

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION GOVERNANCE

Paper submitted to UBRI, June 2019

UBRI decision(s) required

UBRI is asked to consider the proposed changes to the Research and Innovation (R&I) Governance structure, and their fit with the research strategy, and to approve the new governance structure and arrangements.

Summary of proposals/recommendations

In August 2018, the incoming PVCs R&I commissioned the Strategic Projects Team in the Planning and Strategy Office (PSO) to design and implement a stocktake review of the Research Management and Governance structures. This was initiated as part of their early work to appraise the current arrangements to deliver the 2020 Research Plan and to determine what is working well and what, if anything, can be adapted further as we look towards and beyond the REF 2021 submission.

The stocktake review indicated that there was a lack of clear distinction between governance, strategy and delivery committees, and that committees were burdened by high workloads and overlapping responsibilities. There was also perceived to be a lack of communication outside the committee membership. The report recommended that a revised research governance structure be developed to address these issues.

The new governance structure aims to address the weaknesses identified above, and to align with the new research strategy. It provides an opportunity to respond to the changing external context in research as well as internal organisational changes. It also presents an opportunity to increase transparency and improve communication. Importantly, the new structure provides a mechanism by which members of the research community can apply for positions on committees and contribute to decision-making.

Key objectives for each committee have been identified, and membership required to deliver on those objectives has been determined, whilst also reducing individual workloads and eliminating overlaps. Committees' ways of working will establish clearer responsibilities for members, and colleagues in Schools and Functions in terms of their contribution to the delivery of objectives. The new structure and ways of working aim to encourage a more open approach to decision-making and communication. The revised structure will also support and encourage collaborative work between Functions and academic units. This work will be supported through the use of collaborative software.

Next steps

- If approved, UBRI will report on the adoption of the new governance arrangements to Senate.
- A communication plan for the new governance will be developed by the Research Communication and Engagement Team.
- New members will be appointed, where necessary, over the summer.
- Each committee will review its terms of reference at the initial meeting in 2019/20, and will propose changes for approval by UBRI.

Dominik Zaum, Parveen Yaqoob, Wanda Tejada, June 2019

Background

In spring 2019, URC began to review the current research governance structure and processes. This was informed by a number of factors. First, feedback on research governance, from the mid-term stocktake and from members and observers of individual committees, suggested that the current governance structure is perceived as being heavy-handed and labour intensive, with repetitive reporting and strongly overlapping membership of committees. The feedback also raised questions about the efficacy of these committees, most notably CEIK and UBRI, and noted that there is limited communication of committee deliberations and decisions outside the core research governance structure. Second, with the development of a draft research and innovation strategy, complementing the 2020 Research Plan, URC considered whether the research governance structure should reflect more directly the priorities in the research and innovation strategy, which have naturally evolved over the last four years in response to external and internal changes. Third, changes in the research leadership structure, in particular the merger of two themes (Health and Food), and the concomitant reduction in the number of Research Deans, requires a re-thinking of the membership of different committees to more effectively manage the workload of the wider research leadership team.

Principles

The revised research governance model proposed below is informed by four key principles, which shape the proposed committee structure, the membership of committees, and their ways of working. These principles are accountability, leadership, effectiveness, and inclusiveness.

- **Accountability:** While recognising that decisions by research related committees often involve information that is confidential or commercially sensitive, research committees should strengthen accountability through the transparent making and communication of decisions.
- **Leadership:** The committees should articulate a clear vision for their areas of responsibility within the context of the objectives of the wider research and innovation strategy, give clarity about the activities required to achieve this vision, and provide support and guidance for these activities.
- **Effectiveness:** Committees in the research governance structure have three key functions: providing oversight, challenge, and scrutiny of performance; bringing together and reviewing information to support effective decision making, and taking decisions and monitoring their implementation. To be effective in these, they should through their ways of working bring a wide range of relevant experience to bear, both from academic units and professional services.
- **Inclusiveness:** Successful research is rooted in the efforts and contributions of both academic and professional staff, and their effective collaboration. Reflecting this, committees should include the expertise and perspectives of both professional and academic colleagues in their evaluations, decisions, and projects. The processes and ways of working of the wider research governance structure should facilitate this.

Key proposed changes

The proposed governance structure involves six key changes:

- 1) A clearer distinction between governance, strategy, and delivery across the different committees.
- 2) Some readjustment in committee responsibilities, to reflect priorities of the research strategy, including:
 - Bringing together responsibility for the development of researchers (especially ECRs) with PGR development and recruitment in a single committee
 - Bringing together impact, public engagement, and development of research partnerships in a single committee

- Greater focus on open research and research integrity, bringing together three separate committees
 - Discontinuation of the Committee for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange
- 3) Greater transparency: sharing of committee agendas and decisions with wider research leadership and professional services
 - Publish minutes to RDLs and UoA leads, and relevant staff in Functions, and Heads of Schools
 - Circulate decisions more widely
 - 4) Reduce membership of most committees, but share information more widely
 - 5) Work will be delivered by projects under key committees, with leadership and input from relevant professional services and academics
 - 6) To support the development of research leaders, most committees will have a number of spaces for members appointed through open competition. These appointments will be for a period of three years.

Ways of working

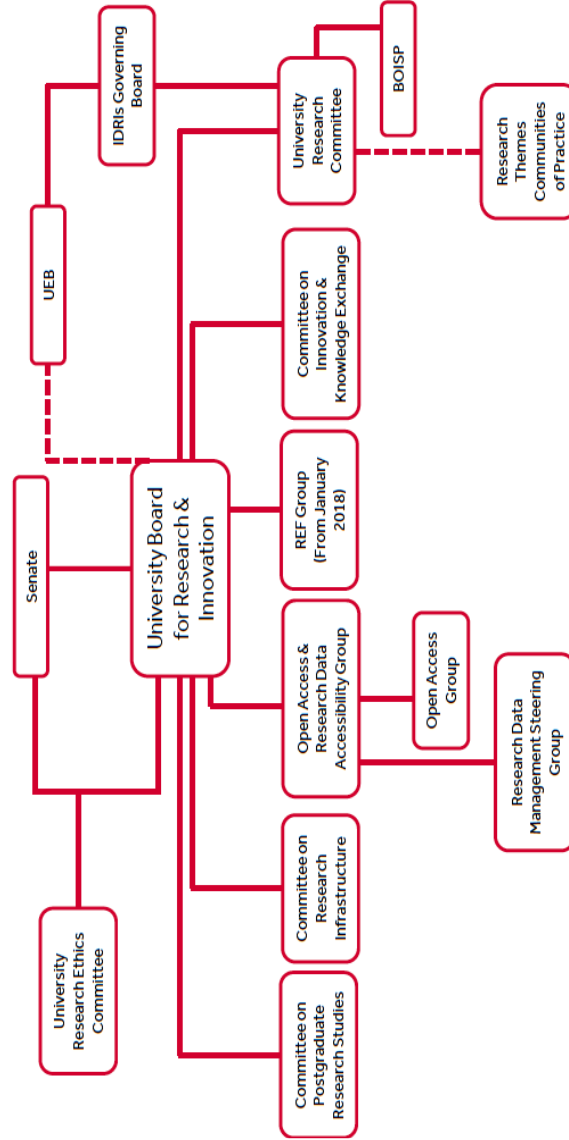
Making the new research governance structure work will require different ways of working. All committees will share minutes and papers with Research Division Leaders, relevant staff in Functions, and Heads of School, to increase the transparency of decision making. Information will be shared through Microsoft Teams.

They will deliver their key objectives through programmes, projects and key activities; and at least one member of the committee will own the development of each project/programme/key activity.

Academics and professional services will be able to put agenda items forward to the different committees, through a committee member acting as a sponsor. Professional services colleagues will be present for discussion items where they are authors/co-authors of relevant papers.

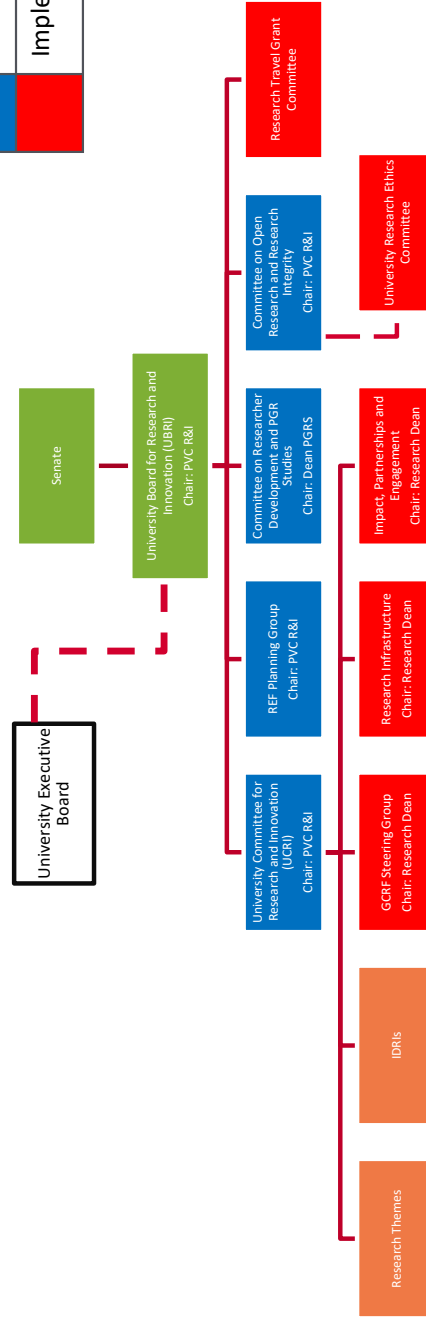
Processes and guidance will be put in place to support the effective running of committees.

CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



PROPOSED RESEARCH GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Governance
Strategy
Implementation



Draft Terms of Reference for Individual Committees¹

University Board for Research and Innovation

Membership

Pro-Vice Chancellors (Research and Innovation) (Chair)

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic Planning & Resource)

Research Deans

Dean for Post-Graduate Research Studies

Chair of the Research Staff Committee

Commercial Director

University Librarian

2 academic members appointed by Senate

1 Early Career Researcher

1 Representative from the Students Union

Others to attend on invitation for discussion of particular items

Secretary: appointed by the University Secretary (*Nathan Helsby*)

Key Objectives

1. Governance and oversight of research and innovation activities
 - Research and innovation performance
 - Researcher development and training
 - REF
 - Research integrity and open research
 - Research finance (RETF, GCRF, Research Infrastructure, HEIF)
2. Oversees engagement with sector-wide developments (e.g. consultations)
3. Challenge and support for research leadership

Terms of Reference

1. To monitor and evaluate the implementation of the research strategy, approve plans from relevant committees, and monitor progress towards key research performance indicators.
2. To monitor and evaluate the development and implementation of open research policies, processes, and systems; and approve significant changes to them.
3. To monitor and support preparations for the University's submission to the Research Excellence Framework, and the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF).
4. To support and monitor the implementation of researcher training and development, including of PGR students, and approve relevant strategies.
5. To monitor the University's systems and processes for research integrity, monitor compliance with the Concordat on Research Integrity, and approve changes to relevant structures and processes

¹ Excluding the Research Travel Grant Committee, where no change is made to the membership or ToRs.

6. To oversee and support the University's engagement with national and international developments in research and innovation, and on relevant consultations, including their approval (including, if necessary due to timing, outside formally scheduled meetings).
7. To approve the annual plans for the use of RETF and other internal research funds, and monitor and evaluate their contribution to the research strategy.
8. To maintain oversight of the activities of its reporting committees, and undertake an advisory role as appropriate.

Meeting Schedule: Meets quarterly

University Committee for Research and Innovation (UCRI)

Membership

Pro-Vice Chancellors (Research and Innovation) (Chair)

Research Deans

Dean for Post-Graduate Research Studies

Head of Planning and Reporting

Project Manager 2020 Research Plan/Research Strategy

Others to attend on invitation for particular issues under discussion

Secretary: appointed by the University Secretary (*Sue Jones*)

Key Objectives

1. To ensure progress towards the objectives of the University Research and Innovation Strategy and the 2020 Research Plan
2. To undertake detailed prioritization of research and innovation portfolio

Terms of Reference

1. To devise and implement necessary strategies for the achievement of key performance indicators and to monitor their effectiveness.
2. To devise strategies to ensure the most efficient use of the University's research infrastructure and resources, including the RETF.
3. To ensure that the University realises the potential impact of its research through maximising the opportunities emerging from synergies between its innovation, knowledge exchange and commercial activities.
4. To support and monitor the development of the cross-disciplinary research themes, and the research institutes.
5. Approve allocations of the RETF, the Research Infrastructure Fund (upon recommendation by CRI), and other research support funds.
6. Monitor and evaluate the spending of RETF resource by projects overseen by other committees
7. Oversee and support development of strategic research partnerships.
8. Develop and oversee efforts to support the development of research leadership.

Meeting Schedule: Meet fortnightly

REF Planning Group

Membership

Pro-Vice Chancellors (Research and Innovation) (Chair)

Research Deans

Dean for Post Graduate Research Studies

Dean for Equality and Diversity

Head of Planning and Reporting

REF Manager

Others to attend on invitation for particular issues under discussion

Secretary: *Dawn Cobbold*

Key Objectives

1. To develop plans, processes, and structures for REF submission
2. To oversee the production of REF return
3. To make recommendations to produce strongest possible REF return for the University

Terms of Reference

1. Approve plans and processes developed to support the delivery of the University's submission to the REF 2021.
2. Oversee the implementation of plans and processes, monitoring progress and making decisions on required changes to these plans.
3. Identify and monitor the project risks and ensure that appropriate action is taken to reduce identified risks.
4. Make final recommendations to the University Executive Board on:
5. the Units of Assessment where the University will make a submission
6. the approach to determining staff in scope
7. the impact case studies to be included in the submission
8. Approve Environment and Impact case study templates to be submitted
9. Oversee the development of the University's Code of Practice for the REF 2021, ensuring the code is widely disseminated and that it is applied across the University.
10. Review Equality Impact Assessments against the protected characteristics at appropriate stages of the submission preparations, and determine what action, if any, needs to be taken, should any noticeable imbalances be observed in the output and staff submission profile.
11. Keep abreast of developments in national REF policy and criteria, and take any necessary action arising from implications of these developments.
12. Provide regular updates to the wider University on policies, processes and the status of the University's preparations for REF 2021.

Meeting Schedule: Meets monthly (possibly bi-weekly after summer 2020 until submission)

Committee on Researcher Development and PGR Studies

Membership

Dean for Post Graduate Research Studies (Chair)

1 Research Dean

1 Teaching and Learning Dean

2 School PGR Directors

Chair of Research Staff Committee

Staff Development Manager (Leadership and Research Staff Development)

2 members of staff (appointed through open competition)

1 HR Manager

1 PGR student representative

Others to attend on invitation for particular issues under discussion

Secretary: *Director of Graduate School Services*

Key Objectives

1. Develop strategy for PGR recruitment, progression, and professional development.
2. Develop strategy for and oversee researcher development, including programmes for researcher development and training.
3. Oversee the work of the Graduate School, and Doctoral Training Programmes across the University.
4. Oversee commitments under HR Excellence in Research award, and the Concordat on Research Staff.

Terms of Reference

1. To devise and implement strategies to support the development of individual researchers at all career stages, including for research division leadership.
2. To oversee Reading's strategic approach to PGR recruitment, working with Schools / Departments and relevant Functions, to increase PGR recruitment levels, in line with the University's overall PGR recruitment target as determined by the University Executive Board.
3. To consider a range of management information relating to PGR students and to monitor success against internal and external indicators and targets.
4. To oversee the work of the Graduate School in terms of PGR policy development, student support, professional development, and promotion of PGR matters across the University and more broadly.
5. To oversee the quality management arrangements, including monitoring of progress, for all PGR students.
6. To determine and oversee the arrangements for the allocation and award of PGR studentships.
7. To oversee Doctoral Training Partnership provision across the University.
8. To receive and, where appropriate, respond to reports from the School Directors of PGR Studies Forum, the Postgraduate Research Student Representatives Forum, and the Research Staff Committee.

Meeting Schedule: termly

Committee on Open Research and Research Integrity (CORRI)

Membership

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Chair)

Research Dean

Associate Director Library (Collections, Planning, Research)

Research Data Manager

Head of Planning and Reporting

Head of Research Communication and Engagement

Head of Research Services

Head of Governance

Member of IT Services

2 members of staff appointed through open competition

Head of Quality Assurance in Research

Chair of the Research Ethics Committee

Others to attend on invitation for discussion of particular items

Secretary: *Senior Governance Officer*

Key Objectives

1. Oversee and as appropriate further develop policies, structures and processes for research integrity and ethics, and review their effectiveness.
2. Develop and oversee implementation of the open research strategy.
3. Oversee development of relevant training in research ethics and integrity, and open research.
4. Ensure compliance with the Concordat.

Terms of Reference

1. To have overall responsibility for institutional policies and related procedures in relation to open research, open access publishing and the management of research data, and to monitor their effectiveness, and ensure that these are fit for purpose and compliant with statutory and funder requirements.
2. To define strategic objectives for embedding open research, access and data management (RDM) and data sharing into standard research practice and University research management and processes.
3. To advise on and support the development of effective communications and direct engagement activities relating to these policies and procedures to staff and students.
4. To establish and, where appropriate, review principles and responsibilities and approve mechanisms for allocation of Open Access publishing and funding, and monitor its expenditure.
5. To be aware of and engage with Open Research developments nationally and internationally, and promote the adoption of appropriate innovative practices.

6. To have overall responsibility for institutional policies and related procedures ensuring and promoting research integrity, research ethics, and the Concordat.
7. To fulfil the reporting requirements relating to research integrity and the Concordat.
8. Oversee the use of the open access block grant and other internal and external Open Access funding.

Meeting Schedule: termly

Committee for Research Infrastructure (CRI)

Membership

Research Dean (Chair)

Research Dean

Director CAF

Director RFIF

Head of Research Services

Director, Estates (or representative)

Director, Technical Services

Director of IT (or representative)

A senior research accountant

Representative of UMASC

2 members of staff appointed through open competition

Secretary: *Dawn Cobbold*

Key Objectives

1. Provide comprehensive overview of research infrastructure requirements.
2. Implement infrastructure and facilities related issues of the research strategy.
3. Recommend allocations of the research infrastructure fund.
4. Monitors progress with infrastructure fund projects.

Terms of Reference

1. To assess short and medium term requirements for research infrastructure in the University, together with all related operational aspects.
2. To make recommendations to UCRI for the allocation of the University's Research infrastructure annual fund.
3. To devise and implement mechanisms to effectively monitor the usage of University research infrastructure in relation to the production of high quality research grant applications and research outputs.
4. Lead the engagement and response to national research infrastructure initiatives.

Meeting Schedule: termly

University Committee for Impact, Partnerships and Engagement (UCIPE)

Membership

Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Chair)

Research Dean

Research Dean

Commercial Director

Head of Research Services

Research Impact Manager

Head of Research Communications

Head of KTC

REF Manager

Director, TVSP

2 academic members appointed through open competition

Secretary: Appointed by the University Secretary (*Helen Davies*)

Key Objectives

1. Financial and performance oversight of BOISP.
2. Support implementation of public engagement plan.
3. Support KE and commercialization elements of research strategy.

Terms of Reference

1. To oversee the University's submission to KEF.
2. To enable and support strong sustained relationships with business and other stakeholders, monitoring the levels of collaboration and their effectiveness.
3. To monitor the development and maintenance of the University's relationships with end users.
4. To evaluate the impact of our research including through income generation, technology transfer, knowledge exchange and policy development.
5. To monitor and support engagement with TVSP.
6. To monitor BOISP finances and impact.
7. To develop and oversee plans for research led public engagement, and its links to wider public engagement activities of the University.
8. To manage HEIF IS uplift, and strategic HEIF funding, in line with the Research and Innovation Strategy, and the University HEIF strategy.

Meeting Schedule: termly

GCRF Steering Group

Membership

Research Dean (Chair)

Research Dean

Head of Research Services

RDL Global Development

Head of Research Communications

External Members

Secretary: *RES GCRF Manager*

Key Objectives

Oversee 3-year GCRF QR strategy (until 2021).

Terms of Reference

1. Develop a strategy to enable researchers in the university to engage effectively with the GCRF, and to maximise GCRF opportunities.
2. Identify and lead the University's approach to strategic opportunities offered by GCRF, for example large RCUK/UKRI GCRF calls, including the internal selection process for proposals; oversight of the development of proposals; facilitation of research collaboration; internal review of proposals.
3. Lead the strategic engagement with the GCRF and the bodies delivering GCRF, e.g. through consultation; and with other bodies funding development research (e.g. DFID).
4. Review annually the performance of applications to GCRF calls, and identify relevant lessons learned.
5. Manage the GCRF Strategic Fund.

Meeting Schedule: termly