Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy 2019-2024

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Purpose

Research leads to the discovery of new knowledge, shapes our understanding, and provides the basis for innovation and continual improvement both within academia and industry. Knowledge transfer is the sharing of this knowledge within UCOL and with our sector stakeholders, partners, and communities. UCOL's research and knowledge transfer strategy outlines an institutional wide focus for active researchers and experts with a high profile as knowledge sharers within the Tertiary Education Sector, industry and communities. UCOL continues to contribute to its local and national economies through applied research and knowledge transfer. A research and knowledge transfer culture contributes to UCOL's vision *"To inspire students, business and community to succeed"* and mission *"Develop great graduates who make a difference wherever they work in the world".*

UCOL is committed in supporting applied research and knowledge transfer across the institution, by providing sufficient resources to support research, supporting staff to actively engage in high quality research which informs the delivery of academic programmes, professional and vocational practices, and the development of mutually beneficial research and resource collaborations with both public and private sector organisations.

Objectives and Measurement

UCOL submitted to the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) for the first time in 2018 and this forms the basis for an increased focus on research and knowledge transfer particularly related to ensuring our degrees are of a high quality. Research informs teaching, industry practices, and curricula development and will have targets that meet expected requirements of the ITP sector by NZQA. Knowledge transfer facilitates the dissemination of knowledge, expertise and skills within a project itself and is not necessarily attached to an academic research output requirement.

NZQA has a clearly stated "Definition of Research and Expectations[1]". To meet these expectations UCOL has implemented that a minimum of 60% of all staff teaching in each degree programme will be engaged in research, with a minimum of 20% of all staff teaching in each degree programme submitting to the PBRF. These targets are to be met, or exceeded, by the end of the 2019-2024 Research & Knowledge Transfer Strategy timeframe. For each degree, Research and knowledge transfer plans will

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[1] https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Registration-and-accreditation/Degree-approval-and-monitoring/guidelines-degree-and-related-quals-v2.pdf

be developed showing planned outputs from each team that reflect the targeted level of engagement, and will focus on Research Outputs as defined in the PBRF documentation. The research and knowledge transfer plans can also include research and knowledge transfer activity carried out by non-degree staff and by staff outside of teaching teams. These plans will clearly demonstrate how research and knowledge transfer informs our curricula, how this contributes to teaching and learning, and the knowledge transfer to industry. Study for a higher degree is considered research engagement and is also indicated in the plan.

Strategy Principles

The following six key principles inform the Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy:

1. UCOL endorses the requirement of the Education and Training Act 2020 S454 (3) that degree programmes should be delivered mainly by people engaged in research. Accordingly, UCOL seeks to provide an environment where degree teaching staff are:

     i.   Actively engaged in research & knowledge transfer; and

     ii.   That this research & knowledge transfer actively informs the teaching process.

   UCOL also recognise the value of the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills between research conducted by both academics and the non-academic community. It is also well recognised as an important return on New Zealand's investment in academic research, one that provides a significant driving force for enhancing economic growth and societal wellbeing. For UCOL, knowledge transfer is a way of gaining new perspectives on possible directions and approaches for research. This two-way exchange element of knowledge transfer is at the heart of successful and sustainable collaboration.

2. Within the centralised professional development fund allocated by the PD Committee, chaired by the Executive Director of Education and Applied Research, there is contestable funding for research and knowledge transfer dissemination, and that committee's discretion for research and knowledge transfer activity. The Faculty Executive Deans will be responsible for supporting staff with applications for any research to enable research outputs that aligns to the following:

     iii. that research is being used to inform teaching and learning practices;

     iv.   that the majority of staff teaching in degrees are involved in research; and

     v.   that research links to industry relevance and knowledge transfer.

3. UCOL's Research & Knowledge Transfer Policy highlights the role of applied research as well as knowledge transfer activities as the foundation of UCOL's research activity whereby these foundations inform professional and vocational practice, and enjoys a synergistic interface with business and industry with mutually beneficial outcomes.

4. The priority for research and knowledge transfer support will be given to research which either supports the delivery of existing degrees or supports the case for approved plans for the development of new degrees. Priority will also be given for team and/or interdisciplinary based research that develops identified areas of specialisation within UCOL and research that informs our curriculum, and innovation in teaching and learning.

5. Co-ordination of research and knowledge transfer within UCOL will meet the requirements of our Academic Quality Management System which is designed to enable the organisation to meet both qualitative self-assessment activity, and contributes to External Evaluation and Review and the

Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics of New Zealand (ITPNZ) Academic Quality Standard for research.[1]

6. While the imperative of an active research and knowledge transfer culture for accredited quality status is acknowledged as a key driver for research/knowledge transfer activity at UCOL, the intrinsic value of a research culture in enhancing students' learning, enhancing the reputation of the institution as a whole and increasing the attraction of UCOL employment for academics are also acknowledged.

Strategy Actions

The following actions will achieve UCOL's Research and Knowledge Transfer expectations:

1. Responsibility for the implementation of the Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy in relation to each faculty, including all degree and non-degree programmes participating in knowledge transfer activities, and reporting against the key performance indicators, rests with the Executive Deans of Faculties. For degrees, the Executive Deans are also responsible for ensuring research is embedded into the job descriptions of degree teaching staff; research KPIs are included in the annual performance plans for degree teaching staff; and that key staff have time allocated in their workloads for research activities. For non-degree programmes, the Executive Deans are also responsible for ensuring knowledge transfer activities are embedded into the job description as a recognised activity. Responsibility for non-academic staff engaged in research will be with the relevant Executive Director for that area.

2. Every degree programme will have a representative on the Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee to lead research activities, stimulate team work, align research proposals with potential funding sources and industry/business needs, and ensure monitoring of progress research projects towards a recognised research output.

3. Teaching teams with a knowledge transfer focus will have a designated knowledge transfer leader to mentor these activities, stimulate team work, align knowledge transfer with potential funding sources and industry/business needs and will be represented at the research and knowledge transfer committee.

4. Teaching teams will develop an annual Research and Knowledge Transfer plan for all research and knowledge transfer activities, in consultation with the Executive Dean. These plans will be published on the intranet following approval from the UCOL Research Committee. Completions against agreed annual research plans must be reported at the end of each academic year and will also be published on the intranet.

5. Non-degree knowledge transfer activities (not academically researched based) should be included in this annual research and knowledge transfer plan in consultation with the Executive Dean/Executive Director.

6. Staff undertaking approved research or knowledge transfer, in consultation with their Executive Dean or relevant Director (for non-academic staff), will be eligible to apply for funding from the Professional Development Fund, managed by the Executive Director of Education and Applied Research, but are encouraged to first explore external funding opportunities. Evidence of having

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[1] While UCOL is operating in the Self- Assessment leading to External Evaluation and Review environment, it has chosen to maintain the use of the AQMS referenced against the Academic Quality Standards developed by ITPNZ

made this consideration is required in the application for any funding internally. Executive Deans will work with research leaders and teams to allocate resources to support agreed research & knowledge transfer, with a focus on achieving UCOL's Strategic Story and Research & Knowledge Transfer Strategy Principles.

7. Faculties are encouraged to use a team focus for research and knowledge transfer activities in clusters, across subject disciplines. Focus on cross-degree and cross-faculty research & knowledge transfer will also promote research and knowledge transfer throughout UCOL and will create critical mass and a clear research focus.

8. The research and knowledge transfer committee, identified sub-committees and research and knowledge transfer leaders, will be supported by the work of a designated research & knowledge transfer administrator.

9. Research and knowledge transfer will be promoted through regular activities such as research and knowledge transfer seminars and staff development events which provide opportunities to showcase UCOL's research outcomes as well as external research. Executive Deans can recommend rewards for staff making significant research contribution including nomination for staff research awards.

10. Research and knowledge transfer in emerging researchers will be encouraged and developed through staff with higher qualifications sharing their research expertise and knowledge, to benefit staff in their research discipline, and across faculties and departments at UCOL.

11. Local, national and international research collaborations with researchers, academic institutions, along with community and industry organisations will be encouraged and promoted whenever possible.

12. Research and knowledge transfer planning will recognise the role of UCOL Academic Staff as Dual-Professionals, as represented through research reflecting this through a focus on both applied industry and pedagogical research.

13. Active involvement, as appropriate, in national bodies which focus on research and knowledge transfer, international links and publications will be supported.

14. UCOL will actively profile and celebrate its research and expert staff, research and knowledge transfer outcomes, showcasing the benefits of how these outcomes informs both educational and industry based practice at UCOL

Table 1. UCOL Action Plan for achieving the Actions outlined in the UCOL Research Strategy

2019-2024 Strategy	Actions	Responsibility	Resources	Success Indicator
1. Staff are actively engaged in research and knowledge transfer, focused on both pedagogical or industry based activity.	Research and knowledge transfer plans identify staff engagement and how research and knowledge transfer informs our curricula and its relevance to industry.	Research Leaders, Executive Deans & Director of Education and Applied Research	In place	Most staff for UCOL (defined as 60% of degree & above staff for each programme, excluding staff below 0.2 FTE, or primarily involved in clinical teaching), are involved in research (with involved in research meaning a named member in a currently approved UCOL research project).

That a minimum of 20% of degree staff for each programme are working towards a PBRF portfolio submission for the PBRF (or similar) assessment round. |
| 2. Researchers and Research leaders to seek external UCOL sources of funding for research activity | To explore other sources of funding in conjunction with industry research/knowledge transfer partnerships | Academic Board delegation to the Research Committee Executive Director of Education and Applied Research and Executive Deans as per the Committee's Terms of Reference | $ TBC | UCOL staff have a clear understanding of the NZQA research definition and requirements, UCOL understands the benefits of moving into PBRF environment and makes a decision whether it is eligible or not. New funding sources for research and knowledge transfer projects. |
| 3. UCOL builds a stronger reputation for research and knowledge transfer | To identify new initiatives with allocated resources internally and externally to UCOL | Executive Deans and Executive Director of Education and Applied Research | Through increasing critical mass of research and knowledge transfer through (for example) Centres of | UCOL prioritises key projects and resources to increase the presence of research and |

			Vocational Excellence	knowledge transfer which brings value to our programmes and industry
4. Explore research and knowledge opportunities in collaboration with industry being aligned to UCOL's strategic Story and Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy Principles	Identify target areas in the development of UCOL research specialisations, in collaboration with industry – this is reflected in research plans and research reports.	Executive Deans and Director of Education and Applied Research	On-going budgeted resources	Increased industry engagement with UCOL research projects
5. Focus on the development of research capability of UCOL staff.	Implement professional development programme to further develop research capability of UCOL staff.	Executive Deans and Executive Director of Education and Applied Research	Professional Development process in place	Staff are accessing research targeted PD funding to the maximal level available.
6. A regular communication plan on research impact and knowledge transfer on our UCOL social media site and publications	To ensure that the research culture is evident to all staff. To ensure that changes to curricula are connected to research outcomes/knowledge transfer. Communication plan focuses on celebrating our research success and profiles our research capability.	Director of Education and Applied Research & Director, Communications	On-going budgeted resources	Better visibility for research activities (e.g. dedicated website, and UCOL staff presence at some Public Lecture Series events
7.Strengthen our participation in National bodies, such as NZACE and Ako Aotearoa, in their publication fora	Communicate when these opportunities arise through the RKT Committee	Executive Director of Education and Applied Research and Executive Deans Appropriate staff	Conference attendance from PD budgets.	Presentations and publications with National bodies, such as in NZACE. Culture of work based learning research which informs teaching
8. Promote and celebrate research staff and their activities, including profiling research applications for both education and industry.	Internal and external promotion of research activities	Staff Executive Deans Research Committees UCOL Communications Team	Existing	Visibility of UCOL researchers internally through SharePoint. Media releases regarding achievements. National profiling of

				UCOL researchers and their projects. Industry awareness of UCOL's research.