

## **Section A: Official Development Assistance (ODA) and GCRF strategy**

### **The strategy**

1. Summarise the key aspects of your three year **strategy for development related and GCRF research activity**, including:
  - a. Your institution's strategy and priority objectives for all development related research activity funded through all sources for three years from 2018-19.
  - b. Summary of the key aspects of your three year strategic plan for QR GCRF in light of the criteria and objectives for the GCRF outlined in the guidance.
  - c. How activity funded through QR GCRF fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity.
  - d. How activity funded through QR GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF.<sup>1</sup>
  - e. How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR.
  - f. Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing your strategy.
  - g. The key activities by which you will realise your objectives, such as capacity and capability building; mono-disciplinary interdisciplinary and collaborative research; generating impact from research; meeting the full economic cost of GCRF activity funded through other sources; rapid response to emergencies with an urgent research need; and pump priming.
  - h. The main Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list developing countries you intend to collaborate with.

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<sup>1</sup> UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund,  
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/challenges/>

Maximum 3,000 words

**Malawi and Sub-Saharan Africa Collaborative Development for Logistics, Supply Chains and Economic Development**

a. *Your institution's strategy and priority objectives for all development related research activity funded through all sources for three years from 2018-19.*

The University does not have any other sources of funding in relation to development-related research. We do however have longstanding franchise arrangements with Malawi, Zambia, Botswana and more recently with Sri Lanka, Given the small amount of funding available (circa £20k) our strategy is to focus on a small number of specific activities in relation to Sub-Saharan Africa one area. Our focus in 2018-19 will be principally on Malawi. In terms of the **GCRF Strategy and Challenge Areas**, our focus is on

-- Sustainable livelihoods supported by strong foundations for inclusive economic growth and innovation

-- Inclusive and equitable quality education

- Sustainable production and consumption of materials and other resources

In this context our **priority objectives** are

1. To further improve the effectiveness, ownership and relevance of **business facing research** in the context of UK/SSA research training partnerships particularly in the areas of supply chain management and logistics

2. To train emerging researchers **to disseminate best practice** in research, teaching and knowledge exchange in the context of advanced programmes in commercial sector contexts, to enhance empowerment and relevance.

These priorities reflect our **strategic principles** for development-related research of:

- Collaborative partnership

- Empowerment

- Sustainability

- Commercial relevance

- Locally led initiatives where possible

- Integration of research, teaching and Knowledge Exchange (aligning with our Teaching Intensive, Research Informed' institutional pedagogic strategy) -

Scalability



In this context our **broader strategy** is to work collaboratively with our SSA partners – with an initial focus on Malawi - to (i) understand better the **mechanisms** whereby educational programmes in business, supply chain and logistics have an economic and social impact (ii) identify **barriers** to improving impact (iii) develop and assess educational, support and networking **interventions** to improve the levels of impact.

b. *Summary of the key aspects of your three year strategic plan for QR GCRF in light of the criteria and objectives for the GCRF outlined in the guidance.*

For over 10 years, the University of Bolton have been delivering transnational educational business-related postgraduate programmes in the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries of Malawi, Zambia and Botswana. There are over 500 Alumni with Masters level qualifications, and over 15 Alumni with Doctoral level qualifications. In Malawi our partner is the Malawi Institute of Management, [<http://www.mim.ac.mw/>] In Zambia our partner is ISTT, [ <http://istt.ac.zm/en/> ] while in Botswana our partner is IDM [ <http://www.idmbis.com/idm-bs.php> ].

In this context our operational priorities and activities for 2018-9 are:

**Priority 1:** To initiate, set up and develop an equitable professional knowledge-exchange network ('TNE-Employer Consultation Network'). This includes organisations from the public and private sectors in Malawi, initially invited via the alumni of the TNE partnership (MIM-UoB) but not exclusively to the alumni organisations. There will be representatives from a variety of public and private organisations, and also organisations that do not include employees that are alumni from the TNE programmes delivered by MIM-UOB. It will also include UoB-MIM alumni, current doctoral students (PGTA) on TNE programmes and members from TNE partner institutions.

To achieve Priority 1 in 2018-09:

- TNE partners will recruit and appoint a project coordinator based in Malawi who will be responsible for the research project running over 3 years, and contribute/support *planned knowledge-exchange and capacity-building activities* over that period. This includes coordination of knowledge exchange and capacity building activities involving the 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' and 'Postgraduate Teaching Assistants group' (further details below, under Priority 2).

The Project Co-ordinator in year 1 will:

- Communicate with Masters and Doctoral Alumni (via the database and existing digital social-professional network), from their organisations and other relevant bodies from the public and private sectors in Malawi. This communication will used to introduce and then subsequently set-up a series of 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network': *Working together to Enhance the Impact of Higher Education Programmes in Malawi* workshops. These workshop will help to 1) explain the goal and benefits and 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' and the research project, 2) build trust and active interest

in the 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' and the research project, and 3) promote the value and set out the aspirations for longer-term/sustainable social and economic developments resulting from the work of 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' and the research project.

- Plan, design and deliver a series of 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' workshops to meet the research project and knowledge-exchange goals for year 1. This includes the:

- 1) gathering data from employers/organisations within the 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' to compare and contrast that previously gathered from alumni on their perceptions of value/impact of the TNE (highlights from preliminary Alumni survey as described briefly above in section 1)
- 2) building on current knowledge and developing further understanding of the impact of TNE on the alumni and non-alumni/other relevant organisations from the public and private sector in Malawi
- 3) supporting the development of the sustainable consultation network focused on knowledge exchange between TNE providers and public and private sector organisations in Malawi, with the long-term view to enhance the impact and accessibility of TNE in Malawi.

- Analyse the data gathered in the series of workshops consultations and online. This data will inform the year 2 project activities.

**Priority 2:** To set up and provide remunerated training, teaching and dissemination opportunities for 4 PhD students (Postgraduate Teaching Assistants), supported by academic mentorship and a 'Community of Practice' group activity. This would provide professional development for the Postgraduate Teaching Assistants, and support knowledge sharing of effective TNE pedagogic practices in Malawi.

To achieve **Priority 2** in 2018-09 the:

- TNE partners (UoB and MIM) will select up to 4 PhD Students (studying on the UoB doctoral programme at MIM) to be Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PGTA), and assign academic teaching mentors from MIM and/or UoB academic staff, in addition to their research supervisors.
- Teaching mentors with coordination from the UoB-MIM management provide training to support the engagement with teaching opportunities for the PGTA on the TNE programmes delivered at MIM.
- The Project Officer will set up PGTA community of practice meetings (on monthly basis) for the selected TA / PhD students. The agenda for these meetings will focus on the identification, analysis and dissemination of effective TNE pedagogy, specific to Malawi, on Masters education programmes in business, supply chain and logistics.

With specific focus on impact of the PGTA professional and industry experiences on teaching within the TNE programmes.

*c. How activity funded through QR GCRF fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity.*

Our development related research strategy currently relates primarily to support for PhD research by students. We have recently carried out some research to highlight key issues impacting on improving the impact of our PhD and taught Masters provision with our partners in Malawi. A systematic and evaluative literature review of transnational education (TNE) highlighted significant gaps in the empirical research (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). The gaps included career paths of students of TNE, and marketing/branding of TNE to differentiation and enhance competitiveness. We believe our current and proposed projects will be the first empirical research studies used to explore the impact of gaining a UK postgraduate degree to the careers/employment, organisational growth/health/strategic achievements, and their direct links to sustainable development goals in the Sub-Saharan African countries of Malawi, Zambia and Botswana. Our preliminary survey of 106 of 350 alumni contactable on our taught and research based collaborative provision indicated that:

64% stated that their UOB qualification had contributed to increased turnover of their organisation  
58% stated that their UOB qualification had contributed to increased profit of their organisation.  
69% stated that their UOB qualification had contributed to the net cost savings of their organisation.  
60% stated that their UOB qualification had contributed to lives saved by their organisation's work.  
62% stated that their UOB qualification had contributed to jobs created by/in their organisation.

In this context our **broader strategy** is to work collaboratively with our SSA partners – with an initial focus on Malawi - to (i) understand better the **mechanisms** whereby educational programmes in business, supply chain and logistics have an economic and social impact (ii) identify **barriers** to improving impact (iii) develop and assess educational, support and networking **interventions** to improve the levels of impact. This will be assessed through workshop explorations and an online survey with a sample size of approximately 600 across Malawi and subsequently in Zambia and Malawi.

d. *How activity funded through QR GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF.*

Our work is modest in scale compared to other institutions; however this research funding will provide a visible and valuable dimension to our long-standing partnership with SSA institutions. In that context our work through QR GCRF relates to the UK Strategy for the GCRF by addressing the areas of

-- *Equitable Access to Sustainable Development* by promoting *inclusive and equitable quality education* by means of developing an evidence base to motivate companies to support educational initiatives in these areas and by developing alumni mentors who will provide customised support for students.

-- *Sustainable Economies and Societies* by promoting *Sustainable production and consumption of materials and other resources* greater understanding of the impact of education and applied research in logistics and supply chain management, and working collaboratively to increase that impact. We will do this empirical analyses of the experience of past and previous students. –This will also be achieved through a focus on *Sustainable livelihoods supported by strong foundations for inclusive economic growth and innovation* by empowering graduates of research and masters level training develop careers, skills and networks which will have commercial added value for employers and public sector agencies primarily in the crucial logistics and related sectors.

The GCRF will develop excellent research that addresses significant problems and development challenges, directly contributing to the sustainable and inclusive prosperity of people in developing countries in SSA. We will build on our 10-year collaboration with our Malawi partners and with the alumni of our programmes

e. *How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR.*

Since the development of our current research strategy in 2015 we have focused on ensuring that our research activity informs our teaching activity and vice versa. We run a number of student research internships schemes and invest our QR in areas relevant to improving educational access, success and impact. In that context we have targeted the UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience; UoA 17 Business and Management Studies; and UoA 23 Education and prioritized investment of our QR in these areas. Our Off Campus division is more than a typical 'International Office' but is populated by

research active academics who teach, mentor, design, assess and research collaboratively with partners around the world. Our off campus division teaches and research collaboratively with colleagues in all of our three Faculties.

*f. Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing your strategy.*

Our risk assessment of this work has identified to key issues (i) The small amount of funding available means there is a risk of raising expectations with partners and potential beneficiaries and (ii) the overall support challenges in the context of modest resource. However, we have identified key enablers and controls. For example we have a clearly defined initial focus on a well-established partner in one geographical location with an initial development of research work we have already carried out (rather than a fresh start). In order to manage expectations, we will involve our partners in the design of this programme and will be part of the project management team. The project has clearly documented and realistic outcomes which have been negotiated with our partners. Additionally we have a communications and partnership network already in place and multiple partnerships visits and events scheduled in 2018-19 and 2019-20 significantly reducing what would otherwise be a considerably lower level of VFM, affordability and sustainability.

*g. The key activities by which you will realise your objectives, such as capacity and capability building; mono-disciplinary interdisciplinary and collaborative research; generating impact from research; meeting the full economic cost of GCRF activity funded through other sources; rapid response to emergencies with an urgent research need; and pump priming.*

We will have a focus with on Capacity and Capability building with an emphasis initially on pump priming working with our partners through collaborative research. We will support our partners to work with us in interdisciplinary research beginning with the modest follow on work from our recent pilot work. Our project will also seek to boost impact of PhD research.

*h. The main Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list developing countries you intend to collaborate with.*

Our work will build on mature existing partnerships with a focus initially on Malawi (LDC) potentially expanding into Zambia (LDC) and Botswana (UMIC&T) where we also have established collaborative teaching and research partnerships. We do not currently plan to expand our work into Sri Lanka due to resource limitations.

2. Provide details of the main intended **outcomes and impacts** of your strategy.

Our focus is on strengthening the impact and relevance of TNE postgraduate training by helping students and graduates work with businesses to shape applied research work that will benefit the local economy and give visibility to knowledge led solutions for



development. The main emphasis is on supply chain and logistics the principles will apply across multiple sectors include the public sector particularly education and health. In that context the main intended outcomes and impacts of the strategy (that includes research, knowledge exchange and capacity building activities used to explore, develop and assess educational, support and networking interventions specific to transnational education (TNE) within Malawi) are as follows:

- An enhanced TNE curriculum to further meet the needs of the public and private sector organisations in Malawi, that contributes to sustainable growth of public and private sector organisations. This would come from an evidence-based and validated strategic development plan resulting from the research and knowledge exchange activities conducted over 3 years.
- More inclusive and equitable TNE programmes in business, supply chain and logistics at the Masters and Doctoral level delivered in partnership with Malawi Institute of Management (MIM), informed by an evidence-based and validated strategic development plan that includes well-informed intelligence on the challenges-faced/barriers that prevent women and *those most in need of financial support* access to TNE programmes Malawi.
- A sustainable knowledge-exchange network ('TNE-Employer Consultation Network') with members from educational partner institutions (UoB and MIM whom have been working together for over 10 years to provide transnational HE programmes in business, supply chain and logistics), organisations/employers from the public and private sectors in Malawi, alumni of TNE programmes, and current doctoral students teaching in TNE. This network will help to deepen the integration and increase awareness of the impact of TNE programmes.
- A successful doctoral candidate with enhanced project management skills and an indepth knowledge of the mechanisms, barriers and interventions associated with TNE programmes in business, supply chain and logistics and the levels of economic and social impact of such programmes in Malawi.
- Professional (teaching and learning) development opportunity for doctoral students, as Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PGTA) supported by academic mentorship and a coordinated community of practice group. The value of this activity will be assessed, and plans defined and proposed for further capacity building. For example, PGTA using their new teaching skills and knowledge to train/support the next generation of PGTA / new teachers in Malawi.
- Practical and innovative pedagogic intelligence, generated by the PGTA group work, focused on the identification, analysis and dissemination of effective TNE pedagogy for taught Masters programme in business, supply chain and logistics. This intelligence will inform practice on how to more effectively meet the needs of work-based students and organisations, informed by business/industry professionals undertaking doctoral studies while teaching on TNE Masters level programmes.

### Management of GCRF

3. How will your HEI **monitor** and **evaluate** its progress and compliance in ODA and GCRF activity, including assessing geographical distribution of activity, outputs, outcomes and economic and social impacts?

Please describe the policies, procedures and approach you have in place to measure progress, evaluate outcomes, identify lessons learned, and ensure ODA compliance.

Maximum 1,500 words

There will be a small in-country project team monitored by a Project Committee comprising representatives from Malawi Institute of Management and co-chaired by MIM and UoB researchers. There will be a project manager for the initiative who will provide a quarterly report to the Project Committee MIM UoB Research & Graduate School. There will be strategic monitoring by the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange SubCommittee of Senate. Operational support for the project will be provided by the University's Off Campus division who will also manage liaison drawing on their decade long experience of this partnership

### Section B: Use of QR GCRF 2018-19 allocation and future QR GCRF priorities

4. Please complete the table in Annex A2 detailing the expected spending and activities for QR GCRF in the academic year 2018-19. Note that the total QR GCRF spending must equal the indicative allocation (available in Annex C), and all activities must be ODA-compliant for strategies to be assessed as ODA-compliant overall.
5. Please add here any explanatory notes on how you have completed the table in Annex A2 that will help inform assessment of ODA compliance.

Maximum 200 words

We have decided that given the small amount of funding available that better Value for Money is secured by funding a research project, coordinate by one Project Officer (supervised via the Academic partnership of MIM-UoB, and selected from the Master's of the TNE *knowledgogrammes* in Malawi). The *research project would involve planned exchange Employer and capacity-building activities* over 3 years, involving the 'TNE-Consultation ter will Network' and 'Postgraduate Teaching Assistants group'. The lat provide teaching and professional development opportunities for a small group of current/new PhD students on the UoB doctoral programme based in MIM, Malawi. This will be primarily supported by academic mentorship, via partnership work between MIM and UoB and the coordination of a community of practice group.

6. How would your **priorities and activities** for 2018-19 QR GCRF change if the funding level differs from that outlined in indicative allocations? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Maximum 500 words

If the funding were less we would probably not seek to develop any substantial activity as the administrative overhead would be disproportionate. If the funding were increased we would expand the work into other countries with which we already have a strong presence such as Zambia.

7. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR GCRF activity in 2019-20? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Our priorities and activities for 2019-20 are:

**Priority 1:** To gather the views of employers/organisations (from established equitable professional network/'TNE-Employer Consultation Network') on what and how TNE providers could enhance their operations, and inform the curriculum of TNE to increase accessibly (for women and those in need of financial assistance) and the impact of Masters and Doctoral level provision for organisational growth.

To meet priority 1, the Project Officer in year 2 will:

- Design and plan a 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' Conference, through the coordination of a committee that consists of alumni from the network, UoB and MIM academic staff, and current students engaging with the TNE programmes at MIM. The conference themes will include:

- 1) The impact of women on growth, health and development of our organisation and how do we build on this?
- 2) The routes to TNE study funding opportunities in and outside of our organisations - success and future directions
- 3) Postgraduate Teaching Assistants Perspectives - Teaching Masters students in TNE Business programmes at MIM

- Conduct follow-up in-depth interviews with selected employers that presented papers at conference, *and some employers that did not present papers.*

**Priority 2:** To gather and disseminate the learning from the Postgraduate Teaching Assistants by showcasing their 'Community of Practice' work at the conference.

To meet priority 2 the PGTA group will:

- Share with employers at the conference what they have learned so far about effective TNE pedagogy, specific to Malawi for Masters TNE programmes at MIM.

If funding is reduced there will be no projects and no priorities

If funding is increased our priorities would be expanded into Zambia and Botswana more quickly

8. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR GCRF activity in 2020-21? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Our priorities and activities for 2020-21 are:

**Priority 1:** To synthesise and report on findings from the research project supported through 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' and 'Post-graduate Teaching Assistants' group. The report will inform future work focused to enhance the TNE curriculum, and inclusivity and equitability of the TNE programmes in business, supply chain and logistics, specifically designed for the public and private sector organisations based in Malawi.

To meet priority 1 for 2020-21, the Project Officer in year 3 will:

- Analyse all data collated (via workshops, conference and interviews), specifically to understand and enhance the impact of TNE in Malawi, provided via research and networking activities in year 1 and 2 of the project, and draft a report / strategy document.
- Arrange a meeting for the 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' to present the findings from the research project, and validate these findings during the meeting through facilitated feedback and collation of recommended changes.
- Incorporate the feedback and suggestions (from 'TNE-Employer Consultation Network' and PGTA group, as indicated below under priority 2) for any changes before a Report: Strategy for TNE Development in Malawi by TNE-Employer Consultation Network is finalized.
- Publish/disseminate the findings from the report, with the intention to enhance inclusivity, equability and organisational growth of private and public sector in Malawi, through evidence based guidance on TNE for Business in Malawi. This new knowledge established via the network, research study and impact activities will assist TNE

providers in the development of the TNE to further meet the needs of organisations in Malawi (hence lead to positive social and economic impact).

**Priority 2:** To establish the value and consider possible developments that build the capacity in teaching skills and knowledge that could be shared with the next generation of PGTA / new teachers in Malawi.

To meet priority 2 for 2020-21, the Project Officer in year 3 will

- Gather and evaluate feedback data from the PGTA academic mentors and current students on the programmes/modules involving PGTAs.
- Facilitate an 'end of research project' meeting with PGTA group to 1) gather insights on impact of their professional and industry experiences on teaching within the TNE programmes (over the past 3 years) and recommendations for future activities/methods to build capacity for new/future teaching professionals on TNE programmes in Malawi and

- 2) share the evaluation report (based on the academic mentor and student feedback, above).
- Incorporated the feedback and suggestions for any changes before a Report: Strategy for TNE Development in Malawi by TNE-Employer Consultation Network is finalised (as above).

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**The proposal has the full support of the Malawi Institute of Management**



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To whom it may concern

23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2018

**GLOBAL CHALLENGES RESEARCH FUND – UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON**

With reference to the above subject, Malawi Institute of Management are very interested to support the University by participating in this collaborative bid to further develop our partnership. We feel that the project proposed will allow us to better understand the impact of our collaborative Masters and Doctoral programmes with the University in Malawi in both the public and private sectors. The proposed work will allow a deeper and more integrated connection with the employers that we serve in the region to further develop programmes and enhance their impact in the region.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on any aspect of the above programme.

We look forward to the opportunity of working together with the University.

Yours faithfully,

Associate Professor Golden Msilimba

**Director of Training & Consultancy**

**For: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**