

RE-P-2020-03-Annex B

University of Gloucestershire

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.

The KE Strategy is closely aligned to the University's Strategic Plan (2017-22) which outlines our goals as follows:

Goal 1: To provide a breadth and richness of experience that enables all our students to reach their full potential;

Goal 2: To provide teaching and support for learning of the highest quality

Goal 3: To undertake research and professional practice which enrich students' learning and create impact and benefit for others

Goal 4: To build partnerships which create opportunity, innovation and mutual benefit for the communities we serve

KE activity supports these goals in a number of different ways. Goal 1 is delivered primarily through our employability team and the University's 'Your Future Plan' programme which included placements and internships, as well as the wide range of associated employability support and professional experience that Schools provide for their students. Goal 2 is supported by our on campus Growth Hub and Business Engagement team who facilitate other experiential opportunities, enabling students to explore different avenues, and develop a network of contacts, including Business and Law Clinics with live case studies and projects, adding interest and intellectual challenge to courses. Goal 3 is supported via expanding the range and volume of organisations we work with, identifying research opportunities and access to research participants, with a strong focus on the impact of our research as demonstrated in the impact case studies

submitted to the recent REF. Goal 4 is supported by the development of excellent relationships with organisations of all sizes, expanding the opportunities for our students, staff and client SME's and helping to support local economic growth.

The University has just commenced the project to develop our next strategic plan for the period 2022 – 2027. That will cover most of the period in scope of this return. We are therefore not currently in a position to provide documentation detailing that future strategic framework. However, our future corporate strategy will definitely address as an ongoing central goal of the University the promotion of KE, student employability, enterprise, innovation and support for economic development.

The University's ongoing ambitions for KE are:

- **To support and promote access to student and graduate talent for prospective employer organisations.** As part of our employability activity we work with many organisations, providing our students with distinctive and valuable opportunities to gain employability experience, building their skills and confidence, and supporting them to achieve their professional and career ambitions. Organisations gain an opportunity to work with students and develop a talent pipeline for their business. This element supports the '*People*' pillar of the original National Industrial Strategy, with 'good jobs and greater earning power for all', as well as '*Business Environment: the best place to start and grow a business*' and '*Places: prosperous communities across the UK*'
- **To continue to develop and promote a wide range of higher and degree apprenticeships and work-based learning programmes, designed to support local and regional skills needs.** Our client development teams work closely with businesses and public sector organisations to identify skills needs, promote existing programmes or co-create new ones. We hold advisory boards and course enhancement events to continuously improve our portfolio and to ensure our curricula are aligned to business needs. The development of our course portfolio over several years has significantly strengthened the professional/vocational orientation, for example through rapid growth of nursing and allied health programmes, the introduction of engineering, and the delivery from this autumn of new courses in biosciences, architecture and construction. Resulting programmes provide much needed CPD opportunities, or early career apprenticeships for organisations to train or upskill their staff. Our Apprenticeships and Client Development teams have supported the apprenticeship market more generally, providing extensive advice and guidance to employers new to apprenticeships. This initiative again relates specifically to the '*People*' pillar of the National Industrial Strategy.
- **To provide Growth Hub and Enterprise Business Support.** Since 2014 the University has been providing impartial information, events and expert advice and guidance to high growth businesses through our Growth Hub, which is co-located with our Business School and the GFirst LEP. We worked closely with the LEP and local authorities in the development of the Local Industrial Strategy, we continue to be actively involved in local economic recovery schemes and the Gloucestershire application of "Building Back Better". We also provide a range of incubation space, as well as enterprise and start-up advice and support. To date we have provided support to more than 10,000 local businesses, providing medium and high intensity support to more than 6,000 of these. The exceptional work the Growth Hub does in encouraging and supporting businesses and working closely with the GFirst LEP aligns with '*Business Environment*' and makes Gloucestershire a particularly great place to start and grow a business. It also supports '*Places*', by making Gloucestershire a more prosperous community. The achievements of the Growth Hub have been supported through ESIF funding. Going forward, it is a key uncertainty for our strategy as to whether, how and when the Government's Shared Prosperity programme will provide funding support for the

continuation of these business support services.

- **To Promote and share our academic expertise to business.** We do this by securing opportunities for organisations to access research, by providing opportunities for commissioned and applied research, creating Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, and by facilitating other knowledge exchange, community and research projects. This supports the 'Ideas' pillar, and a local culture of innovation. Specialist facilities and expert support to use them is provided at our C11 Cyber Security Centre near Bristol and at our main campuses in Cheltenham and Gloucester. The University has a special focus on Cyber and the digitisation of the local economy, supported by academic expertise in these areas, playing an active role in these business communities, and so promoting Cyber and Digital 'Infrastructure'. The University is also developing new areas of curriculum in Architecture, Construction and the Environment. KE Staff are leading engagement with business, local authorities and the LEP to develop the curriculum, providing important expertise and skills related to improved 'Infrastructure'.
- **As a local anchor institution,** we are a key contributor to economic development, business success, innovation and enterprise in our community, providing excellent and distinctive support for businesses and skills development. The University is actively involved in this work, with senior staff working closely with the GFirst LEP as part of their Sector groups and other local economic initiatives and projects. The University plays a leading role in the economic, social and cultural development of Gloucestershire and the region. Business Engagement activity supports this through high quality links into public sector stakeholders and the business community. Our Growth Hub and the wider Growth Hub network are an exceptionally successful example of this activity nationally.

Building Back Better

Post-Covid, much has changed for our local business communities. We remain committed to the strategic drivers indicated above, but the pandemic has highlighted additional concerns.

Colleagues in the Growth Hub and in Start and Grow Enterprise have provided much needed support to businesses and business owners during the pandemic, and acted as the delivery mechanism for several grant initiatives (funded by MHCLG), utilising their expertise and connections. The University launched a Gloucestershire Recovery Bursary, significantly discounting a range of professional postgraduate programmes for people made redundant in the county.

Digitisation and Cyber were always key areas of development for the University and are strengths of the Gloucestershire region. As most businesses of all sizes strengthen their digital and cyber capabilities, the University as an active member of the Gfirst LEP sector group, is providing new apprenticeships in this area, specialist advice and guidance for business, and using our expertise in KTPs.

The University announced in March the purchase of the former Debenhams department store in the centre of Gloucester, which we will repurpose as a major teaching centre, with public access services, a major contribution to the economic regeneration of the City. Gloucester has faced a long period of economic decline and challenge, and the University will be central to the reinvention of a high skill economic future.

The University is proud of its record in support for 'Widening Participation'. We have a high proportion of WP learners, and have developed expertise and resources to support those for

whom Higher Education may be more challenging. This includes some of our Apprenticeship learners, who are performing well on their programmes and in their organisations, but whose earlier experience of education was less than positive. In this way the University actively supports the 'Levelling up' ambitions included in Building Back Better.

The University is very proud of its record in Sustainability, which links closely to the proposed *Transition to Net Zero Carbon*. We were the number 1 university in the People and Planet League Table in 2019. Green Energy and Net Zero remain key priorities for our LEP as part of the Gfirst Draft Local Industrial Strategy. All of our business courses foreground environmental consideration and responsible governance. Colleagues in CCRI specialise in research around the rural environment and responsible business, and our Sustainability Team provide advice and guidance to feed into academic courses and also to business. We ran online events in conjunction with several other universities through the Ingenuity initiative, promoting sustainability and the environment.

The Growth Hub works closely with many High Growth Businesses. For many, export growth and internationalisation have been the main routes to growth and improved productivity, hence 'Global Britain' is important to us and our stakeholders. The Growth Hub and colleagues in our Business School work closely with the GFirst LEP. For example, our MBA students worked on consultancy projects alongside the LEP in the lead up to Brexit.

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>Client Development Team which focusses on developing business engagement opportunities with local businesses– services promoted would include apprenticeships, CPD courses, consultancy, KTPs, collaborative projects/funding bids, research projects etc.</p>	<p>Covers approximately 50% of team costs</p>	<p>Supports the <i>People</i> and <i>ideas</i> foundations of the industrial strategy by investigating the needs of the business the skills required and the ways in which the University can work with them to overcome their main constraints to continued growth</p>	<p>Supports objectives 3 and 4 - To undertake research and professional practice which enrich students' learning and create impact and benefit for others and to build partnerships which create opportunity, innovation and mutual benefit for the communities we serve.</p>	<p>2020-21 onwards</p>
<p>Your Future Plan (YFP) Team which focusses on identifying student placements and building student employability skills and experience.</p>	<p>Covers up to 25% of team costs</p>	<p>Supports the <i>Business Environment</i> by providing access for employers to students and graduate talent, and supports the <i>People</i> element by building experiences for our students and linking them to career opportunities.</p>	<p>Supports objective 1-To provide a breadth and richness of experience that enables all our students to reach their full potential.</p>	<p>2020-21 onwards</p>

<p>The Higher Apprenticeship Team which focusses on promoting apprenticeships generally and providing information, advice and guidance to employers. Our Apprenticeship team work closely with FE providers in the area to ensure clear progression routes. The Apprenticeship team work with the LEP and local employers to identify new and emerging skills needs locally.</p>	<p>Covers in the region of 20% of team costs to support the identification and development of new programmes and their associated promotion</p>	<p>Supports the <i>People</i> elements of the IS and the <i>Skills and Levelling Up</i> pillars of Build Back Better by ensuring that employers have access to the training and development they need and can upskill their workforce to meet new and emerging challenges post Brexit and post Covid.</p>	<p>Supports objectives 2 & 4 - To provide teaching and support for learning of the highest quality and to build partnerships which create opportunity, innovation and mutual benefit for the communities we serve</p>	<p>2020-21 onwards</p>
<p>Enables academic knowledge exchange, collaborative research and development of expertise.</p>	<p>Covers a small proportion of a number of academics who support business engagement through activities such as the running of our Cyber Centre, Student Placements, development of KTPs, and other research projects</p>	<p>Supports the Ideas element of the IS and the <i>Innovation</i> pillar of Build Back Better, by identifying new knowledge and development opportunities which our academic staff can support.</p>	<p>Supports objectives 1, 3 and 4 - To provide a breadth and richness of experience that enables all our students to reach their full potential; To undertake research and professional practice which enrich students' learning and create impact and benefit for others and to build partnerships which create opportunity, innovation and mutual benefit for the communities we serve</p>	<p>2020-21 onwards</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.

(Max 4 pages of A4)

HEIF Spending is managed on an annual basis in accordance with the KEF strategy and in line with the amount of annual funding received.

Measurement of progress is part of our normal annual cycle of business planning. The University's annual planning processes, along with quarterly updates, are used to evaluate performance against a set of KPI's for each area of service. Therefore there is an annual business plan for the Business Engagement team, setting out its goals, priority actions and KPIs, which is used to track progress in delivery.

Apprenticeships and CPD elements are overseen by the Higher Apprenticeship Board, which is composed of representatives from academic schools and professional services, and is chaired by the Vice Chancellor. The Board oversees programme developments, achievement of recruitment targets, quality management, promotional activities, as well as learner and employer feedback. Lessons Learned and best practice are shared through regular meetings of academic and professional services staff involved in apprenticeships, as well as regular staff training sessions.

Growth Hub and Start and Grow Enterprise activity is overseen by a Growth Hub Board, which includes members of University staff, local authority staff and representatives of the local business community, and also through regular reviews with BEIS and MHCLG. The Growth Hub Board is chaired by the Chair of GFirst LEP. Both the Growth Hub and Start and Grow Enterprise are ESIF funded projects (not supported directly by HEIF) with agreed project targets. Progress is reviewed regularly at Project Board Meetings and regular review meetings with MHCLG. In addition, independent evaluations are commissioned at key points in each project's lifecycle. Both projects also elicit regular feedback from their clients.

Employability initiatives are overseen by the Employability and Business Engagement Board, which comprises the leadership of our employability programme – "Your Future Plan", employability representatives from each academic school, representatives from the Students'

Union and colleagues in business facing roles with connections to local SMEs, the LEP, industry and public sector organisations. The board is chaired by the Vice Chancellor and reviews employability survey data and all aspects of employability initiatives. It also facilitates the sharing of good practice.