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Centres and Institutes Policy

Office of Accountability:	Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
Approver:	Board of Governors and General Faculties Council
Scope:	Compliance with this University policy extends to all members of the University community.

Overview

There are two types of **centres** and **institutes** governed by this policy: **academic centres and institutes** and **affiliated centres and institutes**.

The Government of Alberta's *Post-Secondary Learning Act* gives the Board of Governors the authority to "develop, manage and operate, alone or in co-operation with any person or organization, programs, services and facilities for the educational or cultural advancement of the people of Alberta" (section 60(1)). Subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, the General Faculties Council has responsibility over "academic affairs" (section 26(1)) and can "make recommendations to the board with respect to affiliation with other institutions" (section 26(1)(o)).

Purpose

This policy addresses academic and affiliated centres and institutes at the University of Alberta, in accordance with the University's mission.

POLICY

1. ACADEMIC CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

The University of Alberta may create academic centres and institutes which shall engage in scholarship and carry forward the mission of the University through specific attention to an area of study or research.

Each academic centre or institute will report to a Dean, except in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) when an academic centre or institute may report directly to a Vice-President.

The Vice-President (Research and Innovation) shall have final authority in determining whether an academic centre or institute falls under this policy.

Academic centres and institutes shall highlight a department's, a Faculty's, a College's, and/or the University's research and scholarly excellence in an area.

2. AFFILIATED CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

The University of Alberta shall enter into affiliation agreements with third parties to create affiliated centres or institutes that engage in scholarship and carry forward the mission of the University through specific attention to an area of study or research.

3. All affiliation agreements for centres and institutes will be entered into in the name of the Governors of the University of Alberta and will be executed in accordance with the Contract Review and Signing Authority Policy. The Governors delegate final approval for all affiliation proposals to the President's Executive Committee - Operations (PEC-O). Prior to entering into an affiliation agreement, appropriate advice will be sought from the Office of General Counsel and Risk Management Services.

The formal affiliation agreement must include the critical elements outlined in the *Affiliated Centres and Institutes (Appendix A) Agreement Requirements* and will ensure the risk to the University has been minimized.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [▲ Top](#)

Centres	<p>A centre normally engages in study, research or other academic focus on a specific area of interest that is defined closely at its creation and would normally incorporate a commitment to conduct its activities beyond the scope of a single discipline.</p> <p>Centres are units or bodies not normally founded solely to conduct a research project before disbanding. They are to be distinguished from units called “centres” that do not have a mandate to engage in scholarship, for example units such as the Sexual Assault Centre or buildings such as the Van Vliet Physical Education and Recreation Centre.</p> <p>Centres often exist within the mandate of a single Faculty.</p>
Institutes	<p>An institute normally is broader in scope than a centre and engages in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research into a major area of interest to one or multiple Faculties or College(s).</p> <p>Institutes are entities not normally founded solely to conduct a research project before disbanding.</p> <p>Normally, an institute shall engage in multiple initiatives simultaneously and engage the talents of several different experts.</p>
Academic Centre or Institute	<p>An academic centre or institute exists at the University of Alberta and is controlled by the University of Alberta. An academic centre or institute may exist solely within the University of Alberta or may be created through a partnership between the university and other entities. Such other entities may include other universities, governments, public authorities (such as health authorities), and non-profit organizations. If an external corporate entity is involved in the centre or institute, the process for managing conflict of interest and conflict of commitment must be reviewed. The University attaches the utmost value to academic freedom and scholarly integrity. Accordingly, academic centres and institutes shall not place any limits on these accepted principles of academic freedom and scholarly integrity.</p> <p>Centres or institutes are not subsidiary companies, spin-off companies, societies created through non-university policies, or groups or corporations that lease University of Alberta space to achieve their own ends.</p> <p>Additionally, if the academic centre or institute has a governing board, membership of the board is constituted such that the University of Alberta has control.</p>

Affiliated Centre or Institute	<p>An affiliated centre or institute is created through a contractual or other legal arrangement with one or more third parties such as a joint venture, a corporation, a society, a partnership or other affiliation type arrangement by which a centre or institute is created which is not under the control of the University.</p> <p>The centre or institute reports to a governing board that is external to the University of Alberta and for which the University does not have control. This definition would include centres and institutes located on or off the University's campuses, including national centres of excellence.</p> <p>In all cases, the required governance reviews and approvals must be obtained prior to contract execution.</p>
Research Project	<p>A research project exists to fulfill the obligations of the funding grant, and as such, has a beginning and end date. The Principal Investigators within the research project are University of Alberta researchers.</p>
Control	<p>Majority of voting shares and/or ability to appoint the majority of directors.</p>

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[Post-Secondary Learning Act](#) (Government of Alberta)

PUBLISHED PROCEDURES OF THIS POLICY

[Academic Centres and Institutes Establishment Procedure](#)

[Academic Centres and Institutes Operation Procedure](#)

[Academic Centres and Institutes Termination Procedure](#)

[Affiliated Centres and Institutes \(Appendix A\) Agreement Requirements](#)

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