



UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

| Policy: UJ Research Structures | |
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| Custodian | DVC: Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library |
| Responsible Division | |
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| Amendments | |
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| Review Date | |
| Related documents | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">(UJ documents (e.g. Policies, Regulations, Guidelines, Contracts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UJ Research Policy and Strategy • UJ Research Committee Charter • Report on Structural Definitions adopted by other HEIs | <p style="text-align: center;">Other (e.g. Legislation, DoE and HEQC directives and guidelines)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRF IRDP; • NRF TRDP; • DST Strategic Plan. |
| <p>Stakeholders affected by this document (units and divisions who should be familiar with it):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Executives; • Executive Deans/Directors; • all academic employees; • Directors and Heads of Departments of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ academic units; ○ academic administration support services; ○ service and support divisions; | |
| Website address of this document | |

1. PREAMBLE

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) inherited several disparate research entities and structures from its legacy institutions. As a result, there is a need to formalize research structures and link their operations to institutional strategic plans. Formally-established research structures play an important role in directing a focused research agenda and enhancing the image of the institution. They also play an important role in attracting external research funds. Given this, it is essential to provide clear directives concerning the functioning of existing and the establishment of new research structures. The current policy on research structures is formulated according to the most prevalent practices in the South African Higher Education sector, and integrates historic and present National Research Fund (NRF) and Department of Science and Technology (DST) definition and frameworks.

2. DEFINITIONS

In regards to the concept of Research Unit or group, the stipulation above mean that the term refers to a researcher or team of researchers in or between departments or faculties in reference to a specific project or strategic domain of research. The research unit or group falls outside the structures defined in Table 1 and the governance of the research unit or group falls within the domain of faculty structures. 'Centre of Excellence' is a title assigned from outside the UJ; and, furthermore, it will not assign the title of 'Centre of Excellence' to any internal research structure(s).

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a systematic approach to the naming and establishment of research structures and create an objective basis for comparison across the range of research structures in the UJ. Simultaneously, it provides a guideline for the classification of the existing and future UJ research structures.

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all faculties and relevant division at the University.

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 No university research activities, groups or entities may assume either of the following titles: Research Centre; Centre of Excellence; Niche Area; or Institute without seeking approval in terms of this policy.
- 5.2 All university research activities or structures existing at the time of approval of this policy by Senate who denote themselves utilizing either of the terms listed above will be reviewed to examine the extent to which they align with the stipulations of the Policy Document; the timetable and operational roll-out of this review will be formulated by the DVC: Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library and the University Research Committee (URC) in

consultation with faculties and the relevant divisions.

- 5.3 The review will express an opinion on the extent to which the existing research structures align with the stipulations of the Policy, and the URC will use this review to recommend an appropriate title for the specific research structure, or an action plan to address a possible mismatch between the title of a university entity and this policy.
- 5.4 All future research activities or structures that would wish to utilize one of the terms mentioned above, or any other structural term similarly denoting an organizational entity, will need to submit to the URC a rationale for the specific term of choice.
- 5.5 In exceptional instances and on the basis of arguments or existing contractual obligations put forward by the respective research group, activity or entity the URC may decide to recommend to Senate approval of a term or title, even where the research activity, group or entity does not align with the provisions of the Policy, provided the URC identifies and presents cogent reasons for such a recommendation and provided such a deviation is an exception to the rule.
- 5.6 All URC recommendations on the titles of research activities or structures, or on action plans as mentioned above, will be submitted to Senate for consideration and approval.
- 5.7 Once a University research activity or entity has received approval to utilize either of the terms listed above, it retains the right to that use unless a subsequent review suggests otherwise; such reviews must be conducted at least once every four years, unless the URC determines a shorter period.
- 5.8 Irrespective of the substance or timing of any prior approval by Senate to any research activity, group or entity for the use of either of the titles listed above, Senate may at any time withdraw such permission on the recommendation of the URC.
- 5.9 All research are in the first instance members of staff and therefore linked to a specific faculty or division, and that the research entities consequently are faculty or division structures that operate and report within established faculties or divisions; except for joint research entities where the Director reports to a Board.
- 5.10 The management structure for a Research Center need to be determined by a single charter, but at the same time retain flexibility taking into account all relevant factors such as inter-disciplinary research, focus, function, etc.

6. CLASSIFICATION OF UJ RESEARCH STRUCTURES

The definition that was developed by the NRF were used to formulate the descriptive definition for a Research Niche Area and a Research Centre, while the definition of a research Institute was strongly informed by approaches adopted in other South African higher Education Institutions. Accordingly, the definitions set out in Table 1 will be used as guidelines by the URC in considering whether to allow the use of either of the terms by a University research or academic entity, and will inform the URC's recommendation to Senate in this regard. The guidelines set forth would apply to existing and future research entities with provision for a gradual compliance. Also, the classification allows faculties and divisions to exercise flexibility in areas that might not be practically feasible to attain the stipulated requirements.

The following classification of research structures is adopted:

- Research Niche Area
- Research Centre
- Centre of Excellence
- Research Institute

APPROVED BY SENATE ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2014

Guidelines for the CLASSIFICATION OF UJ Research Structures (revised August 2014)

| DIMENSION | RESEARCH NICHE AREA | RESEARCH CENTRE | CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE | RESEARCH INSTITUTE |
|---------------|--|---|--|--|
| DESCRIPTION | Research Niche Areas (Research Focus Areas) A focussed collaborative effort focussed on specific research, educational or community outreach activities, generally with participants within or across departments. The major focus of a niche area is to develop a specific area of research or related activity to a national competence – and should lead to an intellectual environment that brings people together and focus resources to achieve specific goals. It is expected therefore, that Niche areas will grow into Research Centres in about three to five years. | Research Centres: A focussed collaborative effort focussed on specific research, educational or community outreach activities, generally with participants across departments. The research area of the centre must be aligned to the UJ's Institutional research plan and vision. A research centre will be reviewed periodically and continuation will be subject to satisfactory performance. The Research activities of a Research Centre are already enjoying national recognition. | Centres of Excellence; Established under NRF Centres of Excellence programme – and including some internal initiatives, to a call for proposal, proposal evaluation and subsequent award. These are generally designed to take the research from national excellence to international recognition. These will run for a period specified in the funding agreement. | Research Institutes: A larger integrative unit that seeks to achieve specific research, educational or community outreach goals, generally with participants across faculties. The focus on a centre is externally supported research and related activities, and fully funded from external sources. A Research Institute will have a term of five years – thereafter, subject to satisfactory performance may be renewed for a further five years. |
| ESTABLISHMENT | Application submitted to the Executive Dean, Recommend to URC, approval and sign-off by the DVC: Research, Innovation Postgraduate Studies and the Library. Availability of funding will be taken into consideration at the approval stage | Application submitted to the Executive Dean, approved by URC and Noted by Senate | Following a call for proposals, Application submitted to the Executive Dean, DVC: Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library. Discussed at URC and Finally approved by MEC | Application submitted to the Executive Deans concerned, the DVC Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library. Discussed at URC and Finally approved by MEC. |
| GOVERNANCE | The Niche area is led by a Niche Area Leader who is a faculty member [and still serve the faculty in terms of Teaching, Administration, etc.]. The Niche area Leader's Appointment is approved by the DVC: Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library. | The centre is led by a Director (who shall be appointed on a five year contract,). The director shall reports to the Executive Dean. The Director, who may be a faculty member, with faculty responsibilities, may receive a Centre Director Allowance (yet to be approved, comparable to a Head of Department allowance). If the Director is full-time, then will remunerated as below. Any other arrangement must be approved by the DVC as the establishment and approval of the centre. | The centre is led by a Full Time Director (who will be appointed on a three or five year contract, approved by the DVC: Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library) who reports to the Executive Dean /or DVC: or any other arrangements as specified in the funding agreement. | The Institute is led by a Full Time Director (who will be appointed on a three or five year contract, approved by DVC) who reports to the DVC: Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Studies and the Library. A Board consisting of up to 8 members (which may include up to 25% external members), chaired by the Executive Dean or DVC: (RPL) may be appointed. |
| FUNDING | Niche areas will be funded on a three year cycle. Further extensions will be based on performance. A further 1 or 2 year funding may be considered depending on specific motivation and review of progress. Funding will be requested, from URC, in line with normal URC funding criteria. | The major focus on a centre is externally supported research –The Director's remuneration and the Centre's Full time staff will be covered from the Centre's budget (from the faculty or generally externally sourced). Top-up funding may be requested from URC for a three year cycle (subject | The Director's remuneration and the Centre's Full time staff will be funded from the Centre's budget (externally sourced). The centres will generally be 100% externally funded or receive a special award from the University. | The Director's remuneration, the Centre's Full time staff and running costs will be funded from the Institutes' budget sourced externally. If funding is internally sourced, the total funding over 5 years will be approved before the |

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| | | to satisfactory progress, as reviewed annually). The funding will be limited to running costs, temporary (research support) staff and local travel. | | Institute is established or extended. There will generally be no funding from URC. |
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