University Research
Risk Management

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Overview

- Mechanisms for managing risk in research and knowledge transfer
- Defining Responsibilities
A Reminder of the Objective

- To undertake high quality research to enhance knowledge
- To disseminate / apply the results widely / appropriately
- To do so ethically, legally, and within agreed policies and terms
Thoughts on Accountability

- You cannot inspect quality in; it has to be built into the product / process
- Promote good practice in research, management and administration
- But, potentially, the greater the burden of regulation / legislation, the less effort is put into promotion of good practice
Thoughts on Accountability

- Simplification and harmonisation of rules, policies, terms and conditions
  - Greater chance of compliance
  - Lower cost of achieving and assuring compliance
- Framework of policy, rather than highly detailed prescription
A Selection of Mechanisms Used to Manage Risk and Provide Accountability

- Review processes (e.g. concepts, proposals, partnerships)
- Project risk assessment and approval process
- Governance processes for human (ethics and sponsorship) and animal research
- Systems with adequate data capture and categorisation
- Policies (e.g. misconduct, conflicts)
- Audit processes
Audit Processes

- External financial audit
- Internal audit
- Departmental reviews
- Funding Assurance Programme
- Quality Assurance and Validation
- Project-specific audits
- Funding Council “single conversation”
Consequences of Failure

- Research Council sanctions
  - Late Starting Certificate  >42 days  5%
  - Late final report or statement  >3 months  20%
    >6 months  100%

- QAV sanctions
  - Reduced institutional cost rates
Benefits of Audit

- Getting operational change to happen
- Providing evidence for investment decisions
- Advice on processes
- Improvement of understanding
- Co-operation in managing risk
Who’s Responsible for What?

- Investigators
- Academic Managers
- Professional Support Staff
## Responsibilities of the Investigator (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>The creation of an environment in which high quality research is undertaken, in a collegiate and supportive fashion. The provision of suitable direction to enable productive research, along with controls to ensure quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership and Quality</strong></td>
<td>The recruitment and development of members of the team (employees and students), and their direction and supervision in delivering against research targets. Management of partners and collaborators against agreed plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Management of Project Staff</strong></td>
<td>Appropriate use of resources within the terms of the funding agreement and within the University’s policies and procedures.</td>
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**Responsibilities of the Investigator (2)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety</td>
<td>Ensuring an environment in which the risks to staff and participants have been assessed and are appropriately managed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting, Dissemination and Publication</td>
<td>Providing appropriate reports on progress to the funder and others as required. Ensuring results are suitably disseminated, exploited, and published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Governance</td>
<td>Ensuring good research practice, and adherence to any relevant legislation, regulation, or policies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contractual and Project Management</td>
<td>Recognising and meeting the contractual obligations of the funding. Ensuring that the project is undertaken in a timely fashion, against an agreed plan.</td>
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Responsibilities of Professional Support (1)

Administrative
- Ensuring proposal meets funders requirements
- Liaising with, and co-ordination of, partners
- Supporting team meetings, partner meetings, and meetings with funders / customers
- Publicity and marketing

Financial
- Costing and pricing of proposal
- Procurement
- Charging of costs to appropriate accounts
- Provision of relevant statements and alerting to over- / under-spends
- Support of audit processes

Staffing
- Administering the appointment processes
- Ensuring induction and PDR processes are undertaken
- Maintaining a training plan
## Responsibilities of Professional Support (2)

| Environment          | • Ensuring working environment meets relevant health and safety procedures  
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<th>• Support of equipment, etc.</th>
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| Reporting            | • Provision of material for reports and presentations  
|                      | • Ensuring reports meet funder requirements |
| Commercial           | • Contract development and negotiation  
|                      | • Assistance in making proposals commercially relevant  
|                      | • Identification of results that can be protected  
|                      | • Identification and support of potential exploitation routes |
Responsibilities of Professional Support (3)

Project Management

• Maintaining a project plan
• Providing alerts for required actions
• Risk assessment and management
• Liaison with funders / customers
• Support of forward planning
Summary

● Creating the right conditions for good performance and good practice
● Use of both supportive and directive mechanisms
● Bilateral audit mechanisms
● Clarity of responsibilities