

Approved by: Executive Team July 2010

University Policy on the Approval of Major Initiatives

Procedure for Dealing with Major Strategic Initiatives and Major Research Initiatives (including bids to the Scottish Funding Council, specifically the Horizon Fund)

1. Background

It is anticipated that there will be three main strands of this process: for initiatives that have a Research & Knowledge Exchange focus; Learning & Teaching focus and those which are seeking Scottish Funding Council Horizon Fund support. (N.B. it is recognized that there may well be overlap between this broad categorization, in such circumstances the lead member of staff for the initiative should contact the Director of Corporate Services for advice).

2. Scope

A Major Initiative shall be defined as any initiative involving a proposed external funding partner who is not a research council, or major research charity and/or an external delivery partner. Initiatives seeking funding from the Scottish Funding Council (for research pooling, strategic development grants or the Horizon Fund) are covered by this procedure.

Major Initiatives covered by this procedure typically have one or more of the following characteristics:

- 1) a total resource requirement of greater than £1M based on full economic costing
- 2) a total resource requirement of less than £1M but still a strategic implication for the University and/or Faculty/ies
- 3) an expectation of match funding from the University
- 4) a significant estates/refurbishment dimension
- 5) a significant level of risk to the University and/or individual Faculty/ies.

3. Initiation Meeting

Any member of University staff may request an initiation meeting, typically this will be the project champion, or Head of Department/School, Dean, Professional Services Director or Deputy Principal.

Initiation meetings will be chaired by a Deputy Principal. The type of project will dictate which Deputy Principal should chair the meeting. It is expected that generally this will be either the Deputy Principal Research & Knowledge Exchange or Deputy Principal Learning & Teaching. (For proposals seeking funding from SFC's Horizon Fund it has been agreed that the Deputy Principal Research & Knowledge Exchange must chair the meeting.)

For initiation meetings the following staff will be invited to attend by the Deputy Principal in the chair:

- the proposition champion;
- Head of Department/School/unit/Professional Service Director;
- Dean(s) or Vice-Dean(s);
- Director(s) of the appropriate Professional Services(s) (or nominees);
- CFO and COO (or nominees).

The 'initiation meeting' will be used to determine the future development of the Major Initiative and the main outcomes should be:

- Recommendation to the Executive Team on whether to pursue the Major Initiative and the risks associated with the decision outcome;
- In cases where the Major Initiative is to be developed, recommendation on the composition of the Project Team and the roles of the individuals within it;

- Assessment of the likely frequency of meetings of the Project Team required to meet milestones and external deadlines;
- Key details of reporting mechanisms, timings and information required of the Project Team.

4. Project Team

The Project Team will be responsible for development and delivery of the proposal and business case and other pre-award preparation. At this stage it is also important to agree how the project will be monitored, the future sustainability of the project and future exit strategies.

Project Teams will vary according to the need of the Major Initiative, however, it is anticipated that Project Teams will typically involve:

- The Proposition Champion;
- Faculty(ies) representative(s);
- Professional Services representatives as appropriate depending on the project.

It is anticipated that Project Teams will report to the lead Dean(s) or Professional Service Director – copied to the Deputy Principal, COO and CFO.

It is expected that at the point that all agreements are concluded and all funding and governance structure(s) are in place, the Project Team will be replaced by the appropriate governance and leadership structures for delivery of the Major Initiative.

AIF/DG/RKES/CC

C Court, Corporate Services
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