

Joint Statement on Impact by HEFCE, RCUK and Universities UK

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Research Councils UK (RCUK) and Universities UK (UUK) have a shared commitment to support and promote a dynamic and internationally competitive research and innovation base that makes an increased and sustainable contribution, both nationally and globally, to economic growth, wellbeing, and the expansion and dissemination of knowledge.

Building on established research excellence, and on the infrastructure for knowledge exchange that has been developed over the last decade, we are committed to working together to continue embedding throughout the research base a culture in which excellent research departments consistently engage with business, the public sector and civil society organisations, and are committed to carrying new ideas through to beneficial outcomes, across the full range of their academic activity.

HEFCE, RCUK and UUK agree that the range of benefits that can flow from excellent research, and the variety of means by which those benefits are achieved and felt in different contexts, are broad and diverse. Benefits can result from an individual piece of research, or from a body of activity conducted over a period and perhaps across several departments or universities. They can take a wide variety of forms, and may become fully apparent some time after the underpinning research from which they flow was conducted. They may be apparent in an industrial or business context, in the fields of healthcare and social wellbeing, public policy or as a contribution to cultural life, public debate or improved understanding of the world that we live in. The responsibility for achieving these outcomes is shared by both the funders of research and the higher education institutions where the research takes place. Therefore, these outcomes should be recognised and rewarded through funding mechanisms, career development and the management of research.

Through engagement with UUK and the HE sector, and building on the progress that has already been made, HEFCE and RCUK will continue to work together to develop common frameworks, including by:

- ensuring that our approaches to supporting knowledge exchange are joined up
- securing greater impact from publicly funded research whilst ensuring our funding policies are complementary and work coherently together
- ensuring that our monitoring, assessment and evaluation as well as the collection of statistical data from HEIs is proportionate.
- supporting the training of new researchers, at both PhD and post-doctoral level, to ensure that they acquire the skills and expertise needed to maximise the impact of their own research. This includes the development and application of professional skills in knowledge exchange within the research base.