

Research & Innovation

Working in partnership to support success

What is research

What is Research?

Sector agencies, such as [Research England](#) and the [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\)](#) only allow the classification of income as 'research' if the activity conforms to the Frascati definition, as outlined in the [Frascati Manual](#). Royal Holloway uses this definition to categorise income as research income.

The Frascati definition is an internationally recognised definition of research that has been adopted within the UK Higher Education Sector. It defines research as:

Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative and work undertaken on a systematic bases in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to use this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.

For an activity to be an R&D activity, it must satisfy five core criteria.

The activity must be:

- novel
- creative
- uncertain
- systematic
- transferable and/or reproducible.

The term R&D covers three types of activity: basic research, applied research and experimental development.

Basic Research	Applied Research	Experimental Development
Experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view.	Applied research is original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge. It is, however, directed primarily towards a specific, practical aim or objective.	Experimental development is systematic work, drawing on knowledge gained from research and practical experience and producing additional knowledge, which is directed to producing new products or processes or to improving existing products or processes, or improving substantially those already produced or installed.

Exclusions:

For a detailed analysis of exclusions, refer to the [Frascati Manual](#). However, general exclusions include:

- education and training (other than PhD research)
- general purpose data collection (such as recording weather statistics)
- scientific and technical information services
- Routine testing and analysis of materials, components, products, processes etc
- Testing and standardisation
- Feasibility studies (where it relates to using existing techniques to provide additional information before deciding on implementation of a proposed engineering project, for example)
- Health care (where it is routinized investigation and normal application of specialised medical knowledge)
- Policy-related studies (including local, regional and national)
- Programmatic evaluations
- Purely R&D-financing activities
- Indirect supporting activities
- Services rendered activity (e.g. consultancy)

If you have any queries regarding whether your project can be identified as research, please contact [research services](#).