

## Assessment criteria & matrix

The following criteria will be assessed by your Head of Department or their nominated reviewer. Make sure you cover criteria 1-5 in your narrative statement.

All assessment should be conducted in line with the University's commitment to implementing fair and responsible methods of research assessment and management considering the individual's contribution, quality of the content & impact, influence, visibility and reach.

**Table 1: Condensed assessment matrix**

| Criteria                                       | Meets expectations if the response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0. Meets the specified 'mandatory conditions'  | Meets all conditions, or provides realistic assurance that conditions will be in place (please note this must be a condition of any Head of Department approval). In exceptional circumstances, a well justified response which fully mitigates all risks may be considered. |
| 1. Defined area of research/ research identity | Reflects a clear research area and trajectory, as well as investment in developing their research identity.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 2. Research experience                         | Shows involvement and experience in externally funded projects and high-quality outputs appropriate to the role applied for. Reflects solid experience but does not require prior leadership of major initiatives.                                                           |
| 3. Leadership and management experience        | Demonstrates active involvement in project delivery and some leadership experience. Reflects growing responsibility and/or engagement with formal training.                                                                                                                  |
| 4. Professional network                        | Shows development of purposeful academic and partner networks and outlines practical ways to engage collaborators.                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5. Responsible research, ethics & integrity    | Shows a sound understanding of (and is clear how their work addresses) research integrity and ethics, responsible research and innovation, and trusted research. Demonstrates compliance with mandatory training requirements (e.g. EDI and Research Integrity training).    |

**For further insight and guidance, Table 2 is provided** to offer examples of when an applicant might meet, fail to meet, or exceed expectations.

**These examples are not prescriptive, and you do not have to meet all of them** - just enough to evidence that you meet the expected level. Any references in the examples to particular conferences or publications should not be used to distinguish between the different levels (i.e. one conference or publication does not hold more weight than another and the activity/the part you play is the key element).

**Table 2: Detailed assessment matrix with examples**

| Criteria                                           | Does not meet expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Meets expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Exceeds expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <b>Defined area of research/ research identity</b> | <p>Response lacks clarity, focus, and evidence of strategic development. It doesn't show a well-defined research identity or proactive steps toward growth.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My research is broadly in environmental science.</li> <li>• I read journal articles and attend occasional seminars to stay updated.</li> <li>• I'm still exploring which specific area I want to focus on long- term.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Reflects a clear research area and trajectory, as well as investment in developing their research identity.</b></p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My research focuses on urban climate resilience, particularly the role of green infrastructure in mitigating heat stress.</li> <li>• I am developing expertise through co-authored publications, participation in interdisciplinary workshops, and collaboration with local councils on pilot studies.</li> <li>• I've undertaken training in spatial analysis and stakeholder engagement to strengthen my methodological and impact capabilities.</li> <li>• I have presented or am shortly preparing to present at a conference.</li> <li>• I can provide examples of innovative and original ideas that have benefitted my area of research.</li> </ul> | <p>Response demonstrates a well-articulated and strategically developed research identity, with leadership, innovation, and impact. It strongly supports readiness for project leadership.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have established a research niche in nature-based solutions for climate adaptation in urban environments, integrating ecological, social, and policy dimensions.</li> <li>• I lead a cross-disciplinary network of early-career researchers focused on climate resilience, and I've secured funding to host a symposium advancing this agenda.</li> <li>• I have been invited to speak and contribute to conferences and events</li> <li>• My development includes publishing in high-impact journals, completing advanced training in systems thinking and policy co-design, and building strategic partnerships with DEFRA and local authorities.</li> <li>• I have prepared a monograph and leading a special issue in Urban Sustainability to consolidate and disseminate emerging frameworks in this field.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Research experience</b>                         | <p>Responses that lack specificity or reference to external funding or high-quality outputs. No demonstration of significant contributions to impactful research.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>Shows involvement and experience in externally funded projects and high-quality outputs appropriate to the role applied for. Reflects solid experience but does not require prior leadership of major initiatives</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Response demonstrates involvement with substantial external funding and high-impact outputs. Positions the researcher as a strong candidate for project leadership.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-I on a transdisciplinary Horizon Europe</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| Criteria                                    | Does not meet expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Meets expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Exceeds expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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|                                             | <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributed to a departmental research project on climate adaptation (internal funding).</li> <li>Assisted with data collection for a study on urban heat islands.</li> <li>Co-authored one conference abstract presented at a regional event.</li> </ul>          | <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(For Co-I request) Lead a work package on an EPSRC funded project)</li> <li>(For PI request) Researcher Co-investigator on a UKRI-funded project examining climate resilience in urban planning (£250k over 2 years).</li> <li>Lead author on a peer-reviewed article (2023)</li> <li>Presented findings at the European Geosciences Union (EGU) Annual Meeting (2024).</li> <li>Contributed to a successful Horizon Europe bid as a named researcher.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                | <p>consortium (€2.1M total), leading the UK work package on climate adaptation strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published in a journal relevant to discipline and able to reflect on its reach and impact.</li> <li>Delivered keynote at the Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference (2024)</li> <li>Developed a policy briefing adopted by DEFRA for urban planning guidelines.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Leadership and management experience</b> | <p>Response lacks evidence of leadership or management responsibility. It shows passive involvement and minimal training, which doesn't support readiness for project leadership.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported administrative tasks for a departmental research group.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Demonstrates active involvement in project delivery and some leadership experience. Reflects growing responsibility and/or engagement with formal training.</b></p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managed day-to-day operations of a work package within a UKRI-funded project, including coordinating data collection and liaising with collaborators.</li> <li>Supervised two MSc students and mentored a PhD student on research methods.</li> <li>Completed The Researcher Academy leadership programme e.g. LEAD programme or GW4 Crucible.</li> <li>Organised quarterly team meetings and contributed to project reporting for funders.</li> </ul> | <p>Response shows strategic leadership, formal training, and successful delivery of complex research programmes. It clearly exceeds expectations and supports a strong case for project leadership.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led the delivery of a multi-institutional work package in a Horizon Europe project, managing timelines, budgets, and stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>Supervised research team members and coordinated interdisciplinary collaboration across five institutions.</li> <li>Designed &amp; delivered a training module on project management for ECRs.</li> <li>Demonstrates how the LEAD programme has influenced their self-management with examples of a change in people management practice.</li> <li>Chaired the project steering group and led the</li> </ul> |

| Criteria                    | Does not meet expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Meets expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Exceeds expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can demonstrate the principles of effective project management and when to apply them, giving examples of my role within one or more successful projects.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>final reporting process to funders, resulting in commendation it's delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can demonstrate a detailed understanding of project management methods and their application e.g. I have had a significant role in delivering successful projects, or a significant role within a costly, complex or novel facility;</li> <li>I am recognised as influential, contributing to others' work, mentoring others, and encouraging others to produce ideas</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Professional network</b> | <p>Response is vague and passive. It lacks evidence of strategic networking or plans to leverage relationships for research success</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attended a few conferences and met some researchers in my field.</li> <li>I follow relevant academics on social media and occasionally engage with their posts.</li> <li>I hope to collaborate more in the future when opportunities arise.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Shows development of purposeful academic and partner networks and outlines practical ways to engage collaborators.</b></p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have built a network through regular attendance at national conferences and participation in a UKRI-funded research consortium.</li> <li>I collaborate with colleagues from two UK universities on joint publications and data sharing.</li> <li>I plan to engage my network in future research through co-authored funding bids and collaborative workshops.</li> <li>I maintain active communication via research mailing lists and LinkedIn to stay informed and connected.</li> <li>I developed relationships outside the university which has led to the opportunity to communicate the impact of my work to a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences.</li> <li>I have made a significant impact to the</li> </ul> | <p>Response demonstrates strategic, sustained, and impactful networking. It shows leadership and a clear plan to mobilize collaborators for research success.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have cultivated a robust international network through leadership roles in research consortia, invited talks, and editorial board membership for Journal of Climate Adaptation.</li> <li>I co-founded an interdisciplinary working group on urban resilience, now involving over 30 researchers across Europe and North America.</li> <li>I actively engage my network through joint funding applications, co-authored publications, and policy engagement initiatives.</li> <li>I am developing a collaborative platform to share tools and datasets, and I've secured funding to host a strategic retreat to align future research priorities.</li> <li>My network includes academic, policy, and industry partners, which I leverage to ensure</li> </ul> |

| Criteria                                            | Does not meet expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Meets expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Exceeds expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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|                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | management of relationships with key stakeholders; or new and complex contracts/commercial agreements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>research relevance, impact, and scalability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can give examples of clear engagement leading to successful and positive relationships and outcomes.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Responsible research, ethics &amp; integrity</b> | <p>Response is vague and superficial. It lacks understanding of trusted research principles and doesn't demonstrate commitment to integrity or compliance with institutional expectations.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I try to be ethical in my research and avoid plagiarism.</li> <li>I haven't done the University's Research Integrity training yet.</li> <li>I follow general guidelines but haven't had much formal instruction.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Shows a sound understanding of (and is clear how their work addresses) research integrity and ethics, responsible research and innovation, and trusted research. Demonstrates compliance with mandatory training requirements (e.g. EDI and Research Integrity training).</b></p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I understand trusted research as ensuring that collaborations, data sharing, and research practices are secure, ethical, and aligned with national and international standards.</li> <li>I adhere to principles of research integrity including transparency, reproducibility, and responsible authorship.</li> <li>I have completed the University's Research Integrity training (2024) which covered topics such as data management, ethical approval, and avoiding misconduct.</li> <li>I ensure ethical compliance by securing appropriate approvals and maintaining clear documentation throughout the research lifecycle.</li> </ul> | <p>Response demonstrates leadership in research integrity and trusted research, going beyond compliance to influence practice and policy. It strongly supports readiness for project leadership.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trusted research involves safeguarding the integrity, security, and ethical standards of research, particularly in international collaborations and sensitive areas such as dual-use technologies and personal data.</li> <li>I actively promote research integrity through mentoring, transparent reporting, and rigorous data management practices. I ensure all collaborators understand and adhere to ethical standards.</li> <li>I completed the University's Research Integrity training (2024) and additional modules on responsible innovation and international research security.</li> <li>I led the development of a departmental protocol for ethical data sharing and contributed to institutional guidance on trusted research in collaboration with the Research Governance team.</li> <li>I regularly engage with national discussions on research ethics and have presented on integrity frameworks at sector-wide events.</li> </ul> |

