

# RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE STRATEGY 2015 - 2020

Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development

## BACKGROUND

This strategy sets out the future direction for research undertaken within the Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development (OCSLD) at Oxford Brookes University. As a Centre for academic and organisational development, OCSLD is a hub for high-impact higher education research. The main areas of activity in OCSLD are: higher education institutional research, specialist research and scholarship, and knowledge exchange and public engagement.

There are three main reasons for the University to invest time and money in OCSLD's research activity. First to enhance the student experience by ensuring that 'learning and teaching are at the leading edge and relevant to contemporary contexts' (Strategy for Enhancing the Student Experience, 2015). Secondly, to ensure that all 'students benefit from our research through a research-informed curriculum' (Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy, 2015). Thirdly, to enhance 'the international student experience' and fostering an international educational environment (International Strategy, 2015).

## CONTEXT

OCSLD sits within the Directorate of Human Resources and supports the University's mission through the provision of high quality internal and external staff and educational development, and by undertaking research and publishing. OCSLD provides a location and supervision for postdoctoral researchers supporting the Programme to Enhance the Student Experience (PESE), and externally funded projects. The previous iteration of the research strategy co-ordinated wide ranging activities, including pedagogic research, institutional evaluation, and profile-raising consultancy across the higher education sector.

## AIMS

This strategy will guide OCSLD's research activities, defining a better balance between original research and sector-leading consultancy by clarifying a realistic set of objectives for the small team based in this Centre, and prioritising resources accordingly. Over the next five years, OCSLD will build upon existing strengths in order to conduct institutional evaluation, original research in specialist areas, and consultancy arising from research activities.

### **Higher Education Institutional research**

Institutional research has been a growth area for OCSLD, which has conducted investigations and evaluations to support Brookes in making evidence-informed decisions in areas such as Black Minority Ethnic student attainment, the Brookes Assessment Compact, the Brookes Attributes, Academic Advising, and Peer Enhancement of Learning, Assessment and Teaching (PETAL). Institutional research will be established as core business for OCSLD, complementing the excellent work provided by the Strategic Business and Planning Office (SBPO).

We will:

- Provide research support to projects arising from Projects to Enhance the Student Experience (PESE) and the Internationalisation Steering Group (ISG).
- Publish outcomes arising from our institutional research.
- Establish institutional research as core business for OCSLD.

### **Specialist research and scholarship**

OCSLD has a strong track record of gaining external funding for research and consultancy projects. Recent projects have been funded by the Higher Education Academy, the Joint Information Systems Committee (Jisc), and the Education and Training Foundation and the Leadership Foundation for HE. Outputs have been widely disseminated, and the team can make a good case for the impact of their work across the sector. OCSLD retains a strong reputation nationally and internationally through publications, by sharing resources online, and by hosting international visitors.

We will:

- Prepare active researchers from OCSLD to enter the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2020.
- Provide time and opportunities for all OCSLD developers to engage in scholarship and collaborations related to their specialist areas of research.
- Collect evidence of the impact of research activities, in preparation for an impact case study for the REF 2020.

### **Knowledge exchange and public engagement activity**

Consultancy has been a fundamental aspect of OCSLD's activities since the Centre was created. Increasingly, Brookes is working in collaboration with Associate College Partners (ACP). The nature and amount of consultancy undertaken has changed, as more universities have created their own educational development units, and sector bodies have taken on a more advisory and developmental role, often offering their services for free or as part of an institutional subscription.

We will:

- Provide sector-leading consultancy arising from our research activities.
- Manage realistic expectations for consultancy activities and income in line with OCSLD's wider activities and objectives and the changing needs of the sector.
- Contribute sector-leading advice and resources through our open access courses, repository and blogs.

### **References**

- International Strategy (2015) Oxford Brookes University. Available from <https://www2.brookes.ac.uk/international> [December 2015]
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy (RKE) (2015) Oxford Brookes University. Available from [https://www2.brookes.ac.uk/research-support/research\\_strategy](https://www2.brookes.ac.uk/research-support/research_strategy) [December 2015]
- Strategy for Enhancing the Student Experience (SESE) (2015) Oxford Brookes University. Available from <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocslid/sese/> [December 2015]