Research Strategy Group
Terms of Reference
May 2021

Remit

The Research Strategy Group remit will include research strategy, fore sighting, policy, research culture and research governance. The group will provide oversight for major, cross-university projects. The group will be concerned with research staff, PGR students (from a research perspective, not with regard to administration of their studies) and professional services support for research. Research Strategy Group will have an overview of major projects, strategies, tactics and identifying cross-college opportunities and will monitor progress on major cross university initiatives. Via its sub-groups, RSG has an overview of Research Ethics and Integrity; Research Culture, which includes issues relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Post-Graduate Research; and Research Engagement. RSG can convene specific project groups or short-life working groups to deal with issues as required, such as the Growing Research Together Steering Group. Research Strategy Group does not interfere with research issues that are more properly handled within the Colleges. RSG plays a role in prioritising funding applications where numbers are restricted which is consistent with Universities UK good practice.

RSG will make recommendations to the University Executive. RSG does not hold a budget.

Areas of responsibility

- Development of the University's research strategy and monitoring of progress against the strategy.
- Development of research practice, including:
    - identification and prioritising emerging areas
    - targeting existing areas for enhancement
    - supporting interdisciplinarity
    - encouraging large scale bids
    - prioritising bids to external agencies, when necessary
    - supporting mechanisms to identify and facilitate impact
    - facilitating the development of key external research partnerships
    - stewardship of relationships with funders
    - Building the profile of the University of Edinburgh as a world leading institution in which to establish and grow a research career regardless of ethnicity, gender or ableness.
    - supporting the provision of training and development for research staff regarding those early in their research careers,
    - recommending developments in the research environment
    - developing policy to address changes in the research environment such as open access, open data, data repositories, open science, and new funding opportunities.

- Oversight of the Edinburgh Research Office, with reference to research funding, impact, and research governance arrangements.

- Oversight of good research practice and stewardship of university-wide research policies, including those relating to researcher development, research ethics and integrity.
- Oversight of requirements for formal reporting to Court and funders associated with research practice policies, but exclusive of research programmes involving animals in scientific research[1] or the participation of volunteers in clinical trials.[2]
- Assessing research performance against key performance indicators.
- Ownership of the processes for the delivery of external assessments such as the Research Excellence Framework.
- Delivering institutional responses to external consultations on research policy, best practice, guidance/advice, and legislation.
- Oversight of and guidance to the Innovation Working Group (Deputy Vice Principal (Enterprise)

Membership
Chair: Senior Vice Principal (Jonathan Seckl)
Vice-Principal International
Vice-Principal Philanthropy and Advancement
 Deputy Vice Principal (Research)
Deputy Vice Principal (Research – Artificial Intelligence)
Deputy Vice Principal (Enterprise)
Deans of Research (all Colleges)
Dean PGR (one representative)
Director, Edinburgh Research Office (ERO)
Director, Edinburgh Innovations
Director, CityDeal (Edinburgh and South East Scotland)
Director, Library Services (or representative)
Head of Researcher Development (Institute of Academic Development)
HR Representative

Attendees:
Secretary: Strategic Planning/ ERO (Susan Cooper)
Senior College Research Officers
Communications Representative
SVP Policy Officer

(No representatives from Estates, Planning, Finance or specific staff groups e.g. Early Career Researchers unless invited)

Secretariat for the Group will be provided by ERO.

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[1] http://www.ed.ac.uk/research/animal-research/regulation;
[2] http://accord.scot/about-accord

Stakeholders

Research Strategy Group's stakeholders are:

- Colleges, Schools, their academic and research support staff
- University Senior Management, through University Executive
- Edinburgh Research Office
- Edinburgh Innovation (industry engagement, innovations/Intellectual Property development)
- Doctoral Colleges
- Strategic Planning
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Estates
- Procurement
- Edinburgh Global
- Information Services Group
- Communications and Marketing
- Development and Alumni
- Social Responsibility and Sustainability
- Institute for Academic Development
- External research funders[3]
- Research policy bodies[4]

Attendance and Commitment

The Research Strategy Group will meet every 8 weeks for 2021/22 before moving back to 5 meetings per year.

Quorum

The quorum will be a simple majority of the current membership. If a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time of the appointed meeting, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to an alternate, appropriate day and time.

Where required, decisions taken by the Group must be approved by a majority of members present and voting. In the case of equality in voting, the Chair may use their casting vote. Those in attendance do not have a vote but can provide advice and information to those who do.

Reporting

Research Strategy Group reports to University Executive and will provide three reports each session to Senate.

Public record of meetings

A public record of each meetings of RSG is uploaded once the note of the previous meeting has been formally confirmed https://www.ed.ac.uk/governance-strategic-planning/research/rpg.

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[3] Scottish Funding Council; Research England; European Research Council; UKRI; UK and Scottish Government departments; UK and international charities funding research; and other UK and international research funders
[4] Russell Group, Universities Scotland (including its Research and Knowledge Exchange committee), Universities UK, LERU, Universitas21 etc