

Research Strategy 2009-2012

Context

Research and scholarly activity confirm the authority and legitimacy of our academic community, and ensure that we are working at the forefront of our respective disciplines. The University will pursue research and advanced scholarship of intrinsic merit. We also seek to disseminate the products of research and scholarship in the form of knowledge transfer. In addition, the University wishes to harness the research expertise and scholarship of staff so as, wherever feasible, to enrich the curriculum and support its development. We will encourage a symbiotic relationship between research and teaching, maximising and capitalising on 'the circumstances in which research and teaching have occasion to meet.'¹

Definitions

The University follows the work of Boyer,² and QAA regulatory documents³ in understanding 'scholarship' to be an inclusive term that embraces 'research'. More detailed definitions have been developed by the University for specific purposes (such as the annual audit of research activity), but at the highest level, the two terms are defined as follows:

'Scholarship' is learning of a high level, which widens and/or deepens an individual's knowledge of an area of study.

'Research' is scholarship that takes the form of original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding, which is intended to be placed in the public domain in some permanent form.

Scholarship is expected of all academic staff; research is encouraged for all staff.

Mission Statement

To support and sustain high-quality research and scholarship which advance the disciplines in the University curriculum, and benefit our students and the wider community.

Aims and objectives

1. To build upon our successful application for research degree awarding powers in 2008 by:

- a. Sustaining a research student population at a level commensurate with the majority of the post-92 sector.
- b. Continuing to develop high quality support and training for new and existing PhD supervisors and to PhD students.
- c. Providing accurate and accessible information on research degree programmes to students, prospective and actual.
- d. Ensuring systematically that the most able and committed of its Masters' graduates consider MPhil/PhD study at the institution.
- e. Supporting the Schools in developing the curriculum at Masters' level so to build on the distinctive features of Bath Spa's academic profile.

¹ Hattie. J and Marsh, HW. (1996). The relationship between research and teaching: a meta-analysis, *Review of Educational Research* 66(4), 533.

² See Ernest Boyer (1990). *Scholarship Reconsidered* (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching).

³ QAA (2008). *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: draft for consultation*. Page 24.

- f. Supporting the Schools in maintaining and further developing research methodology training provision for research students and those on Masters programmes, and to ensure that each School maintains a programme of research seminars involving research students and research active staff (in which all PGR students are expected to take part).
- g. Ensuring that prospective and continuing postgraduate students apply for external support for their studies, as in AHRC studentships in the performing and creative arts and humanities.
- h. Encouraging research students to become involved in national or regional research initiatives and to use the University's Corsham Court Centre for that purpose where appropriate.
- i. Monitoring the progress of students and their research programmes.
- j. Monitoring Bath Spa's performance in providing high-quality programmes of supervised research study.
- k. Developing and sustaining the culture of research and scholarship across the institution and to improve Bath Spa's national and international profile in key areas.

2. To maintain a vigorous culture of research and scholarship across the institution following the good results achieved in RAE 2008 by:

- a. Developing and sustaining the culture of research and scholarship across the institution and to improve Bath Spa's national and international profile in key areas.
- b. Ensuring that research profile, or the potential for building a research profile, is considered as part of the staff recruitment process.
- c. Maintaining support for 'promising researchers' enabling them to develop research of national and international significance.
- d. Developing support for established researchers, such as through a sabbatical system, to enable them to initiate and/or bring to fruition research projects of national and international significance.
- e. Developing a promotional reward structure within the University's agreed pay framework for researchers of the highest calibre.
- f. Maintaining effective deliberative structures for research activities and to monitor Bath Spa's performance in furthering its research activities.
- g. Maintaining effective management structures for the oversight of spending.
- h. Targeting HEFCE research funding at those Units of Assessment which gained income from RAE 2008 and demonstrate potential for similar success in the next research excellence exercise⁴.
- i. Enhancing Bath Spa's profile in research and scholarship by promoting the work of the University's formal Research Centres which have a brief to attract external, non-HEFCE research funding with the support of the University's Research Support Office.
- j. Building Bath Spa's capacity and reputation for PedR, initially through the activities of Artsworld, its national Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and subsequently through the funding of PedR projects across the institution.

⁴ The 'Research Excellence Framework' (REF), details of which are yet to emerge.

- 3. To increase external income for research and scholarship, by:**
- a. Increasing funding from sources other than HEFCE to increase and underpin research and consultancy activities at a level commensurate with that in similar universities.
 - b. Supporting Research Centres across the institution with a brief to attract external, non-Hefce funding for research and applied consultancy with the support of the University's Research Support Office.
 - c. Developing mechanisms, such as teaching relief, for individuals to develop research proposals attracting non-Hefce funding.
- 4. To establish collaborative relationships with other research institutions and organisations, by:**
- a. Encouraging and supporting each School to work with partner institutions or organisations on a collaborative research or applied consultancy project involving groups of Bath Spa staff.

Strategic and Operational Responsibility

Aim	Responsibility	Reporting Mechanisms
1	Higher Degrees Research Committee; Head of Graduate Studies and Research Management	Graduate School annual report to Academic Board School annual reports to HD(R)C
2	Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Head of Graduate Studies and Research Management	RCSC papers (eg annual audit of research) *PedR through Learning and Teaching Committee
3	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Head of Graduate Studies and Research Management; Heads of School; Research Centre Heads	Reports on Research Centre activity to Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee School annual strategies to Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee
4	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Head of Graduate Studies and Research Management; Heads of School; Research Centre Heads	Reports to Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee (eg annual audit of research activity) School annual strategies and operating plans to Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee