Research Structures Procedure

1 Purpose

To establish a process for the establishment, function, research performance assessment, and management of the University's research structures.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all University research structures.

Exclusions:

The Offices of the Research and Innovation Division are not within scope of this procedure.

3 Procedure Overview

This procedure establishes the framework for the operation, performance, reporting, review, governance, management, establishment and disestablishment of the University's research structures.

This procedure aligns with:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*: Standard 4.1 Research

4 Procedures

The University is committed to research excellence that delivers significant impact to industry and our communities. Structures that foster a vibrant research culture are critical to this.

4.1 Research structures

The University recognises three tiers of research structures.

4.1.1 Research institutes

Research institutes are University entities of research excellence in a broad area of research strength. They have multiple research programs focused on delivering impact, and are involved

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in national and international partnerships. Research institutes provide high-level leadership and advocacy for a broad research area; are a major conduit between industry, the community and the University; promote multidisciplinary research; provide affiliated centres and research program teams (RPTs) within the institute with strategic, administrative and business development support; and play a key role in implementing strategies related to the University's recruitment and retention of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Students as well as international rankings. They are led by a research Institute Executive Director who reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation). Institute Deputy Executive Directors may also be appointed.

4.1.2 Research centres

Research centres are comprised of several research programs in a specific research area. They are core University entities for driving research performance, providing leadership and mentoring to researchers, and training of HDR Students. Research centres will normally be aligned to an institute and therefore be major contributors to an institute's research performance. They are led by a research Centre Director who normally reports to a research Institute Executive Director. Centre Directors of non-aligned research centres will normally report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) or where appropriate, to an approved external governance structure such as those typical for Co-operative Research Centres and Australian Research Council (ARC) Centres of Excellence.

4.1.3 Research program teams (RPTs)

Research program teams (RPTs) are comprised of two or more academic researchers and their HDR Students, and are focused on a specific research program. RPTs are typically the functional research units within research centres and institutes and hence are central to the performance of centres and institutes. RPTs, which are not aligned to research centres and institutes, may also be recognised by the University. RPTs are led by the RPT leader who will be responsible for reporting on the RPT's activities and performance to the affiliated (if relevant) research Centre Director or research Institute Executive Director.

4.2 Establishment of an institute or centre

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), will seek endorsement from the Vice-Chancellor's Executive for the Vice-Chancellor's approval for the establishment of an institute or centre. In determining whether to establish an institute or centre, the following will be taken into account:

1. research performance of the proposed institute or centre;
2. alignment with the University's strategic objectives;
3. membership and critical mass;
4. financial viability; and

5. the value add that the new structure will drive in achieving the University's overarching research goal and objectives.

4.3 Governance of research institutes and centres

Each institute will have a governance board which will be chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and include the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), Institute Executive Director, Institute Deputy Executive Director (if applicable), and up to four members who would provide relevant expertise to the institute's performance. Members of the governance board may also be external. The final composition of membership will take into consideration appropriate equity and diversity representation.

The role of the governance board is to:

1. provide leadership in relation to the research priorities and direction, as well as quality of research and research training activities performed by the institute and associated centre/s;

2. set annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for their institute and associated centre/s; and

3. review performance against agreed KPIs (refer Section 4.6).

The governance board will normally meet bi-annually. The terms of reference for the governance board will be subject to the Vice-Chancellor's approval, on the recommendation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

4.4 Management of research institutes

Each institute will have a management committee to oversee operations, research performance and research culture. The management committee will comprise the Institute Executive Director, Institute Deputy Executive Director (if applicable), research Centre Directors and other members key to the operations of the institute such as Office of Research Development Employees. The management committee will meet at least quarterly to discuss and review Research Activities, performance and management.

The Institute Executive Director, assisted by the Institute Deputy Executive Director (if applicable), will be responsible for the management and leadership of the institute. This includes oversight of operations and safety, promoting multidisciplinary research and collaborations, implementing strategies related to the University's recruitment and retention of international HDR Students and international rankings, ensuring strong links within the University especially into the faculties, and fostering a vibrant research and mentoring culture.

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4.5 Management of research centres

Each centre will have a management committee to oversee operations, research performance and research culture. The management committee will comprise the Centre Director, aligned RPT leader/s and other members key to the management of the centre. The management committee will meet at least quarterly to discuss and review Research Activities, performance and management. The Centre Director will be responsible for the management and leadership of the centre. This includes management of operations including safety, allocation of resources, ensuring strong links within the University, especially into the faculties, providing mentoring to researchers and fostering a vibrant research and research training culture. If a centre is not aligned with an institute, a governance board will be established with membership including, but not limited to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and Centre Director.

4.6 Performance

Institutes and centres are expected to achieve KPIs, which will be set and agreed annually. These will include, but not limited to, external income, number and quality of research publications and other Research Outputs, level of engagement with industry and community organisations, HDR Student commencements and completions.

4.7 Operations, reporting and review

Each research institute and centre will report annually on its performance against agreed KPIs to their respective governance board.

Research institutes and centres will normally have a term of four years. Additional terms may be granted subject to review.

The review process (which may involve external input) will take into account, but is not limited to, the following:

1. performance against annual KPIs;
2. research culture;
3. alignment with the University strategic objectives;
4. level of implementation of University strategies and plans;
5. membership and critical mass;
6. financial viability; and
7. the value add that the structure provides to each entity.

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4.8 Naming convention

Research institute and centre names will be straight forward in nature and reflect the area or areas of research that are undertaken by the University entity. Descriptors such as 'excellence' or 'national' will not be included unless specified by an external funding agency such as those typical for Co-operative Research Centres and ARC Centres of Excellence. Convention for reference to a research institute and centre will normally be 'UniSQ Institute for…' or 'UniSQ Centre for…'.

4.9 Resourcing

The University will provide facilities and operational support to research institutes and centres including financial and budgetary assistance, intellectual property and contract management, grant submission etc. It is expected that funding for research and additional operational Employees, equipment, consumables, travel etc. will be secured from funding organisations external to the University.

4.10 Disestablishment of an institute or centre

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), will seek endorsement from the Vice-Chancellor's Executive for the Vice-Chancellor's approval for the disestablishment of an institute or centre at any stage during a term. In determining whether to disestablish a research institute or centre, the above review criteria (refer Section 4.7) will be taken into account.

Where a disestablishment affects Employees, consultation will occur in accordance with the University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement or employment contract.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research)
Responsible Officer	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Development and Commercialisation)
Policy Type	University Procedure

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Policy Suite	Integrated Planning and Performance Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	2/1/2026
Effective Date	2/1/2026
Review Date	26/2/2023
Relevant Legislation	
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Marketing and Brand Policy
Related Procedures	Sales and Student Recruitment Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Enterprise Agreement
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) The person bearing that title including a person acting in that position. Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Student A Student enrolled in an HDR program. Key Performance Indicators The key measures of activities the University is undertaking to achieve the aims of the strategic plan. Research Activities Refers to activities that result in the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This

	could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes. Research Output An output is an outcome of research and can take many forms. Research Outputs must meet the definition of Research. University The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland. Vice-Chancellor The person bearing the title of Vice-Chancellor and President, or as otherwise defined in the University of Southern Queensland Act 1998 , including a person acting in that position.
	Definitions that relate to this procedure only
	Centre Director The person or persons bearing that title. **Institute Deputy Executive Director** The person or persons bearing that title. **Institute Executive Director** The person or persons bearing that title.
Keywords	
Record No	18/174PL

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