



Research  
England



**RE-P-2020-03-Annex B**

# Durham 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](mailto: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.*

Knowledge Exchange objectives are distributed through all aspects of the 2017/27 University Strategy which is formulated around three central pillars that focus on Education, Research & Engagement, and the Wider Student Experience (WSE). The University Strategy is supported by a range of sub-strategies that crosscut the three pillars including the Global Strategy. Detailed deliverables related to Knowledge Exchange are documented in the five-year HEIF Strategy and the operational plan of Durham's Research & Innovation Services Directorate.

Durham University is developing a discrete Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Strategy (KEES). This strategy will support the University Strategy and establish a coherent approach to the development of KE-related strategic and operational plans across the whole University. The draft strategy is due for consideration / approval at the start of academic year 2021/22.

This KEES will support the Institutional response to the KEF, KEC, HEIF Review, R+D Roadmap and post REF priorities. It is much broader in scope than the current HEIF strategy and RIS operational plan and is built on engagement with a much wider range of stakeholders and contributors. Some adjustments to team structures and remits are therefore being made in anticipation of full implementation from the 2021/22 reporting period.

The key pillars of the draft KEES are:

#### A) Enterprise and Commercialisation: Aims & Objectives

- i. Firmly establish Durham University as an anchor institution within the city and wider region, acting as an integral partner delivering the North-East innovation and enterprise ecosystem.
- ii. Position Durham within the North-East innovation ecosystem as part of a 'living laboratory' to develop and scale commercial ventures on the national and global stage.
- iii. Create an innovation support and advice process that delivers a comprehensive and cohesive journey from ideas through people, skills, infrastructure and funding.

#### B) Public and Community Engagement: Aims & Objectives

- i. Establish a clear framework to connect the University's engagement activities with both external policy drivers and internal strategic priorities.
- ii. Map the external stakeholder network - identifying priority groups, understanding their needs, and mapping these onto the University's institutional mission.
- iii. Ensure that organisational resources, capabilities and knowledge are coordinated in a cohesive way – allowing strong engagement with external audiences to facilitate two-way dialogue, information exchange and influence.

#### C) Economic Development and Place: Aims & Objectives

- i. Build on our role as an anchor institution in the county and wider region, delivering an innovation ecosystem that maximises our ability to commercialise research, support student enterprise and enhance business engagement with university research.
- ii. Ensure the University maximises its opportunities to deliver impact on the local economy with a particular focus on where our research strengths can deliver economic advantage raising the profile of the University and underpinning strategic growth.
- iii. Develop an established role as a key influencer of economic policy and funding nationally and locally ensuring the role of the university is understood and supported.

#### D) Partnerships and Collaborations: Aims & Objectives

- i. Develop and diversify a range of new strategic partners in line with the themes identified through the framework.
- ii. Enhance Durham University's profile and reputation through collaborative activity with partners.
- iii. Maximise opportunities for KE, impact, and income generation across the University, working with existing and with new partners.
- iv. Create a strong business-focussed offer for industry, across contract & collaborative research, consultancy and other expert services, CPD, and the economic development portfolio.

#### E) Expert Services - Consultancy, CPD and Analytical Services: Aims & Objectives

- i. To establish clear internal processes and support structures for the development, administration, incentivisation and delivery of CPD. Including securing best ROI for new activities
- ii. To develop Expert Services activities that augment and complement our teaching, research and WSE objectives and which meet the needs of our stakeholders, including those in the local region and align to the governments levelling-up strategy e.g. Tees Valley Authority, and/or which leverage additional funding to support development activities.
- iii. To increase the levels of expert services to median Russell Group levels across all three subsets by 2025. Thereby supporting the institutional Income diversification agenda.
- iv. To ensure expert services augment the other strands of the KEES; supporting impact, engagement, local growth and commercialisation.

#### F) People, Behaviours & Inclusivity: Aims & Objectives

- i. To create a culture in which staff and students are supported to engage in KEES activities, with appropriate recognition and reward, and which support the University aim to be the partner of choice for external organisations.
- ii. To enhance representation of under-represented groups in KEES activities, ensuring that internal policies and structures support the most effective use of funds and resources.
- iii. Develop an institutional culture in which enterprise is understood and valued by staff and students.

## 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)

<b>Planned areas of HEIF supported KE activity</b> Please provide an overview of planned KE activities or projects that will be supported by your 2021-22 and onwards HEIF allocations.	<b>HEIF support</b> How HEIF will be used to support the project?	<b>HEIF priorities</b> How does this relate to govt priorities and RE-OfS strategic objectives? (Including note of scale where student benefits are achieved.)	<b>Strategic objectives</b> Which institutional strategic KE objective does this relate to?	<b>Indication of timescales</b>
Northern Accelerator / Connecting Capability Fund. A programme of support to encourage spin out formation and share expertise in the region led by Durham University and run-in collaboration with Newcastle, Northumbria and Sunderland Universities	Non-Staff: £100kpa	Levelling up – supporting the growth of the Northeast economy through the provision of targeted support to encourage new business creation in high value sectors. Innovation and commercialisation – supporting researchers to identify commercial ideas and supporting in-depth analysis of commercialisation opportunities. R+D roadmap – supporting enhanced R+D spend, knowledge exchange and levelling up. Post Covid Economic Recovery – developing new businesses and business leaders of the future across the NE and Teesside area who will generate new job opportunities.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i (D)Partnerships and Collaborations: i (F) People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: iii	Up to June 2023
Commercialisation other - including Tech Transfer (Other)	Staff: 3FTE Non-Staff: Patents £251k	Supporting active researchers to commercialise and develop new market opportunities. Linking to R&D Roadmap driving up innovation and productivity and capturing the economic benefit from our research through innovation.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, iii, iv (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii (D)Partnerships and Collaborations: iii (E)Expert Services: iii (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, iii	To 2025
Policy Hub - supports research into practice by building relationships	Staff: 2 FTE Non-Staff: Innovation in Policy Making Fund £20k.	Linking to R+D Roadmap connecting researchers with external	(B)Public and Community Engagement: i, iii	To 2025

between researchers and policymakers.		organisations and initiating impactful research proposals	(C)Economic Development and Place: ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: i, ii, iii (E)Expert Services: ii, iv (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii	
Arts and Heritage Impact and Engagement Program - supports research into practice by building relationships between researchers and arts and culture organisations and practitioners.	Staff: 1 FTE Non-Staff: Impact Accelerator Fund £20k	Linking to R&D Roadmap Driving up innovation and productivity and capturing the economic benefit from our research through innovation. 9b – Civic Place agenda / Levelling up.	(B) Public and Community Engagement: i, ii, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: i, ii (E)Expert Services: ii (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii	To 2025
Consultancy / Analytical Services support	Staff: 2.2 FTE	Linking to R&D Roadmap Driving up innovation and productivity and capturing the economic benefit from our research through innovation. 9b – Civic Place agenda / Levelling up.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: ii, iii, iv (E)Expert Services: i, ii, iii, iv (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii, iii	To 2025
CPD support	Staff: 1.5 FTE	Linking to R&D Roadmap Driving up innovation and productivity and capturing the economic benefit from our research through innovation. 9b – Civic Place agenda / Levelling up.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i (B)Public and Community Engagement: ii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: ii, iv (E)Expert Services: i, ii, iii, iv (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii	Strategy in place: Summer 2021. Support hub 2022.
Careers and Enterprise	Staff 6.2 FTE Enterprise and Placement Officers	Aligning with RE/OfS objectives to support students in delivering	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, iii	To 2025



	Non-Staff: £89k	knowledge exchange. Internships and placements are supporting businesses to drive up innovation and productivity. Presently c170 students engaged in placements with ambition to increase to 250. Enterprise programmes also aligning with the R&D Roadmap and levelling up agendas in supporting entrepreneurs and start-ups. Presently 12% of student population engaging with enterprise activity working towards the HEIF KPI target of 20%.	(B)Public and Community Engagement: i (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: ii, iii (F)People, Behaviours & Inclusivity: i, ii, iii	
University Enterprise Zone - Orbit - delivering a designated space for knowledge transfer, collaboration and business accommodation at NetPark	Staff: 0.2 FTE Management resource (leveraged external funding £2.3m) Non-Staff: £0	Contributes to 'place' and levelling up and aligning to R+D roadmap where it supports our innovation enabling infrastructure and fosters greater co-creation and collaboration.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (B)Public and Community Engagement: iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii, iii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: ii, iv (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, iii	To June 2023
Intensive Industrial Innovation Programme (IIIP) a regional programme of industrial PhDs with SMEs delivered by Durham University in partnership with Newcastle, Northumbria and Teesside Universities.	Staff: 0.2 FTE management and compliance resource (leveraged external funding) Non-Staff: £0	Contributes to 'place' and levelling up and R+D roadmap.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii, iii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: i, ii, iv (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, iii	To June 2023
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships Development	Staff: 1.3 FTE Non-Staff:	Linking to R&D Roadmap supporting businesses to drive up innovation and productivity and capture the economic benefit from our research through innovation.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii, iii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: ii, iv	To 2025

			(F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii, iii	
Research Impact Development Support	Staff Res: 1.4FTE Non-Staff: £125k Research Impact Fund	Linking to R+D Roadmap connecting researchers with external organisations and initiating impactful research proposals	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (B)Public and Community Engagement: i, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: ii, iii (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii, iii	
Business Development Support	Staff: 4.4 FTE Non-Staff:	Linking to R&D Roadmap supporting businesses to drive up innovation and productivity and capture the economic benefit from our research through innovation.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (B)Public and Community Engagement: ii (C)Economic Development and Place: ii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: i, ii, iii, iv (E)Expert Services: ii, iii, iv (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, iii	To 2025
Innovation Ecosystem e.g., Local Growth and regeneration.	Staff: 3.4 FTE Non-Staff: £50k cash (match for local growth initiatives)	The team supports the 'Place' foundation of the Industrial Strategy through developing partnerships and programmes of support in the locality to generate economic impact and grow our civic contribution. Also aligns with the R+D roadmap where it supports our innovation enabling infrastructure and fosters greater co-creation and collaboration.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii, iii (C)Economic Development and Place: i, ii, iii (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: i, ii, iii, iv (E)Expert Services: ii (F)People, Behaviours and Inclusivity: i, ii, iii	To 2025
Marketing & Communications support	Staff: 1 FTE Non-Staff:	Linking to R+D Roadmap enabling the researchers to connect with external organisations and initiating impactful research proposals.	(A)Enterprise and Commercialisation: i, ii	To 2025

		<p>Communications support to enhance our civic responsibilities and delivery of the place agenda / levelling up. Proactively drive involvement with Durham KE activities, expanding the breadth and depth of stakeholders working with DU.</p>	<p>(B)Public and Community Engagement: i, ii, iii  (C)Economic Development and Place: i,iii  (D)Partnerships and Collaboration: i, ii, iii, iv  (E)Expert Services: i, ii, iii</p>	
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### **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.*

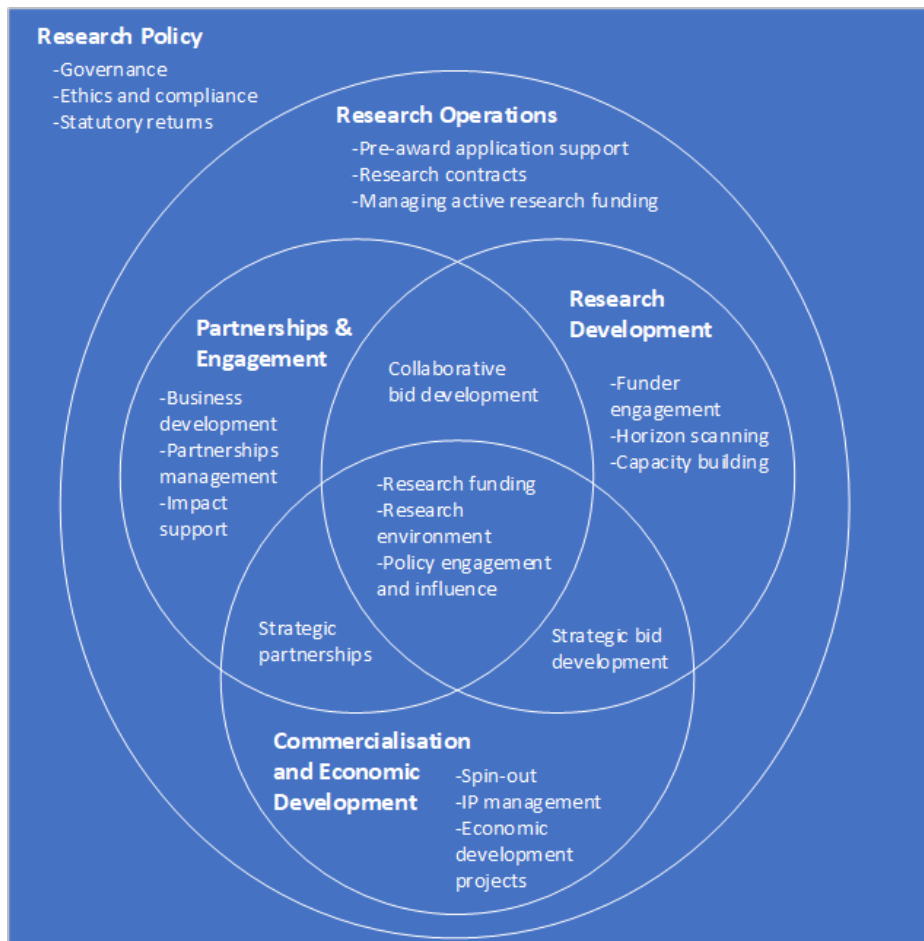
## i. Management of HEIF funding

### a) Budget setting

Institutional priorities and budgets are set in April / May each year, and HEIF allocations confirmed in June. Through this process, a broad-based budget is set for the following academic year. Existing commitments are examined for strategic relevance and value for money. Strategic delivery areas are invited to make business cases for allocation of HEIF resource, based on value for money, business need and alignment to acknowledged HEIF / Governmental priorities. Internal tensioning of resource takes place initially in Research & Innovation Services (RIS), who both manage HEIF and deploy the majority of this funding. The final decision on the allocation of HEIF resource is taken by the Vice-Provost (Research) (VP-R), consulting with the Director of Research & Innovation Services and Director of Commercial and Economic Development. Minor deviations from budget are handled within RIS, but significant changes require consultation with, and approval of, the VP-R.

### b) Functional support

Functional areas are responsible for monitoring changes in government policies and priorities, and for ensuring that planned spend remains justifiable and continues to represent best use of resource. Although not a perfect match, strategy areas do align closely to sub-team structure. The diagram below summarises the key functional areas responsible for delivery of activities and outcomes supported by HEIF funding – working to the priorities set out in the draft institutional Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Strategy (described in Question 1).

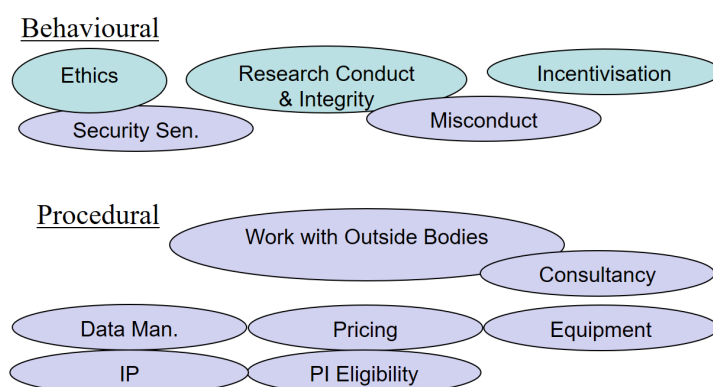


*Figure one: Research and Innovation Services – Team Structure*

Budget holders across relevant functional areas (including those set out in Figure 1) are responsible for monitoring spend against budget. Frequency of monitoring is proportional to activity risk. Critical risk to delivery and over/under spend are reported to RIS. Where possible HEIF income is segmented from other income sources and treated as any external funding would be. For example, the Research Impact Fund is an open competitive fund, which academics bid into for support for impact-related projects – this fund is run through the institutional grant management system and uses an analogous award, set-up and grant management process to a research grant. This ensures effective monitoring of spend, due diligence of project set-up and delivery, as well as supporting systematic evaluation of outcomes.

The majority of HEIF funding is allocated to programs with specific deliverables and project-level performance indicators. Within these programs it is common to find pots of funding (generally up to £50k) which, although dedicated to a specific project, can be used flexibly to support eligible activities. These run as both open competition and closed funds. Robust and transparent approval routes (as outlined in the financial regulations and local guidance) are applied.

RIS put in place a policy framework for the management of all research and research related activities in 2016/17 and these policies are subject to review every two years. The framework is comprehensive of its coverage of the core strategy areas and is supported by guidance notes, toolkits and dedicated governance support in the Research Policy team.



*Figure two: Durham's policy framework.*

Alongside the RIS policy framework, sits the HR and other central documentation including the Responsible University, Respect at Work policies.

## **ii. Measuring progress**

Progress against strategic objectives is monitored externally via the KEF, HEBCI and HEIF returns, and internally via the annual planning round, integration in staff KPIs and via regular reports to Research Management Committee (quarterly) and the University Executive.

Operational monitoring of the delivery of the strategic aims is via the RIS operational plan; this document sets out SMART KPIs across the majority of the strategy areas (in some areas such as Community Engagement, this is covered by operational plans in other areas e.g. Marketing and Communications). These KPIs are set against both short-term (1 year) and medium-term (3 years) timescales. Directorate accountability for delivery is via the annual planning process, but this is

augmented by the cascade of KPIs down into individual staff Performance & Development Reviews. These take place annually, with a six-monthly review point.

The completion of the HEIF annual monitoring statement provides an interim review point at the midpoint of the period. Activities must be justified against the approved five-year KE strategy objectives in reference to changing government priorities and accounting for the impact of external factors such as COVID-19.

### **iii. Evaluating outcomes**

All programs are subject to evaluation of outcomes. This can be both internal and external. For significant investments / priority areas these are more likely to be external.

#### **A-Enterprise and Commercialisation**

Performance in delivery of Enterprise and Commercialisation activities is evaluated against core metrics which include spin-out numbers, longevity, GVA to region, staff employed and leverage of additional funding into the regional economy and innovation ecosystem. Other tracked metrics include disclosures, patents, licenses and related income. These figures feed in to HEBCI amongst other internal and external reports.

#### **B-Public and Community Engagement**

Where direct links to research and engagement programmes exist (and are recorded) e.g. in impact case studies or where they are captured by researchfish or HEBCI, we use these to monitor our activities. We also carry out evaluations of exhibitions and events (our own and those with partners) to understand how we have performed. Durham is also looking at ways to account for value generated in a wellbeing economy as well as commercial economy; to ensure that we evaluate against criteria that Durham's communities recognise and support in addition to those the University recognises; and to ensure inclusivity in evaluation processes so that all communities and stakeholders have the opportunity to make their voice heard

#### **C-Economic Development and Place**

The majority of work in this area is externally funded so each program has key deliverables of its own against which projects can be assessed such as business supported, new products developed and new jobs created. The University also monitors impact of these programs and leverage of additional funds as key metrics.

#### **D-Partnerships and Collaborations**

Metrics include the number of businesses and other bodies engaged with, volume and value of contract, number of collaborative research activities and KTP's. Metrics include the creation and maintenance of strategic partnerships (defined by value and level of interaction). Qualitative data is gathered through surveys.

#### **E-Expert Services: Consultancy, CPD and Analytical Services**

Numbers of activities, value and (for CPD) learner days as recorded by HEBCI are the primary means of measuring success in this area. Sub targets exist for other strategy areas which include engagement with particular groups, market share and growth.

#### **F-People, Behaviours & Inclusivity**

An institutional Research Culture Committee was established in 2021, and this group is responsible for developing and implementing new initiatives and policies in this area, monitoring activity type by protected characteristics, and ensuring the application of the research integrity and other behavioural policies.

#### **iv. Identifying lessons learned**

RIS operates a model of continuous evaluation and improvement. This includes an internal best practice sharing across delivery teams. Durham also works with other universities to share ideas, collaboration opportunities and best practice.

Customer surveys are undertaken to gain feedback on our business services (both from external and internal stakeholders). We use that feedback to improve our processes.

Work is currently being undertaken to implement processes to capture feedback systematically at key points in the project lifecycle (for example at issue of final invoice). We use existing management structures to maintain oversight of quality assurance issues and performance monitoring mechanisms.

Continuous improvement is supported by formal reviews. In 2018, the University undertook a review of its Public and Community Engagement activities, seeking input from a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. Seven recommendations arose from the review and implementation of actions in response to these will form part of the relevant streams within the new Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Strategy (see Question 1). Although some evaluation is carried out (see point 8), there is an acknowledged need to ensure that this is reviewed, and appropriate action taken so that improvements can be made.