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| **RESEARCH IMPACT AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY** |
| **Department** | Research Office, Directorate |
| **Author** | Research Impact Managers |
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| I have carried out an equality impact assessment screening to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality.  | ü |
| I have considered the impact of the Policy/Strategy/Procedure *(delete as appropriate)* on the Welsh language and Welsh language provision within the University. | ü |

# **RESEARCH IMPACT AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

## Key Purpose of Strategy

Research Impact is defined by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) as the “*demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy*”. That is, the measurable benefits that research has outside of academia to society, the economy, or the environment.

This strategy seeks to support researchers in developing research outcomes that fit the needs of the local and global community, businesses, and society, thus embedding impact that has reach and makes a real-world significant difference, into the research culture at Wrexham University.

Our Research Impact and Communication strategy sets out a framework that will bolster the University’s Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 submission, with the aim of increasing our Quality-Related (QR) funding allocation. The communication methods that will be used to deliver the strategy are also detailed.

## Alignment to Vison & Strategy and other Supporting Strategies

The Research Impact and Communication Strategy aligns to the University’s Vision and Strategy 2025 on a number of priorities and actions:

**Conducting ‘Research that Transforms’** is central to the Research Impact Strategy, and cultivating trusted research that addresses issues and provides benefits outside of academia.

The Research Impact Strategy aims to **grow outputs and income associated with research,** with successful REF2029 outcomes and increased QR funding allocation being a success measure.

Creating an engaged and confident research culture across the university to **increase the visibility, impact, and value of our research.** This includes utilising and growing academic and industrial research partnerships and collaborations to deliver impact.

Key to the Research Impact Strategy is **having clear knowledge transfer and exploitation actions and outputs that benefit within and beyond academia.** Supporting researchers to identify, measure and communicate the real-world impact and benefits of research in the best way possible.

Other related strategies:

* Communication Strategy
* Research Strategy
* FAST and FSLS Research Strategies
* Civic Mission Partnership Strategy
* Enterprise Strategy
* People Strategy
* Research Excellence Strategy

## Introduction and Context:

Our Research Impact and Communication Strategy concerns developing research activity, the outcomes and impact of the research, and the visibility and value of those outcomes. This focus is shaped by several internal and external factors:

 External drivers:

1. Meeting REF requirements and objectives for both reputational and financial benefits
2. The expectation that research is internationally excellent, making a difference to those that research makes a difference to those outside of academia, demonstrating benefit and value
3. National policies, including the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015
4. International policies, including the United Nations’ (UN) Sustainable Development Goals
5. Funding opportunities to sustain research
6. External engagement to raise the profile of research at the university, garner trust, seek opportunities, and further embed the research culture.

Internal drivers:

1. Increase the number of research-active staff, as academic staff at the university have teaching *and* research contracts
2. Support the progression of research supervisors
3. Requirement to undertake *research that transforms*, as part of the university vision and strategy
4. Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP) application process and subsequent implementation if successful
5. Funding opportunities to sustain research, including increased QR funding
6. Embed knowledge of Research Impact across the University
7. Enable staff to plan their intended impacts from the start of their projects
8. Identify potential impact case studies for REF 2029
9. Develop staff research expertise.

## Priority Aims

1. Attract positive attention to our research, researchers, and Wrexham University, thus, advertising its value.
2. Increase research engagement and collaborations with industry/external partners and academics, producing mutual and impactful benefits
3. Increase researcher engagement with various publics related to the research area, maximising public impact and benefit
4. Achieve more QR funding from REF 2029
5. Strengthen the research culture and environment
6. Increase the university’s understanding and awareness of Research Impact and how it is measured
7. Maintaining and developing our role as an active partner in the Wrexham City region.

## Priority Actions

1. Increase research and researcher presence on social media and the University website.
2. Staff to consult with external contributors whilst planning new research projects to increase Research Impact opportunities at the start.
3. Further enhance communication between researchers and the Research Office so support can be provided, training and professional opportunities increased and promote research projects and events to all staff.
4. Researchers to have impact plans for their projects
5. Implementing REF sessions that include Research Impact, targeted at researchers and postgraduate students
6. Set up a central record system within the Research Office to track ongoing research activity, aid and support impact planning, and to drive awareness of the university's research and innovation activities
7. Further enhance and maintain relationships with the University Civic Mission and Enterprise teams in order to build regional networks, collaboration opportunities, and knowledge exchange potentials.

## Success Criteria:

Key Performance indicators:

* Increase followers and engagement on Social Media
* The external facing website showcases every researcher and their research, with examples from each research lab and research group/centre
* Number of collaborative agreements and/or joint bids with partners
* Number of collaborative post-project publications and activities for impact and measuring the impact
* Increased number of researchers collaborating, working with, and applying for funding with external academics
* Research Groups/Centres/Institutes running their own research events
* All researchers have either links to subject associations, learned societies, publishers, journals, engage in advanced scholarship, or have other academic achievements included in the RDAP criteria
* Number of research outputs published
* Increased engagement with the Public Lecture series and other external engagement events
* Increased attendance at Research Office events and training including Open House, Research Impact sessions, and Coffee Mornings
* Increased visits to the Resource Office intranet pages relating to impact and increased download/use of resources.
* Research Office to hold a central summary of researcher outputs in an accessible format (i.e., so anyone can understand it) that be used for marketing/media purposes
* An established central record of ongoing research across the university to be held within the Research Office that can be used for impact planning development, identifying public engagement opportunities, and promotion of university wide research activities
* Number of networking and collaborative opportunities for knowledge exchange as an active partner within Wrexham, fostered through enhanced relations with the University Civic Mission and Enterprise teams

## Risks

1. **Relevant Corporate Risk**
2. **Additional Risks**

Research Profile

Financial

Partnerships

Student Recruitment

Culture change

## University Responsible Group(s) that monitors and provides support

Research Committee

## Action Plan

See attached.