UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Minutes of meeting 04/05 of the University Research Committee held on 7 December 2005 at 9:30am in Kemira Rooms 3 & 4, Building 11.

PRESENT: Professor M Sheil (*Chair*)
A/Professor L Astheimer
Dr J Beck
Professor H Brown
Professor C Cook
Professor P Crookes
A/Professor B Derewianka
A/Professor S Dodds
A/Professor S Dolnicar
Professor S Dou
Dr E Dutkiewicz
Ms E Ens
Professor W Funnell
Ms J Green
Professor B Harper
Ms S Hughes
Professor S Kaye
Dr A Macris
Ms H Mandl
Ms J Murrell
Professor J Norrish
Mr C Peden
Dr S Robinson
Ms K Roser
A/Professor P Sharrad
Mr A Skorulis
Professor J Steele
Mrs T Tindall
Professor A Wells
Professor Rob Whelan
A/Professor C Woodroffe

SECRETARY: Susan McGaffin

PART A - PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A1 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies had been received from Ms Shengrong Bu; Professor Joe Chicharo, Dr Troy Coyle, Mr Peter Day, Professor Rian Dippenaar, Professor Peter Eklund, Professor David Griffiths, A/Professor Sandra Jones, Dr Michael Lerch, Dr Lenore Lyons, Professor J Patterson, A/Professor Greg Rose, Professor Andrew Schultz, Dr T Scrase, Professor David Steel, Professor Martin Tsamenyi, Professor Gordon Wallace.
Dr Jenny Beck was representing Professor Mark Wilson; Dr Eryk Dutkiewicz was representing Professor Rei Safavi-Naini, Ms Janette Green was representing Professor Kathy Eagar, Dr Anthony Macris was representing Dr Eric Loo, Ms Helen Mandl was representing Ms Felicity McGregor.

The Chair welcomed Professor Warwick Funnell, the new Faculty Research Chair for Commerce, and Ms Trish Tindall, the new representative of the University Internationalisation Committee.

A2 Business from the Last Meeting

A2.1 Minutes of previous meeting (28 September 2005)

RESOLVED (17/05)
That the minutes of the University Research Committee meeting held on 28 September 2005 (03/2005) be confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

ACTION: Susan McGaffin

A2.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

Code of Practice – Research
The revised Code of Practice – Research has been passed through Academic Senate and Council.

Summer Scholarships
Summer Scholarships can be offered to students subject to meeting guidelines which are available at http://www.uow.edu.au/about/scholarships/ug/staff/schol_vac.html. Summer Scholarships will be administered by the relevant academic unit.

A3 Chair’s Business

A3.1 Senior Appointments
The Chair congratulated Professor Lee Asheimer on her new appointment as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research). Lee will commence in her new role in January 2006.

Professor Peter Metcalfe has accepted the position of Professor of Medical Radiation Physics. An offer has been made for the positions of Professor of Power Engineering and Professor of Steel Metallurgy.

Dr Troy Coyle has taken up the role of Executive Officer for Research Development. Her responsibilities include: providing support to the DVC(R), developing a strategy for development of the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Hub, working on commercialisation and IP issues, assisting those who are planning to be involved in a new or extension CRC bid, and managing the MICD role for Faculty of Law and IPRI.

Ms Sharon Hughes, Director, Research Services Office has been successfully nominated as a member of the Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS) NSW/ACT Chapter for 2006.
Professor Margaret Sheil will take up the AVCC D/PVC(R) Committee Chair for 2006. Sharon Hughes will act as the Executive Officer for the Committee.

A3.2 National Research Agenda

The Chair reported that it was not clear at this stage how long Brendan Nelson will stay on as federal Minister for Education Science and Training. It is important that UoW continue to push for a strong research presence/profile.

A3.3 National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS)

The NCRIS Committee, chaired by Dr Mike Sargent, is developing a Strategic Roadmap to identify priority capability areas which will provide the framework for allocation of NCRIS funding. There is approx. $542M in NCRIS funding available from 2004/05 to 2010/11 to provide researchers with access to major research facilities and supporting infrastructure/networks necessary to support world-class research efforts.

An email regarding the NCRIS Exposure Draft of the Strategic Roadmap has been circulated to Deans, Directors of Research Strengths and Faculty Research Chairs. Feedback on the proposed capability areas is due to DEST by Friday 9 December.

RESOLUTION (18/05)
That feedback on the DEST NCRIS Exposure Draft be provided to Sharon Hughes by Thursday 8 December.

ACTION: Sharon Hughes

PART B – GENERAL BUSINESS

B1 Research and Innovation Division Report

The Research and Innovation Division Report was tabled and noted.

B2 ARC Outcomes

The following documents were tabled:
- Notes from the ARC Feedback Tour Information Session on 15 November
- Graphs showing results for Linkage Projects for the GO8 and other groups from 2002-2006
- Listing of pending 2006 Linkage Projects grants for UOW

It was noted that:
- UOW’s performance in Linkage has been trending downwards over the past 3 funding rounds.
- There was a trend towards ARC funding larger projects with multiple institutional and industry partners, eg, Univ. of South Australia awarded $8.6M for a single grant in the last round.

Dr Tony Macris reported that at a workshop by Dr Mandy Thomas, ARC Executive Director, Humanities & Creative Arts, Dr Thomas had indicated that the ARC was looking to increase creative arts outputs. One mechanism to achieve this was for researchers in the creative arts to engage in more cross-disciplinary research partnerships (eg, Science, Bioinformatics).
A/Professor Paul Sharrad commented that the Minister’s intervention on a number of ARC Discovery grants in the humanities and social sciences could have a potentially negative impact on researchers in these disciplines submitting future ARC grants.

The Chair advised that Peter Hoj, CEO, ARC had written to DVC(R)s emphasising the need for ARC applicants to communicate effectively the nature and importance of their research to a wider audience, particularly with regard to project titles and project summaries.

B3  Research Quality Framework (RQF) Update

The DEST RQF Preferred Model paper was released in September. The RQF Expert Advisory Group has established five working parties to consider key implementation issues. Professor Margaret Sheil will participate on one of the working parties considering RQF panel composition and multi-disciplinary research issues. A further report is expected to be released by the Minister by January 2006. The PVC(R) will continue to liaise with faculties on the identification of potential research groupings for inclusion in the RQF.

B4  Revised Animal Ethics Committee Operating Procedures

RESOLVED (19/05)
That the University Research Committee endorse the revised Animal Ethics Committee Operating Procedures

ACTION: Penny Potter

B5  French Cotutelle Scheme at UoW

The Committee discuss the need to identify potential sources of conflict upfront to protect students via a standard dispute resolution clause.

RESOLVED (20/05)
That the University Research Committee endorse the French Cotutelle Scheme, subject to insertion of suitable new clause for dispute resolution and forward to the Academic Senate for approval.

ACTION: Kim Roser

PART C – ITEMS FOR NOTING

C1  HDR Scholarship Outcomes for 2006

The Chair noted that while domestic quality is down, international student applications are very strong. It is proposed that 10 – 15 additional scholarships will be offered.

C2  Thesis Committee Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 7 September 2005 (08/05), 12 October 2005 (09/05) were noted.

RESOLVED (21/05)
That the University Research Committee receive minutes of the University Thesis Committee of 7 September 2005 and 12 October 2005.

ACTION:  Julie King

C3  University Ethics Policy Committee Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21 July 2005 (02/05) were noted.

PART D – NEXT MEETING AND OTHER BUSINESS

D1  Research Software

A question was raised regarding possible URC support for widely used research software. The Committee was advised that this issue had been initially raised at an FRC breakfast and that the RSO had sent emails to all faculties seeking details on software currently in use. Mark Geloven was still in the process of chasing up this feedback from some faculties. The Chair suggested that a 50/50 funding arrangement may be considered for some identified software.

RESOLVED (22/05)
That the issue of support for research software be referred back to a future Faculty Research Chair breakfast for further consideration.

ACTION:  Sharon Hughes

D2  Next meeting – 9.00 am, Wednesday, 29 March, 2006 Kemira Rooms 3 and 4, Building 11

The meeting closed at 10.25am.

ACTION ITEMS:

Action A2  S McGaffin to file previous URC minutes.
Action A3  S Hughes to collect feedback on the DEST NCRIS Exposure Draft and forward to DEST by Friday 9 December.
Action B4  P Potter to note URC has endorsed the revisions to the AEC 2005 Operating Procedures.
Action B5  K Roser to insert suitable clause for dispute resolution and forward French Cotutelle Scheme to Academic Senate.
Action C2  J King to file previous Thesis Committee minutes.
Action D1  S Hughes to refer issue of support for research software to an FRC breakfast.

Signed as a true record ...........................................................

Chairperson  ....../.../ 06