



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

Policy Title	Research Centre and Institute Establishment and Maintenance Policy
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Policy Owner	PVC (Research & Enterprise)
Lead contact	Director of the Research and Enterprise Office

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1. Research Centres / Institutes are a central part of Bangor University. The University encourages the establishment of research centres as a framework for promoting and facilitating interdisciplinary research and postgraduate teaching initiatives. They provide a vehicle for the University to achieve its strategic aims in relation to research excellence, impact and increasing research income.
- 1.2. Research Centres / Institutes are often one facet of the University's research most visible outside the University and they therefore perform a number of important functions, both in terms of bringing scholars together, doing research and presenting what we do to others.

2. Definition of Research Centre and Research Institute

- 2.1. The University makes the following distinction between Research Centres and Institutes.
- 2.2. Research Centre - Title to describe a unit whose main focus is research supported by research-associated activity e.g. knowledge transfer, post-graduate teaching/supervision. A centre would normally have activity across two or more schools. A Centres activity as a whole must be distinct from the activities of the Schools.
- 2.3. Research Institute - Title to describe a unit whose main focus is research supported by research-associated activity e.g. knowledge transfer, post-graduate teaching/supervision. A Research Institute would normally consist of two or more Research Centres.

3. Criteria for Establishment

- 3.1. A Research Centre / Institute should:
 - be distinctive from the school and school level research activities the creation of a Centre /Institute should add value to the normal research activities of its individual members
 - bring together a critical mass of scholars, usually from different disciplines for collaborative work in a clearly defined area over an extended period of time beyond the life of one specific project
 - maintain high levels of scholarly and other activity; be recognised as (or have the potential to become) excellent in the defined areas for research according to publications, environment and impact
 - provide an institutional platform from which to successfully apply for grant support for projects and/or develop postgraduate research opportunities and/or establish groups of postdoctoral activity
 - have existing (or clear plans to develop) collaboration with external partners (e.g. at other universities, the community, private sector researchers)
 - offer an excellent environment for postgraduate and post doctoral researchers
 - promote the work of the centre and disseminate results by sponsoring and organising lectures / conferences /colloquia / workshops

- attract academic visitors, those on research leave from elsewhere and other scholars, researchers and academic visitors
 - be involved in the public dissemination of research, thereby supporting University work with business, government and the community
 - show potential for sustained activity (typically over at least 3 years) which will reflect well upon the University
 - not be substantially dependent on a single individual
- 3.2. A Research Centre / Institute may also be involved in other, appropriate activities, such as working with professionals to improve professional practice and publishing reports, proceedings or monographs.

4. Establishment

- 4.1. A group wishing to bring forward a proposal to be considered for Research Centre / Institute status must prepare a proposal that will demonstrate the following:
- A business case that clearly demonstrates sustainability (financial, managerial, administrative and scientific).
 - A concentration of research active faculty who share common research and professional interests in an area and where the level of performance and dynamism is beyond that of *ad hoc* collaboration.
 - Reasonable expectation that the research being undertaken will be significantly enhanced by the formal establishment of a Research Centre / Institute.
 - Staff at appropriate levels in the University who are willing to commit time to the Centre / Institute, including leadership.
 - Clearly thought through organisational structures.
 - Finances that are organised in accordance with University policies and procedures. The proposal must include a budget which, as well as outlining in broad terms the expected funding through grants, specifies sources of funding for the administrative operation of the Centre / Institute.
 - The proposal must include a three-year plan for the Centre's / Institute's trial period of operation. College Directors of Research and CRSOs will review a Centre or Institute's progress at the end of the three year period and make recommendations to the Review Group and RSTG accordingly. From then on, further reviews will usually take place on a three year basis.
 - Proposals for the establishment of a Research Centre/Institute should be made on the form attached (Annex 2) and submitted to the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), who will establish in consultation with and on behalf of Research Strategy Task Group, a Review Group to review the case.
- 4.2. Centres will be established by acceptance by the University Executive of the recommendation given by the Review Group.
- 4.3. The Research and Enterprise Office will maintain a register of approved Research Centres and Institutes.

- 4.4. Each Research Centre/Institute must maintain a webpage containing a brief description of activity, membership and management.

5. Management

- 5.1. Where more than one College is involved, the Deans of College concerned must agree which College will have overall responsibility for the management of the Centre/Institute and its finances.
- 5.2. Deans of College must agree in advance those projects and associated income which can be attributed to the Centre. The distribution of earnings will be agreed on a case by case basis depending on relative input.
- 5.3. The Dean(s) of College must appoint a Director for the Centre/Institute.
- 5.4. Centres must establish a Board of Management that will include the Deans of College of the participating Colleges. The membership of the Board must be approved by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) and the Review Group.
- 5.5. The Board will meet at least once a term. If appropriate, an Advisory Board may also be established and will include members from outside the University. Membership of the Advisory Board is also subject to approval by the Board of Management, Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) and the Review Group.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1. Following Executive's decision to establish the Centre/Institute, the Director must produce a plan covering the first three years of operation for approval first by the Board of Management and the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) and the Review Group.
- 6.2. Annual reports (Annex 1) must be provided by the Director to the Board of Management and through it to Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) and the Research Strategy Task Group.
- 6.3. Centres / Institutes will be reviewed by Executive, through Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), on a three-yearly cycle.
- 6.4. Centre / Institute budgets will be monitored within the planning cycle of the responsible College. Research Centres / Institutes will manage their finances as detailed in their approved business case. In some cases, to assist their financial management, larger Centres / Institutes may be allocated their own budget code.

7. Review

- 7.1. Reviews will normally take place every three years to assess the effectiveness of a Research Centre / Institute. The review process is designed to explore the contribution of a Centre / Institute to the University, identify strengths and weaknesses, and promote constructive change. The review process presents an opportunity for a Research Centre / Institute to reflect on its activities over the last three years and formulate a plan for the next period of time.
- 7.2. There is no prescriptive formula for the documentation to be submitted as part of Centre / Institute renewal. However, the requirements for establishing a Centre / Institute provide a

reasonable framework and should be used to both report on past activities and present future plans. In addition, a request for Centre / Institute renewal should include the following.

- A clear statement of how the Centre / Institute has added value to the research of the University over and above that which would have taken place without the Centre / Institute being present. The statement should include tangible evidence of any claim or statement.
- Budget statements, showing the Centre's / Institute's revenue, sources of revenue and expenses for the last three years.
- A summary of the Centre's / Institute's fund raising activities. For example, details of recent successful and unsuccessful applications for research grants and contracts and other funding.

7.3. Reviews are overseen by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise), who will establish a group to review the case and report to Research Strategy Task Group and the Executive. Meetings may be organised with the Centre / Institute Director and other key staff involved in its operation. Where appropriate, the review group can seek external advice. The spirit of the review should be formative and constructive, but the report of the review group must present an explicit recommendation regarding renewal. A review may recommend:

1. full renewal of Centre / Institute status for a specified period of time (usually a further three years);
2. conditional renewal of Centre / Institute status;
3. the orderly winding down and closure of a Centre / Institute.

7.4. When a Centre / Institute does not submit documentation for review in a timely manner, this will be taken as an indication that there is no desire to seek renewal. In such circumstances, Centre / Institute closure will be recommended to Research Strategy Task Group.

7.5. The review process is designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of particular Centres / Institutes. Issues such as the precise timing of a review, membership of the review group and the involvement (if considered necessary) of any external advisers will be undertaken in consultation with Centre / Institute members. It may be important, for example, for Centre / Institutes to indicate the field(s) of expertise they see as most useful in reviewers. The overriding remit of the review process should be to foster a vibrant and ongoing programme of collaborative research.

8. Closure

8.1. Centres which do not meet aspirations in terms of standing and purpose or where the level of activities cannot be sustained at the appropriate level will be closed on the recommendation of Board of Management to Executive.

9. Appeal

9.1. There will be a right of appeal. Lead Academics should write to the Deputy Vice Chancellor outlining their reasons for disagreeing with the Review Group's decision. The appeal will be heard initially by the Review Group who will make recommendations to the RSTG. Their decision will be communicated to the relevant lead academic by the relevant CRSO within 6

weeks.

ANNEX A1: Application to Establish a University Research Centre / Institute

Name of Centre / Institute	
Lead College	
Additional College(s) involved	
Director	
Management Board	
External Advisory Board	
Staff Associated with the Centre	
PhD students	
Master's Programmes and number of students	
Current grant portfolio	

Proposal should outline the following (no more than four sides):

Rationale for Research Centre / Institute Status

- what are the aims and objectives?
- what is the relationship with the University Strategy?
- why move from the *status quo* to Centre / Institute status?
- what benefits to research activity can be expected?
- what need is there for a new Centre / Institute?
- what is the purpose and activities?
- how is the Centre / Institute distinct from the School?

Membership

- who will be members?
- what categories of membership will there be?
- what are the proposed members' records of research activity relevant to the Centre / Institute?
- what commitment are the members prepared to make to the proposed Centre / Institute and how is this involvement linked in to their home School?
- evidence of (or potential for) International Standing.

Governance

- how will the Centre / Institute be managed and administered?
- what are the governance structures, including advisory boards etc?
- what protocols and procedures will be followed?
- how are all of these consonant with the collaborative and voluntary nature of the Centre / Institute?
- how will the Centre / Institute organise its financial and administrative areas in ways consonant with University practice?

Three year plan

- what are the Centre's / Institute's detailed research plans for the next three years, including specific input and output targets?
- what funding is expected through grants?
- what budget (income and expenditure) is planned for the next three years?
- what sources of funding will provide for the administrative operation of the Centre / Institute?
- what provisions have been made for resources such as office space?
- what plans are there for the involvement of graduate students and doctoral researchers, including links with the Bangor University Doctoral Schools?
- who are the main competitors and what is the expected external profile of the Institute / Centre?
- are there any request for University investment?
- how will the Centre / Institute achieve sustainability?

Before completing the form applicants should read the University's Policy on Centres available on the University's website.

The completed form must be countersigned by the Head of the academic unit to be responsible for the centre and sent to Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise).

For the Research Centre/Institute

Signed: _____

Date: _____

For the host Academic College/School

Signed: _____

Date: _____

For the University

Signed: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX A2: Annual Report for Research Centres / Institutes

Name of Centre / Institute	
Lead College	
Director	
Staff Associated with the Centre	
PhD students	
Master's Programmes and number of students	

Report to cover the following headings:

1. Aims and Objectives
2. Activities and Achievements
3. User Engagement, and impact; collaborations and partner involvement
4. International collaboration (visitors, joint projects, etc.)
5. External Research Funding
6. Publications (which must be present in the University's Repository - <http://repository.bangor.ac.uk>)
7. Future Developments (including specific goals/targets for the coming year)

For the Research Centre/Institute

Signed: _____

Date: _____

For the host Academic College/School

Signed: _____

Date: _____

For the University

Signed: _____

Date: _____