

# Research Strategy

---

Version: 3.00  
Status: Final  
Authors: Dr Bekithemba Mpofu/ N Moore  
Date: 21/06/2016

## Table of Contents

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>1. Background</b> .....   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>2. Research strategic objectives</b> .....                          | <b>2</b> |
| 2.1. Aid meeting UCEM's overarching aims of the Strategic Vision ..... | 2        |
| 2.2. Enhance Research capability within UCEM .....                     | 2        |
| 2.3. Disseminate Research Undertaken at UCEM .....                     | 4        |
| <b>3. Implementation and evaluation</b> .....                          | <b>4</b> |
| <b>4. References</b> .....   | <b>4</b> |

# Research Strategy

## 1. Background

- 1.1. This document outlines the strategy for research, and any research collaborations, undertaken by UCEM to reflect the expectations of the Royal Charter, QAA, Accrediting bodies and obligations as a Higher Education Institution with Taught Degree Awarding Powers.
- 1.2. Our Royal Charter states that UCEM is constituted partly “*to organise, encourage and stimulate postgraduate studies and research for all other persons concerned in, or intending to be concerned in, managing, developing, admeasuring, valuing or dealing in, or with, land, buildings or other property and to encourage by educational methods the study of and research into all subjects pertaining thereto and the value thereof*”.
- 1.3. In addition to being part of the core purpose of UCEM's existence, research contributes to meeting Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA's) requirement that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with taught degree awarding powers demonstrate that they are ‘a well-founded, cohesive and self-critical academic community that can demonstrate firm guardianship of its standards’ (QAA, 2013). To evidence this requirement, HEIs need to demonstrate how teaching staff (QAA, 2013);
  - maintain a close and professional understanding of current developments in research and scholarship in their subjects and that structured opportunities for them to do so are widely taken up;
  - have relevant knowledge and understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline area and that such knowledge and understanding directly inform and enhance their teaching;
  - are actively engaged with research and/or advanced scholarship at a level commensurate with the degree on which they teach.
- 1.4. With Academic Excellence as one of our six central UCEM organisation goals, there is the recognition of the value of research in supporting academic excellence. This research strategy sets out UCEM plans and activities for the period 2015 through to 2019 by which time it has aspirations to become a leading vocational online university. The research model reforms that were approved by the Academic Board in 2014 and reviewed by the Research Committee in 2015, form the basis for this research strategy which identifies strategic research goals, plans and resources required to achieve the goals.

# Research Strategy

## 2. Research strategic objectives

UCEM has three main drivers for its Research Strategy:

### 2.1. Aid meeting UCEM's overarching aims of the Strategic Vision

Enable it to meet its overarching aims of the Strategic Vision with particular reference to;

- 2.1.1. **Independence:** Ensure that research environment is provided which allows for the research to flourish in line with the requirement of an university in possession of taught degree awarding powers;
- 2.1.2. **Academic Excellence:** Embed and support the Property and Construction Research Centre as the driving force for Built Environment Subject specific research;
  - Support the delivery of UCEM educational programmes, ensuring that they are informed by up to date subject matter and the promotion of research skills development in students;
    - Ensure research informs the teaching, learning and assessment strategy;
    - Ensure research informs and enriches curriculum development and complements the Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy;
    - Engage research active staff at all levels in teaching;
    - Encourage staff to attend HEA seminars and report back to colleagues;
  - Support the principle of academic freedom in line with UCEM Royal Charter (section 11,3) and Section 43 of the Education Act 1986, as amended by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.
- 2.1.3. **Becoming the Leading Vocational Online University:** Embed and support the Online Learning Research Centre as the driving force for online pedagogical research into approaches for improved online learning and teaching.
- 2.1.4. **Financial Sustainability:** Utilise and carefully manage any research budget to support the strategy and where possible seek either income or partnering with others to increase our capacity to undertake research.

### 2.2. Enhance Research capability within UCEM

- 2.2.1. Ensure that any research undertaken by UCEM staff and students is undertaken mindful of their responsibilities in relation to ethics, and is supported to ensure these responsibilities are met;
- 2.2.2. Enhance the knowledge and experience of UCEM employees and enhance its reputation;
- 2.2.3. Enhance the quality of the student learning experience and disseminate knowledge to students;

## Research Strategy

- 2.2.4. Disseminate knowledge to the wider higher education community, professional groups and the general public through a range of published and electronic formats;
- 2.2.5. Establish collaborative links, mutually beneficial arrangements and/or partnerships with companies practicing in the UK's real estate and construction sector, online learning institutions, academic, governmental or non-governmental organisations wherever possible, through providing expert consultation and applied research resources;
- 2.2.6. Develop research capacity and establish a faculty research culture
- Establish and broaden base of research active staff
  - Encourage academic staff to develop their research potential through agreed annual research activity plan and appraisal (PDR)
  - Develop and promote a mentor programme to support post docs and early career researchers
  - Provide a fast-track 2 year research programme for UCEM faculty researchers and/or support tutors seeking to complete PhDs.
  - Ensure consideration of research capability is brought into the appointment of new academic roles
  - Recognise research output, including providing opportunities for progression and research promotion such as appropriate workload planning
  - Invest strategically in staff appointments to support faculty research interests and goals
- 2.2.7. Support a research culture that inspires collaboration
- Set up collaborative arrangements with research centres and staff in other HEIs in order to enhance research capacity
  - Promote collaboration in order to enhance quality and breadth of research
  - Partner with industry stakeholders including professional bodies in the production of research outputs
  - Participate in appropriate organisations that promote research and innovation
- 2.2.8. Create an enabling research environment
- Develop efficient research management systems
  - Establish and implement career research development pathways for academic staff
  - Run staff research development programmes geared towards enabling academics to publish
  - Support peer to peer engagement in the development of research within and across faculties
  - Provide resources, facilities and space in order to encourage staff research
- 2.2.9. Engage in research that has social and economic impact
- Identify and develop research that complements sectoral national and international research strategies and priorities
  - Enhance social responsiveness of research within UCEM

## Research Strategy

- Encourage participation of staff in national and international research initiatives

### 2.3. Disseminate Research Undertaken at UCEM

- 2.3.1. Disseminate knowledge to the tutor and academic support community through publication of reports on publications and summaries of conferences attended by UCEM staff;
- 2.3.2. Establish and report on benchmarks that promote high quality research;
- 2.3.3. Set up annual awards for excellence in research in both research centres, subject specific research and for research based studies leading to improved learning and teaching;
- 2.3.4. Ensure all research undertaken within UCEM is available to students, staff and the wider public;
- 2.3.5. Support student research through setting up awards for undergraduate and postgraduate research.

## 3. Implementation and evaluation

- 3.1. This research strategy will be considered and approved by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure congruence with the overarching strategic vision.
- 3.2. The research strategy contained herein will be implemented through the UCEM Research Implementation Plan. The plan is to be approved by the Research Committee.
- 3.3. The Code of Practice Research and Scholarship will provide operational guidance and policy for its implementation.
- 3.4. The implementation of the research strategy will be reviewed annually.

## 4. References

- The Royal Charter and Bye-Laws
- UCEM Teaching and Learning Strategy
- UCEM Strategic Vision
- The Education Act 1986, Section 43
- QAA (2013): Guidance on scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff: Expectations for Foundation Degree-awarding powers and for taught degree-awarding powers. Available at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Guidance-FDAP-TDAP.pdf> [Accessed 18th March 2016]