This procedure covers the principles and processes for the establishment, management, review and closure of all Centres and Institutes involving UNSW.

**Scope**

All UNSW Centres and Institutes.

**Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?**

☐ Yes, however Local Documents must be consistent with this University-wide Document

☐ No

**Procedure Processes and Actions**

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1. Defining UNSW Centres and Institutes

The University establishes Centres and Institutes to achieve global impact through research, teaching and social engagement, which complement and exceed that which can be achieved through individual UNSW schools and faculties.

While UNSW Centres and Institutes may differ in scope (size, scale, number of faculties/schools involved etc), they share the following common properties:

- Engage in a range of research, teaching, and community service activities that cannot be readily accommodated within the usual school/faculty structure;
- Single or inter-disciplinary in focus, with significant external collaborations at the national and international level;
- Aligned with the strategic goals and priorities of UNSW, and under the sole governance of UNSW;
- Engage in activities commensurate with a significant critical mass of UNSW employees, that are appropriate for its program of work, in order to deliver the set outcomes;
- Hosted within a single UNSW faculty or division, known as the Presiding Faculty;
- Have secured funding for administration/running of the unit;
- Have an income stream from more than one source, which may include competitive, philanthropic, industry and international sources;
- Have infrastructure support from the schools and faculties involved, including space, equipment and facilities;
- Have a department ID (cost centre) and set of accounts separate from that of any school or other unit.

UNSW Centres and Institutes can be broadly categorised as outlined below.

1.1. Internal UNSW Research Centres (Research Centres)

UNSW Research Centres gather a critical mass of UNSW researchers to work primarily on a focussed scientific area, while providing high external visibility for their activities. They may also play a role in teaching, engagement with end-users of their research, and wider community activities. They could be single or inter-disciplinary, involving researchers from one or more faculties.

1.2. Internal UNSW Research Institutes (Research Institutes)

UNSW Research Institutes are major joint ventures across several UNSW schools/faculties which facilitate long-term, cross-disciplinary research that addresses significant scientific and social challenges. They position UNSW as an international leader in a broader field and will have a track record of significant internal and external linkages. They should also play a role in teaching (which could include HDR supervision), as well as engagement with research end-users and the wider community. They foster strong collaborations outside UNSW (with both research and wider communities) and provide high visibility of UNSW’s activities in their field.

1.3. Internal UNSW Community Centres (Community Centres)

Community Centres are focussed on making impact in the wider community (outside academia) by addressing a specific social challenge. They may work solely on outreach and community engagement in areas aligned with the strategic priorities of UNSW. They may also undertake teaching and/or other educational activities which involve significant cooperation across school and/or faculty boundaries (extending the teaching activities of UNSW schools). They may also include some research activities. They may be single or inter-disciplinary, involving researchers from one or more faculties.

1.4. Internal UNSW Community Institutes (Community Institutes)

Community Institutes should facilitate cross-faculty and cross-disciplinary engagement and education, that addresses broader social challenges, positioning UNSW as a global leader in our strategic priorities. They will focus on outreach, community engagement, and education in areas aligned with the strategic priorities of UNSW. They should also work on research problems, that are crucial for

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1 For S25-funded Interdisciplinary Research Institutes, the Division of Research is the “Presiding Faculty” for the purpose of this Procedure.
solving the societal challenges. They should develop strong collaborations outside UNSW with wider communities and provide high visibility of UNSW’s activities.

1.5. External Centres and Institutes

External Centres and Institutes typically involve a number of organisations which, together with UNSW, have agreed to form a collaborative endeavour in order to pursue a joint mission. Such organisations may include other Universities, Research Organisations (e.g. CSIRO, ANSTO), affiliated medical research institutes, and research end-users (e.g. industry, government, NGOs, and other non-research partners). They are established on the basis of external funding (e.g. ARC Centre of Excellence, etc), and as such have well defined and typically external establishment requirements (including governance, reporting, and reviewing procedures). As with internal units, they can focus on research and/or community outreach and education.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (DVCR) has responsibility for the establishment, monitoring, and closure of:

- Internal UNSW Research Centres/Institutes; and
- External Centres/Institutes whose primary activity is research.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic (DVCA) has responsibility for the establishment, monitoring, and closure of:

- Internal UNSW Community Centres/Institutes; and
- External Centres/Institutes whose primary activities are social engagement and/or educational.

Unless otherwise stated, the DVC refers to the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor in each instance. Where a DVC is described as performing a specific role in this procedure, the DVC, subject to any limitation of delegation in the Register of Delegations, may authorise a Pro-Vice-Chancellor (PVC) to carry out this function on his or her behalf.

The Research Strategy Office (RSO)\(^2\) in the Division of Research will provide logistical support to both the DVCR and DVCA on the above tasks, by working with the Presiding Faculty administration units and any other relevant UNSW unit.

3. Establishment of Internal UNSW Centres and Institutes

3.1. Establishment Criteria

The key criterion for the establishment and on-going operation of a UNSW Centre/Institute is that in sum it adds value to UNSW beyond that which would accrue from the individual members’ normal duties within a school/faculty.

Each proposal to establish a Centre/Institute must:

- Articulate the additional value and benefits of the Centre/Institute to UNSW strategic priorities (i.e. state vision and scope);
- Provide a clear justification for the proposed Centre/Institute being the most appropriate and efficient means to deliver the additional value to UNSW;
- Detail a clear plan covering:
  - Program;
  - Duration of operations (mandate) between 3 and 7 years;
  - Milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) over the term of the mandate.
- Demonstrate that the proposed Centre/Institute meets one of the specified categories under Section 1, by providing evidence that it achieves a minimum threshold of activity for its focus (Research or Community), scope (Centre or Institute), and topic of endeavour\(^3\), including the ability to:

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\(^2\) For UNSW Futures Institutes, the UNSW Futures operation team will undertake the role of the Research Strategy Office that is outlined in this Procedure.

\(^3\) It is acknowledged that this threshold is sensitive to the type of endeavour (e.g. research disciplines involved).
- Engage a critical number of relevant UNSW researchers (e.g. for a Research Centre, it should include more than a single research group, and the researchers should have strong track records in the relevant disciplines) with clear commitments (% FTE) from the listed academics;
- Become nationally and internationally recognised in its field (e.g. for research-focused units, this should involve track record on quality research outputs and major external research funding);
- Engage high-profile external partners (e.g. for research-focused units, leading international researchers and research end-users should be engaged, while for community-focused units, this will be prominent community leaders and institutions);

- Delineate an appropriate governance and management structure (the Establishment Form (Appendix A) proposes two possible structures, one of which should be adopted depending on the size and scope of the unit), and the associated resourcing, including:
  - Assurance that an adequate leadership team is in place or will be recruited (in the near future);
  - Consideration of the administrative, financial and compliance burden associated with the proposed Centre/Institute. The application must demonstrate that funds have been secured (from either internal or external sources) for at least 0.6 FTE of administrative support, with higher requirements for larger, interdisciplinary Centres/Institutes.

- Assess and take adequate steps to mitigate legal, financial, reputational, health and safety and other risks associated with the Centre/Institute’s establishment and continuing operation;
- Demonstrate clear and achievable marketing and communications objectives with appropriate resources to deliver these objectives (budget and staffing) to assure high external visibility of the Centre/Institute (see Section 7 below).

UNSW Centres/Institutes should not have sole responsibility for undergraduate teaching courses, unless special dispensation is given by the DVCA. Postgraduate teaching and research training activities will normally be coordinated by schools or faculties, in accordance with the relevant UNSW policies, procedures and delegations, unless the centre has been authorized to coordinate such specific activities.

UNSW Centres/Institutes may, through arrangements with schools or faculties, assist in the coordination and delivery of undergraduate and/or postgraduate teaching and training programs. Funding received for teaching and training activities needs to be negotiated as part of the Centre/Institute arrangements with schools and faculties, and where appropriate should form part of the projected business case for the centre.

### 3.2. Application Procedure

The Establishment Form for Internal UNSW Centres and Institutes (see Appendix A) should be negotiated between the proponents (usually the leadership team of the proposed Centre/Institute) and the management of all faculties of the academics/staff involved in the Centre/Institute.

The proposal to establish a new Centre/Institute should be submitted to RSO by the Presiding Faculty (or application lead, for UNSW Futures Institutes). Further negotiations may take place between the proponents, management of the Presiding Faculty and the responsible DVC, until a decision on approval is reached. The DVC has the right to reject an application.

During the establishment process, the Presiding Faculty (or application lead, for UNSW Futures Institutes) will be responsible for seeking input from UNSW legal counsel via the Legal Office, as well as from Finance, Risk Management, Facilities Management, Division of External Relations, and other parties, as required to ensure that all relevant factors have been duly considered. This will include documenting any significant health and safety, financial, legal or ethical risks associated with the proposed Centre/Institute, and hence whether on occasion a detailed risk audit through the UNSW Risk Management Office may be required.

The establishment process will be supported by RSO, which will:

- Update the Presiding Faculty/application lead regarding proposals pending;
- Coordinate the sign-off and approval for establishment of the Centre/Institute with the office of the DVC;

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* A small centre can, by exception, apply for a waiver of this rule. Applications for UNSW Futures Institutes are exempted from this requirement as their approval includes the provision of strategic funds, via the Division of Research, to cover core operational costs, including administrative support.
• Advise the proposer and faculty when the establishment of the Centre/Institute has been approved, and the date on which the formal name of the “Centre” or “Institute” can be used;
• Add the Centre/Institute to the UNSW Centres/Institutes Registry and the Centres/Institutes website.

4. Monitoring of Internal UNSW Centres and Institutes

4.1. Annual Report

By the end of April each year, each UNSW Centre/Institute must submit an Annual Report for the past year, using the Annual Reporting Form (Appendix B), to the Chair of its Steering Committee or the Dean of the Presiding Faculty (depending on its governance structure, see Appendix A). The Annual Report must include a certification by the Presiding Faculty's Finance Business Partner that the financial position of the UNSW Centre/Institute (as at the end of the previous calendar year) is correctly presented in the report.

The Annual Report will be reviewed by the Chair of the Steering Committee or the Dean of Presiding Faculty, and/or its nominee (where appropriate), to ensure that sufficient progress is being made against the established KPIs. Any issues identified but not satisfactorily resolved may be referred to the DVC. Approved Annual Reports will be reviewed and submitted to RSO for archiving.

UNSW Centres/Institutes will be encouraged to publish their Annual Reports on their websites, after removal of any confidential information.

4.2. End of Mandate Review and Renewal

All Internal UNSW Centres/Institutes will be reviewed at the end of the agreed mandate, with the timing determined following consultation with the Chair of the Steering Committee or the Dean of Presiding Faculty (depending on its governance structure) and the DVC.

The performance of each UNSW Centre/Institute will be reviewed to determine whether it has delivered on its vision and KPIs, as agreed in its establishment (or for continuing units, its renewal) document, in a financially sustainable manner. The review will also examine the functioning of its management and governance structures.

If a UNSW Centre/Institute applies for renewal, similar criteria as establishment (see Section 3.1) will be used to assess proposals.

Review and Renewal Process

In Q4 of each year, RSO will notify all faculties which of their Centres/Institutes are scheduled for formal review in the coming year. The timeline of each review within the upcoming year will be negotiated between RSO and the Presiding Faculties.

The Presiding Faculty, in consultation with the UNSW Centre/Institute Management and the Chair of the Steering Committee or the Dean of the Presiding Faculty (depending on its governance structure), has responsibility for organising the review, with support provided by RSO, as required.

UNSW Centre/Institutes will be given at least two months’ notice to prepare for the review. UNSW Centres/Institutes will submit a completed Review Form (Appendix C) including any additional information. If the UNSW Centre/Institute wishes to continue beyond the agreed mandate, a Renewal Form (Appendix D) should also be submitted. The form(s) and all other supporting documentation should be submitted to the Presiding Faculty management, at least two weeks in advance of the review date.

Review panels will be established by the Chair of the Steering Committee or the Dean of the Presiding Faculty. The Review Panel will be chaired by the DVCR or nominee for research-focussed Centres/Institutes, and DVCA or nominee for community-focussed Centres/Institutes.

The Review Panel will also include:
• At least one UNSW Deputy/Associate Dean of Research or Education (depending on the focus) not directly involved in the Centre/Institute;
• At least two members of academic staff who are broadly familiar with the area of the Centre/Institute, but not directly connected with the Centre/Institute; and
• At least one external (to UNSW) expert in the field.
The Review Panel will seek input on the Centre/Institute's performance from relevant parties, including the Director, the Dean of Presiding Faculty\(^5\) (or nominee), the Chair of the Steering Committee (if it exists), and the Head of School most closely associated with the unit, as well as others suggested by the Director.

RSO in collaboration with the Presiding Faculty will draft the report of the review panel. In the case of a Centre/Institute seeking a renewal, this will include recommendations specified in the Renewal Form.

The Review Panel's final report including recommendations on renewal or closure will be approved by the panel Chair and sent by RSO to the Presiding Dean\(^5\), the Chair of the Steering Committee (if it exists), and the Centre Director, who may append responses to the report prior to it being submitted to the relevant DVC.

**Review Recommendations and Decisions**

The DVC will consider the review recommendations and associated responses and make a decision that the UNSW Centre/Institute is either:

- Renewed (if applicable) with a newly agreed mandate and KPIs; OR
- Extended until KPIs are met\(^6\) (for a maximum two years after the review); OR
- To close (see Section 5).

The RSO will liaise with the Presiding Faculty to ensure that recommended actions are implemented by the UNSW Centre/Institute within the timeframe specified.

### 5. Closure of Internal UNSW Centres/Institutes

An Internal UNSW Centre/Institute may be closed by the DVC under the following circumstances:

- Following formal review of a UNSW Centre/Institute (see Section 4.2);
- On the recommendation of its Presiding Dean\(^5\) and Steering Committee (if it exists), on the grounds that it is no longer financially viable or no longer meets the strategic objectives of UNSW;
- Where it has significantly breached UNSW policy, procedures or guidelines, and/or if the UNSW Centre/Institute in any way brings or is likely to bring the University into disrepute; or
- Where it is superseded through the creation of a larger Centre, for example, following the award of a Commonwealth funded Centre.

In closing a UNSW Centre/Institute, the DVC must be satisfied that an exit strategy exists which addresses the UNSW Centre/Institute’s finances and resources (or management of deficit), and the resolution of any legal obligations as well as any impact on staff or students associated with the Centre. A process and checklist Closure Form is provided in Appendix E.

The Academic Board will be notified by the relevant DVC of the closure of the Centre/Institute and the RSO will remove the Centre from the UNSW Centres/Institutes Registry and Centres/Institutes website.

### 6. External Centres/Institutes

As per Section 1, these units involve partner, affiliated and/or external organisations, and are based on external funding arrangements. As such they have more complex establishment requirements, reporting, and reviewing procedures, based on externalities and legal agreements. UNSW’s participation in External Centres/Institutes\(^7\) undergoes a careful institutional-level due diligence process which includes typical considerations outlined in Appendix F (UNSW Participation in an External Centre), the specifics of which are outside the scope of this document.

The respective DVC is the ultimate decision-maker as to whether UNSW participates in an External Centre, and if so, on what terms.

External Centres/Institutes are either for a specific period of time (e.g. 7 years for an ARC Centre of Excellence) or are subject to periodic review (typically 5 years) as specified in their legal agreement on

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\(^5\) For UNSW Futures Institutes, the role of the Dean of the Presiding Faculty will be undertaken by the Executive Director (Research).

\(^6\) If the agreed KPIs have not been met within the mandate.

\(^7\) The term “participation” comprises of instances where UNSW is considering being part of a consortium bidding for such a Centre, whether as the lead or as a collaborating organisation, or is invited to join an existing Centre (for example when joining an established CRC), or proposes to change the nature of its involvement in a Centre (for example, proposes to withdraw from an existing Centre). Participation typically involves complex legal agreements for which formal legal advice is sought.
establishment. Again, the specifics of this process are outside the scope of this document, and the DVC remains the ultimate decision-maker on UNSW involvement.

7. Operational Considerations

7.1. Branding and Marketing

The Division of External Relations (DEx) should be consulted on the Centre/Institute’s proposed marketing and communications strategy, and its digital presence. DEx will support Centres/Institutes to determine appropriate branding and use of the UNSW logo, before any work is commissioned or undertaken.

Advice on these elements and DEx’s support for activities will be based on the information supplied within the submitted establishment or renewal forms, within available resources and with input from the relevant Business Partner of the Presiding Faculty.

All Centres/Institutes are required to adhere to UNSW Brand Guidelines. All such branding and marketing collateral will need to be approved by the Chief Communications Officer and/or their delegate.

The UNSW Legal Office needs also to confirm that the name of the Centre/Institute is available, and not used or constrained by another entity.

7.2. Confidentiality

External members of Steering Committees, Advisory Committees and External Expert Advisory Committees (see Appendix A) of UNSW Centres/Institutes need to sign Confidentiality Agreements to protect UNSW’s confidential information. During reviews of UNSW Centres/Institutes, Centre Review Panel members who are not UNSW employees or conjoints should also be bound by a Confidentiality Agreement (supplied by the UNSW legal office).

7.3. Acknowledgment of UNSW Centres/Institutes in Published Work

Published work resulting from research or other activity carried out within, or supported by, a UNSW Centre/Institute should acknowledge the Centre/Institute. The preferred method is for the Centre/Institute to be named as one of the relevant authors’ affiliations. When this is not possible, or when the participation of the Centre/Institute is minor, the Centre should be named in the Acknowledgements.

8. Assistance and Support for UNSW Centres/Institutes

RSO provides services spanning the life-cycle of all UNSW Centres/Institutes, and is responsible for:

- Coordinating and advising on the processes for establishment and closure of UNSW Internal Centres/Institutes and ensuring that relevant stakeholders are consulted;
- Coordinating the review of UNSW Centres/Institutes;
- Maintaining the UNSW Centres/Institutes Registry and the UNSW Centres/Institutes website;
- Maintaining an email contact-list of all UNSW Centre/Institute Directors.

9. Transition period

Existing Internal UNSW Centres and Institutes currently in operation are required to conform with this Procedure. RSO will coordinate a process of transitioning to the new Procedure by working closely with UNSW faculties, as outlined below:

Step 1: Faculties will undertake an internal review of all Internal UNSW Centres/Institutes that preside within their Faculty and make a recommendation on which are likely to be:

i. Renewed outright;
ii. Reviewed and Renewed, or
iii. Closed.

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8 Except for UNSW Futures Institutes, for which the UNSW Futures operations team undertakes these roles.
9 Only units that successfully passed a review or have been established in the past 3 years can be renewed without a review.
Faculty recommendations will be submitted to RSO six months from the date when this Procedure becomes effective (see table below).

**Step 2:** Faculty recommendations will be reviewed by RSO and actioned accordingly:

(1) **Renewal**

If the unit has been established in the past 3 years, only a Renewal Form (Appendix D) needs to be submitted to RSO, following negotiation and agreement with the faculties involved.\(^{10}\)

If the unit has been reviewed in the past 3 years, a Renewal Form (Appendix D) accompanied with the review documentation and report needs to be submitted to RSO.

(2) **Review and renewal**

If the unit has been in operation for more than 3 years and not undergone a review in that period, it should submit both a Review (Appendix C) and a Renewal (Appendix D) form and prepare for a full review, as per the process in Section 4.2.

(3) **Close**

RSO will work with faculties on units they recommend be closed, as per Section 5 of this document.

It is envisaged that by April 2021 all Internal UNSW Centres and Institutes will be compliant with this Procedure so that Section 9 of this document will be obsolete.

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<tr>
<td>1. Establishment Form (Appendix A)</td>
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<td>6. UNSW's Participation in an External Centre (Appendix F)</td>
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<td>Paid Outside Work by Academic Staff Policy</td>
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<th>Superseded Documents</th>
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<td>Centres Procedure, v3.2</td>
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\(^{10}\) UNSW Futures Institutes are exempted from this requirement and will be automatically renewed, due to their Management Board-approved establishment procedure in 2017/2018.
### Definitions and Acronyms

Insert Term

Insert definition of terms used within this Procedure and expand any acronyms used. Add extra rows below as required.

### Revision History

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<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</td>
<td>24 October 2008</td>
<td>24 October 2008</td>
<td>Full review of Centres Policy (v2.0 AB05/117)</td>
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<td>21 May 2012</td>
<td>25 May 2012</td>
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<td>3 September 2013</td>
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<td>29 February 2016</td>
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### Further Information

This section is not published on the final PDF document. It is for website purposes only

#### Keywords for search engine

University-wide Procedures will be housed within the Governance Repository. Include keywords to assist location using the ‘search’ function.

#### FAQs and answers

Include any Frequently Asked Questions and answers to be included with the Procedure (in a separate tab or section) in the Governance Policy Repository