

Title: Structures and Management of Priority Research Centres**1.0 Scope**

The clustering of research into units, centres and institutes is in line with the University strategic plan and is encouraged. Research centres should be established in areas where the University enjoys national leadership and a level of international recognition for excellence and in which the University is likely to become a major contributor in the next several years. Centres are comprised of active research groups and individuals within a department, faculty or across faculties and who have a demonstrated ability to attract additional funding from outside the University.

Research centres that are formally approved by the University are referred to as 'Priority Research Centres' and as such have an official endorsement by the University. Researchers that wish to cluster but would not meet the criteria for a Priority Research Centre can form units. These units are approved at faculty level through the faculty research committees.

2.0 Definitions

A **Priority Research Centre** means a research grouping that accommodates a major research activity relevant to the University's purpose, vision and goals; of significance to the community; and meriting repute beyond the University. It has the potential to be a contributor in its field of expertise at the national and international level and to provide industry and the community with a reference point in the appropriate field(s) of study. It is formally approved by the University as a Priority Research Centre.

3.0 Aims and Function of Priority Research Centres**3.1. Aims of Priority Research Centres are:**

- to undertake core research activities that are recognised at high national and international levels;
- to aggregate research activities in related fields to achieve critical mass within coherent research themes;
- to support the development of a quality research training environment to support research postgraduate candidates and mentor post doctoral researchers
- to attract external research funding both nationally and internationally
- to translate research findings for the benefit of the external community and the regional and national economy

3.2. Functions of Priority Research Centres are:

- undertaking high quality research;
- applying for external research funding;
- developing research staff and students;
- fostering cooperation and collaboration between staff and with other research groups;
- facilitating, where appropriate, cross-disciplinary convergent research;
- networking with national and international researchers in the field;
- facilitating the communication of research output through publications of the highest standard;

- capturing and disseminating research results that will benefit the external community

4.0 Establishment of Priority Research Centres

A Priority Research Centre is established by decision of the Committee for Development and Implementation of Research Strategy (C-DIRS) and endorsed by the Executive Committee, on the recommendation of the VPR. The procedure for the establishment of a Priority Research Centre is outlined in Appendix 1.

4.1 Reserved Name

The term 'Centre' is only available for use by those Priority Centres specifically approved by the University.

4.2 Logo

A Priority Research Centre logo must be consistent with the University's branding and marketing strategy and must be approved by C-DIRS.

4.3 Websites

Only Priority Research Centres will be referred to on the University Research Office website.

A Priority Research Centre website must be consistent with the University's branding and marketing strategy.

Content of web pages should be appropriate and current.

5.0 Structure and Management

Priority Research Centres may be located in one Faculty, or for interdisciplinary Centres in more than one Faculty. The Faculty(s) concerned shall take management responsibility for the Centre either through the Dean(s), Head(s) of Department(s) or other designated manager/supervisor. Each Faculty shall establish mechanisms to enable Centre personnel maintain effective liaison with the Head(s) of Department(s) within which staff/faculty associated with a Centre are assigned.

6.0 Membership

The members of a Priority Research Centre will be obliged to engage in research that advances the strategic development of the Centre and will be researchers who are active across one or more of a range of indicators. These indicators will include publications; postgraduate supervision and post doctoral mentoring; peer-reviewed research funding, knowledge transfer activities and measures of peer esteem.

6.0 Affiliation to Research Institutes

Research Centres will be encouraged where appropriate to become affiliated to Institutes.

7.0 Research Plan & Sustainability

Priority Research Centres will be required to have a research and sustainability plan. The plan should address how the Centre will continue to enhance the quality of research carried out within the Centre and demonstrate alignment with the University strategy and with relevant Faculty and Department research strategies.

The centre will be responsible for ensuring that every effort is made to identify external funding sources for the work of the centre. The Centre will be required to have a 3-year rolling funding plan, updated annually.

8.0 Monitoring and Review of Research Centres

All Priority Research Centres must submit a report annually to the Research Office giving an account of research and scholarly activities performed and contributions of the centre to the strategic plan of the University. The annual report should include a financial summary showing research expenditure and revenues for the previous year and the 3-year funding plan. See Appendix 2 for the annual report template.

Research Centres are not viewed as permanent units and will be reviewed periodically by C-DIRS. In addition to the review of the annual report new Centres are reviewed at the end of their first two years of existence and at least once every three years thereafter.

Appendix 1: Procedure for the Establishment of a Priority Research Centre

Process

Applications for establishment of a Priority Research Centre are considered initially by the Faculty committees concerned and then submitted to the Research Office for evaluation by the Committee for Development and Implementation of Research Strategy (C-DIRS). This process should highlight and resolve any inter-faculty or inter-disciplinary issues prior to recommending final approval by C-DIRS.

Applications submitted to the Research Office must be accompanied by a cover sheet endorsed by the Dean(s) of the Faculty(s) involved confirming that the application has been evaluated by, and is being submitted with the support of the Faculty(s).

The application must demonstrate:

- i. the involvement of 3 or more academic staff, and/or where appropriate Research Fellows and Post Doctoral researchers with established records of research, scholarship or professional activity;
- ii. alignment with the University research strategy. Where appropriate the Centre should be multidisciplinary;
- iii. that the proposed Centre has a research and sustainability plan. The plan must contain clear goals, objectives, milestones and deliverables. The deliverables should include details on how the research outputs will be translated;
- iv. the activities to be pursued and the anticipated outcomes;
- v. the researchers named must have academic credibility, in terms of the quality of their activities and output in the area seeking recognition;
- vi. links with undergraduate and postgraduate teaching;

In considering the application for designation as a Priority Research Centre, the University will take into account:

- a. the relationship between the Centre and the Departmental/Faculty academic programmes;
- b. the ways in which the centre supports the University strategic plan;
- c. The level of interdisciplinary and cross-Faculty involvement;
- d. the quality of the research plan;
- e. research track record of proposed members in the proposed research themes;
- f. collaboration track record of proposed members;
- g. potential for income generation and financial sustainability;
- h. the appropriateness of the title and traded name of the Centre.

Application Form Details

The application must include the following specific information:

1. Executive Summary (max 1 page)
2. Proposed Priority Research Centre Name
3. Academic(s) Leading the Application
4. Research Plan should include the following;
 - a. Mission
 - b. Research theme(s)
 - c. Rationale and justification for selection of the research theme(s)
 - d. Explain the competitive advantage the Centre will have in a national and international context
 - e. Outline how the Centre will support the achievement of the University strategy
 - f. Outline the goals, objectives and targets for the centre
5. Management & Governance
 - a. The proposed Centre structure should be presented in diagram format with text to explain the proposed structure
 - b. How the Centre structures will fit into the Faculty(s) and Department structures must also be clearly outlined
6. List of Faculties Participating
7. List of Departments Participating
8. List of Members/Associate Members
 (List should be in table form as per the example shown. A one page CV will be required for UL academics and any other key UL members listed in the table. The CV template is shown at the end of the application)

Members			
UL Academic			
Title	Name	Department	Research Area
UL Non Academic (eg Post Doc, Technical/Support/Administration Staff)			
Title	Name	Department	Research Area if applicable
Associate Members (Non UL)			
Title	Name	Department	Research Area if applicable

9. Publication Summary Table for UL Academics

(Summary tables for publication of **members** for the previous 3 years should be prepared using the template shown below. The actual publications listing for the previous 3 years should be included as an appendix.. Do not include information relating to associate members)

Summary Publication History			
Category	Number of Publications		
	20XX	20YY	20ZZ
ISI Journal			
Other recognised Journal Ranking e.g. ABS			
Non ISI Peer-Reviewed Journals			
Books			
Book Chapters			

10. Research Funding/Project Summary Table for UL Academics

(A summary table for the research funding history of **members** for the previous 3 years should be prepared using the template shown below. The actual details of the funding award including; PIs name, title of the project, agency, programme, and amount to be included as an appendix. Do not include information relating to associate members)

Summary Funding History			
Funding Body	Total Value of Awards (€)		
	20XX/XY	20XY/ZZ	20ZZ/PP
e.g. IRCHSS			
e.g. IRSCET			
e.g. SFI			

11. Postgraduate Summary Table for UL Academics

(A summary table for postgraduate supervisor and completion of members for the previous 3 years should be prepared using the template shown below. Do not include information relating to associate members)

Postgraduate Training History			
Category	Total Numbers		
	20XX/XY	20XY/ZZ	20ZZ/PP
Current registered PhD			
Current registered research masters			
Graduated PhD			
Graduated research masters			

12. Practice Impact History for UL academics

(A summary table for practice impact including commercialisation indicators and other practice indicators such as impact on policy of members for the previous 3 years should be prepared using the template shown below)

Practice Impact History			
Commercialisation Impact	Total Number		
	20XX/XY	20XY/ZZ	20ZZ/PP
Number of Invention Disclosures			
Number of Licences			
Number of spin out companies			
Number of collaborative projects (direct industry involvement)			
Non-Commercialisation Related (Please provide specific details of the impact)			

13. Collaboration History for UL academics

(Provide details of current **significant** collaborations and the nature of these collaborations within the following categories. Need to include evidence of the collaboration such as joint research project, joint student supervision, joint publication, other)

- National HEIs
- International HEIs
- Companies/Businesses
- Community Groups
- National Governing Bodies
- Policy Agencies
- Major Advisor Boards
- Other – please specify a type

14. Sustainability Plan

(This should include details of how activities of the centre will be funded)

15. Appendices

- a. CVs of Members
- b. Publications of members
- c. Research Funding Details of members

CV Template only for UL academics or other key UL members (one page max)**NAME: DR. XXXX XXXX****RESEARCH CAREER:** (*List most recent first*)**INDICATORS OF RESEARCH ACTIVITY:**

Total Refereed Papers	X	Total Books/Book Chapters	X/ Y
Total Research Funding (previous 3 years):	€X	Total PhD/ MSc graduated:	X/ Y
Current Size of Research Team:	X (Y Post-Grads; Z post-Docs; W Other)		
Awards & Honours:	XXXXXXXXXX		
Other Relevant Indicators:	XXXXXXXXXX		

PUBLICATIONS (*List up to five key publications relevant to the proposal under consideration*):

1. Smith AA, Jones BB, Black CC (2007) Exciting project about really interesting stuff. *The Amazing Journal of Everything*. **21**: 304-308.
2. xxxxx
3. xxxxx
4. xxxxx
5. xxxxx

RESEARCH FUNDING (*Please list 3 Recent / Current Examples*):

<i>Period</i>	<i>Funding Agency and amount (€)</i>	<i>Title of research project/ programme</i>
20XX – 20XY		
20XY – 20YY		
20YY – 20ZZ		

MOST SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS:

- xxxx
- xxxx
- xxxx

PRESENT RESEARCH INTERESTS (*Please give examples relevant to application*):

- xxxx
- xxxx
- xxxx

Appendix 2: Priority Research Centre Annual Report Format

Annual reports should be prepared for each calendar year and submitted to the Research Office in the first quarter of the following year.

The report must include the following sections

1. Executive Summary
2. Update on the status of the research and sustainability plan with explanations for any deviations from the previously proposed plan
3. Performance Versus Planned against each of the research metrics, 5Ps shown below. Any deviations should be explained
 - a. Publication
 - b. Projects
 - c. Postgraduate
 - d. Practice Impact – translational research
 - e. Prestige
 - f. Any relevant examples of research convergence
4. Budget status
5. Forecast for future funding for 3 years
6. Goals & Objectives for following year
7. Appendices
 - a. List of members
 - b. List of Publications
 - c. List of Active Projects

Actual Balance Sheet & Sustainability Plan

	Planned 20XX	Actual 20XX	Projected 20YY	Projected 20YZ	Projected 20ZZ
<u>INCOME</u>					
TOTAL INCOME	-	-	-	-	-
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>					
<i>Maintenance Costs</i> For example equipment, electronic systems					
	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Operational Costs</i> Consumables Travel Other (Promotional, phones etc)					
	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-	-	-	-	-
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	0	0	0	0	0

Revision & Approval Log

Rev No.	Date	Revised By:	List of Revisions	Approved Sign & Date
0	30/03/2010	MS	New Document	BF (VPR) Feb 16 th 2011