UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CREATION AND REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES

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SUMMARY

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg understands the value of collegiate teamwork in the academy and so provides a mechanism for creating organisational structures, referred to generically as University Entities, outside the normal School and Faculty structure.

The primary purpose of a University Entity is to enhance the academic activities of the host School and or Faculty for the benefit of the University.

This Standing Order must be read in conjunction with the Research Entities Policy and Procedure and consists of descriptions of how to establish a new Entity and how to govern and manage these Entities. It describes the roles of the Entity Director and the Entity Advisory Committee. It concludes with a description of the quinquennial review process, which may lead to the closure of the Entity.

Table of Contents

IMMA	RY	1
INT	RODUCTION	3
1.1.	Purpose and Definition of a University Entity	3
1.2.	Considerations of Organisational Structure	3
1.3.	Founding and Management Authority	4
1.4.	Staffing Considerations	5
EST	FABLISHMENT OF NEW ENTITIES	. 5
2.1.	The Application and Approval Process	. 5
2.2.	Criteria for Establishment	. 6
GO	VERNANCE OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES	7
3.1.	Functions of the Advisory Committee	. 7
3.2.	Membership of the Advisory Committee	. 8
3.3.	The Operation of the Advisory Committee	. 9
MAI	NAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES	10
4.1.	Responsibilities of the Director	.10
4.2.	Management Committee	.10
4.3.	Other Committees	.11
	INT 1.1. 1.2. 1.3. 1.4. ES ¹ 2.1. 2.2. GO ¹ 3.1. 3.2.	1.1. Purpose and Definition of a University Entity. 1.2. Considerations of Organisational Structure. 1.3. Founding and Management Authority. 1.4. Staffing Considerations. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ENTITIES. 2.1. The Application and Approval Process. 2.2. Criteria for Establishment. GOVERNANCE OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES. 3.1. Functions of the Advisory Committee. 3.2. Membership of the Advisory Committee. 3.3. The Operation of the Advisory Committee. MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES. 4.1. Responsibilities of the Director. 4.2. Management Committee.

4.4.	Relationship of Entity with the School/Faculty	11
4.5.	Annual Report	11
5. RI	EVIEW AND DISSOLUTION OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES	11
5.1.	Timing of Reviews	12
5.2.	Details of the Review	12
6. AF	PPENDIX: UNIVERSITY ENTITY MEMBERSHIP	14
6.1.	Members	14
6.2.	Associate Members	14
6.3.	Affiliate Members	14
6.4.	Professional and Administrative Staff	15
6.5.	Postdoctoral Fellows	15
6.6.	Graduate Students	15
6.7.	Summary of Entity Membership	15
ΔRRR	EVIATIONS LISED	16

1. INTRODUCTION

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Wits or the University) understands the value of collegiate teamwork in the academy and so provides a mechanism for creating organisational structure, referred to as University Entities.

1.1. Purpose and Definition of a University Entity

The primary purpose of a University Entity is to enhance the academic activities of the University. They are organisational structures which accommodate teams of academics and associated professional and administrative staff (PAS) members who share a common academic focus. They may be established where there is a clear research, teaching and learning, and or community engagement dimension to a specific area of academic work which would best be fulfilled under the auspices of a formal organisational structure, outside of the normal School and or Faculty structure.

The functions of a University Entity may include one or more of the following. To facilitate:

- Inter-disciplinary teaching and or research;
- Service learning and other comparable activities on the part of University students in collaboration with various communities of the University;
- The development of professional, vocational and community based teaching programmes;
- The creation of clear focus points around which contract research and consultancy activity, which will assist in attracting external funding, can be organised.

University Entities will be created in such a manner that they enhance the strategic goals of the University and all its Schools and Faculties. At no time will the University Entities compete for resources with the School and Faculty structure. On the contrary, these Entities should be developed in such a manner as to be regarded by the Schools and Faculties as valuable assets enabling them to realise their strategic aspirations.

1.2. Considerations of Organisational Structure

Referring to Figure 1 below, University Entities can be located in three different places within the University's organisational structure. Firstly, they can be hosted by a School (see circle 1) where there is a close alignment between the activities of the Entity and that of the School. Secondly, in some circumstances, for example where the Entity has a broad inter-disciplinary base spreading across different Schools, they can be hosted by a Faculty (see circle 2). Thirdly, in exceptional circumstances such as the nurturing of a new widely interdisciplinary area of academic activity with little or no core disciplinary support in any School or Faculty structure, or in the case where the establishment of an Entity is regarded as strategically important for the entire University, it may be hosted between Faculties by an appropriate Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) (see circle 3). This latter option is normally a temporary arrangement meaning that the Entity, once firmly established, will revert to being hosted either by a School or Faculty.

¹ See section 1.3 Founding and Management Authority

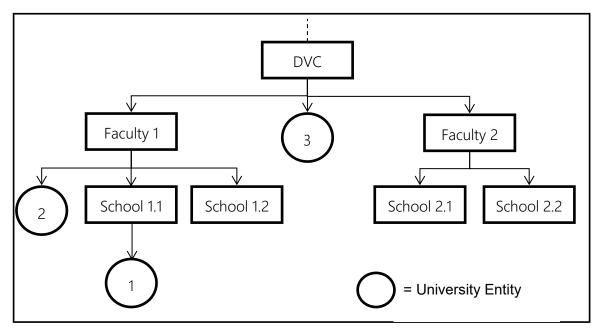


Figure 1: Three possible organisational positions for University Entities

1.3. Founding and Management Authority

The founding authority, which approves the establishment of new University Entities, supports their ongoing existence and closes them at the end of their useful lifespan is vested in the University Council. Council makes these decisions based on recommendations from the Senior Executive Team (SET), normally chaired by the Vice-Chancellor (VC), and Senate. Senate is inturn informed by its appropriate sub-committees, namely:

- Academic Planning and Development Committee (APDC), chaired by the DVC Academic, for largely undergraduate teaching focused Entities;
- Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), chaired by the DVC for Research and PG Affairs, for largely postgraduate teaching focused Entities;
- University Research Committee (URC), chaired by the DVC for Research and PG Affairs, for largely research focused Entities;
- Or any appropriate combination of these committees (APDC/GSC/URC).

The management authority is dependent on the location of the Entity in the organisation structure (see Figure 1). The Head of School (HoS) carries management authority for Entities hosted by Schools (circle 1), the Dean for Entities hosted between Schools in a Faculty (circle 2) and, similarly, by the appropriate DVC for inter-Faculty Entities (circle 3).

1.4. Staffing Considerations

The University Entity leader, referred to as the Entity Director, reports to the management authority indicted in Section 1.3, and should be a senior academic, usually at the level of an Associate Professor / Reader or Personal Professor / Research Professor with a strong academic CV and a strong international reputation. Additionally, the required expertise includes financial acumen, fund raising ability and experience of academic management.

University Entities are staffed with academic and associated PAS members that are recruited in one of two different ways. They are either existing staff of Schools or Faculties that become affiliated with the Entity. In this case, staff members (on fixed or indefinite contracts) remain full members of their Schools for all responsibilities listed in their contracts of appointment and remain subject to the normal rules and policies of the School, Faculty and University. Alternatively, they are hired on fixed term contracts by the University Entity using normal HR processes and paid for using external sources of funding. More details of the types of Entity staff member are provided in the APPENDIX: UNIVERSITY ENTITY MEMBERSHIP on page 14.

Both types of Entity employees will be managed by the Entity Director according to normal University policy framework.

Once established by Council (see Section 2.1), an Entity Director should be appointed using normal University HR procedures for the appointment of senior staff with input from the founding authority (see Section1.3). This process should recognise that the proposal development was usually lead by an individual (or principle investigator) that is well suited to take on the role of founding Director.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ENTITIES

2.1. The Application and Approval Process

Proposals for the establishment of new Entities may be put forward at any time. The approval process consist of five layers, described below. At each layer the following issues will be considered, namely that the proposal:

- Addresses all points under section 2.2 Criteria for Establishment and is consistent with the vision and principles of the School/Faculty and the University;
- Indicates that the Entity is sustainable in all respects, but particularly financially, based upon a five year business plan including a realistic budget of income and expenditure;
- Illustrates the Entity's potential for making a significant contribution to the University and its communities.

Layer 1: Depending on the organisational position of the proposed Entity, the proposal must be presented to the relevant School Executive (for School based Entities), Faculty Executive (for faculty based Entities) or the relevant DVC (for University based Entities). Given the necessary support the proposal is then taken to level 2.

Level 2: The proposal is then considered by the appropriate Senate sub-committee, namely APDC, GSC, and or URC. As before support for the proposal will advance it to level 3.

Level 3: The proposal is then considered by the Senior Executive Team (SET). Approval will allow it to move to level 4.

Level 4: The proposal is then presented to Senate. Senate approval will allow the proposal to be considered by Council (level 5).

Level 5: Council's approval will establish the Entity.

2.2.Criteria for Establishment

The proposal should:

Clearly describe the planned teaching role of the Entity, giving regard to the fact that,
while Entities may deliver and promote teaching programmes, the responsibility for them
remains with the Faculty. The proposal must show how the Entity's activities will
enhance the teaching programmes of the Faculty and not simply duplicate the roles of
Schools. The proposal should state the expected impact that the Entity will have on the
quality of teaching and learning in the University;

Or

- Clearly state the research niche that the Entity will develop. This will include the role of the Entity in enhancing the research activities of the host School or Faculty and University through considering aspects such as:
 - o Identifying and stimulating new multi-disciplinary research opportunities;
 - Providing a platform for research students to gain access to research facilities;
 - Research capacity development of postgraduate students and early career academics;
 - o Publication strategies.

The criteria used for evaluation of proposals, at all levels mention above, are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria to assess proposals to create University Entities

#	Broad area	Specific criteria	
1	Strategic	1.1 The relevance and significance of the proposed activities to the main components of the University strategic plan	
	rationale	1.2 Alignment of the Entity's proposed strategy with that of its host organisational structure (School or Faculty or intra-faculty position)	
2	Human	2.1 Evidence of an established nucleus of active scholars capable of developing and sustaining the research and or teaching activities associated with the Entity	
	capacity	2.2 Enhancement of human capacity through collaborative links with 'industry' and other research, consultancy and community-based agencies	

3		3.1 An outline the management arrangements beyond the role of the Director
		3.2 A detailed five year business plan and budget of income and expenditure clearly addressing the issue of financial sustainability
		3.3 Details of current and or potential sources of external funding
		3.4 Agreements with external parties which may be partners in the Entity
	Management	showing details related to funding, intellectual property issues and the
	aspects	description of Wits' role in the collaboration
		3.5 The prognosis for sustainability beyond the first five years
		3.6 The financial beneficial implications for the host School or Faculty.
		The real costs to the School, for example, of staff time being seconded to
		the Entity
		3.7 Realistic considerations of the space and utility requirements of the
		Entity

The proposal should also clearly indicate the timetable for the establishment of the Entity and whether there is a need for the provision of establishment funding from the University. The application for establishment funding should provide an itemised budget and a full budget justification.

3. GOVERNANCE OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES

Good governance of University Entities is vitally important for short term success, long term sustainability and building the good reputation of the University.

Being approved by Council, the ultimate governance responsibility lies with that body. However due to the size and complexity of the University the governance of University Entities is normally delegated to the appropriate founding authority, namely a HoS, Dean or DVC (depending on organisational structure considerations shown in Figure 1) who are advised by a suitably constituted Advisory Committee.

3.1. Functions of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee should advise the responsible HoS, Dean or DVC on the governance of the University Entity. Specifically this advice should ensure that the Entity is, and is seen to be, a responsible organisation contributing to the good reputation of the University. To this end, the Advisory Committee should advise specifically on:

- 3.1.1. Suitable key performance areas and related indicators;
- 3.1.2. The quality and suitability of the Entity's five year strategic plan;
- 3.1.3. The Entity's annual business and related financial plans. These plans should include specified deliverables that are compatible with the overall goals of the five year strategic plan;
- 3.1.4. When necessary, the appointment of the Entity's Director (see Section 1.4 *Staffing Considerations* on page 5). Appointments will be made by the appropriate HoS, Dean or DVC using the University's normal recruitment procedures;

3.1.5. Whether execution of the Entity's responsibilities conforms to the highest ethical standards.

The Advisory Committee should also provide advice on the ethical leadership for the Entity through the discussion of risk, performance and sustainability in the context of their mutual dependence. To this end, the Advisory Committee should also advise on:

- 3.1.6. The risk profile of the Entity's five year strategic plan;
- 3.1.7. The performance of the Entity annually against the deliverables identified in the annual business and financial plans;
- 3.1.8. The performance of the Entity Director;
- 3.1.9. The relationship between the Entity's management (see section 4.2 *Management Committee* on page 10) and the University and its stakeholders;
- 3.1.10. The effectiveness of the financial audit of the Entity activities.

By way of preparation for these functions the members of the Advisory Committee should participate in an induction programme that describes the functions of the University Entity. As part of good governance practice the Advisory Committee should also perform a regular self-evaluation of the impact of its own advice on the performance of the Entity.

The Advisory Committee can delegate certain of its advisory functions to well-structured and appointed subcommittees without abdicating its own responsibilities. The Advisory Committee should decide who sits on each subcommittee and how they should function and who should chair them.

3.2. Membership of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee, as described by the nominal list in Table 2, will consist of a minimum of five and a maximum of twenty people and be constituted, where possible, of a numerical balance of *ex-officio* and nominated members.

The Entity Director, Research Manager (should one be appointed) and the secretariat provided by the Entity should be in attendance at all Advisory Committee meetings.

Nominated members of the Advisory Committee, as recommended by the founder and thereafter by the Entity Director, will be approved by the appropriate management authority namely HoS, Dean or Senate sub-committee (APDC/GSC/ URC) depending on the organisational position of the Entity (see Section 1.2 on page 3).

Table 2: Nominal list of Advisory Committee members

Type of member	Position	Comment
Ex-officio members	An appropriate DVC or Dean of HoS	Chairperson. The selection of the appropriate position will depend on where the Entity is located in the University's organisation structure (see Figure 1)
Ex-omicio members	Senate representative *	Members of the appropriate Senate sub-committee (maximum of two)
	Deans of other Faculties	Deans from other involved Faculties (maximum of

		four)
	Heads of School (HoS) *	Up to two HoS (other than the possible chairperson) from Schools that are closely associated with the Entity
	Faculty Business Manager *	From the host Faculty
Maximum number of ex-officio members		10
	Those representing disciplinary fields appropriate to the Entity *	A maximum of six (6)
Nominated members	Those representing funders and or industries or other organisations appropriate to the Entity	A maximum of four (4)
Maximum number of nominated members		10
* At least one of these members must be on the committee		

The term of office for all nominated members will be five years, renewable with the approval of the appropriate management authority. Normally no more than one third of the nominated members should be replaced in any one year.

3.3. The Operation of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee shall meet² at least twice a year with at least thirty days' notice of the meetings.

- 3.3.1. The Advisory Committee will be chaired by the appropriate management authority (HoS, Dean or DVC);
- 3.3.2. The costs associated with the functioning of the Advisory Committee are for the Entity to bare;
- 3.3.3. Extraordinary meetings can be called by the Chairperson at the request of at least five members (including him/herself) and giving fourteen days' notice;
- 3.3.4. If a member is unable to attend more than three consecutive meetings, even if they have nominated a representative, the member will be asked to leave the Advisory Committee by way of a letter from the Chairperson, unless special circumstances apply as recognised by the Chairperson;
- 3.3.5. A quorum of at least 50% of *ex-officio* Advisory Committee members and 50% of the nominated Advisory Committee members will be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Advisory Committee and so empower it to provide advice;
- 3.3.6. The Advisory Committee shall aim to make decisions about the advice it gives based on consensus, after necessary consultation, failing which these decisions shall be agreed upon by a simple majority vote, each member having one vote. The Chairperson's vote will break any voting deadlocks;
- 3.3.7. The Advisory Committee may not change this Standing Order, but may recommend to the VC to make such amendments so as to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Entity;

² Meetings may take place in person, or electronically via telephone and/or video-conferencing tools.

3.3.8. The proceedings of all meetings of the Advisory Committee will be recorded by the secretariat provided by the Entity. Draft minutes will be distributed to the members within one month of the meeting. Corrected minutes will be approved at the next meeting and signed by the Chairperson as a true reflection of the proceedings of the meeting. Minutes shall be kept for at least five years.

4. MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES

The day-to-day leadership and management of the Entity will be the responsibility of the Entity Director. He or she will carry out this responsibility with the support of an appropriate management committee (see section 4.2 *Management Committee* on page 10), which will be chaired by the Director, and will be conducted in the collegiate style.

4.1.Responsibilities of the Director

Additional responsibilities of the Entity Director are to:

- 4.1.1. Conceive and implement a five year strategic plan, including associated budget;
- 4.1.2. Develop and implement annual operational plans, including associated budgets;
- 4.1.3. Direct appropriate research, teaching or outreach programmes and projects according to the originally approved focus of the Entity within the framework of five year plan;
- 4.1.4. Actively seek and secure external funding in support of the activities and development of the Entity;
- 4.1.5. Control expenditure of the Entity's resources in accordance with University policy and procedures so as to achieve the goals of the five year plans;
- 4.1.6. Supervise and organise the Entity's staff members and set the tone for quality and ethical academic endeavour;
- 4.1.7. Represent the Entity on various of the University's committees as may be requested or appointed;
- 4.1.8. Undertake other functions and assume such powers as delegated by the HoS, Dean or DVC and as may be recommended by the Advisory Committee;
- 4.1.9. Produce an annual integrated report of progress against the five year plan clearly indicating achievements and failures for consideration by the Advisory Committee (see section 4.5 *Annual Report* on page 11);
- 4.1.10. Continue to conduct his or her own scholarly work thus maintaining and indeed improving his or her scholarly profile.

4.2.Management Committee

It is strongly recommended that the Entity Director constitutes a management committee to assist the Director with the day-to-day management of the Entity. The committee should include the Entity's Research Manager (should one be appointed) and should normally include between three and five people from the Entity representing key functions of the Entity. It should normally meet monthly, but the frequency will be determined by the Director. All associated costs of running the Management Committee are for the Entity.

4.3. Other Committees

At the cost of the University Entity, other committees with domain specific knowledge can be established to support the activities of the Entity. For example, a Research Advisory Committee could be established by the Director to:

- 4.3.1. Provide high level research-related advice to the Director;
- 4.3.2. Assist the Entity through networking; and
- 4.3.3. Review and comment on the research components of the Entity's annual report.

4.4. Relationship of Entity with the School/Faculty

As mentioned above, the Entity Director will report to the appropriate management authority (see Section 1.3 on page 4) depending on where the Entity is located in the organisational structure of the University (see Figure 1). Consequently, the Director will be included in the appropriate management structure, that is, School Executive, Faculty Executive or DVC Executive or equivalent.

In all cases, there shall be a free, two-way flow of information between the University (School or Faculty) and the Entity to enhance the activities of both. It is vital that the Entity is regarded as an asset of the School and Faculty enabling them to achieve their strategic aspirations.

4.5.Annual Report

The Entity Director, with the support of the Management Committee (where one exists), must prepare an annual progress report for consideration by the Entity's Advisory Committee and the appropriate management authority, namely School, Faculty or DVC Executive committee. The annual report should be structured to address progress against the current five year plan and include at least the following elements:

- 4.5.1. A statement of the membership of the Advisory Committee and the Entity staff complement;
- 4.5.2. A summary of achievements (and failures) by the Entity during the preceding calendar year including:
 - 4.5.2.1. Scholarly, research, consultancy, and/or community activities;
 - 4.5.2.2. Accredited publications produced under the auspices of the Entity:
 - 4.5.2.3. Visiting scholars or fellows who have been part of the Entity's activities;
 - 4.5.2.4. Seminars, public talks or conferences hosted by the Entity;
 - 4.5.2.5. Activities and progress of postgraduate students affiliated with the Entity;
 - 4.5.2.6. Grants secured and grants applied for.
- 4.5.3. A summary of all financial activities, including acquittal of any funds supplied to the Entity by the University.

5. REVIEW AND DISSOLUTION OF UNIVERSITY ENTITIES

Entities will undergo formal peer review once every five years. The purpose of such a review will be to ascertain how effective the Entity has been in realising its stated objectives and how it has contributed to the strategic plans of the School, Faculty and or University. Additionally the

review will provide independent guidance on how the Entity may improve its performance or enhance its relevance and sustainability in the future. Alternatively, the review may recommend the closure of an Entity. Such recommendations will be dependent on the observed failure of the Entity to achieve a large proportion of its objectives, the perceived lack of future sustainability or the analysis that the academic agenda is no longer relevant.

The commissioning officer of the review is the appropriate HoS, Dean or DVC (management authority) to whom the Entity Director reports. The commissioning officer will normally delegate the detailed arrangements and actual review work, but should always chair the initial and concluding review meetings.

5.1.Timing of Reviews

Where possible within the constraints of the five year timetable, Entity reviews are to be timed to coincide with the quinquennial review of the School that hosts the Entity. The Entity review report must be made available as an input into the School quinquennial review, where possible. In the case where the Entity is located in a Faculty or between Faculties (see Figure 1), the timing must be guided by the quinquennial review of the most closely related School.

In the case where an Entity's external funder requires a peer review, for example MRC Extramural Units or DST-NRF Centres of Excellence, then the University review process will be collapsed into the external funder's process so long as the Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the external review is of high enough quality. If not, two reviews will need to be conducted, one by the funder and one by the University.

On the advice of the School and Faculty Executive Committee or APDC/GSC/URC to the Senate, Senate may request Council to instigate a formal review of an Entity, at any time.

5.2. Details of the Review

The review will be conducted by a panel of independent disciplinary experts. Membership of the review panel will be primarily established by the Entity Director and approved by the commissioning office (HoS, Dean or DVC). In most cases the commissioning officer will add one or more members to the panel. Membership of the panel may comprise three or more non-conflicted University staff and representatives from external organisations, including external stakeholders in the Entity. Where budget allows it is highly recommended that the review panel includes at least one international expert.

The cost of the review will be borne by the management authority.

At the conclusion of the review, the review panel will provide an oral report to the Entity management in the concluding meeting. Within three weeks of the concluding meeting the reviewers must also submit a written report including recommendations.

The Advisory Committee and the Entity Director will be given the opportunity to point out factual inaccuracies noted in the review report and to address issues raised by the report. In the case of a report that recommends discontinuation of the Entity the matter is to be debated in the appropriate management authority structure. Thereafter the matter will be debated in Senate. If

the recommendation to close the entity is upheld, Senate will make this recommendation to Council. In the event that Council accepts such a recommendation, the decision shall be final and there shall be no appeal process.

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6. APPENDIX: UNIVERSITY ENTITY MEMBERSHIP

The formal membership of University will include Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members and Support Personnel. Postdoctoral Fellows and Graduate Students can be linked to an Entity through their hosts or supervisors (including co-supervisors) who will be Members, Associate Members or Affiliate Members of the Research Entity. All Entity members will contribute to the overall purposes of the Entity.

6.1.Members

Members will constitute the core research staff of the Entity. New Members will be employed by the Entity on fixed term contracts, which can be renewed as many times as necessary, against set performance criteria. The University rank of a Member will be set on appointment by the Staffing and Promotions committee of the Faculty most closely aligned to the discipline of the Member. Should a Member's contract not be renewed he or she will not automatically be provided with an alternative position in the University.

The role of Members will be to pursue excellence and productivity in the academic focus of the Entity. They will report to the Director.

The benefits of the research publications of Members will accrue directly to the Entity.

6.2. Associate Members

Associate Members will be employed by a School within the University. However, they will associate with the Entity in order to support the function of the Entity, often jointly with Entity Members, and to supervise or co-supervise postgraduate students associated with the Entity. This association will need to be agreed to by their Dean and Head of School/Department, to whom they will continue to report.

The benefits of the research outputs of Associate Members will normally accrue to the Schools in which their appointment resides, unless an alternative sharing agreement is reached where time spent at, or funding provided by, the Entity may be taken into consideration.

6.3.Affiliate Members

Affiliate Members will be those who are employed by external organisations, that is, by other universities, local and international NGOs, private enterprise and the government sector, but who, for the purposes of specific research programmes, will work with the Entity. Their work may include the research and supervision of postgraduate students. All intellectual property created as a result of this work belongs to the University unless agreed to differently. Affiliate Members are not normally represented on the Management Committee, although the Director may decide otherwise.

The benefits of the research outputs of Affiliate Members, where the research is directly attributable to time spent at or funding provided by the Entity will accrue to the Entity.

6.4. Professional and Administrative Staff

Professional and Administrative staff (PAS) can either be employed by the Entity, on fixed term contracts, or by the University, in which case they may be seconded to the Entity for a period of time either wholly or partially.

The normal human resource policies and procedures will apply. These people will be responsible to the Director. Their purpose is to support and facilitate the Entity's work. The Research Manager in a research focused Entity, is on example of such a position

6.5.Postdoctoral Fellows

Postdoctoral Fellows (Postdocs) may be regarded as either Members (contracted by the Entity) or Associate Members (contracted by the School but associated with the Entity) depending on where they spend most of their research time and where their host is located.

The benefits of the research outputs of Postdoctoral Fellows will accrue to the entity to which the Postdoc is contracted or where most of the research is done.

6.6. Graduate Students

Graduate students will always be registered in a School and Faculty. They may only be associated with the Entity through their affiliation of their supervisors. The benefits of the input and output subsidies arising from graduating students will accrue to the School in which they are registered unless an alternative sharing agreement is reached, where time spent at, or funding provided by, the Entity may be taken into consideration.

6.7.Summary of Entity Membership

The types of membership of the Entity is summarised in Table 3. The Entity Director maybe a Member or an Associate Member of the Entity.

Table 3: Summary of types of Entity Memberships

Hired by the Entity	Hired by the University	External Members
Members	Associate Members	Affiliated Members
PAS	PAS	
Postdocs	Postdocs	
	Postgrads ³	

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³ Postgraduate students are not hired by the School, but are always registered in a School

ABBREVIATIONS USED

APDC...... Academic Planning and Development Committee

DVC...... Deputy Vice-Chancellor GSC..... Graduate Studies Committee

HoS..... Head of School

PAS..... Professional and Administrative staff

Postdocs.... Postdoctoral Fellows SET...... Senior Executive Team

University... University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

URC...... University Research Committee

VC..... Vice-Chancellor

Wits...... University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg