

Principles, Guidelines and Processes for the Establishment and Management of Research Units



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

(A) Principles

1. Formal research platforms are integral to the University of Waikato's *Vision* and commitment to being a world class research-led University.
2. The University of Waikato supports the establishment and operation of three formal research platforms. These are:
 - 2.1 Research Units;
 - 2.2 Research Centres;
 - 2.3 Research Institutes.
3. The guidelines and processes set out in this document will apply to new and existing Research Units at the University of Waikato in order that they will:
 - 3.1 facilitate excellent research in areas of strategic relevance to foster innovation;
 - 3.2 facilitate research excellence by enabling high quality, innovative research and research-based services to be carried out by collaborative teams of researchers;
 - 3.3 provide a supportive research environment for the development of research capabilities by emerging scholars and postgraduate students;
 - 3.4 support world-leading research, facilitate and promote inter-disciplinary research, enhance research collaboration, provide visibility and raise the profile of the University's research;
 - 3.5 provide a visible structure to attract increased external revenue through interactions with external stakeholders such as other research organisations and a wide range of end users (e.g. funding agencies, charitable trusts and foundations, benefactors, central and local government agencies, industry associations, businesses and community groups) in New Zealand and overseas.

(B) Guidelines and Processes

1. Research Units

1.1 Definition of Research Units

- 1.1.1. Research Units bring together staff members who have common research goals, strengths and expertise.
- 1.1.2. Research Units are established around a suite of research activities and projects, or a service-based unit focused on specific technical staff expertise, or on a particular facility (e.g. laboratories), or on unique equipment which are covered in a separate document.
- 1.1.3. A Research Unit may be located within a single department or across several departments.
- 1.1.4. If a Research Unit is located across more than one Faculty or department a host Faculty or department will be identified.
- 1.1.5. Research Units have the following common characteristics. They:

- i. have a mix of experienced research academic staff of international standing and new emerging researchers and research postgraduate students;
- ii. do not have financial independence. Expenses, including salaries, are met by the host faculty and/or department(s);
- iii. will have an increased level of external funding over time;
- iv. do not employ dedicated staff (academic or general) and staff allocation is done on a per project (as needed) basis;
- v. are led by a research academic staff member established in the field;
- vi. represent a small portion of the faculty research activities and outputs.

1.2 Establishment of Research Units

1.2.1. The following application and approval process is required for the establishment of a Research Unit.

Step 1: The research team notifies the relevant chairperson(s) of department, chairperson(s) of school, associate dean research (or equivalent) and dean that they intend to develop a proposal for the establishment of a Research Unit.

Step 2: A proposal is prepared by the research team in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, e.g. end users, collaborators, the Research Office. The University's Research Office will provide assistance in the development of the proposal if required.

Step 3: The proposal is submitted for consideration to the chairperson(s) of department(s) or school(s) which the Research Unit will operate within. If supported, the proposal is submitted to the dean.

Step 4: The dean seeks the advice of the faculty board of studies on the establishment of the Research Unit.

Step 5: The dean considers the proposal and the recommendations of the chairperson(s) of department(s) or school(s) and the faculty board and approves or declines the establishment of the Research Unit.

Step 6: Approved proposals are submitted by the dean to the Research Office and the Research Committee for information.

Step 7: The Research Office informs the University's Human Resource Management, Communications and External Relations, and Financial Services Divisions of the establishment of the Research Unit.

Step 8: The establishment of the Research Unit is communicated internally by the faculty.

1.2.2. Proposals must contain the following information:

- i. Name of the Research Unit;
- ii. Faculty the Unit will be located within;
- iii. Department(s) the Unit will operate within and the name(s) of the relevant chairperson(s) of department(s) or school(s);
- iv. Host department;
- v. Name of the Research Unit;
- vi. Description of the planned research activities including:
 - originality/novelty/uniqueness of what is proposed;
 - development of research postgraduate students;
 - publication plan associated with the proposed Research Unit;
 - names, roles and time commitment of all staff involved;
 - international connectedness.

- vii. Agreed arrangements for cost and revenue sharing between departments (if relevant).

1.3 Administration of Research Units

- 1.3.1 The administration of a Research Unit must comply with the University's policies and *Handbook on Research and Outside Professional Activities*.
- 1.3.2 A Research Unit will promote its activities through the relevant school/faculty/department web sites and printed material. All promotional material must be approved by the University's Communications and External Relations Division and must display the University's official logo.

1.4 Reporting for Research Units

- 1.4.1 The overall performance of a Research Unit is monitored by the chairperson of the host department on behalf of the dean.
- 1.4.2 A Research Unit must submit an annual report to the chairperson(s) of department(s) or school(s) and to the dean of the faculty it is located within.
- 1.4.3 The annual report should give an overview of the Unit's activities and achievements for the year, including conferences, publications, grants, contracts, and postgraduate studies and income and expenditure if applicable.

1.5 Review of Research Units

- 1.5.1 Deans are encouraged to review their Research Units annually and to assess whether they should continue in their current form, progress to a Research Centre, be refocused, or be discontinued.
- 1.5.2 The University will formally oversee the review all Research Units every six years (commencing in 2009). The Terms of Reference for these reviews will be established by the Research Committee and communicated prior to the commencement of the reviews.
- 1.5.3 The reviews of Research Units will assess the following performance criteria:
 - i. ongoing research activities in terms of high-quality publication and peer esteem (IP if relevant);
 - ii. increases in the level of external funding over time;
 - iii. level of staff development;
 - iv. continuous flow of research postgraduate students (and degree completion);
 - v. effective knowledge transfer to end users;
 - vi. extent of use across the University (for service-based Research Units).

Approved by Academic Board 13 August 2013