

# University of Manchester Statement of Research Expectations

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The University of Manchester is among the top 50 universities in the world and aims to be within the top 25, known worldwide as a place where the highest academic values are cherished and where research prospers and makes a real difference.

Our research success is based on our people. Academics at Manchester value and strive for excellence in research: advancing knowledge, shaping intellectual debate and having a major impact on the world around them. If the University is to achieve its aims, we need our academic staff to reach their full potential. That means having high expectations of our researchers and giving them the environment and support that they need

Our key targets for research as expressed in our Vision 2020 are:

- To be recognised as one of the 25 leading universities in the world, with a number of subject areas in the top 20, as measured by our position in international league tables.
- To double total research grant and contract income by 2020 (from a baseline of 2010), ensuring an increase in both international and business income as a percentage of total income and an increase in Manchester's share of UK RGC income.
- To improve the quality of research outputs, ensuring that 90% of staff are judged as producing world-leading or internationally excellent research by peer review through REF or our own exercises.
- To ensure that the share of our publications falling in the top 10% of cited papers in their field matches that for the UK's top 5 institutions.

To achieve these goals and to the overall goal of contributing to the well-being of our region and society more widely we set out the following mutual expectations for staff and for the institutional support received by staff.

## **A) Expected Research Performance Levels for Staff**

We expect all academic staff whose duties include research to undertake research of the highest quality and continually seek to raise their level of research activity to world leading standards of excellence. These staff should therefore:

### **1. High quality publications**

Perform research at internationally recognised levels of excellence and regularly publish the results in leading outlets. All staff should produce a minimum of four 3\* outputs in a given REF period and should aspire for at least two of those outputs to be at 4\* level as judged by peer review.<sup>1</sup> Due recognition will be given to those whose work achieves equivalent levels in terms of outstanding research impact (economic, social or cultural).

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<sup>1</sup> The University is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment. This declaration challenges the role played by the Impact Factor as the main means for evaluating publications and promotes the assessment of research on its own merits rather than on the basis of the journal in which it is published. <http://www.ascb.org/dora/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/SFDeclarationFINAL.pdf>

## **2. Citations and other indicators of academic impact**

Secure wide readership and academic impact for their research by using appropriate dissemination channels, including open access publication that is fully compliant with funders' requirements. Where relevant to the output type, staff should aim to produce outputs that are in the top quartile for citations in their field and aspire to the top decile or higher (specific targets will be differentiated across subject areas). Other indicators of academic impact which staff should aim to secure include prestigious plenary and other invitations, book reviews and prizes awarded in recognition of research achievement, and membership of esteemed bodies.

## **3. Research funding**

Apply for and win research funds from external sources at a level which allows them to be competitive in their field and to create opportunities for next generation researchers. The research funding opportunities to be pursued include peer-reviewed grants from national and international research funding bodies and collaborative research with business and other external organisations in the UK and abroad. In consultation with the Faculty and University, each School will set a minimum research income target for its staff which is appropriately ambitious and sensitive to discipline norms. Performance will be monitored and managed against these targets by Heads of School in collaboration with School Research Directors.

## **4. National or international research collaborations**

Seek where appropriate to develop research collaborations with national or international high quality partners (such as HEIs, businesses, government bodies or NGOs) in order to address major economic, societal and/or global challenges and improve access to global knowledge and facilities.

## **5. Doctoral supervision**

Undertake doctoral supervision and satisfy the Manchester Doctoral Colleges expectations for the supervision of research students supporting the timely and successful completion of their research degrees and recognizing that the normal expectation is that a thesis should support at least one 3\* output.

## **6. Collegial service to support a vibrant research environment at the University**

Actively participate in the research life of the University and support the development of a vibrant local research culture for staff and students. Contributing to the local research environment by:

- Engaging in the peer review of colleague's research proposals and outputs.
- Supporting externally funded research fellowships and visiting scholars.
- Promoting the training and development of early career researchers, including mentoring of colleagues.
- Participating in relevant research events at Manchester, including organising and hosting international conferences and other high-profile events

## **7. Collegial service and engagement in the external academic community**

Contribute to the development of their research field(s) for example through regular presentations at conferences, accepting invitations to give key lectures, membership of peer review colleges, panels and/or subject associations or committees, editorial responsibilities in respect of international journals and conferences.

## **8. Knowledge exchange and impact**

Ensure that opportunities for their research to achieve economic, social, cultural or other impacts beyond academia are realised through a combination of creative dissemination and engagement plans devised as part of research project planning and responsiveness to unforeseen opportunities as they arise.

## **9. Research integrity and ethics**

Embrace the values of research ethics and integrity as set out in the University's Code of Good Research Conduct. Including:

- Acting with honesty and integrity in undertaking, reporting and collaborating in research.
- Being rigorous and meticulous in performing and reporting their research.
- Paying due regard to the welfare of researchers, research participants and research subjects (human and animal).
- Paying due regard to the care and protection of the environment and cultural objects.
- Complying with any legislation, regulations, professional standards and good practice that govern their research.
- Reporting suspected research misconduct in accordance with the University's Code of Practice for Investigating Concerns about the Conduct of Research.

## **10. Professional accountability**

Engage with University, Faculty and School reporting and accountability processes and comply with policies on research, publication and open access.

## **B) Institutional Support for Researchers at the University of Manchester**

The University strives to provide an intellectual and physical environment that supports academic excellence, including in research, through the delivery of its Strategic Plan and Research Strategy.

Our academics can expect the following to help them to produce research at the level expected of them.

### **1. University Investment in Estates and People**

The University invests to provide a world class research environment. We invest in estate, including world class laboratories, library resources and related technologies and infrastructure. Of equal importance is our investment in people. This includes securing the best possible professional, technical and administrative support services to provide efficient, responsive and effective support. It also includes developing and supporting the very best academic leadership in our managers so that they are equipped to deliver the University's Strategic Plan and to support academics to develop their careers and realize their potential.

### **2. A Research Strategy and Vision framework at the Faculty/School level**

Each Faculty has a research vision and strategy which articulates the University strategy and outlines the infrastructural context, policies and priorities for supporting research. These are detailed and implemented through policy documents. Coverage includes resource allocation to support research, such as workload models and academic leave. Staff can expect these strategic plans to be evaluated, refreshed and communicated on a regular basis so that they are aware of, and consulted about, their research environment.

### **3. Professional Support to foster innovation in knowledge exchange, including business engagement and entrepreneurship**

Staff can expect the University to provide professional support to enable them to engage effectively in knowledge exchange, including research consultancies, industrial research collaboration, and policy advice.

### **4. Guidance on the expected standard of research performance**

Staff can expect their line manager, on behalf of the Head of School, to provide clear guidance on the expected standards for all academic responsibilities, including research performance.

With regard to research performance within their discipline area this guidance will encompass the expected quality and volume of outputs, research funding, doctoral supervision, knowledge exchange and impact activities, and collegial contribution to the research community.

### **5. Research performance advice, mentoring, training, support and review**

Staff can expect to receive effective support in relation to their individual research performance in order to promote the best possible research practice and standards. This will be provided through the University's procedures for mentoring, training, career development and regular performance review.

The University will offer opportunities and encouragement for staff to undertake professional development and training of the highest quality.

If staff consider they need additional or different support and advice to achieve their full research potential, it is incumbent on them to bring this to the attention of their line manager. They may wish to discuss with their mentor before doing so.

### **6. Guidance and training in research ethics and integrity**

The University's Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity Team provides information, training and support for individuals conducting research particularly in regulated areas such as clinical trials and research involving human tissue, human or animal subjects.

### **7. Research performance management**

Schools will provide informal guidance and support to help any member of staff whose research performance falls below the expected standards presented in this statement.

If the informal guidance and support available does not enable a member of staff to achieve the standard expected, the Head of School will seek the advice of the Human Resources Directorate.

### **8. Research time**

The University will maintain and regularly refresh workload allocation models that encompass the portfolio of academic duties (teaching, research, knowledge exchange, service and leadership) and include specific arrangements for protecting research time.

Each School offers academic leave (sabbatical) in accordance with the University policy.

Opportunities, encouragement and support are provided for staff to engage in research-related scholarly activity such as conference participation and organisation, editorial duties, service for learned societies and other national bodies, service as external examiners and peer reviewers and other roles which contribute to the vitality of their academic discipline and their institutional home.

### **9. Recognising and rewarding research performance**

The University recognises and rewards research performance through its promotion and payment systems. Research performance is one of the criteria for promotion and exceptional

performance is also rewarded through accelerated incremental awards (non-professorial) and professorial pay review.

Cases for reward and promotion are fairly and rigorously assessed against clear and consistent policies which value excellence in research, teaching, knowledge exchange and collegial service and leadership.

#### **10. Fair application of Research Expectations**

The University is committed to maintain and implement exemplary standards of fair treatment, equality and diversity in all our policies.

Full account will be taken of the University's HR policies in the interpretation and application of research expectations. These will help ensure that research expectations are managed in a way that is fair to all staff and takes account of individual circumstances.

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