



**Research
England**

Circular letter

Addendum to HEIF policies and priorities: spin-outs best practice and adoption

To	Heads of English higher education providers
Reference	RE-CL-2024-09
Publication date	24 September 2024
Enquiries to	General queries to KEpolicy@re.ukri.org

Dear Vice-Chancellor or Principal

1. This circular letter formalises our expectations on higher education providers (HEPs) to consider the best practices identified in the [Independent Review of University Spin-outs](#) and to inform us of their adoption of these practices, which is voluntary, and provides first information on HEPs that have adopted to date.

Background

2. This circular letter follows [RE-CL-2024-02](#), which set out our plan to implement the actions falling to Research England from the review, including implementation of our monitoring of adoption of best practice. An important principle to the review was transparency, and we committed to publishing a rolling list of adopting institutions on the HEIF accountability webpage, including HEP weblinks with details of associated institutional policy changes.
3. It also follows communication to HEPs on 10 May sent from KEPolicy@re.ukri.org on how to notify us of adoption via a survey accessed through the Research England Data Portal.
4. This communication is relevant to all HEPs eligible for Research England knowledge exchange funding, including the Higher Education Innovation Funding. It forms an Addendum to “Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) policies and priorities: accountability statements” ([RE-P-2020-03](#)).

5. It is of particular interest to research-intensive universities that produce spin-out companies, reflecting an expectation that these institutions agree to adopt the best practice policies set out in this document by the end of 2024.
6. It is also of particular interest to HEPs who have been successful in gaining CCF-RED shared tech transfer function pilot awards, as adoption of these best practices is a condition of their award.

Expectations on best practice

7. We expect HEPs to whom it is relevant (who are spinning out) to take account of the following best-practice documents in determining their policies and approaches to spin-out companies:
 - The report of the [Independent Review of University Spin-outs](#), specifically Recommendation 1.
 - [TenU's USIT Guide](#) (University spin-out investment terms).
 - [TenU's USIT for Software Guide](#) (University spin-out investment terms).

First adoption list

8. The list of HEPs that have adopted best practices by 13 September 2024 is attached in the annex of this document.

Next steps

9. We plan to update “Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) policies and priorities: accountability statements” ([RE-P-2020-03](#)) in 2025, leading into the next round of HEIF accountability statements. We expect to embed the requirements on both spin-out best practice (this Addendum) and on KE data collection (Addendum [RE-CL-2024-05](#)) in this next iteration of HEIF policies and priorities.
10. We are aware of many universities still undergoing a review of their policies in response to the independent review. We are committed to publishing an updated adoption list periodically. We expect to publish the next list on 21 November 2024 to mark a year since the spin-outs review report was published.
11. We expect to review our overall progress in implementing the review with Government at the end of 2024.



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Further information

12. Adoption will not be relevant to many HEPs, and if any HEP is unsure of its relevance to them, they may email KEpolicy@re.ukri.org for clarification.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jessica Corner'.

Professor Dame Jessica Corner FMedSci, MAE, RN

Executive Chair



Annex

Spin-outs review implementation: Best practices adoption list (first iteration)

This is the publication of the first iteration of the spin-out best practices adoption list, addressing Recommendation 1 of the [Independent Review of University Spin-outs](#). This list includes those English higher education providers who have confirmed adoption of best practice policies for spin-out deal terms and related issues by 13 September 2024.

Name	Link to adoption statement/policies
Brunel University London	https://www.brunel.ac.uk/business/Research-and-development/Spin-out-review-statement
De Montfort University	https://www.dmu.ac.uk/research/research-support/intellectual-property/university-spin-out-companies.aspx
Durham University	https://durham.ac.uk/research/facilities-and-services/create-spin-out-companies/
Imperial College London	https://www.imperial.ac.uk/enterprise/staff/creating-a-spinout-company/founders-choice/
Institute of Cancer Research	https://www.icr.ac.uk/working-with-industry/our-successes/spin-out-companies
Keele University	https://www.keele.ac.uk/policyzone/data/intellectualpropertymanagementpolicy
King's College London	https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/kings-innovation/kings-technology-opportunities
Loughborough University	https://www.lboro.ac.uk/internal/research-innovation-support/commercialisation-research/spinouts/
Manchester Metropolitan University	https://www.mmu.ac.uk/research/spin-out-companies
Newcastle University	https://www.ncl.ac.uk/media/wwwnclacuk/research/files/Ownership,%20Protection%20and%20Exploitation%20of%20Intellectual%20Property%20for%20Employees.pdf
Nottingham Trent University	https://www.ntu.ac.uk/business-and-employers/access-ntu-expertise/intellectual-property/spin-out-companies
Open University	https://research.open.ac.uk/innovation-engagement/license-our-technology/statement-adoption



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Oxford Brookes University	https://www.brookes.ac.uk/about-brookes/news/news-from-2024/06/spin-out-review-statement-of-best-practice-adoptio
Queen Mary University of London	https://qminnovation.co.uk/spin-out-portfolio/
Royal Holloway, University of London	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/about-us/more/collaborate-with-us/spin-out-review-statement-of-adoption/
Royal Northern College of Music	https://www.rncm.ac.uk/statement-of-adoption-of-independent-review-of-university-spin-out-companies/
Sunderland University	https://www.sunderland.ac.uk/more/research/university-spin-out-companies/
UCL	https://www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise/about/governance-and-policies/ucl-adopts-spinouts-good-practice-recommendations
University of Bedfordshire	https://www.beds.ac.uk/ris/working-with-us/develop-your-research/
University of Birmingham	https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/partners/enterprise/spin-out-process
University of Bristol	https://www.bristol.ac.uk/business/innovate-and-grow/research-commercialisation/our-spin-out-companies/
University of Cambridge	https://www.enterprise.cam.ac.uk/for-the-university/independent-review-of-university-spin-out-companies-adoption-of-best-practices/
University of Central Lancashire	https://www.uclan.ac.uk/business/develop-your-business/ip-and-commercialisation
University of Exeter	https://www.exeterinnovation.com/about/ip-policy/
University of Kent	https://www.kent.ac.uk/business-and-partnerships/commercialisation
University of Lincoln	https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/abouttheuniversity/governance/universitypolicies/
University of Liverpool	https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/collaborate/commercialising-research/adoption-statement/
University of Manchester	https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/archive/list/display/?id=31642&year=2024&month=07
University of Nottingham	https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/hr/guidesandsupport/universitycodesofpracticeandrules/intellectual-property-ip-policy.aspx



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University of Oxford	https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/using-research-engage/spinout-review-statement-best-practice-adoption#:~:text=The%20University%20of%20Oxford%20has,chaired%20by%20our%20Vice%2DChancellor.
University of Reading	https://www.reading.ac.uk/research-services/intellectual-property-and-commercialisation/commercialising-ip/spin-out-review
University of Sheffield	https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/commercialisation/our-commitment-your-commercialisation-journey
University of Southampton	https://www.southampton.ac.uk/business/commercialisation/spinout-equity-guide.page
University of Sussex	https://www.sussex.ac.uk/collaborate/business/investment-licence/spin-out-companies
University of the Arts London	https://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/press-office/stories/uals-creative-enterprise-network4
University of the West of England	https://www.uwe.ac.uk/business/businesses-and-employers/intellectual-property
University of Warwick	https://warwick.ac.uk/services/innovations/partnerships/spinouts
University of Westminster	https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-strategies-and-policies
University of York	https://www.york.ac.uk/about/organisation/governance-documents/ordinances-regulations/regulation-12/