



The University of  
**Nottingham**

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**The University of Nottingham**  
**Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences**  
**School of Health Sciences**

**Research Strategy**  
**2014 – 2018**

## Introduction

The School of Health Sciences has been created following the strategy review of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and came into effect on 1st August 2013. The School is a leading centre for health care research and has recently undertaken a performance review in the UK wide Research Excellence Framework. This Research Strategy encompasses a natural progression from the achievements delivered from the previous 'School of Nursing Midwifery and Physiotherapy Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy 2012 – 2016', the vision and ambition for the new School of Health Sciences and seeks to deliver the objects outlined in the University of Nottingham's Strategic Plan 2010-15. This Strategy intends to reflect on building on the achievements in research quality, outputs, public engagement, impact and environment that have been delivered to date under the previous School as well as a focus on key strategic areas identified for improvement. This strategy will be underpinned by the School's Mission and Values to ensure cohesion and synergy across all strategic and operational areas of the School.

Our **aims** are as follows:

1. Reflect the University's vision for its research to achieve international excellence in all our research endeavours based on strong interdisciplinary collaborations across the Faculty and with other world leading researchers in our fields;
2. Enable the use of our research to influence and improve health and social care practice and policy nationally and internationally;
3. Develop research capacity and capability in the School and in our constituent professional groups by nurturing an environment in which all research active staff and research students can develop and progress;
4. Support the development of post-doctoral researchers so that they can become research leaders of the future;
5. Enable the systematic and scholarly application of research findings in education for our constituent professional groups at undergraduate, post registration and post-graduate levels and enable appropriate standards of competence in research practice and theory among students.

## **School Research Groups**

There are currently six research groups in the School:

- *Supportive, Palliative and End of Life Care* (lead: Professor Jane Seymour)
- *Maternal, Child and Public Health* (lead: Professor Helen Spiby)
- *Education and Technology for Health* (lead: Professor Heather Wharrad)
- *Mental Health* (lead: Professor Patrick Callaghan)
- *Rehabilitation* (lead: Professor Avril Drummond)
- *The Centre of Evidenced Based Healthcare* (lead: Professor Fiona Bath-Hextall)

These groups encompass the primary areas of activity. We recognise that groups will transform and change, and evolve. Whatever the expertise of staff, we encourage them to build collaboration within and outwith the School, and to extend this internationally in line with the University Strategic Plan.

Staff work collaboratively with colleagues from other Schools, Institutions, as well as partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Examples of this activity include the School's involvement as a collaborating centre with the Joanna Briggs Institute for Evidence Based Practice, the Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS) and the Institute of Mental Health Nottingham.

## **Research Governance**

The Research Strategy Board is chaired by the Director of Research and aims are; to determine the research strategy and objectives of the School and to monitor their implementation and success, to ensure that the School research strategy and objectives are consistent with those of the University as a whole and that the School is responsive to changing circumstances, both internally and externally to the University. Provide strategic research leadership across the School. The Committee meets three times a year and reports to the School Executive Committee.

The Research Operations Committee is chaired by the Deputy Director of Research and aims are to operationalise the School's research strategy and contribute to the strategic development of research in the School. The Committee meets three times a year and reports to the Research Strategy Board.

**Table 1: Research Strategy Objectives 2014–18**

| <b>Aim</b>  | <b>Objectives</b>   | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Date to be completed</b>                      | <b>Coordination / Leadership</b>                         |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Attain international excellence across our research activities</b> | Sustain critical mass in our key areas of research.   | Develop a proactive recruitment strategy for Professorial and sub-professorial staff; ensure that that research aims are reflected in wider school staffing strategy.               | Ongoing  | Patrick Callaghan / School Executive / Professorial team |
|   | Improve programmatic funding/income.  | Submit at least one Programme grant or one EU grant per research group; increase the proportion of research council funding by 100% and NIHR funding by 100% (compared to 2009-14). | End of 2017                                      | Research Strategy Board                                  |
|   | Monitor research performance.   | Use the REF framework results to undertake an annual evaluation of School performance (outputs/impact and environment) and develop an action plan.                                  | Six months after publication of REF2014 results. | Research Strategy Board                                  |
|   | Focus on the publication of 3* and 4* quality outputs   | Promote a culture which supports staff focusing on the quality of their research outputs as opposed to volume.  | Ongoing  | Research Strategy Board                                  |
|   | Increase the number of funded PhD scholarships and fellowships (especially UK), as per the Postgraduate Strategy. | Target individuals and work with them to develop applications; circulate opportunities and coordinate responses to calls.   | Ongoing  | Research Operations Committee                            |

|  |   |  |         |                               |
|--|---|--|---------|-------------------------------|
|  |   | Submit at least one high quality application for the Anne McLaren and NARFs each year (Early Career Researchers, Level 4 and 5 staff, PhD students). | Ongoing | Research Operations Committee |
|  |   | Submit a high quality application for an ESRC DTC studentship each year and other external opportunities as they arise (target recent alumni).       | Ongoing | Research Operations Committee |
|  | Build PhD supervision capacity and support supervision excellence as per the Postgraduate Strategy; improve four year PhD thesis submission rates to reach 90% each year. | Sustain supervisory support programme; identify issues in supervision in which supervisors require support.  | Ongoing | Research Operations Committee |

**Professor Avril Drummond, Director of Research**

02 April 2014