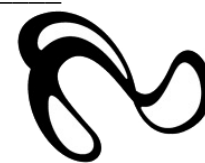


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## Academic Policy Statement APS4



**Middlesex  
University**

### ***Research***

Middlesex University believes that Institutions of Higher Education should be significant initiators of the advancement of knowledge and understanding, based upon a dynamic programme of research, as well as disseminating knowledge and understanding through taught programmes and other activities.

The University believes that research is vital to the provision of a stimulating learning environment in which staff and students, including research students, flourish and fulfil their potential. Engagement in research contributes to staff confidence, competence and development and supports the professional health of staff.

As a research-informed institution, the University views the research-teaching link as vital to the design and delivery of the University's curriculum, ensuring that it is both up-to-date and relevant. Peer-reviewed research ensures that teaching staff are fully informed of the recent developments in their subject, and peer-reviewed publication signifies that teaching staff can satisfy their peers that they themselves can contribute to the further development of the field. The University's view is that research encourages the development of open and critical minds – a vital part of the University's education philosophy through students interacting with staff who are working at the forefront of subject knowledge and professional practice and through the provision of student projects and case studies.

The University believes that interdisciplinary research is particularly important in support of its mission and its desire to provide broad and flexible educational opportunities for its students.

The University recognises the importance and benefits of research in: attracting and retaining high quality staff; developing and sustaining stronger relationships with the Research Councils, government bodies, industry, commerce, the public sector, voluntary organisations and the professions; and developing and sustaining strong links with partner institutions locally, regionally and internationally.

The University expects that the majority of academic staff – and all staff teaching on postgraduate courses – will be active in research (as defined by the University), and this will be monitored as part of the annual staff development appraisal system. Accordingly the University is committed to provide academic staff with the support necessary to foster their research activity.

The University accepts that the nature of research differs from discipline to discipline and covers a wide range of scholarly and intellectual activities. The University differentiates between (1) research and scholarship, which leads to the advancement of knowledge, and (2) other scholarly activity, which involves keeping abreast of subject developments, curriculum development, and the writing of most kinds of textbooks. In this policy statement the term research is used in the sense of (1) above.

The University recognises, as the basis for its policy on research, the following definitions:

**Basic Research:** experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge without any specific application initially in mind;

**Strategic Research:** work intended to generate new knowledge in an area which has not yet advanced sufficiently to enable specific applications to be identified but for which applications are likely;

**Applied Research:** work which seeks to develop existing knowledge and is directed towards specific practical objectives and research users or towards the evaluation of policies or practices;

**Creative Work:** the invention and generation of ideas, hypotheses, images, performances or artefacts, including design in any field of knowledge which leads to the development of new knowledge, understanding or expertise;

**Scholarship:** work intended to expand the boundaries of knowledge and understanding within and across disciplines by the analysis, synthesis and interpretation of ideas and information, making use of a rigorous and documented methodology and which results in publications of various kinds.

***The University, therefore, values and supports research as one aspect of its mission. Accordingly it will:***

- encourage all kinds of research as defined above;
- continue also to define research in accordance with the needs of its postgraduate teaching, and produce lists of staff who are research active in this respect; (a University definition of research activity is attached to this Policy Statement)
- encourage and actively support staff by offering incentives (which may be financial) to seek funding from a range of sources, including government, commercial and industrial sources.
- target its own research funding strategically and selectively, in accordance with the University's mission, Research Plan, and School Research Plans through inter alia: the support of University-designated Research Centres, research groups – in particular, multidisciplinary research groups; collaborative research with research groups in other institutions (in accordance with the University's policy in this respect); and individual research projects of proven or potential quality;
- use sabbatical leave as an important element of research development, in accordance with the sabbatical leave Policy Statement;
- expect research undertaken by its staff to enhance the University's taught programmes and to contribute to agreed staff development programmes;
- maintain effective and efficient procedures for the promotion, planning, management and monitoring of research projects, and for monitoring the progress of research students;
- develop systems for the support of new researchers, and for other staff who have research as their primary role, providing thereby opportunities for their career enhancement within the University;

- ensure that research students benefits from an appropriate programme of research training in addition to the pursuit of their individual research projects;
- pursue the practice of peer group assessment in the evaluation of internally-funded research project proposals and in the evaluation of final project reports arising from internally-funded research programmes;
- encourage staff to publish their research results in peer reviewed outlets such as journals, books, electronic media, and conferences, and where appropriate, exhibitions, performances and artefacts;
- encourage research links with the Research Councils, government bodies, the community, industry, commerce, the public sector, voluntary organisations and with the professions, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- develop and publish a three-year rolling action plan for the implementation of this policy. This plan should include a review of past University investment in research, and annual targets for research income and research outputs for each School of the University and, where appropriate, for Services, and should be regularly monitored and updated following consultation; and
- develop and use performance indicators related to research in evaluating the implementation of this research policy and its associated plans.

*This policy was first approved by Academic Board at its meeting on 13 March 1996, and reviewed and approved again by Academic Board at its meeting on 21 March 2001. The version was reviewed during the academic year 2006/2007 approved by Academic Board at its meeting on 20 June 2007. It is due for further review by 2012.*

**MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY**

**RESEARCH TEAM**

**THE DEFINITION OF 'RESEARCH ACTIVE' STAFF  
RELEVANT TO POSTGRADUATE TEACHING**

**The Types of Research Active Staff**

1. Those who meet RAE 'research active' criteria in publishing at least one high quality research output per year (the term 'output' here used to denote a research paper, book, chapter, performance, item of fine art, etc.).
2. Those at an advanced stage of completing a PhD (but not an MPhil which can be simply a review of research literature).
3. Staff who are producing high quality work but not in such quantity as to qualify for RAE submissions (i.e. research output produced once every two or three years, and presentations of papers at research conferences and research seminars).
4. A member of staff who is actively and successfully supervising research students but who is not necessarily publishing at RAE rates or even those indicated above.
5. A member of staff who is actively involved in high quality contract research but who is not publishing at the above rates but who is producing research reports.
6. Those who have completed a PhD but who have not yet begun to publish because they are relatively inexperienced in that respect but the prospect of early publication of research is good.
7. A member of staff who has published in the past and who is actively involved in the management of research but who is not necessarily any longer publishing at RAE rates.
8. Someone who is involved in the development of knowledge or technique in a professional capacity (e.g. in Art, Design and the Performing Arts, or other areas such as Business Studies) but who is not producing the type of research output indicated above.