

R2D Research WAM Category – Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Context

This policy defines the **R2D (University-Funded Research Development)** category within the university's **Workload Allocation Model (WAM)** to differentiate developmental research from activities expected to generate direct research outcomes. This distinction ensures proper support for research development while preventing premature classification as **Significantly Responsible for Research (SigRes)**.

Historically, research development activities were inconsistently allocated within WAM, sometimes categorised within non-research areas such as Teaching (T10) or Support (S3). The introduction of R2D provides a structured and transparent classification, ensuring that research development is recognised appropriately. This is in alignment with HESA and REF2029 reporting requirements and enhances fairness and accuracy in research time allocation.

While R2D affects SigRes calculations, it should not be used as a tool to artificially influence SigRes populations or REF metrics. Allocation decisions must be based on a transparent, evidence-based assessment of expected outcomes. The establishment of R2D does not require an increase in research time allocation; rather, it provides a structured framework for recognising research development activities. This distinction clarifies activities intended to produce measurable research outputs versus those focused on skill and capacity-building.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all academic schools and defines how research activities should be categorised:

- **R2 (University-Funded Research):** Activities expected to directly generate measurable research outputs.
- **R2D (University-Funded Research Development):** Activities focused on research development without an immediate expectation of outputs.

These classifications ensure consistency in workload allocation and research support.

2. Intent and Objectives

2.1 Why R2D Was Introduced

- To support academics in developing their research and progressing towards **Significant Responsibility for Research (SigRes)** without premature expectations of immediate research delivery.
- To provide a **structured approach** for recognising research development activities.
- To allow **better transparency and accuracy** in workload allocation.

3. Definitions and Key Terms

- **Workload Allocation Model (WAM):** The university's framework for tracking and distributing academic workload, including research-related activities.
- **R2 (University-Funded Research):** Research activities expected to generate measurable outputs.
- **R2D (University-Funded Research Development):** Research development activities aimed at capacity-building without an immediate expectation of outputs.
- **R3 (Postgraduate Research Supervision):** Supervision of postgraduate research students.
- **R4 (Externally Funded Research):** Research activities funded externally.
- **Significant Responsibility for Research (SigRes):** A classification for **HESA** and **REF2029** reporting.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Allocation Responsibilities

- **Schools** manage R2D allocations within their existing **Workload Allocation Model (WAM)** structures.
- **Line Managers (or designated research mentors/advisors)** support with categorisation (R2 or R2D) of academic research activities.
- **Associate Deans of Research & Innovation (ADRI) and Research Leads (Centre/Theme Leads)** provide discipline-specific guidance on categorisation if required.
- **ADRI** ensure the consistent application of policy across schools.

4.2 Responsibilities of Academics

- Align **R2D allocation** with **MyContribution** objectives and **individual research development plans**.
- Ensure **R2/R2D time** supports career progression in line with discipline, career stage, and institutional research priorities.

4.3 Oversight and Governance

- The WAM Steering Group, co-chaired by ULT and EIS, manages oversight of R2D as part of the overall governance of the WAM framework, to ensure consistent applications across school
- **ADRs and Deans** monitor the correct application of R2D within WAM allocations.
- **Schools** must maintain transparency in R2D allocation practices.
- All WAM/MyContribution activities should uphold principles of **inclusivity, fair allocation, and unconscious bias awareness**.

5. Application of R2D

5.1 Criteria for R2D Classification

- R2D activities should focus on developing an academic's **research capacity** and skills, supporting their progression towards productive research in the future.
- Activities must be developmental, with no immediate expectation/likelihood of delivering a research outcome.
- While **R2D designation** may affect **SigRes status**, categorisation should be based solely on the nature of the activity.
- Experienced academics may hold **R2D objectives** if developing research in a **new or previously unexplored area**.

5.2 Examples of R2D Activities

Classification of **R2D activities** is determined by each school based on whether the activity has a **reasonable expectation of delivering a tangible research outcome**. However, R2D should not be assigned based on its potential **impact on REF submission**.

Examples of **R2D activities** include:

- **Pilot studies and preliminary research** to support future projects.
- **Grant writing and funding applications** for academics without a prior/recent track record.
 - Schools may **stratify classification** based on previous funding success during a defined time period (e.g. in the previous 5 years):
 - Academics with a history of securing **small grants** may receive R2 classification when applying for similar small grants but R2D for larger awards.
 - Schools, centres, or disciplines may set their own **thresholds**, provided these are **justified and transparent**.
- **Building research collaborations and networks** to establish future research opportunities.
- **Engaging in research training or mentorship** to enhance research capability.

5.3 Interaction with Reporting Systems

- **R2D activities** must be recorded in **WAM and MyContribution**.
- Categorisation should be **reviewed annually as part of MyContribution planning and reporting**, ensuring alignment with career progression and development.

6. SigRes Considerations

- **Only R2 (not R2D)**, R3 (PGR Supervision), and R4 (Externally Funded Research) **contribute to SigRes** classification.
- Academics may have a **mix of R2D and R2-aligned objectives**, but only R2 counts towards SigRes determination.
- While R2D allocation does not contribute to SigRes classification, its presence in an academic's WAM **does not preclude SigRes status**. If an academic's combined R2, R3, and R4 allocation reaches 20% of their total WAM, they will be classified as Significantly Responsible for Research (SigRes), regardless of their R2D allocation.
- Although SigRes classification impacts submission size, **an individual's SigRes status does not determine whether their research will be submitted to REF2029**. This 'decoupling' is a new aspect of REF2029.

7. Monitoring, Review, and Compliance

7.1 Tracking R2D to R2 Progression

- **Tracking progression** from R2D to R2 demonstrates the impact of research support within the university.
- **Schools** are responsible for monitoring both **individual and institutional** progression from R2D to R2.
- **Progression should be based on meaningful outcomes** that enhance an academic's skills, capabilities, or likelihood of delivering research outputs.
- The transition from **R2D to R2** should be **supportive, not punitive**. Lack of progression is not a concern if there is **reasonable engagement** with activities. Line managers should focus on **identifying barriers and providing support**, recognising that research progression varies by individual and is not guaranteed within a fixed timeframe.

7.2 Dispute Resolution

- If categorisation issues arise, they should be resolved at the **school level** with ADRI oversight.
- Appeals may be referred to **the Dean if necessary**.

8. Policy Review and Updates

- This policy will be reviewed by schools (ADR and Dean) after 12 months.
- The outcome of this review will be reported to the Research and Innovation Committee (RIC).

- Any amendments will be informed by this review process and subject to governance consultation.