Research and Scholarship (R&S) Strategy 2018-2020

Introduction

The 2018-2020 Research and Scholarship strategy builds on the approach initiated by the People. Knowledge. Impact 2014-2018 strategy which is presently being evaluated. It aims to build on its achievements and to deliver the next stage by engaging academic staff across the institution, and developing international/worldwide reputation in key areas.

This research strategy must be read with reference to the Research Excellence Framework Strategy, the University’s commercialization strategy, and the Learning and Teaching Strategy (Create Excellence).

This document indicates the direction of travel, and provides the broad outlines of the new strategy. It is subject to review to accommodate the outcomes of the Stern Review consultation.

Our vision

To be ranked within the top 100 universities in REF 2021

How will the vision be delivered?

By engaging the UWL academic community in pioneering solutions to real-world local and global problems

Our ambition is to produce research of international and world-class excellence, whilst ensuring that all academic staff are also publicly engaged in knowledge creation based on scholarship, innovation, and industry-related activities.

The University of West London values academic engagement with industry, policy, and any form of broader public engagement. The R&S strategy therefore addresses all forms of scholarship1 and all levels of research; and values all

1 The University adopts a broad definition of scholarship based on Ernst Boyer (Boyer 1990) notion that scholarship is about ‘connectedness’ with colleagues,
scholarly public outputs derived. It seeks to build a culture where every academic member of staff is publicly engaged through research or scholarship and actively engaged in dissemination in a wide range of outlets. It is expected that these activities will feed into an industry-relevant, research-informed, renewed curriculum.

The University is leading knowledge creation in the areas of infections solutions, non-destructive testing methods, cyber-security, gender, subcultures and porn studies, media and photography, music production, composition, sustainable hospitality, tourism and aviation. Emergent fields of study include criminology, policing, and addiction, and dementia care.

**Approach**

Our research strategy recognizes the rich and diverse contribution of the University’s academic community to knowledge creation that is aimed at finding solutions to real-world local and global problems. This includes practical, policy-based, strategic, and creative discoveries in a wide-range of subjects.

UWL research adheres to rigorous ethical, public engagement, openness and sustainability principles. The University's research operations are underpinned by a set of ethical guidelines², and an ethics approval process; we have signed the *Manifesto for public engagement*³ and has published a *Corporate Social Responsibility Statement*⁴. All research carried out by UWL members of staff and students is compliant with these corporate engagements.

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² [https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/Research/Web/PDF/research_ethics_governance_policy_Feb2016.pdf](https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/Research/Web/PDF/research_ethics_governance_policy_Feb2016.pdf)
³ [https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support-it/manifesto-public-engagement](https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support-it/manifesto-public-engagement)
⁴ "The University of West London is an institution whose mission explicitly states its devotion to the public benefit, public good, and social justice. This orientation builds on the University’s roots in co-operative education, and the heritage of the Lady Byron School founded in 1860. The University enacts its corporate responsibility thorough strategies that support the implementation of its mission and translate into every day decisions at all levels of the institution as staff, managers and the executive engage with external stakeholders. The University seeks to conduct its business in accordance with the ‘Seven Nolan Principles’ (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership). The guiding principles underpinning its approach to governance and they are embedded in its local policies"
In order to increase the visibility, use and impact of its research, the University is supporting the Open Access principle of providing free and unrestricted access to research outputs. It has an approved Publications Policy\(^5\) with associated deposit licence, and a takedown policy.

All staff engaged in research, scholarly or enterprise activity are affected by these policies, which are compliant with HEFCE’s Policy for Open Access in the 2020 Research Excellence Framework.

The UWL Repository is the institutional source and record for all scholarly and research outputs. It provides a definitive record of the REF2021 submissions. Deposit is a straightforward process and help is available with depositing.

**Aims**

1. **To achieve university-wide engagement in research and scholarship**

UWL’s ambition to be ranked within the top 100 universities in REF 2021 (presently 126) requires increased institutional visibility of research and scholarship in the everyday life of Schools/Colleges and academics, and beyond. This aim closely matches the REF agenda to deliver research-informed teaching. All staff who might potentially be entered in the REF (subject to the outcomes of the consultation on the Stern Review) have been given output targets; all other members of staff will be given scholarship outputs that will contribute to enhance both the teaching and research environment. This aim will be achieved through the following objectives:

**Objective 1**: All staff contracted to carry out research are engaged in research that delivers outputs, impact and enrichment of the environment.

**Objective 2**: All academic staff are engaged in scholarship that delivers outputs, impact and public engagement.

2. **To connect research, scholarship and innovation to students and the curriculum**

In order to develop career-oriented graduate attributes in our student body, it is imperative that research, scholarship and innovation activities inform the curriculum, and benefit students. UWL students will be exposed to state-of-the-art knowledge, be aware of the main research, social, and industry stakes in their area of study, and be able to aptly contribute to their field post-graduation.

This aim will be achieved through the following objectives:

**Objective 3:** The curriculum is innovative and the postgraduate portfolio is enhanced.

**Objective 4:** All students are engaged with research, scholarship, and innovation.

The above objectives connect very closely with the aims of Create Excellence.

**3. To provide a robust infrastructure for research and scholarship**

The R&S strategy is inclusive and involves all staff in research, scholarship, and some form of public engagement. It will build on existing infrastructure, and provide training and incentives. It will ensure that guidance is in place to support compliance (REF, Open Access, and Repository) and to enhance and reward performance (training, streaming, and incentives). This aim will be achieved through the following objectives:

**Objective 5:** The infrastructure to support research and scholarship is enhanced.

**Objective 6:** Performance feeds into reward structures.

Professor J. Fanghanel (PVC Academic)

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