

RE-P-2020-03-Annex B

Middlesex University

HEIF accountability statement

**Narrative return template for HEIF funding period
2021-22 to 2024-25**

Return date: 21 May 2021

Return as Microsoft Word file to: KEPolicy@re.ukri.org

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Question 1 – Strategic objectives

Summarise the institutional strategic objectives that relate to knowledge exchange and guide your plans for HEIF.

We expect institutions' plans for HEIF to be guided by strategic objectives for knowledge exchange. However, there is no requirement for institutions to submit or maintain a standalone knowledge exchange strategy document.

We appreciate that KE objectives may be found in a specific KE strategy document or they may be contained as part of other strategic documents such as teaching, research or overarching institutional strategies.

Whatever form your knowledge exchange objectives are in, please provide a precis of the main objectives here so that we can see the strategic context that guides your plans for HEIF and forms the basis for your monitoring and delivery of intended benefits.

We welcome the inclusion of hyperlinks to published strategies and plans that may be referenced in the summary.

In answer to this question, you are free to use text or tabular format but please ensure that the question response is contained in no more than two pages of A4.

Middlesex University's KE activity takes place in all faculties. Most areas of KE practice are covered and we have a notable reputation in the provision of CPD and regional economic development and engagement (KEF profile) with strengths in healthcare, education, information and communication technology, natural sciences, the creative industries, business and management, and law.

Middlesex's strategy for knowledge exchange has evolved over a number of years.

- Our HEIF3 Institutional Plan (2006) committed us 'to develop the infrastructure of network and partner relations as a sound basis for new work with an extended set of partners (SMEs, large firms, regional and national agencies)'.
- Our Institutional Plan (2008) focused on 'develop[ing] a wide range of 'third stream' activities, in all academic Schools, and deploy[ing] resources to support Schools in raising direct income...develop[ing] linked KT-research strategies in areas of significant external repute...and develop[ing] outstanding support mechanisms, routes to funding,

information systems (including CRM and Finance) for the support of School-delivered KT activities’.

- Our 2017 HEIF Institutional Plan required ‘knowledge exchange that enhances the influence and relevance of our scholarship for industry, the public and voluntary services, building links with employers and the University’s reputation...[measured by] the effect on our students and the communities and stakeholders we work with.’
- In 2021 our emerging ‘MDX Towards 2031 Strategy’ outlines the intention ‘to create and put Knowledge into Action to develop fairer, healthier, more prosperous and sustainable societies’, through a focus on thematic areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We intend to do this by,
 - Prioritising practice in how we produce actionable knowledge
 - Being inclusive and non-hierarchical in working with others
 - Pursuing excellence in being part of impactful coalitions with practice to help shape the direction of knowledge-producing communities
 - Prioritising topics encompassed in our 3 key impact areas (see below section 3)
 - Developing a distinctive KE and research culture fostering the skills, methods and ethos of practice-oriented, interdisciplinary working.

This evolution in our strategy – from infrastructural consolidation (2006/2008) to impactful KE in our locality (2017) and now to global influence through a distinctive KE in SDG-related impact areas (2021) – indicates the maturing of our KE effort.

Our new university strategy is deliberately ambitious and will shape our KE ambitions for the next decade. Explicit linkage to themes derived from the SDGs is intended to aid that ambition and, alongside our international outlook (Middlesex has campuses in Dubai and Mauritius and partnerships with 98 institutions around the world), challenge the University to have an impact that is global as much as local.

Our priorities for KE development derived from this strategy are as follows:

Priority number	Description
P1	Restructuring of the faculties of our university to grow leadership for KE, encourage interdisciplinary KE in the theme areas and develop fresh and detailed strategies for public and community engagement.
P2	Development of KE in areas in which we intend to build <i>communities of practice</i> , learning-oriented action groups which in turn build on KE subject strengths outlined in our 2017-22 KE strategy, and which may be strategic or local in scope.

P3	Focus on KE in three key areas of SDG and university focus ('equity and improvements in health and well-being' (P3a); 'inclusive socio-economic development and enriching lives through culture' (P3b); 'sustainability of communities and the environment' (P3c)) with associated ambitions for contributions to change
P4	Selective use of KE as part of an ambition to grow impactful research (in REF2014 79% of our impact case studies were rated as 4* & 3*).
P5	Continued focus on KEF-highlighted areas of practice strength (CPD/skills (P5a), regional contributions to growth (P5b)) without forgoing the opportunity, where possible, to build capacity in areas of relative weakness (technology/R&D transfer/partnering (P5c))

Both KEF and the KE Concordat exercises have informed the construction of these priority sets, and we intend building upon what we have learned. Alongside these priorities we want to,

- Explore scope for a KE sub-strategy as part of the University's development of a 'Strategy 2031' exercise, and a coherent statement of purpose in relation to civic mission;
- Develop an engagement approach commensurate with the extensive nature of our existing engagement work and our local and global ambition, and fresh approaches to 'active listening' to stakeholders in relation to skills;
- Promote the benefits of publication/dissemination of KE work to partners and beneficiaries more clearly.

Question 2 – Use of HEIF

How do you intend to use your 2021-22 to 24-25 HEIF allocations?

As detailed in [RE-CL-2020-04](#) and RE-P-2020-03., in order to enable institutions to effectively respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will use the 2019-20 HEIF Annual Monitoring Statement submitted in February 2021 to gather information about the use of HEIF during 2020-21,

In this accountability statement return we would like to know about your plans for HEIF for the remainder of the funding period 2021-22 to 2024-25. Please include indication of the planned timescale of the activity e.g. 2021-22 only; ongoing or 2022-23 onwards.

Please use the response layout grid provided overleaf, to provide the following information:

- a) Describe the key activities supported by your HEIF allocation.
- b) Include specific reference to how you expect HEIF to support these activities – i.e. specific expenditures: funded posts, academic staff buy out, internal competitive projects; and the proportion of the activity that is supported by HEIF (e.g. x1 business development post 50% HEIF funded).
- c) How these activities relate to the government priorities and RE-OfS strategic objectives outlined in paragraphs 9 and 10 of RE-P-2020-03. Where student benefits are achieved, please include an indication of the number of students benefiting.
- d) Which strategic KE objective, as outlined in question 1, does each activity relate to.
- e) Indication of the timescale for each activity (e.g. 2021-22 only, ongoing or to be confirmed)

In answer to this question, please use the response grid provided and ensure that the entire question response is contained in no more than six pages of A4 or A3.

Question 2: Use of HEIF

(Max 6 pages of A4 or A3)

<p>Planned areas of HEIF supported KE activity</p> <p>Please provide an overview of planned KE activities or projects that will be supported by your 2021-22 and onwards HEIF allocations.</p>	<p>HEIF support</p> <p>How HEIF will be used to support the project?</p>	<p>HEIF priorities</p> <p>How does this relate to govt priorities and RE-OfS strategic objectives? (Including note of scale where student benefits are achieved.)</p>	<p>Strategic objectives</p> <p>Which institutional strategic KE objective does this relate to?</p>	<p>Indication of timescales</p>
<p>Establish 4 'community of practice' groups in KE priority areas</p>	<p>0.2fte x4 buyout (50% HEIF funded)</p>	<p>Supports R&D Roadmap (RDR) objective of supporting creative ideas; Industrial Strategy (IS) ambition of driving up innovation and productivity; RE/OfS RE-P-2020-03 (RE) in relation to Ideas and Place pillars, potentially to civic contributions and, during 2021-23, to covid recovery.</p>	<p>P1, P2, P4</p>	<p>2021/22-2024/25 (with priority setting in 2021/22)</p>
<p>Grow faculty-level expertise in KE engagement with business and community groups through concentrated focus on key relationships and relationship management</p>	<p>~0.2fte x 4 buyouts ('KE champions') 50-100% HEIF funded</p>	<p>Supports RDR objective in skills, innovation and levelling up; IS objectives in driving up innovation and productivity and levelling up; RE ambitions in relation to Place agenda.</p>	<p>P1, P3a-c, P4</p>	<p>2022/23-2024/25</p>
<p>Establish engagement forums and comms platforms in skills development and regional economic development</p>	<p>0.2fte buyout or 0.5fte new post (80% HEIF funded)</p>	<p>Supports RDR objective in skills and levelling up; IS objectives in enabling talented people and levelling up; RE ambitions in relation to Place agenda.</p>	<p>P1, P5a,b</p>	<p>2022/23-2024/25</p>
<p>Faculty project initiation 'pump priming' in fields connected with P3a-c</p>	<p>Pump priming funding of between 50 and 75% of full internal cost for 15 new projects p.a. - connected to discernible and</p>	<p>Supports RDR objective in skills, innovation and levelling up; IS objectives in driving up innovation and productivity and levelling up; RE ambitions in relation to Ideas and Place agendas. Student engagement to include exposure to KE action for 100 students p.a.</p>	<p>P1, P3a-c, P4</p>	<p>2021/22-2024/25</p>

	evidenced market failure - to drive growth in activity in P3a-c. Projects to include student participation in at least one third of projects.			
Support for Faculty leadership development in KE for Deputy Deans' teams (x3)	External networking, memberships, practice conferences etc. budget	Supports RDR objective in skills and innovation by growing internal leadership on responsiveness; IS objectives in driving up innovation and productivity; RE ambitions in relation to Ideas, People and Place agendas. This is an infrastructural investment intended to improve university KE effectiveness.	P1, P4	2021/22-2024/25
RKTO staffing support dedicated to supporting P5a-c areas and P4 ambitions	HEIF support (80%) on 4.5 posts (£225k), declining as a percentage over the HEIF round	Supports RDR objective in skills, innovation and levelling up; IS objectives in innovation & productivity and levelling up; RE ambitions in relation to People and Place agendas by improving responsiveness. This infrastructural investment is especially intended to grow responsiveness to the RE Place agenda through requiring RKTO staff to develop skills in regional development support. Also includes student benefit of support, through the MDX Accelerator programme, to up to 50 students p.a. working on social enterprise development projects in the sub-region.	P4, P5a-c	2021/22-2024/25

<p>Web development support to improve direct business engagement</p>	<p>Development of new web-based tools by contractors (dovetails with planned web presence redesign)</p>	<p>Supports IS ambition of driving up innovation and productivity; RE ambitions in relation to People and Place agendas by improving responsiveness. This infrastructural investment is especially intended to grow responsiveness through closer liaison with business need.</p>	<p>All priority areas</p>	<p>2021/22</p>
<p>Creation of a standing 'Levelling-up Engagement Team' (LET) from among faculty staff (by buyout) to promote regional routes to 'levelling up' impact in the wider region</p>	<p>Travel, subsistence, consultancy/data buy-in for analysis work (100% HEIF funded)</p>	<p>Supports RDR/IS objective in levelling up; RE ambitions in relation to Ideas and Place agendas.</p> <p>Student engagement to include involvement in the LET of >25 students p.a., and involvement of >100 students in follow-up actions.</p>	<p>P3 b,c, P4</p>	<p>2022/23-2024/25</p>

Question 3 – Monitoring success

How do you manage your HEIF funding and monitor the success of your activities against the strategic objectives set out in question 1, and in line with delivering Government priorities?

Describe the policies, procedures and approach you have in place in the context of your strategic objectives to:

- i. manage your HEIF spending
- ii. measure progress
- iii. evaluate outcomes and
- iv. identify lessons learned.

In answer to this question, you are free to use text or tabular format but please ensure that the entire question response is contained in no more than four pages of A4.

(i) Management of HEIF spend

Our spend arrangements sit within a well-established framework of governance and accountability. The University Governors and senior leadership (University Executive Team) shape the Strategic Plan which, when approved by Governors and communicated to stakeholders, forms the basis for planning all aspects of resourcing to deliver the strategy.

In relation to *progress* against the strategy's targets, the University's Academic Board receives reports from the Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC), chaired by the DVC (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Engagement), which oversees KE quality management, performance and conduct, and scrutinises KPIs and proposes measures for action to the Academic Board.

In relation to *spend*, the Financial Services directorate sets out, after dialogue with all units and in accordance with our Financial Regulations, the rationale for the allocation of HEIF resource to Faculties and to the central KE functions of the university. An annual planning round and budget preparation is linked to the strategy so that allocations of HEIF and non-HEIF resource to KE purposes are included in a detailed review of unit plans related to the strategy.

Two further checks are in place at unit level: first, the Director of Knowledge Exchange periodically reminds units of the criteria for eligible expenditure from HEIF resource as well as fielding questions in relation to eligibility for the use of HEIF resource and, second,

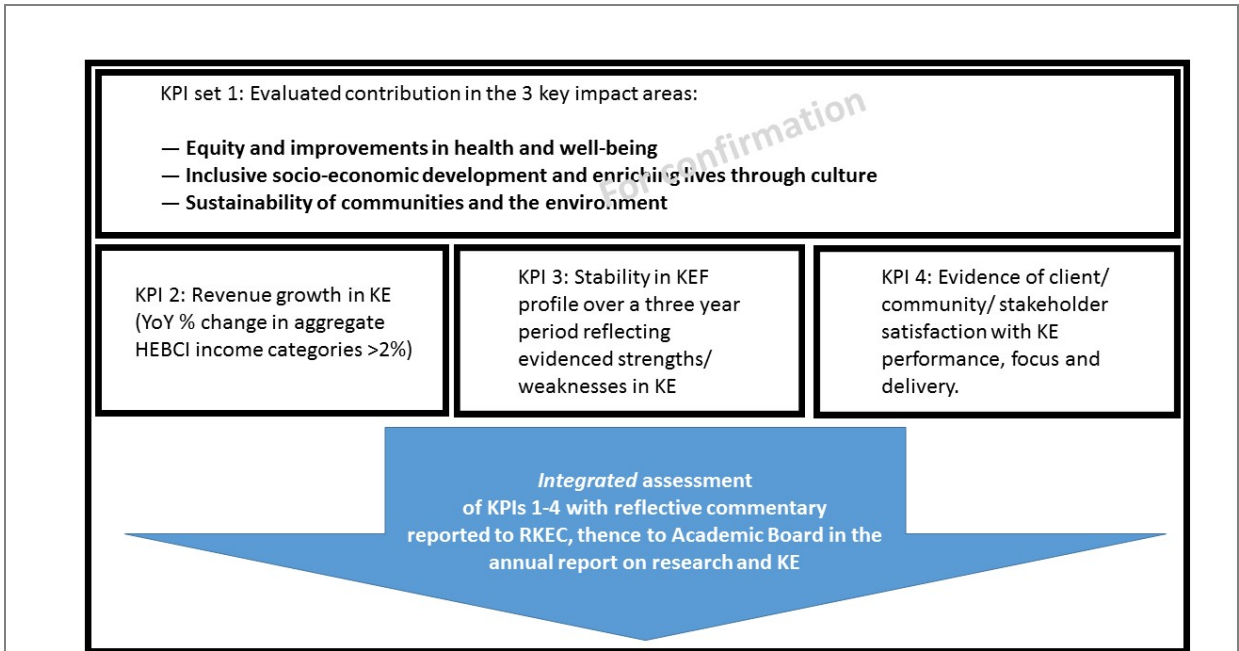
faculty-level Research and Knowledge Transfer Committees ensure that operational use of HEIF resource is consistent with unit plans, eligibility for spend and utility for delivery of the strategy.

Financial Services directorate 'business partners' for each unit liaise regularly on spend with each unit, while a Tableau-based live report of revenue and expenditure by units allows unit directors to see how spend is progressing. RKEC reviews financial performance at each meeting, and notes any significant change from unit plans on report from representatives of the faculty-level RKECs. At the end of the year, and in advance of HEIF AMS submission, the Financial Services directorate prepares an analysis of spend using the AMS categories; the University RKEC receives and reviews this.

(ii) Measurement of progress

The University's new (2021-2031) strategy will use bespoke measurement and structured evaluation to determine progress, but during the life of the current (2017-22) university strategy measurement of progress against the 2017-22 HEIF Institutional Plan has been the responsibility of RKEC on report to Academic Board and, thence, to Governors. Progress in the 2017-22 Institutional Plan was measured by means of mainly revenue-related measures; RKEC receives at each meeting a report from the research and knowledge exchange team in the Financial Services Directorate of income received in each HEBCI category, broken down by unit. The report shows income received against (a) income received at the same stage in the last financial year, and (b) income against expected income. Verbal reports allow responses from representatives of the faculty-level RKECs and central units. Progress is, by these means, reported to Academic Board. A summative annual report from RKEC to Academic Board seeks to understand the experience of the year's work.

With the implementation of the university's new strategy from AY 2021/22 (and a new sub-strategy related to KE and research), the university intends to replace this method of progress monitoring with a new one. At the heart of the new strategy is the intention to generate contributions to the achievement of impact aligned to the strategic development goals (SDGs), and the RKEC will, together with the University's Planning Unit, be considering measures and metrics for these high level outcomes during the summer. A hierarchy of measures of progress is under review, and will be implemented subject to approval of the new strategy:



Our approach to measurement recognises the priority for our KE work to make a contribution to the SDG-linked ambitions in the three theme areas of our overall strategy (KPI 1), a commitment made in our KE Concordat action plan for the development of a measure of stakeholder satisfaction (KPI 4) and wish to ensure that the overall mix of our KEF work and reputation signalled in our KEF profile remains settled (KPI 3). We remain committed to revenue growth (KPI 2), alongside a balanced contribution between all four KPI areas. Details of KPI 1 still require confirmation at the time of writing.

Evidence in relation to each of the KPIs contributing to the balanced assessment will come from different sources:

KPI	Primary source	Secondary sources
KPI 1	Annual evaluation of contributions conducted by Planning unit (in discussion)	Case studies generated by Faculties
KPI 2	Financial Services report in year; HEBCI annual summative statement of activity by activity categories	
KPI 3	KEF profile	
KPI 4	Survey of stakeholders consisting of (i) responses to request for feedback at KE project end points collated in the RKTO and (ii) annual survey of stakeholders conducted by RKEC.	Press Office statistical summary of social media/press coverage of KE activities, with scope for sentiment analysis.

KPI set 1 and KPI 4 will include reflection on satisfactory delivery against the priorities set out in RE-P-2020-03, as well as the priorities established in 'Build Back Better: our plan for

growth' (HMT CP 401, March 2021). Specifically, we identify the following government priorities as important in these KPIs:

- evidence of securing economic and social benefits from research through KE (R&D roadmap)
- contributing to 'levelling up' in our region and sub-region (R&D roadmap and 'Build Back Better')
- contributing high quality education and skills training to sustain productivity growth through CPD (Build Back Better)
- contributions to the three central themes of RE-P-2020-03, namely 'ideas', 'people' and 'place', and that the balance of contribution reflects the strengths of MU in KE as set out in our KEF profile.

(iii) Outcome evaluation

The balanced assessment framework set out above includes (in KPI set 1 and KPI 2) outcome evaluation evidence. While the composite picture of KE outcomes drawn from these measures will be helpful we recognise that individual project outcomes deserve reflection. As a result, and beyond the framework set out above, which will ensure that the direction of KE meets the objectives set by the new strategy, we recognise the move to a 'robust outcome-based funding approach to HEIF, demonstrating value for money, balancing predictability in funding with more regular rewards for dynamism', and want to ensure that where our strategy encourages a novel and effective approach to KE delivery we take particular steps to evaluate project level outcomes. This means that at project level the RKEC will ask Faculties to produce post-project evaluations (PPE) of outcomes and outputs from selected projects approved for funding with HEIF resource. The RKEC together with the Planning Unit will produce guidance on PPE for KE projects, based on the 'proportionate framework' set out in the HMT Magenta Book.

(iii) 'Lesson learning'

Lesson-drawing is managed through three related but separate features of governance, review and oversight arrangements in the university:

(a) Periodic review of *policies* related to KE occurs to a timetable established by the Academic Board. These periodic revisions reflect upon experience and lessons learned from individual projects. This periodic review seeks contributions from all faculties and units, and Academic Board ensures that committee sponsors of individual revisions, including the RKEC, seek views on how policy should be changed in the light of experience. Lessons learned incorporated in recent policy reviews have included revisions to student IP policy to explicitly address student moral rights in KE work, and revisions to financial regulations have

addressed issues such as planning due diligence reviews ahead of partnering in KE work overseas.

(b) Revisions to the contents of a practice manual for the conduct of KE work – through a set of ‘practice notes’, live documents recording how KE work is accomplished – are made when lessons are learned from the conduct of KE work. Recent revision of that element connected with export controls and R&D contracts reflected experience of applying it in bioscience, producing clearer practice.

(c) The most valuable lesson drawing comes from reflections on programmes and projects, usually conducted near to the end of the project. This may be initiated either by the terms and conditions associated with the work (by a requirement imposed by a funder for collaborative research, for example) or by the University’s own oversight arrangements through the RKTO. It is our policy that major projects (those over £2m) must report periodically to RKEC and, at a minimum, a quarterly review is required. This includes financial, operational and outcome reporting. Smaller projects are subject to review in a gathered field of similar projects by Heads of Department or by faculty level RKECs, which bring any lessons learned to the university-level RKEC in an attempt to synthesise what has been learned.