
- A greater proportion of staff in the 21 to 30 age group (18.18%) than in any other age group were not submitted as they were in a UoA which the University decided not to submit.