QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
RESEARCH STRATEGY
2012-2015

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Introduction

The 2008 Research Assessment Exercise established Queen Mary, University of London as one of the rising stars among the research-intensive institutions in the UK and highlighted distinctive research strengths in all of our faculties. Our success has been marked by our entry into the Russell Group in 2012. We are now developing ambitious plans, outlined in this College-wide strategy, to consolidate, expand and extend our research activities. This strategy is designed to help create the highest-quality environment for researchers and research students, and to support research partnerships both within the College (including new interdisciplinary, cross-faculty partnerships) and beyond it. It expresses our commitment to the development of researchers at all stages of their careers and should be read alongside the Queen Mary, University of London Strategic Plan 2010-15 and the individual Faculty Strategies.
1: Focussing on our research strengths and promoting our research

1.1 We recognise that research quality depends on the individual enthusiasm, passion and curiosity of our staff and that they require the time, appropriate facilities and encouragement to reach their highest research potential.

1.2 We will support research quality and research staff in a broad range of subjects in all three faculties, continuing to invest in established areas of internationally leading research as well as in emerging areas of excellence. (*Strategic Aim (SA) 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6)

1.3 We will do this by highlighting strategic research areas of established or emerging excellence in all three faculties such as cancer, cardiology, globalization, histories of culture, interrogating our heritage, governance and equalities, public health, the life sciences, materials, computational biology and bioengineering as well as through specialist interdisciplinary research centres. We will review these strategies and centres annually to ensure an appropriate level of progress. (SA 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6)

1.4 We will develop a high level of public visibility for our research and its impact, ensuring broad awareness of the innovative work that we do across the College. We will provide information in an accessible and exciting manner by highlighting both our disciplinary successes in fundamental research and our cross-cutting interdisciplinary work which draws on the strengths of individual researchers, schools, institutes and faculties. We will provide a rolling programme of outward-facing presentations on areas such as:

• QM2012 (our Olympics-related research)
• Healthy cities
• Securing the future
• Creative technologies
• Active citizenship
• Aging in the 21st century
• Mind and society
• New materials for the 21st century
• Policy and politics

These will be regularly reviewed and revised. Faculties and schools/institutes will be supported to ensure that they also highlight research successes that are appropriate for their audiences – these may be more focused on disciplinary or fundamental research problems. (SA 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6)

1.5 We will embed public engagement activities across all our research areas, train our early career staff in public engagement skills, and develop and support Queen Mary’s Centre for Public Engagement to deliver greater public awareness of the difference our research and researchers make to key global problems. (SA 1.1, 1.3)

1.6 We will continue to develop our research profile through our open access research repository in order to make our excellent research available freely to the widest possible audience. (SA 2)

*Please note:*
References to numbered Strategic Aims (SA) and Enabling Aims (EA) relate to the Queen Mary, University of London Strategic Plan 2010-15.
2: Research performance and research funding

2.1 We will appoint and retain excellent academic staff with, or with the potential for, a strong publication profile and clear plans for attracting external funding and, where relevant, industrial and/or public engagement. We will ensure that all research staff, regardless of race, gender and disability, have equal opportunities for developing their research potential. Each faculty will develop mechanisms for creating an appropriate workload and for monitoring, supporting and rewarding success in publication, PhD supervision and research funding application success. We will have clear policies for supporting sabbatical leave to encourage research development. (SA 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7)

2.2 We will provide mentorship or other forms of support systems for all academic staff at appropriate levels within the institution. This will include helping staff to identify appropriate routes for publication, research funding, any ethical implications, and the potential for the commercialisation and impact of their work. We will implement an internal peer-review process for all major grant applications. (SA 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)

2.3 We will return staff to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) where there is confidence their publications will be assessed as being of the highest quality. We will use external expert advice in making these judgements and will adhere to our code of practice in making and communicating these decisions. (SA 1.6, 1.7)

2.4 Staff will get feedback on their research performance and support to develop and improve where necessary. Staff who perform exceptionally well in research will be rewarded through the promotion and contribution reward scheme. (SA 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

2.5 We consider that excellence in research depends on staff who are motivated and committed to integrity and ethical behaviour. We will regularly review our staff development and support in this area of performance as well as ensuring that we deploy appropriate policies and procedures for research integrity and ethical behaviour in research. (SA 1.4, 1.5, 1.10)

2.6 We will invest in dedicated professional support for European Union funding applications and their delivery, targeting the appropriate themes of Frameworks 7 and 8, Marie Curie and Erasmus Mundus schemes, as well as European Research Council opportunities. (SA 1.5)

2.7 We will invest in supporting greater liaison with industrial, NGO and other partners. We will use CASE (Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering), CDA (Collaborative Doctoral Awards) and other forms of PhD co-supervision to strengthen our research portfolio and ensure that our contractual and IP agreements are appropriate for these relationships. (SA 1.5, 1.10)

2.8 We will work closely with UCLPartners and other partner NHS Trusts to deliver and develop research related to NHS priorities. We will work to increase patient participation in clinical trials across all medical disciplines. (SA 1.5)

2.9 We will build on and develop our key research relationships with companies such as Microsoft, Bosch, HP and Quintiles; NGOs such as the Intellectual Property Institute and ArtsAdmin; major cultural institutions such as the Natural History Museum, Kew Gardens, V&A and the British Library; and with community groups such as London Citizens and AfroReggae.

2.10 We will promote the disclosure of inventions, grow income-generating licensing agreements and create spin-out companies arising from Queen Mary and related Trust work by supporting and rewarding this type of activity through our promotions processes and contribution reward scheme. (SA 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12)

2.11 We will review and develop our IP and technology transfer policy to ensure that it provides an appropriate incentive for academic colleagues, protects the College’s interests and enables the generation of knowledge that is of benefit to the wider UK and international community. (SA 2.9, 2.11, 2.12)

2.12 We will expand our consultancy income by reviewing and implementing our policy on consultancy to ensure that it meets both academic colleagues’ interests and the needs of the College. We will ensure that the use of College facilities and services for private purposes is carefully monitored and that academic colleagues recognise the value of working within the College policy on consultancy. (SA 2.13)

We will also work with national and international research facilities such as CERN and ISIS. (SA 1.4, 2.10, 2.13, (Enabling Aim) EA 1.6)
3: Development of researchers and research students

3.1 We will deliver the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers by 2012 by agreeing mechanisms for appointment, mentorship and bridging funding to ensure that research careers at Queen Mary are appropriately developmental (SA 1.8, 1.9) and engage with the Equality Challenge Unit, Vitae and other national bodies in developing and implementing our policies in equalities and diversity for researchers. (EA 1, 1.3)

3.2 We will retain our Athena Bronze award and achieve an Athena Silver award in at least four schools/institutes by 2014. (EA 1.3, 1.4)

3.3 We will achieve the European HR Badge of Excellence in Research by 2013. (SA 1.3, 1.3)

3.4 We will use our IT transformation project to provide a high quality IT infrastructure that supports the development and delivery of 21st Century research including secure data storage, a database repository, and our requirements for high performance computing. (EA 2.5)

3.5 We will embed research grant preparation and researcher development for all new staff who require such support in our academic development programmes by 2012. (SA 1.6, 1.8, 1.9)

3.6 We will sustain and develop our Research Council-funded partnership arrangements through successful Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) block grants and doctoral training centres. We will anticipate Research Councils UK (RCUK) calls for doctoral training by developing internal training centres in strategic areas. (SA 1.4, 1.10)

3.7 We will comply with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) code of practice for research degree programmes and deliver an appropriate compulsory postgraduate research skills training programme for all our doctoral candidates, including support for employability by 2012. (SA 1.10)

3.8 We will provide high-quality supervision training for new staff and offer regular refresher sessions for existing staff. (SA 1.10)

3.9 We will have a PhD submission rate of 85 per cent across all three faculties by 2015, using our progression and annual monitoring processes to identify and support students who are facing difficulties. (SA 1.10)

3.10 We will develop attractive postgraduate research recruitment and support packages for the highest quality Home/EU and International applicants by 2012. (SA 1.10)

3.11 We will provide high-quality work and social space for all our postgraduate research students, either at school/institute/faculty- or College-level by 2015. (EA 2.6)