



NCG HE Research and Scholarly Activity (RSA) Strategy

The purpose of this document is to provide a strategy which outlines NCG's expectations in relation to research and scholarly activity (RSA).

HE Registry has created a strategy to meet the requirements of our awarding powers whilst also providing assurance of the scholarship and pedagogical effectiveness of academic staff across the institution. QAA's 2013 publication 'Guidance on scholarship and pedagogical effectiveness of staff: Expectations for Foundation Degree-awarding powers and for taught degree-awarding powers' require that institutions must demonstrate:

- *the existence of 'a well-founded, cohesive and self-critical academic community that can demonstrate firm guardianship of its standards'*
- *that staff are 'competent to teach, facilitate learning and undertake assessment to the level of the qualifications being awarded'.*
- *how it discharges its 'responsibility for ensuring that staff 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'*
- *how it ensures that all teaching staff engaged in the delivery of higher education programmes 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'*
- *for any member of staff teaching on doctoral programmes (where relevant), active personal engagement with research and/or advanced scholarship at a level commensurate with the degrees on which they teach.*

Source: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2013

More recently, the OfS Regulatory framework (2018) stated that the scholarship and pedagogical effectiveness of staff is of the utmost importance for organisations granted powers to award degrees. There is an expectation that those involved in teaching or supporting student learning, and in the assessment of student work, is appropriately qualified, supported and developed to the levels and subjects of the qualifications being awarded. In line with these expectations NCG are committed to ensuring that

- staff maintain a professional understanding of current developments in research and scholarship in their subject and, where applicable, keep in touch with practice in their professions and for ensuring that structured opportunities for them to do so are both readily available and widely taken up
- staff have relevant learning, teaching and assessment practices that are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship

- staff are actively engaged with the pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge
- staff have an understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline and this directly informs and enhances their teaching.
- Staff are actively engaged with research and/or advanced scholarship to a level commensurate with the level and subject of the qualifications being offered.
- Staff have development opportunities aimed at enabling them to enhance their practice and scholarship

- we ensure that every student has the chance to develop as an independent learner and is able to succeed in their studies and this is achieved by ensuring teaching is effective and that the effective teaching and the facilitation of learning is undertaken by staff with academic, professional and vocational expertise in line with the organisation's curriculum offer.

It is important that the vision for RSA at NCG is clear for those delivering higher education (HE) across the organisation to ensure 'a well-founded, cohesive and selfcritical academic community that can demonstrate firm guardianship of its standards'.

Our approach to RSA is inextricably linked to the nature of our HE curriculum offer. For this reason, our shared understanding of the meaning of research and scholarship is most clearly illustrated through Boyer's model. In a report published in 1990 entitled '*Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*', and later in 1996 ('*The scholarship of engagement*') Boyer articulated his vision of four distinct categories of scholarship:

1. The scholarship of discovery: this can be defined as the acquisition of new knowledge through critical enquiry. This aligns most closely with the concept of research.
2. The scholarship of integration: this can be defined as the application of knowledge across disciplinary boundaries. This usually takes the form of interdisciplinary studies.
3. The scholarship of engagement: this can be defined as the application of knowledge to remedy problems outside of academia. This might involve collaboration with employers, industry, professional bodies or community organisations.
4. The scholarship of learning and teaching: this can be defined as the acquisition of knowledge concerning teaching and learning. This might take the form of innovative evidence-based curriculum developments or action research within the learning environment.

HE within NCG is committed to implementing Boyer's model placing value on the four distinct categories of scholarship. This reflects the focus of our provision of vocational



HE programmes. Divisions within NCG who deliver HE programmes are required to situate their own approach to RSA within Boyer's model. This strategy reflects NCG's core principles for RSA and makes reference to the guidance provided by QAA for degree awarding powers.

The core principles within the strategy are:

1. Enhancing Teaching and Learning
2. Supporting Staff
3. Supporting Students as Researchers
4. Engaging with External Bodies
5. Externalising Research Outputs

Core Principles

1. Enhancing Teaching and Learning:

We believe that research and scholarship should inform and enrich teaching and learning. This will continue to ensure that our HE courses are current, academically rigorous and valued by employers and industry. Research-informed teaching is embedded across our HE provision. Future curriculum design will encourage and promote research-engaged teaching, in which learning opportunities allow students to explore the limits of disciplinary knowledge through replicating contemporary research practice within their field.

2. Supporting Staff:

We are committed to supporting and developing staff members in utilising RSA to deliver exceptional learning opportunities for our students. Teaching staff are viewed as members of a wider subject community, who have a responsibility to contribute positively to the currency and future academic direction of their discipline. We recognise and value research and scholarship undertaken by staff members, appropriate to the academic level at which they teach.

3. Supporting Students as Researchers:

We view students as peers and partners in the research process. Our students are valued as partners, not merely as consumers, of knowledge, whose research outputs are worthy of promotion and dissemination. Students will be encouraged to participate as active members of an inclusive research community. We seek to empower students as agents of change, whose research projects inform the development of our HE provision, including assessment practices, module design, teaching and learning. In this capacity, it is anticipated that students will initiate and drive evidence-based change processes to deliver an outstanding learner experience

4. Engaging with External Bodies:

We are committed to strengthening existing relationships with employers, industry, professional bodies and the wider community by engaging them in RSA conducted



across the institution. These bodies will be encouraged to view us as the solution to regional business and skills needs through our strength in applied research.

5. Externalising Research Outputs:

We are committed to validating our research outputs by exposing them to the scrutiny of the wider academic community. Externalising RSA through peer-reviewed publications and conference papers affirms that our research is recognised and valued beyond the institution, ensuring research impact at a regional, national and international level. We also recognise the value and importance of external outputs which, due to issues of commercial sensitivity, cannot be disseminated widely, including consultancy reports and patent applications.

Process:

To provide 'assurance of the scholarship and pedagogical effectiveness of academic staff' each Division will be required to submit an annual plan (**Appendix 2**) which outlines the focus and RSA activities for the academic year. The plan will be submitted for approval at the HE Learning Teaching and Enhancement committee (September) with regular updates provided by each Division to the committee throughout the academic year in the form of written progress against the plan.

In addition to the plan NCG expects staff to evidence, or be actively working towards if they are involved in teaching, learning and supporting higher education: The table in **Appendix 1** outlines the criteria and expectation for staff linked to the level of teaching.



Appendix 1

SCHOLARSHIP & PEDAGOGICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF STAFF TEACHING HE

The following table outlines the criteria which the NCG expects staff to evidence, be engaged with, or be actively working towards if they are involved in teaching, learning and supporting higher education:

All HE teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> An academic qualification awarded at one level above the highest level taught or a significant level of relevant industrial experience.<input type="checkbox"/> An appropriate teaching qualification.<input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of the Higher Education Academy Fellowship scheme<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and understanding of the QAA subject benchmarks and qualification descriptors.<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and understanding of the resources and services provided by the Library.<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and understanding of the resources and services of Academic Support and the RSA Team
Teaching staff at levels 4 & 5 (in addition to the above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and understanding of current scholarly developments, professional practice and legislation.<input type="checkbox"/> Application of knowledge from industry on teaching and learning.<input type="checkbox"/> Ability to maintain a suitable balance between theory and practice as part of the learning experience.<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at HE conferences, Research Seminars and relevant external events.<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of academic literacy and integrity, relevant to the academic level and subject taught.<input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of benchmarks, standards and quality assurance processes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment on Staff Development sessions, appropriate to prior experience, qualifications and academic level taught.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and understanding of research and advanced scholarship in the relevant discipline.
Teaching staff at level 6 (in addition to the above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement with RSA through developing or leading staff, student or collaborative research projects leading to some form of scholarly output, including Plus One, RSA Forums, conferences and internal publications such as Seven Bridges, Folio and the Culinary Arts journal. <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to deliver research informed teaching. <input type="checkbox"/> Support for students in planning, executing and disseminating their research. <input type="checkbox"/> Dissemination of RSA outputs for example through the HE Conference, Research Seminars, the Research Portal and E-Journal. <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in Research Forums, CHEARG & RSA Socials.
Teaching staff at level 7 (in addition to the above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Membership of appropriate professional bodies or learned societies as appropriate, such as HEA Fellowship. <input type="checkbox"/> Active personal engagement with RSA, with a focus on external dissemination. <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring of colleagues with regard to research, assessment, teaching and learning through channels such as Doctoral and RSA Forums. <input type="checkbox"/> Active membership in appropriate professional bodies or learned societies. <input type="checkbox"/> Experience as external examiner, moderator or QAA reviewer.
PT/fractional teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Personal engagement with HEIs, industry, employers and/or community organisations. <input type="checkbox"/> Currency with professional practice and relevant legislation. <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of current teaching practice, benchmarks and standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Application of knowledge from industry on teaching and learning, appropriate to the academic level taught.



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Engagement with the ethos, culture and strategic vision of the School community of research. |
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Guest speakers Associate or visiting lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Advanced understanding of cutting edge scholarship or professional practice.☐ Engagement with students through adding value to the learner experience.☐ Appropriate academic qualifications or extensive vocational experience, appropriate to the level taught.☐ Engagement with the institutions community of research.
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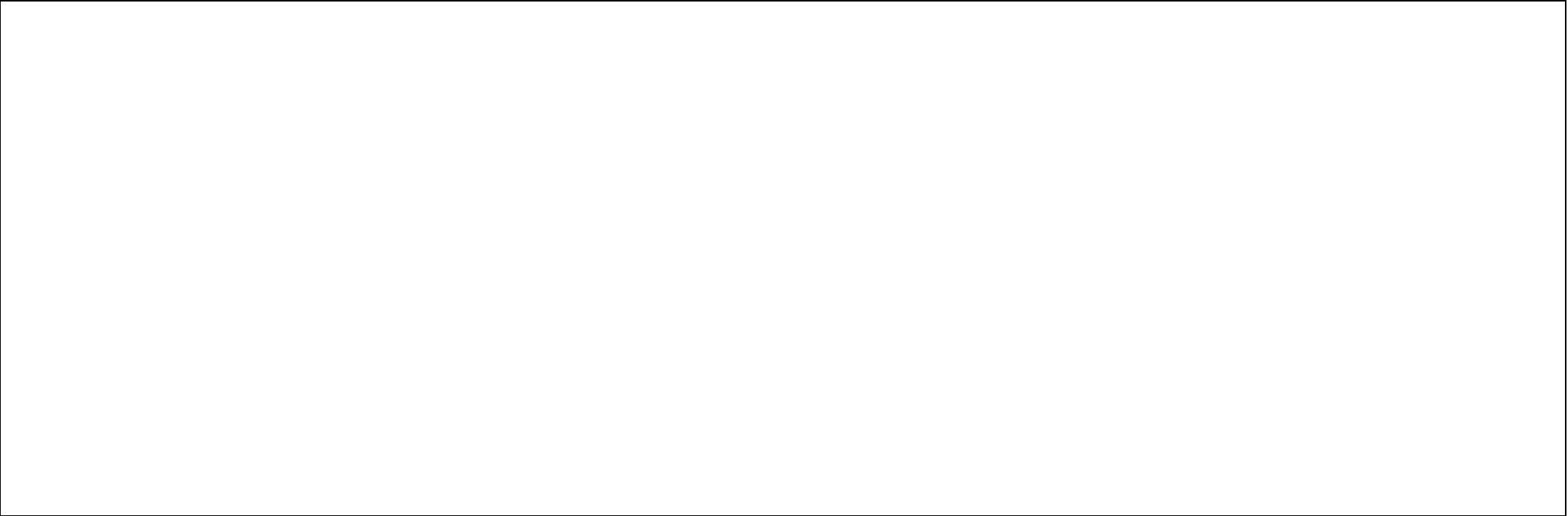
Appendix 2

RSA Implementation Plan

Division:	
Academic year:	
RSA Strategy	Divisional response to meeting the strategy
1. Enhancing Teaching and Learning	
Supporting Staff	



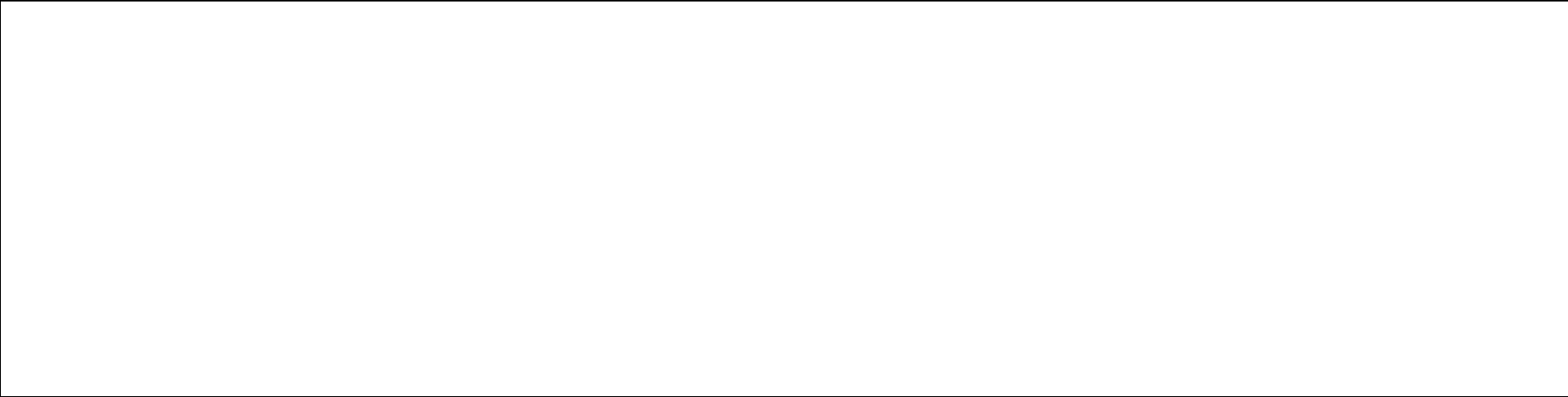
Supporting Students as Researchers





Engaging with External Bodies

Externalising Research Outputs





Guidance on completing the RSA Implementation Plan:

For each of the sections in the implementation plan Registry would expect to see activity relating to the below points but not restricted to these solely:

1. Enhancing Teaching and Learning

RSA which informs and enhances teaching and learning.

RSA which informs curriculum development and innovation.

Currency of staff subject/disciplinary knowledge, appropriate to the academic level of teaching, through engagement in the latest developments in the subject of study.

2. Supporting Staff

Provide staff development to support new and advanced research practitioners.

Ensure currency of academic and subject specific knowledge.

Support and encourage staff to undertake RSA appropriate to the level they teach.

Hold events in the form of conferences, seminars and/or workshops which provide opportunity for staff to share their RSA.

Promote and share research interests across NCG.

Encourage industrial placements, including secondments, to inform scholarly activity and curriculum development.

Contribute to outstanding teaching and learning through the promotion of RSA as part of the appraisal process.

3. Supporting students as Researchers

Providing appropriate academic guidance and resources to support students in their research activities.

Promote personal development as research practitioners, appropriate to their level of study.

Support student-led research projects.

Provide opportunities for students to contribute to the future direction of RSA.

Disseminate student research findings to their peers.

Embed enterprise and entrepreneurship across the HE curriculum to support students in viewing their research skills as an asset within industry and employment.

4. Engaging with External Bodies

Communicate RSA capabilities effectively to external bodies through Employer Forums, placements, conferences, seminars and marketing material.

Support staff members to participate actively in relevant professional bodies by serving on committees, holding office or contributing to publications.

Encourage appropriate staff members to serve as external examiners, moderators or reviewers.

Initiate collaborative research initiatives with HE providers, industry and employers to further raise the profile of our RSA across the commercial sector.

5. Externalising Research Outputs

Providing effective support for staff and students in developing their research findings for publication or external presentation.

Encourage the submission of articles by staff and students to national and international peerreviewed academic journals.

Strengthen current relationships with national and international HE bodies to increase the opportunities for staff to present their work at external events.

