

RESEARCH AND SPECIALIST CENTRES POLICY

Section	Research
Contact	Office of Provost
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Purpose:

- To develop and maintain a range of high-quality research and specialist platforms aligned with the University's aspiration to be Tiriti o Waitangi-led and the strategic objectives for research activity within the University.
- To provide for the orderly establishment, operation, risk management and exit for all Centres located within Colleges or hosted by Massey University.
- To provide operational guidelines for Research and Specialist Centres with reference to existing University policies and procedures.
- To ensure that the management and financial operations of all Centres are transparent for all parties.

Policy:

1. Strategic purpose of Centres

The University recognises formal research and teaching platforms as being integral to its strategic vision to deliver world-class research, conducted in partnership with industries and the communities it serves, and to its aspiration to be Tiriti o Waitangi-led in the enactment of this work. The University also seeks to build upon existing research expertise by encouraging and supporting the development, formalization and visibility of groups of academic staff working in common areas through the creation and recognition of collaborative interdisciplinary research groups.

One way in which to achieve these strategic goals is the establishment of formal Centres. Such Centres usually will have research as their main focus; however, some may be involved in the provision of services or educational resources. The University supports the establishment and operation of a range of Research and Specialist Centres that contribute effectively to the University's strategic goals.

The principles and processes set out in this policy apply to new and existing Centres at Massey University.

2. Categories of Centres

The University recognises and enables the following categories of formal research and specialist platforms:

- College Research or Specialist Centres
- University Research or Specialist Centres, and
- National Research or Specialist Centres.

2.1 College Centres

A College Centre is established by a group of academic or research staff, whose objective is to lift the profile of a disciplinary or multi-disciplinary area of strategic relevance to the teaching and/or research strategies of the University, with a view to enhancing reputation, student success in postgraduate research degrees, and collaboration.

A College Centre may be supported by external income or by funding awarded at University or College level; however, the approval for and ongoing operation of a College Centre is not dependent on such funding.

It is not a Budget Centre as defined in this policy, and operates financially within an Academic Unit. It has a reporting line to the Provost, via the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor or designate.

A College Centre will meet or develop the necessary characteristics to align with the principles for establishing and operating Centres. In addition, a College Centre:

- a) is established around a suite of research activities and projects and/or equipment (College Research Centres) or focuses on specific teaching and/or technical expertise (College Specialist Centres)
- b) is aligned with the strategic goals of the College and University
- c) is led by academic staff member(s) established as expert in the relevant field
- d) includes sufficient staff contribution, generally no fewer than three Massey University affiliated researchers, to maintain a sustainable, collaborative team that can achieve the purpose and aims of the Centre
- e) provides a supportive environment for the development of postgraduate students and emerging researchers
- f) may be engaged with external stakeholders such as government, industry, iwi/Māori or community and in national and international collaborations
- g) may attract external research and/or consultancy income, and
- h) plans for, captures, and monitors research engagement and impact.

2.2 University Centres

A University Centre generally is interdisciplinary and focuses on major national and international issues, with world-class research carried out by academics working in partnership with external collaborators. It is likely to include staff members from more than one Academic Unit or College. Normally, a University Centre reports through to the Provost, via a Pro Vice-Chancellor who collectively oversee the activities in the University Centre. Other arrangements may exist for University Research Centres in terms of line management and reporting; where this is the case, this should be clearly articulated in the Centre Agreement.

A University Centre is a Budget Centre, funded through a combination of externally funded projects, programmes or consultancy, and internal investment. It will operate in a business-like manner but must retain an emphasis on the academic and research nature of the University's business. As noted above, it is accountable to the Provost and/or nominee as set out in the Centre Agreement.

A University Centre will meet or develop the necessary characteristics to align with the principles for establishing and operating Centres. In addition, a University Centre will:

- (a) generally include a significant group of University scholars, with an integrated research and/or academic platform, who have already achieved recognition for excellence in a particular area
- (b) involve a range of experienced and emerging researchers across a range of disciplines
- (c) be likely to include staff from other research and/or academic organisations in New Zealand and overseas through adjunct or honorary appointments and co-supervision of students
- (d) provide a supportive environment for the development of research and/or academic capabilities of postgraduate students and emerging scholars

- (e) generally engage with external stakeholders such as government, industry, iwi/Māori or community and in national and international collaborations where appropriate
- (f) be substantial in terms of staff contribution, postgraduate students, external revenue and publication rates
- (g) generally be likely to attract more than \$2M funding per annum from sources external to the University
- (h) generally have demonstrable international recognition
- (i) have a clear governance and management structure including dedicated director(s) established as an expert of international standing in the relevant field as specified in the Centre Agreement
- (j) where appropriate, may have a Governance and/or Advisory Board and a Director (or joint or co-directors); the terms of reference, including the membership (selection criteria, term of service etc.) and responsibilities of any Board must be set out clearly in the Centre Agreement
- (k) plan for, capture and monitor research engagement and impact, and
- (l) make a fair contribution to the University in terms of support provided for operational costs as specified in the Centre Agreement.

2.3 National Centres

A National Centre is a fully funded entity with established funding streams from external research or other contracts and sources. Normally it is a Government or industry sponsored group whose role as a Centre is set out in contractual obligations to a funding agent and, as part of this, is formally linked to responsibilities that extend explicitly to external Centre partners and to the public good. It is a Budget Centre, with a reporting line through to the Provost.

The process for establishing and operating a National Centre may vary depending on the nature of the partner organisations. National Centres at Massey University will align with the provisions in this policy and the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy. When partner organisations are involved in the proposal to establish a National Centre it must be supported by the University Vice-Chancellor and submitted to the University Council for approval.

A National Centre may be formed by the merging or expansion of existing large platforms such as University Centres. It will have established funding streams from external research contracts and other sources including endowments.

A National Centre makes a fair contribution to the University in terms of support provided for operational costs.

National Centres must have a Governance Board and a Director. The Director will normally be a Massey University employee and report through to the Provost. The terms of reference, membership (selection criteria, term of service, etc.) and responsibilities of the Governance Board must be set out clearly in the Centre Agreement. A Massey University representative will be appointed to the Governance Board by the Massey University Vice-Chancellor.

3. Principles for establishing and operating Centres

The following principles guide decisions on the establishment, operation, and review of Centres.

- 3.1 Centres act as “flagship” platforms that promote the University’s profile to external stakeholders.
- 3.2 Activities represent academic endeavors and opportunities at a level over and above what could be achieved if the staff involved operated individually or in small groups within existing Academic Units.
- 3.3 All research outputs and any publications, reports or other outputs and activities associated with Centres are clearly attributed to Massey University. All research publications should be affiliated to ‘Massey University, New Zealand’.

- 3.4 There is a focus on unified, whole-of-centre projects, platforms, programmes and/or equipment that depend for their success on the combined contributions of the experts involved.
- 3.5 Centres contribute additional benefits to the University, including building revenue and enhancing research and teaching reputation.
- 3.6 Centres provide flexible structures that facilitate interaction and collaboration with a range of stakeholders internal or external to the University.
- 3.7 New and existing Centres will:
 - align with the University's aspiration to be Tiriti o Waitangi-led
 - align with the University's *Strategy, Research Strategy* and other strategic goals
 - build on acknowledged expertise and a proven record of academic achievement, and
 - be held in high esteem internally and externally to the University.
- 3.8 The University may offer support to establish and maintain its Centres, including but not limited to administrative, financial, or public relations/marketing support. By virtue of providing this support, the University agrees to promote the work of a Centre; this is in the spirit of mutual and reciprocal benefits that should accrue both to the University and any Centre.
- 3.9 Centre status does not imply permanency of structure in the same way that Academic Unit status does. Regular reviews are undertaken, and their continuance is contingent on performance, relevance, and sustainability.
- 3.10 University Research and National Research Centres are normally supported by a Centre Agreement that specifies the objectives, operating requirements, and performance targets of the Centre. In the event of a difference between the operating requirements and performance targets in the Centre Agreement and this policy, then the Centre Agreement specific to that Centre shall take precedence.
- 3.11 Centres provide a supportive platform and space for collegial research, structured mentoring, and capability building.

4. Centre naming and branding

The titles 'Research Centre' and 'Specialist Centre' may only be used by entities that have received formal approval through the process set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy. The title 'National' may only be used by National Centres as defined in this policy and with the approval of the Provost.

Where a Centre includes or plans to include Te Reo Māori in its name, the name must be submitted for consideration and support by the Convener of Māori Language Advisory Group, Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori.

Name changes to approved College Centres must be approved by the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor. Name changes to approved University and National Centres must be approved by the Provost.

All current and future Centres must contain the word 'Centre' in their titles and branding. The word may be included in a tag or subtitle (for example: 'A Research Centre of Massey University'). All promotion material by an approved Centre, including all letterhead, brochures, publications, internet sites and other publicity material, must display the University's official logo and must clearly indicate affiliation with Massey University.

Approved Centres will be listed in Massey University publications and on the University website, as arranged by Research Operations. Centres will be expected to promote their own research, teaching and other activities within Massey University through relevant organisations, public addresses, specialist comments and opinion in the media, in accordance with University policies.

The names (and any relevant, associating branding such as logos) of approved Centres will be registered as trademarks with the New Zealand Intellectual Property Office.

5. Establishment of Centres

A Research or Specialist Centre is eligible for establishment if it meets the strategic purpose and principles for establishing and operating Centres, as set out in this Policy.

No unit, group or platform within the University may describe or designate itself as a Research Centre or Specialist Centre except as it has received formal approval through the process set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy.

No Centre may change its Centre category (for example, from a College to a University Centre) without approval through the process set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy, except as its category is changed because of a formal Centre review process as set out in the same Procedures and as formalized in a new Centre Agreement.

6. Risk management

Risk assessment and management of Centres must be addressed as set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy.

7. Budget and Financial Performance

7.1 College Centres

All costs associated with the College Centre (letterhead, stationery, secretarial services and other operating expenses) will be a cost to the host Academic Unit. College Centres do not have a unique budget centre code and will operate financially within an Academic Unit.

7.2 University Centres

University Centres will have a unique Budget Centre code and are required to fully meet all costs, including Massey University space charges and indirect cost levies as specified in the Centre Agreement. They are required to meet all contractual requirements with funders, the provisions of the Centre Agreement and all Massey University policies. Operating and capital expenditure must proceed in accordance with the annual University planning and budgeting process.

7.3 National Centres

National Centres will have a unique Budget Centre code and are required to fully meet all costs, including Massey University space charges and indirect cost levies. They are required to meet all contractual requirements of the funder, the provisions of the Centre Agreement and all Massey University policies. Operating and capital expenditure must proceed in accordance with the annual University planning and budgeting process.

8. Operation of Centres

The Provost reserves the right to review and amend the terms and conditions and/or the operation of a University or College Centre Agreement at any time. Changes to the terms and conditions of any Centre must be discussed with the Centre leader(s) and the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the host College, and changes to National Centre Agreements must be negotiated with the external partners.

Any change in leadership of a College or University Centre or significant change of direction by a Centre during the term of the Agreement will require a formal amendment to the Agreement and will be subject to approval by the Provost. Similar changes to a National Centre will be subject to approval by the Vice-Chancellor or nominee.

All activities of the Centres will be deemed to contribute to the research and/or academic outputs of Massey University and must be managed and reported accordingly. Where any Centre has external partners, arrangements regarding research outputs for each of the parties will be specified in the Agreement Schedules.

Centres may promote their activities through the relevant Academic Unit/College or University websites, and through printed material. Where relevant, Centres are encouraged to work with communication support teams, as appropriate, to find opportunities to raise their profiles, increase their impacts or influence, or position themselves for future growth.

A Research Centre will contribute to the PBRF rating of the University through its research and/or postgraduate teaching programme.

All new IP resulting from activities within a Centre should be declared to the Dean Enterprise and ownership will vest in the University unless otherwise agreed by the Provost.

9. Annual Reporting

The overall performance of a College Centre is monitored by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the host College.

College and University Centres must submit an annual report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the host College by 31 March each year, as set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy. A copy of the annual report will also be provided to Director Research Operations for referral to the Provost. In addition, a Research Centre will provide a copy of its annual report to the relevant College Research Director/Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

National Centres will conform to the requirements of external funding agencies or organisations with respect to reporting. Such reports will be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor or nominee.

10. Review of Centres

The University will review every College and University Centre on a three to five-year cycle, to assess viability, performance and the degree to which it has met its objectives and the strategic goals of the University. Where external partnerships exist, reviewing arrangements will be coordinated to take account of the requirements of both internal and external partners and stakeholders. The review will follow the process set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy.

The review process will act as the normal mechanism for re-categorizing Centres. An outcome of the review will be a recommendation on the future status of the Centre. Any Centre that has ceased activity or has low levels of activity may be disestablished, or re-categorized as appropriate, in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the host College and/or Provost.

11. Disestablishment of Centres

A Centre may be disestablished through the process set out in the Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy.

General:

This policy must be read in conjunction with any general terms of reference issued by the Provost or nominee, and/or any specific contract agreement already entered into between the University and the Centre or external partners.

All Centres are bound by the policies of the University, unless otherwise stated in their respective Centre Agreements. The Policies are available on-line at the following link:

<https://masseyuni.sharepoint.com/sites/RiskAssurancePoliciesProcedures>

Definitions:

A **College Centre** is defined as a group of senior academic or research staff, whose objective is to lift the profile of a disciplinary or multi-disciplinary area of strategic relevance to the teaching and/or research strategies of the University, with a view to enhancing reputation, post graduate research degree student success and collaboration.

A **University Centre** generally is interdisciplinary and focuses on major national and international issues, with world-class research carried out by academics working in partnership with external collaborators. It is likely to include staff members from more than one Academic Unit or College. It is normally supported by a Centre Agreement.

A **National Centre** is a fully funded entity with established funding streams from external research or other contracts and sources. Normally it is a Government sponsored group whose role as a Centre is set out in contractual obligations to a funding agent and, as part of this, is formally linked to responsibilities that explicitly extend to external Centre partners and to the public good.

A **Research Centre** is established around a suite of research activities and projects and/or equipment.

A **Specialist Centre** is established around a group of Massey University staff which has an established academic identity in the provision of services or educational resources.

Academic Unit refers to the host unit and this is a Department, School or Institute. For some University Centres the Academic Unit may be a College and for National Centres the Administrative Unit will be the Provost or nominee.

A **Budget Centre** is defined as a distinct accounting line entity within the University's financial system which has accountability for a budget. The budget usually includes both revenue and expenditure lines. A budget centre has its own unique general ledger code and would normally have both staff and assets attached to it.

A **Centre Agreement** is specific to each Centre and outlines the objectives, operating requirements and performance targets for the Centre.

Board refers to a board associated with the Centre, such as a Management Board, Advisory Board or similar.

Commercial Centres are stand-alone entities with cost centre responsibilities and are not subject to this policy as they do not meet the definition of a Research Centre. Commercial Centres operate under their own establishment and operation policy.

Audience:

All University academic and research staff.

Relevant Legislation:

Nil.

Legal Compliance:

Nil.

Related Policies and Procedures:

- Related Procedures for the Research and Specialist Centres Policy
- [Research and Consultancy Contracts Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [Research and Consultancy Activity Proposals Policy](#)
- [Freedom of Expression Policy](#)
- [Media Commentary Policy](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)

- [Risk Management Policy](#)

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