**Psychology**

**Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (RIKE) Strategy 2020-2025**

***Key Performance Indicators for 2025:***

Increase income by 40% compared to current levels

Work towards increasing research power by 30% for next REF (assumed 2028)

Work towards improving our REF Research Environment score

Have at least 3 new Ph.D. students each year

Increase the number of externally funded Ph.D. students compared to current levels

Increase the number of developing Impact Case Studies

Work towards 3/4\* Impact Case Study (ICS) submission at next REF

Increase the number of projects with non-academic partners compared to current levels

Ensure 90% of assessed outputs are Open Access

Ensure that 50% of researchers make data openly accessible

**Overview**

We will produce high quality, pioneering research in four main areas of psychology. That research will also underpin knowledge transfer, public engagement and teaching. Currently, our research team has a strong international profile, publishes high quality outputs, has attracted external funding from research councils, charities and consultancy, and disseminates widely to other researchers and in public engagement forums. Much of our research is multi- or inter-disciplinary and we also undertake work with real world impact, as evidenced by our impact case studies. We aim to develop in all of these areas.

**Research Groups, Interdisciplinary Projects, and Income:**

We will create and develop a new Centre, the Centre for Psychological Research. This will incorporate our four existing research groups: 1. Developmental Psychology 2. Cognition and Cognitive Neuroscience 3. Applied Social and Health Psychology, and 4. Prevention Science. We will develop research in these groups that is, or has the potential to be, recognised as internationally excellent or world leading, that has the potential to attract funding and that contributes to the University achieving its KPI Targets for 2025.

In addition, we will lead and/or contribute to projects that align with the inter-disciplinary priorities outlined by Oxford Brookes University and by the UK Government. To that end, we will contribute to research in Brookes’ cross-cutting Research Networks (i.e., Children and Young People, Healthy Aging, Migration and Refugees, Inclusion, Diversity and Gender).

We will also develop projects that correspond to our expertise and specific themes within the Global Challenges Research Fund. These themes are

1. Equitable Access to Sustainable Development: *sustainable health and well-being* and, *inclusive and equitable quality education*

2. Sustainable Economies and Societies: *resilience and action on short-term environmental shocks and long-term environmental change*

3. Human Rights, Good Governance and Social Justice: *migration* and *reducing conflict* and *promoting peace*

Staff will contribute to committees and research groups dedicated to interdisciplinary research both internally (e.g., OxINMAHR) and externally (e.g., John Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust). We will build these relationships further and aim to contribute substantially to OxINMAHR. Researchers will be encouraged to contribute to collaborative interdisciplinary research programmes and to seek funding opportunities in these areas.

**Management and Support of Research:**

Research strategy and policy is overseen by the Psychology Research Lead and the REF Unit of Assessment Co-ordinator. However, it is developed in consultation with all Psychology staff at team meetings and at Departmental Away Days and with the Psychology Planning Group (comprised of senior members of the team). The psychology research strategy is discussed with the Faculty’s Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange (ADRKE) and is incorporated in Faculty and University Research Strategies. The new Centre for Psychological Research has a management structure of two Co-Directors (Dr. Mark Burgess and Dr. Kate Wilmut) and four Assistant Directors (Dr. Emma Davies, Dr. Nayeli Gonzalez-Gomez, Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Dr. Michael Pilling), each of whom will represent the different research groups.

Staff also produce rolling Three Year Research Plans. These detail current projects including publication, dissemination and impact plans. The research plans also include proposed funding bids. These are registered on the Faculty ‘Intent to Submit’ Form which is a step in the Faculty Grants Panel process. The Research Lead is responsible for ensuring that research-active staff are supported and mentored appropriately to develop a plan that aligns with the research objectives of the Department. These are reviewed on an annual basis with the Faculty ADRKE and contribute to staff members’ research allocation in their annual Work Load Plan.

**Impact:**

We aim to support activities that maximise the impact and dissemination of our research for the benefit of the students and staff of the University and our communities, at a local, regional and global level. Staff will be supported in assessing possible impact of their research through working with the Research Lead and in partnership with the University’s Research & Business Development Office (RBDO) and the Faculty ADRKE. Together they will ensure that the impact of research is at the core of project planning, realisation and dissemination. We will encourage staff to seek Faculty support in the form of the Impact Steering Group and the Faculty Impact Officer, particularly in training to use the “Tracker” system to record the impact of their research programmes. In addition, we will seek to progress current Impact Case Studies further into the next REF cycle and identify and develop new potential ICS.

**Allocation of QR funds:**

QR funds will be used to support activities that maximise the impact and dissemination of our research for the benefit of the students and staff of the University and our communities, whether local, regional or global. We will use those funds to invest in staff, infrastructure and to pump prime promising projects. For example, staff can apply for money from a small projects fund to support pilot research or to ensure that current projects reach completion. They can also apply for money to develop research skills, disseminate information and attend workshops and conferences. Staff link their applications for funds with the aims outlined in their Three Year Research Plans. In addition, funds will be used to host visiting researchers and to host events at Oxford Brookes in order to raise our research reputation nationally and internationally.

**Employment:**

We will grow through strategic appointments that can contribute to the four research groups, the interdisciplinary research themes prioritized by Oxford Brookes (i.e., Children and Young People), and the interdisciplinary strands of the GCRF in which we have existing strengths (outlined above).

We will continue with our successful strategy of appointing Early Career Researchers and will seek University agreement to offer them full time lecturing positions once their ECR contract ends (subject to suitable performance). We will also appoint senior staff. This will bring a wider research network and expertise to the department, will help mentor younger researchers and will increase both income and research power.

We will appoint dedicated technical support that corresponds with BPS requirements and that will provide specialist support for psychology equipment such as (but not limited to) EEG, eye-trackers, TMS, movement recording equipment.

**Infrastructure:**

We collaborated with architects and Faculty senior staff to design a purpose-built research space for Psychology and moved into this space in December 2018. Our additional lab space provides modern resources and facilitates the expansion of our growing research reputation. This has included expansion and improvements to the Visual Cognition Lab, EEG Lab and BabyLab. New, purpose-built, dedicated space has also been provided to set up a TMS Lab, Perception and Motion Analysis (PuMA) Lab and Writing Lab. Much of the old equipment has been replaced or extended with the installation of a range of updated, specialist research tools. This includes new cameras in the BabyLab, a new TMS and EEG system, new wall tracking to improve the camera positions in the PuMA Lab, new tests in the psychological test library. Four new, purpose-built specialist spaces have also been created which are suitable for conducting interviews and focus groups. These provide comfortable and private areas for conversations with research participants. We will seek to maintain, develop and enhance our equipment to ensure it is commensurate with the requirements of pursuing international level research.

The new facilities include a room for PhD students. Each student has their own desk and computer. There is also a dedicated room with 12 desks and computers for Psychology Researchers on temporary or part-time contracts. This includes Early Career Research Fellows, Post Doctoral and Graduate Research Assistants and Visiting Researchers. This large space gives flexibility to accommodate staff on new research projects. For example, 6 part time RAs have been accommodated for the work funded by Hogrefe Ltd. The new premises for Psychology also include x new staff offices, each accommodating 4 members of staff, a room for the Psychology Demonstrator team (who support staff and student research, as well as teaching), a room to house an equipment and psychological test library and three meeting rooms. The computer hardware and software will be kept up to date in each of these rooms.

**Open Science:**

In May 2019 the Psychology team, led by two senior members of staff, embarked on a development project to explore current knowledge and expertise in the team, gather views in practicing Open Science more formally and prioritising areas to support Open Science within the team, the University and broader national scientific community.

Following this exercise, recommendations have been suggested for research groups:

1. Establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for improving the quality of studies, including: pre-registration of study analysis plans, sharing analysis code, and preparing data outputs in accordance with FAIR principles for data stewardship.

2. Strong encouragement of the use of pre-prints and responsible data sharing.

3. Publication plans prepared early in a research project, with drafted titles, target journals and anticipated authorship lists following COPE asnd ICJME recommendations. We also strongly encourage a written confirmation from the study PI to commit to publication regardless of results obtained.

4. Training and consultancy advice available for all staff and research students on principles and practice of reproducible and open research, including preparing data analysis plans, developing and sharing code for data analysis, and improved statistical planning and analysis skills.

5. An OBU representative to the Oxford Node of the United Kingdom Reproducibility Network.

Other considerations at institutional level include discussion of Institutional support for Open Access publication for high quality research outputs and revised recruitment and promotion criteria to include Open Science practices. We will continue to discuss Open Science initiatives.

**Public Engagement and Outreach:**

Psychology researchers are involved with the Brookes Public Engagement Network. For example, they regularly participate in the Oxford Science Festival, the Brookes Science Bazaar, and local school events. Further afield, they do research-based talks for charities, special schools, clinicians, and the military in order that those groups can benefit from their knowledge. On an international level, free psychiatric consultation is given in a deprived community in India. Activities such as these are valuable in disseminating our research and in allowing the public to benefit from our findings.

We will continue to promote our work to the public and special interest groups and will also seek funding to expand this work. In addition, we have a plan to capitalise on our public engagement events with regards to increasing our participant recruitment. For example, researchers who work in the Children and Young People research strand will organise a series of seminars to inform local parents of their research that may be of interest to them (e.g., language development, bilingualism, sleep). This will also act as a means of enhancing participant numbers by recruiting parents and their children for future research projects.

We plan to develop further promotional videos of what we do in Psychology. These will be shown at science fairs and also at industry events where we would be looking to pitch for consultancy.

**Enhancing the Visibility and External Profile of Research in the Department:**

Psychology runs a programme of research seminars, inviting leading researchers from the UK who align with our research priorities. We also host visiting international researchers and provide them with space to work on their research and with meeting rooms to forge collaborative projects. We will strengthen current collaborations in the local community organisations and industry as well as improve the visibility of our research beyond the university with a new social media strategy related to the Centre for Psychological Research.

**Postgraduate Students:**

We will continue to recruit high quality Ph.D. students, ensuring that candidates’ projects are aligned with research programs that contribute to our REF strategy for high quality outputs. In so doing students are more likely to submit their Ph.D. on time and are more likely to produce REF returnable outputs.

We will develop up to two specialist Masters in the medium term that reflects our research strengths and staff interests while attracting high quality students. We will work with Marketing and Faculty to determine market viability and also to determine whether Master’s modules can be used for CPD purposes.

**Research Integrated into the Undergraduate Curriculum**

Our research strategy feeds into our undergraduate curriculum. The new undergraduate programme was designed with a view to our research expertise and also to likely future research priorities such as the GCRF strands. Integrating our teaching with research expertise will develop a new generation of researchers from our student body and help to attract new external appointments who wish to enthuse students with research of contemporary importance.