

SENATE

Subject: Environmental Ergonomics Research Centre

**Origin: Dept. of Ergonomics (Human Sciences) / Loughborough Design School**

**Purpose:** To establish the Loughborough University Environmental Ergonomics Research Centre

**Background**

1.The University has invested £ 1.25 M in the Environmental Ergonomics infrastructure surrounding the new Environmental Stressor Suite in James France creating a world class facility for interdisciplinary research in vibration, lighting, altitude and thermal environments.

2. Research in the area of Environmental Ergonomics has flourished over the last decade culminating in an excellent RAE rating for the group as part of the Mechanical Engineering submission (UoA 28) and the reception of the Presidents Medal of the Institute of Ergonomics & Human Factors.

3. With a distinct interdisciplinary research programme, the 6 core academics, PhD students and associated researchers have forged extensive links with industry. The majority of the PhD students are industrially funded. Research income is from a variety of sources, e.g. EPSRC, EU FP7, MOD (DSTL) and industry (Adidas, Decathlon, Caterpillar, Nissan etc) and extensive enterprise activity takes place.

4. It is anticipated that the infrastructure created will get wider use within the university, accommodating researchers in the Loughborough Design School, the School of Sports Exercise and Health Sciences, Civil Engineering, the Sports Technology Institute and the School of Design Research. In addition, the facility of a hypoxic altitude chamber will feature in Loughborough’s national High Performance Centre for Athletics (HiPAC).

**Aim and objectives**

 In the light of the infrastructure development, the expected growth in research turnover, and the related management issues of such a facility, it is proposed to establish a research centre for these activities. This proposal is in accordance with the criteria described in the Senate paper on ‘research groups’ by Professor Golding that was agreed by senate summer 2009:

1: The centre will form an interdisciplinary research platform in the area of Environmental and Physiological Ergonomics.

2: The centre will provide management of the facilities within the established school structure.

**Organisational Structure**

 The centre would report to the Head of the Director of the Design School. The centre will not act as a separate cost centre but may financially manage the facilities. Prof. Havenith is proposed as its first Director.

**Centre Name**

‘Environmental Ergonomics’ is the internationally accepted term for the research area.

Adding ‘Design’ to the name was considered, but consultation with clients/stakeholders showed that this would create the wrong connotation of the centre’s work. It was decided that ‘Design’ was covered sufficiently under the umbrella of the school name. The Design School project board is supportive of the chosen name.

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