The most valuable possession is knowledge
**Introduction**

We regard research as fundamental to our Mission. We value research and advanced scholarship for their own sake and recognise them as essential to the provision of a dynamic, stimulating learning environment and critical in underpinning high-quality, leading-edge knowledge transfer services to businesses, industry and the professions. This document represents the fourth iteration of the University's Research Strategy and it continues to be informed by, and closely related to, the Corporate Strategic Plan (2012-2017) and, in particular, the following agreed targets expressed therein.

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<th>Corporate Objective</th>
<th>Corporate Target</th>
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<tr>
<td>Improving the Sustainability of Research Activity</td>
<td>Increase the average research income per academic staff to £10K by the end of the planning period.</td>
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<td>Improving Quality and Impact of Research</td>
<td>50% of research activity returned to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) to be world leading or internationally excellent</td>
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<td>Using Performance Review as a Strategic Tool</td>
<td>100% of academic and support staff to have annual performance reviews by the end of the planning period.</td>
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Since the publication of the first research strategy in 1999, the University has been primarily concerned with developing the research base and extending research culture. The objectives have largely been achieved as evidenced by:

- The attainment of Research Degree Awarding Powers in 2009;
- A fourfold expansion in volume of annual research income between 1999/00 and 2012/13;
- An eightfold expansion in the annual number of research students between 1999/00 and 2012/13;
- The majority of academic staff engaged in research and/or advanced scholarship;
- The submission of focused returns to the 2001 and 2008 Research Assessment Exercises, and to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework.

To ensure continued enhancement of this profile the University must respond strategically to significant and challenging developments as they arise in the external research environment. These on-going environmental challenges include:

- A greater focus on the impact of research outside of academia;
- The quality threshold for QR funding raised to minimum of three star;
- A shift in funding priorities towards large-scale collaborative/multidisciplinary projects;
- A diminution and concentration of available research council funding.
Achieving this strategy will require sustained focus on, and investment in, those areas of research which are, or have the potential to be, recognised as internationally excellent or world leading. A greater emphasis will be placed on strengthening the research base through the recruitment and retention of talented academics, and the need for researchers to contribute to the design and delivery of high-quality contemporary curricula, and engagement in forward-looking knowledge transfer activities. It will also be necessary to develop and apply a more consciously thought-out risk framework to guide the pursuit of research.

Cardiff Metropolitan University respects and, through this Strategy, supports academic freedom, seeing benefit in academic staff determining for themselves the areas in which they wish to undertake research. The University is, however, best able to support research which aligns both with this Strategy and the discipline-based research priorities of each School, and we will prioritise our finite resources accordingly. The Research and Enterprise Investment Fund is deployed to support those activities deemed best placed to underpin strategic objectives. Those applications which are located at the interface between research and enterprise, and which consequently have the greatest likelihood of curriculum or commercial impact, will be given greatest priority for support. Colleagues are therefore encouraged to consider the research priorities of the University and their School or Unit when developing their research interests.

Supporting research excellence whilst simultaneously promoting an inclusive approach to research engagement will require a transparent approach to agreeing research objectives, and agreeing how research activity will be accommodated alongside teaching, enterprise and other duties. It will also require a better measurement of the influence and effect of research, both in terms of its potential and immediate applications and also in terms of its contribution to enriching the student experience and attaining the University’s enterprise objectives.

Colleagues will be supported in rising to the challenges posed in this Strategy through the continuing development of a dynamic, scholarly, high-performance culture where creativity and innovation thrive. This will be achieved through developing a working environment that nurtures emerging researchers, promotes collaboration and is underpinned by: professional skills development; performance evaluation; transparent work-load allocation; improved mechanisms for collecting and analysing information on academic staff activity; staff recruitment, talent management and succession planning; mechanisms for recognising, rewarding and celebrating success; and a commitment to equality, inclusivity and the celebration of diversity.

We will continue to invest in the repair, refurbishment, replacement and acquisition of our equipment and facilities, creating an environment that facilitates collaboration and innovation. We will host frequent conferences and seminars as a contribution to the relevant disciplines and subject fields. Research and Enterprise Services will continue to
ensure that all stakeholders can benefit from our research, providing comprehensive support including the development of funding applications, the protection of intellectual property and the promotion of knowledge transfer.

The targets and mechanisms identified in the Strategy are based on the known research landscape. Changes to the landscape may need to be taken into account whilst implementing the Strategy. For example, at the time of writing, the University has finalised its submission to - but does not know the outcome of - the REF 2014. Therefore, a detailed analysis of performance will be undertaken following publication of REF outcomes.

The Strategy is supported by an Action Plan which will be refreshed on an annual basis.

The Strategy is composed of three key themes:

1. Research Outputs;
2. Research Impact;

Each theme is accompanied by:

a) A contextual summary;
b) A small number of key targets;
c) A description of the primary mechanisms that will be used to facilitate the achievement of the targets.
RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Access to a diminishing pot of public research funding is becoming increasingly determined by the quality of research outputs. Cardiff Met will continue to take a strategic approach to ensuring that its research outputs are characterised by their originality, significance and rigour. Equally, greater emphasis will be placed upon enhancing the financial sustainability of its research activities.

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<td>Improve the quality profiles of work submitted to the Research Excellence Framework(^1).</td>
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<td>All research to be captured in the Academic Staff Profiles Information System before the end of the planning period.</td>
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We will primarily, but not exclusively, achieve the targets through:

1. Engaging Schools and PDR in the setting of appropriate research targets and undertaking an annual audit exercise;
2. Implementing a systematic and transparent approach to agreeing individual research objectives;
3. Maintaining a transparent, selective approach to the allocation of resource, focusing on supporting potentially world leading or internationally excellent activity;
4. Identifying and supporting research active staff who were not included in the REF 2014 submission, but have the potential to be returned for the next exercise;
5. Promoting opportunities to undertake high-profile research collaboration with global partners through EU Framework and other competitive funding streams.

\(^1\) The definition of this target will be developed when the 2014 REF outcomes are known.
RESEARCH IMPACT

The University is committed to extending the reach and significance of its research endeavours, expanding and increasing funding sources, and ensuring that outputs have the potential to make a positive impact upon the economy, society and culture.

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<td>Prepare sufficient viable impact case studies to exceed the minimum number required by the Research Excellence Framework by at least two per Unit of Assessment.</td>
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<td>To grow collaborative research income from £1.1M in 2011/12 to £1.5M in 2018/19, and to deliver an average of 50 consultancy contracts a year during the planning period².</td>
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We will primarily, but not exclusively, achieve the targets through:

1. Enhancing the quality of our impactful research outputs;
2. Engaging in research that contributes to the development and delivery of high-quality, relevant curricula;
3. Continuing to develop our open-access research repository;
4. Working closely with partners to develop new products, services and solutions linked to our research;
5. Promoting and disseminating our research more effectively;
6. Maximising the value of our intellectual property.

² There were 39 in 2011/12 and 46 in 2010/11.
RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Successful implementation of this Strategy requires that researchers are able to pursue their interests in a sustainable environment that supports and equips them to be adaptable and flexible. The University recognises and values the contributions made by researchers and will continue to promote and enhance well-developed mechanisms for career progression. The University will place greater emphasis upon supporting and furthering equality and diversity across all research activities.

It is also necessary to further enhance the quality of the postgraduate experience, and to ensure that the University’s research cultures both benefit from, and contribute to, the enhancement of research and enterprise.

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<td>All researchers to have an agreed personal development plan before the end of the planning period.</td>
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<td>Achieve Athena Swan Bronze Award before 2016/17 and thereafter work incrementally towards Silver.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To achieve and maintain an improved profile as measured in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey.</td>
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We will primarily, but not exclusively, achieve the targets through:

1. Developing strategic networks of influence regionally, nationally and internationally;
2. Addressing gender and other inequalities by removing both personal and structural barriers to sustainable academic career progression;
3. Implementing structured and consistent approaches that encourage staff to share responsibility and pro-actively engage in their personal and career development;
4. Adopting best practice in respect of talent management, staff retention and targeted recruitment;
5. Enhancing the quality and sustainability of research student supervision and supporting the environment for research students;
6. Examining the potential benefits of a Graduate School for research students.