

## Research and Knowledge Exchange Annual Report 2019-20

<b>Action</b>	For Approval
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<b>Document Type</b>	Report
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<b>Executive Summary</b>	<p>This is a summary report for 2019-20 academic year of research and knowledge exchange activity aligned to the Marjon Growth Plan. A statement of research integrity which is a requirement of the concordat to support research integrity is incorporated within the report. Key research and knowledge exchange priorities for 2020-21 are summarised.</p> <p><b>Key Terms and links:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEBCI <a href="#">Higher education and business community interaction survey</a></li> <li>• KEF <a href="#">Knowledge Exchange Framework</a></li> <li>• PGR Post-graduate research students covering FHEQ Level 8 and research masters' degrees at Level 7 of the FHEQ</li> <li>• RDAP Research degree awarding powers</li> <li>• REF <a href="#">Research Excellence Framework</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Researcher Development Concordat</a></li> <li>• UKRIO <a href="#">UK Research Integrity Office</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">UUK concordat to support research integrity</a></li> </ul>

## **1. Overview**

Despite the interruption of a pandemic 2019-20 was a year of significant progress for research and knowledge exchange at Marjon.

We embedded the new governance arrangements (section 2) and launched an ambitious new research and knowledge exchange strategy aligned to our values (section 3).

Our preparations for submission to REF2021 intensified, despite a Covid-19 related pause, and demonstrate areas of established research excellence (section 4).

The deadline for the first KEF exercise was postponed due to Covid-19 but we have worked towards this submission and identified excellent knowledge exchange activity that warrants show-casing (section 5).

A successful partnership review of our PGR collaborative agreement with the University of Chichester, improvement in post-graduate research experience survey and growth in student numbers support our progress towards RDAP (section 6).

We did not make as much progress as we would have liked to in relation to research integrity and aligning to the knowledge exchange concordat due to Covid-19 and so this is a priority for 2020-21 (section 7).

While it was challenging to continue to develop a positive environment to support research and knowledge exchange during lockdown we converted activities to an online format and saw good engagement, launched four new research and knowledge exchange groups and had a successful year in terms of bids and awards (section 8).

The focus for 2020-21, aligned to the research and knowledge exchange strategy key performance indicators are summarised in section 9.

**2. Governance**

Senate has responsibility for considering the development of the academic activities at Marjon. The Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee reports to Senate and linked to this a revised committee structure was implemented during 2019-20 involving three associated group: a) Research Ethics Panel, b) Research Degrees Scrutiny Panel, and c) REF2021 Working Group.

The revised structure enabled clearer evidence of our ability to assure the quality of research degrees, greater recognition of knowledge exchange and stronger coordination and monitoring of our REF2021 preparations.

Additionally, the repositioning allowed for a more distributed leadership of research and knowledge exchange thereby reducing the risks associated with being a small university and being 'one deep' alongside supporting greater representation of staff from across the Marjon community.

### 3. Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy

Marjon Research Strategy (2015-2024) identified a transition to becoming learning-led but research-informed and focused on maximising the original research conducted within the university to benefit the reputation of Marjon alongside providing social and economic impact. Evaluation of progress against the five key strategic drivers in this research strategy suggests significant positive developments since implementation;

- a) *To establish a reputation for research excellence in a subset of existing and emerging niche academic areas.* The most well-established research areas of education and sport and exercise science have continued to grow in terms of number of outputs, quality of outputs, vitality of research environment and the impact of our research as outlined through our preparations for REF2021 (section 4). Marjon open access repository confirms 95 entries for 2019 and 2020 so far which demonstrates ongoing commitment of staff to publishing outputs. The research outputs in the repository are also generated by a high proportion of staff as indicated by RDAP metrics (section 6).
- b) *To achieve maximal societal impact for our research.* The impact case studies being prepared for submission to REF2021 reflect some of the longer standing activities for instance the health and wellbeing clinics which run on campus and have supported 1000+ participants enhance quality of life and our research on educational isolation which has supported the development of policy and practice to improve life chances of young people. There are emergent activities and high levels of public and community engagement evidenced through the KEF exercise which provide an important pathway to societal impact (section 5).
- c) *To develop an enviable network of external collaboration.* A significant proportion of our research is undertaken in collaboration with partners including other HEIs alongside private and public-sector organisations as outlined in RDAP metrics (section 6). Our research environment is supported by a network of visiting fellows (n=4), visiting professors (n=11), external PGR supervisors (n=7) and partnerships with external organisations e.g. the Institute of Naval Medicine, DDRC Healthcare on Plymouth Science park.
- d) *To become a supportive generator of and magnet for world-class researchers.* There has been significant investment made in recruiting and or supporting internal promotion of research active leaders to enhance the research environment and currently the staffing base comprises ten professors (Bloxham, Cotton, Dawson, Golder, Hyland, Jones, Luke, Ovenden-Hope, Shum and the Vice Chancellor Professor Warner) and four associate professors (Cooper, Gibson, Leather, Ord). In relation to gender equality it is worth noting 50% of the professors are female.

While there is good evidence of progress against the 2015 research strategy a refined and modernised strategy was needed to better recognise knowledge exchange activities and to respond to governmental and regional agendas (Figure 1). The revised research and knowledge exchange strategy, '[Building Knowledge Together](#)' (2020-2025) centres around our values and has clear key performance indicators (KS1 to KS19) which this annual report refers to. The development of a revised strategy was identified as a priority in the 2018-19 annual report.



**Figure 1:** *Knowledge Strategy Ambitions Aligned to Marjon Values*

#### 4. Research Excellence Framework

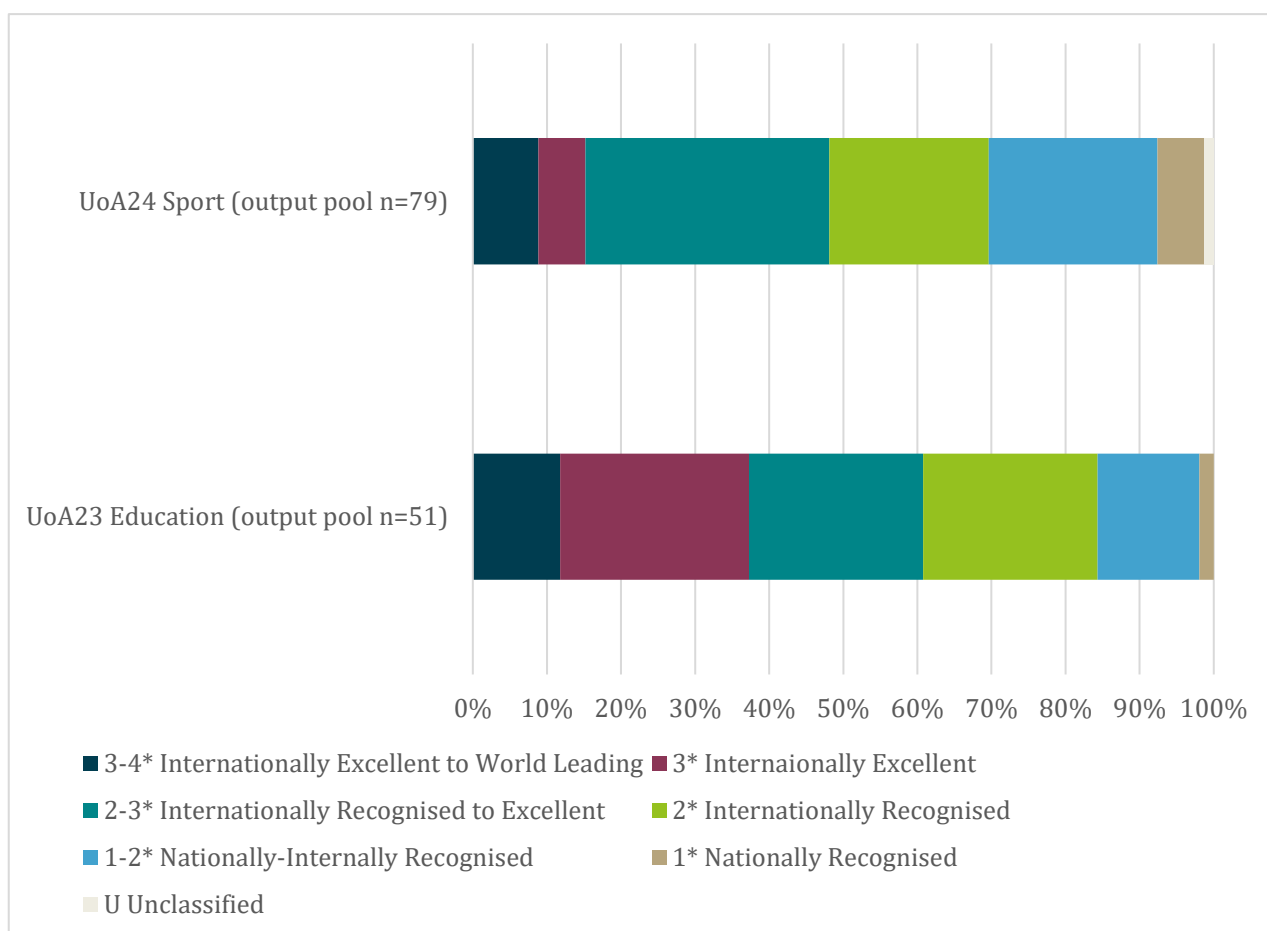
<b>KS6</b>	Submit in at least two units of assessment to REF2021 aiming for all outputs and impact to be a minimum of 2*. As a consequence, begin to attract QR funding from Research England to support research infrastructure	2020-2022
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The Research Excellence Framework officially recommenced on 31 July 2020 following a four month pause due to Covid-19. Marjon are well placed to be able to meet the revised deadlines with submission due 31 March 2021 and results in April 2022. Quality related funding linked to REF2021 will commence in the 2022-23 financial year. The priorities identified in the 2018-19 annual report (summarised below) have all been met.

- a) Individual staff contribution meetings and internal/external assessment of outputs to form the output pool (Oct to Jan)
- b) Exemptions for small units and return of survey of intentions (Dec)
- c) Drafting Institutional (Oct to Nov) and UoA (Jan to Mar) environment statements.
- d) Checking HESA data submission for staff (Dec to July)
- e) Equality impact assessments and staff circumstances consideration (ongoing)

Marjon will submit to two units of assessment (UoA) aligned to our areas of education provision that we have strong reputations in; UoA23 Education and UoA24 Sport and Exercise Science, Leisure and Tourism. We have approved exemptions to not submit to four UoAs where there are fewer than five (fte) staff with significant responsibility for research (UoA3 Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy, UoA4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience, UoA17 Business and Management Studies and UoA33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies), these areas should be a focus for future REF activities.

We set out the strategic ambition to make a credible first submission with outputs and impact expected to be a minimum of 2\*, and preparations suggest we are on track to achieve this. Outputs account for 60% of the overall REF2021 results. Figure 2 summarises the estimated quality profile of the output pools for each UoA following a process of internal and external review. For UoA23 Education 10.5 fte staff will be returned requiring 26 outputs; figure 2 shows over 80% of the output pool are estimated to be at least 2\*. For UoA24 Sport and Exercise Science, Leisure and Tourism 14.0 fte staff will be returned requiring 35 outputs; figure 2 shows nearly 70% of the output pool is estimated to be at least 2\*. The other elements that contribute to the overall REF profile impact case studies (25%) and environment (15%) are currently undergoing a process of internal and external review.



**Figure 2:** *Estimated Output Profiles Based on Internal/External Review Process*

## 5. Knowledge Exchange and Knowledge Exchange Framework

<b>KS14</b>	Annually improve our Higher Education and Business Community Interaction return, ensuring it reflects our delivery	Annually monitor
<b>KS15</b>	Submit to the Knowledge Exchange Framework and benchmark against comparator HEIs ensuring our consultancy, exploitation of facilities, public and community engagement and regeneration and development metrics reflect as priorities	2020-21

The 2018-19 annual review identified four priorities in relation to knowledge exchange; priorities j and k have been met and priority l and m are ongoing.

- j) HEBCI data collection, verification and return (Oct to Dec)
- k) Contribute to HEBCI review as appropriate (Oct to Sep)
- l) Submit to KEF (time frame not yet specified)
- m) Develop a civic university agreement with partners in line with UPP Foundation guidance and in partnership with Plymouth City Council and other local organisations

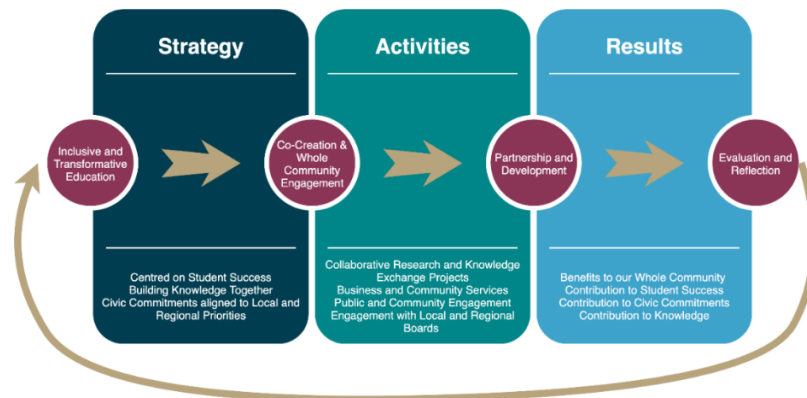
The first Knowledge Exchange Framework assessment was delayed due to Covid-19 but we are due to make a submission by 16 October. The KEF submission will focus on 2016-2019, is primarily metric based, but will also include three narrative statements related to i) Overall Institutional Context, ii) Public and Community Engagement and iii) Local Growth and Regeneration. There is significant knowledge exchange activity to celebrate within the KEF submission, related to our civic commitments (Figure 3). While these commitments focus on our immediate region they also apply national and globally through our communities of interest related to our research excellence.



**Figure 3: Marjon Civic Commitments**

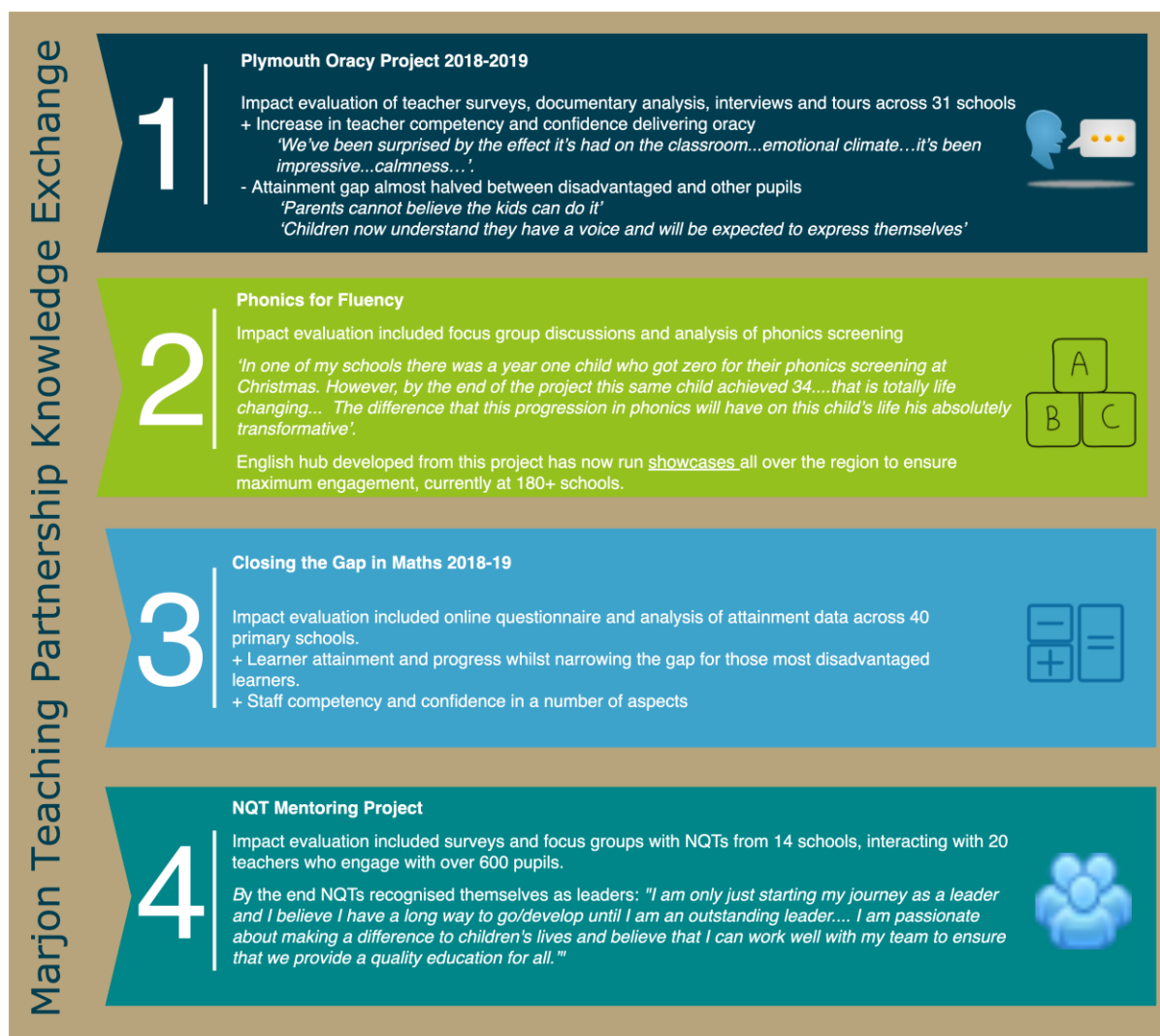


Co-construction involving active partnership and mutual respect, aligned to our values, drive our approach to applied research and knowledge exchange (Figure 4). This approach has led to growth in partnerships, public and community engagement and support for our regional community. Examples of knowledge exchange activity that will be reported in the KEF, aligned to our civic commitments, are included below (a-d).



**Figure 4:** Approach to Knowledge Exchange

- a) *At Marjon we are committed to student success, social justice and tackling inequality.* We have contributed to seven school improvement projects with income of £125 000 between 2016-2019 (Figure 5). These projects include multi academy trusts seeking to improve educational outcomes, reduce education inequalities and promote teacher recruitment and retention. Our regional work and expertise in educational isolation, teacher recruitment and retention has led to impact on National strategy and policy (e.g. [The Future of Initial Teacher Education](#)).



**Figure 5: Teaching Partnership Activities and Outcomes**

- b) *At Marjon we are committed to supporting lifelong health and wellbeing. Marjon hosts over 15 health and wellbeing clinics which brings students, patients and professionals together to challenge and advance 21st century healthcare. Through focusing on the person this model supports patient activation and empowerment underpinned by our research. The range of clinics and partnerships are summarised in Figure 6 and were featured in a report as a case study of the benefits to society of sport and exercise science. They are an example of how our overall approach of co-creation and partnership support incremental growth through refining services to meet local and regional needs. Example comments from stakeholders that corroborate this include Sentinel Healthcare e.g. *"We value our collaborative partnership with Marjon. Their expertise and innovative practice informs and assists our continual requirement to improve our services for patients. As such we are making the best use of assets available to us through collaboration, enabling us to support patients in a community setting."**



**Figure 6: Marjon Health and Wellbeing Clinics Activities and Impact**

- c) *At Marjon we are committed to enabling access to creativity, culture and development opportunities.* Social, community and cultural engagement has always featured as a core part of our teaching, learning and research at Marjon. Our HEBCI returns over the three-year reporting period highlight the engagement of our community with the university (Figure 7). Planned theatrical productions were quickly transformed and delivered online during lockdown, increasing audience reach. (e.g. Love and Information).



**Figure 7** *Social, community and cultural engagement 2016-2019 from HEBCI returns*

- d) *At Marjon we are committed to supporting sustainability, innovation and clean growth.* Our enterprise education research has contributed to delivery of enterprise workshops 'build creativity and networking knowledge and skills' delivered across school settings. In 2018 our enterprise education and focus on sustainability were brought together through our role as project partners for an ERDF funded project aiming to tackle food waste whilst creating job opportunities for people far from the labour market. Directly linking to the activity of the Flavour project, in the first year of delivery (2018-19) 622 tonnes of food surplus was delivered to 128 organisations working with people in food insecurity. Mid-year reporting for 2019-20, despite the impact of covid-19, shows an additional 405 tonnes to 186 organisations. Project wide local pilots engaged with 471 individuals/organisations including direct support for over 400 families during the covid-19 crisis. The impact on those far from the labour is also emerging with evidence of five jobs created and six volunteering roles directly because of the Flavour project.

## 6. Post-graduate Research and Research Degree Awarding Powers

<b>KS7</b>	Grow our postgraduate community, including postgraduate research students, in line with our developing supervision capacity and aligned to our research groups to ensure an appropriate high-quality research environment.	Annually monitor
<b>KS8</b>	Ensure at least half of full-time academic colleagues are active and recognised contributors to subject associations, learned societies and relevant professional bodies.	2021
<b>KS9</b>	Ensure at least a third of academic colleagues have recent (within the past three years) personal experience of research activity in other UK or international university institutions, for example, by acting as external examiners for research degrees, serving as validation/review panel members, or contributing to collaborative research projects with other organisations.	2021
<b>KS10</b>	Ensure at least a third of academic staff are engaged in research or other forms of advanced scholarship and be able to demonstrate achievements that are recognised by the wider academic community to be of national and/or international standing.	2021

Priorities f to i (summarised below) identified in the 2018-19 annual report have all been met.

- f) Recruit 5-10 fee-paying PGR students each cycle and 4 bursary students in fields aligned to our strategic priorities (start date 1 Feb or 1 Oct).
- g) Introduce a research supervisor forum to support a positive and more consistent PGR student experience and increase capacity (3 meetings per annum).
- h) Successfully respond to the Chichester partnership review ensuring we continue to be accredited to provide PGR programmes. Seek the addition of Business and Social Sciences as an environment area and Professional Doctorates to the agreement. (Dec)
- i) Work on systems to routinely monitor and verify the broader metrics for RDAP (Jul to Aug).

During 2019-20 we had 21 students completing PGR programmes including eight students who commenced during the academic year, which represents reasonable growth in line with identified targets. The opening of the doctoral loan scheme supported this growth since five of these students were self-funding. The 2019-20 academic year also saw the completion of the Mayflower scholars' bursaries, although during covid-19 lockdown a number were granted an additional 6-month fee-waiver to support their progress in unprecedented times. There were 35 academic staff members identified as current or potential supervisors for PGR provision, 25 of these staff members supervised PGR students either at Marjon or externally and 12 staff members were identified as primary supervisors during the academic year 2019-20. Additional staff with experience of supervising PGR students were recruited during the academic year to support the overall research environment but also ensure support for new PGR supervisors.

Several improvements were made during 2019-20 to improve the PGR student experience as detailed below. These actions supported substantial improvements in the outcomes of the post-graduate research experience survey (PRES) with all seven domains improving by 20% on average, alongside improvement in overall satisfaction to 75%. A full action plan is reported in the research degree annual monitoring to ensure this improvement is sustained and enhanced.

- a) The introduction of a PGR supervisors forum to support the standardisation and sharing of best practice related to supervision. Three supervisor forums were held during 2019-20 with 11 to 17 supervisors attending each session. Topics covered were i) revised PGR process and interview guidance, ii) annual and major review and iii) viva preparation and examination.
- b) PGR Coordinators were appointed to provide an additional support layer for PGR students. The annual review process was adjusted to include the attendance of the PGR coordinator to increase consistency. This alongside the improved partnership with PGR students led to a highlight in the PRES of 100% of respondents agreeing they know who to approach if they are concerned about any aspect of the degree programme.
- c) A full programme of research and knowledge exchange events were scheduled (section 8) to support PGR student development as researchers and enhance the research environment.

A successful partnership review of our PGR collaborative agreement with the University of Chichester, was undertaken during 2019-20. Three recommendations were identified through this process: i) The University of Chichester enabling access to their resources; ii) The University of Chichester providing its Professional Doctorate regulations to enable consistency; and iii) For Plymouth Marjon University to provide information on its governance arrangements for acquisition, storage, use and disposal of human tissue. Four endorsements were identified: i) Writing retreats, academy series lectures, 'brown bag' sessions which evinced a vibrant environment; ii) CPD budget for students; iii) university funding and support for staff development; iv) sense of energy, enthusiasm and encouragement evident at Marjon. Through the review process we were able to successfully add a fourth research environment area of business and social sciences from 2020-21 academic year and professional doctorates from the 2021-22 academic year.

Achieving RDAP requires us to demonstrate we meet additional standards and criteria above and beyond those we have demonstrated to be on the OFS register of providers. The planned timeline is for an application to be made in December 2022 with three years of auditable data commencing in 2019-20 academic year. In relation to the specific metrics that are specified for RDAP Table 1 shows that during 2019-20 our data suggest we clearly meet one metric (c), are close to meeting a second metric (b) and need to gather further



evidence of the third metric (a) once PDRs are completed. Additionally, we need to have achieved more than 30 doctoral degree conferrals awarded through partnerships with UK awarding bodies. There are 29 PhD completions on record via our former agreement with the University of Exeter and the first of the Mayflower PhD bursary students submitted their PhD in September 2020.

**Table 1: Summary of RDAP Metrics for 2019-2020**

RDAP Metric	Evidence of meeting this metric in 2019-20
A significant proportion (normally around a half as a minimum) of its academic staff are active and recognised contributors to at least one organisation such as a subject association, learned society or relevant professional body. Such contributions are expected to involve some form of public output or outcome, broadly defined, demonstrating the research-related impact of academic staff on their discipline or sphere of research activity at a regional, national or international level.	Not yet known. The i-review system was adjusted to better capture this data through annual PDRs. PDRs have not yet been completed to report on this data.
b. A significant proportion (normally around a third as a minimum) of its academic staff have recent (i.e. within the past three years) personal experience of research activity in other UK or international higher education or specialist research institutions by, for example, acting as external examiners for research degrees, serving as panel members for the validation or review of research degree programmes, or contributing to collaborative research projects with other organisations (other than as a doctoral student).	Based on having a published collaborative research outputs verified within the repository within the last 3 years, 33 staff (30%), meet the criteria.  Experience acting as external examiners, research degree panel members and other collaborative research projects is being collated in PDRs through the i-review system.
c. A significant proportion (normally around a third as a minimum) of its academic staff can demonstrate recent achievements (i.e. within the past three years) that are recognised by the wider academic community to be of national and/or international standing (e.g. as indicated by authoritative external peer reviews). It is expected that the evidence will largely relate to work undertaken within the applicant organisation rather than in other HEIs.	Based on having a research output verified within the repository within the last 3 years, 54 staff (49.5%), employed during 2019-20 (HESA staff return) meet the criteria of engagement in advanced scholarship.  In relation to being identified as having a significant responsibility for research for REF2021 purposes then 39 staff (36%) employed during 2019-20 (HESA staff return) meet the criteria.

## **7. Research integrity and Knowledge Exchange Concordats**

<b>KS4</b>	Review current practices and implement any requirements of the revised 2019 concordat to support research integrity	2020
<b>KS13</b>	Ensure all of our research and knowledge exchange is open access, continuing to support our repository and in line with sector developments	Annually monitor

A revised version of the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which seeks to provide a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance, was released in October 2019. The signatories of the concordat agreed that there should be a 12-month period of implementation for the revised concordat to support research integrity. This means that employers of researchers must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the new concordat by October 2020 and as a minimum, must have:

- Identified a named point of contact who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity, and ensure that contact details for this person are kept up to date and are publicly available on the institution's website
- Provided a named point of contact or recognised an appropriate third party to act as confidential liaison for whistle-blowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted under their auspices
- Published an annual statement on how they are meeting the requirements of the revised concordat

The commitments identified within the concordat naturally align to our values at Plymouth Marjon University and the ambition that our research and knowledge exchange is underpinned by rigour, respect and responsibility. The UKRIO recommended in 2013/14 that institutions develop a research code of practice to strengthen compliance with requirements set out in the concordat, and Plymouth Marjon has a research ethics policy and code of conduct. An action planned for 2019-20 was to update the research code of conduct considering the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity. This action was not completed primarily due to; i) waiting for the release of the knowledge exchange concordat (published 24/4/20) since a code of conduct that covers the full range of research and knowledge exchange activity best suits our approach at Marjon and ii) subsequent challenge in undertaking a full review during lockdown. Updating the code of conduct, to account for both the revised concordat to support research integrity and the knowledge exchange concordat remains a priority for the 2020-21 academic year.



In compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, Plymouth Marjon University is required to publish an annual statement on research integrity which must be presented to the Board of Governors, and subsequently be made publicly available, ordinarily through the website. The following statement covers the period from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 and summarises the University's status relative to the expectations of the Concordat. It outlines activities undertaken and our approach to strengthening our alignment to the commitments expressed within the concordat.

- a) **Commitment 1** *We are committed to upholding the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.* This commitment is exemplified through our work on ensuring our values of ambition, curiosity, independent and humanity underpin all activities at Marjon. The emphasis on our values are embedded in all aspects of academic review for in probationary processes, performance and development reviews and as part of academic promotion. Several activities aim to support the research environment (section 8) including a researcher development series to support rigour and to support understanding of the research ethics process.
- b) **Commitment 2** *We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.* Plymouth Marjon University is an active member of a number of external bodies including UKRIO, Guild HE Research and Cathedrals Group Research and Enterprise group which help to ensure we remain up to date in terms of external frameworks. Researchers within Marjon were supported to attend workshops and conferences e.g. UKRIO annual conference. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the concordat including the oversight of research policies, research governance and ethics, and training and development opportunities provided by the University to its staff and students. The Research Ethics Panel discharges a number of these responsibilities and ethical approval processes were substantially updated during 2019-20, the activities of this panel are reported in its annual statement (annex 1).
- c) **Commitment 3** *We are committed to supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers.* There is a named point of contact to act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity on the website. Our commitment at Marjon is reinforced in the updated Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy, 'Building Knowledge Together' e.g. via the strategic intent of 'building knowledge capacity inclusively across our community, including students and the public, built on trust and integrity'. Learning, training and mentoring opportunities are operated through activities of the research and knowledge exchange office centrally. Academic staff are managed by directors of school who support a culture of integrity in line with Marjon values.

- d) **Commitment 4** *We are committed to using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.* There is a named point of contact for whistle-blowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted. Several managers undertook complaints investigation training in March 2020 the learning could readily be applied to support commitment to ensuring that we have appropriate principles and mechanisms to ensure that investigations are thorough and fair, carried out in a transparent and timely manner, and protected by appropriate confidentiality. There were no reports of academic misconduct during the reporting period and in such cases, there are appropriate processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise in the research code of conduct. Plymouth Marjon University introduced a report and support approach to identify all forms of bullying and harassment and none of the incidents related to research integrity.
- e) **Commitment 5** *We are committed to working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.* This commitment has been strengthened by increasing the contribution to and membership of the relevant committees that have oversight of research and knowledge exchange within Plymouth Marjon university. At Marjon we remain committed to open access of research and knowledge exchange and support this through our subscription to the GuildHE research repository. During the reporting period 161 items from the repository were downloaded 29 681 times and 65% of these were open access (the remainder were subject to published restrictions). Additionally, we supported a number of outputs through gold open access publication routes.

## 8. Research and knowledge exchange environment including grants and awards

<b>KS1</b>	Establish the researcher development series and brown bag sessions and increase engagement with these activities	Annually monitor
<b>KS5</b>	Celebrate the successes and achievements of all members of our community in relation to research and knowledge exchange	Annually monitored
<b>KS16</b>	Review existing research clusters and establish a revised process for the formation of research groups	2019-2020
<b>KS17</b>	Establish interdisciplinary research groups that address global and national issues underpinned by a critical mass of interest and existing expertise to support growth and that engage our broader community.	2020
<b>KS18</b>	Increase grant funding income including collaborative bids as a funded partner with organisations aligned to Marjon values from major grant funding bodies	Annually monitor

Marjon became a signatory of the Researcher Development Concordat to demonstrate our commitment to achieving the principles for the environment and culture, employment and professional and career development of researchers. The implementation of the revised academic promotion and career development procedure enabled one staff promotion to Associate Professor and two to Professor aligned to successes including those in research and/or knowledge exchange and impact. In relation to this we also committed to the Declaration on Research Assessment ([DORA](#)) and confirm journal-based metrics were not utilised as a measure of quality of individual research articles in making decisions about recruitment of staff or academic promotion. Researcher development opportunities for all Marjon staff and PGR students includes internal development events, subscriptions to vitae and access to UEA online PhD training. Staff and PGR students have attended National and International conferences to present their research work, in the case of PGR students this was utilising the development budget made available to them. The internal development events that support staff and PGR students at Marjon during 2019-20 included:

- a) Brown-bag seminar series which typically consists of staff or PGR student presentations of their research to their peers in a supportive setting. During 2019-20 there were ten brown-bags and 23 different presentations covering a range of subject areas/disciplines including education, sport, health, arts and business and social sciences. Some presenters utilised the brown-bag as a practice run for external conference presentations. From March 2020 to the end of the 2019-2020 academic year these sessions were quickly adapted to be delivered through MS Teams and this seemed to increase attendance (typically 20+ attendees).
- b) Academy and professorial lecture series which consists of internal and/or external speakers from across discipline areas. Six events were run from Sept 2019 until March 2020 covering a range of disciplines. Several events scheduled between March 2020 and the end of the academic year were postponed due to lockdown, since they were less easily converted quickly into an online format.

- c) Researcher development series which supports development aligned to the vitae researcher development framework and is particularly geared towards supporting early career academics/PGR students and is delivered by either internal staff or through external experts. During 2019-20 there were twelve different workshops covering a range of themes including research methods/approaches, funding and bid-writing, research impact, publishing hints and tips and research ethics. These sessions have been well-attended, and evaluation suggests they have been well-received and gaps for future workshops have been identified.
- d) Following the successful launch of writing retreats during 2018-19 one additional two-day off-site writing retreat focused on productivity for academic staff and PGR students was held in January 2020. Taking the learning from this retreat PGR students have established a self-led PGR Procrastinators Anonymous regular writing session. Unfortunately, further in person writing retreats have not yet been possible due to restrictions associated with coronavirus.

In total there were 15 bids related to research and knowledge exchange activity made during 2019-20 by staff and of these eight were successfully awarded. Total funding awarded was, in excess, of £1 million (including partner income and over the full lifetime of projects) and most successful bids were in collaboration with other Higher Education Institutions or private/public organisations. Research and knowledge exchange activity continued on large long term projects, for instance our involvement in the 4.3 million euro grant funded [Flavour](#) project (September 2018 to 2022) which focuses on sustainability through the valorisation of food surplus while also supporting those far from the labour market and people living in food insecurity). A significant success during the 2019-20 academic year was the award of £250k OfS and Research England jointly funded project “Developing a model of Student-led Knowledge Exchange (SLKE) using Transformative Evaluation”. This is a partnership across academic departments, building upon the knowledge exchange activity of Marjon wellbeing clinics and evaluation expertise in the Institute of Education and reinforces the essential link between knowledge exchange and student academic and social development.

To support the development of research at Marjon several research clusters, focused around specific disciplines, were formed from 2017 onwards. Some of these research clusters; for example, i) Agency, Context and Education, ii) Rehabilitation and Performance, iii) Exercise Medicine and Well-being have sustained evidence of outputs and impact over time, supporting the vitality of the research environment and drawing together a critical mass of researchers. In contrast other clusters e.g., Experimental Myology and Integrative Physiology were built upon a small niche of research excellence and have not been sustainable. The new research and knowledge exchange strategy identifies our ambitions to utilise interdisciplinary approaches, in partnership with our wider community, to respond to real-world challenges. Considering this during 2019-20 a revised process for the

development of inclusive research and knowledge exchange groups was developed which emphasises collaboration across our community including with external stakeholders, the need to support and enhance the research and knowledge exchange environment and to align to regional and wider priorities. Following a consultation process four new interdisciplinary research and knowledge exchange groups to replace the research clusters were formed these groups are; i) Context, Agency, Place and Education, ii) Creativity, Innovation and Sustainability, iii) Lifelong Health and Wellbeing, and iv) Resilience and Human Performance. The four new research and knowledge exchange groups have agreed priorities aligned to the research and knowledge exchange strategy and will report on progress annually.

## 9. Priorities for Research and Knowledge Exchange 2020-21

<b>KS2</b>	Develop a relevant and challenging early career researcher offer in line with the revised 2019 researcher development concordat including an offer for recent PhD graduates and experienced practitioners entering higher education	2020-2021
<b>KS4</b>	Review current practices and implement any requirements of the revised 2019 concordat to support research integrity	2020
<b>KS6</b>	Submit in at least two units of assessment to REF2021 aiming for all outputs and impact to be a minimum of 2*. As a consequence, begin to attract QR funding from Research England to support research infrastructure	2020-2022
<b>KS19</b>	Develop a civic university agreement with partners in line with UPP Foundation guidance and in partnership with Plymouth City Council and other local organisations	2020

The key priorities for 2020-21, alongside sustaining research and knowledge exchange in line with this annual report link to the key performance indicators in the Research and Knowledge Exchange strategy. The biggest milestone, for Marjon, will undoubtedly be the submission to the REF in March 2021.