

Analysis of Equality Data relating to staff at the University of Chester who were submitted to REF 2014

Report prepared by the HR Manager (Policy & Case Management), February 2014

Introduction

In order to determine whether the selection process for REF 2014 may have had any disproportionate impact on any equality group, equality data relating to the staff who self-selected themselves for consideration for submission has been analysed.

Data was examined in relation to the following protected characteristics: sex, age, disability, ethnicity, religious belief or non-belief, sexual orientation and marital/civil partnership status. Data concerning permanent or fixed term and full or part time status has also been examined in accordance with the REF Code of Practice.

The primary purpose of this report is to consider any impact that the REF 2014 selection process may have had on equality groups. A secondary area of analysis is to examine the equality profile of research active staff (as defined by those who self-selected for potential inclusion in the REF submission) in comparison to the University's academic staff profile.

First Analysis of Selection Process

An initial analysis was conducted in December 2012 prior to conclusion of the selection process. At this stage, 189 staff had self-selected themselves for consideration for submission. At the time of the analysis, 83 were considered very likely to be submitted, 57 remained under consideration, and the remaining 49 had been judged not to meet the threshold for submission.

This equality analysis revealed the following:

- The selection process thus far had had no adverse impact on staff employed on fixed term contracts; in fact, fixed term staff seemed more likely to be submitted;
- There had been no disproportionate impact on part time staff compared to full time staff;
- Females seemed to be slightly less likely to be submitted than males but the numbers were not considered to be statistically significant;
- There was no apparent adverse impact on younger or older staff, disabled staff or black or ethnic minority groups;
- It was difficult to draw meaningful conclusions regarding any disproportionate impact in relation to marital status, religious beliefs or sexual orientation due to this information being unknown for a relatively large number of staff.

Second Analysis of Selection Process

A further examination of equality data was conducted in January 2014 following completion of the REF 2014 submission, to compare the equality characteristics of the 215 staff who self-selected and were considered for submission, and the 151 staff who were eventually selected for submission. The results of this analysis are detailed below:

Fixed Term Status:

28.4% of the 215 staff who were considered for submission were employed on fixed term contracts, compared to 33.1% of the staff who were submitted. It appears that the selection process has not had an adverse impact on fixed term staff, in fact the opposite appears to be the case, with a slightly higher percentage of staff submitted being fixed term than might have been expected, although this is not statistically significant (χ^2 (1df, N=151) = 1.67, $p > 0.05$).

Full/Part Time Status:

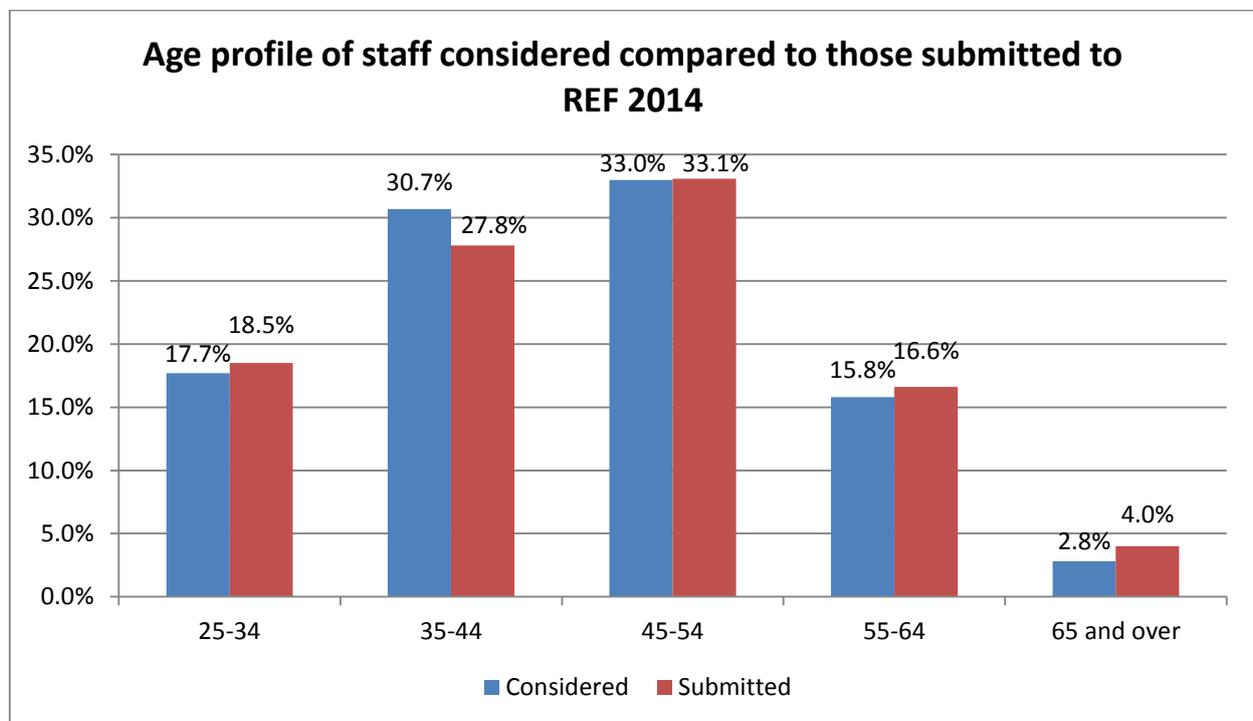
12.1% of the staff considered for submission were engaged on part time contracts, compared to 15.2% of staff who were submitted. It therefore appears that the selection process did not have any adverse impact on part time staff, in fact the opposite is the case, with a slightly higher percentage of part time staff being selected for submission than might have been expected, although again this is not statistically significant (χ^2 (1df, N=151) = 1.40, $p > 0.05$).

Sex:

40.5% of the staff considered for submission are female, compared to 37.7% of staff who were submitted. This percentage is slightly lower than might be expected, but this is not considered to be statistically significant (χ^2 (1df, N=151) = 0.49, $p > 0.05$) and therefore the selection process is not considered to have had any adverse impact on female staff.

Age:

The age distribution for the staff considered for submission, compared to the staff who were submitted is shown below:



As shown, 17.7% of staff considered for submission were within the 25-34 age range, while 18.5% of those submitted were within this age range. Staff aged 55-64 and 65 or over represent 15.8% and 2.8% respectively of the overall group who have been considered for submission, compared to 16.6% and 4% of those selected for submission. This suggests that the selection process has had no adverse impact on either younger or older staff, indeed the overall age profiles of the considered and selected groups are very similar.

Disability:

3.7% of staff considered for submission have a declared disability, compared to 2.6% of staff who were submitted. This percentage is slightly lower than might be expected, but this is not considered to be statistically significant due to small numbers involved (χ^2 (1df, N=151) = 0.49, $p > 0.05$), and therefore the selection process is not considered to have had any adverse impact on disabled staff.

Ethnic Origin:

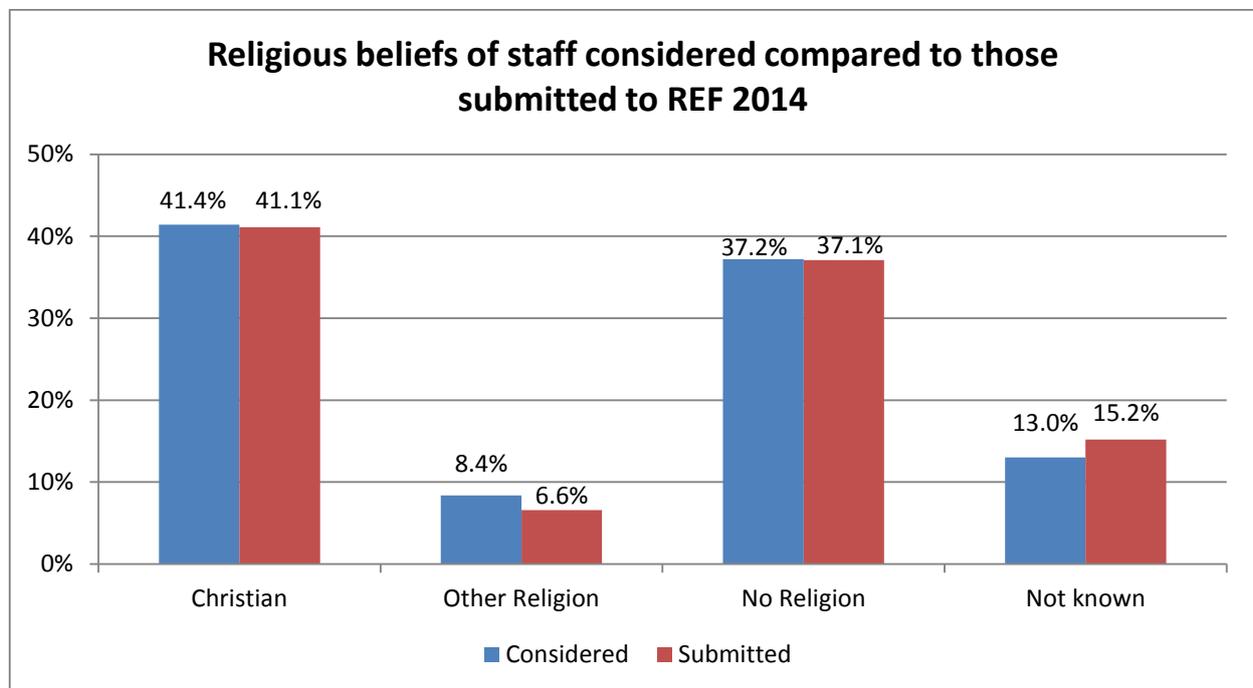
6.5% of staff considered for submission are of black or minority ethnic origin, compared to 7.3% of staff who were submitted. It can therefore be concluded that the selection process has not had any adverse impact on any ethnic group.

Marital Status:

43.7% of both the group of staff considered for submission and the group selected for submission are married or in civil partnerships. It would appear that the selection process has had no adverse impact in relation to marital or civil partnership status, although it is noted that marital status is not known for 24.7% of staff considered, and 28.5% of staff submitted.

Religion:

The religious beliefs of the staff considered for submission, compared to the staff who were submitted are detailed below:



41.4% of staff considered for submission are Christian, 8.4% of them have other religious beliefs, and 37.2% have declared that they have no religious beliefs. For the remaining 13% of staff, religious beliefs are not known.

The percentage of staff submitted who hold Christian beliefs or no religious beliefs are 41.1% and 37.1% respectively, and so these percentages are as might be expected compared to the overall group. A slightly lower percentage of staff who were selected hold other religious beliefs (6.6% compared to 8.4% of all staff considered), but the percentage of staff who submitted for whom religious beliefs are not known is slightly higher (at 15.2% compared to 13% in the overall group). Based on the fact that only partial data is available, it is concluded that these differences are not significant (χ^2 (3df, N=151) = 1.17, $p > 0.05$), and that the selection process has had no adverse impact in relation to religious beliefs.

Sexual Orientation:

The University has only recently begun to collect data on staff members' sexual orientation, and therefore data is only available for 65.1% of the staff considered for submission, with 60.9% of

this group declaring themselves to be heterosexual and 4.2% declaring themselves to be homosexual.

57% of staff who were submitted declared themselves to be heterosexual and 3.3% declared themselves to be homosexual. Sexual orientation is not known for 39.7% of the staff who were submitted (compared to 34.9% of the overall group). It is therefore concluded that there is no evidence of adverse impact on staff in relation to sexual orientation, but clearly it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions from such partial data.

Analysis of Research Active Staff Compared to All Academic Staff

As a secondary area of interest, the equality characteristics of research active staff (i.e. the 215 staff who self-selected for potential submission to REF 2014) was compared against the profile of all 527 academic and research staff who were in employment on the REF census date. This analysis did reveal some interesting areas for further analysis, which can be summarised as:

- Female staff are significantly under-represented amongst researchers - 40.5% cf. 52.6% (χ^2 (1df, N=215) = 12.7, $p < 0.01$);
- The age profile of research active staff is biased in favour of the younger age groups - the 25-34 and 35-44 age ranges are more research active and the 55-64 age range less research active than the overall academic population. These variations are significant (χ^2 (4df, N=215) = 23.88, $p < 0.01$).
- There is a significant difference in the marital status of researchers compared to the overall academic staff population (χ^2 (2df, N=215) = 10.34, $p < 0.01$), with researchers being less likely to be in a marital/civil partnership (43.7% cf. 54.1%). However the proportion of staff for whom their status is not known is also higher for researchers (24.7% cf. 18.2%). The data for unmarried is 31.6% cf. 27.7%.
- Researchers are more likely to declare themselves to be of 'no belief', whilst Christians are under-represented. This variation from the overall academic staff population is statistically significant (χ^2 (3df, N=215) = 13.98, $p < 0.01$) although the data is not available for approximately 13% of staff in both groups.

It should be emphasised that these variations do not suggest that there are any areas of concern in terms of the REF 2014 selection process, but they are considered to be worthy of further investigation. Recent work for Athena SWAN and GEM (Gender Equality Mark) applications has also identified the need to understand the apparent gender inequality in research and a project is underway to examine this and other equality issues for researchers.

Summary

Therefore, in summary:

- The selection process has had no adverse impact on staff employed on fixed term or part time contracts;
- A slightly lower percentage of females were submitted compared to the percentage of staff considered who were female, but these numbers were not considered to be statistically significant;
- The selection process has had no adverse impact on younger or older staff or ethnic minority groups;
- A slightly lower percentage of disabled staff were submitted compared to those considered overall, but this was not considered to be statistically significant;
- A slightly lower percentage of staff with religious beliefs other than Christian were submitted compared to those considered overall, however this is offset by a higher percentage of staff for whom religious beliefs are not known, and therefore it is concluded that there was no adverse impact in relation to religious beliefs;

- It was concluded that there was no evidence of adverse impact on staff in relation to sexual orientation, but that it was difficult to draw reliable conclusions given that sexual orientation was unknown for more than a third of staff considered for submission;
- An analysis of the equality profile of staff who self-selected for submission compared to all academic and research staff employed at the University revealed some statistically significant differences in relation to sex, age, marital status and religious beliefs which will be the subject of further investigation.