

## **EIA on University of Westminster's policy and procedures for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research**

### **1. Introduction**

The objective of this EIA is to monitor and provide information on how the University's policy and processes for identifying staff with significant responsibility for research, as set out in our [REF Code of Practice](#) (section 2), may have impacted on equality and diversity in our submission to REF2021, with the aim of ensuring that our processes support colleagues from protected groups to participate fully in REF. The EIA is the responsibility of the University REF E&D group which reports to the REF2021 Sub-committee.

### **2. Background**

From our inception, the University of Westminster has provided an environment and culture committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusivity. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group, established in 2018-19, has continued to work through and with our established Colleague networks to manage and implement the University's EDI Action Plan.

The Research Excellence Framework is conducted by Research England on behalf of the UK higher education funding bodies. The REF informs the selective allocation of QR funding, provides public evidence of the benefits of research investment and supports the establishment of standards of research quality. The REF is organized into 34 subject sub-panels or units of assessment, of which the University of Westminster submitted to 13. Institutions make submissions at Unit level. For REF2021 there is also a pilot exercise where institutions submit an institutional level environment statement to provide contextual information.

The procedural framework for the University's submission to REF2021 is set out in our Code of Practice and was developed with support from staff and with the agreement of UCU. Policy and processes are set out in such a way as to apply equally to all academic colleagues. Those individuals at the University of Westminster involved in REF2021 decision-making processes are expected to be fully conversant with equal opportunities issues and the legislative environment and its implications for the REF, and undertook appropriate mandatory training on equality and diversity principles. Specific guidance on how such principles relate to REF policies and procedures were also provided through in-person workshops, and all staff in decision-making roles were asked to commit to running a fair and transparent process. All colleagues in the University are also required to complete a mandatory Equality and Diversity Essentials e-Learning Module, which aims to raise awareness and knowledge of diversity issues across the University and to ensure commitment to embracing diversity and promoting equality.

### **3. Scope**

The policy and processes covered by this EIA are detailed in Section 2: Identifying staff with significant responsibility for research in the University's Code of Practice. Colleagues potentially affected by this policy are those on academic teaching and research (T&R) contracts. Staff employed as PTVLs, on variable contracts and non-academic staff are not impacted. In line with the Code of Practice, all staff on T&R contracts were identified as either having significant responsibility for research or not having significant responsibility for research for the purposes of REF2021. Any member of staff for whom explicit time/resources were made available to engage actively in independent research as recorded in their overall annual workload were, as a matter of principle, returned to REF2021. This review is being carried out to ensure that colleagues with particular protected characteristics were not unfairly discriminated against in this determination of significant responsibility for research for the purposes of the University's REF2021 submission.

Before our REF2021 Code of Practice was finalised an initial draft EIAs on projected staff submission to REF were undertaken. Further EIAs were undertaken, following the adoption of the Code of Practice, in March 2019 and March 2020 as the Code was implemented. This EIA has been carried out on the final identification of those T&R staff determined as having significant responsibility for research or not on the REF census date of July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

The EIA considers the protected characteristics listed below. In addition, information on full-time or part-time contract status has been included.

- Age
- Ethnicity/race
- Sex
- gender re-assignment
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity, adoption and shared parental leave

### **4. Analyses**

Chi squared analysis of each protected staff characteristic and part-time/full-time status revealed that, apart from age and full-time/part-time status, there was no significant difference across the characteristics ( $p < 0.05$ ) in terms of staff who were identified as having significant responsibility for research (SRR). We note that for a number of characteristics there are a high number of staff with the designation "unknown", with close to 50% of staff listed as "unknown" for the characteristics of marital status, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. This may be due to these data being added to the data requested from new staff joining the institution more recently, resulting in a high proportion of staff for whom this data has not been requested and therefore are listed as unknown.

For age, colleagues in the 35-44 age range were more likely to be identified as having SRR than would be expected from the overall proportion of T&R staff in this age range, colleagues in the 55-64 age category were less likely to be identified as having SRR.

Colleagues on part-time contracts were less likely to be identified as holding SRR. This was previously identified in the interim EIA carried out in March 2019 and subsequent analysis found this to be the result of high numbers of part-time staff in particular subject areas where there is a particular emphasis on teaching of professional practice and where such part-time staff are also often employed in such practice outside the University.

	Degrees of freedom	N	Chi-squared	Significance
Age	4	421	19.04	p>0.05
Ethnicity	3	421	1.78	p<0.05
Gender	1	421	0.19	p<0.05
Disability	2	421	4.93	p<0.05
Sexual Orientation	6	421	11.00	p<0.05
Religion or Belief	10	421	9.11	p<0.05
Marital Status	8	421	1.91	p<0.05
Status (PT/FT)	1	421	15.06	p>0.05

## 5. Conclusions

The determination of holding SRR for staff on T&R contracts resulted in a submission to REF2021 that was broadly in line with the overall proportions of staff with protected characteristics on T&R contracts in the University. The EIA did not identify significant differences in terms of colleagues identified as holding SRR across the protected characteristics surveyed, apart from age, where significant differences were identified. Following on from analysis of the interim EIA, and reflecting the staff profile in some subject areas, part-time staff were also identified as less likely to hold SRR compared to full-time staff. While, with the exception of the age profile and full-time/part-time status, small differences in rates of submission to REF across different staff groups do not appear to be statistically significant, the University recognises that it is important to explore further any divergence in rates of submission between different groups and to continue to monitor and embed equality and diversity within all our processes.

## 6. Action plan

The outcomes of the EIA will be shared with and discussed with the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group and Research Committee, and with staff representatives of researcher forums and staff networks (including the BME Network, Q+ Network and Women of Westminster network), and with the University's Researcher Development Working Group. The University continues to work to advance Equality, Diversity and

Inclusion through its University EDI Action Plan and to support staff in developing their research careers through its dedicated Researcher Development Programme.

## 7. EIA data

Equalities Denominator	No. of T&R colleagues with SRR	% of T&R colleagues with SRR	No. of T&R colleagues in the University	% of T&R colleagues in the University
<b>Age</b>				
16-24	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
25-34	25	5.94%	43	5.11%
35-44	132	31.35%	199	23.63%
45-54	145	34.44%	293	34.80%
55-64	91	21.62%	238	28.27%
65 and over	28	6.65%	69	8.19%
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
BME	82	19.48%	182	21.62%
Information Refused	6	1.43%	9	1.07%
Unknown	17	4.04%	37	4.39%
White	316	75.06%	614	72.92%
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	205	48.69%	419	49.76%
Male	216	51.31%	423	50.24%
<b>Gender Re-assignment</b>				
Yes	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
<b>Disability</b>				
No	410	97.39%	803	95.37%
Prefer not to say	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
Yes	10	2.38%	38	4.51%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				
Bisexual	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
Gay Man	16	3.80%	17	2.02%
Gay Woman / Lesbian	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
Heterosexual/Straight	179	42.52%	347	41.21%
Other	6	1.43%	8	0.95%
Prefer not to say	38	9.03%	68	8.08%
Unknown	176	41.81%	393	46.67%

Equalities Denominator	No. of T&R colleagues with SRR	% of T&R colleagues with SRR	No. of T&R colleagues in the University	% of T&R colleagues in the University
<b>Religion or Belief</b>				
Buddhist	≤5	Too small to disclose	7	0.83%
Christian	61	14.49%	132	15.68%
Hindu	≤5	Too small to disclose	11	1.31%
Jewish	6	1.43%	10	1.19%
Muslim	15	3.56%	31	3.68%
No Religion	116	27.55%	190	22.57%
Other	≤5	Too small to disclose	9	1.07%
Prefer not to say	33	7.84%	64	7.60%
Sikh	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
Spiritual	≤5	Too small to disclose	7	0.83%
Unknown	172	40.86%	378	44.89%
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Civil Partnership	7	1.66%	10	1.19%
Cohabiting	30	7.13%	53	6.29%
Divorced	16	3.80%	32	3.80%
Married	174	41.33%	353	41.92%
Separated	≤5	Too small to disclose	6	0.71%
Single	79	18.76%	164	19.48%
Unknown	107	25.42%	215	25.53%
Widow	≤5	Too small to disclose	6	0.71%
Widower	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
<b>Maternity, Adoption &amp; Shared Parental Leave</b>				
Yes	≤5	Too small to disclose	≤5	Too small to disclose
<b>Status</b>				
Full-time	331	78.62%	589	69.95%
Part-time	90	21.38%	253	30.05%