The Open University in Scotland response to the SFC’s Universities Innovation Fund (UIF) priorities for AY 2017/18

Background

1. The Open University in Scotland utilises the UIF Platform Grant from the Scottish Funding Council to maintain its knowledge exchange and innovation activities. In 2016/17, this has included cultural and public engagement, key sector seminars & lectures, scoping of a number of potential outcomes as well as our continued production of free learning resources through the OpenLearn website, iTunesU, the OU channel on YouTube, the OpenScience Laboratory and FutureLearn.

2. We do not plan to apply to the Outcome Grant in 2017-18. However, as in 2016-17, we will use part of the Platform Grant to fund activity towards supporting the National Outcomes that have been identified in relation to the Outcome Grant. We intend to build upon positive relationships in the sector with a view to collaborative opportunities in the future.

Utilisation of Platform Grant

3. We will utilise the Platform Grant to build on our core knowledge exchange and cultural engagement activities.

- We will support a programme of cultural engagement, which will be focused in 2017/18 to ensure national reach and penetration into communities which may not have previously reached.
- We will support the development of informal learning activities to have impact at both a national and international level, through the continued production and promotion of our free educational resources.
- We plan to produce an open educational resource for Scots language for learning facilitators.
- We are maintaining our staffing base to ensure continuity of our knowledge exchange activity.

4. We will engage with and develop activity to support the National Outcomes identified in relation to the Outcome Grant:

<table>
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<th>Outcome 1: Demand Stimulation</th>
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<td>- The Open University is developing training to enhance academic engagement in knowledge exchange (PA5)</td>
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<td>- Further enhancing our outreach work with employers in the Dumfries &amp; Galloway region, with a particular focus on healthcare and the opportunities for innovation presented by research-practice interface developing around the Crichton Care Campus (the OU having the lead institutional role amongst the academic partners) and the OU’s own Priority Research Area (PRA): Health &amp;</td>
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Wellbeing. (PA6)
- Continuing discussions with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), in particular with their University Engagement Manager, around supporting sustainable economic development within Highlands and Islands both at an individual institutional level and in collaboration with other HEIs. (PA6)
- Tendering to increase the number of Scottish Union Learning skills workshops we offer to a range of employers, increasing the demand in business for this university service (PA6)

Outcome 2: Commercialisation
- We will continue to work with Interface, offering Open University expertise where appropriate (PA5)
- We will engage with template contracts where commercialisation occurs (PA7)

Outcome 3: Greater Innovation
- The Open University is developing training to enhance academic engagement in knowledge exchange and improve professional development for Enterprise and Innovation (E&I) officers (PA5)
- We will re-engage more fully with University Technology (www.university-technology.com) for processes and products developed by OU researchers (PA5)
- We will work towards a strategic engagement plan for Scotland in our each of our Strategic Research Areas (SRAs):
  - Space
  - Citizenship and governance
  - International development
  - Technology enhanced learning (PA6)

Outcome 4 – Entrepreneurialism.
- We have augmented our careers service resource in Scotland to include a focus on promoting entrepreneurialism in students, including more systematic engagement with Scottish Institute for Enterprise and the Enterprise Campus (PA1)
- We will complete the review and collating of our entrepreneurship resources, currently focused on the popular Rural Entrepreneurship open educational resource, on OpenLearn (PA2)
- Working with colleagues based on our Milton Keynes campus, we will review our current enterprise and knowledge exchange training provision for staff. [see also Outcomes 1 & 3 ] (PA5)

Outcome 5 – Internationalisation
- We will continue to support the development of open educational resources and informal learning activities to have impact at both a national and international level (PA11)
- Supporting the University’s ‘Brexit Project’ to develop written articles, audio and audio-visual pieces as a prompt to examine Brexit's relationship with the different situations and experiences of the UK and Ireland's nations and regions, industrial sectors and social groups, and to encourage radical speculation on its consequences. (PA11)
### Outcome 6 – Inclusive growth and social impact.

- Continue to develop our relationships with third sector organisations developing capacity, skills and impact via the application of new research and learning from global contexts and in leadership. (PA10)
- Building on work from 2016/17, continue to develop our work on dementia to help support carers, communities and workplaces better support people who are living with the condition to lead more fulfilled lives. (PA10)
- Run an extensive range of sector events throughout Scotland, drawing on the national and international expertise of the OU to engage policy makers, employers and the workforce in key issues. We will continue to promote our collaborative model of co-delivered events with e.g. third sector and community organisations. (PA10)

### Outcome 7 – Equality & Diversity

- We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision for an inclusive university community: [www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity](http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity)
- We will consider the equality and diversity impact of our UIF activities
- We will ensure our partners have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote and advance equality of opportunity, promote and foster good relations and subscribe to the vision and principles of our equality scheme
- Whilst The OU in Scotland does not have the capacity to lead on the delivery of Outcome 7 at a sector level, we believe can make a valuable contribution and we are keen to work with other HEIs to support this outcome.

### Match funding and Outcomes Grant

5. As a UK-wide organisation, The Open University’s research funding is from HEFCE. In this regard we would, therefore, consider The OU in Scotland to be a small HEI. For 2017-18, we are not able to match the Platform Grant funding. However, where there are synergies available across the UK we will work with colleagues in other nations to maximise benefit from the strategic objectives that drive all nations’ objectives or outcomes.

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