

Job Description

Role Title:	Research Excellence Manager
School / Dept:	N/A
Directorate:	Research and Knowledge Exchange
Reference:	MPF4264
Grade:	8
Full or Part time:	Full time
Hours:	1.0 FTE / 36.25
Reports to:	Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange
Responsible for:	Research Excellence Team

Overview

The Research Excellence Manager provides specialist expertise and institutional leadership in research excellence, with particular responsibility for the University's Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission, research impact strategy, and research and knowledge exchange data analytics.

The postholder will shape institutional approaches to research excellence, culture and impact, influencing strategic priorities and decision-making across the University. Working with senior academic and professional services colleagues, the postholder will interpret complex and evolving external requirements, exercising substantial professional judgement to develop policy, strategy, processes and systems that strengthen research performance and maximise the benefits arising from the University's research.

Role Purpose

Working across the University, the postholder will lead the planning, development and delivery of the University's REF submission, translating complex external requirements into effective institutional policy, processes and systems. This work will include providing authoritative advice and evidence-based recommendations to senior leaders and academic colleagues on REF requirements, research performance, research impact, and areas of risk and opportunity. The postholder will play a key role in influencing institutional priorities, resource decisions, and the development of research strategy and policy.

Principal Duties & Responsibilities

- Lead the University's institutional planning, preparation and operational delivery for the Research Excellence Framework, ensuring a coordinated, compliant and high-quality submission within externally prescribed requirements and timescales.
- Act as an institutional expert on national research assessment policy (including REF requirements and guidance), translating complex and evolving external requirements into institutional policies, processes, systems and guidance.
- Provide authoritative advice and recommendations to senior University leaders, Faculty leadership teams, REF leads and academic colleagues on REF strategy, eligibility, submission requirements, data quality, performance and risk in order to maximise institutional performance.
- Develop and maintain the University's overall REF delivery plan, governance arrangements, assurance processes and timetable, identifying dependencies and proactively managing significant risks to successful institutional delivery.
- Lead institutional REF modelling and scenario planning, working with senior academic leaders to provide robust evidence to inform strategic decisions relating to the University's submission.
- Take strategic responsibility for the coordination of activity across Faculties and Professional Services to ensure effective institutional preparation for REF, establishing clear responsibilities, standards, milestones and escalation routes.
- Provide institutional quality assurance relating to REF data and evidence, ensuring the completeness, accuracy and integrity of information used to inform decision-making and the final submission.
- Oversee the University's research and knowledge exchange data analytics capability, ensuring that relevant insights support evidence-based decision-making and the delivery of institutional research priorities.
- Lead sophisticated analysis of research performance using internal and external datasets, including publication, citation, research income and other research indicators.
- Translate complex quantitative and qualitative information into clear insights, recommendations and briefings for senior decision-makers, identifying emerging trends, performance issues, risks and opportunities.

- Provide strategic leadership for the University's research impact agenda, developing and implementing institutional approaches that deliver continuous improvement in the generation, development, capture and demonstration of impact arising from the University's research.
- Champion a culture in which research impact is recognised, planned, evaluated and celebrated, working with colleagues across the University to increase understanding of how impact contributes to the University's mission.
- Lead the development, implementation and capture of appropriate evidence and indicators through which the University can understand and demonstrate the quality, vitality and sustainability of its research and knowledge exchange environment.
- Prepare high-quality papers, reports and recommendations for University committees, governance groups and senior leadership, translating complex evidence into clear options for decision and advising on the implications, risks and opportunities associated with alternative approaches.
- Lead the development and implementation of designated elements of institutional research strategy, policy and planning, providing specialist strategic advice on research excellence, assessment, impact and performance.
- Provide effective leadership and line management for the Research Excellence team, setting priorities and objectives, managing performance and workload and supporting colleagues' professional development.
- Represent the University at relevant external networks, sector groups and events, contributing to professional and sector discussions and ensuring that emerging developments are interpreted and translated into appropriate institutional responses.

- **Generic Duties**

- Perform any other duties appropriate to the grade as may be required by the Head of School/Head of Division etc.
- Comply with the personal health and safety responsibilities specified in the University Health and Safety policy.
- To engage with the University's commitment to put our students first and deliver services which are customer orientated, represent value for money and contribute to the financial and environmental sustainability of the University when undertaking all duties and aspects of the role.
- Advance equality, support our work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination, foster an inclusive study and work environment for students, staff and visitors in accordance with our public sector equality duties and university policy.

This role detail is a guide to the work you will initially be required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. It does not form part of your Contract of Employment.

Person specification follows on next page

Person Specification

The successful candidate should demonstrate the following, which are 'Essential' (E) or 'Desirable' (D)

Qualifications

1. A degree or equivalent professional qualification (E)
2. A Post Graduate Research qualification (D)

Background and Experience

3. Direct experience of contributing to or managing an institutional REF submission. (E)
4. Considerable experience of using insights from data to inform strategy and policy (E)
5. Experience of developing and implementing institutional policies, frameworks and guidance, and leading significant improvements to complex processes across organisational boundaries (E)
6. Experience of developing research performance dashboards or analytical reporting using business intelligence tools (D)
7. Experience of working with University committees (D)

8. Knowledge

9. Substantial knowledge and understanding of the UK higher education research environment (E)
10. Detailed knowledge of research assessment and the Research Excellence Framework, including the ability to interpret complex external policy and regulatory requirements and identify their institutional implications (E)
11. Substantial knowledge and understanding of research impact policy and practice within UK higher education, extending beyond the requirements of REF (E)
12. Understanding of research performance information, research metrics and the principles underpinning responsible research assessment. (E)
13. High level of familiarity with Research Information Systems used within Higher Education (e.g. Worktribe) (D)
14. Understanding of modern data analytics platforms and business intelligence tools, e.g. Power BI, Databricks, Microsoft Fabric, and Microsoft Dynamics (D)
15. Knowledge of the wider UK research funding and policy environment. (D)

16. Skills and Competencies

17. Highly developed analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to interpret complex information, identify material issues and formulate evidence-based recommendations (E)
18. Excellent written communication skills, including the ability to prepare authoritative reports, briefings, guidance and committee papers for senior audiences (E)
19. Excellent interpersonal, communication and influencing skills, with the ability to establish credibility with senior academic and professional stakeholders (E)

- 20. Ability to exercise substantial professional judgement and autonomy, including determining appropriate approaches where established precedent or guidance is incomplete (E)
- 21. Ability to lead complex projects across organisational boundaries (E)
- 22. Strong planning and organisational skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities and deliver high-profile activity to fixed external deadlines (E)
- 23. Advanced ability to work with complex datasets and analytical information and communicate their significance to non-specialist audiences (E)
- 24. High level of accuracy and attention to detail, together with the ability to maintain oversight of broader strategic objectives (E)