



Knowledge Exchange Policy 2023-2026

Scope

This policy is applicable for all University members engaged in knowledge exchange activities, including staff and students.

Purpose

Abertay University is a signatory to the [Knowledge Exchange Concordat](#), a UK-wide initiative that aims to enhance knowledge exchange activities within universities. The Knowledge Exchange Concordat include eight principles that cover the range of necessary activities for effective knowledge exchange. This policy aims to encourage and improve our knowledge exchange activities and enhance the wider impacts that these bring.

Policy Statement

Knowledge Exchange is a collaborative, creative endeavour that translates knowledge and research into impact in society and the economy. It is an integral part of our purpose as a university and encompasses a wide variety of mutually beneficial activities that connect staff and students with businesses, charities, policy makers and other research users. The [Abertay University Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2020-2025](#) outlines our commitment to producing quality research and knowledge exchange that is aligned with international, national and local priorities and delivers real impact for society.

Knowledge Exchange Concordat Principles

The following are the Knowledge Exchange Concordat Principles and a statement of our commitment to them:

1. *Mission.* Knowledge exchange is a recognised part of the overall institutional strategy and is valued for the social, cultural and economic outcomes it helps us achieve. We have a clear understanding of the institutional role and the purpose of knowledge exchange, including recognition of the needs and interests of potential and current partners and beneficiaries, ensuring a commitment to inclusivity and equality. Clarity of mission is essential for efficient and effective knowledge exchange.

2. *Policies and processes.* Where appropriate, we have clear policies on the types of

knowledge exchange that we undertake and work with staff, students, collaborators and beneficiaries so that the policies are understood and operationalised. Our policy and processes cover the areas of knowledge exchange central to our mission and values and are consistent with our charitable status and aims.

3. *Engagement.* We build effective relationships by having clear routes to access information and expertise across the university, with engagement mechanisms developed to suit the needs of a wide range of beneficiaries and partners working with us.

4. *Working transparently and ethically.* We make sure that our partners and beneficiaries understand the ethical and charitable regulatory environments in which we operate, including a commitment to inclusivity and equality, and we take steps to maximise the benefit to them within that context.

5. *Capacity building.* We ensure that our staff and students are developed and trained appropriately to understand and undertake their roles and responsibilities in the delivery of successful knowledge exchange.

6. *Recognition and rewards.* We recognise and reward the achievements of staff and students who perform high quality knowledge exchange activities.

7. *Continuous improvement.* We proactively strive to share best practice with our peers and have established processes for learning from this.

8. *Evaluating success.* We undertake regular institutional and collective monitoring and review of our strengthening knowledge exchange performance using this concordat and through other relevant benchmarks to inform the development and execution of a programme of continuous improvement so that our knowledge exchange activities become more effective.

Abertay's Policy

1. We are committed to maintaining a portfolio of knowledge exchange activities to help drive economic, social, and cultural recovery and growth.

2. Our mechanisms for connecting academic knowledge with external users include consultancy, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), Innovation Vouchers, UKRI Innovation Awards, contract or collaborative research, secondments, commercialisation of research, CPD Courses, and outreach and public engagement activities.

3. We provide a supportive environment for knowledge exchange activities.

4. We are committed to recognising, developing, and improving our knowledge exchange activity.
5. We value external partnerships and meeting the needs of our partners is central in our knowledge exchange activities.
6. We are committed to managing our knowledge exchange activities sustainably.

Further Information

Abertay University has specific policies which relate to our knowledge exchange activities outlined in the following documents:

1. [Research Code of Conduct](#)
2. [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
3. [University Consultancy Framework](#)

Enabling Frameworks

1. [Knowledge Exchange Concordat](#)
2. [Abertay University Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy](#)

Reporting

As part of Abertay's Research and Knowledge Exchange Governance Structure, the KE Concordat Group oversees the development of an action plan, and reports annually on engagement and progress to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

Our knowledge exchange activities are reported through HEFCE, HE-BCI, Scottish Funding Council Outcome Agreements and University Innovation Funding reporting, case studies, and to the University Court as part of our Research and Knowledge Exchange reporting on KPIs.

Knowledge Exchange Action Plan

Abertay supports academic staff and students with knowledge exchange (KE). Our research environment promotes cross- and inter-disciplinary partnership and collaboration with external organisations and communities. Our researchers are embedded in a culture of good research practice and innovation to achieve excellence, societal and economic impact.

The KE support infrastructure includes training courses, a dedicated enterprise centre (Bell Street Ventures), funding, and a developing community of practice.

Training

[Abertay's Research Training and Development Programme](#) includes sessions related to KE, Enterprise, and Innovation for both academic staff and postgraduate students. Example sessions have included:

- National Concordats
- What is Enterprise and Entrepreneurship?
- Commercialising your Research and Talking to Industry
- Intellectual Property and Protecting your IP
- Networking and Building your Personal Brand
- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships
- Research Commercialisation as Impact

These KE support activities form part of the University's commitment to the principles outlined in the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#) and the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#).

Bell Street Ventures

[Bell Street Ventures](#) is Abertay's Enterprise and Incubator Centre. It was established using a legacy from William Sword and funding from Santander Universities. The Centre provides access to funding, workshops, competitions, advice, and mentoring to support development of innovation and enterprise.

Funding

KE funding includes such mechanisms and programmes as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP), Innovate UK, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Research Councils, Interface Innovation Vouchers, and Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre (IBioIC).

- KTPs

[KTP](#) is a UK-Government funded knowledge transfer mechanism designed to increase the competitiveness of the UK's industrial base. It involves a three-way collaboration between a University, a UK Business or Not-for-Profit Organisation, and a KTP Associate who is a suitably qualified graduate.

[The North of Scotland KTP Centre](#), of which Abertay University is affiliated, supports projects with partners across Grampian, the Highlands and Islands, and the rest of the UK. It is tasked with establishing collaborative projects between academia and industry in order to support the development of new products, processes and markets.

- Innovate UK

[Innovate UK](#) is the UK's national innovation agency. It supports business-led innovation in all sectors, technologies, and UK regions, and provides funding for business innovation. It connects business, researchers and policy makers to drive the development and commercialisation of new products, processes, and services. Innovate UK's collaborative R&D scheme co-funds partnerships between businesses and academia, including [Management Knowledge Transfer Partnerships \(mKTP\)](#).

- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Research Councils

There are a number of funding routes for industry-academia partnerships available from [UKRI and seven disciplinary research councils](#). Each research council offers distinct opportunities for companies and third sector organisations to work with University researchers. These range from PhD studentships to funded research.

Further information on collaboration and knowledge exchange schemes supported by research councils can be found through the UKRI website.

- Interface Innovation Vouchers

[Interface](#) is a central hub connecting organisations from a wide variety of national and international industries to all of Scotland's universities. It also facilitates clusters of businesses and academics working together to tackle industry sector challenges leading to impact.

Interface administers a range of Innovation Vouchers:

- [Standard Innovation Vouchers](#) (between £1,000 and £5,000): There are two types of Standard Innovation Vouchers: Product/Process/Service Innovation Vouchers (to support *outward* innovation to develop a new product, process or service); and Workforce Innovation Vouchers (to support *inward* innovation to develop a company's internal workforce such as new or enhanced workplace processes, innovative workplace practices and innovative business expertise. It does not include staff CPD or to finance any external training courses.)
- [Advanced Innovation Vouchers](#) (up to £20,000): aimed at building sustained relationships between small/medium-sized companies (SMEs) and universities in Scotland who may have previously collaborated together or for those companies who are beginning their collaborative journey with a University partner.
- [Student Placement Vouchers](#): The scheme is aimed at building on existing

relationships between SMEs and HEIs in Scotland. The company must have suitable premises to host a student for the duration of the project. Only SMEs that have had a successful SFC Standard Innovation Voucher award are eligible to apply. The company contributes an equal value in cash or in kind (such as staff time, materials or equipment) or a combination of both. The company should identify a clearly defined issue or opportunity that will benefit from PhD/Masters student interaction within their business and offer skills and talent development for the postgraduate student.

- [Scottish Inward Investment Catalyst Fund](#): The Inward Investment Catalyst Fund supports businesses not yet located in Scotland but seeking to establish stronger ties with academia here. As well as funding the research and development it provides an opportunity for the company to establish relationships and give insight into other aspects of the Scottish landscape, such as further investment opportunities, supply chains and the skills base to strengthen the case for investing in Scotland.

- Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Innovation Centres Programme

The [SFC's Innovation Centres Programme](#) aims to enhance innovation and entrepreneurship across Scotland's key economic sectors, create jobs and grow the economy. There seven centres which draw on Scotland's research expertise in the relevant sector to work on problems and opportunities identified by industry.

Further Support

- KE Concordat Events

The KE Concordat organises [events](#) on a range of topics related to implementation, measurement, approaches, and tools which can help deliver KE partnerships and activities.

- Konfer

UKRI and the National Centre for Universities and Business developed an on-line, smart matching innovation brokerage platform, called [Konfer](#), that connects UK universities and businesses with innovation opportunities.

- Converge Challenge

[Converge](#) runs national and local competitions to uncover spinouts and start-ups from Scotland's universities.

- Elevator

[Elevator](#) hosts promising entrepreneurs from academic backgrounds for intensive startup programmes.

- Scottish EDGE

[Scottish EDGE](#) is a competition aimed at identifying and supporting Scotland's up- and-coming, innovative, high-growth potential entrepreneurial talent. There are two funding rounds per year.

