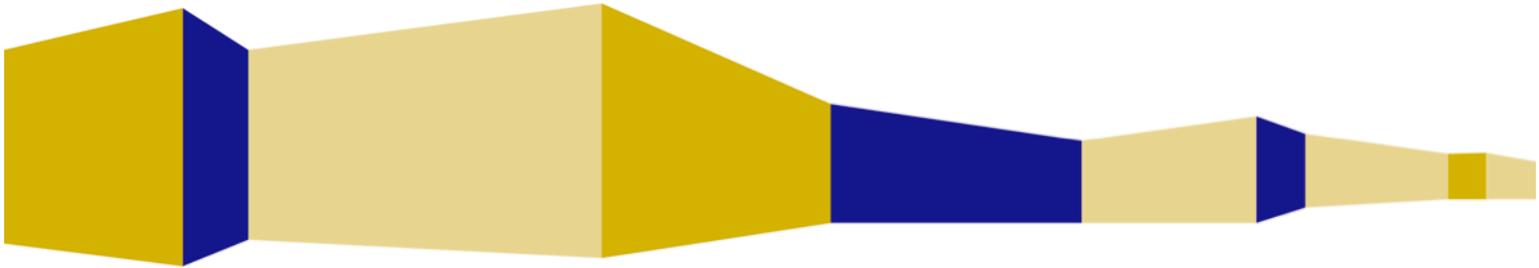


**THE GLASGOW
SCHOOL OF ART**



Research And Postgraduate Studies

**RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
STRATEGY 2009-2013**

June 2009

The Glasgow School of Art

Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy 2009-2013

This strategy follows the outstanding achievement in the 2008 UK Research Assessment Exercise, and reaffirms the Glasgow School of Art's commitment to research and its fundamental links to other areas of the School's activity. Referred to hereinafter as the Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy (or RKT Strategy), its full scope will support the GSA's strategic development in research, knowledge transfer and exchange, commercialisation, outreach, cultural engagement, and research-teaching linkages including postgraduate research and taught postgraduate.

1. Research at the Glasgow School of Art

This Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy relates to The Glasgow School of Art Strategic Plan 2008-2012 and succeeds the Research Strategy 2002-2006 and follows the submission to the 2008 UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE2008) in November 2007. It has been developed following extensive discussion at Executive and senior planning group level, and consultation throughout the institution with Heads of Schools, Senior Researchers, academic and support staff, and postgraduate students.

- 1.1. The GSA Strategic Plan 2008-2012 articulates a vision for the next ten years that clearly focuses on achieving international excellence in teaching and research,¹ and in which teaching, research, practice and scholarship are productively linked.² With the GSA achieving 50% of its quality profile at 4* (world-leading) and 3* (internationally excellent) levels in RAE2008, it could be said that this vision has already been realised; however, the School will build on this strong platform to ensure that we continue to develop research that is internationally excellent and is relevant to our students, staff, society and the economy, as well as the strategic direction of the institution.
- 1.2. The Strategic Plan makes explicit that the aim of the GSA over the period 2008-2012 is to "achieve international excellence and recognition in research and knowledge transfer/exchange in key areas of strength."³ We will realise this aim through stepping up our activities and expertise in knowledge transfer and exchange while seeking to build on areas of research strength identified through internal assessment, the results of RAE2008, monitoring of future performance, and areas of growing strategic importance.
- 1.3. As a result of successive years of investment in people, research activity and infrastructure, research at the GSA is at a high international level, is well resourced and supported, effectively led, and confident: feedback from RAE2008 noted as strengths world-leading or internationally excellent research outputs in the areas of photography, architecture, fine arts and design; as well as effective strategy, formation of a Research and Postgraduate Studies department, leadership and a central infrastructure.

2. Key objectives for research at the Glasgow School of Art

The GSA Strategic Plan has identified five key research objectives⁴ in meeting the strategic aims for the institution:

- 2.1. *To develop a new research and knowledge transfer/exchange strategy which identifies areas of strength, areas of potential growth and ways to support, develop and exploit them.* Participation in research grew significantly during the period 2001-2007, with 84% of staff identified as research active at the time of submission to RAE2008. While continuing to ensure that excellent research is supported wherever it is found in the GSA, we will build on this platform to focus our investment and support in areas of the highest quality, strategic importance and potential for growth. To achieve this aim, our research performance will be recorded and evaluated on an ongoing basis as we seek to develop a higher proportion of our research at internationally excellent and world leading levels.
- 2.2. *To form alliances with partners of quality beyond our disciplines and higher education sector, locally, nationally and internationally, to develop interdisciplinary and applied research.* As an organisation with international reach and reputation, the GSA is engaged in numerous partnerships across our portfolio of activities. While the GSA will continue to support excellent research produced by individuals ("lone

¹ GSAfuture, the Glasgow School of Art Strategic Plan 2008-2012, p.7.

² *ibid.* p.9.

³ *ibid.* p.10.

⁴ *ibid.* p.13.

scholars”), we will seek ways in which to identify, form and benefit from strategic partnerships in research and knowledge transfer, and will engage increasingly in collaborative, interdisciplinary and applied research while remaining sensitive to subject, context and capacity. The Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy will also operate in conjunction with the recently developed Internationalisation Strategy to develop existing and new strategic research partnerships in priority countries.

- 2.3. *To continue to embed and support the culture of research in the institution.* While a relatively recent addition to the long tradition of art, design and architecture education at the Glasgow School of Art, research has become integral to the fabric and academic life of the institution. Building on substantial development in recent years, and the achievement in RAE2008 of the highest percentage of 4* rated research of any University in Scotland, we will continue to ensure that research is part of the culture of the institution, and will continue to invest – in human, intellectual and physical resources – in the development and enhancement of all aspects of the research culture. As a major provider of education in the creative disciplines we will also work to ensure that each subject area of the GSA is active in research that has the potential to reach international levels of recognition, to support the highest levels of scholarship and research-informed teaching and curriculum development.
- 2.4. *To build postgraduate volume and capacity around hubs of research to inform developments in the postgraduate and undergraduate curriculum.* Reflecting growing confidence and expertise at this level, the GSA is committed to substantial growth in postgraduate numbers and the development of a postgraduate culture that is linked to research and supports progression opportunities from undergraduate level. In addition to growing the postgraduate portfolio through capitalising on long-standing expertise in taught subjects, and in response to external trends and potential applicants’ requirements, we will build capacity and volume through applying knowledge developed through research and our research hubs, to develop courses, pathways of study and full Masters level programmes. We will also continue to develop research-teaching linkages at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level to foster research-like learning as a graduate attribute.
- 2.5. *To increase and diversify external research and knowledge transfer/exchange income.* External research income has increased significantly over recent years and was close to the median for UoA63 in RAE2008. Our objective is to increase externally generated income from research and knowledge transfer / exchange by 50% by 2012 (from RAE2008 levels), and to continue to grow beyond this towards eventual parity with income from the Research Excellence Grant (REG). To ensure this is underpinned by the continued value of the REG, we will focus on improving performance in Other Activity Indicators (formerly Minor Volume Indicators) and will monitor and improve performance in eligible external research income, charities income, and the number of research students and assistants.

3. Staff

- 3.1. The GSA recognises that the most important dimension in research is its staff. Whether working as lone scholars or in groups, hubs, networks or centres, the GSA will ensure that research opportunities and support are widely available for researchers, and that individual members of staff are helped to improve research performance. Our priority is to focus investment and support to help active researchers to attain internationally excellent and world-leading standards of research performance.
- 3.2. GSA staff produced more than 1500 outputs during the period 2001-2007 of which more than 280 (around 20%) were submitted to RAE2008. In supporting the development of new knowledge and the realisation of public outputs, our strategy will be to focus on supporting research likely to result in outputs of the highest quality and impact, and to ensure that a higher percentage of research outputs has the potential to meet international standards of quality. To achieve this we will continue to evolve mechanisms to evaluate research outputs, and will focus on quality ahead of growth in volume, at institutional and individual levels.
- 3.3. To build on significant development in recent years in research performance and subject leadership, we will work to develop academic role descriptions, recruitment policies and procedures that explicitly relate appointments to the institutional strategy and to individual research experience and track record and, where appropriate, leadership potential. For appointments of academic staff new to higher education, potential for undertaking research will be taken into account and appointees will be supported and mentored to develop their research profile.
- 3.4. The GSA will build on programmes of staff development and training to continue to support researchers to: enhance their knowledge and understanding of both subject-specific research and issues across higher education research; develop expertise, networking and leadership potential; and increase knowledge of, and success in, external funding opportunities.

- 3.5. We will also continue to offer and improve the highly successful programme of academically-accredited supervisory development for GSA staff and external academics and institutional partners, including international partners identified through the Internationalisation Strategy.
- 3.6. The GSA will continue to involve senior and experienced researchers, research leaders, and visiting experts in supporting and providing mentoring to emerging and developing researchers. More experienced researchers will encourage colleagues to develop their knowledge and understanding, to plan and enhance their individual profile, and achieve success with dissemination and external funding. Where possible, and appropriate, emerging researchers will work collaboratively with established colleagues.
- 3.7. Research leadership will be developed in order to bring benefit to researchers and the research culture, through clarification of the roles and responsibilities of senior research staff, appointment of visiting professors and chairs, and support and development for staff in subject leadership and senior management roles.
- 3.8. Activity Planning will be further developed and its effectiveness monitored in supporting researchers to produce individual three-year research plans incorporating realistic objectives for research activities and outcomes, negotiated and revised annually in relation to performance and other academic duties including teaching, scholarship and professional practice. Researchers will also be expected to take a pro-active role in planning and realising their research objectives.
- 3.9. Annual Career Review will include evaluation and feedback on research performance, and will include the potential for identifying development needs and opportunities for informing Activity Planning and enhancing future performance. Staff will use the opportunity presented by Career Review to re-assess research objectives and seek appropriate support in realising them.
- 3.10. Recognising the wide range of research activity and performance among staff, and the significant investment required, and made, by GSA in terms of time for staff to undertake research activity, we will seek to develop more refined and appropriate mechanisms for calibrating the allocation of research time flexibly in relation to staff interests, capacity, performance and balance with academic, teaching, scholarly and administrative duties and professional practice.
- 3.11. In addition to supporting staff to identify and evaluate research performance through Career Review, the GSA will develop appropriate strategies for monitoring performance indicators in terms of quality, income, dissemination and impact, and postgraduate supervision, across a range of individual, departmental, and School levels.
- 3.12. The GSA will seek to develop and introduce, for the first time, a system of research leave to support staff in completing major research projects for public dissemination. This will be developed and reviewed within available funding streams, and alongside the development of eligibility criteria.

4. Research funding

- 4.1. To support our strategic objectives and ensure sustainability, by 2012 we will increase externally generated income by 50% over the average annual income at RAE2008. Our longer term target is to increase external income by 100% from RAE2008 levels, and eventually to achieve parity with income from the REG.
- 4.2. In considering research funding, we will seek to help staff to develop clearer understanding of the relationship between research income and expenditure, including: full economic costing and pricing; the Research Excellence Grant; and income from Research Councils, charities, contract and commercial research. Our aim is to ensure that our research is well funded and sustainable.
- 4.3. By 2013 we will increase the quality and number of external funding applications, increase research income and income from other sources, and diversify the range and number of funding sources over RAE2008 levels.
- 4.4. To achieve this we will implement strategies and mechanisms, including developing institutional infrastructure, enhancing capacity and expertise in research development and proposal writing, continuing to develop the funding database and 'alerting' system, improving internal quality review, and developing and agreeing local plans and targets for each School or department for grant applications and successes, income, outputs, dissemination and impact, which will be assessed and revised annually.

- 4.5. To ensure the long-term value of the Research Excellence Grant (REG) is maintained, we will monitor and improve performance on RAE2008 levels in Other Activity Indicators including eligible external research income, charities income, and the number of research students and assistants.
- 4.6. The GSA will seek, in particular, to extend the research income base beyond the REG and RCUK sources to increase significantly in European, charities, KT/KE and contract and commercial research activity across all areas of the institution.
- 4.7. We will work towards developing income targets and performance indicators for research centres, networks and groupings supported by the GSA.
- 4.8. To enhance research support and opportunities across the GSA, we will increase the amount of funding from the REG used to support staff research, replacing the previous research culture fund with a more strategic, flexible and responsive funding scheme, which will be distributed according to the principles of strategic 'fit' with institutional priorities, quality of application, and peer review under the auspices of the research committee.
- 4.9. We will continue to promote the principal of partial or 'matched' external funding to encourage researchers to seek funding from external sources and to achieve sustainability in their research activities.

5. Research culture

- 5.1. Following the outstanding achievement in RAE2008, the GSA aims to build a well-resourced and sustainable research culture that fosters internationally excellent research in the creative disciplines and supports scholarly, practice-led and applied research and enhances our capacity to develop activities and expertise in knowledge transfer and exchange.
- 5.2. The GSA will endeavour to ensure that research activity is embedded in all subject areas in which the GSA is engaged in teaching, that research is considered in all other relevant areas of the institution's business, and that knowledge transfer is linked explicitly to research activity. Local plans will reflect arrangements for linking research to teaching, knowledge transfer and exchange.
- 5.3. We will continue to build on considerable developments in the research culture since 2001, and noted in RAE2008, including: formation of a Research and Postgraduate Studies department; a central infrastructure to support staff; intellectual infrastructure and substantial leadership; a variety of support mechanisms for staff; and a comprehensive student training programme.
- 5.4. The GSA will further develop research support, funding, training, communication, dissemination, leadership, recruitment and mentoring as the essential institutional 'engine' to drive research performance.
- 5.5. Development of the research culture will be enhanced significantly through strengthening cross-institutional capacity and expertise in proposal writing, grant seeking and submission, peer review, awards management, and strategically directed 'seed' funding.
- 5.6. Further enhancements will be sought at institutional and local level through utilising senior and experienced researchers and visiting experts in fostering the research culture and intellectual infrastructure through dissemination events, collaborative research activity and mentoring. To support this, the GSA will encourage appointment and promotion to professorial and readership positions, with clear descriptions of the responsibilities of role-holders in contributing to the development of the research culture.
- 5.7. The GSA, through the Research Committee, will continue to review the number and performance of established and emerging research groupings including centres, networks and units, and will develop formal procedures for the approval, targets and performance of each grouping.
- 5.8. Through strategic planning processes, and the involvement of the Research Committee, the GSA will seek to keep fully informed about important emerging national policy, European and international opportunities, and strategic research themes, and to identify suitable ways in which the institution can contribute, participate and collaborate. We will invest in strategically important areas, and monitor performance within strict time limits.
- 5.9. We will strengthen existing, and develop new, international research partnerships identified through the Internationalisation Strategy and will seek to develop the culture to support researcher exchanges and collaborative postgraduate initiatives.

- 5.10. In addition to continuing to support excellence wherever it is found, including for the “lone scholar” model, we will develop the research culture to enable GSA researchers better to understand and undertake interdisciplinary and applied research both within the institution and with external academic and industrial partners.
- 5.11. Wherever possible the GSA will maximise eligibility for, and take-up of, infrastructure investment schemes including SRIF and SRDG, and enhancements to the research culture through available network funding opportunities.
- 5.12. Alongside the Executive Group and the Research and Postgraduate Studies department providing strategic leadership for research at the GSA, the role of the Research Committee will be strengthened to enhance operational oversight, guidance, peer review, and reporting of research activities and groupings. The links between the Research Committee and supporting organisational structures and committees (such as the Research Degrees Sub Committee, Boards of Studies, the Postgraduate Committee, the fEC/TRAC Steering Group, and the Internationalisation Working Group) will also be strengthened to support an integrated approach to research development and the enhancement of the research culture at GSA.
- 5.13. We will further develop and integrate the postgraduate community with the institutional research culture at all levels.

6. Postgraduate students

- 6.1. Since 2004 the GSA has achieved significant developments at postgraduate level including: alignment of PGT programmes with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework; development of a common academic framework for taught postgraduate programmes (PGT:CAF); introduction of pathways and elective courses; progression opportunities from undergraduate to postgraduate taught (PGT) and research (PGR); growth in programmes, subjects, student numbers and interdisciplinary opportunities; and major increases in doctoral enquiry, application and completion rates accompanied by far-reaching development in supervisory capacity, expertise and qualifications including a validated Postgraduate Certificate in research supervision. The GSA is committed academically and culturally to the integration of research and teaching, and will build further on these achievements.
- 6.2. We will expand the postgraduate culture of the GSA, with 20% of our student body being at postgraduate level by 2014, and will plan the development of the postgraduate community, including scoping a virtual and/or physical graduate school, to meet the needs of a growing student body and the aspirations of potential applicants.
- 6.3. We will build postgraduate volume and capacity around proven research strengths and hubs to inform developments in the postgraduate and undergraduate curriculum, and will continue to develop research-teaching linkages at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level to foster research-like learning as a graduate attribute.
- 6.4. We will continue to develop taught postgraduate provision around three key areas: (1) programmes offering progression from subjects available at UG; (2) provision developed according to potential applicants' interests and the real world, e.g. in digital and new media; (3) courses, pathways and programmes derived from the generation of new knowledge in our research and scholarly activities.
- 6.5. The PGT:CAF will continue to be monitored for effective delivery of taught postgraduate provision, and will be developed further to support new courses, pathways, programmes, part-time and non-campus based modes of study linked to the GSA's research, and progression opportunities from undergraduate to PGT and from PGT to PGR.
- 6.6. We will continue to encourage growth in PGR application rates and convert an increasing proportion of high quality applications into enrolments with suitably qualified supervisory teams, identifying areas which require development in supervisory capacity. Local plans will prioritise supervisory development in high application areas.
- 6.7. Completion rates have risen markedly since 2004 alongside investment in PGR capacity and infrastructure. We will continue to monitor completion rates, and periods of study, to ensure these high levels are maintained with expected growth in student numbers.
- 6.8. We will continue to improve and develop research training opportunities for postgraduate students, remaining sensitive to differential training needs at PGT and PGR levels, and will scope the introduction of assessment for research training at PGR level.

- 6.9. Following successful introduction of formal supervisory qualifications and the validation of a PGCert in research supervision which has seen major growth in supervisory capacity, we will continue to target growth in supervisory capacity and expertise, will seek to grow expertise in currently under-represented areas, and will work with international partner institutions to offer supervisory development.
- 6.10. We will complete work on scoping the structure and feasibility of alternative doctoral routes and, if appropriate, will introduce credit-rated professional doctorates at GSA and with international partners identified through the Internationalisation Strategy.
- 6.11. We will continue to be strong advocates for increased funding for postgraduate study in the creative disciplines, including with government, the Funding Council and research councils. We will seek to develop financial support for postgraduate students including scholarships, bursaries, fees remission, and industrial sponsorship.
- 6.12. We will continue to remain actively involved as a leading contributor to debates about practice-led research degrees and will seek to influence their development in international contexts.
- 6.13. We will develop, implement and support a system of Graduate Teaching Assistantships which will be fair, institution-wide, and enriching to the postgraduate student experience. GTAs will be supported by access to the Associate Route of the PGCert in Learning and Teaching, and formal mentoring by a member of staff.
- 6.14. We will continue to align with the QAA Code of Practice on postgraduate research degrees, and will monitor and enhance our institutional Code of Practice in consultation with the University of Glasgow's Code.

7. Knowledge Transfer

- 7.1. In accordance with government policy and trends in the HE sector, the GSA is committed to the evolving KT agenda. We will further develop and extend activities and expertise across the knowledge transfer spectrum to include knowledge transfer and exchange, innovation and commercialisation, outreach and cultural engagement, and impact assessment. As part of our increase in research and knowledge transfer income, we will increase the income from KT/KE and aim to have established at least four Knowledge Transfer Partnerships or other government innovation schemes by 2012.
- 7.2. We will identify new areas of potential growth in KT/KE and innovation, and will develop plans with agreed targets and milestones, including securing external funding, for two new networks with the potential to grow into centres, *Glasgow Urban Lab* and *Design Innovation Scotland*, which will work with external partners on agendas of national and international significance, and will support active participation from GSA researchers.
- 7.3. We will utilise effectively the KT grant from the Scottish Funding Council and will scope the creation of a dedicated KT team to maximise the commercial, cultural and social benefits of our research, and secure new income streams in KT/KE activity.
- 7.4. The GSA will seek to increase the number of areas of the institution involved in innovation, enterprise, KT and commercialisation activity, in addition to work already undertaken by the DDS.
- 7.5. The GSA will draw on the relationship with the University of Glasgow and will develop links with, and derive benefit from, the University's expertise in enterprise and commercialisation through working with GU Research and Enterprise Office on relevant projects.
- 7.6. The GSA will further develop expertise in, and will seek to generate income and derive benefit from, outreach and cultural engagement activities that build on work already undertaken with the modest Cultural Engagement grant from the SFC. We will seek ways in which to develop an integrated programme of research visits, seminars, symposia, conferences and keynote lectures that will raise the profile of GSA research, develop partnerships, and create a publicly available record of outreach activity.
- 7.7. We will work to develop researchers' knowledge of the KT agenda and its central importance to future research activity. We will encourage personal and professional development for staff through the Association for University Research and Industry Links (AURIL) and the recently established Institute of Knowledge Transfer (IKT), and will seek accreditation for KT/KE activities and practitioners.

- 7.8. The GSA will monitor the development of KT/KE and will develop explicit criteria for the integration of KT/KE and commercial exploitation of research into operational plans for centres, networks and research units.
- 7.9. We will develop criteria to ensure that the dissemination strategy, KT/KE and impact are included in funding applications seeking support from new flexible and responsive funding streams that will become available from the REG.
- 7.10. We will monitor and undertake appropriate analysis of the commercial benefits of our research, and will ensure our participation in ongoing debates in HE and at government level on impact assessment and measures.
- 7.11. The Research Committee will further strengthen and amplify the work of the fEC/TRAC Steering Group, and will develop explicit guidance on costing and pricing which will be revisited and update annually. Researchers will be encouraged and supported better to understand the relationship between costing and pricing research and commercial activity, and to seek a return for the GSA on its investment.
- 7.12. We will, through growing expertise in KT/KE and associated activities, develop a system of identifying and rewarding applied research and consultancy that results in direct benefit, income, impact and/or esteem to the GSA.
- 7.13. The GSA will undertake to review and develop the IP policy including issues of shared 'ownership' and 'benefits'.
- 7.14. Where appropriate, the GSA will facilitate postgraduate student involvement in KT/KE and outreach activities, and will consider the potential for developing courses at PGT level for aspiring KT practitioners that can attain IKT accreditation.

8. Monitoring, reporting and communications

- 8.1. The GSA is aware of the fundamental requirement for research outputs to be available for peer review and dissemination to the widest possible audiences and publics, and of developing expectations of research assessment, research councils, and other funders that the products of research are widely available in the public domain. Accordingly, the GSA will invest significantly in developing its recording, evaluation, storing and communications of research outputs.
- 8.2. We will scope and develop, in line with evolving expectations of research assessment, funders and users, a physical and digital research repository to current and anticipated archival standards, that will facilitate the widest dissemination, access and peer review opportunities.
- 8.3. The GSA will continue to invest in and develop the electronic database system developed for RAE2008, for recording research activities and achievements, and will seek further enhancements to the system including a minimum of annual updates for the records of every researcher, integration with the repository and website, and appropriate levels of access that may be required for external assessment and funders.
- 8.4. We will facilitate ongoing deposits, recording and updates to the repository and database, with a minimum of annual updates in all current records, to assist in the process of internal quality review and preparations for external research audit including the evolving Research Excellence Framework.
- 8.5. The GSA will further develop appropriate forms of self-generated research reporting, including reports to the Research Committee and Academic Council, and the introduction of an annual research report, as is common in several high performing research institutions, to provide a single and coherent point of entry to GSA research activities and successes for users, potential academic and industrial partners, funders and external assessors.
- 8.6. We will continue to develop and enhance information available through the VLE and intranet, and will contribute to improvements in the systems.
- 8.7. The GSA Research Committee will undertake more frequent review and evaluation of research activities in the institution, and will ensure that all areas of research activity are reported in a timely and useful fashion in the interests of the institution and external users.
- 8.8. The Marketing and Communications department will, in conjunction with the Research and Postgraduate Studies department, develop strategies for marketing and promoting the GSA's research and postgraduate

activities and opportunities to the widest range of publics and users, to maximise benefit and impact, and build profile for our achievements. Annual monitoring and evaluation, and appropriate further development, will be undertaken.

- 8.9. The website will remain in the purview of the Marketing and Communications department, which will work closely with the Research and Postgraduate Studies department, Schools, centres, networks and units, and the Library and Learning Resources and IT to ensure full integration with the research database and electronic repository, and accurate and responsive updating of public information on research, projects, outputs, postgraduate studies and opportunities, and supervisory expertise.