

Research Assessment Exercise 2008 and Equality

Equality code of practice summary for staff

Code of Practice 2 - Summary for Staff who meet the criteria for possible submission into Category A

1. The University RAE Equality Code of Practice sets out the criteria and approach to securing the best possible outcome for the University in RAE 2008 whilst at the same time ensuring that the University discharges its legal responsibilities as an employer. It seeks to ensure transparency and fairness in the decision making process within the University over the selection of eligible staff for submission into the RAE.
2. The Code of Practice details the process by which the University will make decisions about the selection of staff who are eligible for submission into the 2008 RAE as Category A, namely staff such as yourselves who hold, or are likely to hold, academic contracts of employment with the University and are on the University payroll on the RAE Census Date of 31 October 2007.
3. The decision about which eligible staff to select for submission is a University one; however such decisions must be justifiable in the sense that they do not display any unjust discrimination.
4. This document is intended to provide a quick reference guide for eligible Category A staff of the key points to note about the RAE Equality Code of Practice. It assumes that the reader meets the criteria to be eligible for possible submission into Category A and seeks to describe what the RAE Equality Code of Practice means for them.
5. This summary should be read in conjunction with the full University RAE Equality Code of Practice which can be found on the University's RAE Website at www.xxxxx.ac.uk
6. The University Code of Practice will continue to evolve in light of equalities legislation.

Decision making framework

7. The decisions about the eligible staff to be selected for submission into RAE2008 will be made at various University levels. These include by Departments, by Faculties and by the University in the form of the RAE Senior Advisory Board. The exact role occupied by faculties and their constituent departments will vary since this is dependent on the synergies between University departments and the subject coverage of the RAE UoAs. Your department and/or faculty will be able to provide further information about the decision-making process and decision-makers applicable to you.
8. Decision-makers have been selected on the basis of their roles within the University and their subject knowledge and expertise. They will be expected to have, or acquire sufficient knowledge of each eligible staff member's research work along with any circumstances which may have impacted their performance over the assessment period (since 1 January 2001), further information about which is provided in paragraph 11 below. In addition, they will be aware of, and hold a personal responsibility towards, all relevant current equality legislation so that their decisions

can be informed by this.

Factors which will govern the selection of eligible staff

9. Decision-makers will consider a number of research indicators when deciding whether to select you for submission into RAE 2008, as follows:
 - a. The quality of your research outputs, i.e. those outputs where you are a named (co)author, published during the period 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2007;
 - b. Your income (i.e. spend) from external research grants and contracts, i.e. those where you are a named investigator, during the period 1 January 2001 to 31 July 2007;
 - c. The numbers of research students and research assistants whom you have supervised during the period 1 January 2001 to 31 July 2007 and are supervising on the census date of 31 October 2007;
 - d. Any relevant measures of esteem (including awards, prizes etc) awarded;
 - e. Your overall contribution to the research environment;
 - f. Any circumstances which may have impacted your research performance over the assessment period (see paragraph 11 below);
 - g. The sub-panel assessment criteria.
10. These indicators will be used to form a view about your research quality. The first item - the quality of your research outputs - will count most highly. If your research is considered to be of insufficient quality relative to other University staff within that UOA (and any relevant sub-areas) you are unlikely to be selected for submission into the RAE. The final decision will also be subject to the RAE Advisory Board's (or nominees') judgement of the most advantageous overall profile for the University, or for a given UoA.

Awareness of specific circumstances for individual staff

11. Paragraph 9f above notes that one of the factors for consideration when agreeing which staff to select for submission into the RAE is any circumstance which may have had an impact on your research performance and capability during the assessment period. The individual circumstances are outlined in paragraph 39 of the Generic Statement of the RAE 2008 Panel criteria and working methods and are described in more detail in the RAE sub-panel assessment criteria statements. These are available at: <http://www.rae.ac.uk/pubs/2006/01/>.
12. If you have experienced one or more of the specific circumstances described in the relevant sub-panel criteria statement during the RAE assessment period (i.e. since 1 January 2001), then you are invited, if you wish, to provide a confidential written statement to your Head of Department/Faculty (HoD). The statement should, where possible, be made on the pro-forma, which is available on the University's RAE Website at www.xxxxx.ac.uk. Please ensure that your statement includes a description of the circumstance, its timing, duration and the impact on your ability to carry out research.
13. In all cases, your form will be passed confidentially by the HoD to the University for the purposes of equality monitoring. In addition, if the decision-maker chooses to provide this information in the RAE submission, then the content of your form will be included, confidentially in form RA5b of the University's RAE submission.
14. Any such statements are captured for RAE purposes only and will be considered by

RAE decision-makers when deciding whether to select you for submission into the RAE.

15. The RAE sub-panels have, in their criteria statements, been clear that they will consider individual circumstances on the basis of their impact on the volume of research work produced during the assessment period. This means, that where an individual returns fewer than the maximum four research outputs and a valid individual circumstance applies, the sub-panel can elect not to penalise the individual for submitting fewer outputs. The University decision-makers will adopt the same approach and thus consider any individual circumstances on the basis of whether they had a material impact on the volume of research produced by an individual during the assessment period.

Notification of selection for submission

16. The University has agreed that all eligible members of Category A staff ought to receive information, on a frequent basis, about whether they are likely to be selected for submission into RAE2008. Hence, you will receive written confirmation from your HoD (or nominee) of your RAE status (namely whether you are likely to be selected for submission into RAE2008). These notifications will be provisional at that point in time and hence may be revisited for good reason.
17. This information will be provided to you at the following points in time:
 - a. December 2006
 - b. End May 2007
 - c. 7 November 2007 *if* a change in decision has taken place between the previous notification and that date
 - d. End December 2007 to give an absolute final confirmation after the RAE submission deadline.
18. If you have not been informed of your likely RAE status by the dates specified, you should contact your HoD for further information.
19. For information on the profiles of staff in the University's RAE submission, you should contact your HoD.

Complaints

20. A complaints procedure forms an integral part of our code of practice and seeks to address any perceived unfair discrimination, concerns about process (including if it is felt that procedure has not been followed) or circumstances where previously unavailable evidence has come to light. The RAE is a qualitative process in which judgements are made about the quality of research of individual members of staff. The judgements are subjective, based on factual information. Hence, disagreement with the decision alone would not be appropriate grounds for an appeal.
21. If you believe that you have appropriate grounds for a complaint, then you should take the following action(s):
 - a. HoD's Stage. You should request a meeting with your HoD to outline the grounds for possible unfair discrimination (this request should ideally be made in writing). A meeting should then take place within 10 days of the request and the outcome followed up within 7 days of the meeting.
 - b. University Panel Stage. If you remain dissatisfied, then you should submit formal

written notification to the Head of HR Operations, stating what action has been taken to date and the reasons why you remain dissatisfied. A University Panel will meet, which will comprise:

- i. A Pro Vice-Chancellor who acts as Chair.
- ii. A Dean (who is not connected to the faculty concerned).
- iii. You may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague.
- iv. A member from HR will assist.