University Committee for Research and Innovation
TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Establishment

a) The University Committee for Research and Innovation is established as a Committee of the Senate[1], and reports jointly to the University Executive (UE).

b) The Court has delegated to the Senate all of its powers in relation to academic work and standards so that, subject to the terms of the Charter and the Statutes and to the powers reserved to the Court, the Senate is the principal body responsible for the academic work and standards of the University and in relation to:

- programmes of study;
- teaching and research;
- the granting of awards; and
- the regulation and stewardship of the education and discipline of the Students.

c) The Senate reports to the Court on the discharging of these responsibilities.

d) Statute 5.4(b) permits the Senate to delegate any of its powers to any Committee which contains at least three of its members (at least one of whom should be an ex officio member of the Senate).

e) Ordinance C4 permits the Senate to establish standing committees and to prescribe the terms of reference, including the remit and composition.

f) An operating principle of this Committee is that when a decision is required in relation to the exercising of delegated powers of the Senate, those persons present who are not Senators shall be invited to abstain from voting.

g) The University Executive (UE) is established by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, with the endorsement of the Court, as the primary management body of the University. The UE reports to the Court on the discharging of its responsibilities.

h) The work of the UE is supported by contributions from groups, boards and committees, and it may delegate elements of review and decision-making authority to groups, boards and committees.

2. Reporting

To reflect the joint reporting arrangement, the Committee reports:

a) **to both the UE and the Senate** on matters of strategy and policy as defined in its remit.

b) to the **Senate** on specifically **academic governance** matters, such as Regulations (as the Senate is the primary academic body of the University).

c) to the **UE** on specifically **executive** matters, such as those relating to staffing, material and other resources (as the UE is the primary management body of the University).

---

[1] from 1 August 2017 (Senate Minute M17/046)

3. Purpose

The purpose of the University Committee for Research and Innovation is to provide institutional-level leadership in the development and implementation of the **academic vision and mission** for **Research and Impact and Business and Enterprise** in support of the University's Strategic Plan.

In this context Research and Impact (hereafter referred to as Research) is taken to include: research activities of academic staff, the supervision of students registered for research degrees and public engagement.

In this context Business and Enterprise (hereafter referred to as Enterprise) is taken to include: enterprise activities of academic staff including company creation, commercialisation, spinouts, generation of Intellectual Property, deployment of the SFC University Innovation Funding, consultancy and fostering company relationships.

4. Remit

The Senate[2] and UE delegate authority to the University Committee for Research and Innovation to:

1. develop, recommend, monitor the implementation of, and report on the Excelling in Research and Enterprise Strategy including to:

    a) develop, recommend, review, monitor and report on performance indicators and other specified targets for the Strategy;

    b) receive and monitor a risk register covering the strategic elements of the Strategy;

    c) review and endorse the Research and Enterprise related Strategies of Schools and the Strategic Summaries of the relevant Professional Services, ensuring alignment with the overall Research and Enterprise Strategy;

    d) receive, disseminate and respond (where appropriate) to the development of the research and impact and business and enterprise policies of key national and international agencies which are in the interests of the university (e.g. UKRI, SFC, Scottish Enterprise, EU); ensure the University has representation on appropriate external research and enterprise bodies, with a focus on maximising the impact of Heriot-Watt University;

    e) provide strategic oversight of the research student experience; and

    f) define and develop a positive research and enterprise culture.

2. promote and support both internal and external collaborations and partnerships in research and enterprise (e.g. Global Research Institutes) with business and universities globally;

3. identify, and encourage, the means by which the University can capitalise on emerging research and enterprise opportunities, with particular emphasis on opportunities for cross-School collaboration;

4. develop, recommend, monitor the implementation of, and report on Ordinances and Regulations for, and make, review, modify, and revoke policies and procedures with respect to:

    a) research and impact;

    b) business and enterprise;

    c) research governance and standards including:

        i. researcher conduct;

        ii. research ethics;

        iii. research integrity;

        iv. research information and data management;

        v. research student supervision and training; and

        vi. access to research publications and datasets;

---

[2] Through the Senate Statement of Primary Responsibilities and Delegations

    d) appropriate professional development provision for Staff and Students undertaking research and enterprise activities;

    e) academic quality assurance and enhancement for research degree programmes;

    f) academic and other entry requirements, and the recognition of prior learning for research degree programmes and higher doctorates;

    g) conditions of registration, periods of registration, and changes of registration for research degree programmes and higher doctorates;

    h) assessments, examinations, feedback, and progression for research degree programmes and higher doctorates;

    i) the appointment of internal and external examiners for research degree programmes and higher doctorates;

    j) the granting, deprivation and revocation of awards with respect to research degree programmes and higher doctorates.

5. consider and make recommendations on:

    a) academic quality assurance and enhancement reviews with respect to research degree programmes;

    b) the findings of quality assurance and enhancement reviews, and action plans arising from these, with respect to research degree programmes;

    c) the University's participation in external research assessment exercises (REF), and the findings and action plans arising thereof;

    d) the enhancement of support in relation to the development of the academic attributes of Students and the research skills of Staff and Students undertaking research and enterprise activities;

    e) the development of the physical and virtual academic environment pertaining to research and enterprise;

    f) the findings of surveys and other reviews of Student experience and the destinations of graduates with respect to research students and graduates.

6. with respect to research degree programmes and higher doctorates (and supported as required by a sub-committee), to:

    a) consider and approve the granting of awards with respect to research degree programmes and higher doctorates;

    b) consider and approve the granting of changes to periods of study for research and higher degree Students;

    c) approve, amend, or revoke the appointment of internal and external examiners;

    d) consider and approve the academic conditions associated with the establishing, modifying, or withdrawing of research degree programmes

    e) consider and approve the academic conditions associated with the establishment, management, or termination of external academic partnerships for the delivery of research degree programmes;

7. develop and make recommendations regarding the development of library and academic-related information services as they relate to research and impact and business and enterprise.

8. jointly, with the **University Committee for Learning and Teaching**, develop, recommend, monitor the implementation of, and report on Ordinances, Regulations and policies in respect of access to, and use of, the library services and academic-related information services.

9. receive regular reports from all Schools, including the minutes of the Schools' Research and Enterprise Committees;

10. provide advice on such matters related to the Committee's purpose as may be referred to the Committee from time to time by the UE and/or the Senate;

11. create and receive reports from such sub-committees and short-life working groups as are necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the Committee.

[Note 1: the Committee shall inform the Senate and UE of the creation, on-going work, and disbanding of any sub-committees and short-life working groups.]

[Note 2: the Senate must approve the Terms of Reference of any standing sub-committees that are to exercise delegated powers of the Senate.]

[Note 3: for the avoidance of doubt, and as outlined within the Remit, the Senate delegates authority in relation to **research** programmes of study to this Committee. Commensurate responsibility for taught programmes of study falls within the remit of the University Committee for Quality and Standards.]

5. Composition

Ex-officio members	Members	Appointed until
Co-chairs		
Deputy Principal (Business and Enterprise)	Professor Gillian Murray	
Assistant Vice-Principal (Research and Impact)	Professor Duncan Hand	
Vice Chair	Professor Gillian Murray	
Principal and Vice Chancellor's nominee: The Chief Scientist	Professor Tadhg O'Donovan	
Deputy Principal (Global Sustainability)	Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer	
Associate Principal (Enterprise)	Professor Gabriela Medero	
Associate Principal (Impact)	Professor Marc Desmulliez	
Associate Principal (International Research)	Professor Lynne Jack	
Associate Principal (Research Culture and People)	Professor Jemina Napier	
Associate Executive Dean (Research and Impact) from each School		
Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS):	Professor Teresa Fernandes	
Engineering & Physical Sciences (EPS):	Professor David Bucknall	
Mathematical and Computer Sciences (MACS):	Professor Marcelo Pereyra	
Social Sciences (SoSS):	Professor Dimitris Christopoulos	
Textiles and Design (TEX):	Dr Britta Kalkreuter	
Associate Executive Dean (Enterprise and Entrepreuneurship) from each School		
Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS):		
Engineering & Physical Sciences (EPS):	Professor George Goussetis	
Mathematical and Computer Sciences (MACS):		
Social Sciences (SoSS):		
Textiles and Design (TEX):		
The Director/CEO from each Global Research Institutes		
Lyell Centre:	Professor Michel Kaiser	
	Professor Andreas Busch	

National Robotarium:	Mr Stewart Miller	
Net Zero:	TBC	
Health and Care Engineering:	Professor Maiwenn Kersaudy-Kerhoas	
Student Representation		
The elected officer of the Student Union with responsibilities relating to Research and Innovation matters	Mr Cameron Fields, Student Union President	31/05/25
A Postgraduate Research Student Representative	Mr Joshua Eseigbe	31/05/25
Members Appointed by the Senate		
A Dean of the University (*as nominated by the Senate*)	Dr Alistair McConnell (Science and Engineering)	31/12/26
Three members of the Senate appointed by the Senate		
(normally drawn from the Senators elected from Schools, and nominated with a view to helping the Committee reflect the geographical spread of the University)	Dr Ruaraidh McIntosh	31/07/25
	Dr Richard McCracken	31/07/25
	Dr Shameel Muhammed	31/07/26
Additional Member(s)		
The Chair(s) of any Sub-Committee(s) if they are not already member(s) of the Committee		
Chair of the Research Ethics Committee	Dr Stephen Yarwood	28/02/25
Chair of the Research Degrees Committee)	Professor Scott Dalgarno	25/08/24
Chair of the Research Management Committee (Malaysia)	Dr David Barron	TBC
Chair of the Research Management Committee (Dubai)	Professor Tadhg O'Donovan	TBC
In attendance		
The following are normally in attendance at meetings:		
Dubai Student Council President	Ms Ridhima Shivkumar	31/05/25
President of the HWUM Student Association	Ms Pearlyn Tee	31/05/25
Global Director of Research Engagement	Dr Fiona Armstrong	
Chief Entrepreneurial Executive	Mr David Richardson	
Head of Research & Business Intelligence, SPP&P	Dr Paul Thompson	
Director of Information Services (or nominee)	Mr Fraser Muir	
Representation & Democracy Coordinator, Student Union	Ms Heather Innes	
Research & Enterprise Strategy Programme Manager, RED	Ms Alison Bowden	
The Clerk to the Committee (from Governance and Legal Services)	Mr Phil Rowsby	
The following are eligible to attend meetings:		
University Secretary	Ms Ruth Moir	
Two Deans of the University (*i.e., the Deans who are not listed above as the member nominated by the Senate*)	Dr Dan Hale (Pan-University Constituency)	31/03/26
	Dr Yvonne McClaren-Hankin (Humanities and Social Sciences)	31/03/26

6. Chair and Vice-Chair

a) The Chair of the Committee, as nominated by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, and agreed by the Senate, is the Deputy Principal (Research and Impact).

b) The Vice-Chair of the Committee, as nominated by the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, and agreed by the Senate, is the Deputy Principal (Business and Enterprise).

c) In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair from any given meeting, those members present shall appoint one of their number as Acting Chair for that meeting.

7. Equality and Diversity in Membership

The Committee exercises its responsibility, as far as possible, to promote diversity of representation within its membership and the membership of any working group or committee established by the Committee. The Committee will also act, in carrying out the business of the Committee, to promote equality of opportunity for all.

8. Quorum and Voting

a) The quorum necessary to transact business is **five** members, at least two of whom shall be Directors of Research and at least two of whom must be members of the Senate. In accordance with Statute Five, paragraph 4(b), the quorum of any Committee of the Senate exercising delegated powers shall include at least two members of the Senate.

b) Members who are participating in a meeting by means of audio-visual conferencing or other means enabling them to speak with, and be heard by, all members present at the meeting simultaneously shall be deemed to be present at the meeting and to count towards the quorum.

c) Normal practice is that wherever possible decisions shall be reached through consensus.

d) All members of the Committee are entitled to vote in any vote of the Committee except:

d1) when the Committee is required to vote on the exercising of delegated powers of the Senate, those persons present who are not Senators shall be invited to abstain from voting[3].

d2) when the committee is required to vote on a matter that is solely under the purview of the University Executive, then only those persons who are members because of their executive positions shall be eligible to vote.

e) The Chair shall rule on instances where a vote is required, and whether any matter under consideration pertains to the exercising of delegated powers of the Senate, or whether a matter is solely under the purview of the University Executive.

f) A person invited to be 'in attendance' at one or more meetings of the Committee is not entitled to vote.

g) The Chair has a deliberative vote and a casting vote.

9. Attendance at meetings

a) The Committee may co-opt members as appropriate for a specified period of time and report such co-options to the Senate and the UE at the earliest opportunity.

b) In addition to the members, and those normally 'in attendance', other colleagues may from time to time be invited to attend meetings on an ad-hoc basis for particular agenda items and invited to contribute to discussions at the discretion of the Chair.

c) The Committee maintains a record of attendance at each of its meetings and reports this information in accordance with the Attendance Policy.

---

[3] A change to the Statute shall be proposed in due course to govern this situation

10. Forward Planning

a)   The Committee maintains a list of Standing Agenda Items and an annual schedule of activities.

b)   The Committee sets dates for its ordinary meetings two years in advance.

c)   As part of its annual year-end self-assessment, the Committee reviews its performance in fulfilling its Remit, and considers possible modifications to its Terms of Reference. This also gives opportunity to review the Composition (including the gender balance of its membership, and the opportunity to receive contributions from the University's different campuses), and to submit recommendations as appropriate to the Senate and to the UE.

11. Principles of Operation

In fulfilling its terms of reference, the Committee shall follow the principles as agreed by the Senate to enhance academic governance seeking:

a)   closer alignment between the decision-making structure and the University's strategic objectives, to ensure that the decision-making structures are fit for the delivery of the strategy;

b)   a more efficient approach to the decision-making process, leading to clearer lines of reporting and accountability, a reduction in time taken to reach business-critical decisions, and high quality outcomes;

c)   main committees should focus on matters of strategy and policy, with operational matters being dealt with by the relevant colleagues in consultation with ad hoc working groups as required;

d)   minimisation of business considered by numerous different groups and with appropriate accountability for decisions taken;

e)   an assumption that decisions will be reached by consensus wherever possible;

f)   an assumption that each Committee will address business internationally;

g)   appropriate delineation between governance and management;

h)   the papers coming forward to committees should contain clear, evidence-based proposals for consideration;

i)   greater use should be made of IT facilities to reduce the amount of paper being circulated, with members of committees and others being able to access committee papers on a local intranet with appropriate access authorisation; and

j)   effective communication of decisions to all relevant parties throughout the University.

12. Sub-committees and Short-life working groups of the Committee

The Committee is empowered to create such sub-committees and short-life working groups as are necessary to fulfil its responsibilities.

i.   **University Research Ethics Committee**

Ethical standards in the conduct of research in the University are the responsibility of the University Research Ethics Committee, and of School and Institute sub-committees, whose work it oversees.

ii.   **Research Degrees Committee**

This is to be a co-ordinating body for the oversight of all PGR matters across the University. This body will make an annual report to the Committee for Quality and Standards regarding research programmes of study.

iii.   **Research Management Committee (Malaysia)**

This is a co-ordinating body for oversight of all Research matters at the Malaysia Campus and supports the work of the Director of Research (Malaysia).

iv.   **Research Coordination Committee (Dubai)**

(Further information to be added)

v.   **Strategy Implementation Steering Group**

This is the co-ordinating group for monitoring the Excelling in Research and Enterprise Strategy.

vi.   **Research Staff Forum**

This provides a forum for researchers to meet with University Executive members to discuss pertinent issues.

vii. **School Research and Enterprise Committees**

School research and enterprise committees report via minutes of meetings or school reports to the University Committee for Research and Innovation.

13. Frequency of meetings

a) The Committee normally meets four times each Academic Year in advance of Senate meetings.

b) The Chair of the Committee may choose to hold periodic strategy days consistent with the strategic function of the Committee.

c) Additional meetings (including meetings held in conjunction with other bodies) may be required – with the approval by the Chair – for more detailed consideration of particular items.

d) Changes to arrangements, such as cancellation, rescheduling or additional meetings will be notified to members by the Clerk as soon as possible, and normally within not less than five working days of the scheduled meeting date.

14. Lifespan and Effectiveness of the Committee

This is an established Committee of the Senate and its lifespan is ongoing.

An annual year-end self-assessment is conducted, with a formal review of effectiveness every five years.

15. Actions that may be taken by the Committee

The Committee may:

- Approve
- Note
- Receive
- Consider

- Endorse
- Recommend
- Reject
- Ratify

16. Minutes

a) Minutes of each meeting are distributed to members within two weeks of the meeting. The Chair approves the content of minutes before release.

b) The minutes are presented to the next ordinary meeting of the Senate and to the next business meeting of the UE, with any matters for consideration and/or approval highlighted in a cover paper.

c) The Committee's agenda and minutes are published on the University Intranet

d) Agendas, minutes, and papers are held electronically by the Clerk to the Committee.

e) The Committee has traditional/formal minutes in accordance with internal University guidance on style, and requirements regarding Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.

f) The agendas, papers and minutes for all meetings should be copied to the Head of Heritage and Information Governance for archiving purposes.

17. Resources

Clerk – Mr Phil Rowsby, Secretariat Operations Team Manager, Governance and Legal Services

Administrative support - Allocated from within the Policy and Governance Division, Governance and Legal Services

Meetings - Normally four meetings per session

Version	Amendments	Approved by
V1		Senate - 17 May 2017
V2	Minor Amendments to reflect changes in Committee membership	Senate - 11 September 2019
V3	Minor Amendments to reflect changes in Committee membership Italicised wording under sections 4 and 12 removed as they were historic	Senate - 5 November 2020
V4	Minor Amendments to reflect changes in Committee membership	UCRI - 11 November 2021
V5	Minor Amendments to reflect changes in Committee membership	UCRI – 14 November 2022
V6	Co-chairing arrangements in place until new Deputy Principal (Research and Impact) is appointed	Senate – 29 August 2024
	Amendments to reflect the focus of UCRI being on both research and enterprise activities and minor amendments to reflect Committee membership changes	UCRI – 19 September 2024 SCIBE – 13 November 2024