RESEARCH STRATEGY

JUNE 2023

Scope and retention period

This Research Strategy has been developed in response to the draft 2024 institutional *Strategic Plan*, the panel feedback from the 2021 Research Excellence Framework, and a gap analysis undertaken by a working group of the Research Committee in September 2022. Its purpose is to reflect the ambitions of the 2024 *Strategic Plan* and enhance the institutional research environment through the current funding cycle in preparation for the Research Excellence Framework 2028, supporting the work of Academy researchers and enabling Academy research to benefit the student experience and society at large.

For the purpose of this Research Strategy, the definition of research will match the REF2021 definition: "a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared." Researchers are defined as: staff with a significant responsibility for research (as documented in the HESA staff return); staff without a significant responsibility for research who are nevertheless producing research or supervising research students; research students.

The draft 2024 *Strategic Plan* explicitly references research in each of its three thematic areas:

> *Theme 1 – Education*
> - The currency of our student experience will be underpinned by research, scholarship, and professional practice.
>
> *Theme 2 – Engagement*
> - Strengthen our research environment: support world-leading research with wide-ranging impact, using our world-class teaching staff to develop interdisciplinary research.
> - Develop the range of resources available to support student and staff research, including funding for pilot projects, peer mentorship, and support for collaborative projects and outputs.
>
> *Theme 3 – People and Resources*
> - Recruit and retain excellent staff providing regular training to support their ongoing pedagogical and/or professional development.
> - Ensure that the mission statement of the Museum and Collections is understood across the Academy and that their potential for learning, teaching and research is maximised.
> - Ensure that Library acquisition, disposal, cataloguing and digitisation projects support the curricular and research needs of students, staff and the wider research community.

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This Research Strategy sets out a series of aims and deliverables that will fulfil the expectations of the *Strategic Plan* in the above references and its broader mission. In doing so, it will define the direction of development of the institutional research environment through the current funding cycle to REF2028. The Research Strategy will be reviewed annually.

Strategic Aims

The following seven strategic aims will underpin the administration, management, and governance of the institutional research environment:

1. Improve the visibility and communication of research
The Academy will integrate research activity within existing communications and marketing strategies, promoting the work of research staff and students, and institutional projects, on the Academy's website, social media channels, and other outlets. Additionally, the Academy will support researchers in developing connections within international research communities, and develop its digital infrastructure in support of open research, updating and optimising the existing open access repository.

2. Increase capacity for research and the quality of research output
The Academy will seek to develop a sustainable staffing strategy to build capacity, explicitly and transparently connecting research to the developing policies of staff reward and advancement, and providing opportunity for staff with a significant responsibility for research to develop and grow their research activities. Additionally, the Academy will seek to provide opportunity for staff who do not currently have a significant responsibility for research to develop as researchers, and seek to appoint, where relevant and possible, new teaching staff with established research profiles and early-career researchers.

3. Align research with institutional priorities of Belonging
The Academy will make progress with staff recruitment and support in relation to Belonging. Working with the Belonging Committee, it will identify intersections between research activity and access and participation initiatives, to alleviate current imbalances within staffing, and take positive steps in relation to external guidance, such as the *Athena SWAN Charter* and the *Race Equality Charter*. Additionally, the Academy will develop Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training packages to support research staff.

4. Maximize external research income
The Academy will encourage and support research staff in the development of external funding applications to national and international research funding councils and other funding bodies. Additionally, the Academy will encourage and enable collaborative funding applications with external researchers and organisations.

5. Support and enable research impact
The Academy will establish impact tracking systems to capture the nature and scope of the impact that Academy research has on music pedagogy, the music profession, and society at large. Additionally, the Academy will seek opportunities to enable and extend the impact of past and current research, through internal integration with taught programmes and principal study departments, through the consolidation

and expansion of partnerships with international educational institutions and cultural bodies, and the development of partnerships that deliver wider industry, civic, and cultural benefit.

6. Encourage collaboration in research
The Academy will enable and support collaboration in research, at the levels of individual researchers, networks and clusters, with the Library, Museum and Collections, principal study departments, and between institutions, encouraging collaboration internally between staff with a significant responsibility for research and those without, and between staff and research students, and externally, with researchers at other organisations internationally. Additionally, the Academy will seek opportunities for researchers to expand the epistemological framework of their research through establishing interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations.

7. Develop and formalise research governance
The Academy will take positive steps to increase the transparency of its research governance, and towards aligning the strategic governance of research with the priorities of UK Research and Innovation and its associated organisations as set out in the published Concordats and other policy documents, including: *Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research*; *Concordat for the Advancement of Knowledge Exchange in Higher Education*; *Concordat on Open Research Data*; *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*; *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*. Additionally, the Academy will establish mechanisms to respond to newly published research funder policies, and through its broader mission engage with national priorities, including digital infrastructure, sustainability, levelling up, and widening access.

Deliverables
The following deliverables will support the realisation of the above strategic aims. Progress in these deliverables will be reviewed at the Research Committee meeting in the 2024 summer term.

Establishment of a Research Office
The Research Office, comprising the Research Manager and Research Officer (already in post), will provide administrative and managerial support for the institutional research environment [supporting aims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7].
- Support research staff in the development of funding applications and collaborations, and provide information about relevant opportunities.
- Develop impact enabling and tracking systems.
- Develop resources to support research activity and staff training and community-building initiatives.
- Develop web and social media content for research [website refresh in Autumn 2023].
- Enable collaboration through liaison with external stakeholders, the Library, the Museum and Collections, and programme staff.
- Contribute to the organisation of research events and public-engagement activities.
- Develop research management systems.
- Administer and develop research policies and procedures.

The constituency of the Research Office is: staff with a significant responsibility for research; staff without a significant responsibility for research who are nevertheless producing research or supervising research

students; research students (excluding programme administration covered by the Postgraduate Programmes and Research Administrator).

Career development of researchers
The following initiatives will aid in the development of a sustainable staffing strategy and support staff in research activity and applying for research funding [supporting aims 1, 2, 4, 6].

- Establish a termly internal research seminar that builds a research community and provides a space for collaboration, the sharing of research, and staff training [from September 2023].
- Initiate and maintain regular contact with researchers to ensure that support is tailored to individual research needs and goals [from June 2023].
- Formalise internal research grant application processes [from June 2023].
- Roll out to research staff relevant funding opportunities from the ResearchConnect funding database [from September 2023].
- Promote Academy research on the Academy website and social media channels [website refresh in Autumn 2023].
- Identify, promote, and support the development of internal research networks.
- Work with Programme Managers, Heads of Departments, and Human Resources to identify and alleviate structural impediments to research.
- Work with Programme Managers and Heads of Department to further embed staff research within taught programmes.
- Explore the viability of a formal mechanism for transferal between 'teaching only' and 'teaching and research' contracts, providing training, peer mentoring, and opportunities to pursue research degrees where relevant.
- Develop the connections between research activity and staff reward and advancement.
- Develop a programme of training packages to support researchers in their development.
- Explore the viability of funding to allow for the support of Early Career Researcher positions.

Research governance
The following initiatives will enhance research governance in the areas of research integrity, open research, and Belonging [supporting aims 1, 3, 5, 7].

- Produce a Research Integrity handbook for staff and students [by May 2024].
- Publish an annual statement on Research Integrity [by May 2024].
- Review the Research Ethics policy and the training, procedures, membership, and benchmarking of the Research Ethics Committee [by May 2024].
- Collaborate with the CUK Research Ethics Committee and other bodies, such as the UK Committee on Research Integrity, to develop training for researchers and those on the Research Ethics Committee.
- Review the Open Access policy to ensure compliance with the latest developments [by January 2024].
- Produce an Open Research guide and training for research staff [by January 2024].
- Replace PRESTO with an Open Access repository that is fit for purpose [by May 2024].
- Work with the Belonging Committee to identify intersections between research activity and access and participation initiatives.
- Promote research that foregrounds issues concerning Belonging.

- Explore recruitment and support initiatives for research staff that alleviate current imbalances.
- Develop institutional responses to external guidance and benchmarking in Belonging relevant to research.
- Develop training and mentoring packages that include ECR professional development, ethics and research integrity training, research-based EDI training, staff wellbeing initiatives, and bespoke training for staff where appropriate.
- Develop the structure and function of the Research Committee and its relationship with the Research Office.

Impact, Knowledge Exchange, and Public Engagement

The following initiatives will enable and track the benefit of Academy research to education, industry, culture, and society. While Knowledge Exchange has separate management and oversight to Research, and is largely outside the scope of this Research Strategy, it is understood that there will be numerous points of contact and opportunity between the two areas [supporting aims 1, 5, 7].

- Develop an Impact strategy that is linked to teaching and collaboration [by May 2024].
- Invest in impact tracking software and develop impact enabling and tracking systems [by May 2024].
- Formalise reporting by research staff of publications, Impact, Knowledge Exchange, and Public Engagement activities [from September 2023].
- Identify opportunities for intersection between research and knowledge exchange management.
- Reintroduce public engagement research events [from Spring term 2024].

Research degrees

While the management and administration of research degrees falls largely outside of the purview of this strategy, the following initiatives will support both the research degrees programme and the institutional research environment [supporting aims 2, 4, 6].

- Explore external and internal funding models that support research students.
- Explore teaching and team-teaching opportunities for PGR students that reciprocally provide teaching relief and enhanced research time for research staff.
- Develop research collaboration, joint publication, and research network opportunities for research students.
- Explore opportunities for career development and post-doctoral work.
- Explore the viability of an application for Research Degree Awarding Powers.