

Title Communications Process

1.0 Scope

Communications both internal and external is a priority for the Office of the Vice President Research (OVPR). The following outlines key principles and approaches for consistent and effective communications both internal to the division and externally to our customers.

2.0 Internal Communications approach

Internal communications within OVPR are conducted on a formal and informal basis. OVPR operates a series of structured meetings to enable information flow to and from management and staff as outlined in figure 2 below. In addition, managers are part of organisational management fora e.g. Management Council, Executive Committee (EC), University Research Committee (URC). These meetings provide opportunity for two-way communication from divisions/units to senior management. It is the responsibility of managers to disseminate information from these meetings to their teams.

OVPR Formal meetings	Attendees	Description
Research Office Management (ROM)	Chaired by VPR and attended by unit Director and Manager	Meetings held monthly minimum and more frequently as required with ongoing weekly interaction across all members.
Quarterly OVPR meeting	Chaired by VPR and attended by all unit staff	Quarterly meeting of all members of the OVPR team.
RSS Team Meetings	Chaired by Director RSS and attended by RSS team	Held bi-weekly with ongoing informal interaction across the team.
RSPT Team meetings	Chaired by Research Strategy and Policy Manager and attended by RSPT.	Held bi-weekly with ongoing informal interaction across the team.
Quality Management Team	Chaired by QMT Chair and attended by QMT.	QMT includes representatives from each unit within OVPR. Meetings held bi-weekly. Reports issued to ROM and quarterly communication issued to the full OVPR team.
Project Teams	Cross-office	Cross-office teams are established as required in response to specific projects.

Figure 2 OVPR formal meetings

2.1 Formal meeting principles.

- a. Records of all formal meetings are held on the OVPR divisional SharePoint hub and retained in accordance with UL records and retention policy.
- b. Quality/Customer Feedback is a standing item at all formal meetings.
- c. An agenda and any relevant papers are issued in advance to attendees with an option to add agenda items either in advance or under AOB.

3.0 Customer Communications Process

Our customer charter outlines our customer groups. OVPR deploys various methods of communicating with our customers both one-to-one (virtual or in-person), information sessions and through email communications among others. The office has a number of channels of communications available and these are outlined below. The following outlines principles and processes for communicating with our customers.

1. Embrace a virtual first approach by ensuring our online presence is accurate, consistent and fit for purpose to support our communications activity.
2. University of Limerick branding is applied correctly and consistently across our communications both digital and print
3. Widen accessibility of our services by greater use of recorded sessions, FAQs, directing to our intranet or website where appropriate.
4. Points of contact for services are clearly communicated.
5. Directing to source information is the recommended approach rather than replication e.g. link to funding agency source data
6. A second set of eyes approach to be taken in the preparation of large-scale communications e.g. newsletter, mass email, print, web pages. See communications check-list provided below to guide proofing.
7. Where possible, targeted communications are advisable. For example, mass emails to research information distribution list may not be the most effective approach for a circular relevant to one discipline only. In that instance communications via Head of Department and Assistant Deans Research may be more effective.

OVPR Communications Channels		
OVPR Newsletter	Internal – UL Academics & researchers	Monthly communication incorporating information on funding calls, research news, publications, training etc.
Email issued from ULRIS@UL.ie	Internal – ULRIS profile members	Weekly alerts to users of unclaimed publications. Alerts regarding system downtime and upgrades.

Email issued from RSS@ul.ie	Internal – UL & academics researchers	This is used as the primary e-mail address for communication to the research community regarding upcoming events, funding opportunities, news stories and other communications relating to the support of research.
Email issued from Research@ul.ie	Internal – UL & Academics researchers	Limited Use. Used for general communications that relate to the overall workings of the OVPR and not a specific unit.
Email issued from EU Research	Internal – UL & Academics researchers	Targeted use for European Commission funding related activities. Managed by EU funding team.
Twitter account @UL_Research	External and Internal	Frequent use with a priority focus on opportunities for UL researchers, trends in research funding and policy generally and promoting success of our customers.
Research Website www.ul.ie/research	External	News section is updated frequently. Annual content review led by systems administrator.
Researcher Portal	Internal – UL staff and students	Ongoing updates taking place. Annual content review led by systems administrator.

Customer Communications Check-list	
OVPR communications template applied including customer feedback mechanism, office branding lock-up,	
UL Branding Applied Correctly	
Web link and/or point of contact for further information included	
I have checked that this communication is relevant to the audience receiving it e.g. are UL staff eligible, check the deadline hasn't passed,	
I have asked a colleague to proof-read this communication.	
I have ascertained whether the communication can be incorporated into other communications e.g. newsletter, ADR presentations.	
If the communication is suitable to be deployed via our @UL_research twitter account I have flagged this with the appropriate staff member.	
OVPR team communications check-list	
Is my e-signature accurate and consistent with the divisional template?	
Is my profile up to date on the office contacts page e.g. photograph, contact details.	

3.0 Records

Records management is in accordance with UL Record Management and Retention Policy. The following records relevant to this process are maintained:

- Minutes for meetings of: ROM, Unit meetings, Units, Quality Management Team, Quarterly OVPR meeting.
- Newsletter issues are held in the newsletter distribution system.

- Emails issued from the email addresses above.

4.0 Review

This process is reviewed in accordance with the self-assessment process and any updates are included in the next revision.

Revision & Approval Log

Rev No.	Date	Revised By:	List of Revisions	Approved Sign & Date
2	02/11/2015	HL, SOD, MB, JOS	Update following QMS audit: title change, addition of schematic and removal of text. Updating and streamlining of text. See archived document for additional details.	ROM 12/11/2015
3	05/01/2017	JOS	Update following interdepartmental audit. Amendment of scope to include RO internal communications only. Addition of Quarterly meetings in text and schematic. Removal of Quality Manual reference for partner and stakeholder communication mechanisms.	ROM 10/01/2017
4	18/11/2021	CB, YK, RC	Update in light of focus from office communications to incorporate customer communications	ROM 01/12/2021