

RE-P-2020-03-Annex B

The University of West London

HEIF accountability statement

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

Return date: 21 May 2021

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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.

In May 2018, the University launched a new strategic plan, **Achievement 2023**: a five-year plan which aimed to make the University a lynchpin of community interactions. This set the aim of the University playing a central role in shaping a set of relations that will bring new levels of innovation, co-operation and business activity aimed at unearthing and improving the quality of entrepreneurial talent wherever it resides. Knowledge exchange and enterprise activity have moved from an important, but relatively small, activity five years ago to something which accounts for 25% of income and above all is increasingly culturally embedded in both student learning and staff working practices. Achievement 2023 explicitly makes commitments to: produce impactful research; provide exceptional work-related carers opportunities to students; and be an engine of innovation and enterprise for our local area.

The University's emerging **Knowledge Exchange Strategy**, covering the next four years, will underpin our approach to having a positive impact on economy and society through:

- Working with businesses and stakeholders to embed the University in west London's economic, cultural and social development;
- Playing an active and leading civic role, engaging with the wider civil society;
- Enabling the University to play a role in regional and national economic development, creating impact internationally from our research activities;
- Being a role-model for dynamic, ethical and entrepreneurial business activity;
- Creating an innovative and self-sustaining enterprise culture that helps ensure the UWL's financial health, as a major local anchor employer;
- Creating a future workforce with higher-levels of skills and employability.
- Adding value to the student experience through developing staff with sector-specific credibility, enhanced through knowledge exchange activities.

In order to deliver this UWL will be formalising our 6 KE Objectives in a new KE strategy:

1. **KE visibility at UWL.** Broadening the engagement of staff in KE activities through raising KE's profile in terms of: visibility, its value to UWL and our stakeholders; and deepening staff's understanding of what KE is, and how it is relevant to their roles.
2. **Enhancing KE Support.** Providing appropriate resources to support staff to successfully engage in KE activity through: developing new methods of encouraging engagement through support resources, models of reward, and recognising success; building a broader and appropriate suite of policies & procedure; fostering a culture of continuous improvement; and Implementing an enhanced measurement of KE activity and performance, using this data to inform future action.

3. **Civic Engagement.** In everything we do, endeavour to involve local communities and play an active part in the educational, cultural and economic life of our region.
Through: outreach to build a better understanding of UWL as a resource for the whole community; enhancing the student learning experience through connections to community; public engagement with research and science; supporting local growth, regeneration, and community building; and building and maintaining networks, partnerships and relationships with other key organisations
4. **Anchoring local talent development.** Through: developing our students as source of talent (recruitment, internship, etc); growing and developing higher and degree apprenticeships; providing expert professional programmes (Levels 7-8); providing a range of CPD and CE opportunities linked to business need and local skills demands; exploring new partnerships and approaches to deliver skills needed by local businesses.
5. **Drive Business start-up and growth.** Through: supporting the creation and development of new businesses through the Westmont Enterprise Hub; supporting new product development for start-up/SME food-beverage businesses through the West London Food Innovation Centre; supporting local business through consultancy (both staff-led and student-led); building on UWL's track-record in the creative sectors to develop support to creative entrepreneurship and support the *Creative Enterprise West* CEZ; partnering with our local Boroughs for economic regeneration and business start-up.
6. **Leveraging our physical & intellectual resource.** Provide benefit to our local, regional, and national economy and create impact through: drawing on the full range of resources at the university and aligning them with the business needs of west London; and maintaining credibility as a University through knowledge creation, with clear routes to commercialisation and creating impact (*linked explicitly in the revised UWL Research Strategy*).

For this period of HEIF funding the key area of focus is moving from the use of HEIF to support the underpinning resources for KE, to developing more project-based activities such as KE Seed Funds and to providing resource for more academic staff time to develop local initiatives. This is partially predicated on an assumption of continued growth in HEIF funds, in line with the recent Qualifying Income trajectory.

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>Providing underpinning resource for KE activities, within the Research & Enterprise Operation Directorate.</p> <p>Key areas covered: Strategic direction, external networking and collaboration with partners in economic & social regeneration; performance monitoring & reporting; legal/contract; business development; and direct operational support (KTP, Collaborative & Contract research; apprenticeship, access to facilities; consultancy; short-course and CPD)</p>	<p>HEIF contributes to 30% of the Research & Enterprise Operations Department staff budget (18 FTE), with the shortfall covered through income generating activities.</p> <p>Limited B2B marketing and PR activities (non-staff spend supported by HEIF) as part of opportunity development</p>	<p>Supports R&D Roadmap through: underpinning collaborate and contract research; direct support to KE Concordat implementation; and support to delivering KEF metrics.</p> <p>Supports 'Build Back Better' through collaborative working and input into local infrastructure projects; directly through development of skills; and supporting innovation and KE outcomes and impacts from research.</p>	<p># 1 KE visibility at UWL</p> <p>#2 Enhancing KE Support</p> <p>Underpinning objectives #3-6</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>KE Seed Funds – pump prime funds to develop activities that will lead to measurable KE outcomes</p>	<p>Planned for 10-20 projects p.a. to be supported, with values up to £3k.</p>	<p>Supports R&D Roadmap through: supporting academics to develop opportunities for collaborate and contract research; direct support to KE Concordat implementation; and support to delivering KEF metrics.</p> <p>Potential to support ‘Build Back Better’ through development of skills provision; innovation and KE outcomes and impacts from research and teaching.</p>	<p># 1 KE visibility at UWL</p> <p>#2 Enhancing KE Support</p> <p>Plus directly delivering objectives #3-6 (depending on the projects supported)</p>	<p>From 21/22 onwards</p>
<p>KE Champions: Workload allocations for academic staff to act as Champions, supporting colleagues to develop KE initiatives within academic departments. This is across a range of disciplines and therefore the KE activities and outcomes will reflect that range. Allocations anticipated to vary based on Academic Department requirements.</p>	<p>Academic workload allocation of an average 5% for an estimated 9 academics (equivalent of 0.45 FTE). Workload allocation to be formally approved via URSEC</p>	<p>Supports R&D Roadmap through: supporting academics to develop opportunities for collaborate and contract research; direct support to KE Concordat implementation; and</p>	<p># 1 KE visibility at UWL</p> <p>#2 Enhancing KE Support</p> <p>Plus potential to support local delivery of objectives #3-6</p>	<p>From 21/22 onwards</p>

		<p>support to delivering KEF metrics.</p> <p>Potential to support 'Build Back Better' through development of skills provision; innovation and KE outcomes and impacts from research and teaching.</p>		
<p>KE Culture Project: and Appreciative Inquiry into enhancing KE culture and understanding the links to, and impacts on, organisational performance. This project will explicitly feed into the self-evaluation against the KE Concordat, in part through seeking to understand the wider views and understanding of KE in UWL.</p>	<p>5% of Senior member of staff as Project Coordinator</p>	<p>Supports R&D Roadmap through: feeding into the KE Concordat implementation; and support to delivering KEF metrics.</p>	<p># 1 KE visibility at UWL</p> <p>#2 Enhancing KE Support</p> <p>Indirectly supports academics to engage with objectives #3-6</p>	<p>Ongoing, but estimated to conclude 22/23</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.

Managing HEIF spend:

For UWL, HEIF funds are predominately used to provide the underpinning infrastructure and resource to support KE activities at UWL. As such they provide a contribution towards the budget for the Research & Enterprise Operations department (both staff and non-staff) whose role is to grow and sustain KE activity. The shortfall in salary costs or non-staff costs is made up from the department's income generating activities.

As such the current prime mechanisms for managing HEIF spend are:

- Standard UWL controls to manage staffing numbers and budgets, in line with the suite of HR policies and processes in place (<https://www.uwl.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-regulations>). Appraisal and objective setting for this group of staff ensures that this aligns with the KE strategy and appropriate use of HEIF funds to support their roles (in most cases partial rather than full support).
- Standard financial controls in line with the Universities Financial Regulations (https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/appendix_1_-_financial_regulations_amended_2020-final.pdf) provide for effective management of non-staff costs. As with staff costs HEIF provides a contribution where activity and associated cost can be clearly identified as being incurred in line with KE strategy and appropriate use of HEIF funding.

As part of the annual monitoring process departmental budget is analysed jointly by the Director of Research & Enterprise Operation and the Finance Department to identify which elements are appropriate to record against HEIF funding.

As HEIF funding has been increasing at UWL the strategy being developed, and due to be formally approved, seeks to expand engagement with KE by a wider group of academic staff. As such HEIF spend patterns for the next period are expected to shift slightly. There is a planned move to increase the funds being allocated to allow workload allocations within schools for KE Champions, and development of a KE Seed Fund (see *response to Q2 and Annex C*).

- The management of KE Champion costs (based on a standardised workload allocation) will be embedded in annual appraisal and work-loading, in line with UWL policy. Performance will be monitored at KE Growth Group and reported through the University Research, Enterprise and Scholarship Committee (URSEC), one of the formal governance committees that reports up to Academic Board).
- Allocation of HEIF-funded KE Seed Funds will be based on formal application, which will be reviewed by KE Growth Group with recommendations to the Director of Research & Enterprise Operations (the Budget Holder) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for approval. Applications for Seed Funds will need to demonstrate how the funding will lead to KE outcomes, and in particular those that feed through to HEBCIs and KEF metrics. Spend will be managed using

standard UWL financial systems (including use of Hourly Paid Lecturer system where academic staff need reduced teaching to be able to undertake a KE Seed Fund project). Project spend will be managed through the Research & Enterprise Department directly (not delegated to Academic Departments) to allow clear oversight and coordinated reporting (to URSEC via KE Growth Group).

Measuring progress:

Progress against UWLs KE ambitions and strategy will occur at a number of levels:

- The overarching measurement of performance at UWL is against the KPIs set in our strategic Plan: Achievement 2023 (https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/Web/PDF/strategic_plan/achievement_2023_a5_28pp_booklet_july_2018_v2_web.pdf). Within the 18 KPIs five are related to KE activity (#1 Employability; #2 Graduate Employment; #3 Degree Apprenticeships; #4 Business' incubated through Westmont Enterprise Hub; and #9 Research & Enterprise Income). Monitoring of these KPIs is formally undertaken annually, and reported through to the Board of Governors directly, and published in the University's Annual Report.
- In addition, UWL has refreshed its Research Strategy and associated targets, and a key feature is a much clearer link to KE activities. This includes explicit targets for levels of collaborative research, contract research and other industry-based funding for research activities. Reporting of performance is undertaken through URSEC, which meets three times per academic year. Normally the first Committee meeting of the academic year allows full reporting of the previous year's performance, with ongoing monitoring of in-year performance in the other two committee meetings.
- The UWL KE strategy is in development and will be taken to URSEC for approval this academic year to approve the principles, aims and objectives. Following approval the strategy will have a set of formal metrics approved as well as an implementation plan:
 - KPIs for the KE strategy will align to measuring performance against the key HEBCIs metrics, KEF and incorporate the KPIs already developed for the Research Strategy. As with the Research Strategy metrics the KE metrics and performance will be reported through URSEC. This will move the reporting framework for KE to a more granular level than currently reported to URSEC.
 - An Implementation plan will accompany the KE strategy and will draw together: existing plans arising from the KE culture research project; the peer-reviewed action plan arising from self-evaluation against the KE Concordat; other areas of development, improvement or enhancement identified through the self-evaluation that do not form part of the Action

Plan; and implementation and/or enhancement of the activities listed in Q2. Progress against this plan (which will include timeframes and accountabilities) will be reported to URSEC along with the performance against KPIs/metrics.

- An additional layer of measurement of performance is through the regular Enterprise Executive, chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor and attended by the Director of Research & Enterprise Operations and Finance colleagues to monitor in-year financial performance of KE activities.
- The final level of progress measurement is embedded within the KE culture action research project that led to the development of the KE Growth Group, as a sub-group of URSEC charged with developing and growing KE at UWL. This research project has developed a set of metrics to measure KE performance over time, as well as metrics to understand levels of engagement and the development of an enhanced KE culture.

Evaluating Outcome:

UWL recognises that within the KE Capability/Maturity model we have moved from being re-active to embedding more defined approaches to KE across the organisation. Development of structures like the KE Growth Group and more formalised reporting provides a platform for the new KE strategy to move UWL into being more proactive, with processes and approaches measured and managed.

On this basis the approach to evaluating outcomes is one that is in development, rather than fully developed and implemented. The work undertaken to date highlights that greater understanding of KE within the Faculty and Professional Support services is a core need. As part of the developing plans to support an enhanced KE culture this means that evaluation is key. Within the KE culture research project some early work has been undertaken to develop a Theory of Change that links KE culture change to organisational performance improvement. Once developed this model will support a more robust evaluation of KE activity and outcomes. This will inform the metrics used and their interpretation in the development of further actions. This will therefore feed into ongoing review process for the KE Strategy implementation plan alongside, annual self-evaluation against the KE Concordat.

Lessons learned:

In line with UWLs position in terms of KE maturity 'lessons learned' is an area of development and aspiration that will form part of the evaluation and monitoring of the new KE strategy. Effectively, UWL is seeking to mature its approach to KE over the timespan of the new KE strategy.

Early work on this area has been implemented through the KE Growth Group, where the focus of activity is on developing new activities, growing a culture of engagement with KE and learning from and sharing best practice from across the various academic departments. Much of this work has also arisen from the reflective collaborative research project that has used an Appreciative Inquiry approach to understand what works well in UWL with regard to KE, and build from there. This approach inevitably means reflection on what has been learned to date. The cyclical approach should allow for ongoing learning to arise from UWL's journey to enhancing the levels of engagement with KE activities, and how this feeds through to organisational performance improvement.