

# PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

## Governance

### 1. Objective

This document outlines the terms under which services are delivered by Governance. **It should be read in conjunction with our service statement**, which outlines the services we provide, as approved by the University Executive Board.

### 2. Period of the agreement

This document covers the period 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018. Towards the end of this period we will review and revise it as necessary.

### 3. Who we are and what we do

Governance sits within the Academic and Governance Services Directorate. It is the hub for the following activities:

Student Appeals and Complaints:

- a) Student Complaints
- b) Student Academic Appeals
- c) Student Discipline
- d) Student Academic Misconduct
- e) Fitness to Practise
- f) Academic Engagement and Fitness to Study
- g) Liaison with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

Information Management and Policy Services:

- a) Freedom of Information
- b) Data Protection
- c) Copyright
- d) Liaison with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO)

Risk Management and Business Continuity:

- a) Risk Management
- b) Business Continuity Planning
- c) Major Incident Planning

Quality Assurance in Research:

- a) Coordinator for Quality Assurance in Research
- b) The University's Ethical Research Framework
- c) Animal Research licensing and governance
- d) Liaison with the Home Office (HO)

Committee Secretariat Services:

- a) Secretariat services for those committees as defined by Charter and Ordinance, and those key compliance committees required by the CUC Code.
- b) Key contact point, support and liaison with the University's Lay Members of Council
- c) To provide advice and guidance on the preparation and amendment of key compliance policies

Internal Audit:

Governance hosts Internal Audit Services for administrative purposes and so its service statement is also included within this document.

The role of Internal Audit Services is to provide independent appraisal of, and assurance on, the adequacy of the University's arrangements for the following, within the scope of work undertaken

- Risk management, control and governance
- Economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money)
- Management and quality assurance of data

All of the University's activities, funded from whatever source, fall within the remit of Internal Audit Services in terms of considering the adequacy of controls in place to manage risks.

We provide services to students, Schools, Functions, UEB and its individual members.

For further detail on the services we provide to various user groups across the University, **please see our service statement**, which sets out our standard and additional services.

## 4. How to access our service

Our services can generally be accessed as follows. **Please see our service statement** for any variations for specific services or user groups.

### a. When we're available

We will endeavour to provide our services during standard office hours, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm; there is no out of hour's service. There may be occasional issues with covering the service if members of staff are absent unexpectedly. If this is the case we will provide as much information as possible in the interim and resume services as soon as we can.

### b. How to contact us

Staff can be contacted by email, telephone or in person as appropriate.

### c. Who to contact

The Head of Governance (Louise Sharman), [l.v.sharman@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.v.sharman@reading.ac.uk), (ext. 6180), Room 321 Whiteknights House, can be contacted for queries relating to the overall delivery and standard of service, and all matters in relation to committee secretariat services or University policies.

Student Complaints and Discipline Officer (Jack Paulley), [j.paulley@reading.ac.uk](mailto:j.paulley@reading.ac.uk), (ext. 6179), Room 321 Whiteknights House, can be contacted for queries relating to student complaints, student discipline and fitness to practise. Key contact for the OIA.

Student Appeals and Misconduct Officer (Claire Hall), [c.l.hall@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.l.hall@reading.ac.uk), (ext. 6179), Room 321 Whiteknights House, can be contacted for queries relating to student appeals, academic misconduct, academic engagement and fitness to study.

Information Management and Policy Services Officer (Becky Daniells), [IMPS@reading.ac.uk](mailto:IMPS@reading.ac.uk), can be contacted for queries relating to Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Environmental Impact Regulations, Subject Access Requests, Information Compliance, and Records Management. Key contact for the ICO. For Copyright Compliance, [copyright@reading.ac.uk](mailto:copyright@reading.ac.uk) (ext.5570), Room 222 Whiteknights House.

Risk Management and Business Continuity Officer (Jamila Begum), [j.begum@reading.ac.uk](mailto:j.begum@reading.ac.uk), can be contacted for queries in relation to Risk Management and Risk Registers, Business Continuity Planning, and Major Incident Planning.

Head of Quality Assurance in Research (Mike Proven), [m.j.proven@reading.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.proven@reading.ac.uk), can be contacted for queries in relation to the Code of Good Practice in Research, Animal Research, and Research Ethics.

Director of Internal Audit Services (David O'Connor) [d.a.oconnor@reading.ac.uk](mailto:d.a.oconnor@reading.ac.uk) or [internalauditservices@reading.ac.uk](mailto:internalauditservices@reading.ac.uk) can be contacted for queries in relation to Internal Audit Services. The contact details for whistleblowing and public interest disclosure hotline is [whistleblowinghotline@reading.ac.uk](mailto:whistleblowinghotline@reading.ac.uk)

#### **d. Who can request our services**

Students and all members of academic staff can request our services directly.

## **5. Our commitment to service users**

In delivering our services, we commit to the following principles and practices:

We will:

- Work collegially with Schools and Functions to achieve the objectives of the University, Schools and Functions
- Provide Schools and Functions with timely and effective support in relation to the activities and processes provided
- Be welcoming, approachable, attentive and helpful
- Demonstrate empathy, courtesy and respect
- Use our knowledge, experience and expertise to provide a high quality service
- Provide timely responses to requests, providing clear and accurate information, and ensuring that deadlines are met (whether set by a third party or internally)
- Provide our services in an equitable and inclusive manner, and treat users fairly and in compliance with policies and procedures
- Deliver our services in an accessible, safe and well-maintained environment
- Review our services regularly and respond positively to constructive feedback from our users.

## **6. What we need from our service users**

In order to deliver an effective service, we require our service users to do the following:

- To understand and respect the integrity of and necessity for key processes,
- Provide information, as requested, in full (wherever possible), in the format requested, and not later than the deadline specified
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect
- Where possible, give us sufficient notice so that we can take time to provide accurate, informative and helpful responses to requests

- Provide constructive feedback on our services.

## 7. Service limitations and dependencies

The following factors may affect the service we can provide to users:

- Timely provision of our services may be affected at times by staff absences
- Functionality is dependent on the overall IT infrastructure operating at acceptable levels.
- Exceptional demands made over and above the agreed levels of services.
- Maintenance of the current level of funding for the function

## 8. Managing our service

The Head of Governance (Louise Sharman) is responsible for managing the overall service, [l.v.sharman@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.v.sharman@reading.ac.uk) (ext 6180).

## 9. Reporting and resolving problems with our service

Users experiencing problems with services provided by Governance should contact the Head of Governance (Louise Sharman).

## 10. Providing feedback on our service

We welcome constructive feedback on our services. Compliments and complaints, and suggestions for additions and improvements to the services provided should be sent to the Head of Governance (Louise Sharman).

Periodically, we may request this information as part of the on-going review of our services and their provision.

## Version control

VERSION	KEEPER	REVIEWED	APPROVED BY	APPROVAL DATE
1.0	L Sharman		Richard Messer	

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# SERVICE STATEMENT

The following services are routinely provided by Governance:

## IMPS

### 1. Overall purpose of the service

The Information Management and Policy Services Office (IMPS) exists to:

- Ensure the University (including off shore campuses and wholly owned companies under the control of the University) complies with statutory and legislative requirements under the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), The EU Data Directives, Human Rights Act, Copyright law, and other relevant information and privacy legislation.
- To maintain and update a publication scheme.
- To ensure all regulatory notifications and related licences are up to date.
- To ensure advice on records management is available.
- Ensure that suitable training is made available for all staff (including partners, stakeholders, and any third parties that access personal data held by the university) and oversee and monitor the completion of mandatory training as necessary.
- Provide Ad Hoc advice to staff and students in respect of the above listed legislative requirements.
- Represent information compliance matters on projects, working groups and committees.
- Advise on compliance questions presented by research partners.
- Liaise with external partners and stakeholders in matters relating to information compliance
- Maintain and coordinate a network of IMPS contacts across the University
- Maintain a central log of information security incidents for the university.
- Provide advice and assistance with respect of contractual agreements across the university.
- Development and review of university information frameworks and policy.
- Provide a single point of contact with the Information Commissioners Office.
- Inform the on-going development of institutional strategy in respect of information security and compliance.
- Maintain relevant knowledge of Data Protection, Freedom of Information, and Environmental Information Regulations; including keeping up to date with legislative and case law developments and on practice in the sector and more widely.
- Support the broader Governance Unit of the University.

### 2. Definition of the service to be provided

#### a. Standard services to the University:

IMPS routinely provides the University/all staff with:

- Completion of FOI and EIR requests – within 20 working days from receipt.
- Completion of requests made under subject access rights – within 40 calendar days.
- Assistance with on line training modules – 3 working days.
- Induction Day IMPS awareness sessions – Monthly.
- Ad hoc advice on information compliance, records management and Copyright - as required/agreed.
- Project Support – as required/agreed.

IMPS routinely provides students/ex staff/members of the public with:

- Completion of requests made under subject access rights – within 40 calendar days.
- Complaint investigation and resolution.

b. Standard services to specific users:

IMPS routinely provides IT with the following:

- Advice or completion of IMPS related IT (Topdesk) queries.
- Advice on NFR submissions, contractual clauses, data relationships for software suppliers.
- Advice on DPA principle 7 compliance relating to technical information security measures.

IMPS routinely ensure IMPS contacts are provided with the following:

- Reports on training module compliance for their respective school/area – Monthly.
- Workshops, meetings, guidance and opportunities for feedback – Termly.
- Advice on previous compliance returns where possible – as required.

IMPS routinely ensures Graduate School are provided with:

- Advice and training on electronic deposition of thesis.
- Representation of Copyright concerns on working groups.

IMPS routinely ensure MOOCS team are provided with:

- Copyright clearance, contract support and advice.

c. Additional services:

IMPS may provide the following on request:

- Privacy Impact Assessments.
- Bespoke records management guidance or schedules.
- DPA training to partner contractors.
- Talks and DP/FOI/Copyright awareness sessions.

d. Notable exclusions:

IMPS does not provide:

- References, staff or student – refer to HR or student services respectively.
- Contractual negotiations or content approval beyond compliance - contact Legal Service.
- Technical IT services such as encryption, access controls, penetration testing, security scans – contact IT.
- Compliance training to students (with exception of PGR's volunteers as required).
- Signatories to contracts or information sharing agreements – seek advice from Legal Services.
- Monitoring of information compliance of individual projects unless stated or specifically agreed – contact project lead or head of department or service.
- Advice on other mandatory staff training modules.

IMPS does not process:

- Compliance requests for data under the control of a contracting partner – contact relevant partner.
- Queries relating to use of University Trademarks or materials – contact Legal Services.

IMPS does not undertake:

- Contact preference updates for external communications and marketing – contact Alumni or relevant school/department.

### 3. Respective responsibilities

#### a. IMPS duties and responsibilities:

We (IMPS) will:

- Provide the advice and guidance within our standard IMPS service (as outlined above), ensuring that it is up to date and clearly explained.
- Respond to Information Compliance requests made under FOI, EIR and Subject Access within statutory deadlines.
- Ensure staff training and access to information is effective, easy to access and monitored.
- Advise on matters of Data Protection and FOI compliance providing pragmatic and practical solutions and how to ensure data uses are compliant with the law.
- Ensure that we request the necessary information from you in order to process requests in a timely and effective manner.
- Agree with you the information that we will provide, and the format in which we will provide it, as best suits the purpose of your request or project.
- Let you know if we are unable to process your request in the agreed timeframe

#### b. University staff/departments/schools duties and responsibilities: In order to help us fulfil our obligations under this agreement as well as our legal and statutory obligations, you (Head of Department/School) will:

- Ensure that your school/department has an IMPS contact assigned and that adequate resource provision is available for dealing with IMPS requests.
- Ensure that cover and contingency for staff absence includes provision for IMPS requests.
- Involve IMPS at the earliest possible project stages where information compliance issues are likely to be factor in any decision making.
- Wherever possible allow a reasonable timeframe (10 working days) for investigating and advising on Ad Hoc information compliance queries or requests.
- In respect of FOI, EIR and Subject Access Requests, ensure that data requested is made available to IMPS by the specified deadline.
- Clearly explain and evidence and sensitivities relating to data requested under the above regimes in order for exemptions to be considered.
- Ensure all staff have completed the mandatory on line training modules with 30 calendar days.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any data provided by IMPS in order to assist with an information compliance request.
- Provide clear and detailed briefs on intended uses for personal data.
- Advise us if the data requested is intended for use outside the University
- Not circulate information we provide beyond the University unless we have cleared it for external use.

### 4. Service limitations and dependencies

- IMPS strictly abides by related legislative requirements.
- IMPS will not provide advice that is contrary to ensuring the above.
- Subject Access request deadlines may be impacted by excessively broad or speculative requests.
- IMPS will rely on schools and departments returning FOI and DP returns on target to ensure statutory compliance.
- IMPS will not be responsible for any breach of legislation resulting in a failure of an individual or department to follow IMPS advice.
- IMPS will be unable to provide advice if the deadline for that advice is unreasonable and does not allow time for necessary consideration or further work to ensure legislative requirements can be met.

### 5. Amendments

At any time following the initial signing of this agreement, the partner to the agreement may propose to add new services by written request to the IMPS Officer ([r.a.daniells@reading.ac.uk](mailto:r.a.daniells@reading.ac.uk)). The final decision on inclusion of the new services and the timeframe for delivery will be through mutual agreement between the IMPS Officer and the partner. Where additional services incur a charge, this will be specified as part of the agreement.

## Student Appeals and Complaints

### 1. Overall purpose of the service

The team exists to:

- Administer the following six student facing processes: Academic Appeals, Academic Misconduct, Fitness to Study, Fitness to Practise, Student Complaints, Student Discipline
- Service the following Committees: Student Appeals Committee (SAC), Standing Committee on Academic Engagement and Fitness to Study (SCAEFS), Standing Committee on Academic Misconduct (SCAM), Standing Committee on Exam Results (SSCER), Standing Committee on Fitness to Practise (SCFtP), Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC), Misconduct Appeals Committee (MAC)
- Co-ordinate the preparation of supporting documentation, circulate necessary information, take minutes, and follow up actions on cases managed under each process
- Provide the key point of contact with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)
- Provide advice to students and staff regarding the policies and procedures at all stages
- Provide staff training where appropriate
- Maintain and update relevant policies and procedures
- Analyse and report on the six processes to the Senate, Student Experience Committee, and those bodies responsible for enhancing teaching and learning and improving the student experience

### 2. Definition of the service to be provided

#### a. Standard services to the University

- Manage the student facing formal complaint processes (Stage 2). This may require information from specific members of staff within 30 working days.
- Provide case files and associated information to the OIA within specified timelines
- Convene and service the six standing committees
- Request information from Schools regarding specific student cases, e.g. appeals against exam results or complaints. The processes are time bound by specific deadlines (e.g. exam results, resits, graduation), prompt responses are required to facilitate the processes
- Request representation at committee hearings from appropriate members of the School
- Report to the Senate and the Student Experience Committee
- Maintain policies and procedures

- Maintain information for students on web pages, handbooks etc, in conjunction with CQSD and Student and Applicant Services
- b. Standard services to specific users
- Provide guidance to students on University policy and processes
  - Liaise with RUSU advisors on progress of particular cases
  - University point of contact with OIA
  - Provide training and advice to staff on all six processes
- c. Additional services
- Talks and awareness sessions
  - May provide secretarial support to other hearings when appropriate to do so
  - In particular circumstance the team may deal with certain categories of complaints from the local community; this will be undertaken in conjunction with Community Relations Officer within Marketing, Communication and Engagement
- d. Notable exclusions
- The team does not supply advice or guidance to students regarding their grounds for appeal or supporting information/evidence
  - The team will not advise students on the likely outcome of their appeal
  - The team is not responsible for implementing any recommendations or actions arising from any of the committees unless agreed so by the Chair
  - The team is not responsible for Stage 0 or Stage 1 complaints
  - The team is not responsible for providing legal advice, although it will liaise with Legal Services where necessary

### 3. Respective responsibilities

a. Duties and responsibilities:

We will:

- Provide advice and guidance within the remit of the policies and procedures in place, and ensuring that it is up to date and clearly explained
  - Complete all Stage 2 complaints within the specified time frame
  - Respond to the OIA within the specified time frame
  - Convene committees and hearings in a timely and efficient manner
  - Manage all processes transparently and consistently
- b. University staff/departments/schools duties and responsibilities. In order to help us fulfil our obligations under this agreement as well as our legal and statutory obligations, you (Head of Department/School) will:
- Provide any information requested relating to cases in a timely and clear manner
  - Undertake Stage 0 and Stage 1 complaints as outlined in the complaints procedure, keeping appropriate records of any discussions and the outcome reached
  - Direct students with queries about any of the six processes to either the Student Appeals and Misconduct Officer, or the Students Complaints and Discipline Officer, or the RUSU Advisory Service
  - Understand and support those staff who may be required to attend hearings, often at short notice

### 4. Service limitations and dependencies

- The team abides by legislative guidelines
- The team abides strictly by approved policies and procedures

- The team will not provide advice or guidance that is contrary to ensuring the above
- The team is required to convene panels in line with the committee list
- The team has to work within very specific time frames for each of the processes

## 5. Amendments

At any time following the initial signing of this agreement, the partner to the agreement may propose to add new services by written request to the Head of Governance (l.v.sharman@reading.ac.uk). The final decision on inclusion of the new services and the timeframe for delivery will be through mutual agreement between the Head of Governance and the partner.

## Risk Management and Business Continuity

### 1. Overall purpose of the service

To ensure the delivery of University and local level business objectives, all School and Function areas are required to develop and maintain local Risk Registers. Business continuity planning should be adopted to ensure contingency arrangements are in place in the event of business disruption. A coordinated and structured response ensures there is clarity over roles and responsibilities in the event of a Major incident. Individuals, teams, and sometimes external agencies are required to provide response in these medium to large scale events.

The role of the Risk and Business Continuity Officer is to coordinate the above processes at the University:

- Provide assurance to the required bodies by maintaining the Corporate Risk Register, and ensuring Schools and Departments maintain Risk Registers;
- Coordinate key reports – Annual Review of Risk Management Arrangements –which involves Corporate risk owners and Schools and Function Areas;
- Ensure all these processes link in with key areas within the University;
- Monitor on-going developments for these core areas internally and externally, and consider how to enhance existing processes;
- Deliver key recommendations arising through the internal/ external audit process, and actions arising from lessons learnt (post incident review).

### 2. Definition of the service to be provided

#### a. Standard services to the University

- Provide advice and guidance for Risk Management, Business Continuity and Major Incident Planning to Risk Management Group, Schools and Function Areas;
- Coordinate, deliver and monitor a programme of works to deliver the above, which link in with the management frameworks set out for the above areas;
- Maintain the Corporate Risk Register, and support Schools and function areas to develop and maintain Risk Registers;
- Support Schools and Function areas to develop and maintain Business Continuity Plans;
- Support Schools and Function areas to have in place procedures/ or fulfil their obligations for incident response;
- Provide training– 1:1's, and bespoke team training to support engagement with the core areas.

- b. Standard services to specific users:
  - The following areas have an oversight of the Corporate Risk Register at set times throughout the academic year: UEB, Finance and Strategy Committee, Audit Committee, Council;
  - Internal Audit to inform Audits in Schools and Function areas;
  - Key risks update – External audit – (annual)
  - Internal Audit and Audit Committee - delivery of programme of work.
- c. Additional services
  - Bespoke training for teams/individuals
- d. Notable exclusions
  - Where the need arises for large scale training/exercises, if the Risk Management and Business Continuity Officer is unable to support they will make recommendations.

### **3. Respective responsibilities**

- a. The Risk Manager and Business Continuity Officer will:
  - Provide advice, guidance and support in developing and maintaining Risk Registers, Business Continuity and Incident Plans.
- b. University staff/departments/schools duties and responsibilities. In order to help us fulfil our obligations under this agreement as well as our legal and statutory obligations, you (Head of Department/School) will:
  - Maintain, review and monitor risk registers in a timely manner, to allow the information provided to be used in a timely manner for compiling reports;
  - Advise the Risk Management and Business Continuity officer of any changes in priorities that may impact the delivery, or plan of work;
  - To understand that some aspects of the work such as Business Continuity planning may have longer term goals, especially when we begin to consider interdependencies across the service areas;

### **4. Service limitations and dependencies**

- As an individual service provider, there is a potential for high demand of support required at given times, users are made aware of this.
- Realistic expectations should be adopted when working with multiple areas due to conflicts in priorities/ small teams etc.

### **5. Amendments**

At any time following the initial signing of this agreement, the partner to the agreement may propose to add new services by written request to the Risk Management and Business Continuity Officer (j.begum@reading.ac.uk). The final decision on inclusion of the new services and the timeframe for delivery will be through mutual agreement between the Risk Management and Business Continuity Officer and the partner.

## Quality Assurance in Research

### 1. Overall purpose of the service

- Maintain an up-to-date version of the University Code of Good Practice in Research (UCOGPR).
- Provide advice and guidance to University staff and students on Quality Assurance in Research (QAR) standards and the implementation of QAR at the University.
- Provide training in QAR and the use of the UCOGPR to staff and students.
- Provide advice and guidance to University staff and students on regulated animal experimentation and the operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (as amended) (ASPA) at the University.
- Oversee the governance of ASPA licensing at the University and provide support to staff and students when applying for and using Establishment, Project and Personal licences.
- Provide annual data on animal usage in ASPA-regulated animal procedures at the University.
- Provide advice and guidance to University staff and students on ethical review requirements and procedures (for research involving human subjects, data or samples) by either the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) or the NHS Health Research Authority REC service (HRA REC).
- Oversee the governance of UREC operations at the University and provide support for staff and students making applications for ethical review to UREC or to HRA REC.
- Provide annual data to UBRI on the performance of UREC.
- Provide advice and guidance to University staff and students on the requirements of the Human Tissue Act 2004 and its operation at the University.

### 2. Definition of the service to be provided

- a. Standard services to the University
  - Provide the services as outlined in section 1).

### 3. Respective responsibilities

- a. The Head of Quality Assurance in Research will:
  - Provide the services as outlined in section 1).
  - Request the necessary information from staff, students and relevant external 'third parties' in order to provide the services in a timely and effective manner.
  - Inform staff and students when unable to provide the services as outline in section 1)
- b. University staff/departments/schools duties and responsibilities. In order to help us fulfil our obligations under this agreement as well as our legal and statutory obligations, you (Head of Department/School) will:
  - Provide all data, information and application forms in relation to UREC, HRA REC and ASPA licence services to any specified timeframes, in agreed formats and with necessary in-School authorisations.

### 4. Service limitations and dependencies

- As an individual service provider, there is a potential for high demand of support required at given times, users are made aware of this.
- For some of the services (HRA REC, ASPA and HTA licensing) the ability to provide the service is reliant on third party providers over which the University has no control.

## 5. Amendments

At any time following the initial signing of this agreement, the partner to the agreement may propose to add new services by written request to the Head of Quality Assurance in Research (m.j.proven@reading.ac.uk). The final decision on inclusion of the new services and the timeframe for delivery will be through mutual agreement.

### Internal Audit

#### 1. Overall purpose of the service

The role of Internal Audit Services is to undertake a rolling programme of work, directed by the Audit Committee, to help inform its annual opinion to Council, and onward to HEFCE, of the adequacy and effectiveness of the University's arrangements for risk management, control and governance, value for money, and the management of the quality assurance of data submitted to public bodies. Other activities that Internal Audit Services provide are below.

- a) General operational advice to managers in areas relating to internal control, risk management and governance.
- b) Performing fraud/irregularity investigations as part of its remit to support the University's Fraud Responses Group, including liaison with the Police and notification to Action Fraud and HEFCE when necessary.
- c) Undertaking special investigations requested by Council, Audit Committee, the Vice Chancellor or other University senior managers as required.
- d) Managing the whistleblowing hotline.

#### 2. Definition of the service to be provided

##### a. Standard services to the University

- Perform our work in line with the requirements set out in the current *HEFCE Memorandum of assurance and accountability between HEFCE and institutions*, Audit Code of Practice (Annex A). Specifically, provide an annual report to Council and onward to HEFCE, that provides our opinions on the risk management, governance, value for money and the management and quality assurance of data.
- Undertake the agreed plan of internal audit services work in accordance with relevant professional standards, including the production of reports and recommendations that relate to our findings.
- Provision of advice and consultancy to University Management in line with our Terms of Reference.
- Manage the work of external consultants who have been engaged to perform work for the University.

##### b. Standard services to specific users

- Undertaking special projects and investigations as directed by the Audit Committee, Fraud Response Group or Management.

##### c. Additional services

- Managing the University's 'Whistleblowing hotline' and responding to any disclosures made to the Fraud Response group.
- d. Notable exclusions
- Internal Audit Services Service has no executive role, nor does it have any responsibility for the development, implementation or operation of systems. This enables it to provide independent and objective advice.

### 3. Respective responsibilities

In order to help us fulfil our annual plan of assurance work directed by the Audit Committee and fulfil our objectives under this agreement we ask that you:

- give timely input and agreement to the audit scope document issued to you;
- let us know as soon as possible if there are going to be any significant practical difficulties such as annual leave, conferences or busy periods, so we can take this into account;
- provide us with a suitable single point of contact to liaise with during the audit to enable effective co-ordination and co-operation;
- give as much information as you can in the initial planning stages so we can minimise disruption;
- keep Internal Audit Services informed of proposed changes and developments to existing procedures, systems, and functions so that we can take account of them during a current audit or more generally within the audit planning process;
- be open, approachable, and supportive during the audit review and provide full, complete and timely access to records we want to see that are relevant to individual audits;
- let us know of any concerns that you have so we can address them during our work and assist you in finding solutions;
- properly consider and respond to an Internal Audit Services draft report and recommendations within 4 weeks of receipt;
- implement recommendations in accordance with the agreed timescales and provide evidence of implementation to Internal Audit Services; Recommendations that are not implemented within the required timescale have to be reported to the Audit Committee, Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer;
- complete customer satisfaction feedback at the end of each review.

We will:

- issue a draft audit scope outlining the objectives, and method for each audit for senior management agreement;
- give reasonable notice of a scheduled audit and consider any significant practical difficulties raised with us;
- operate in accordance with the Institute of Internal Auditors International Professional Practices Framework and International Standards, HM Treasury Standards, and the HEFCE Audit Code of Practice;
- set out to agree realistic, practical and achievable recommendations with you to address any risk identified during our audit;
- arrange a closing meeting and/or issue a discussion draft report following the conclusion of our testing to inform you of our findings before the issue of a formal draft report;
- aim to issue you with a draft audit report 4 weeks after the completion of the audit fieldwork;

- provide a final audit report that includes an opinion as to the level of assurance which can be placed upon the controls in place in the area examined. This opinion can be one of the following: good, satisfactory, of limited effectiveness, weak, unacceptable;
- provide a copy of the final report to senior management, the Chief Strategy Officer and University Secretary, with a summary being presented to the Audit Committee;
- request progress updates and evidence to support the implementation of agreed recommendations by the agreed completion date.

#### 4. Service limitations and dependencies

Our Internal Audit Services strategy and plan is approved by the Audit Committee on delegation of this responsibility from the University Council. We must consider any requests for additional work in the light of our approved programme and the impact it has on the level of assurance we are able to provide. Changes can be made to the plan if the risk to the University is assessed to be significant. We are required to obtain Audit Committee approval of changes to the audit plan.

#### 5. Amendments

*As above – amendments must be considered alongside the existing plan to decide where resource should be directed.*

### Committee Servicing

#### 1. Overall purpose of the service:

The Committee Servicing Team has responsibility for ensuring that there are effective governance arrangements in place within the University, by leading and advising on constitutional matters, supporting the University Council, and provide professional secretarial support to the key decision making bodies of the University. The team is also responsible for the development and maintenance of the University Calendar and the Committee List.

The Committee Serving Team aim to achieve excellence in the delivery of a professional service and promotion of governance best practice to support the University's strategy and ambitions; to deliver support which assists University good governance policy, practice and decision-making; to extend and share expertise to create added value; to adapt and enhance the service provided to meet the changing requirement of stakeholders; and to apply best practice and fresh thinking to improve our effectiveness and efficiency.

#### 2. Definition of the service to be provided

##### a. Standard services to the University:

- to lead on committee servicing standards across the University
- organising the operation of the committee structure
- coordinating the business and arrangements for meetings
- supporting the University Council
- providing advice on appropriate approval mechanisms and directing proposals seeking approval for policy or administrative decisions to the appropriate bodies
- preparing agendas, minutes, papers and reports

- advising chairs and members on committee procedure
  - disseminating information on key decisions, new policies and procedures and changes to the regulations
  - monitoring and following-up agreed actions
  - providing appropriate reminders to ensure compliance with procedures for documentation and approval
  - maintaining the University's minute archive records
  - developing and co-ordinating meeting schedules to assist the smooth processing of business
  - ensuring committees are properly constituted and organising and administering elections where appropriate.
  - produce the University Calendar
  - produce the Committee List
  - produce the annual meeting list
  - produce the handbook for Council members
  - provide and deliver appropriate training, advice and mentoring to committee secretaries across the University
  - maintenance of the Diligent system
  - Administer the University's Personal Titles process
  - Administer the Visiting, Honorary and Courtesy Titles process
- b. Standard services to specific users
- provide direct support services to the lay members of Council
  - to service Council and its sub-Committees and the senior decision making bodies of the University
- c. Additional services
- to service other committees and working parties as determined from time to time by the University Secretary
- d. Notable exclusions
- the team does not provide secretarial support to School based committees or those undertaken by the Student Support Centre.

### 3. Respective responsibilities

a. Duties and responsibilities:

We will:

- Provide the advice and guidance on committee servicing standards, ensuring that it is up to date and clearly explained.
  - Develop and provide staff training to ensure best practice across the University
  - Advise on constitutional matters in regard to the University committee framework.
  - Ensure that requests for papers or committee reports are made in a timely and effective manner.
- b. University staff/departments/schools duties and responsibilities: In order to help us fulfil our obligations under this agreement as well as our legal and statutory obligations, you (Head of Department/School) will:

#### 4. Service limitations and dependencies

- The Committee Servicing Team often have to abide by constitutional, regulatory or legislative guidelines and timelines.
- As a small team, there is a potential for high demand of support required at given times, users are made aware of this.

#### 5. Amendments

At any time following the initial signing of this agreement, the partner to the agreement may propose to add new services by written request to the Head of Governance (l.v.sharman@reading.ac.uk). The final decision on inclusion of the new services and the timeframe for delivery will be through mutual agreement between the Head of Governance and the partner.