Governance of Research

Contents

Summary

1.1 Organisational Context

1.1.1   The founding Articles of Association establishes that the Object of the School is 'To organize, promote and assist research and the advancement of science and learning in the various branches of knowledge dealt with by the institution.' (Article 3(A) (II)).
The means by which the School pursues this Object are set out in its various strategies and policies for research, knowledge exchange and impact.

1.1.2   This Policy defines the governance of research at the School. Governance in this context is taken to mean the processes by which the School corporate ensures the effective management of research, either by the individual member of staff, or by an organisational entity. Research is taken to include knowledge exchange and impact, and policy work.

1.2 Organisational Entities

1.2.1   There are three major distinct organisational entities where academic activity is carried out in the School:

1.2.1.1.1   Departments: the central loci of teaching, research and permanent faculty appointments.

1.2.1.1.2   Institutes: Large inter-disciplinary units that bring together faculty members from multiple Departments (and Centres) for multi-functional programmes of research, training and non-academic engagement. Institutes can run executive education or short course teaching programmes. They do not make permanent appointments of New Academic Career (NAC) staff.

1.2.1.1.3   Research Centres: specialist research initiatives operating under Research Committee supervision. They require support from multiple departments and/or institutes and will act for the benefit of the School as a whole, though have a nominated affiliated department/institute for administrative purposes. In varying degrees, Centres can also, or may primarily, take on knowledge exchange or non-academic engagement functions, linked to research by LSE faculty. Research Centres can run executive education or short course teaching programmes. They do not make permanent appointments of New Academic Career (NAC) staff.

2.   For historical or other reasons, the name of an organisational unit may not correspond to its formal status within the School's governance framework. Thus, for example, the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment carries the status of Research Centre within the School's governance framework, and some DRUs may continue to carry the name, 'Centre of…' or '…Observatory'. Throughout this document, reference to Department, Research Centre, Institute or inter-/Departmental Research Unit relates to the status of the organisational entity, not the name of the entity.

3.   Departments are the central loci for research in a number of ways:

- Every member of the career-track academic staff and every research student is affiliated to a Department or Departments, through which they receive support and are managed.
- The School funds its activities primarily at the level of the Department.
- National research evaluation submissions are developed in the main around disciplines, and Departments are to the greater part accountable for performance in these evaluations.

1.3 Research by Individuals

1.3.1   The School's research is conducted by individuals contracted for the express purpose, whether by employment contract or by other association intended and recognised for research purposes (e.g. visiting or affiliate status).

1.3.2   Individuals conducting research and generating impact on behalf of the School are subject to the School's research policies and guidelines, which may vary from time to time. These include (but are not limited to) the Research Ethics Policy[1], the Code of Research Conduct[2] and the Principles of Authorship[3] . Staff conducting research on behalf of the School are protected by the statutory principles of academic freedom set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act and subsequent legislation.

1.3.3   The research performance of individual staff is subject to the School's management and related processes which vary from time to time, including Review and Promotion procedures.

1.4 Research within organisational entities
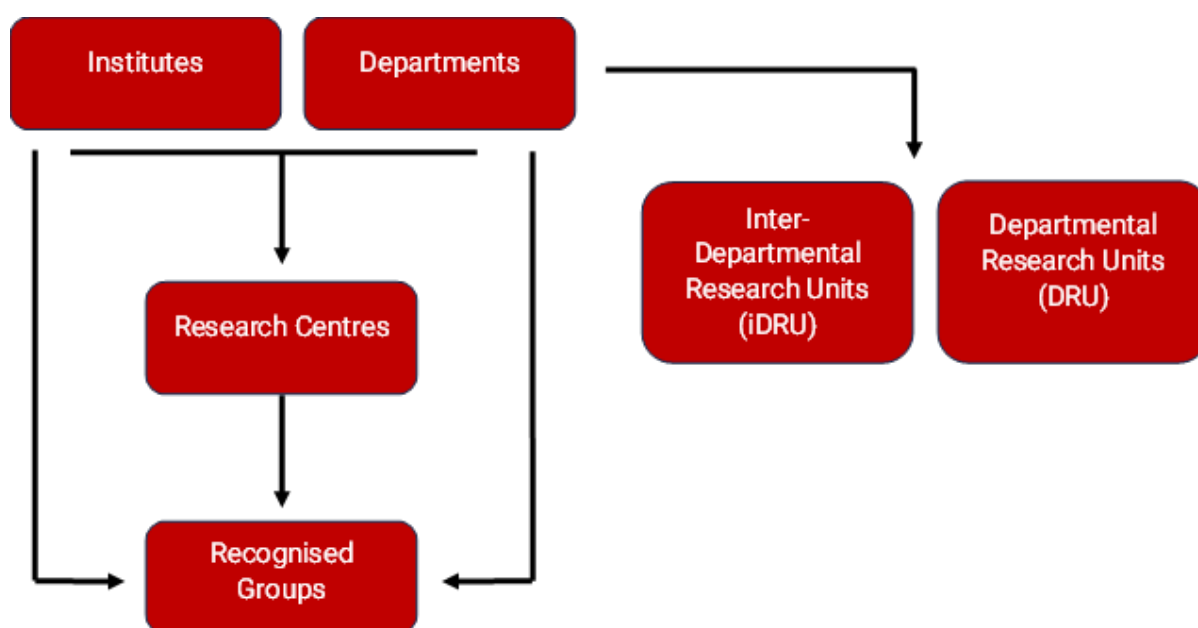
Departments

1.4.1   The School's Research Committee has a joint responsibility, along with APRC and ASC, for reviews of Departments. A member of the School's Research Committee assists with each Departmental review with a view to assessing the research contribution and research and KEI/non-academic engagement strategy (including for research students) of Departments. Reports from each Departmental Review will be considered by Research Committee.

Institutes

1.1.1.   The School's Research Committee is responsible for the review of Institutes, and for recommending the establishment and termination of Institutes. Procedures and further information can be found in Section 4.

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[1] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/resEthPolPro.pdf

[2] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/codResCon.pdf

[3] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/priOfAut.pdf

Research Centres

The School's Research Committee is responsible for the review of Research Centres, and for recommending the establishment and termination of Research Centres. Procedures and further information can be found in Section 4.

Other research entities

1.4.2   The School supports collaborative research and supports the development of research groups where these enhance the quality of the School's research and knowledge engagement activities and where they provide a focus for fund-raising. Research groups meeting these criteria will be supported in the School by the recognition of their names and identities, the provision of space on the School's website and, in some cases, the allocation of resource.

1.4.3   Three such entities exist within the School: Departmental Research Units (DRUs), inter-Departmental Research Units (iDRUs) and Recognised Groups.

Departmental and inter-Departmental Research Units

1.4.4   Typically, Departmental Research Units (DRUs) or inter-Departmental research units (iDRUs) will be mid-sized entities that fall between the existing categories of Research Centres and individual researcher. Although size alone will not be a defining factor, DRUs and iDRUs should consist of a programme(s) of research that is more than a project undertaken by a sole researcher. Whilst there is no prescribed timescale for the duration of a research programme(s) within a DRU or iDRU, it would be expected that a programme(s) has a duration of at least three years, typically with an annual research income of at least £100k. Members of DRUs or iDRUs can be drawn from different Departments. A DRU will normally be hosted within a single Department. An iDRU will be hosted by two or more Departments, usually on a rotating basis subject to approval by the Pro Vice Chancellor Research (PVCR). The 'lead administrative Unit' for governance and financial purposes should normally be that of the first iDRU Director.

1.4.5   Departmental Research Units and inter-Departmental Research Units will be recommended and reviewed by Departments, subject to approval by and oversight of the School's Research Committee.

Recognised Groups

1.4.6   Recognised Groups are smaller research groups, networks, projects, commissions or other research or research-related activities operating within or across one or more Departments, Institutes or Research Centres, which have a continuing programme of events or activities or produce publications which are ascribed to the entity, but which do not have the status of a DRU or iDRU.

1.4.7   Recognised Groups will be recommended and reviewed by Departments, Research Centres or Institutes (as appropriate), subject to approval by and oversight of the School's Research Committee.

1.5 Summary of responsibilities, accountabilities and benefits

1.5.1   Departments, Institutes, Research Centres and DRUs/iDRUs are eligible for the award of Research Investment Funding (RIF) in accordance with the terms of the scheme. Recognised Groups have no RIF entitlement.

1.5.2   Departments, Institutes and Research Centres are eligible for the allocation of School space dedicated to the unit, with actual space allocation according to the norms established for the purpose by the School Management Committee. DRUs/iDRUs and Recognised Groups do not normally have a separate space entitlement and are accommodated within their host unit's

allocation.

1.5.3 Departments, Institutes, Research Centres, DRUs/iDRUs and Recognised Groups are eligible for a presence on the School's website. No other research group is formally recognised by the School.

Entity	Accountability	Benefit
Department	SMC, APRC and Research Committee	Space, RIF funding, website presence
Institute	SMC, APRC and Research Committee	Space, RIF funding website presence
Research Centre	Research Committee	Space, RIF funding, website presence
Departmental Research Unit or inter-Departmental Research Unit	Department (with report to School Research Committee)	Share of RIF funding, website presence
Recognised Group	Department/Research Centre/Institute (with report to School Research Committee)	Website presence

1.5.4 Those responsible for managing any academic unit in the School must adhere to the following six core principles:

(a) transparency and accountability;
(b) clarity of functions and roles;
(c) adherence to the highest standards of integrity and School-wide values;
(d) clear decision-making frameworks;
(e) clear authority and powers of delegation;
(f) collegiality.

All members of the School must abide by the School's Ethics Code[4] and associated policies and procedures. An overview of relevant School-wide policies in relation to good conduct of research can be found on the School's Research Integrity web page[5].

1.6 Changes to this Policy

1.6.1 Research Committee will recommend to Academic Board for approval any changes it thinks are necessary to this policy and its annexes.

2 Processes

2.1 Memoranda of Understanding

2.1.1 In the course of work within a Recognised Group, DRU/iDRU, Research Centre or Institute, an agreement may be made to work with an external organisation. In this case, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) may be required.

2.1.2 MOUs can only be signed by authorised signatories within the LSE. If one is required, please contact the Research Due Diligence Manager and the Research Contracts team for guidance[6].

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[4] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Secretarys-Division/Ethics/Ethics-Code

[5] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-and-innovation/research/Research-integrity-at-LSE; See also: UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity: https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf

[6] RI.Security@lse.ac.uk

2.2 Support

2.2.1 Support for all researchers and research staff is provided by the Research and Innovation division. A table showing which staff support which units can be found here: https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-and-innovation/Team

2.2.2 All applications (for grants) should go through the relevant Research Development Manager as identified in 2.2.1 above.

3 Institutes

3.1 Establishment of Institutes

3.1.1 An institute is a structure which provides a coordinated focus for research, knowledge exchange, engagement and impact in social science subjects of contemporary relevance that cannot be approached from the standpoint of a single academic discipline or by simple interdisciplinary cooperation between departments. They will have significant levels of funding and are expected to have an externally facing profile.

3.1.2 Institutes will ordinarily have the formal support of at least three Departments (as indicated by the Head of Department or by agreement at a Departmental Meeting), but Research Committee, APRC and Academic Board can also receive and review proposals that have the support and active buy-in of a substantial body of faculty members from across the School.

3.1.3 Institutes should demonstrate how they will provide a net benefit to the mission of the LSE. Additionality can take several forms: better coordination of existing activities; significant new external funding supporting the distinctive agendas of the Institute in question; more efficient use of shared services; new research, training, knowledge exchange, impact and engagement agendas that go beyond (and need to go beyond) inter-Departmental initiatives; upgrading of the internal LSE research environment, for example by acting as occasional hosts or sponsors of inter-Departmental seminars and workshops; enhancing the overall reputation of the School, etc. In all cases, the underlying intellectual case for an Institute will explain why such activities cannot be accommodated within existing School units or inter-departmental activities.

3.1.4 Institutes should demonstrate that their activities will be of a quality that is comparable with the major activities of existing LSE Departments and Research Centres, and that they will comply with appropriate LSE quality assurance mechanisms.

3.1.5 Proposals to develop an Institute should be submitted using the standard form[7]. Proposals will need to establish:

- How the mission of the School will be positively enhanced by the establishment of the proposed Institute. This may include specific attention to:
- how the Institute will produce research, knowledge exchange, engagement and/or impact of high quality;
- how key training activities will contribute to LSE's educational mission;
- how the Institute will advance the LSE's public engagement;
- how the Institute will enhance recognition of the LSE and its work.

3.1.5.1.1 Proposals should set out possible or anticipated conflicts with existing School activities, if any. Concerted opposition to a proposal from an existing School unit (as revealed, for example, at the Forums of Department Heads and Research Centre Directors) should be noted and addressed.

3.1.5.1.2 Proposals will further:

- indicate and justify other key functions of the Institute and their likely staffing complement.
- indicate the qualities and competencies required of an Institute Director.
- provide evidence of widespread consultation with all members of the academic community who may have an interest in the proposed initiative. The consultation can include School bodies (such as the Department Heads Forum) but will go beyond them to reach individuals. Details of who has been consulted and their responses should be listed on the application form.
- provide a plausible budget plan for a five-year period (to be developed with Finance Division and to be reviewed by APRC).

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[7]

3.1.6   Proposals will also complete the Major Academic Initiatives process (whereby a checklist is used to ensure all Service Areas have been consulted regarding the potential impact of new developments).

3.1.7   Following consideration of a proposal, Research Committee or APRC can recommend to the Academic Board, for endorsement, and to the Council, for approval, the establishment of a new Institute.

3.2 Governance of Institutes

3.2.1   As for Heads of Departments, Institute Directors will ultimately be responsible to the School's Vice-Chancellor, with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) as the Vice-Chancellor's nominated deputy.

3.2.2   Institutes will have clearly developed governance structures, normally including:

- An Advisory Board formed of major contributors to the Institute's activities;
- A Management Committee chaired by the Director of the Institute and including senior faculty from those Departments that are most obviously involved in the Institute's activities, along with either the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research or their delegate.
- Each Institute will normally have a single Director appointed by the Vice-Chancellor for a period of 5 years.

3.2.3   Institute Directors will ordinarily be proposed for appointment by the Vice-Chancellor following a selection process that - where appropriate and bearing in mind the School-wide function of Institutes - can involve HoDs or other representatives from closely linked Departments or Research Centres. Exceptionally, Directors can be single nominations.

3.2.4   The Institute Director may recommend the appointment of non-recurrent research and visiting staff according to standard School recruitment and appointment procedures. Where Institutes are linked to key supporting Departments – as opposed to groups of individuals across the School – Department Heads might be invited to participate in appointment and monitoring procedures.

3.2.5   There will be no permanent appointments of New Academic Career (NAC) staff to an Institute. With the permission of their Head of Department, academics in Departments and Research Centres can contribute to research and training in an Institute.

3.2.6   Each Institute should normally have a single Director. A case for joint directorship can be approved by Research Committee exceptionally and on a case-by-case basis. The role of the Institute Director is to provide academic and intellectual leadership and to be responsible for the effective management of the Institute. The Institute Director is responsible for the research funds held within the Institute as a whole. Individual grant-holders are responsible for the conduct of funded research projects and programmes.

3.2.7   All Institutes must have an Advisory Board that meets twice a year and has a majority of members from outside the Institute. In addition, each Institute should have a Management Committee.

3.2.8   The Advisory Board exists to provide the Institute Director and members of the Management Committee with an external perspective. The Advisory Board will be chaired by a member external to the School and will in addition comprise members selected for their ability to provide the benefit of their expertise as commissioners or users of research and/or as fundraisers and ensure that there is appropriate diversity of representation on the Board in line with the School's policies on equality, diversity and inclusivity. Advisory Boards are subject to the School's Ethics Code and associated policies and procedures. The Institute Director or his or her representative must attend all meetings of the Advisory Board; other key members of the Management Team or Committee will normally attend at least one meeting of the Board each year. The Advisory Board will provide the forum in which the legitimate interests of the funders of the Institute are represented and will consider issues of strategy and policy. Template Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board are available on the website[8].

3.2.9   The Management Committee is responsible for management of the Institute including setting

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[8] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/schAdvBoa.pdf

academic priorities and organizing the activities of the Institute; overseeing the budget; overseeing human resource matters; for receiving the Director's reports; advising the Research Committee on the succession of the Institute Director; and reporting to both the Institute's Advisory Board and the School's Research Committee.

3.3 Review of Institutes

3.4   Institutes are reviewed every four years by the Research Committee, in line with the review process for Research Centres, and annually as part of the Annual Monitoring Meetings, in line with Departments. The Education Committee will be represented at the review. Otherwise, the review will follow the scheme laid out in 4.4.

3.5 Ethical Oversight by Institutes

3.5.1   Institutes are responsible for ensuring that researchers (whether staff or students) within their units are aware of their responsibilities vis a vis the Research Ethics Policy, and that they are familiar with the School's research ethics guidance and resources[9].

3.5.2   Institutes should ensure that researchers within their units have undertaken appropriate training, or to have relevant experience, in order to evaluate the ethical implications of the research they plan to undertake, and that, where required, ethics approval is obtained before the commencement of any data collection activities.

3.5.3   In addition, Institutes have a responsibility to periodically monitor the ethics submissions from researchers within their units. In accordance with §48 of the Research Ethics Policy, Institutes should periodically check that ethics applications submitted by researchers in their units have undergone review/approval by the appropriate person. All Institutes have a nominated 'faculty ethics approver' whose role is to review/approve ethics applications submitted by staff within their units where the application has been categorised as 'Departmental review'[10]. A list of faculty ethics approvers is available [here](#)[11]. (Applications requiring review/approval by the Research Ethics Committee are automatically submitted to the REC for review.)

4   Research Centres

4.1 Establishment of Research Centres

4.1.1   Research Centres exist to manage and promote a coherent programme of research including policy research and to foster knowledge exchange and engagement and the public dissemination of research and impact. They are often, but not always, interdisciplinary by nature, and must be cross-departmental. Research Centres normally have substantial levels of external funding and can employ a significant number of research staff. They are also expected to have an externally facing profile, adding value to the School beyond the work carried out in Departments.

4.1.2   Research Committee is responsible for the initial assessment of proposals to establish new Research Centres, where applicable in accordance with the APRC procedures for approving Major Academic Initiatives. The Committee will assess both the intellectual and financial viability of new proposals, and the plans for the production of high-quality research that has a clear and impactful agenda and/or knowledge exchange and engagement activities. Based on its assessment of a proposal, the Research Committee can recommend to the Academic Board, for endorsement, and to the Council, for approval, the establishment of a new Research Centre, in line with the Scheme of Delegation[12].

4.1.3   While a Major Academic Initiative Process should be carried out before a Centre is applied for, the completion of the process does not mean that a Centre has been approved. The process

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[9] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-and-innovation/research/research-ethics/research-ethics
[10] For reasons of simplicity the term 'Departmental' is used here to encompass research Centres and Institutes.
[11] Any changes should be reported to the Research Ethics Managers via research.ethics@lse.ac.uk
[12] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Secretarys-Division/Assets/Documents/Governance/Council/Scheme-of-Delegation-Approved-Nov-2019.pdf

looks only at resource implications, not the viability and academic suitability of a centre.

4.1.4   Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- the value of the research programme and knowledge exchange/engagement and impact activities to the School and the wider scholarly community;
- the need for a distinct organizational unit to manage the research programme or research-related activity outside a Department or Institute, and/or the need for a distinct organizational identity and brand;
- financial sustainability. Within the context of the School's Research Grants Policy[13] and the distribution of overhead income, Research Centres are expected to be financially sustainable through research funding, without recourse to non-research funding such as executive education in order to meet the minimum funding requirement. Centres are expected to have a minimum of £1 million funding.

4.1.5   A proposal for a Research Centre should normally carry the support of at least two Heads of Department or Institutes and confirm there is broad departmental/institute support. In addition, the proposer(s) should demonstrate that they have consulted those Departments, Institutes or Research Centres that may have a material interest in the proposal. Centres are normally required to name a single Department or Institute to be its main host, though Centres are often interdisciplinary and/or involve academic and research staff from more than one Department/Institute. All proposals must use the template[14] held on the website.

4.1.6   Centres proposed in the context of a competitive, peer-reviewed application process (e.g. ESRC Centres or Leverhulme Centres) approved through the Major Academic Initiatives process will be required to submit only the grant application and any additional information required at the discretion of the Chair of the Research Committee.

4.1.7   A Centre is expected to have an anticipated lifespan, after which the work of the Centre will end. Discussion of how long the Centre is expected to last should be included in the application.

4.2 Governance of Research Centres

4.2.1   Except where explicitly provided otherwise by Research Committee, all Research Centres will be accountable to Research Committee for the quality of their research output and their knowledge engagement and impact activities. However, because the activities of Centres and their research staff can impact on Departments' REF returns and their teaching arrangements, Heads of Department from the relevant affiliated department have the following role with respect to Centres:

- As a member of the Centre's Management Committee (see below).
- Approval of the appointment or promotion of research staff in the Centre.
- Approval of grant applications for projects to be run through the Centre for which the Principal Investigator is a member of the Department's faculty and is seeking buyout from Departmental responsibilities.

These approvals are not to be withheld unreasonably. The PVCR will have authority to over-rule the Head of Department in exceptional circumstances and in the interests of the School as a whole.

4.2.2   All Research Centres must have an Advisory Board that meets twice a year and has a majority of members from outside the Centre. In addition, each Centre should have a Management Committee.

4.2.3   The Advisory Board exists to provide the Centre Director and members of the Management Committee with an external perspective. The Advisory Board will be chaired by a member external to the School and will in addition comprise members selected for their ability to provide the benefit of their expertise as commissioners or users of research and/or as fundraisers and ensure that there is appropriate diversity of representation on the Board in line with the School's policies on equality, diversity and inclusivity. Advisory Boards are subject to the School's Ethics Code and associated policies and procedures. The Centre Director or his or her representative must attend all meetings of the Advisory Board; other key members of the Management Team or Committee will normally attend at least one meeting of the Board each year. The Advisory Board

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[13] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/resGra.pdf

[14]

will provide the forum in which the legitimate interests of the funders of Centre research are represented and will consider issues of strategy and policy. Template Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board are available on the website[15].

4.2.4   Research Centre Directors must be appointed in discussion with Pro-Vice Chancellor for Planning and Resources and must receive an appointment letter from them.

4.3 Management of Research Centres

4.3.1   Each Centre should normally have a single Director. A case for joint directorship can be approved by Research Committee exceptionally and on a case-by-case basis. The role of the Centre Director is to provide academic and intellectual leadership and to be responsible for the effective management of the Centre. The Centre Director is responsible for the research funds held within the Centre as a whole. Individual grant-holders are responsible for the conduct of funded research projects and programmes.

4.3.2   The Management Committee will be chaired by the Centre Director and will be formed from the academic and research staff attached to the Centre and the Centre Manager. The Head of the Department or Departments to which the Centre is affiliated will be members of the Committee ex-officio, and each must send a representative to attend meetings of the Committee. Representatives of other interested Departments should also attend. External members of the Centre are restricted to academic staff collaborating on the Centre's research projects or programmes and may attend meetings at the invitation of the Centre Director. External representation from funding bodies on the Management Committee is prohibited to safeguard - and to be seen to safeguard - the independence of the Centre's research programmes. External representation from funders, research users and other external non-academic bodies is welcomed on the Advisory Board subject to the Guidance on Terms of Reference on Advisory Boards as set out [here]

4.3.3   The Management Committee is responsible for management of the Centre including setting academic priorities and organizing the activities of the Centre; overseeing the budget; overseeing human resource matters; for receiving the Director's reports; advising the Research Committee on the succession of the Centre Director; and reporting to both the Centre's Advisory Board and the School's Research Committee. The Management Committee should meet termly.

4.4 Review of Research Centres

4.4.1   Research Committee is responsible for undertaking formal reviews of all Research Centres every four years. The primary purpose of the Review is to assist the development of the Centre, in terms of its strategy and goals, and identify potential improvements. Centres are also asked to provide annual financial reports, in order to identify any imminent issues.

4.4.2   Reviews are timed, as far as possible, to coincide with the life cycle of a Centre's main source of external funding (e.g. the five-year ESRC review). Reviews aim to establish whether a Centre has the intellectual and financial means to merit continued existence. Assessment will be made and judgements formed according to the terms of the establishment, the mission and the strategy of the Centre, as approved by Research Committee. Centre Directors and the Head of the affiliated Department(s) will be asked to nominate a short list of appropriate external assessors, from which two will be selected by Research Committee. A core set of data is produced centrally.

4.4.3   In the Review, Centres are asked to confirm the data and to provide a qualitative commentary (including raising any issues) on 8 key areas:
- Future strategic direction
- Quality of research and publishing strategy

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[15] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/schAdvBoa.pdf

- Knowledge exchange and impact
- Internal and external collaboration
- Financial viability
- Research culture
- Research and KEI governance, integrity and ethics
- Succession planning

4.4.4   Reviews are conducted by a small review team led by the PVCR or their representative and comprising the Director of the Research & Innovation Division, one member of the Research Committee and the two selected external assessors. They may also involve others within the School. Centre Directors and Centre Managers meet with the review group to discuss any issues raised in the quantitative data and qualitative commentary. The review group will also meet with centre staff during the Review to discuss their perceptions on career development, research culture and expectations within the Centre. A report from the review group is discussed at a meeting of the Research Committee, with the Chair highlighting any issues discussed previously with the Centre Director. Centre Directors are invited to attend Research Committee to make a short presentation on the future directions of the Centre and to discuss any issues raised by the Committee.

4.4.5   The HOD of the affiliated department should receive the completed review pro-forma and data for comment prior to the review, and the completed review report. The review team may hold a separate meeting with the Head of the Department to which the Centre is affiliated to discuss the Centre's activities and relationship with the Department. If necessary, a joint meeting between the HOD, Centre Director and members of the review team may be arranged.

4.4.6   Research Committee retains the ability to undertake a Review at any other period as it sees fit should it have concerns about the ability of the Centre to meet its objectives. Research Committee will recommend to Academic Board and Council the closure of a Research Centre when it no longer meets the criteria set out in section 4.1.4 above and is not satisfied that the Centre has a viable recovery plan. When recommending the closure of a Centre, Research Committee will also recommend an 'exit plan'. Such a plan may include the transition of the Centre to a Departmental Research Unit or a Recognised Group within a Department over a defined period. Subject to the approval of the Research Committee and the Department to which the Centre transitions, Centres should be permitted to retain their name notwithstanding such a change in status in order to maintain their external profile.

4.4.7   Research Committee will decide on the basis of the Review whether:

i)   to approve the continuation of the Centre for a determined period (normally four years);
ii) to approve the continuation of the Centre for a determined period (normally four years) subject to any specified conditions;
iii) to recommend to Academic Board and Council the closure of the Centre and an exit plan;
iv) to make any other recommendations that it deems to be appropriate.

4.5 Ethical Oversight by Research Centres

4.5.1   Research Centres are responsible for ensuring that researchers (whether staff or students) within their units are aware of their responsibilities vis a vis the Research Ethics Policy, and that they are familiar with the School's research ethics guidance and resources[16].

4.5.2   Centres should ensure that researchers within their units have undertaken appropriate training, or to have relevant experience, in order to evaluate the ethical implications of the research they plan to undertake, and that, where required, ethics approval is obtained before the commencement of

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[16] https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-and-innovation/research/research-ethics/research-ethics

any data collection activities.

4.5.3   In addition, Research Centres have a responsibility to periodically monitor the ethics submissions from researchers within their units. In accordance with §48 of the Research Ethics Policy, Centres should periodically check that ethics applications submitted by researchers in their units have undergone review/approval by the appropriate person. All Departments/ Centres/Institutes have a nominated 'faculty ethics approver' whose role is to review/approve ethics applications submitted by staff within their units where the application has been categorised as 'Departmental review'[17]. A list of faculty ethics approvers is available [here][18]. (Applications requiring review/approval by the Research Ethics Committee are automatically submitted to the REC for review.)

4.6 Succession Planning

4.6.1   All Research Centres must have a written plan of succession. Research Centre procedures should specify the length of time a Director will serve before the appointment is reviewed; it is suggested that four years is an appropriate initial period.

4.7 ESRC Research Centres

4.7.1   Applications for a Centre to be funded by an external grant funding body, such as ESRC or Leverhulme, will be subject to the demand management process organised by the Research and Innovation Division. Applications to these bodies must be approved by the Division and by the PVC Research.

4.7.2   As they have already undergone the demand management process, these Centres are only required to submit the grant application to the Research Committee.

4.7.3   The Research Committee will generally conduct a review of ESRC funded centres following their ESRC review. ESRC and other Research Centres in receipt of external core funding from a Research Council or other competitive grant funding body are not asked to nominate any external assessors if (as with ESRC) the Centre has already been assessed externally. Nor are they required to complete the standard template for Reviews if (as with ESRC) they have external review reports. In addition to any external review reports, they should submit a short note on the future direction of the Centre, a report on the Centre's relationship to the wider activities of the School including what value-added the Centre brings to the School, and details of any funding (proposed or secured) for the Centre.

4.7.4   Centres which have been funded by ESRC may be awarded legacy centre status after this funding ends. This funding will not usually enable them to continue as a Research Centre, and they will be given DRU status.

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[17] For reasons of simplicity the term 'Departmental' is used here to encompass Research Centres and Institutes.
[18] Any changes should be reported to the Research Ethics Managers via research.ethics@lse.ac.uk

5 Departmental Research Units and inter-Departmental Research Units
5.1 Establishment of Departmental or inter-Departmental Research Units

5.1.1   Unless the establishment of the DRU or iDRU follows the recommendation of Research Committee following the Review of a Research Centre, the establishment of a DRU or iDRU is by formal application from the relevant Head(s) of Department(s) to Research Committee.

5.1.2   The HOD (or HODs of the relevant Departments involved in the case of an iDRU) will need to make a clear and strong case to Research Committee indicating the benefits of a project or group of projects becoming a DRU or iDRU. They will be expected to show that becoming a DRU or iDRU will promote the success of research activity within the unit and may attract academic involvement from across the School as well as other forms of external interest and possible collaboration. The application should provide evidence that DRU or iDRU designation will enhance the visibility of the research programme, increase the possibility of future funding, and assist with sustainability.

5.1.3   The HOD(s) should note the anticipated duration of the DRU or iDRU, which is expected to be at least three years depending on the duration of the proposed unit's main source of funding.

5.1.4   In addition, in the case of iDRUs, the HODs of the Departments involved should have agreed an MOU detailing the structure of the management committee, and arrangements relating to responsibilities for administrative support, agreements relating to budgets and financial controls including apportionment of RIF funding and other matters relating to the governance and operation of the iDRU which the Research Committee may require.

5.1.5   To initiate a request for DRU or iDRU status the Head(s) of Department should submit an application to Research Committee using the form on the website[19].

5.1.6   A DRU is expected to have a finite lifespan. It is not expected to last longer than ten years.

5.2 Review of Departmental and inter-Departmental Research Units

5.2.1   DRUs and iDRUs are subject to annual reviews by their home departments. In the case of iDRUs, other affiliated departments should also be consulted.

5.2.2   Research Committee has oversight of the review process.

5.3 Management of Departmental and inter-Departmental Research Units

5.3.1   It will be at the discretion of Research Committee whether a Department should be advised to set up a formal executive Management Committee for a DRU, though this will normally be required in the case of an iDRU. The decision will be based on the size/funding/complexity of the entity, and wider membership formed from staff directly associated with the unit.

5.3.2   A DRU will likely be required to set up a Management Committee in cases where one or more criteria are applicable:
- The DRU has more than two members of staff attached to it;
- The funding grant amount for the DRU exceeds £250,000 per year;
- The period of funding secured for the work of the DRU is over 5 years;
- Setting up a Management Committee is a requirement from an external funding body.

5.3.3   Where constituted, the Management Committee should meet at least once a year and may determine its own quorum. Members of the Management Committee must have adequate notice of meetings, agendas and papers.

5.4 Closure of Departmental or inter-Departmental Research Units

5.4.1   Research Committee can require the closure of a DRU or iDRU if it is failing to meet its objectives or the conditions for the creation of a DRU or iDRU. It may recommend that it continues as a Recognised Group.

5.4.2   Departments can propose the closure of a DRU/iDRU to the Research Committee, having previously consulted all relevant individuals involved with the DRU/iDRU. Research Committee may request a report on who exactly has been consulted if it deems this necessary.

Recognised Groups

5.5   Approving Recognised Groups

5.5.1   Requests to establish a Recognised Group must be supported by the head of the parent unit and endorsed by Research Committee. An application form can be found here[20].

5.6   Accountability for Recognised Groups

5.6.1   The Department, Institute or Centre in which the Recognised Group is registered is responsible for its activities and for taking any actions necessary to ensure that the Group meets the Department, Institute or Centre's strategy and objectives, including terminating any Recognised Group. The academic unit should include a report on the Recognised Group's activities in its normal reporting (i.e. in Departmental reviews in the case of Departments, and to Research Committee in the case of Research Centres and Institutes) and must promptly notify Research Committee of any changes in the name or status of the Recognised Group.

5.6.2   Research Committee may review a Recognised Group if it is concerned that the Group is not achieving its objectives, or its activities are not of sufficiently high quality. Following such a review, Research Committee may require appropriate actions to be taken to address its concerns, potentially including the closure of the Recognised Group.

Annex A: List of Institutes (September 2024)

Institute
Data Science Institute
Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa
Global School of Sustainability
International Inequalities Institute
Marshall Institute for Philanthropy and Social Entrepreneurship

Annex B: List of Research Centres

Department/Institute	Research Centre
Department of Economics	Centre for Economic Performance (CEP)
	Centre for Macroeconomics
	International Growth Centre
	Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines (STICERD)
European Institute	Hellenic Observatory
Department of Finance	Financial Markets Research Group (FMG)
Geography & Environment	Saw Swee Hock Southeast Asia Centre (SEAC)
	What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth
Department of Health Policy	Care Policy and Evaluation Centre (CPEC)
	LSE Health
Department of International Relations	LSE IDEAS
	Middle East Centre
	Phelan United States Centre
Department of Philosophy	Centre for Philosophy of Natural and Social Sciences (CPNSS)
Department of Social Policy	Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE)
Department of Sociology & School of Public Policy	LSE Cities
Global School of Sustainability	Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment
	Transition Pathway Initiative Global Climate Transition Centre (TPI Centre)

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Annex C: List of Departmental Research Units and inter-Departmental Research Unit

Parent Department(s)	DRU/iDRU
Accounting	Centre for Analysis of Risk and Regulation
Government	Electoral Psychology Observatory
International Relations	International Trade Policy Unit
Philosophy	The Jeremy Coller Centre for Animal Sentience
PBS	The Inclusion Initiative
School of Public Policy	The Growth Co-Lab at LSE
Social Policy	LSE-Fudan Research Centre for Global Public Policy
Anthropology, Methodology, International Relations and the Faith Centre	Religion and Global Society
Health Policy, International Development, PBS and Social Policy	LSE Global Health Initiative

Annex D: List of Recognised Groups

Parent Department/Institute/Centre	Recognised Group
Care Policy and Evaluation Centre	International Long-term Care Policy Network
	NIHR Policy Research Unit in Adult Social Care
CASE	LSE Housing and Communities
CEP	Centre for Vocational Education Research
Economic History	Financial History Group
European Institute	Contemporary Turkish Studies
Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa	Centre for Public Authority and International Development (CPAID)
	Centre for Women, Peace and Security
FMG	Paul Woolley Centre for Market Dysfunctionalities
	Systemic Risk Centre
Geography and Environment	Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies
	LSE London
Hellenic Observatory	LSEE: Research on South Eastern Europe
International Development	Ageing @ LSE
	Population Investigation Committee
International History	Iranian History Initiative
International Inequalities Institute	India Observatory
International Relations	European Foreign Policy Unit
Law	Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Theory Forum
	Law and Financial Markets Project
	Legal and Political Theory Forum
	Legal Biography Project
LSE Cities	Urban Age
LSE Health	African Health Observatory Platform (AHOP)
	European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies
	Global Surgery Policy Unit (GSPU)
	Medical Technology Research Group (MTRG)
LSE IDEAS	Conflict and Civicness Research Group
	South Asia Centre
Management	Behavioural Research Lab

	Innovation Co-Creation Lab
Media and Communications	Polis
Psychological and Behavioural Science	Behavioural Science Hub
Social Policy	Education Research and Policy Hub
	Global Sexual and Gender Identities Policy Lab
	Mannheim Centre for Criminology
	Women in Social and Public Policy Research Hub
Sociology	LSE Human Rights
	Investment and Human Rights learning hub
	Laboratory for Advanced Research on the Global Economy

Review Schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
3 years	February 2028	October 2027

Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes*
v.1	July 2018	J Black	v.March2017 approved by Academic Board, updated July 2018 (updated list of centres, DRUs, etc plus. Minor amends)
v. 2	February 2021	Academic Board	Version approved by AB in February 2021, Incl. changes to definitions of Research Centres, removal of the category of "centres within institutes" (following dismantling of IGA), changes to the DRU application form
v. 3	February 2025	Academic Board	Document updated to separate application

*Units lists are regularly updated by Research and Innovation

Links

Reference	Link
Code of Research Conduct	https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/codResCon.pdf
Research Ethics Policy	http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/pdfs/school/resEthPolPro.pdf
LSE Research Integrity Web page	https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-and-innovation/research/Research-integrity-at-LSE; See also: UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity: https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf

Contacts

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Communications and Training

Will this document be publicised through Internal Communications?	**Yes**
Will training needs arise from this policy	**No**
If Yes, please give details	