**Knowledge Exchange and Research Impact Strategy**

**Aim and objectives**
The over-arching aim of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Departmental KE and research impact strategy is to enable and encourage academic staff to engage with KE activities. It is expected that all staff submitted to REF will be actively engaged in KE before the end of the current REF assessment period (2014) and that the majority of academic staff will be engaged with KE before the end of the following REF assessment period. It follows from this that the majority of departmental staff (i.e. including research, technical and administrative) will likewise be involved in KE through their respective supporting roles.

Figure 1. Linear model of achieving impact from research outputs through engagement (i.e. KE).

Context. The University of Strathclyde has set the objective of being a leading international technological University. Staff engagement with knowledge exchange activities has a pivotal role in achieving this ambition:

(1). A close partnership with industry and engagement with national government and international challenges is a key aspect of a leading technological University.

(2). The assessment of research excellence now includes consideration of impact outside of the academic world - KE is essential to achieve this and can facilitate the development of relevance, reach and significance of our research impacts.

(3). The Departmental long-term strategy is to develop a teaching and knowledge exchange portfolio underpinned by research excellence. To achieve this we are directing our KE efforts towards achieving impact in areas of research strength.

(4). KE activities provide an accessible route to professional development for junior staff and an opportunity for experienced staff to become familiar with current practice, thus ensuring that our
teaching is up to date and relevant to employers and provides employment-ready graduates. The Industrial Advisory Board plays a pivotal role in this as a source of industry speakers and in bound knowledge exchange.

(5) Enterprise activities represent a potential third income stream to support University activities and the pursuit of knowledge in parallel to teaching and research income streams, which are currently either capped or declining.

(6) KE activity is now reviewed a separate separately (from research, teaching and learning, citizenship) under the Academic Development Review with annual target setting and review.

(7) The University has recently established a distinct KE career path up to the equivalent level of Reader (the KE Professional).

(8) The University, and in particular, the Faculty of Engineering, excels at winning and delivering successful Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and increased numbers of KTPs is a key target in the current Outcome Agreement with SFC.

(9) Knowledge Transfer Partnerships provide a useful means of meeting the requirements of reporting impact for future REF assessments, assuming these are similar to those in REF2014:
   • KTP income is submitted to REF (£137K/KTP) but has a much higher success rate (80-100%) than most other returnable funding sources
   • A KTP project may develop impact from a research output, providing material for the 100 word commentary
   • A KTP project is based on a business plan, with financial impacts reported in the final report, providing a verifiable source of evidence of impact for future impact case studies.

(10) The University’s Outcome Agreement with SFC includes metrics for KE activity and KTP numbers, which are translated into Faculty and Departmental targets.

**Figure 2.** Closed-loop model where impact also informs future research activity.
**Approach**
Given the context described above our approach to achieving this aim and objectives includes the following elements:

1. To provide individual staff with the necessary support to win and deliver successful KE contracts through ad hoc advice from the Director of Knowledge Exchange and/or other KE active colleagues, Faculty KE events and University KE training programmes.

2. To aim to develop appropriate costing and pricing models with the flexibility to accommodate a range of customer budgets, including SMEs and not-for-profit organizations, while recognizing the need to recover any direct and indirect costs incurred (including internal levy’s and/or overheads as appropriate).

3. To aim to develop appropriate resource allocation models which meet actual costs while providing a reasonable return to the individual in return for the additional work undertaken which is comparable to that gained from obtaining equivalent research funding (e.g. as credits to the individual’s special fund etc).

4. To ensure a rapid and straightforward approval process to allow staff to respond to commercial timescales and provide an agile response to opportunities.

5. To keep accurate records of submissions and successes to report internally and externally (e.g. annual KE audit).

6. To develop an innovation pipeline and escalator approach to our interactions with companies, wherever possible leading towards a KTP, as the basis of sustainable long-term partnerships.

7. To ensure all individuals submit an annual list of KE activity to ensure that Departmental and Faculty annual monitoring of KE activity is accurate and complete.

8. To develop transferrable business and entrepreneurial skills in undergraduate and postgraduate students, through identifying business-facing projects, commercial sponsorship of higher degrees and encouraging applications for additional funding competitions (e.g. travel bursaries, small equipment grants etc.).

9. To continue to engage in a variety of KE activity, including consultancy, CPD, KTP, OSR and industrially sponsored research or postgraduate studentships.

**Notes**
Strategy agreed at Departmental Meeting 26/6/13 following discussion and approval at Management Group meetings on 18/2/13 and 20/6/13.