

RE-P-2020-03-Annex B

Harper Adams University

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.

As a small and specialist institution, Harper Adams University has strong connections with industry sectors related to extensive work that reaches from support for our educational programmes to international research, workforce development and both knowledge transfer (KT) and exchange (KE).

The University strategy for 2020-2025 stated that regarding Knowledge Exchange:

“We will establish a position in the top 10 UK agri-food institutions in the forthcoming Knowledge Exchange Framework, so as to underpin our engagement with industry, and our capacity for informative and useful education and research.”

In the recent submission to Research England's Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), the University is listed as a specialist institution covering STEM subjects. In March 2021 the KEF results were published, and Harper Adams University *was named* in the top ten per cent of institutions in the UK for 'Working with Business' and 'Research Partnerships' and scored in the top twenty per cent in the UK for work in local growth and regeneration. Following these KEF results in March 2020, the knowledge exchange objectives have been reviewed for the forthcoming period to support development in specific areas related to HEIF such as enterprise, entrepreneurship and commercialisation. The University's Internationalisation strategy for 2020-25 also created some strategic aims, namely;

- Maximise internationalisation for the benefit of teaching, learning, research, *knowledge exchange*, graduate employability and the industries we serve.

This outlines the University's plan to introduce a component in personal and professional development modules that focuses on working in a global marketplace. The University has an ongoing concern for environmental planet protection, assisting developing countries and regarding the world increasingly as a global village shared by its citizens as fairly and productively as possible. As a result of the recent changes since Brexit, the pandemic and forthcoming changes to UK Agricultural Policy, there are updates to the strategy which are more aligned to industry, curriculum, enterprise and KE.

KE Objectives revised and updated:

1. Provide funding and support for academics, researchers and students to engage with businesses, across the Agri-food supply chain, and demonstrator projects to achieve Net Zero in Agriculture through the new School for Sustainable Food and Farming (already supported by Morrisons, RAFT solutions Ltd, NFU and McDonalds).
2. Develop sustainable relationships through strategic alliances with large industry, partnerships for R&D, innovation projects, apprenticeship programmes and skills uplift resulting in exceptional placement opportunities and graduate level employability prospects for all types of students.
3. Support the growth of the agri-food/agri-tech sector regionally by working with Marches LEP, local and regional authorities, DIT, Agri EPI Centres, CIEL and Newport Innovation Park as the "landing pad" for Agri knowledge exchange to attract inward investment, jobs and skills. This will act as a springboard to help the sector become green Ag-Active!
4. Encourage and support entrepreneurship, start-up and acceleration through a series of new CPD programmes and collaborative research with innovative businesses, to grow student businesses and create a safe space for SMEs.
5. Accelerate the adoption of data science and emerging technologies into agriculture, food production and land management through demonstrator projects in enterprise, precision farming, smart farming (to include aspects of agro-ecology, regenerative agriculture and sustainable intensification), connectivity and compatibility.
6. Raise awareness with policy groups, the public sector and wider rural community by engaging in the development of curriculum for higher technical skills at level 4/5 and above for the sector in line with the Skills for Jobs white paper.

University Strategy documents mentioned above can be found in section 3 of the University's Publication Scheme at:

<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/general/governance/publication-scheme.cfm>

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)

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
Work with a range of key Industry partners (Morrisons, RAFT solutions, NFU and McDonalds) to deliver a new School for Sustainable Food and Farming supporting industry projects to deliver Net Zero Agriculture, research, projects, R & D and apprenticeship transfers to encourage skills development in supply chains and knowledge transfer.	<i>Staff involved in projects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Development Manager • Director of Research 50% • Head of Agri Business 10% • Head of Agriculture 10% • Project Leads x 4 at 10% and 2 at 20% (Root crops, veg and soft fruit, Upland systems - sheep and beef, Lowland sheep, Beef, Poultry & Pork)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IS - Supports the transition to Net Zero • Links to UN Sustainability Goals • R & D Roadmap • Embeds Education for Sustainable Development within our learning and teaching • Aligns to the challenges set out in the Agriculture Act and National Food Strategy The research and Knowledge developed in the school will support curriculum development for all HAU students with data being available from March 2022. Anticipated 15 new Apprenticeship transfer students	Objectives 1, 2 & 6	Collaboration announced March 2021. Launch 2021 and continue throughout all years to 2024-2025

<p>AGRI ERDF Programme to support SMEs in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin to develop innovative Agri-tech solutions through access to consultancy, facilities, equipment and students. Target to engage 45 SMEs (including 6 start-ups) develop 8 projects and generate continuation funding for future SME engagement.</p>	<p>1 Business Development post 50% (shared with Aston University)</p> <p>1 Innovation Management post 50%</p>	<p>supports 'ideas' pillar of IS, by enabling SME business growth</p> <p>RE objectives: To support the breadth and vision in the R&D roadmap</p> <p>To build the foundations for the new industries of tomorrow.</p> <p>IS Pillar – Place</p>	<p>Objectives 3 and 4</p>	<p>Aug 2021 – Oct 2022</p>
<p>Extension of apprenticeship, CPD and skills development to launch from Sept 2021 onwards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chartered Surveyor level 7 route Vet Technician level 5 (to support industry links with Joint Vet School) Senior Leader re-development <p><i>New for Sept 2022-23:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Advisor Agri/Hort Level 6 Environmental Practitioner Level 6 Sustainability Business Specialist Level 7 <p><i>New for Sept 2023-24</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm Manager (sustainability focus) <p>Develop a suite of CPD non-accredited courses related to sustainability using remote learning capabilities.</p>	<p>1 x Business Development Manager (BDM) 70%</p> <p>1 x Apprenticeships Manager 100%</p> <p>1 x Apprenticeship Development Officer (uplift to full time) 100%</p>	<p>OfS objectives 1-4 for student to benefit</p> <p>Anticipate circa 35 apprentices students for 2021-22</p> <p>with a further 50 apprentice students for 2022-23</p> <p>with a further 75 apprentice students for 2023-24</p> <p>with a further 100 students for 2024-25</p>	<p>Objective 2 and 6</p>	<p>Aug 2021 – Sept 2023</p>

<p>Extend the reach of the Business Development Office through restructure at Harper Adams University to support increased commercialisation, consultancy and collaborative industry-led research. Use the expertise assigned to departments and research centres, CERC and KE Leads.</p>	<p>Business Development Partner roles 10% in each dept.</p> <p>CERC Centre Manager 50%</p> <p>CERC assistant 100%</p>	<p>The BDO Partners embedded in each Dept will increase the visibility of our research to industry and vice-versa bringing industry, especially SMEs, to academics to develop R&D projects and opportunities</p> <p>Success will be assessed through the role out of Dept KPIs focussing on industry engagement activities and projects developed / funded per FTE</p>	<p>Objectives 2 and 6</p>	<p>August 2021 – July 2025</p>
<p>Business support for existing KTP project (Bucher) with development of two additional KTP projects agreed and submitted by 2022</p>	<p>Administrator for KTP 10%</p> <p>100% KTP Associate</p> <p>10% KTP Academic support</p>	<p>1 MSc student</p>	<p>Objective 5</p>	<p>Jan 2021-Jan 2023</p> <p>2023- 2025</p>
<p>Collaborative Business Development campaign and PR approach for Newport Innovation Park to attract Agri-tech business to the area using the LA/DIT “Landing Pad” approach to fill first phase units promoting Telford as an HPO.</p>	<p>Business Development Manager 30%</p>	<p>IS Pillar – Place</p> <p>Also supports ‘ideas’ pillar of IS, by enabling SME business growth</p> <p>Supports Marches LEP Recovery plan</p>	<p>Objectives 3, 4 and 6</p>	<p>Oct 2021 – Oct 2022</p>

<p>Entrepreneurial Activity programme: Follow on Mentoring support for scheme participants throughout 2021.</p> <p>Physical and digital Enterprise offering with programmes of support from basic business start-up to accelerators. Workshops and events will run regularly to support aspirations around innovation, entrepreneurship and business start-up.</p>	<p>10% of Business Dept. Team Roles</p> <p>Business Development Support (claimed as 50% of AGRI)</p>	<p>supports 'ideas' pillar of IS, by enabling SME business growth. RE/OfS objective for students to benefit, anticipate circa 10 students will be directly involved each year.</p>	<p>Objective 4</p>	<p>Aug 2021 – July 2022</p> <p>July 2022 onwards</p>
<p>Secure £2m new Collaborative research projects with large and small industry partners related to Innovation and Technology Transfer, funded by Innovate UK or other National schemes for agri-tech Connectivity and technology themes.</p>	<p>10% of Head of Engineering</p> <p>100% Business Development Manager - NCPF</p> <p>30% Principal Lecturer, Engineering</p> <p>30% Professor in Agri Tech</p> <p>20% Professor in Agri Tech Modelling</p>	<p>supports 'ideas' pillar of IS, by enabling SME business growth</p> <p>Industrial Strategy - Clean Growth</p>	<p>Objectives 2, 5 and 6</p>	<p>August 2021 to July 2024</p>
<p>KE Conferences</p> <p>4th Online Symposium in AgriTech Economics for Sustainable Futures will take place on 20/21st September 2021.</p> <p>Soil & Water conference Dec 2021</p>	<p>10% Professor in Agri Tech Modelling</p> <p>Soil & Water Mgmt. Centre</p>	<p>Supports Net Zero and R & D Roadmap</p>	<p>Objective 4 and 5</p>	<p>Sept 2021</p> <p>Dec 2021</p>
<p>Increase the £s value of Student Industrial Scholarships</p>	<p>10% Development Trust team</p>	<p>Employability</p>	<p>Objective 2</p>	<p>May each year ongoing</p>

Ensure the Student Placement number / duration returns to pre COVID Levels so all students receive industry support	20% Of University wide placement mgmt.	KE and employability post COVID	Objective 2	August 2021 to July 2025
<p>Development of Strategic Alliances</p> <p>Grow and further develop Industry-led strategic alliances aligned to sustainable agriculture - These include Alltech (livestock health and efficiency); ABP (sustainability of beef production); Saputo (Dairy product development). We aim to further develop similar strategic alliances.</p>	<p>Chair in Sustainable Beef Production 0.5% FTE (Prof Jude Capper) supported by ABP strategic alliance</p> <p>Prof. Liam Sinclair (0.2 FTE) – Lead of current Alltech strategic alliance</p> <p>Prof. Dawn Arnold (Director of Research)Development of further strategic alliances</p>	<p>HAU already has strong strategic alliances with industry which allocate R&D budget.</p> <p>2 PDRA posts and staff time</p> <p>10 student placements per year</p>	Objective 2	2021 ongoing

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.

At the time of this submission, the University is in the process of choosing a new Vice Chancellor which may have a bearing on future strategic planning after July 2021.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) is the lead for Research and Knowledge Exchange. The Chief Financial Officer leads on strategic Business Development across the University and is currently working with the Senior Leadership Team to develop new operational plans for industry engagement and business development. The Academic Strategy and Management Group (ASMG), comprising Heads of department, Directors of Teaching and Research and other KE leads from departments and services, meet monthly to maximise communications around new project developments, collaborative research and KE bids, with an input to HEIF strategy and KE Concordat action planning. New KPIs have been developed to identify the breadth of activity across each Department in the University and these are reported on to ASMG regularly and to Governors annually. These Department KPIs include level of industry engagement; project development and funding secured per FTE. Impact of the research/collaboration is also monitored through KPIs associated with peer reviewed publications, products launched, IP developed and policy influenced.

The Research & KE committee meets quarterly and is chaired by the Director of Research, supported by the Research Office co-ordinator and attended by research and KE leads.

As a key overarching HEIF project, the Deputy Vice Chancellor is leading a new partnership supported by Morrisons to deliver the School for Sustainable Food and

Farming. This critically-needed collaboration which will support the transition to a more sustainable food system delivering to both human and planetary health. Initial targets will be centred on achieving net-zero in UK agriculture by 2030 and will start with projects based at the Harper Adams University Farm and through a range of partnership supply chain activities in each year. The ambition of the school includes wider aspects of sustainability including biodiversity, animal welfare, rural community support, green energy production and farm profitability. The school will support and further develop production systems and research geared towards more sustainable farming. Four main themes have been identified with Sub groups and project leads already identified to work in subject teams across the University: i) research projects to realise sustainable agriculture; ii) upskilling the current work force - short courses and apprenticeships; iii) upskilling the future work force – curriculum development and placements; iv) policy influence – advising development of national and international policy around sustainable agriculture and land use (e.g. National Food Strategy and NFU Net Zero). The collaboration with industry is also leveraging investment and research funding as well as transfer funding for apprenticeships to encourage supply chains to work more closely in Agriculture.

i. Managing HEIF spending

Initially all HEIF projects must be approved by the Senior Leadership Team before they proceed. A financial approval is also required from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). A Project based approach is co-ordinated and managed by each project team signed off by the Head of Department and Project leads will meet with the finance team for budgetary support and financial reporting.

Quarterly reviews are completed by the Business Develop Manager (BDM) against the HEIF plan to report at Research and KE committee meetings. Annual reporting is completed in collaboration with the finance team to review progress and spend on all projects. The BDM reports weekly to the CFO and updates on business development activities and outputs including numbers of engagements/apprenticeships/KE requests.

The finance team run regular reports and update with the BDM in case of staff changes, project updates and closures. Heads of Department report to the DVC on projects and KPIs through ASMG meetings.

ii. Measuring progress

Progress is measured in a variety of ways in relation to outputs or outcomes depending on the project, funder's requirements and industry feedback. The BDM reports the findings to the CFO, ASMG and Research & KE committee meetings, following regular updates with Business Development colleagues across the University. These reports are then collated by the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer as part of a report to Governor's against KE, employer engagement and research objectives. Departmental KPI reports are an output of these meetings

and are used to encourage further success and achievement against the identified targets.

Departments also hold team meetings, project and academic group meetings to share practise and support development and gather data. KTP projects meet with KTN advisers regularly. NCPF hold a quarterly benefits review on projects to maintain progress against outputs and outcomes. Strategic alliances also have specific meetings focusing on future targets, deliverables and impact. The alliances are supported by a lead PI (academic) and Business Development Officer and include: Alltech, ABP, Morrisons and Saputo currently.

External meetings with BDMs across projects are held with regional public sector partners on a regular basis (such as monthly Agri-Tech catch up meetings), to discuss new leads, engagements with business contacts, successful project developments and potential collaborations for the future including industry re-locations.

iii. Evaluating outcomes

Reports are completed by project leads, to ensure that specific outcomes and outputs are evaluated. These may also be turned into case studies, PR pieces, newsletters, research seminars or reports for internal and external collaborators. There may be opportunity for conference papers and evaluations are used in other follow-on bidding rounds and competitions for further funding. Each project will have specific requirements of the funder for evaluation purposes. The university uses a system called Work Tribe to manage project performance and uses finance dashboards from Innovate UK.

iv. Identifying lessons learned.

In addition, to the groups and committees listed above, the University has a number of internal knowledge networks who meet to discuss their project and progress, i.e. the KTP Associate attends the interdisciplinary engineering group to talk about projects and progress, to find knowledge-based solutions to problems from colleagues across the University. Research papers or summaries may be produced. Project leads identify areas of strength and opportunity in order that we learn from experience in order to ensure success in future projects. Feedback is gathered from Industry via evaluation surveys, summaries, reports and meeting minutes, held by each project team. An annual Staff Learning and Teaching conference provides another opportunity for sharing good practise. Learning in previous years has identified a need for due diligence, to design and test effectively, to identify outcomes that can be delivered, and not be encouraged to do additional work for partners outside the boundaries of the scope, without re-addressing the outputs, IP and finance agreements.