



# University of Portsmouth Research and Innovation Centres and Institutes

This document outlines the expected operation and performance of new and existing Research and Innovation (R&I) Centres and Institutes at the University of Portsmouth.

Such Centres and Institutes are critical to developing and supporting a broad range of internationally-excellent activities in areas where we have critical mass. They form part of a sustainable environment and serve as vehicles for delivering the University's strategic aims for R&I excellence, income, collaboration and impact.

In order to operate, a Centre or Institute must demonstrate that they conform to the principles and performance expectations outlined herein. Any R&I grouping that does not meet these will not be recognised as a UoP R&I Centre or Institute and cannot be marketed as such, although there may be opportunities to highlight their R&I through other marketing mechanisms. Institutes and Centres will be subject to regular review, which could result in their closure.

## Principles of a Centre or Institute

A University of Portsmouth R&I Centre or Institute will:

1. Bring together a critical mass of scholars for collaborative work over an extended period of time beyond the life of one specific project, and in a clearly defined area that:
  - a) Combine related disciplines that may extend beyond traditional school/department boundaries and contribute to their development.
  - b) Relate to important national and/or international agendas, and/or are of strategic importance to the University.
  - c) Support a cohesive body of academic and research staff and students with a vibrant,

sustainable environment.

2. Provide a means for collaboration with external partners from other universities and with community, public and private sector organisations.
3. Actively work with Heads, Executive Deans, and Professional Services to promote and influence the recruitment and development of academic and research staff, and postgraduate research students.
4. Have an accurate, operational and current digital presence (PURE, website, social media) that reflects the membership, structure and activities of the Centre or Institute.
5. Have a variety of dedicated mechanisms to promote the work of the Centre or Institute, in addition to publications, social media, and website presence. For example, seminar programmes, visiting academics, workshops, external advisors, etc.
6. Have mechanisms to capture and maximise the impact of R&I activities.
7. Show how their work contributes to learning, teaching and the delivery of the graduate hallmarks.

## Creation of a new Centre

A Centre provides a “virtual home” for researchers and innovators around a common purpose. They promote internal and external collaboration to highlight existing or emerging research and innovation strengths and opportunities. They sit alongside the University Thematic areas to promote the engagement of all staff in both research and innovation.

We provide below the procedure for proposing the creation of a new Centre.

1. A proposed Director (or proxy if none has been selected) of the Centre will submit a business case to the Faculty R&I Committee (FRIC) of the intended home Faculty. The business case will include:
  - A five-year development plan (see Annex 1 for details).
  - A clear statement about the timeliness of the creation of the new Centre, and why its objectives cannot be achieved within existing University structures (departments, present Centres and Institutes, Thematic areas). This statement must demonstrate the added value, and stress the strategic importance for the University.
  - Letters of support from the relevant Executive Dean(s).

- An operations plan showing how the finances, workload allocations, and line management of the new Centre will be arranged (especially cross-faculty) and managed. This plan should reference any HR organisational change process required.
  - An Equality Impact Analysis (EIA<sup>1</sup>) of the plan.
2. The home FRIC will then make a recommendation to the home FEC, who will request URIC to start the process of establishing the new Centre. URIC may seek additional input from associated FRICs if the Centre is cross-faculty.
  3. The chair of URIC may choose to send the proposal (including the five-year development plan) for external peer review as part of the decision-making process, with a report presented back to URIC on the suitability and sustainability of the Centre.
  4. URIC will then make a recommendation to UEB (including any peer review report or visiting panel report) who will have the final decision.

### **Creation of a new Institute**

An Institute provides a physical home for established, world-leading research and innovation. It is therefore key to delivering sustainable international excellence and should underpin the global reputation of the University.

We provide below a procedure for proposing the creation of a new Institute.

5. A proposed Director (or proxy if none has been selected) of the Institute will submit a business case to the Faculty R&I Committee (FRIC) of the intended home Faculty. The business case will include:
  - A five-year development plan (see Annex 1 for details).
  - A clear statement about the timeliness of the creation of the new Institute, and why the objectives of the new Institute cannot be achieved within existing University structures (departments, present Centres and Institutes, Thematic areas). This statement must demonstrate the strategic importance of the new institute for the University.

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<sup>1</sup> Assistance can be provided by Equality and Diversity Unit (EDU) within HR

- Letters of support from the relevant Executive Dean(s) and PVC R&I.
  - An operations plan showing how the finances, workload allocations, and line management of the new Institute will be arranged and managed. We expect the Institute Director (or their designated proxy) to be a member of the home Faculty Executive board and perform line management duties within the Institute. The institute will possess a dedicated cost centre within the home Faculty budget. This plan should reference any required HR organisational change processes.
  - An Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) of the plan.
6. The home FRIC will then make a recommendation to the home FEC, who will request URIC to start the process of establishing a new Institute. Before continuing, the chair of URIC will seek initial approval from UEB regarding the strategic importance of the new Institute.
  7. URIC will take advice from a visiting panel of external experts. The membership of this panel will be decided by the chair of URIC (PVC R&I) taking advice from members of URIC, Executive Deans and the Institute Director. The visiting panel will provide a report to URIC on the suitability and sustainability of the Institute.
  8. URIC will then make a recommendation to UEB (including any peer review report or visiting panel report) who will have the final decision.

If an existing Centre wishes to become an institute, it must follow the same procedure as outlined above for a new Institute. It must demonstrate the key principle of sustainable international excellence as well as its strategic importance to the University.

## Operation of a Centre or Institute

The expectations for the performance and management of Centres and Institutes are presented below.

- Each Centre or Institute should appoint a Director<sup>2</sup> for a renewable five-year term. The Director will report to the relevant home Executive Dean (who may delegate if they wish).

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<sup>2</sup> Co-Directors are allowed as long as they share the allocated resources and responsibilities. Deputy Directors are also possible, but they must be justified in the business plan, including how they will be resourced.

- The Director will work with Heads, Executive Deans and Professional Services to prepare all necessary information for normal University managerial procedures (e.g. financial planning, PDRs, workload planning, post-award support, etc). We do not expect the Director of a Centre to have line management responsibilities for staff associated with the Centre, unless previously agreed with appropriate Heads, FECs and HR.
- Where more than one Faculty is involved, the Executive Deans concerned should agree which Faculty is the “home” Faculty with overall responsibility for the management of the Centre or Institute. If there are any cross-faculty budgetary arrangements, they should be agreed with the Director of Finance
- For Institutes, the Director (or their designated proxy) will be a member of the home Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) or equivalent. They may also be invited to report to other FECs, especially for cross-faculty Institutes.
- For Institutes, the Director will manage their own Institute budget through the home Faculty finance office using a dedicated cost code. The same budget arrangements may be suitable for a Centre at the discretion of the Executive Dean of the home Faculty.
- Centres and Institutes should establish an internal executive or management committee that includes the Director and relevant R&I leaders (from within the Centre or Institute). All Centres and Institutes are encouraged to include representation from early career researchers (postgraduate students and postdocs) on their executive or management committee. This committee will determine how it operates, however it is expected that it will convene at least three times in each academic year.

All Centres and Institutes will need to submit an annual report to their home FRIC updating on progress against their five-year development plan (see Annex 1), as well as highlighting any key changes or concerns. The home FRIC may develop their own requirements and format for such annual reports. These reports will be shared with other FRICs (for cross-faculty Centres or Institutes) and presented to URIC for information.

It is expected that any on-going problems in delivering the development plan of a Centre or Institute will be highlighted early through the annual review process, and special measures may be requested by the home FRIC and, possibly, URIC. In exceptional circumstances, a home FEC can request URIC to undertake an urgent review of a Centre or Institute.

URIC will independently review every Centre and Institute approximately every five years. As part of

this review cycle, Centres and Institutes will be required to refresh their five-year development plan (Annex 1). For Centres, URIC will select a senior UoP academic (e.g. Associate Dean, Institute director, senior Professor) to perform this review (of both the plan and the Centre as a whole) and submit a report. For Institutes, this review will be performed by a visiting panel of suitable external experts selected by the chair of URIC, with input from Executive Deans, members of URIC, and the Institute Director.

The outcome of this URIC review will be passed back to the home FEC/FRIC and could include a range of recommendations (including possible closure) against the principles outlined above, and presented in the refreshed five-year development plan.

Any request to formally close an Institute or Centre should come from the home FEC (with input from FRICs) to URIC. This request should present a business case for closing the Centre or Institute, and contain a plan for mitigating the impact of the closure on the broader R&I environment within the associated Faculties. URIC will consider this request, before making a formal recommendation to UEB for final approval. Closure of an Institute or Centre may need to follow the formal HR organisational change process to understand the impact on any staff directly employed by the Centre or Institute.

### **Other R&I Groupings**

At present, this guidance only covers Centres and Institutes. In the future, it may be extended to include other types of R&I groupings (e.g., “groups”, “clusters”, “networks”, “hubs”, etc) but for now, such R&I groupings can be formed as needed on an informal basis. Such R&I groupings should avoid confusion with the established titles of approved Centres, Institutes or Thematic Areas at UoP.

At a University level, there will be no formal obligation to reflect such R&I groupings in our procedures and management structures, although they can be supported on an informal *ad hoc* basis. There is no requirement for such informal groupings to progress to established Centres or Institutes (outlined herein), although aspirations for such progression are encouraged.

## ANNEX 1

### Five-year Development Plan

A five-year development plan should include:

1. A **Capability Statement** (up to 2 pages, 11pt Arial) comprising of:
  - A statement of the primary purpose of the Centre or Institute.
  - A summary of the areas of excellence that identifies the distinctiveness of the Centre or Institute and relates it to current or future external themes and priorities. This summary should include a clear statement of how the Centre or Institute aligns with the strategic plans of the University.
  - For Institutes, a demonstration of sustainable international excellence based on past and current performance relative to University KPIs. Evidence on several KPIs is expected, and could include, but is not limited to: Strong REF/KEF/TEF outcomes, established doctoral training programmes (possibly externally funded), visible international leadership roles, international collaborations or partnerships, hosting of international conferences and events, externally funded fellowships, strong publication statistics (e.g. citations) with international co-authors, access to world-class facilities (on campus or beyond), significant external grant funding (especially through collaborative bids involving multiple staff), international visitors, etc. This evidence should demonstrate that the Institute is more than just the sum of the individual staff.
  - For Centres, a summary of activities that relate to the internal and external profile of the Centre including, for example, publications, external income, newsletters, seminars, workshops, visiting fellows, placements, secondments, membership of networks, social media activity and presence, press coverage.
2. A **Situation Analysis** (including SWOT or similar) (up to 2 pages, 11pt Arial) that identifies the unique features or capabilities of the Centre or Institute, and where it sits within the external R&I landscape against similar Centres and Institutes. This should include a comparison with major competitors and identify the major opportunities and threats over the next five years.
3. A **Development and Operations Plan** (up to 3 pages, 11pt Arial) that defines future objectives of the Centre or Institute related to the overarching University R&I strategy. The plan should

include specific KPIs and/or targets against which performance can be measured. This plan should address the following issues:

- Actions planned for growth and development (especially funding).
- For continuing Centres and Institutes, any expected changes in the broad field(s) of research and innovation activity.
- Actions to raise the profile of the Centre or Institute.
- Plans to develop new academic and non-academic collaborations.
- For Institutes, a development plans for staff and early career researchers (postdocs and postgraduate students),
- For Centres, a clear and transparent membership policy (especially if cross-faculty).
- Any succession planning for any intended leadership changes.
- A plan showing pathways to impact (an additional one page allowed).
- For existing Centres and Institutes, a management plan including any planned changes to existing budget arrangements (especially if cross-faculty)

This document was approved by the University Executive Board on 21 May 2019.

A copy can be found at:

<http://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-231.pdf>