**NEWMAN UNIVERSITY**

**Research Plan 2022/3-2025/6**

This plan supports [the two sub strategies of the Strategic Framework](https://www.newman.ac.uk/knowledge-base/strategic-framework-2020-2025/) and is central to providing the University with a clear direction for the range of its research activities and the formation of its students and academic staff. Our focus will be on ensuring the environment and culture necessary to supporting staff and student growth and success, to allocating resources strategically, to diversifying income streams, and to furthering our capacity to secure Research Degree Awarding Powers.

# Introduction

Newman University is committed to maintaining the link between teaching and research and sees scholarship at the heart of the University’s contribution to society. The University encourages partnership and collaborative research, especially with public and third-sector bodies as well as fellow academics on a range of real-world issues including education and well-being, society and culture, community and professional development. It additionally advocates research-informed professional practice and promotes research-informed teaching as integral to student success.

The University expects all academic staff to be involved in advanced scholarly activity (the creation of new knowledge, or the critical reinterpretation, application and transfer of existing knowledge) with outcomes that contribute to the University’s [strategic framework and two sub strategies.](https://www.newman.ac.uk/knowledge-base/strategic-framework-2020-2025/) Among other outcomes, research contributes to staff development, leading-edge teaching practice, staff-student partnership, outreach, income streams, and new knowledge for the benefit of the wider community. We encourage students to aspire to postgraduate study and we aim to build pathways to postgraduate research degrees through our taught Masters programmes. We will support collaborative staff research: internally through a small number of focussed research centres that build on areas of proven research strength and through supportive research groups to grow critical mass; externally through networks, collaborative projects, funding bids, and contributions to professional bodies as well as scholarly associations and societies. The plan rests on four pillars: research-informed teaching; staff research and REF; scholarship and RDAP; postgraduate research.

# 1: Research Informed Teaching

Research, professional practice, and scholarly activity underpin excellent learning and teaching, helping to produce skilled, intellectually adept, and highly employable Newman graduates. We will develop enhancements to learning, teaching and assessment through ongoing engagement in research, scholarship, and innovation in educational practices and experiences. We will encourage different sorts of research-related teaching, including:

* Research-led teaching based on and informed by the lecturer’s research
* Research skills teaching of research methods and processes
* Research-based learning to enable students to learn through doing research and co-creation
* Research-informed research into our own practices to promote enhancements and innovation

We aim to incorporate the insights of research and new knowledge, as well as innovations in technology and practice, into our learning, teaching, and assessment practices. Our students will have opportunities both to engage with real-world problems through the process of experiential and applied learning and to undertake research, either of their own direction or in partnership with staff.

At Newman we will work in partnership with students and we will share our scholarship, research, and innovation in educational practices internally, with partners, nationally and internationally.

We will additionally invest in areas likely to be successful in furthering our educational and social mission, whilst enabling early-stage researchers to develop their capacity.

Our objectives in this area will be to:

* Deliver research-informed-teaching and practice to the benefit of students
* Engage with and promote students as researchers, co-producers and partners in scholarship at all levels of study
* Provide staff development and support for the development of scholarly practices, academic writing and public engagement

*Key Target:*

*90% of academic staff (after 24 month employment) with PGCert in HE/PGCE/HEA fellowship* *Measure:*

*HR records*

# 2: Staff Research and REF

We expect all academic staff with a significant responsibility for research to engage in research and to produce outcomes suitable for the REF. Building upon the many positive outcomes of REF 2021, we will focus REF-oriented investment on sustaining a critical mass of academic staff who are engaged in research, practice, or other forms of advanced scholarship and can demonstrate achievements that are recognised by the wider academic community to be of national or international standing.

Our research, whether foundational, applied or user-defined, is underpinned by a common aim to make a recognised impact in society, contributing to social justice and well-being, to scientific, human, and cultural understanding, and to the sum of knowledge. Advanced scholarship encompasses appropriate forms of community engagement, knowledge transfer and professional practice, alongside discipline-based and pedagogic research.

Our objectives in this area will be to:

* Expand academic leadership through the appointment of Professors and Readers to lead on research development and external funding
* Encourage engagement in collaborative research, advanced scholarship, and external research partnerships to build research capacity
* Attract and retain academic and professional support staff who will help us to achieve a mature, self-sustaining research base.

*Key Target:*

*Ensure research income (incl. consultancy and Knowledge Exchange) to achieve £500k per academic year Measure:*

*Research and KE income (REF/Research England/UKRI/HEIF etc)*

# 3: Scholarship and RDAP

We expect all academic staff to engage in scholarship and to be scholarly in their practices. Scholarship is purposeful, well-founded, and appropriately conducted; it produces meaningful results that are effectively communicated. It may involve knowledge creation, integration, sharing, or application, as well as the development of ways of knowing in others. Such scholarship may issue in research publication but equally may find expression in other disseminated outputs and forms of public engagement. Students will be engaged as researchers and scholars, supported by staff who participate pro-actively in professional development to support their scholarly teaching, supervision, and broader academic practice.

Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP) will be both a crucial staging-post in our development as an independent, fully fledged Higher Education provider and a badge of recognition that the University sustains a strong research base on which to award our own doctoral and other research degrees.

Our objectives in this area will be shaped by the requirements of RDAP:

* Professional affiliations a significant proportion (normally around a half as a minimum) of full-time academic staff will be active and recognised contributors to subject associations, learned societies and relevant professional bodies.
* Research activity a significant proportion (normally around a third as a minimum) of academic staff will 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.
* Academic achievements

a significant proportion (normally around a third as a minimum) of academic staff will be 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.

It is our expectation that all members of academic staff will seek to contribute as appropriate to meeting these requirements by, for example, connecting with subject associations, delivering seminar/conference papers, collaborating with researchers beyond Newman, publishing and disseminating the results of research or advanced scholarship.

*Key Target:*

*Sustain a research environment in line with requirements of RDAP Measure:*

*RDAP metrics for staff as outlined in the three bullet points above*

# 4: Postgraduate Research

Our commitment to transformation includes the community of our research students and our approach to supervision is characterised by individual support as well as high-quality supervisory teams. We aim to create an environment that develops our supervisory capacity and enables our doctoral and MPhil students to reach their goals and realise their potential. Working with partners, as individuals or external supervisors, we aim to work within the Researcher Development Framework to enable our researchers successfully to make their own significant contribution to knowledge. All academic staff registered as postgraduate research supervisors are deemed to have a significant responsibility for research and are expected to engage in research and to produce outcomes suitable for the REF.

We will also strengthen the taught postgraduate offer to provide a range of opportunities for students, including progression to research at the University.

Our objectives in this area will be to:

* Grow research student numbers and timely completions
* Expand research supervisory experience alongside a programme of training and development for supervisors and postgraduate research students
* Sustain an appropriate environment to attract researchers and high-quality postgraduate students.

*Key Target:*

*Increase postgraduate provision Measure:*

*Grow total postgraduate student numbers by 10% annually to 2025-26 from 2022-23 baseline*