The University of Westminster

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.

The University of Westminster's approach to Knowledge Exchange is set out in our Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2020-23 which derives from, and builds on, the University's mission and objectives in Being Westminster 2018-23. KE is fundamental to our purpose, drawing on our heritage as the UK's first Polytechnic, grounded in applied education and applied research which bring impact to business, industry and wider society. KE is consistent with our values and the importance we give to collaboration, diversity and inclusion: serving our various communities with pioneering insights and a compassionate and responsible approach in our partnering relationships. KE enriches experiences and learning for our academics. It improves the quality of our research by validating its application to real life problems. KE brings professional practice and insights into our teaching and offers students the opportunity to engage with real problems to enhance their experience, knowledge and skills. KE links to our employability strategy, as close business relationships and student enterprise deliver enhanced graduate

outcomes. KE ultimately enables the University to demonstrate its difference and distinctiveness, and through a wide range of touch-points (research, consultancy, events, CPD etc) extend our influence regionally, nationally and internationally.

We have two main KE objectives. **The first is to focus our KE activities on four thematic priorities that capture our recognized strengths in research, our values and the impact we have on the world**. These themes enable colleagues to contribute their expertise across subject boundaries and to work collectively to achieve greater impact on key global issues - even more so since the pandemic. These themes also link to the Grand Challenges identified as key priorities in the Government's Industrial Strategy. The four key themes are: Diversity and inclusion (to understand the issues that can enable or prevent particular groups from taking a full part in society as citizens in a global world, employees, students, and members of families and communities); Health Innovation and Well-Being (developing solutions to better manage and prevent disease, helping populations stay healthier at home, in healthcare settings and at the workplace); Sustainable Cities and the Urban Environment (exploring new and sustainable ways of moving people and goods around and between our global cities); and Arts, Communication and Culture (how changes in the environmental, technological and communication landscape are transforming social, cultural and political issues globally). In the last two years, the University has invested significant resource in developing interdisciplinary projects and networks linked to these four areas and embedding these thematic priorities in all our work with business, the public sector and other communities. In delivering Objective 1, we aim to: (a) Build networks with employers, professional bodies, businesses, community organisations and local authorities, linked to our thematic areas of focus through events, a clear digital presence, workshops and activities (b) Increase access to university spaces and facilities for business, public and community groups; (c) Increase engagement with our expertise, including increased visibility of our research expertise and impact leading to an increase in applied research with partners (d) increase levels of public and community engagement to demonstrate the value and impact of our research.

A second key objective is to develop our talent and skills provision to support London's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. For 185 years, we have transformed the lives of young people in London. London is facing a challenging future post-Covid and needs new enterprises, skilled and resilient, confident workers to keep pace with innovation, exploit new digital technologies, and develop a multi-skilled workforce that can adapt as the environment changes. We are eager to play our part in this. In delivering Objective 2, we aim to: (a) Reposition our highly successful Creative Enterprise Centre into a Student Enterprise Centre (SEC) to support students from across the University to develop enterprise skills for employment, self-employment and business start-up. The Creative Enterprise Centre was launched in 2016/17 and has supported students and recent graduates studying creative courses to develop transferable and industry-relevant enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. The Centre won a national enterprise education award in 2019 and has successfully supported the growth of new student and graduate start-ups. In line with future needs for entrepreneurship and a multi-skilled workforce from September 2021, the Centre will be repositioned to support the development of enterprise skills for all students across the University. The University will support the reskilling of the wider community and meet the future skills needs of business by (b) increasing access to student talent by businesses and (c) offering specialist training courses the meets the skills needs of our stakeholders and local communities. Both (b) and (c) will be supported through increasing our engagement with business via Objective 1.

To support the achievement of our objectives for Knowledge Exchange, we will be developing a new dedicated centre for inclusive enterprise and innovation in central London. The Centre will provide a new front door for business to engage with the University to access student talent, facilities and skills training and a place for the local community to learn about and develop new enterprises. Over the 2021/22-2024/25 period we will continue to develop our approach to Knowledge Exchange. We will continue to work with stakeholders to play a key role in delivering economic growth and societal well-being locally, regionally and globally.

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)

Planned areas of HEIF supported KE activity Please provide an overview of planned KE activities or projects that will be supported by your 2021-22 and onwards HEIF allocations.	HEIF support How HEIF will be used to support the project?	HEIF priorities How does this relate to govt priorities and RE-OfS strategic objectives? (Including note of scale where student benefits are achieved.)	Strategic objectives Which institutional strategic KE objective does this relate to?	Indication of timescales
Develop our networks, outreach to local partners (SMEs, public and community groups, businesses) and raise the visibility of our offer across skills development, access to facilities, research and expertise with clear communications and enhanced responsiveness. Landing pages tailored to 1) business and 2) public and communities on website.	HEIF funding to support posts in the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO), Business Engagement Directorate and Public Affairs area. HIEF funding to support the development of marketing collateral and developing the visibility of our offer.	People and place pillars of IS.	Objective 1a) Build networks with employers, professional bodies, businesses, community organisations and local authorities, linked to our thematic areas of focus through events, a clear digital presence, workshops and activities	Main work planned for 2021/22 – 22/23, with some ongoing activity 2023/24 onwards.
Programme of public and community engagement events to engage public and communities across key priority areas of inclusion and diversity, culture, health, sustainability with focus on engagement in our research, facilities, skills training and expertise.	HEIF funds support RKEO and Public Affairs posts Funding to support activities programme. With potential to	People and place pillars of IS and RE/OfS objective for students to benefit. Anticipate 250 students	1d) increase levels of public and community engagement to demonstrate the value and impact of our research; and 1b) Increase access to university spaces and facilities for business, public and community groups	Initial programme planning and set-up 2021/22 with activities commencing in 2021/22 and

	support student facilitators from 2023/24 if student engagement is found to successfully support enhanced public and community's engagement with the programme and support student skills development.	benefiting in first 2 years.		ongoing activity.
Supporting students to develop skills by playing a role in supporting engagement programme as facilitators and facilitating public engagement in research. Student involvement will be supported with University funding from the Quintin Hogg Trust in 2021/22-2022/23.				
Programme of engagement activities to build networks with employers, professional bodies, businesses, community organisations and local authorities, linked to our thematic areas of focus.	HEIF funds support RKEO and Public Affairs posts Funding for membership of networks	People and place pillars of IS.	Objective 1a and supporting 1b, 1c and supporting 2c	21/22 onwards
Support and development of collaborations with businesses aligned to thematic areas/research strengths and industry priorities. Development of business cases and opportunities linked to these, and relevant business needs to facilitate the research and exploitation process. Identification, evaluation and support for research commercialisation opportunities.	HEIF funds support RKEO posts, support evaluation and development of activity where this is in line with objectives and evidenced by business need and external priorities.	Ideas pillar of IS	Objective 1c) Increase engagement with our expertise, including increased visibility of our research expertise and impact leading to an increase in applied research with partners	21/22 onwards

Reposition the Creative Enterprise Centre, from September 2021, as a Student Enterprise Centre to support students from across the University to develop enterprise skills for employment, self-employment and business start-up.	HEIF funds support Student Enterprise Centre within Business Engagement Directorate	People pillar of IS and RE/OfS objective for students to benefit. Anticipate 3,000 students and recent graduates benefiting during HEIF period	Objective 2a) developing SEC	2021-22 and ongoing
The University is committed to playing a vital role in providing a diverse talent graduate pipeline with the skills and competences to meet industry needs. As part of this commitment we are embedding student placements and work-based learning projects through our curriculum: by 2023, all our undergraduate courses will include a minimum of 35 hours of work-based learning and all students will have access to an optional placement year.

Through the development of a new dedicated centre for inclusive enterprise and innovation we will provide a place for employers to meet, interview and interact with students and for students to collaborate with employers on challenges, projects and placements.

Thorough the Student Enterprise Centre, we also create opportunities for | HEIF funds support posts within Business Engagement Directorate | People and place pillars of IS and RE/OfS objective for students to benefit. Anticipate 3,000 students and recent graduates benefiting during HEIF period | Objective 2b) accessing student talent | 21/22 onwards in the lead up to the opening of a dedicated centre for inclusive enterprise and innovation in 23/24 |

businesses to access student talent through co-curricular activities and our TalentHub app https://westminstertalenthub.app/ . A programme of activities to support graduate employability and engagement with industry, linked to the development the inclusive enterprise centre as a new front door for business to access the University.				
Increased focus on B2B short courses, with new courses being created to meet the needs of global businesses. We will focus on providing support for local businesses to reskill their workforce in digital skills. We will also offer courses for the local community, linked to the local skills needs identified by local authorities and regional stakeholders.	HEIF funds support Short Courses team within Business Engagement Directorate	Supports people pillar of IS with emphasise on digital skills for businesses	Objective 2c) offering specialist training courses the meets the skills needs of our stakeholders and local communities.	2021-22 and ongoing
Support for academic leaders within each School with responsibility for KE to become advocates and champions of the KE agenda in the University.	HEIF funds support KE Leads and RKEO posts	People pillar of IS	Objectives 1-2	21/22 onwards

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 spending: To support increased oversight of funding streams and enhance strategic alignment across Research and Knowledge Exchange for the 2021-22 academic year, the University is introducing a new committee structure. Within this structure strategic responsibility for HEIF spending sits with the R&KE Steering Committee with sub-committees for business engagement, research and public and community engagement. The sub-committees are responsible for programmes and activities within their areas. At an operational level HEIF funding is managed by the R&KE Office with the support of a finance business partner.

Committee name	Responsibilities	Reports to
R&KE steering committee	Strategic responsibility for HEIF and overall delivery of KE strategy	Academic council
Public and Community Engagement Committee	Responsibility for public and community engagement. This committee has the main oversight and monitoring responsibility linked to objective 1d.	R&KE steering committee

Business Engagement Committee	Responsibility for business engagement. This committee has the main oversight and monitoring responsibility for activities linked to Objective 2 and shared responsibility for objective 1a, 1b.	R&KE steering committee
Research Committee	Responsibility for research with main oversight and monitoring responsibility for activities linked to objective 1c and shared responsibility for objective 1a and 1b.	R&KE steering committee
Enterprise Panel	Responsibility for IP and technology transfer	University Planning Committee

Measure Progress: Progress against key objectives will be measured primarily though data submitted annually via the HEBCI return as well as regular monthly reporting on two high level university KPIs linked to KE income and activity. Progress against strategic targets will further be measured though strategy reviews undertaken at the mid and end points of each university strategic period.

Progress on individual programmes linked to the objectives will be measured through periodic reporting to the above committees across a range of measures, for example, a pipeline of events, progress on developing relationships with partners and stakeholders and maintenance of regular contacts, progression on number of students receiving work placements and development of plans linked to development of a new centre for inclusive enterprise and innovation. KE leads at school and college level, working closely with professional service teams in the R&KEO and Business Engagement Directorate will work to ensure that opportunities and identified progress on the delivery of key activities is captured. Progress against the objectives is also captured as part of our commitment to the Social Enterprise Gold Mark, KE Concordat, Researcher Development Concordat and the Public Engagement in Research manifesto.

Evaluating outcome and identifying lessons learnt: Outcomes will be measured against the objectives using indicators used to measure periodic progress. In addition to those measures the University will make use of tools to evaluated outcomes. For example, when evaluating against objective 1d - Public and Community Engagement, the EDGE tool will be used to evaluate outcomes at a strategic level and the use of this tool

will be encouraged to evaluate outcomes at the level of individual events and activities. As the university progresses its commitment and activities linked to the KE Concordat we will identify further tools to support evaluation of outcomes in line with our KE Concordat action plan. Lessons learned will be identified at an activity level with the relevant professional service teams working with academic colleagues and relevant KE leads. The R&KEO coordinates colleague researcher and KE training and development and will work to integrate lessons learnt into our training and development offer and though communications to colleagues. Lessons learnt will also be feedback to relevant committees to support strategic buy-in as necessary to drive forward improvements.