# Role description for Director of Research

**Overview**

The Director of Research is a senior academic leadership role within a department.  The role supports the strategic development of the department's research activity, in order to achieve research excellence in relation to research quality, intensity and impact.  In this the Director of Research supports the Head of Department as a member of the department's leadership team in achieving the department's vision and strategic objectives.  The Director of Research chairs the departmental research committee.

The Director of Research works closely with colleagues across the department, and is supported in the role by the department's administrative team.  The Director of Research also works closely with senior faculty officers and relevant members of Professional Services (particularly but not exclusively the relevant Faculty Support Team) to discharge their responsibilities.

**Responsibilities**

Working to the Head of Department, the Director holds the following responsibilities:

1. Developing and recommending to the Departmental Meeting the department's strategic approach to research, and subsequently ensuring that this is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.

2. Chairing the Departmental Research Committee, and reporting to the Departmental Meeting on research matters (including meetings of the Departmental Research Committee).

3. Developing and implementing effective mechanisms to monitor research quality, intensity and impact to ensure that the University's and department's strategic objectives in relation to research are met.

4. Reviewing staff research plans and performance, and where issues or concerns are identified working with the Head of Department to ensure action is taken, and where appropriate support is put in place, to address the issues or concerns.

5. Developing and implementing effective mechanisms and structures to provide research mentoring and peer support that assist colleagues in achieving excellence in research.

6. Making recommendations to the Head of Department on Research Leave applications.

7. Developing and implementing effective processes and structures within the department to support colleagues in developing and preparing grant applications, and for ensuring the quality of such applications prior to their submission.

8. Working with colleagues to ensure that the department takes maximum advantage of the opportunities to obtain external research funding to support the achievement of the department's strategic objectives in research, and to diversify the department's sources of research income.

9. Overseeing the strategic use of departmental research funds (including for example Research Promotion Fund, Indirect Costs from external research grants returned to department, and any other sources), to ensure that these support the department's research strategy.

10. Disseminating information on research development and opportunities.

11. Ensuring that the department has in place and implements appropriate research ethics review processes, and disseminating good ethics practice in research.

12. Working with the Head of Department, to have responsibility for overseeing the preparation of the department's submission to external assessments of research quality.

13. Supporting the Head of Department to develop the Departmental Strategic Plan in relation to undergraduate and postgraduate (taught and research) provision, and ensuring the effective implementation of the strategic objectives for education set out in this Plan.

14. Ensuring that the department's research degree provision is effectively organised and delivered.

15. Ensuring that research degree students (and prospective students) receive current, relevant and clear information about the department, and on their research degree programme in a timely fashion.

16. Establishing and implementing effective arrangements for the induction of new research students, and for the on-going development of the research skills development of research students.

17. Ensuring that the department has in place and implements effective arrangements to provide research students with support and guidance throughout their research degree programme, and to refer students to specialist student support services where appropriate.

18. Appointing supervisory teams for research students, and ensuring that staff who are new to supervision receive appropriate training, advice and mentoring in this area.

19. Ensuring that appropriate and effective mechanisms are developed and implemented to monitor the academic progress of the department's research students, and to support those students not making such progress (including referring students to institutional student support services where appropriate).

20. Monitoring research student submission and completion rates, and taking action where necessary to promote timely submission and completion.

21. To advise the Faculty on requests from the department's research students to intermit, change course/research degree programme, or withdraw.

22. Ensuring that research degree students are included in the department's decision-making processes where appropriate, and that effective mechanisms are in place for considering student feedback; effectively responding to this feedback; and ensuring that the department's students are aware of how their feedback has been used.

23. Co-ordinating the department's annual review of research degree programme and review, and its engagement with periodic review.

24. Acting as the main point of contact for the faculty and University on education issues relating to research degree provision.

25. Liaising with the Research and Enterprise Office on research-related matters relevant to the department.

26. Working to support the sharing of good practice within the faculty and the department in matters associated with Excellence in Research, and where appropriate engaging with national and international networks in support of enhancing research activity in the department.

Holders of the role may delegate specific activities related to these responsibilities to departmental colleagues. Where activities are delegated the role holder remains responsible for them; activities can be delegated, responsibility may not.

**Good practice guidelines**

Heads of Department should:

- Include an appropriate time allocation with the role holder's workload allocation to allow them to carry out the role.

- Ensure that appropriate administrative support from the departmental office is available to the role holder.

- Consider when appointing someone to the role the level of experience and seniority required to operate strategically and influence colleagues effectively.

Heads of Departments are encouraged to:

- Ensure that colleagues are appointed to the role for at least two years, and preferably three, to provide continuity and consolidate expertise.

- Where possible and appropriate, identify a successor a year before a holder of the role is due to end their term of appointment in order to allow the successor to shadow the role before taking up its responsibilities.

Role holders should:

- Attend and engage with relevant faculty and University networks related to the role.

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