

Centres Triennial Review 2021 (postponed from 2020)

Background

School Centres exist to facilitate multi-disciplinary interactions that draw on expertise from across the School and support the School's mission and strategy through collaborative approaches, innovative thinking and by providing an intellectual environment that encourages innovation in methodology, tools, technology, policy and practice to help meet global health challenges.

School Centres are wider in scope than research programmes and add value to the School in its mission and strategy by actively drawing together School-wide expertise in an important area, and where appropriate, supplementing this by drawing in expertise from other relevant institutions.

School Centres draw upon the commitment of their members to contribute and raise the profile of the School's activity in a specific area, whether research, education and knowledge transfer and policy engagement. They both i) provide the glue between the School's Faculties, helping dispersed groups to interact to maximise the impact of the School's work; and ii) raise the profile of the School's work in specific areas.

Academic staff have their primary affiliation to a Department and Faculty through which research grants are held and management processes, including employment, are conducted. Centres cut across this structure, and have more limited financial and management responsibilities.

Aims & Objectives of Triennial Review

The aims and objectives of the Triennial Review as currently listed in the LSHTM Centre Policy are:

- 6.1 Every three years a specially appointed panel derived from academic members of the School SLT, and an appropriate additional academic member, will conduct a review and report their comments and conclusions to SLT. As part of this review, Centres will be asked to set out via a formal report how they continue to meet the criteria for Centre status. Centres will be informed about the timetable and process for the review.
- 6.2 The review will be based on the following information:
 - i. Information about the Centre's governance, activities and outputs available on the Centre website;
 - ii. A summary report or presentation from the Centre Director/Co-Directors that highlights and provides:
 - Examples of the ways the Centre has contributed to and raised the School's profile;
 - Evidence of cross-Faculty involvement;
 - Evidence of impact, following the [REF definition](#) as 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia'
 - Ways in which the Centre has been meeting its stated aims and objectives;
 - Any additional or related information that is not available on the website.

Removal of Centre status

- 6.3 If any of the Centres, according to the assessment of the Triennial Review Committee, does not meet the expected levels of cross-Faculty activity and engagement, or no longer fits within the School's mission and strategy, SLT may decide to either remove Centre status, or change its status to be a Faculty Centre, or Group.
- 6.4 Alternatively, a School Centre Steering Group and Centre Director/Co-Directors may

propose terminating a School Centre when the purpose of the Centre is no longer relevant, and there is limited engagement across the School.

Please note: as a result of the Triennial Review the Centre Policy will be reviewed and updated.

Proposed process and timings

Finalize Review process (December 2020)

Circulate final arrangements to Centre Directors.

Set up panel

Chair: Professor Anne Mills

Dean, Faculty of Epidemiology and Population Health*

Dean, Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases*

Dean, Faculty of Public Health and Policy*

Unit Director, The Gambia*

Unit Director, Uganda*

Secretariat support: Anna Kramer

*Deans/Unit Directors can nominate an alternative representative from the faculty/unit but not a current Centre Director or Deputy Director.

Documentation for review submitted (January - March 2021)

Both review and budget information will be based on academic years 01 August 2017 – 31 July 2020 and will consist of:

1. Centre Activity Report

Centre Support and SRO will collate information on each Centre's activity, to include quantitative data on website, events and social media analytics for Centre Directors to verify (Annex A), and output from Elements. Cross-Centre activities will be included.

2. Centre Director's Report

Directors will be asked to complete a template which provides highlights of a Centre's outputs/achievements which were made possible by each Centre, under the headings below (from the School strategy), along with an additional section to outline each Centre's planned future vision, activities and resources required. In choosing what to highlight, Centre Directors may wish to particularly consider cross-Centre activities, and activities related to diversity and inclusion and decolonizing global health, but otherwise should choose those examples that best demonstrate their achievements as a School Centre.

The highlights can be written in a way that can also be used for external or website communication (or may be taken from existing reports).

Achievements report – How the Centre has: (max 750 words)

a. Facilitated high-quality research: provide a brief description of one example of each of:

➤ cross-Faculty involvement

The last 3 years have seen the Vaccine Centre gain significant strength and visibility, not only internally, across faculties and LSHTM Centres in general, but also within the MRC Units and importantly, externally. The VaC has become an authoritative voice for reporting and reflecting on vaccine-related developments and public engagement, particularly around COVID-19. This is clearly in conjunction with the significant role that other members of LSHTM-particularly from CMMID-have played in advice to governmental organisations such as SAGE. Although our primary goal as a Centre

is not to develop and produce vaccine products, we are seen as an independent “to-go-to” source of information and advice on vaccine development, from pre-clinical to late-stage clinical phases of the pipeline.

The VaC has paid particular attention to the cross-faculty and cross- centre relationships as we see ourselves as a facilitator of such interactions and have deliberately structured our research themes (Innovation, Application, Evaluation) according to the priorities that are covered by all faculties. Each faculty is also represented on the Steering Group of the centre.

Events and activities of the VaC have covered the full spectrum of work at the school from across the disciplines represented at the centre - from social science, to epidemiological evaluations of vaccines, to lab science and to policy (see long list of events/activities in the relevant document).

Key examples of high-profile cross faculty events and activities in the last 3 years are:

- Prior to the pandemic, interdisciplinary face to face events organised on campus at LSHTM for example: event on [Vaccines in Emergencies](#) organised December 2018 (promoted as a joint event with the *Health in Humanitarian Crises Centre*), the collaboration with UNICEF in the [Urban Immunisation workshop](#) May 2019 and the policy focused [UK-China vaccine symposium event](#) June 2019.
- **World Immunization Week events:** a podcast series staged during World Immunization Week 2019 and series of live webinars for World Immunization Week 2020 which were very well attended. These remote webinars and podcasts covered different disciplines of work and featuring researchers from LSHTM and internationally recognized vaccine research colleagues, including from the WHO (Kate O’Brien):

2019 podcasts:

- Episode 1: [Progress towards a universal flu vaccine](#)
- Episode 2: [Learning from Nature - protecting newborns against infections](#)
- Episode 3: [TB and the story of the BCG vaccine](#)
- Episode 4: [New TB vaccines - the cutting edge](#)
- Episode 5: [Understanding vaccine confidence - insights from social science](#)
- Episode 6: [A WHO perspective on vaccines and immunization](#)

2020 webinar recordings:

- Day 1: [Group B streptococcus \(GBS\) in pregnancy](#)
- Day 2: [Vaccinating newborns against Hepatitis B in pregnancy](#)
- Day 3: [Understanding the impact of pneumococcal vaccines](#)
- Day 4: [Immunization and adolescents – the HPV vaccine](#)
- Day 5: [Prevention and vaccines in older people](#)
- Day 6: [COVID-19 vaccines to the rescue?](#)

➤ ***an output arising out of collective Centre activity (exclude those that would have been generated anyway by individuals/research groups);***

Examples:

- **The LSHTM week 2020 Joint Centre Event:**
Under the leadership of VaC, MARCH and Centre for Planetary Health, 9 centres came together to present ongoing research around the COVID-19 pandemic during LSHTM 2020. In Session 1 of the event we brought together colleagues from 5 geographical regions (MRC Unit The Gambia, LSHTM, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Pakistan) to present their work during the pandemic; Session

2 involved Centre-specific breakout sessions, where topic-specific research was presented, and Session 3 brought us back together to discuss the collateral effects of COVID -19. Many of the projects presented in this event are now published, including the modelling of the collateral damage of COVID-19 on routine childhood immunization efforts (EPH), COVID-19 vaccine acceptability by communities (HPRU, PHP), COVID-19 novel diagnostics (ITD), collateral impact on TB control (CRD)

- **FAQs page and animations for the public on vaccine safety and vaccine trials:**

In order to enhance the public-facing visibility of the VaC, we developed a series of short animations to illustrate the principles of vaccine trials, the safety monitoring of vaccines and vaccine components, accompanied by a set of evidence-based, easy to understand FAQ's- all visible on the [new part of our website](#) which hosts public resources. The animations have also been widely viewed directly on the [LSHTM YouTube channel](#). Plans to improve the public facing content of the website were already made prior to the pandemic (see last annual report) but these outputs have gained high visibility because of the heightened interest in vaccine science triggered by COVID-19.

- **COVID-19 Vaccine pipeline development tracker**

The [COVID-19 Vaccine tracker](#) was developed early in 2020 through the Vaccine Centre, which would not be possible outside of a Centre and has proved to be a huge asset. The tracker has been referenced in high profile publications and meetings including the Downing Street briefing by the UK government, in UN presentations and was [featured in the Lancet Global Health](#) in February 2021. The tracker has also attracted funding that would not be possible through research grants.

➤ ***the collective contribution of the Centre to winning research funding (exclude what would have been generated anyway by individuals/research groups);***

- The re-competition of the [HPRU on Immunisation](#) (PHE/LSHTM partnership) included the VaC as an active contributor and helped to secure this significant funding. The VaC director is now a member of the management team of the renewed HPRU, led by Prof A Scott.
- We were awarded \$ 100 000 from the BMGF for our contributions to a systematic review of the safety of COVID vaccines during pregnancy.
- The presence of the VaC has helped to secure PhD funding for several candidates, usually from the Wellcome Trust Bloomsbury funding scheme as academic support in the science of vaccinology could be demonstrated.
- The Vaccine Centre affiliation is now added to a large list of high-quality publications by its members.

➤ ***the collective contribution of the Centre to impact, following the [REF definition](#) as 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia'***

- The VaC activities and outputs have had a significant focus on public engagement, many members of the steering group have been involved in this contributing to public events/forums, and producing materials targeting the public. Apart from almost weekly media coverage and contributions to printed press and TV interviews, incl on Newsnight, BBC World, BBC News Channel, various radio programs, including features in French and German, this included public events for the British Council in Spain and Hungary and an event at the Science museum event on vaccine confidence to name a few recent examples.

- The LSHTM-COVID-19 vaccine tracker has been cited in policy documents, including in the WHO guidance for available COVID-19 vaccines and is also included in the training module for vaccinators during the current vaccine roll-out.
- We are also currently contributing to training materials for school children and the NHS (vaccinator training module).

b. Facilitated high-quality education: provide a brief description of a Centre engagement with Doctoral, Masters or short course students

- **Student leaders:**

Students have been appointed to work with the Centre in years 2018 (Harriet), 2019 (Rachel, Emily) and 2020 (4 current SLOs – [profiles on the Centre website](#)) – these students have helped promote VaC events to the student body and peers, have contributed ideas to the SG meetings, have helped with social media and promotion of the Centre outside the school. The current group of 4 SLOs have a formalized role through support from the Centre support team in creating Terms of Reference and supporting with student training. This student group leads their own initiatives including live events for students and mentoring and advice for prospective PhD and MSc students.

- **Student projects:**

The VaC has conducted an annual collation of a list of vaccine related summer projects for interested MSc students. This list has been compiled with input from academic members of the VaC with projects coming from all 3 faculties of the school + MRC units. This was done in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 and made public for all students. In 2019/2020 a well-attended in-person student event was held with representatives from the different faculties presenting projects to the students. The VaC has also leveraged our relationship with key vaccine global institutions like CEPI and the Wellcome Trust to generate MSc and PhD projects for students that tackle real world issues with input from experts working in the field. One of the 2019/20 MSc project facilitated by the VaC and addressing the impact of COVID-19 on pregnant women and neonates was hosted jointly by CEPI and LSHTM. This was facilitated by an MoU initiated by the VaC. Going forward, this CEPI/VaC collaborative scheme can host additional MSc projects with common interests under joint supervision, facilitating a direct academic exchange for the student and supervisors.

- **Student involvement in VaC activities:**

The Vaccine Centre tracker has provided an opportunity for student to be mentored and involved in a key activity of the Centre, for example on the COVID-19 VaC tracker an MSc student was mentored and helped with the development of this resource, she became the lead author on a Lancet correspondence publication in collaboration with other members of the VaC working on the tracker. Further, the Centre has subsidized PhD students to be involved in key Centre events including subsidies of full board to attend the overnight Vaccine Centre retreat in 2019, and the chance to present their work in a series of “turbo talks” at this event.

- **Annual short course and week of event:**

The *Epidemiological evaluation of vaccines: efficacy, safety and policy* is a short course organized annually, with places subsidized for LMIC students. During the course the VaC organizes evening and lunchtime talks and events to provide the students with additional opportunities to engage with vaccinology while they are at the school for the course, events which are open to the general public. In 2019 a well-attended panel event was organized during the short course: [How is the safety of vaccines established?](#)

- c. **Nurtured innovation, & engagement with policy/practice: provide a brief description of an example of:**
- **Centre contribution to innovation (if relevant)**
 - **Centre-organised engagement with external bodies**
- The [LSHTM COVID-19 vaccine tracker](#) relies on a shiny-app which was designed by the VaC. The tracker has attracted more than 20,000 average monthly hits of over since its inception with this number growing as the site builds a greater audience and more sections/content. It is now a well-established asset for academics, public and media alike. It is freely available and updated by the VaC on a weekly basis. It has evolved during the pandemic to bring the latest overviews not just over vaccine candidates, but also trial results and implementation progress.
 - **Media:** for our extensive engagement with various media outlets please refer to our listed activities. We have acted as a source of reliable information to the Wellcome Trust, CEPI, Science Museum, ARCTEC,
 - **Social Media:** the presence of the VaC on social media has grown substantially over the last 3 years. This has enhanced the reach of our audience internal and external, and the dissemination of our publications, events and resources.
 - See above on new FAQs page on the website including bespoke animations targeting the public and lay people on vaccines.
 - The VaC engaged regularly with the public engagement team at the School (Karl Byrne and team) to get involved in a number of innovative activities at festivals, museum events, public lectures and others to promote vaccinology and the work of the school, including 2 events for the British Council.

Future plans:

- a. **What are the Centre's future plans? (max 500 words)**
- *Include activities planned for the next year and further 2 years in outline form, and a budget round request for 2021-22 (Annex B)*
 - *Please specifically address plans to address diversity and inclusion and decolonizing global health concerns in Centre membership and activities*

Future plans

Annual event 2021 – this event will be staged during the World Immunisation Week in 2021 and will include a keynote lecture from Prof Rino Rappuoli (GSK Vaccines Institute for Global Health, Siena, Italy on the topic of how the rapid vaccine development for COVID might impact the future of vaccine development and implementation. It will be flanked by regular daily podcasts in the run up addressing progress in vaccines currently under development (diarrhoeal illness, RSV, Group B strep and others) We will continue to engage with the media and the public, including giving a role for students, in particular in the development of teaching materials aimed at schools

We will strengthen our portfolio of collaborations and joint events with the HPRU, and partners in the Vaccine Confidence Project and other vaccine related groups and activities across faculty, including the new Centre for Epidemic Preparedness, where vaccinology will be an essential component

We aim to further develop our outward facing vaccine communication materials

We will contribute to fund raisers for LSHTM, but also for specific purposes of the VaC.

We would like to develop a cross-faculty Vaccinology PhD and postdoctoral program and employ a VaC Fellow at post-doctoral level. However, this relies on the ability to attract and hold the necessary funds.

Entirely new initiatives such as an additional vaccinology course for distance learning or MOOC that incorporates the themes of the centre are an ambition but can only be fulfilled with additional man/woman power and require dedicated funds to secure this development.

We are facilitating PhD supervision and engagement with policy makers and again, this aspect can be further nurtured through grants and the networks we have built.

Diversity and inclusion

- **It is our aim to represent the work of our colleagues working in vaccinology who are not physically based at the LSHTM and represent diversity.** Since Prof Kampmann took over the leadership of the Centre, we have implemented a policy of ensuring representation from African MRC units on the steering group of the Centre, initially one of the 6 members of the steering group was from MRC Gambia and when she left in 2020, she was replaced by an academic colleague involved in vaccines at the MRC Unit in Uganda. Beate also links the LSHTM Centre with work in the Gambia via her position in both institutions. In addition to the Units, we seek the contributions of members based overseas and have actively included these colleagues and members of our network activities such as webinars and podcasts. Vaccinology is global and we want to give the topic, the members and the VaC Centre global visibility. We have also worked increasingly in collaboration with international agencies such as UNICEF, WHO, CEPI and others.
- Our student group also includes students from both MRC units and UK based LSHTM students
- Highlighting work and researchers from the Global South: the VaC ensures that events cover vaccine research and issues from across the world. At LSHTM Week 2020 in September, the VaC ensured that there were speakers included in the event covering diverse parts of Africa, Asia and the UK to reflect the diversity of research/researchers working on vaccines at the school. The VaC also champions gender balance in all of our events and activities in its selection of speakers and chairs.

b. **What would you like the School to do to support your Centre to fulfil its aims?** (max 200 words)

- Without the dedicated support of the part time administrator that I negotiated as part of my employment at the LSHTM, I could not run the Centre at the level that I believe, we have managed to achieve. The overall Centre support available is appreciated but not topic- specific enough, and a close relationship and understanding of the mission and aims of the work cannot be achieved in the absence of a dedicated person who works with the Centre director.
- Support to the Centres is not necessarily best placed within in the communications department at the school as it does not allow the Centre support staff to really get to grips with the needs and priorities of the Centre directors and Centre teams. Support for the Centres could be more efficiently provided by someone who is overseen and managed by the Centres themselves, which re-iterates the point I made above.
- Funding is needed for activities – and the inability for Centres to hold their own grants impedes our efforts. For example, the Centres could host its own grants and PhD students, as suggested but this is not possible in the current model. The partnership with the likes of CEPI and also industry would facilitate this move of a more independent functioning from faculty alignment.

3. Surveys of engagement of School staff and doctoral students with Centres, and of MSc students
Collated results from (a) a survey to be sent to LSHTM staff and doctoral students mailing lists to determine their level of engagement with the Centre (Annex C) and (b) a similar survey to MSc students (Annex D).

4. Sector experience & Centre type structures

Centre Support will provide a short summary of how other HEIs organise their cross-department/faculty 'Centres', and the pros and cons of different formats for the Review Panel to consider whether the School has the right model.

5. Centres Support (starting Dec 2020)

A review of the current support provided by the School to Centres (Centre support team and central budget), and the needs of Centre Directors for support, will be undertaken under the supervision of the COO. This will include meetings with the current Centres Support team, consultation with Centre Directors, and review of Centre activities, reports and budgets submitted as part of the Triennial Review. The review will address:

- How can the School best support Centres?
- What might be the elements of a business case to expand Centres Support?
- What human and financial resources should the School allocate to support Centres, and how is this best located and allocated?

Review Panel Meeting with Centre Directors (April/May 2021)

Each Centre Director will have 15 minutes for presentation (max 10 mins) on 'what has been the added value to LSHTM of my Centre and what do we plan to do next?' and questions/discussion (5 minutes).

The panel will have available to them the Directors' and activities reports. The survey results will be collated and shared with both Centre Directors and panel members prior to the meeting.

Centre Directors, if they wish, may submit further individual or collective material for discussion at this meeting.

Review Panel closed meeting and report (April/May 2021)

The Review Panel will discuss and make recommendations based on all the documentation 1-5 listed above and meeting with the Centre Directors.

Anna Kramer to draft the report reflecting discussion and recommendations to Senate and SLT in the following areas:

- How Centres support LSHTM's Strategy
- The strengths of each Centre, and where could they seek to improve
- The added value of each Centre
- The Centre's vision and priorities for the coming three years
- Whether it recommends that the Centre be maintained/merged/closed
- The effectiveness of LSHTM's overall approach to Centres, how this compares with that of other institutions, and are changes needed to the Centre Policy.
- How the School should best support Centres, including what resources should be allocated to Centres and how this should be located and allocated.

Senate Meeting (May 2021)

Review Panel recommendations discussed by Senate to provide input to SLT discussion

SLT (June 2021)

Review Panel report and Senate comments submitted to SLT for approval of recommendations.

Feedback (June 2021)

Letters are sent from Anne Mills on behalf of Review Panel and SLT to Centre Directors.

Annex C: Survey of engagement of School staff and doctoral students with Centres

These questions will be inputted into the BOC online survey template for all internal staff and doctoral students.

1. Are you: (tick box)
 - a. Doctoral student
 - b. Academic
 - c. Professional Support Staff

2. Do you work within: (tick box)
 - a. EPH
 - b. ITD
 - c. PHP
 - d. Professional Services
 - e. Gambia Unit
 - f. Uganda Unit

3. Which Centre(s) are you a member of/ mailing list subscriber of?
 1. Antimicrobial Resistance Centre
 2. Centre for Evaluation
 3. Centre for Climate Change & Planetary Health
 4. Centre for Global Chronic Conditions
 5. Centre for Global Mental Health
 6. Centre for History in Public Health
 7. Centre for Maternal, Adolescent, Reproductive & Child Health
 8. Centre for Statistical Methodology
 9. Centre for Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases
 10. Health in Humanitarian Crises Centre
 11. Malaria Centre
 12. TB Centre
 13. The Applied Genomics Centre
 14. Vaccine Centre

For each Centre ticked, further Q drop-down

4. How effectively does the Centre promote its activities to you? [scale of 1-5] (1 very little and 5 very strongly)

5. Does the communication you receive contain relevant information for your studies/work? [scale 1-5] (1 agree very little and 5 very strongly)

6. How strongly do you feel engaged with the Centre? [scale 1-5] (1 very little and 5 s very strongly)

7. Has the Centre enabled you to (tick all that apply)
 - a. Get involved with research grant applications
 - b. Get involved with research projects
 - c. Get involved with a research paper
 - d. Acquire new skills
 - e. Enhance your academic career
 - f. Get involved with policy engagement and advocacy

- g. Teach
- h. Other

8. How many Centre events have you attended in the past year? (tick box)

- a. 0
- b. 1 – 3
- c. 3 – 5
- d. 5+

9. What were your impressions of the Centre's overall events schedule

- a. The relevance of the topics they covered [scale 1 low and 5 high]
- b. The quality of the event content [scale 1 low and 5 high]
- c. The quality of the speakers [scale 1 low and 5 high]
- d. Quantity of events [scale 1 too few and 5 too many]

10. Are there any activities the Centre should do more or less of? (tick box)

- a. Seminars/Lectures
- b. Workshops
- c. Symposiums
- d. Retreats
- e. Film screenings
- f. Other

11. Do you consider yourself a Centre member? (tick box)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

12. Do you consider Centre membership as important? (tick box)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

13. What benefits does the Centre provide? Tick all benefits that apply (multiple tick box)

- a. Access to leading LSHTM academics in my field
- b. Access to external authorities in my field e.g. academics, policymakers
- c. Helps me with my research
- d. Helps me create an impact with my research by providing opportunities to disseminate my work
- e. Provides access to Centre-specific content and events
- f. Can add my Centre affiliation on gateway personal profiles and research online resources
- g. Useful Centre links (webpage, social media handle, publications)
- h. Centre outputs (annual report, latest newsletter etc.)
- i. Other