

Job Description

Job title	Research Impact Lead
School / department	Research Support Unit
Grade	6
Line manager	Head of REF and Impact
Responsible for (direct reports)	none
Date of creation or review	03/11/2025

Main purpose of the job

The post-holder will contribute significantly to the delivery of the University's research strategy, with a particular focus on strengthening the infrastructure and culture that supports research impact and engagement. They will work with academic staff across all disciplines to help maximise the impact of research beyond academia. This includes identifying potential research users, developing impact plans, advising on required resources, and promoting the uptake and use of research findings.

In collaboration with the Head of REF and Impact and other colleagues, the post-holder will support the collection and articulation of impact evidence for the national Research Excellence Framework (REF) and similar exercises. They will also contribute to the development of a vibrant research culture and environment through targeted initiatives and activities. The role involves supporting strategic initiatives that advance the University's overarching research objectives, including positioning UWL within the top 70 universities for REF2029.

Key areas of responsibility

1. Providing professional leadership and support for academic staff in achieving impact beyond academia from their research.

- Delivering training workshops and other events for staff on achieving and evidencing impact.
- Advising individual academics on developing and implementing strategies to maximise impact from their research.
- Maintaining awareness of national and international developments in research impact and supporting UWL in adopting emerging best practices.
- Helping identify "pathways to impact" as part of applications for external research funds.
- Promoting the involvement in impact-generating research by early career researchers and other groups of academic staff under-represented in these activities.

2. Maintaining and enhancing a database of research impact and associated evidence from across the university.

- Ensuring systematic collection, organisation, and sharing of impact evidence.
- Oversee targeted impact acceleration resources provided to Impact Case Studies (incl. monitoring usage).
- Providing reports on the potential Impact Case Studies to university committees and others as required.

3. Working with the Head of REF and Impact to strengthen external engagement and greater take-up of our research.

- Maintaining relationships with external organisations and agencies that are actual or potential users of UWL research.
- Engaging new external stakeholders across non-academic sectors — including industry, government, healthcare, and the third sector — to facilitate the translation and application of UWL research.
- Collaborating with internal teams (e.g. Knowledge Exchange, Communications, Public Engagement) to extend external partnerships and promote research findings to maximise impact.

4. Supporting the development and submission of high-quality REF impact case studies.

- Working closely with academic staff to develop case studies, extend their impact, and gather supporting evidence.
- Fully understand and apply REF rules and guidance accurately in preparing case studies.
- Report to university committees on the progress of REF Impact Case Study Shortlist.

5. Contributing to the development of research culture and environment.

- Organising and leading activities such as interdisciplinary events, research conferences, and targeted support for early-career researchers.

6. Support the Head of REF and Impact in the coordination and administration of output selection and preparation for the “Contribution to Knowledge and Understanding” component of the REF.

In addition to the above areas of responsibility, the post-holder maybe required to undertake any other reasonable duties relating to the broad scope of the position, commensurate with the post, and in support of the University.

Dimensions / background information

The post is located within UWL’s Research Support Unit. The Unit reports to the Director of Research and Development and sits alongside UWL’s Knowledge Exchange Team and the Graduate School. The Unit works with academic staff across the university as a whole and will take the lead in promoting research impact and developing the research environment in preparation of the university’s REF 2029 submission.

Person Specification

	Criteria	Essential or Desirable ¹	Demonstrated ²		
			Application	Interview	Test / Exercise
Qualifications and/or membership of prof. bodies	Postgraduate qualification or equivalent	Essential	x	x	
	Membership of professional bodies	Desirable	x	x	
Knowledge and experience	Skills in impact evaluation using both quantitative and qualitative methods	Essential	x	x	x
	Capability to develop and maintain a database using appropriate software	Essential	x	x	
	Experience of working in a university or other research-focused environment	Essential	x	x	
	Experience of engaging stakeholders across non-academic sectors	Desirable	x	x	x
Specific skills to the job	Ability to write and edit to a high standard on a range of complex topics	Essential	x	x	
	Familiarity with the Research Excellence Framework (REF) guidance and criteria for impact	Desirable	x	x	
	Good understanding of the academic research process	Desirable	x	x	
General skills	Good communication skills, including face-to-face and through digital channels	Essential	x	x	x
	Good understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion issues	Essential	x	x	
	Ability to manage a diverse workload working to tight deadlines	Essential		x	
	Strong team-working skills	Essential		x	
	Capacity to work on own initiative	Essential		x	
	Ability to develop productive relationships with a variety of staff and external partners	Essential		x	

Other	Ability to contribute to strategic thinking and planning as part of the Research Support Unit and the Graduate School team	Essential		x	

Disclosure and Barring Scheme Is a DBS Check required: ☒ DBS ☐ This post does not require a DBS check

Before making a selection, please refer to the University's [Disclosure and Barring Checks Guidance for Staff](#) and [Criminal Convictions, Disclosures and Barring Staff Policy and Procedure](#). If a DBS check is required for the role, a **Check Approval Form** will need to be completed.

¹**Essential Criteria** are those, without which, a candidate would not be able to do the job. Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.

Desirable Criteria are those that would be useful for the post holder to possess and will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements, to determine which applicants to shortlist.

²**Demonstration:** Select the Recruitment Process stage at which the candidates will have to demonstrate that they meet the criteria. Criteria which have to be demonstrated at application stage should be mentioned in the Recruitment Information Pack as Pre-Selection/Killer Questions, Shortlisting Questions or Shortlisting Criteria. Other criteria should be evaluated and tested at interview stage (e.g. through interview questions) or through additional tests, exercises or presentations. Criteria can (and should) be demonstrated at multiple stages.