

“EXCELLENCE WITH IMPACT” - COVENTRY’S RESEARCH STRATEGY TO 2021”

1. Pre-ambble

- 1.1 The current research strategy ‘Research Excellence with Impact’ (see Appendix i) was written in November 2013 and adopted in the academic year 2014/15.
- 1.2 Prior to the adoption of this strategy Coventry had had a long tradition of applied research which had been driven mainly by income metrics and numbers of outputs.
- 1.3 It was recognised that to take the university forward in terms of reputation both domestically and globally the university needed to rebalance its activities to give as much priority to high quality research as given in to high quality teaching, learning and personal development for students.
- 1.4 For this reason, the University evolved from ‘Applied Research’ as the sole basis of its strategy to ‘Research Excellence with Impact’ as the descriptor.
- 1.5 The strategy has been in place for two years and whilst many of the principles of the original strategy exist this document is intended to act as a definitive update.

2. Rationale for the Research Strategy

- 2.1 Delivering a research strategy which focusses on research excellence with impact will dramatically improve the key metrics used to evaluate research activity, both in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the national and international league tables.
- 2.2 By executing this research strategy Coventry University will take the lead in defining the research agenda and discipline in the areas in which it elects to specialise.
- 2.3 This strategy will serve to enhance the Coventry University Brand and reposition itself in the Market.

3. Definitions of Excellence and Impact

- 3.1 ‘Excellence’ is defined as a combination of originality, significance and rigour and measured through metrics such as number of research outputs (publications) and citations.
- 3.2 ‘Impact’ is the natural development of the University’s previous focus on applied research i.e. research conducted with and for external partners and beneficiaries. The ‘impact’ being auditable economic, social, cultural, policy-influencing, or practice-enhancing depending on the discipline(s) involved.

4. Principles of the Research Strategy

- 4.1 Research will be focussed into a number of University and Faculty Research Centres that represent niche research areas where Coventry can be dominant.
- 4.2 The University will invest internal (from its surpluses) and external (HEFCE QR) funding into the Research Centres to support their development and growth.
- 4.3 The research centres will develop a mixed economy of research, teaching, consultancy and continued professional development. The aim being to cover the research centres’ academic and research staff costs from earned income.
- 4.4 Research students will be supported through the research centres.

- 4.5 The staff and students in the research centre will be co-located to generate a research environment conducive to high quality research.
- 4.6 The University will regularly invite external, expert, review of the quality of our research outputs, outcomes and partnerships.
- 4.7 All research focussed academics (>50% allocated to research) will employed in the research centres.
- 4.8 All research focussed academics will be expected to spend a minimum of 20% of their time on teaching activities enriching the learning experience of our students and delivering 'research informed teaching'
- 4.9 All academic staff will be expected to spend a minimum 20% of their time on scholarship, to include any combination of research, consultancy and non-award bearing CPD (as agreed with their line managers) imparting to them the 'authority to teach'.
- 4.10 All teaching focussed academics (>50% allocated to teaching) may have the opportunity to spend this time as an associated member of one of the research centres. *(see appendix ii)*
- 4.11 Support for proposal development and delivery will be provided centrally as will support for post graduate research training and research staff development.
- 4.12 The costs for this central support will be covered from the tax revenues from research income and research student fees.
- 4.13 The research centres will form the focus of the Research Excellence Framework submission. It is expected that only members of staff in or associated with research centres will be included in the Research Excellence Framework submission.
- 4.14 This strategy should be reviewed annually by the Research Leadership Team and any changes agreed at the University Research Committee.

5. Delivering the Research Strategy

- 5.1 The research mission at Coventry University is led by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and assisted by the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Research. *(see appendix iii)*
- 5.2 The University Research Committee will be responsible for the research governance within the University and reports into Academic Board. The research committee has two subcommittees; namely the Research Degrees and Research Concordat. *(see appendix iv)*
- 5.3 The Research Leadership Team will meet regularly to discuss research strategy and act as a communication pathway for all research matters. Necessary items raised at the Research Leadership Team meetings will be escalated to the University Leadership Team meetings. *(see appendix v)*
- 5.4 The Research Office is led by the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Research and will provide support to the research centres with respect to funding, proposal development, research finance & compliance, project delivery and research excellence. *(see appendix vi)*
- 5.5 A doctoral college will be created which will provide centralised support for all research training and will deliver a comprehensive (PhD to Professor) programme of training for our research students and staff. *(see appendix vii)*
- 5.6 The head of the doctoral college will report into the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research.

- 5.7 University Research Centres will report directly into the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research. *(see appendix viii)*
- 5.8 Faculty Research Centres will report into the relevant Associate Dean for Research with an informal reporting line into the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research. *(see appendix viii)*
- 5.9 The professoriate will be used to provide leadership within the research centres and to provide mentorship to the early and mid-career researchers. They will also be expected to be internationally recognised thought leaders in their fields and develop a global presence and research network.
- 5.10 With the exception of appointments to key leadership roles the staffing strategy will be to prioritise the appointment and development of early career researchers within the centres.
- 5.11 Significant investment will be made in research students with incentives for early completion.
- 5.12 We will look to employ the best of our research students upon completion of their studies.
- 5.13 The Deputy Vice Chancellor for research and the Pro Vice Chancellor for Enterprise & Innovation will work together to develop collaborative research funding opportunities (including industrially sponsored research students)
- 5.14 The Deputy Vice Chancellors for Research and International will work together to develop the International Research Strategy and establish institutional links and associated funding programmes with overseas universities. *(see appendix ix)*
- 5.15 The University will invest up to £20m pa from the university's surplus into the research centres to develop and grow the research activity.
- 5.16 The level of investment into each centre will be reviewed annually as part of the financial planning round and will be made in agreement with the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Centre Director and where appropriate the relevant Associate Dean for Research.
- 5.17 All research centres will have an advisory board comprising members from both inside and outside the University. *(see appendix x)*
- 5.18 The performance of the Faculty Research Centres will be monitored by the relevant Faculty Research Committees.
- 5.19 The performance of the University Research Centres will be monitored by the University Research Committee.
- 5.20 Centres will be reviewed annually by a subgroup of the University Leadership Team. *(see appendix xi)*
- 5.21 The annual review will recommend to the University Research Committee if funding for the individual research centres should be continued. They will in turn make a recommendation to Academic Board prior to final approval by the Board of Governors.
- 5.22 New centres are established by presenting a business plan to a subgroup of the University Leadership Team, who will then make a recommendation to the University Research Committee. They will in turn make a recommendation to Academic Board prior to final approval by the Board of Governors.

6. Measures of success

- 6.1 The performance of the research centres will be assessed against metrics and criteria by which research quality is measured in the Research Excellence Framework and the national and international league tables.
- 6.2 These measures are included in the corporate plan and include number of outputs, number of high quality outputs, number of outputs with international co-authors, number of citations, number of research students, number of research student completions, % of staff qualified to doctoral level, total research income, high quality research income, impact case studies and esteem. (*see appendix xii*)
- 6.3 In terms of the research evaluation framework success will be viewed as a REF 2021 submission where 450 FTE are entered with 75% of or our research rated as internationally excellent or better.
- 6.4 In terms of league tables, success will be measured as Coventry University being placed in the top 40 in the Times UK League Table and in the top 400 in the QS world rankings.

Appendices

Appendix i	The 2013 “Excellence with Impact” Research Strategy
Appendix ii	Principles of Associated Membership of Research Centres
Appendix iii	Vice Chancellor’s Office Organisational Chart
Appendix iv	Membership and Terms of Reference for the University Research Committee
Appendix v	Membership and Terms of Reference for the Research Leadership Team
Appendix vi	Structure and Responsibilities of the Research Office
Appendix vii	Structure and Responsibilities of the Doctoral College
Appendix viii	Principles and Structure of the University/Faculty Research Centres
Appendix ix	International Research Strategy
Appendix x	Terms of Reference for the Research Centre Advisory Boards
Appendix xi	Process for the Creation, Review and Closure of Research Centres
Appendix xi	Corporate Plan Targets for Research Centres