



PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, REVIEW, AND DIS-ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

Final Approved Version

16th December 2014

1. OVERVIEW

The University is committed to supporting its Research Centres and Institutes in achieving research excellence and long-term sustainability. Research Centres and Institutes also constitute a vital platform through which the University can respond to key developments in research policy and funding at national and European levels. In addition, it is critical that effective oversight and management relationships are in place. To achieve these objectives, proposals for new Research Centres and Institutes will be rigorously examined by the Centres and Institutes Committee (CIC) Centres and Institutes will be reviewed periodically to determine their performance. Underperforming Centres and/or Institutes may be closed.

This document outlines procedures for the establishment and review of Research Centres and Institutes.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A RESEARCH CENTRE OR INSTITUTE

A proposal to establish a research Centre or Institute will be evaluated by the CIC.

Assessment Criteria

- Likelihood of the Centre/Institute achieving national and/or international standing during the initial period of designation
- Relevance to the strategic direction and the operational plan(s) of the University and the relevant College(s)
- Alignment with relevant and current national and European research policy.
- Likelihood of increased success in accessing national and European research funding
- Likelihood of support of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research strategies and projects
- Potential to establish institutional links and collaboration with industry and other public or private sector agencies
- Quality of the proposed research upon which the Centre/Institute's collective activities will be focused
- The commitment to provide significant opportunities for postgraduate training
- Evidence of adequate infrastructure and evidence of support from the University and the relevant College for strategic planning of infrastructural development
- Evidence of sufficient start-up funds to enable proper functioning of the Centre/Institute for the first three years of operation
- Evidence that strategies and targets to attract significant exchequer and (especially) non-exchequer research funding including industry funding, where relevant, within a three-year time frame can be implemented and achieved
- Potential for long-term sustainability based on the delivery of a clear sustainability plan with specified targets and KPIs.

- Adequacy of the Centre/Institute's governance structure
- Clearly stated objectives and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Track record of the Lead Researcher/Director and key research personnel, as evidenced by research publications, grant successes, etc.
- Adequacy of recruitment and performance management processes, including plans for training and development, and for career progression of research staff
- Risk assessment plan
- Potential for internal and external collaboration, including interdisciplinary collaboration

The committee will make one of three recommendations to UMTO for approval, forwarding to the Finance Committee and Governing Body as appropriate:

Full approval: the Centre or Institute should receive full approval for three years subject to providing satisfactory annual reports and a full review after three years

Approval with limited tenure: the Centre or Institute should have full approval for a period of less than three years with a review 3-6 months before the end of the approval period. This type of approval is usually awarded where Centres or Institutes are relying solely on seed funding, where there are a number of concerns regarding the sustainability of the proposal, or there is some other imperative to establish the Centre or Institute. This period of limited tenure gives the Centre or Institute time to acquire additional external funding and/or demonstrate sustainability.

Not approved: the proposal is unsatisfactory and is sent back to the authors for revision with feedback.

3. REVIEW OF A RESEARCH CENTRE OR INSTITUTE

Each research Centre or Institute (M & L only) will be reviewed periodically (once in three years) by the CIC. Small (S) Research Centres will be reviewed by the OVPRI. A review may also be instigated by the Centres and Institutes Committee at the request of OVPRI, UMTO, the Finance Committee, or the Audit Committee.

The Terms of Reference for the review shall be as follows:

- To assess the effectiveness and achievements of the Centre or Institute over the reference period against stated aims, objective and targets and, where necessary, to recommend their revision and to address any perceived discrepancies.
- To review RICU Annual Reports
- To review strategic support to the Centre or Institute from the University and the relevant Colleges in the development of strategy and the delivery of its agreed mission

- To benchmark activities against comparable national or international research groups, and to provide examples of best practice as deemed appropriate;
- To appraise research productivity in terms of publications, research income, supervision of postgraduate students, and collaboration with external agencies;
- To assess the sustainability and merit of future directions including leadership, organizational structures, and resourcing;
- To advise the Centre or Institute on strengths and weaknesses in areas of interest;
- To assess the adequacy of recruitment and performance management processes and compliance with HR policies and procedures;
- To assess the benefits from the Centre or Institute's activities which accrue to the University; and
- To provide a report and recommendations to the Centres and Institutes Committee in respect of a Centre or Institute's continuing designation.

CIC will review annual Annual Reports from each RICU (M & L). An Annual Report template will be developed for those RICUs that do not have to furnish an annual report to a funding agency. Failure to deliver an Annual Report will impact on future designation and continuing status as a RICU. Working with relevant stakeholders, a parallel process will be undertaken by OVPRI for small (S) RICUs.

Assessment Criteria

- Progress of the centre towards achieving national and/or international standing
- Relevance to the strategic direction and the operational plan(s) of the University and the relevant College(s)
- Alignment with relevant and current national and European research policy
- Levels of applications and of success rates in national and European funding calls
- Securing significant exchequer and (especially) non-exchequer research funding over the period of the review
- Success in establishing collaboration with industry and other public or private sector agencies
- Success in establishing institutional links and inter-institutional programmes of research
- Quality of the research during the review period
- Commitment to postgraduate training
- Evidence of adequate infrastructure, and of continued engagement of the University and the relevant College(s) as appropriate in developing infrastructural strategy
- The prospect of medium to long-term sustainability
- Effectiveness of the Centre's governance structure

- Progress in reaching objectives
- Adequacy of recruitment and performance management processes and compliance with HR policies and procedures
- Performance of the Director and key research personnel, as evidenced by research publications, grant successes, etc.
- Evidence of effective risk management and appropriate risk mitigation
- Potential for internal and external collaboration, including interdisciplinary collaboration, where appropriate

The committee will make one of three recommendations to UMTO for approval (including designation as S, M or L), forwarding to the Finance Committee and Governing Body as appropriate:

Full approval: the Centre or Institute should receive full approval for a further three years subject to providing satisfactory annual reports and a full review after three years

Approval with limited tenure: the Centre or Institute should have full approval for a period of less than three years with a review 3-6 months before the end of the approval period. This type of approval is usually awarded where there are a number of concerns regarding the continued viability of the Centre or Institute. This period of limited tenure gives the Centre or Institute time to acquire additional external funding and/or demonstrate sustainability.

Closure: the Centre or Institute has failed to meet key targets in terms of outputs and/or financial viability and should be closed. The Centre or Institute leadership will work with the relevant support offices to ensure an orderly closure with transfer of responsibilities as appropriate, for example, academic schools or departments.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF CENTRES AND INSTITUTES COMMITTEE

The Centres and Institutes Committee will comprise the following:

- Vice President for Research and Innovation (Chair)
- Chair, Academic Council Research & Innovation Committee
- Directors of Research Support Services and Technology Transfer Unit
- Heads of College (or nominee)
- Bursar and Chief Financial Officer (or nominee)
- Director of Human Resources (or nominee)
- Corporate Secretary (or nominee)
- 2 RICU Directors

Where appropriate depending on scale, complexity and strategic importance, the review of a proposal to establish or continue a Centre will include an on-site review with at least *one* external expert and one external stakeholder¹ nominated by the CIC.

Each review of a proposal to establish an Institute will include an on-site review with at least *three* external experts and two external stakeholders nominated by the CIC, following consultation where appropriate with the relevant College(s).

In some instances, and with the prior agreement of CIC, the external peer review of a Centre by a funding agency may form part of the CIC review process.

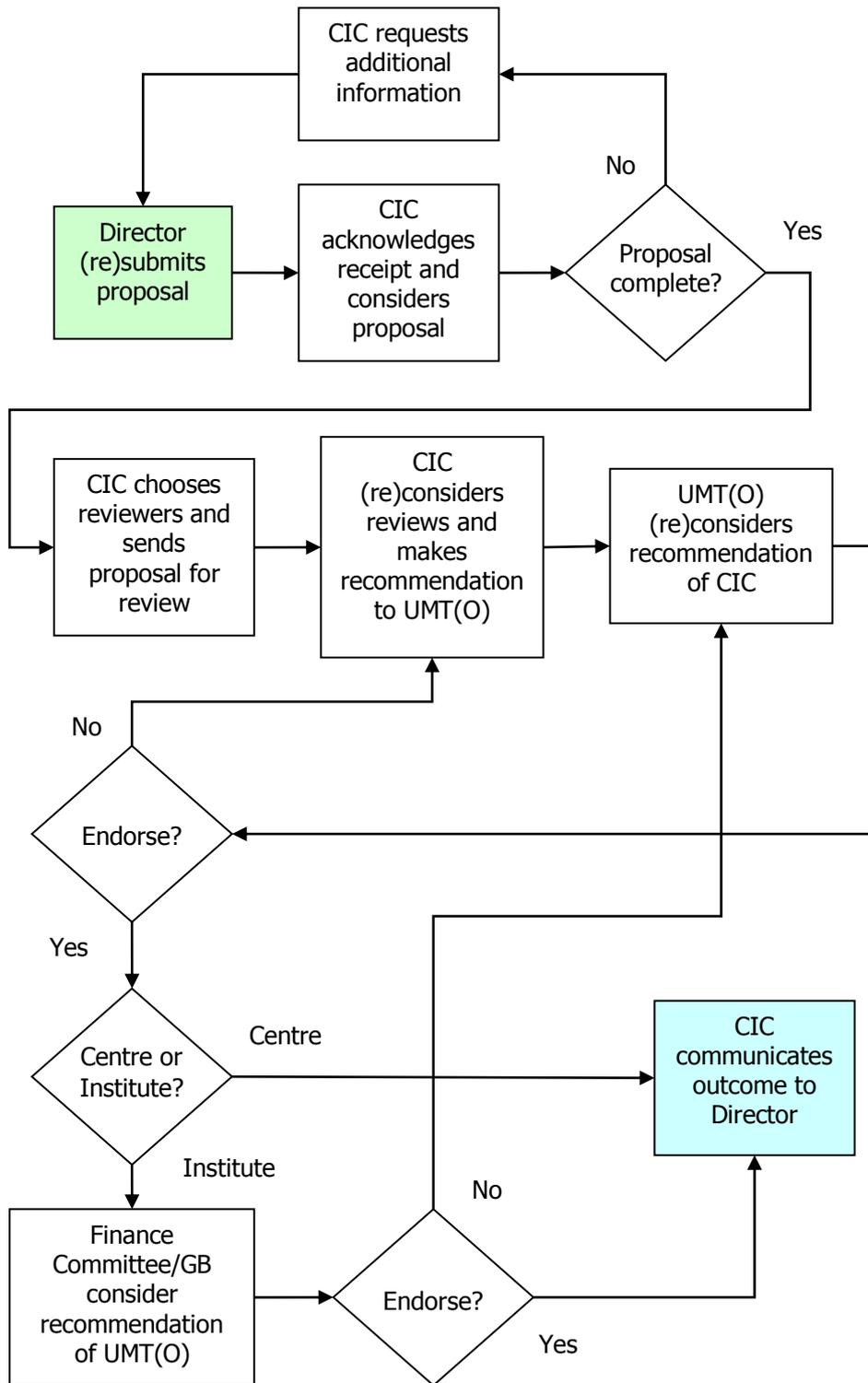
The CIC will report annually to UMTO via the VPRI.

5. APPROVAL/REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals concerning the establishment of research centres and institutes should be initiated by Investigators, supported by Head of Department/School, and HoC(s) and formally signed off by each of them. Proposals should be notified by the HoC to the relevant College Executive Management Committee(s). Following consideration of proposals by the Centres and Institutes Committee, the Vice-President for Research and Innovation will bring recommendations to the UMT(O). Recommendations related to Institutes that are endorsed by UMTO will then be brought to the Finance Committee and Governing Body.

Reviews of research centres and institutes will be carried out by the Centres and Institutes Committee periodically or by request of OVPRI, UMTO, the Finance Committee or Audit Committee of the Governing Body. In addition, the Internal Audit function of the University may review a RICU. Following the review, the Vice-President for Research and Innovation will bring recommendations to the UMTO. Recommendations related to Institutes that are endorsed by UMT(O) will subsequently be brought to the Finance Committee and Governing Body.

¹ The term "stakeholder" includes *inter alia* funding bodies (including Government Departments) and industry representatives



APPENDIX B: EVALUATION FORM: ESTABLISHMENT

NAME OF RICU

To be considered as :

Type S

Type M (single College)

Type M (multiple Colleges) aligned with College _____

Type L aligned with College _____

INDICATIVE CHECKLISTS

The criteria for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine) and HSBL (Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Law) RICUs should be consistent with international discipline norms.

Type S STEM

A Type S refers to a Group, Laboratory or Section embedded within a Department/School. It comprises two or more Investigators and will typically manage multiple Research Projects. A Type S must have:

- ≥ 2 Investigators
- ≥ 2 Researchers

HSBL

A Type S can originate within a Department/School, or be common to more than one Department/School ordinarily within the same College. It comprises two or more Investigators and will typically focus either on a research theme in a sub-area of the discipline(s) concerned or on an emblematic research issue relevant to the discipline(s) globally speaking. A Type S must have:

≥ 2 Investigators

Recruitment of postdoctoral researchers would normally be a strategic priority.

Type M STEM

A Type M comprises a critical mass of Investigators working in a focused thematic area. A Type M must have:

- ≥ 5 Investigators (at least 3 of whom are permanent members of academic/research staff)

and at least three of the following:

- ≥ 5 Postdoctoral researchers
- ≥ 10 PhD students
- $\geq \text{€}250\text{k}$ research expenditure* per annum (externally-secured income)
- $\geq \text{€}50\text{k}$ research overhead income per annum

Criterion	This application	Threshold	Satisfied? Y or N
No. of Investigators		5	
Researchers		5	
Doctoral students		10	
Annual research expenditure		€250k	
Annual overhead		€50k	
OVERALL ASSESSMENT			

**Research expenditure is defined for the purposes of this policy as all research expenditure reported on Agresso regardless of funding source (i.e. collaborative research, contract research, donations, consultancy, commercial income). As in-kind contributions are not reported on Agresso, records supporting the value of in-kind*

contributions should be retained by the School/ College/ Research Centre and provided to the CIC, if requested, for the purposes of review and categorisation of Centre as per the policy.

HSBL

A Type M focuses on a research issue of significance across a range of Schools, typically spanning a major disciplinary sub-division (e.g. the humanities, the social sciences, business) and is a major element in the research infrastructure of the College(s) concerned. A financial plan for a five-year period will be agreed before submission to the CIC with the College Executive Management Committee(s) of the College(s) concerned.

A Type M must have:

- ≥ 5 Investigators (at least 3 of whom are permanent members of academic/research staff)

and at least two of the following in any three-year period:

- ≥ 5 Postdoctoral researchers
- ≥ 10 PhD students
- $\geq \text{€}50\text{k}$ research expenditure per annum (externally-secured income)

Criterion	This application	Threshold	Satisfied? Y or N
No. of Investigators		5	
Researchers		5	
Doctoral students		10	
Annual research expenditure		€50k	
OVERALL ASSESSMENT			

Type L STEM

A Type L is a University flagship, addressing a research theme that is aligned to institutional and national and/or international strategies. The Type L comprises a critical mass (> 100) of researchers with dedicated research space. The Type L may include one or more constituent Type Ms. A Type L must have:

- ≥ 10 Investigators (at least 6 of whom are permanent members of academic/research staff)
- ≥ 25 PhD students
- $\geq \text{€}5\text{M}$ research expenditure per annum (externally-secured income)
- $\geq \text{€}500\text{k}$ research overhead income per annum
- ≥ 10 Postdoctoral researchers
- ≥ 100 researchers in total (including PhD students)

Criterion	This application	Threshold	Satisfied? Y or N
No. of Investigators		10 (6)	
Doctoral students		25	

Annual research expenditure		€5M	
Annual overhead		€500k	
Researchers		10	
Researchers		10	
OVERALL ASSESSMENT			

HSBL

A Type L is a University flagship, addressing a research theme that is aligned to institutional and national and/or international strategies. It is the focus for major infrastructural development in one or more Colleges, comprising capital and recurrent funding, and spanning research support and doctoral education. The Type L may include one or more constituent Type Ms.

A Type L must have:

- ≥ 10 Investigators (at least 6 of whom are permanent members of academic/research staff)
- ≥ 25 PhD students
- ≥ €500,000 research expenditure over a four year rolling period (externally-secured income)
- ≥ 10 Postdoctoral researchers in any three-year period

Criterion	This application	Threshold	Satisfied? Y or N
No. of Investigators		10 (6)	
Doctoral students		25	
Annual research expenditure		€50k	
Postdoctoral researchers		10	
OVERALL ASSESSMENT			

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. Likelihood of the RICU achieving national and/or international standing during the initial period of designation

High	
Low	

Explain:

2. Relevance to the strategic direction and the operational plan(s) of the University and the relevant College(s)

High	
Low	

Explain:

3. Alignment with relevant and current national and European research policy

High	
Low	

Explain:

4. Potential to establish institutional links and collaboration with industry and other public or private sector agencies

High	
Low	

Explain:

5. Quality of the proposed research upon which the RICU's collective activities will be focused

High	
------	--

Low	
-----	--

Explain:

6. Potential for internal and external collaboration, including interdisciplinary collaboration, where appropriate.

High	
Low	

Explain:

7. The commitment to provide significant opportunities for postgraduate training

High	
Low	

Explain:

8. Evidence of adequate infrastructure

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

9. Evidence of sufficient start-up funds to enable proper functioning of the RICU for the first three years of operation

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

10. Evidence that strategies and targets to attract enhanced external research funding within a three-year time frame can be implemented and achieved

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

11. Securing significant exchequer and (especially) non-exchequer research funding over the period of the review

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

12. The prospect of long-term sustainability

High	
Low	

Explain:

13. Adequacy of the RICU's governance structure

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

13. Clearly stated objectives and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

14. Performance of the Director and key research personnel, as evidenced by research publications, grant successes, etc.

High	
Low	

Explain:

15. Adequacy of recruitment and performance management processes

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

16. Compliance with the specific criteria identified by the CIC for designation as a RICU of "Type S" or "Type M" or "Type L".

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

16. Recommendation

Full approval	
Approval with limited tenure (enter number of years)	
Not approved	

17. Reasons for recommendation

18. Name

19. Signature

20. Date

APPENDIX C: EVALUATION FORM: REVIEW

NAME OF RESEARCH INSTITUTE / CENTRE / UNIT (RICU)

-
- Type S**
- Type M (single College)**
- Type M (multiple Colleges)** **aligned with College** _____
- Type L** **aligned with College** _____

1. Progress of the RICU towards achieving national and/or international standing during the initial period of designation

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

2. Relevance to the university's strategic direction and the operational plan(s) or the participating College(s)

High	
Low	

Explain:

3. Success in establishing institutional links and collaboration with industry and other public or private sector agencies

High	
Low	

Explain:

4. Quality of the research during the review period

High	
Low	

Explain:

5. Commitment to postgraduate training

High	
Low	

Explain:

6. Evidence of adequate infrastructure

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

7. Funding to date

Adequate	
----------	--

Inadequate	
------------	--

Explain:

8. Evidence that strategies and targets to attract external research for the next three years can be achieved

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

9. The prospect of long-term viability

High	
Low	

Explain:

10. Effectiveness of the RICU's management structure

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

11. Progress in reaching objectives

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

12. Performance of the Director and key research personnel, as evidenced by research publications, grant successes, etc.

High	
Low	

Explain:

13. Adequacy of recruitment and performance management processes and compliance with HR policies and procedures

Adequate	
Inadequate	

Explain:

14. Recommendation

Full approval	
Approval with limited tenure (enter number of years)	
Closure	

15. Reasons for recommendation

16. Name

17. Signature

18. Date