# RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE STRATEGY

## FOR MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Manchester
Metropolitan
University

# CONTENTS

## CONSULTATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Professor Richard Greene**
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange
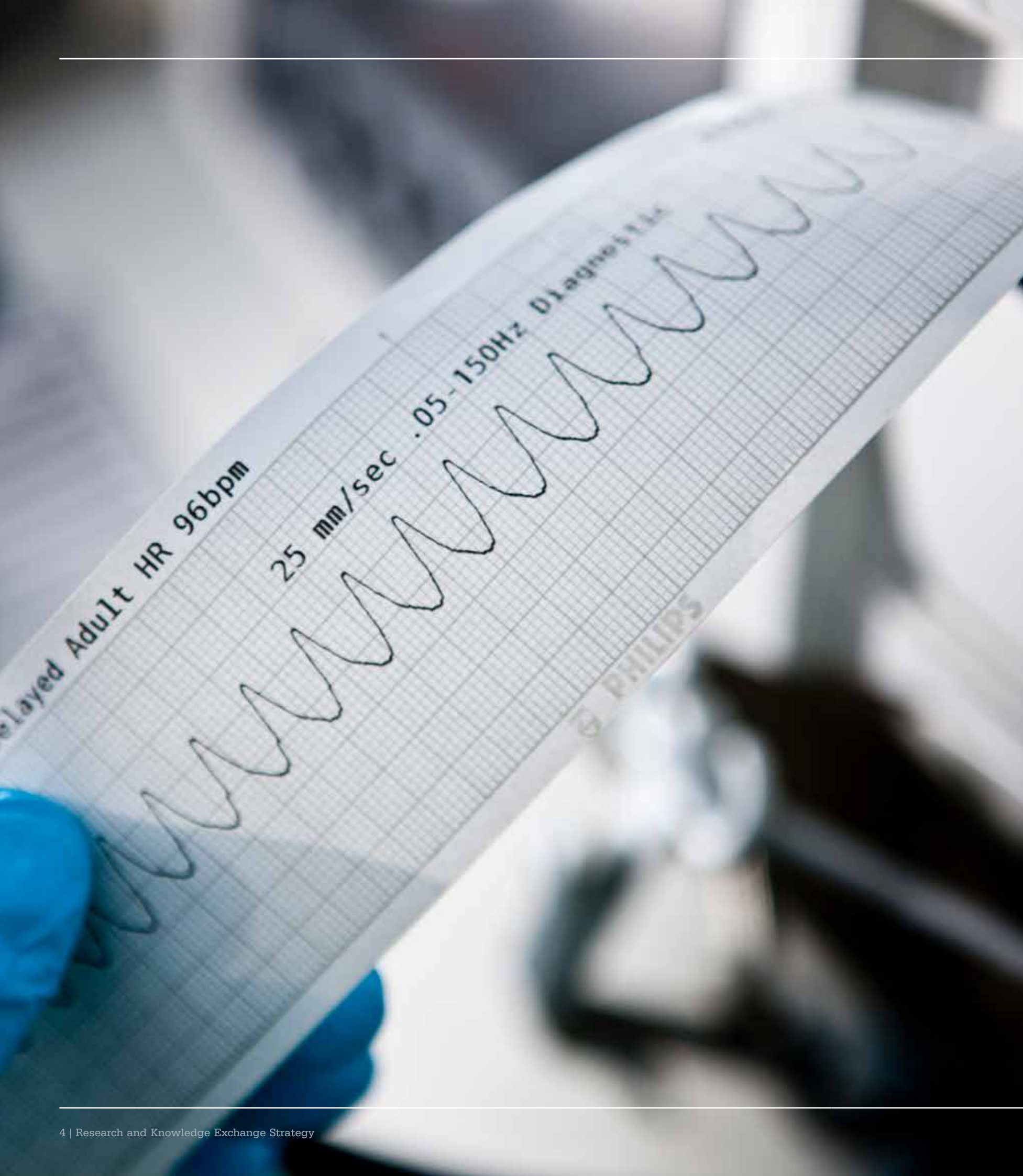
# Principal Features of the Manchester Metropolitan University Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy

1.1 This thematic strategy underpins Manchester Metropolitan's overarching Strategic Framework and within it our ambition to become the best modern university. It builds upon success in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF), our strong stable of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, and the recent recruitment of excellent academic and professional services staff.

1.2 This strategy is designed to ensure that high-quality research and knowledge exchange have a sustainable long-term future at Manchester Metropolitan and play an increasing role in defining our identity.

1.3 We seek to produce high-quality research that has a beneficial impact on society, culture, the environment and the economy.

1.4 We see knowledge exchange and innovation as important parts of a continuum with discovery research that can drive impact, help to address global challenges and make a strong contribution to the government's Industrial Strategy.

1.5 We believe that there are strong and beneficial links between excellent research and excellent professional practice and associated teaching. We will develop these links to help generate impact from our research and to ensure that our students have the best possible academic experience.

1.6 We will take advantage of excellence in a broad range of disciplines, philosophies and paradigms to develop an identifiable "Manchester Metropolitan" approach to ideas, questions and challenges.

1.7 We believe that investing in high-quality research is the best way to enhance our reputation and ensure a bright and sustainable future for research and knowledge exchange at Manchester Metropolitan.

1.8 Our aim is for each Faculty to have at least one area of high-quality discovery research that ranks in the top 10 nationally, has real international presence and acts as a beacon to inspire staff and students.

1.9 We will pay particular attention to enhancing the quality of our academic outputs be they articles, monographs, reports, exhibitions or creative works, and develop reliable mechanisms for assessing that quality.

1.10 Internal resources will be directed at research that meets our ethical standards and usually:

a. Generates academic outputs of sufficiently high quality to attract external income (quality-related (QR) funding and/or overhead).

b. Generates beneficial social, economic, environmental or cultural impact (sufficient to attract QR funding).

c. Is intellectually and financially sustainable.

1.11 Knowledge exchange activities will be encouraged where they meet our ethical standards and usually:

a. Help generate research impact or useful relationships.

b. Are of acceptable quality.

c. Are priced appropriately to generate income for reinvestment.

d. Do not distract us from generating high-quality research outputs.

1.12 Building on a strong base, we aim to lead the sector in the number and value of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), and will set a target of 100% of Full Economic Costing (fEC) as the average cost recovery on industrial contracts.

1.13 Research and knowledge exchange will usually be conducted through University Centres for Research and Knowledge Exchange (UCRKE) offering the benefits of critical mass and shared resources.

However, we will also support outstanding lone workers and smaller groups where they can satisfy the relevant principles from sections 10 and 11 above.

1.14 UCRKEs will operate according to the principles described in the UCRKE Charter (as agreed previously at RKE Committee and University Executive Group (UEG), and included in the document "Towards a Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy for Manchester Metropolitan University").

1.15 UCRKEs will be established by UEG on the recommendation of RKE Committee after an assessment using the following dimensions:

a. Results of the Research Excellence Framework 2014.

b. MMU's Mock REF 2016 (Mock REF 2017 for Art & Design).

c. The Science and Innovation Audit (for relevant disciplines).

d. Ability to address the government's Industrial Strategy.

e. Benchmarks against international competitors.

f. The strength of external networks and collaborations.

g. Proven excellence in professional practice.

1.16 We will create an effective and inspiring RKE ecosystem comprising external partners and interconnected areas of research and knowledge exchange delivery and support as outlined in the document "Towards a Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy for Manchester Metropolitan University".

1.17 Graduate research students are a vital part of our research community. We will grow this community and provide our students with the support and facilities they need to flourish.

1.18 As part of the ecosystem but working within a framework that recognises the "department/faculty" as the primary organising unit of the University, we will develop a simple model that rewards research excellence and stimulates research at the 3* and 4* quality levels.

1.19 Faculties will set a specific target for the proportion of workload allocation directed at 3* and 4* work and measure against it as a lead indicator of progress with the research strategy.

1.20 We will ensure that wherever possible time spent for research is timetabled in the best possible format to facilitate the work of specific disciplines and researchers.

1.21 We will ensure that funding models facilitate collaborative and interfaculty working, including the possibility of staff researching and teaching in different faculties where this is appropriate.

1.22 Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors, through their Heads of Department, will be responsible for meeting research performance targets and will be assisted in discharging this responsibility by the Faculty Heads of RKE and the Heads of Research Centres.

1.23 We will seek effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of broadly centralised research and knowledge exchange support systems.

1.24 As part of the ecosystem we have a series of imaginative support, stimulation and mentoring schemes to provide talented individuals with the opportunity to engage in high-quality research regardless of which stage they are at in their research careers, their working patterns or periods of disruption to their research careers.

1.25 We accept that most activities will fall within the "usual" definitions described in the paragraphs above. In some exceptional circumstances they may not apply, but that must be confirmed on a case-by-case basis by the Faculty PVC working with the Faculty Head of RKE.

1.26 Improving the quality and impact of our research will affect how we perform in the next REF but this document is not a strategy for managing that particular assessment process.

1.27 The thematic Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Research and Knowledge Exchange and a broad range of academic and professional services colleagues, particularly the Director of RKE, Faculty PVCs, Faculty Heads of RKE, Heads of Research Centres, Heads of Department and the Head of the Graduate School, will work together to ensure the successful implementation of this strategy.

# Ambitions, Goals and Overarching Themes

2.1 This document is about Manchester Metropolitan University's identity, infrastructure and performance as an institution that engages in high-quality research, innovation and knowledge exchange to produce significant benefits for society, culture, the environment and the economy. The research and knowledge exchange strategy will underpin the University's overarching Strategic Framework and draw strongly from the themes relating to ambition, sustainability and partnerships. Since the polytechnics became universities in 1992 there has been increasing overlap in league tables, especially at subject level, so we must recognise that to achieve our ambition of being the best modern university we will need to be, in some areas at least, one of the best universities overall. This transformation has already started. We can build on a strong performance in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, a growing stable of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and a series of excellent appointments to improve further our performance in research and knowledge exchange.

2.2 There are three main reasons why we engage in research and knowledge exchange:

(i) It is part of our purpose as a university to engage in work that enhances the knowledge base and has a positive impact on people's lives.

(ii) Students benefit enormously from an environment that is rich in high-quality research, where they learn from those who are creating, disseminating and applying knowledge, and those who guide the world on a course through certainty, doubt, truth and opinion.

(iii) High-quality research enhances our reputation, which in turn gives us greater influence and ensures that our opinions and values are taken seriously. Of course, our reputation determines the quality of staff and students we can recruit and the external agencies we can collaborate with.

Therefore, although in monetary terms research looks like a small part of our business, in reality it affects almost everything we do – these relationships are summarised below in Figure 1.
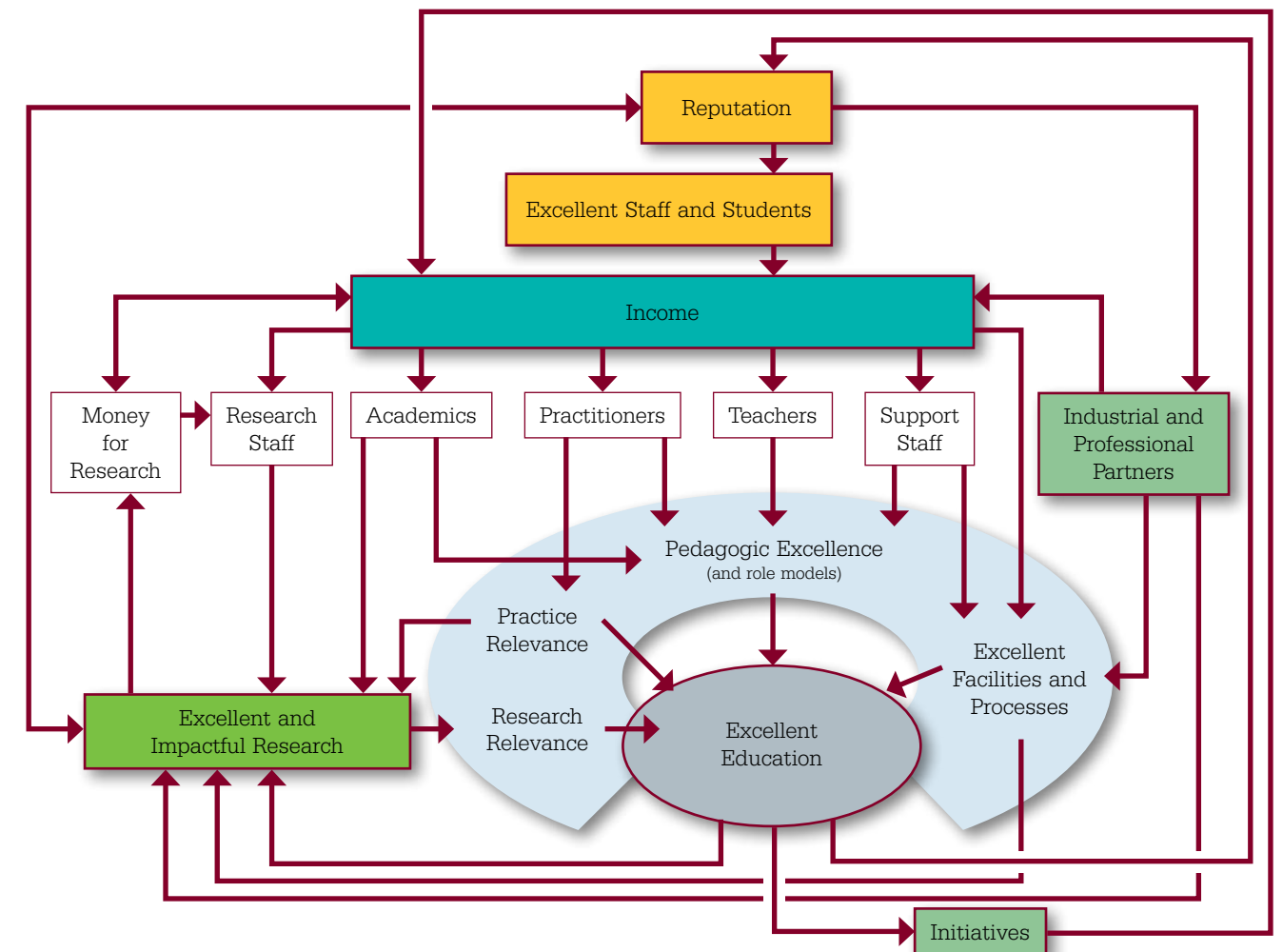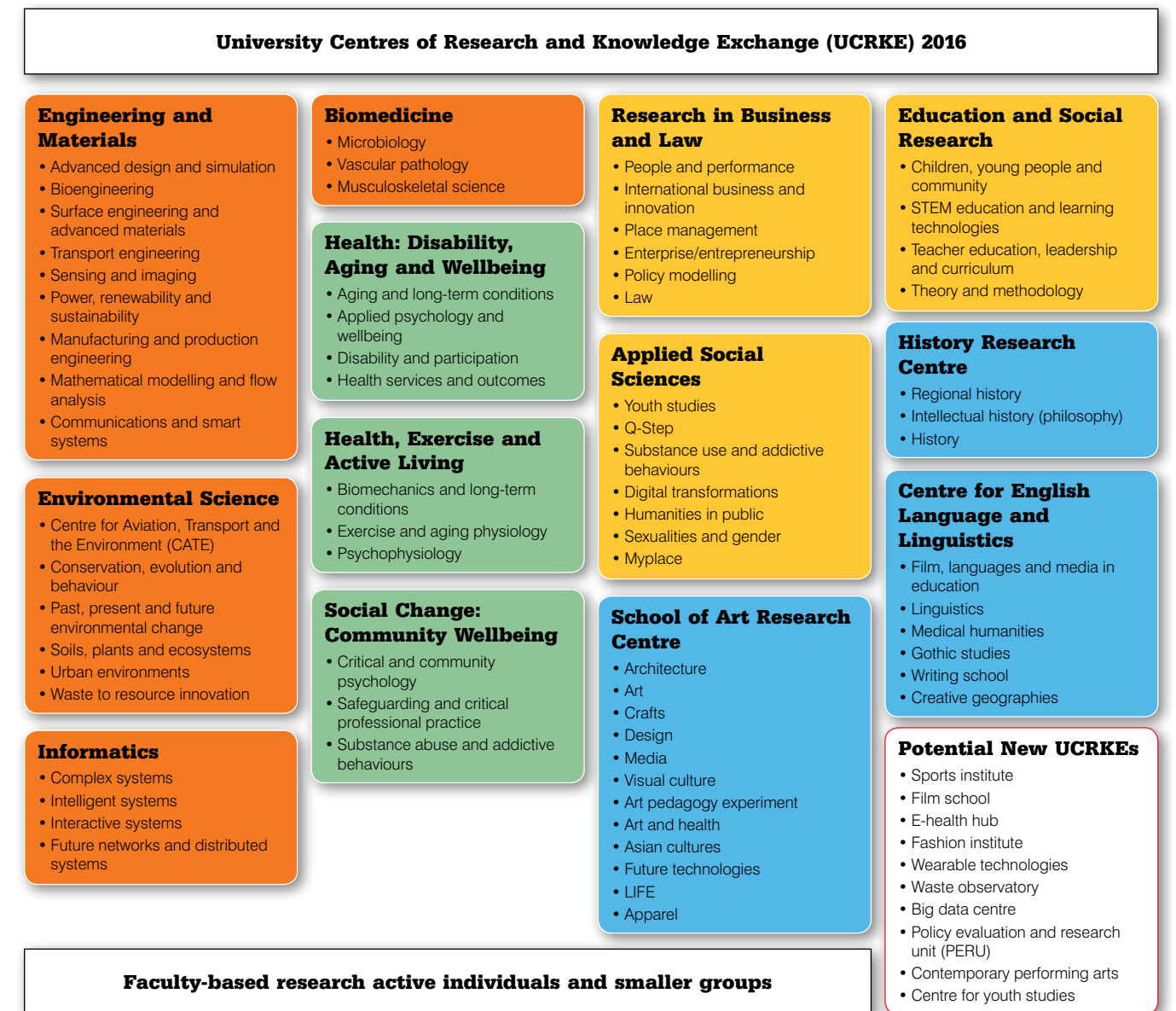


**Figure 1. Positive interactions between excellent research, teaching and professional practice**

2.3 Our ambition is for Manchester Metropolitan University to be recognised externally as an institution that conducts research, innovation and knowledge exchange that is of high quality and generates significant impact. We believe that this recognition will come once each faculty has at least one area of discovery research that produces a meaningful volume of high-quality outputs sufficient to place it in the top ten nationally and attract the attention of the international research community.

2.4 We will not achieve our ambition without making significant changes to how the University sees itself, how it operates and how it is perceived by others. So we must be bold and imaginative. We must have the means to make sound investment decisions, monitor performance and attract, retain and empower the highest quality academic and support staff. We must be able to explain and promote our work to the widest possible audience of participants, collaborators and funders. To be successful, we must invest our resources and leadership attention only in areas that are of high quality, have a compelling intellectual purpose, generate beneficial impact and are academically sustainable.

2.5 Financial sustainability is also vital. Currently, the University spends £39m each year on research but receives only £16m in external research funding. This document will describe a number of approaches to reducing this "sustainability gap" but two factors are of particular importance at this point. One is the need to attract more overhead bearing research grants – in practical terms that means prestigious awards from the research councils – and the second is to increase the quality related (QR) funding that we receive from HEFCE as a result of the Research Excellence Framework. In both cases, only work that is of very high quality in a global context attracts these forms of funding. The academic and financial imperatives both lead to the same conclusion: we must invest our effort in work that is, or has the potential to be, of the highest quality and not allow our modest resources to be wasted on lower quality activities.

2.6 We will concentrate our resources by creating Centres of Research and Knowledge Exchange Excellence. These will be catalysts for change by providing inspirational focal points around which staff (including international visitors and collaborators) can gather to increase critical mass and develop the research skills necessary to produce work that is consistently of high quality. They will also ensure that our students are exposed to research at the highest level and help establish a culture in which research is a more integral part.

2.7 These centres will be difficult to establish and maintain so our approach will be to focus on the further development of areas that have already demonstrated relative strength over a prolonged period. These areas will be identified through a combination of the following mechanisms:

(i) We will start by looking carefully at the existing 13 research centres and smaller groups (Figure 2). These areas include our best research – some of which is already world-class – but it is important to note that only about half of the 750 academic staff associated with these centres are currently producing high-quality outputs (see below). In general we will seek to increase the size and research intensity of these centres, increase the alignment of smaller groups and individuals with these centres and ensure that they compare favourably with international competitors, against whom we would be willing and able to benchmark effectively.

(ii) The work we have done to prepare for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) – termed a "mock REF". Where conventional metrics do not provide a reliable means of assessment we will seek other measures and external peer review will remain an important component for all disciplines.

(iii) We will look carefully at the outcome of the recent Greater Manchester and East Cheshire Science and Innovation Audit because this gives a good indication of where external agencies see our strengths, within the remit of the audit. Since this work was completed, the government has published its Industrial Strategy. In relevant disciplines the ability to address the areas that the strategy identified as needing development will also be an important consideration.

(iv) Evidence of external collaborations and participation in international networks will also be important.

(v) It is important that this strategy also reflects our University's long and distinguished history of preparing students to enter the professions. At its best, professional practice and associated education share many characteristics with high-quality research. These aspects of university life can be mutually supportive as shown in Figure 1. We will therefore look carefully at areas that have demonstrated sustained excellence in practice and/or teaching to see if they are also capable of developing excellent research and knowledge exchange or can generate positive impact from research conducted elsewhere in the University.

(vi) Academic quality and financial sustainability, bench-marked against international competitors and described in the proposed UCRKE's Five Year Strategic Plan, will be vital components in the decision making process.

2.8 It is expected that the approaches described above will identify areas that have at least a reasonable chance of gaining top ten status. However, we will also consider: (1) creating new areas of research excellence through an ambitious recruitment programme and (2) accepting that some areas no longer engage in research. The latter is particularly undesirable given the case for research that has been made elsewhere in the document and the

former would be difficult because a strong research group is unlikely to be attracted by a weak research environment. As a transitory step it might be helpful for individual members of staff caught in such a predicament to teach in one faculty/department and research in another.

2.9 An important balance will be struck between concentrating resources in prestige areas and giving other areas, and colleagues, time is opportunity to develop. A range of interventions is described later (4.13) that will provide opportunities for individuals with real potential in research to engage more fully. However, there will be less opportunity to use internal funds to subsidise work that is of insufficient quality to attract external funding (grants or QR). Our investment strategy will need to focus on areas that generate a return in terms of external funding. In this way, we will

make research more sustainable and once that is achieved it will be easier to invest more speculatively in developing areas.

2.10 The newly created Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, which includes all of the Faculty Heads of Research and Knowledge Exchange, will consider the available evidence and make a recommendation to UEG about which areas are capable of meeting the goals outlined in this document and as such should be the focus of our attention and investment strategy.

**Figure 2. Existing Research Centres (2016/17)**



**University Centres of Research and Knowledge Exchange (UCRKE) 2016**

**Engineering and Materials**
• Advanced design and simulation
• Bioengineering
• Surface engineering and advanced materials
• Transport engineering
• Sensing and imaging
• Power, renewability and sustainability
• Manufacturing and production engineering
• Mathematical modelling and flow analysis
• Communications and smart systems

**Environmental Science**
• Centre for Aviation, Transport and the Environment (CATE)
• Conservation, evolution and behaviour
• Past, present and future environmental change
• Soils, plants and ecosystems
• Urban environments
• Waste to resource innovation

**Informatics**
• Complex systems
• Intelligent systems
• Interactive systems
• Future networks and distributed systems

**Biomedicine**
• Microbiology
• Vascular pathology
• Musculoskeletal science

**Health: Disability, Aging and Wellbeing**
• Aging and long-term conditions
• Applied psychology and wellbeing
• Disability and participation
• Health services and outcomes

**Health, Exercise and Active Living**
• Biomechanics and long-term conditions
• Exercise and aging physiology
• Psychophysiology

**Social Change: Community Wellbeing**
• Critical and community psychology
• Safeguarding and critical professional practice
• Substance abuse and addictive behaviours

**Research in Business and Law**
• People and performance
• International business and innovation
• Place management
• Enterprise/entrepreneurship
• Policy modelling
• Law

**Applied Social Sciences**
• Youth studies
• Q-Step
• Substance use and addictive behaviours
• Digital transformations
• Humanities in public
• Sexualities and gender
• Myplace

**School of Art Research Centre**
• Architecture
• Art
• Crafts
• Design
• Media
• Visual culture
• Art pedagogy experiment
• Art and health
• Asian cultures
• Future technologies
• LIFE
• Apparel

**Education and Social Research**
• Children, young people and community
• STEM education and learning technologies
• Teacher education, leadership and curriculum
• Theory and methodology

**History Research Centre**
• Regional history
• Intellectual history (philosophy)
• History

**Centre for English Language and Linguistics**
• Film, languages and media in education
• Linguistics
• Medical humanities
• Gothic studies
• Writing school
• Creative geographies

**Potential New UCRKEs**
• Sports institute
• Film school
• E-health hub
• Fashion institute
• Wearable technologies
• Waste observatory
• Big data centre
• Policy evaluation and research unit (PERU)
• Contemporary performing arts
• Centre for youth studies

**Faculty-based research active individuals and smaller groups**

# Key Performance Indicators and Targets

3.1 To drive an increase in performance and manage the expansion of our research and knowledge exchange portfolio we must develop a set of key performance indicators and associated targets (KPTs) that we can then use to shape investment decisions. We also need a set of associated management questions that those in leadership positions must answer satisfactorily before any investments are made.

**3.2 High-quality academic outputs**

3.2.1 Our reputation for RKE rests on a combination of factors including the quality of our research; the proportion of academic staff producing high-quality research; research impact; the value of research and contract income; citations; participation in the international research community (presentations, editorships, grant reviewing, etc.) and the scores we obtain in the Research Excellence Framework (REF). However, these factors depend ultimately upon the quality of our academic outputs, including articles, monographs, works of art, policy documents, reports or exhibition pieces.

3.2.2 Whilst this strategy is not specifically about the REF, the academic community has come to understand and accept the broad definitions of quality used in the assessment. Work that is of a "quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour" is denoted as being 4* and work that is of a "quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence" is termed 3*. In terms of funding, 4* work receives three times as much as 3* work through the quality-related (QR) stream, and work that is below 3* receives no QR funding at all.

3.2.3 We do not currently produce enough high-quality academic outputs to sustain world-class areas of research in each faculty. Our outputs tend to be 3* rather than the 4* level and the volume is relatively low. Both of these deficiencies will be addressed as we move forward.

3.2.4 KPT: The 3* – 4* quality ratings are determined by a range of indicators of which external, expert peer review is a very important factor. We will try to emulate this process from time to time but it is complex to organise and very labour intensive. We need a measure that is more easily derived and can be used more frequently to monitor progress and inform decision-making.

3.2.5 In general, higher quality work is cited in the academic literature more frequently than lower quality work. Citation rates, adjusted for discipline, are relatively easy to measure and in most disciplines are a reasonable proxy for quality. We will report field-weighted citations as a KPI for quality and have set a target of 1.6 (current value is 1.26). We will also look for alternative measures for disciplines where citation rates are less reliable.

3.2.6 Responsible persons: all those with a role that includes research leadership, but particularly the Heads of Research Groups/Centres and those who are mentoring colleagues at the early stages of their research careers.

## 3.3 Proportion of academic staff producing high-quality research outputs

3.3.1 Increasing the quality of existing outputs will be necessary but not sufficient to drive the creation of our world-class centres. We will also need to increase the volume of outputs and whilst this will come in part from taking measures to increase productivity in those already producing high-quality work (by increasing the time allocated to research in their workload models for example) we will also need to increase the number of staff who are producing work at this level. Generally, the sector looks at this by using measures of research intensity rather than absolute numbers.

3.3.2 The measure we will report is the proportion of academic staff who are "on track for inclusion in the REF". This measure originates from the methodology of REF2014 and in that sense it is out-dated. However, in effect what it measures is the proportion of academic staff who are producing 3* and 4* work at the rate of one or more academic outputs per year (with an adjustment for personal circumstances that might reduce the volume of outputs) and that is still an extremely useful way to monitor progress.

3.3.3 Based on our recent mock REF exercise, we estimate that only 25% of academic staff at MMU are producing work at the 3* and 4* levels (of which most is 3*). A further 25% of staff produce work at the lower levels of quality or in very low volume.

3.3.4 We believe that if colleagues who are currently producing work of a slightly lower quality were

associated with a world-leading research centre, and gained from its ethos and the experience of its members, the quality of their work would increase. So in due course we aim to ensure that the majority of staff with a specific workload allocation for research (over and above the allocation for scholarship) will be associated with one of these acknowledged areas of research excellence (which we will call University Centres of Research and Knowledge Exchange).

3.3.5 KPT: Our target is to increase the proportion of staff who are "on track for REF" to 50%. This is an important target because once reached it will indicate a significant increase in our research intensity (an important measure used externally) and demonstrate that research is a greater part of our culture. Practically, it will indicate that we have generated a critical mass of researchers from which we can expect an output that is substantially more than the sum of its parts.

3.3.6 Responsible persons: Faculty PVCs; Faculty Heads of RKE and the Heads of Research Centres.

## 3.4 Proportion of staff with research training

3.4.1 Approximately 50% of academic staff at MMU do not produce any research outputs. In some cases this is because they contribute strongly in areas other than research (despite research being part of the standard academic contract) but capability and in some cases opportunity also play a part. It must be appreciated that producing research, and particularly research of high quality, is difficult. Over recent years we have made significant progress in this regard (as shown by the strong performance in REF2014). However, there is still a shortage of such outputs and this can be attributed, in part, to the relatively low level of formal research training seen in our staff. Ideally, all academic staff would have completed a research degree (it is currently only 48%) and a period as a post-doctoral research assistant/fellow, prior to taking up an academic appointment. These are the components of training through which staff develop the skills to conceive, fund, execute and then publish research of high quality. This important issue will be addressed through a mixture of internal staff development and an approach to academic appointments that places greater emphasis on research capabilities.

3.4.2 KPT: We will set targets for the proportion of staff with PhDs and research training to reflect the conditions within different disciplines. However, if Manchester Met is to change, all areas must try to lead the sector in this measure. Where the opportunity does arise to appoint a staff member with both a professional practice and research background, we should take appropriate measures to attract them to Manchester Met.

3.4.3 Responsible persons: Everyone who makes academic appointments and everyone who conducts Personal Development Reviews (PDRs).

## 3.5 Research impact

3.5.1 The desire to conduct research with an applied focus that directly and rapidly benefits society has long been a characteristic of MMU and our founding institutions. More recently, the HE sector has adopted similar thinking and presents it as the "impact agenda". Impact has become a formal part of the REF, where it accounts for 20% of the ratings and a portion of the resulting QR funding.

3.5.2 We have many colleagues with professional qualifications and close links with their practice areas. This is already understood to enhance the learning experience for students but we will increasingly see these links as a mechanism by which our research can be introduced to the professions and in that way generate greater impact. So it is important that these colleagues remain up-to-date and connected with their practice networks so that they can exert influence.

3.5.3 KPT: We are working to find reliable measures of research impact, but this is a very diverse area and we are not yet able to define a single, trans-university KPI/T. The situation is also fluid, as it seems likely that HEFCE will adopt a wider definition of "impact" in the next REF. As a lead indicator we will report the equivalent value of media coverage as a proxy of impact (bearing in mind that there is an urgent need to develop our approach to promoting our research).

3.5.4 Responsible persons: it is incumbent upon everybody who applies for research funding to consider carefully how they will generate impact from that research. The REF Impact Team within RKE also has a vital role in embedding this form of thinking into our approach.

## 3.6 Research grant and contract income

3.6.1 Analysis of the data submitted in the Transparent Approach to Costing for UK Higher Education Institutions (TRAC) return shows that the University spent £39m on research last year but received only £16m in external research funding. The shortfall in funding is offset by a contribution from student fee income. Whilst some subsidy through this mechanism is appropriate where it is clear that our students benefit from an education that is informed by research, we must also ask ourselves whether we are content with the return we have generated from our annual £23m investment in research.

3.6.2 To make research more sustainable we must increase our income from research grants, overheads and QR funding. These three elements all stem from our ability to produce high-quality academic outputs and that is why our investment strategy must focus on the areas that can produce such outputs.

3.6.3 It should also be noted that external research funding obtained through a competitive peer-reviewed process is itself a measure of quality. The thought that goes into such proposals is excellent preparation for the work and helps ensure that it is published in better outlets.

3.6.4 KPT: We are starting at a low base and as such we are tracking the value of funding applications as a lead indicator. This is because research spend, a more usual measure, exhibits a significant delay and does not allow us to monitor the effectiveness of our interventions on a short enough feedback loop to be able to refine and develop our approaches quickly enough. We have set a target to increase applications (and in due course awards) by 50%.

3.6.5 Responsible persons: all academics have a role, but those with significant levels of responsibility are the PVC RKE; Faculty PVCs; Faculty Heads of RKE and the Heads of Research Centres, with the support of Heads of Schools and Departments.

# Key Characteristics of Research Support and Empowerment at Manchester Metropolitan

This section describes the characteristics that we wish to be known by as we further develop our identity as an institution that understands, values and conducts research work of the highest quality. It also outlines the developments in infrastructure and approach that are needed to help us achieve the goals set out in Section One. These elements, grouped into facilities, processes and attitudes, in conjunction with the external environment, form a "research ecosystem" (Figure 3), where each has an important role and where the interactions are crucial to the success of the whole.
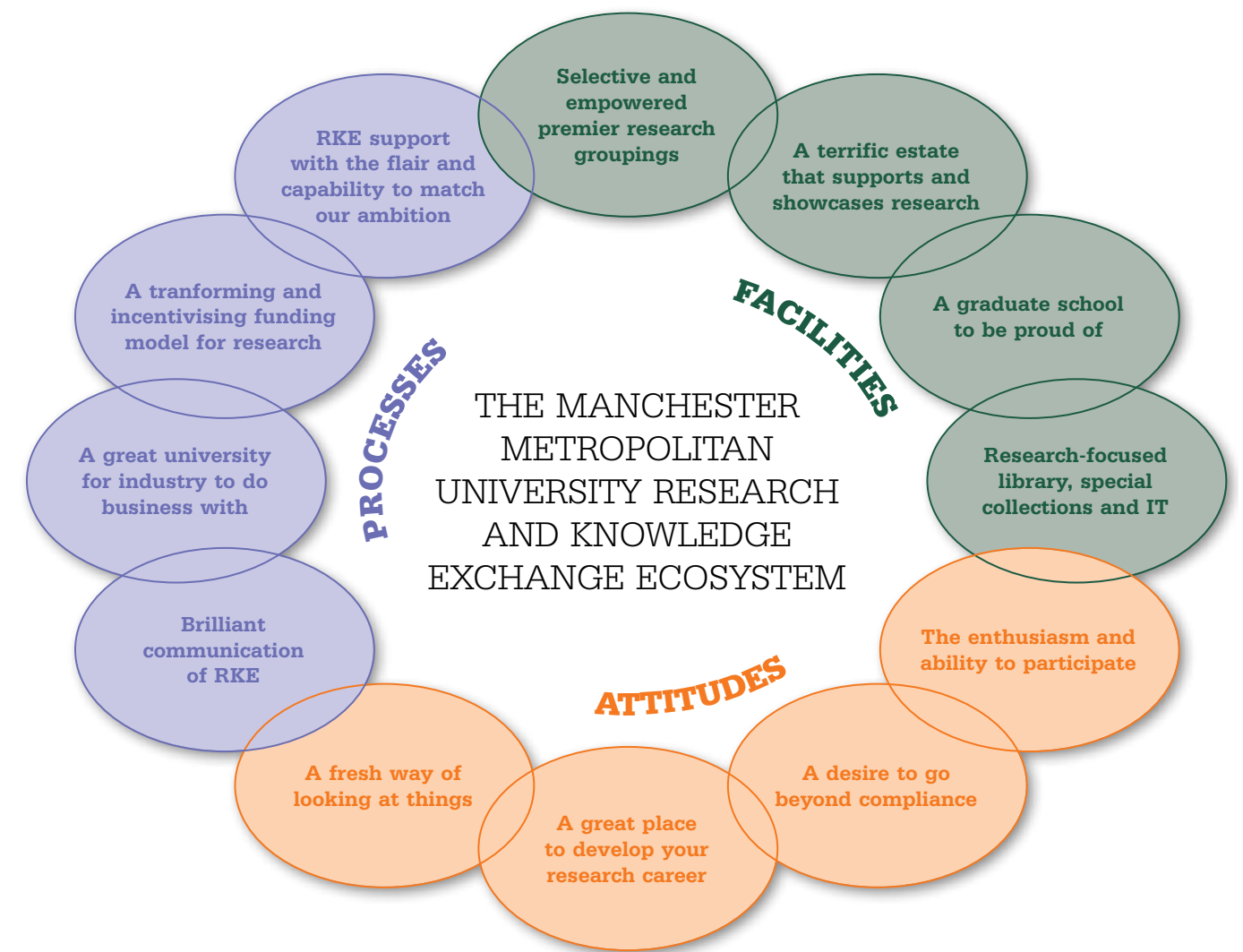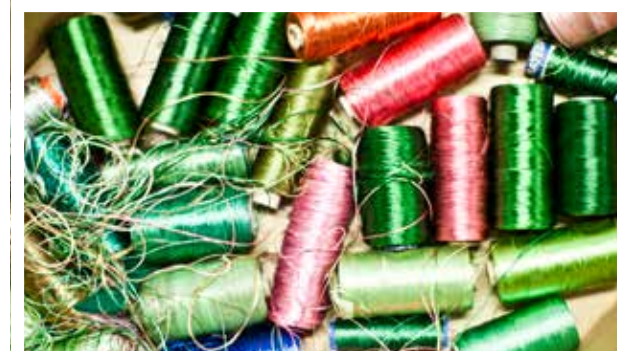


**Figure 3. MMU RKE Ecosystem**

**4.1 Outstanding integration of research, innovation and knowledge exchange**

4.1.1 Our culture and structures will continue to develop with the aim of enhancing the integration of research, innovation and knowledge exchange and promoting knowledge exchange as a means of generating beneficial social, economic, environmental or cultural impact from our discovery research. Indeed, once this integration is effective it may no longer be necessary to refer to knowledge exchange separately, and to introduce the term "innovation" as a more useful adjunct to research.

4.1.2 In order to focus the attention of our research community, we have adopted a definition of knowledge exchange that excludes professional and executive education. Whilst these areas are important in their own right they do not sit well with other areas of KE such as consultancy, contract research, provision of research facilities and the commercialisation of intellectual property. Responsibility for professional and executive education has moved to the Faculty Heads of Education.

4.1.3 Greater integration of research innovation and knowledge exchange will be achieved by the following four initiatives:

4.1.3.1 A unified Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge

Exchange (FHRKE) role has been created to replace the separate roles of Associate Dean Research and Associate Dean Knowledge Exchange. This role will work closely with the Faculty PVC, the Chair of the Faculty Research Degrees Committee, the Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee, and the Head(s) of Research Centres.

4.1.3.2 A University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee has been created to replace the existing Research Strategy Committee. The technical aspects of the management of our intellectual property portfolio and our consultancy arrangements are being managed through a new University Commercialisation Group that includes members from the Legal and Finance directorate as appropriate. All FHRKEs are automatically members of the RKE Committee.

4.1.3.3 Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) will be used strategically to support projects that integrate research, innovation and knowledge exchange. We will create a positive feedback loop by supporting the production of outputs that can be included in the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction (HEBCI) return and thereby increase HEIF funding. These aspirations have been included in our five-year strategy for HEIF funding, submitted to HEFCE in October 2016.

4.1.3.4 University Centres of Research and Knowledge

Exchange will be the focus of this integration and the breeding ground for a culture that sees knowledge exchange as the means of generating impact from research.

**4.2 Selective and empowered premier research groupings**

4.2.1 We have set ourselves the ambitious goal of having at least one area of research in each faculty that stands in the top 10 nationally. We will achieve this by focusing our resources effectively, strengthening and empowering our research leadership and developing a clear research structure.

4.2.2 We will create a set of premier research groupings that will use the protected title of "University Centre for Research and Knowledge Exchange". UCRKEs will be embedded in a host faculty (under the control of the appropriate Faculty PVC(s)) but, and this is an important attribute, they will have porous boundaries to enable cross-faculty working. They will benefit from a degree of autonomy that will be earned by the acceptance of their role in meeting the performance targets outlined in Section One and complying with the contents of the UCRKE Charter (reproduced at the end of this section).

4.2.3 The Charter is informed by a report entitled "Characteristics of high-performing research units" (Manville, Hinriches, Parks, Kamenetzky, Gunashekar,

Wilkinson and Grant 2015, published by Rand Europe and King's College London). Our Charter was developed by a forum of research centre heads and was subsequently approved by the RKE Committee. It covers such matters as the role of an international advisory board; effective peer review mechanisms; use of a research information management system; and the need for a strategic development plan that covers staff, publications, citations, and funding.

4.2.4 Centres will need to demonstrate intellectual sustainability by the presentation of a unifying academic theme or question – the clear intellectual purpose referred to earlier – and a stream of ideas of sufficient quality and relevance to generate sustained external support.

4.2.5 Centres must be sufficiently large and well established to provide stability (an aid to long-term investment planning and essential for the investigation of complex themes, ideas and hypotheses) and to be able to withstand the departure of prominent members. It is likely therefore that centres will contain a number of research groups that share a common purpose or methodological approach. A balance will be struck between increasing the number of groups to provide stability/critical mass versus reducing the focus of the centre to the point where it no longer makes intellectual sense. Simply grouping all of the high-quality work from across a faculty into one place is unlikely to

be successful because there will be no coherent message and the centre will not make sense to the external research community.

4.2.6 UCRKEs will need to be of a size and research intensity to rival the best internationally. Membership will be by invitation and will fall into the following four categories:

4.2.6.1 Full members will be in the majority and will have significant workload allocations for research and will be producing work of 3* and 4* quality. Individual academics must be encouraged to see the benefits of sacrificing a little independence in return for being part of a stable and well-funded group structure.

4.2.6.2 "Impact Champions" will focus on generating impact from the research of the centre. Such staff will have significant and effective external links with industry, charities, community groups, and professional practice. It would be helpful if we could recognise the importance of professional practice and its links to research impact and high-quality education through a specific contract of employment.

4.2.6.3 Associate members will be those staff whose work is not yet at the quality level required for full membership, but who have a clear development and performance plan linked to their annual performance review and monitored by their Faculty Head of RKE.

4.2.6.4 Research Officers will be present in those centres where the work relies on the input of highly trained and skilled technicians. Unlike the situation for technical staff, whose roles are to support teaching and who are all managed through the Faculty Student and Academic Services structure, Research Officers will be part of the Faculty structure and under the direct line management of the Heads of UCRKEs.

*Leadership, management and structure of UCRKE*

4.2.7 Within the broad framework outlined in this document, and in agreement with the PVC RKE allowing for some flexibility to account for the particular strengths within individual faculties, the day-to-day management of the centres will be a matter for the Centre Head, Faculty PVC and the Faculty Head of RKE. These arrangements do not preclude a Centre Head from acting as FHRKE or as a Head of Department. The Centres will be reviewed periodically by the RKE Committee.

4.2.8 Although our approach is to have a particular focus on research and knowledge exchange conducted through UCRKEs, we recognise that high-quality work can also be found in smaller groups and may even be conducted by individuals working alone. In such cases, we will continue to offer support whilst at the same time encouraging the individuals concerned to seek an association with a UCRKE.

4.2.9 Characteristics of a University Centre for Research and Knowledge Exchange (UCRKE):

These characteristics (sometimes referred to colloquially as the "Research Centre Charter") were developed through the Research Centre Heads' Forum, and approved separately through RKE Committee and UEG. They were included as an appendix to the document "Towards a Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy for Manchester Metropolitan University".

a. The title of University Centre for Research and Knowledge Exchange (UCRKE) is awarded or withdrawn only through the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange.

b. UCRKEs are the primary location through which the University executes its strategy to increase the quality, scope and volume of Research and Knowledge Exchange (excluding CPD). UCRKEs are the intellectual home to the majority of the University's postgraduate research students.

c. UCRKEs have a clear intellectual purpose. Their work leads to significant social, economic, environmental or cultural impact, underpinned by high-quality research and consultancy.

d. Members of the UCRKEs contribute appropriately to teaching and learning activities as a means of supporting the University's drive to offer inspirational and research-informed teaching.

e. UCRKEs exhibit a clear set of moral/ethical values that correspond with those of the University as a whole.

f. UCRKEs have a well-developed approach to staff development that supports our aim of providing a great environment in which to develop a research-based career.

g. UCRKEs benefit from the input of an external advisory board. The composition of the boards varies slightly between different UCRKEs to reflect differences in their approach and focus. However, all advisory boards have an international perspective and representation from industry/business and/or the public sector. Some UCRKEs also have representation from charities or community engagement organisations.

h. UCRKEs each have a five-year development plan that includes specific funding, publication, citation, impact and staffing strategies.

i. UCRKEs are supported by a central RKE Office; the Graduate School and a fully professional website.

j. UCRKEs have a sustainable and critical mass of researchers who would all be expected to be in receipt of external funding and/or be returnable in REF2020/21 at a quality level of at least 3* (using REF14 criteria). Researchers who do not meet these criteria may hold associate member status but only if there is a clear and realistic development plan in place to ensure that they meet the criteria in a reasonable period (as agreed between UCRKE Head, Faculty PVC, Head of Faculty RKE and PVC RKE).
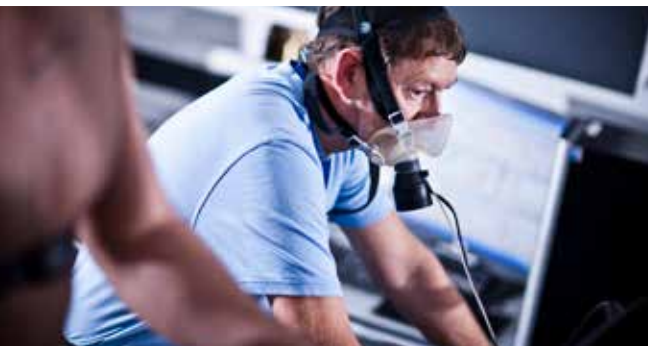
k. UCRKEs have an important role in the promotion of knowledge exchange and as such have some members who are primarily engaged in consultancy or other forms of knowledge exchange, such as the exploitation of intellectual property. The UCRKE Head ensures that the quality and funding arrangements for this form of work are broadly equivalent to the standards that are required for research. Contract research is relevant to the UCRKEs and under most circumstances will be priced at a premium to full Economic Costing (fEC).

l. There is a clear understanding of the time allocated to individuals for UCRKE membership within the workload allocation model. These allocations are agreed between the UCRKE Head and the individual's Faculty PVC/or Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange.

m. UCRKEs are embedded within a host faculty (managed by Faculty PVC; Faculty Head of RKE and the UCRKE Head) but enjoy a high degree of earned autonomy and welcome members from across the University and indeed from outside the University.

n. UCRKEs have clear performance targets linked to the allocation of resources, including significant levels of University investment and QR/HEIF funding.

o. The heads of UCRKEs have a primary role in the project approval process through the "WorkTribe"

software package. As part of this they run an effective peer review process before grant applications and publications/presentations/exhibitions are submitted.

p. UCRKEs have a pivotal role in preparing and implementing our REF strategy and preparing our REF returns.

**4.3 A transforming and incentivising funding model for research**

4.3.1 We will adopt an approach to the allocation of research funds and research workload allocation that empowers and incentivises the UCRKEs. One of the important sources of strategic funding for research is the QR allocation received from HEFCE – its purpose is described as follows on the HEFCE website.

*"Our method for calculating research funding enables a degree of research stability and independence not provided by other funding sources... It gives institutions independence because they can do what they want with the money and it is not directed to particular research programmes:*

*It also ensures that universities:*

- *Drive innovation and respond flexibly to changing needs as autonomous institutions*
- *Invest in new and emerging areas*
- *Grow and support new talent and protect important research areas.*

*The flexibility of this funding provides universities with the resources to:*

- *Support the cutting edge of knowledge*
- *Sustain responsive research*
- *Sustain a world-class research environment*
- *Develop people and skills."*

4.3.2 As well as describing the broad areas for which QR funding should be used, this statement also makes it clear that the University is not obliged to spend it in any particular discipline area and that gives the important opportunity to direct QR spending at new areas and not necessarily those areas that performed well in REF2014. This is an important consideration when deciding how to allocate funds to UCRKEs.

4.3.3 In line with the approach described above, we will move away from models that see QR as income and towards a model that sees it as a form of strategic investment.

4.3.4 A proportion of the total QR fund will be allocated to each UCRKE by UEG on the recommendation of the PVC RKE in light of past performance in the REF and future strategic objectives (see 4.3.1 for a description of the purposes of QR funding as described by HEFCE).

4.3.5 Other features of the model are a commitment that the University will usually support requests for matched funding with an external agency where the projects

are of high-quality and of strategic importance. (In practical terms that will mean that they are conducted through UCRKEs).

4.3.6 Our approach to research funding and reporting will facilitate cross-faculty working, as a means of promoting high-quality multidisciplinary work, and to ensure that colleagues can easily align themselves with areas of research strength. We will report research success in such a way as to make it clear what the contributions are from different individuals, centres, departments and faculties.

4.3.7 The money for these initiatives will come primarily through a re-distribution of resources that are already spent on research. Specifically this will include:

(i) Ensuring that research workload allocations are more closely aligned to the production of high-quality research and knowledge exchange.

(ii) Efficiency gains from further centralisation of RKE support and improved IT infrastructure within the RKE directorate.

(iii) Ensuring that industrial collaborations are priced to recover, on average, the full economic costs of doing the work.

(iv) In terms of the availability of funds, we will also look carefully at the nature of our capital expenditure programme and how it might be funded to ensure that it makes a significant contribution to our plans to enhance research.

**4.3.8** Once the strategic plan for a UCRKE has been agreed, the Head, in consultation with relevant Faculty PVCs, Faculty Heads of RKE, and Heads of Department will decide who should be a member, what category of membership is appropriate, and what the workload allocation should be.

**4.4 RKE support with the flair and capability to match our ambition**

**4.4.1** The research infrastructure should match our ambitions rather than our current capability; this philosophy will provide encouragement, will drive performance and will help us attract strong researchers from institutions where they have enjoyed, and now expect, high levels of support. The Director of RKE will lead and coordinate a series of measures designed to provide a step-change in the quality of RKE support.

**4.4.2** In order to develop our RKE support staff, share best practice, remove unhelpful internal competition and create clearer and more compelling offerings to the outside world, we will develop a broadly centralised approach to RKE support, led by the Director of RKE.

**4.4.3** To increase the quality, speed and efficiency with which we support RKE activities, the RKE will develop a more centralised and self-sufficient working model than is currently the case. The RKE office will be the single route through which the University applies for

external research funding. There will be an increase in the use of standard terms and conditions when issuing contracts and less need to cross-refer between directorates.

**4.4.4** We will introduce a sophisticated research information software package to improve the management of research funding and the reporting of research performance.

**4.4.5** We will draw on key external partnerships in specialist areas such as intellectual property protection and the formation of spin-out companies. Similarly, we will look to locate research outputs in appropriate subject bases and shared repositories rather than our own where this is likely to increase their accessibility and reduce our costs.

**4.5 Desire to go beyond compliance**

**4.5.1** We will seek to lead the sector in ensuring that the decisions we make concerning research ethics align with our values as an institution as well as meeting all regulatory requirements.

**4.5.2** We are obliged to comply with a broad range of requirements around ethics and research governance. There are close links between these two areas so we have already created a single Research Ethics and Governance Committee.

**4.5.3** Crucially, rather than see this as a burden we will

seek every opportunity to go "beyond compliance" and generate added value from the resources we put into compliance issues. For example, the facilities inventory required by the research councils could be used to market facilities to business and industry; and the data and open access repositories could be used to automatically populate a virtual "Manchester Met Gallery" available on our website. This could be linked with related areas such as the special collections in the library and the "MMU Originals" line of gifts.

**4.6 Brilliant communication of research and knowledge exchange**

**4.6.1** We will instigate a step-change in how we market and promote our research and knowledge exchange and be bold and imaginative in how we communicate with the public (and specialist constituencies within this broad description).

**4.6.2** At Manchester Metropolitan, we are blessed with high-quality practice in many aspects of performance and the written word. This provides an opportunity to lead the sector in providing the public with information about our research in exciting and innovative ways. Such work is also capable of effecting significant changes in the behaviour of those who experience it and through this mechanism we can enhance the impact of our research. This is a further example of how those with a practice rather than a research background can make a significant contribution to

realising the University's research ambitions.

**4.6.3** We will celebrate our achievements with awards and events that showcase research to internal and external stakeholders.

**4.7 Enthusiasm and ability to participate**

**4.7.1** The University needs to develop the ability and confidence to participate fully in the international research, innovation and knowledge exchange community. This means by attending conferences, editorial and advisory boards, peer reviewing, and by making applications to the full range of funding sources. It is also important that we participate in the external bodies in the public, private and third sectors, not least as a means of generating research impact. When academic staff are asked to participate in such activities it should be expected that time is created within their workload to enable them to do so properly. This will be achieved by asking those who are not invited to participate in such events to take a larger proportion of teaching and administration. It may also be necessary to provide specific training and support where colleagues are asked to become company directors or charity trustees.

**4.8 A great University for industry to do business with**

**4.8.1** There are compelling reasons for working with business and industry and doing so is already part of

our identity. These range from increasing our access to talent, know-how, facilities and ideas, to project financing and the generation of impact from primary research. Business and industry can also help provide real-world learning opportunities that enhance the employability skills of our graduates and we can provide educational services to business through apprenticeships and executive education – something for which we already have an excellent reputation.

4.8.2 We have set ourselves the ambitious target of being recognised as a great university to do business with. Five elements will underpin our industrial interactions: (1) leadership development (2) access to facilities (3) consultancy services (4) collaborative research (5) Knowledge Exchange Partnerships – where we should capitalise on our already strong position to become the best in the sector.

4.8.3 To be successful we must have access to sector-leading financial and legal processes to support effective and efficient interactions around contracts and intellectual property exploitation. It will be more efficient to develop our approach to groups of businesses rather than always deal with matters on an individual basis. This will require that we take a balanced and more pragmatic view over the management of risk in these areas.

4.8.4 Early-stage businesses will prosper best if they are co-located with support services and a critical mass

of other businesses with a similar focus. Given that we are at an early stage of development in this area we will seek to partner with local providers rather than develop our own spaces.

4.8.5 In working with business, there should be a clear set of targets for timescales around interactions, answering of enquiries, the creation of contracts and the completion of reports and other forms of collaborative work.

4.8.6 In some areas of knowledge exchange it will be possible to gain contracts in areas where the research is not at the 3* and above level. This will require that the contracts be delivered exceptionally well, which in turn will require a significant improvement in how we interact with business and industry. We must be careful to cost and price these contracts appropriately so that, as a whole, they generate a worthwhile surplus as well as help us form valuable relationships and derive other intangible benefits. We must also be sure that our partnership and collaborative research work does not distract us from our primary aim of increasing the quality of our research outputs.

4.8.7 Above all, we must recognise that by working with us businesses gain a competitive advantage in their market places and as such we should have the confidence to price our contributions accordingly and, unless there is a compelling reason not to, in all cases cover at least the full economic cost of any interactions.

4.8.8 It will be helpful to develop mechanisms where we can easily track the value of particular business and other collaborative relationships over a longer period because evidence of an upward trajectory in the nature of the returns would have a positive influence on future decision-making.

### 4.9 A Graduate School to be proud of

4.9.1 The Graduate School is already leading the way in ensuring that graduate research students are at the heart and soul of the research community and, in partnership with their supervisory teams, produce high-quality work that forms the bedrock of many assessments. We need to increase significantly the number of PhD students studying at MMU; our target is for there to be an average of at least one PhD student per academic member of staff. The pioneering PhD studentships scheme introduced in 2016 is already attracting excellent applications and demonstrating our determination to the external research community.

4.9.2 To achieve this growth whilst at least maintaining quality it is understood that we will have to offer something special to prospective students. It is vital they have the best experience and gain the skills and knowledge they need to progress and complete their studies in a reasonable timeframe. To manage this process the Graduate School has already availed itself of the best technologies available to monitor

student progress and intervene in a timely and effective manner where necessary. We will provide an exemplary suite of courses and development opportunities and strive to ensure that all of our graduate students are members of doctoral training partnerships or alliances.

### 4.10 A terrific estate that supports and showcases research

4.10.1 Our estate has improved enormously over recent years, particularly from the perspective of the student experience. We are set to continue that progress by providing modern facilities appropriate to our specific areas of research. These will be manifest in both the physical estate and the electronic estate provided by our IT infrastructure. Furthermore, we will ensure that research is a visible and tangible part of the environment where staff, students and visitors can see that the University is engaged in research. We will celebrate and showcase research in the decorations and exhibits we use in University buildings. We will create and operate accommodation that is designed specifically to make it easier for researchers, and where appropriate their families, to visit the University.

### 4.11 A fresh way of looking at things

4.11.1 Aspects of this strategy are quite generic and could apply to many universities with similar aspirations. As well as developing an identity for the disciplines at which we excel, we should also develop a style of working that characterises Manchester Met – one that is built on our values and relationships and supported by the various philosophies, perspectives and experimental paradigms that inform our approach. Our areas of excellence already give us potential strength in addressing how human and technological factors interact and understanding creativity and original thought from a broad perspective.

4.11.2 There are also practical reasons for developing this aspect of our identity. The external funding environment is changing – there is greater emphasis on interdisciplinary and challenge-based research. The nature of such global or industrial challenges is that solutions are frequently multidisciplinary and those disciplines can be far apart in both subject matter and approaches. Manchester Met has a significant opportunity in this area because it can call upon world-class research in social sciences, humanities, and physical sciences and can re-establish its strength in the more overtly creative disciplines.

4.11.3 Our approach will be to encourage interdisciplinarity but only where it is between established areas of excellence – this will usually mean between UCRKEs – which is why the funding model must be operated to ensure that boundaries between UCRKEs (and indeed external partners) are porous and never an impediment to high-quality working between cost centres.

### 4.12 Library, special collections and IT services aligned to areas of research strength

4.12.1 The role of libraries is changing and these changes affect disciplines differently. In some areas most reference sources can be accessed electronically but in others printed works and physical artefacts are important. We must recognise this in the way we develop our library services and we must see our special collections as a means to provide unique resources to support high-quality research conducted by our own academics and visitors from other institutions. We must seek out opportunities to partner as a means of increasing access and reducing

cost. In line with other areas of this strategy we must ensure that the resources of the library and the special collections are aligned with areas of research strength and as a priority serve the needs of the developing UCRKEs as well as the students. We should consider whether the special collections should be managed through the Faculty and UCRKE structure.

4.12.2 Research and knowledge transfer are dependent on high-quality IT infrastructure in a general sense. In some areas specialist facilities are required and we will ensure that these are aligned to areas of research strength, and provided in partnership where possible.

### 4.13 A great place to develop your research career

4.13.1 The foregoing elements of this strategy will create an environment and culture that we hope will be recognised across the sector as constituting a great place to develop your research career.

4.13.2 If the University is to achieve the goals set out within this document, it will require a significant change in culture and a much greater understanding of, and participation in, research and knowledge exchange. We are unlikely to achieve that without increasing the proportion of academic staff with formal research training – as evidenced by a PhD or equivalent and preferably a period as a post-doctoral research assistant. Our policy will be that all newly appointed academic staff (who have a contract that includes research) will either already hold a PhD or equivalent or will register for and complete one as part of their probationary period.

4.13.3 In line with the rest of this strategy, where staff complete a PhD or are admitted into one of the Fellowship schemes, the subject matter must be carefully aligned with our areas of existing research strength. In practical terms this will mean that the work will be conducted in association with a UCRKE.

4.13.4 In some areas academic staff are perhaps more likely to enter the University with professional practice experience than research experience. Whilst such individuals have much to offer in terms of practice informed teaching, and for some courses accreditation requires a minimum number of professionally qualified staff, their appointment should be the exception rather than the rule. Where staff are appointed on the basis of professional qualifications it should be a clear

condition of probation and subsequent performance reviews that they keep their professional practice up-to-date and use those connections to help increase the impact of our discovery research – most probably by becoming "Impact Champions" within the UCRKEs. It would be helpful if their contracts of employment recognised the specific and important nature of their contribution and reward it appropriately.

4.13.5 It is important to emphasise that our focus is on the quality of research and, as such, staff with a lower quantity of research outputs (for example by reason of periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave; approved leave; working part-time; disability; ill health or caring responsibilities) should not be disadvantaged. The concentration of work into areas of high performance offers a further safeguard because their critical mass and increased levels of output offer staff greater opportunities to collaborate and in that way increase the quantity as well as the quality of their outputs. However, to avail themselves of these opportunities, academic staff may need to accept that they have less choice in what they research as they seek to align with areas of strength.

4.13.6 Academic colleagues who are able to meet our research quality expectations, in areas of strategic importance to the University, will have the opportunity to engage in research. We will expand on good practice in the provision of research sabbaticals in the Faculty of Art and Humanities to produce a sector-leading suite of targeted interventions to facilitate this. They are termed "Fellowships" to convey that they are prestigious, have a specific purpose and are time-limited. Initially these schemes will be funded centrally, but it will be expected that salary and other considerations for each Fellow will be incorporated into Faculty plans (and budgets) in the next available cycle. The Equality and Diversity Team will provide advice to ensure that these schemes are implemented appropriately.

4.13.7 *Research Development Fellowships*

Periods of intense research activity within a high-performing environment can be transformational for the staff involved and give rise to collaborations and further exchanges that form the basis of successful projects for years to come. This is perhaps particularly the case where there is an international dimension and where partners have a less prejudiced impression of Manchester Met. We will endeavour to support exchanges where there is a clear plan of work and a strong possibility that 3* and 4* outputs will result.

4.13.8 *International Research Visitor Scheme*

We really need to develop our international approach to researcher exchange. In our Estates Strategy we must increase the amount of short-term (family orientated) accommodation that we can make available to visitors so that they can feel part of the University.

4.13.9 *Early-Career Researchers Recruitment Scheme*

As an adjunct to the appointment of established researchers of professorial status we will increasingly focus our attention on candidates at the earlier stages of their careers and be prepared to ensure that their workload and job mix gives them a realistic opportunity to establish themselves as researchers.

4.13.10 *Return to Research Fellowship*

Where colleagues had been doing well in their research careers before experiencing a period of disruption, we will provide active support to return them to a position where they can produce research of the required quality.

4.13.11 *Research Re-orientation Fellowship*

There is an important balance to strike between focussing limited resources in areas of existing strength and the need to ensure that talented members of staff have had the opportunity to develop their research careers. An important consideration in reaching that balance is the opportunity for staff to re-focus their work into areas of strategic importance to the University. We will therefore provide some targeted support for talented individuals who need re-training to enable them to contribute to areas of strategic importance.

# Outline Implementation

A detailed implementation plan will be produced to accompany this strategy. However, the following aspects of that plan are of particular importance and are therefore included below:

5.1 There will be a degree of flexibility (to be agreed between the PVC RKE and Faculty PVCs and the FHRKEs) in how the strategy is implemented in different faculties in order to take account of their different levels of maturity as research entities. In some cases, the role of Centre Head may be sufficiently close to that of Faculty Head of RKE for it to be undesirable to split them. The relationships between the relatively small number of research centres and the 34 departments will need to be established. In some cases, it might be appropriate for a Departmental Head to assume the role of Research Centre Head where there is particularly strong alignment between the two.

5.2 Implementation will require some adjustments to workloads and responsibilities and we must be careful that these do not disrupt teaching provision and other activities. Significant changes will be managed through the annual planning rounds, PDRs and discussions around the timetabling of teaching. This coordination will require the full participation of the Heads of Department. This task will be complex because currently there are 34 departments distributed amongst the Faculties and it is therefore extremely likely that research centres will draw from staff located in a number of departments.

5.3 This document makes it clear that a broad range of activities are of great value to the University and that they should be supported, celebrated and rewarded in their proper contexts. That will be more difficult if we are unable to create more differentiation in our contractual arrangements with staff members.

5.4 **The following elements are taken from the original Research Centre Charter:**

5.4.1 It is recognised that we are in a transition phase and that there is considerable work to be done before all potential UCRKEs will be able to demonstrate that they meet all of these criteria. It is important to balance that development need with the need to ensure that our research resources are used as effectively as possible. In deciding where that balance lies, evidence of progress in matching the criteria will be important and current Heads and others are encouraged to consider whether in some instances progress might be faster through judicious restructuring of existing centres.

5.4.2 Being a UCRKE carries with it significant rights and responsibilities and the potential to improve the University's reputation for Research and Knowledge Exchange. UCRKEs will use the majority of the University's research resources and as such it is extremely important that their performance is kept under review.

5.4.3 It is also important that developing areas that would benefit from UCRKE status are given that opportunity and resources re-allocated appropriately. Under the leadership of the Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange, such areas will be incubated at a faculty level before the case for elevation to UCRKE status is made to a panel chaired by the PVC RKE.

5.5 There is a risk of being distracted from developing this long-term strategy for research success by a short-term preoccupation with the tactics for the next REF. We will not know the rules for the next REF until July 2017 at the earliest and detailed instructions in 2018. All indications are that when we do have them they will allow far less influence over the composition of our return than has been the case in the past.