UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Minutes of meeting 02/05 of the University Research Committee held on 22 June 2005 at 9.30 am in Kemira Rooms 3 & 4, Building 11.

PRESENT: Professor M Sheil (Chair)
A/Professor L Astheimer
A/Professor Sharon Robinson
Professor Hugh Brown
Ms S Bu
Ms E Ens
Professor Joe Chicharo
Dr Troy Coyle
Professor Patrick Crookes
A/Professor Susan Dodds
A/Professor Sara Dolnicar
Professor David Griffiths
Professor Barry Harper
Professor Lesley Head
Ms Sharon Hughes
A/Professor Sandra Jones
Professor Stuart Kaye
Dr Michael Lerch
Dr Eric Loo
Ms Helen Mandl
A/Professor Peter McLennan
Professor John Norrish
Professor Ian Ring
Ms Kim Roser
Professor Rei Safavi-Naini
Dr Tim Scrase
A/Professor Paul Sharrad
Mr Aapo Skorulis
Professor David Steele
Professor Julie Steele
A/Professor Colin Woodroffe

MINUTE
SECRETARY: Susan McGaffin

PART A – PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A1 Welcome and Apologies
Apologies had been received from Professor Chris Cook, Professor Shi Dou, Professor Peter Eklund, Professor John Glynn, A/Professor Greg Rose, Professor Rob Whelan, Professor Andrew Schultz, Professor Martin Tsamenyi, Professor Andrew Wells, Professor Gordon Wallace and Professor Jan Wright.
A/Professor Sharon Robinson was representing Professor David Ayre; Dr Tim Scrase representing Dr Lenore Lyons; Ms Helen Mandl representing Ms Felicity McGregor; Professor Ian Ring representing Professor Kathy Eagar and A/Professor Colin Woodroffe representing Professor Mark Wilson.

The Chair welcomed Ms Shengrong Bu and Ms Emilie Ens, as the new HDR student representatives on the Committee.

A2 Business from the Last Meeting

A2.1 Minutes of previous meeting (20 April 2005)

RESOLVED (07/05)
That the minutes of the University Research Committee meeting held on 20 April 2005 (01/05) be confirmed as a true record of meeting.

ACTION: Susan McGaffin

A3 Chair’s Business

A3.1 ARC Centre of Excellence Award

A team led by Prof Gordon Wallace, together with partners from Monash University and the Bionic Ear Institute, were awarded an ARC Centre of Excellence for Electromaterials Science, with total funding of $12M over 5 years (2005-2010).

Prof Christoph Antons is a Chief Investigator on the ARC Centre of Excellence in Cultural and Media Industries, led by Prof Stuart Cunningham at QUT, with total funding of $7M over 5 years (2005-2010).

A3.2 Research Quality Framework

The RQF National Stakeholder Forum was held on 2 June 2005, and the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) met on 3 June 2005 to consider the outcomes from the Forum. The EAG has agreed to ‘trial’ three key issues to clarify and confirm characteristics of the preferred RQF model. The three issues are:

• Structure and operation of expert review panels and assessment of cross-disciplinary research
• Role and measurement of research training in the RQF
• International benchmarking of the outcomes of the RQF

The time frame has now been put back because the process has been delayed for twelve months. We anticipate that the RQF will now be fully implemented by 2007, with reporting of outcomes by 2008.
A3.3 Senior Appointments

Congratulations to Professor Ray Chambers for his new appointment to Chair in Statistical Survey Methodology.

A3.4 ARC Visit

The ARC visit was a huge success on 9 June. The ARC’s CEO opened the Biomolecular Mass Spectrometry Facility. The open forum was also well attended. An evening dinner was held with Senior Executive and key staff members with a very positive outcome being achieved.

A special thanks to Sharon Hughes, Vicky Wallace and Heidi De Coster for their efforts in organising the visit.

A3.5 Trailblazer

The Trailblazer competition was a successful event. The Open winner was Ms Anna Henningham, and the student winner was Mr Luke Scott.

Thank you to Aapo Skorulis and Troy Coyle for their efforts.

A3.6 Change of Title

Sharon Hughes and Kim Roser will each have a change of title, effective 1st July and be thereafter the Director, Research Services Office and Director, Research Student Centre respectively. The new titles will more accurately reflect their relative standing within UoW and to external organizations.

PART B – GENERAL BUSINESS

B1 Research and Innovation Division Report

B1.1 Linkage Projects Outcomes

UOW submitted 27 applications for Linkage Projects Round 2 and only 8 have been funded, a success rate of 30%. A summary report was tabled comparing national and UOW outcomes by discipline area. The report also shows that the overall national success rate for the Scheme is decreasing - from 51.2% in Round 1 to 42.9% in Round 2. The ARC has noted that the decrease is primarily due to a significant shift towards larger funding requests in Round 2. Joe Chicharo commented that as an ARC College of Experts member, he had noticed some very large project applications with multiple partners were funded in the last round.

Margaret Sheil suggested that UOW needs to rethink its strategy on Linkage Projects, and there will be work done in this respect in coming months.
**RESOLVED (08/05)**
*That the PVC(R), Joe Chicharo, Chris Cook, Don Iverson, Sharon Hughes, Troy Coyle, Aapo Skorulis and Jodie Murrell participate in a brainstorm session to discuss Linkage Projects.*

ACTION: Sharon Hughes

**B2 Revised URC Terms of Reference**

The Committee was advised that the revisions to the URC Terms of Reference reflect recent strategic and structural changes, in particular:

- The need to improve articulation between the URC and University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) to ensure there are consistent goals and approaches in areas of overlap. Cross representation between the URC and UIC is proposed with the addition of 2 nominees of the Vice Principal (International)/UIC as members of the URC. Two representatives of the URC and a nominee of the PVC(R) have also been invited to become members of the UIC. It is proposed that more research-focused strategies will be developed by the URC and University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) during 2005.
- Greater articulation of the key role of Faculty Research Chairs and Faculty Research Committees play in research planning and management at the university.

**RESOLVED (09/05)**
*That the University Research Committee endorse the revised Terms of Reference and forward them to Academic Senate for approval.*

ACTION: Sharon Hughes

**B3 UOW Research Quality & Impact Assessment Trial 2005**

The Committee was advised that the Faculty of Creative Arts had been replaced in the trial by the Faculty of Arts.

**B4 2006 UOW Honours Year Scholarships**

The PVC(R) advised that this scheme will be conducted on a trial basis. The Committee discussed the eligibility criteria for these scholarships.

**RESOLVED (10/05)**
*That the University Research Committee approve the 2006 UOW Honours Year Scholarships subject to the following amendments:*

*‘Eligibility
Domestic and international students are eligible to apply. Students who are in receipt of any other Honours Scholarship are NOT eligible.*
Student should be enrolled* in 2006 in a full-time Bachelor honours degree at UoW where the research component is at least 18 credit points undertaken in the final year of study.

Applications forms can be obtained from the Research Student Centre. Applications close on 15 November 2005. Application forms are available from the Research Student Centre, Ground Floor, Building 20.

* It is acknowledged that at the time of application an acceptance into an honours program may not be finalised. Students do not need to wait for results before lodging an application. Should an application be lodged and not be accepted into an honours program the application will be disregarded.’

ACTION: Kim Roser

PART C – ITEMS FOR NOTING

C1 Matters from URSC

C1.1 Research Strengths/Faculties Mid-Term Review Guidelines

Noted.

C1.2 Strategic Research Initiatives Guidelines

The PVC(R) advised the Committee that the current URC Strategic Research Initiatives are:

- Geotechnical and Railway Engineering Research Centre
- Centre for Medical Radiation Physics
- Centre for Comparative Law and Development Studies
- Child Obesity Research Centre
- Centre for Health Behaviour & Communication Research
- Digital Media Centre
- Centre for Statistical and Survey Methodology
- Sonic Arts Research Network (SARN)
- Neurobiology Strategic Initiative

The PVC(R) also advised that typically only 1 to 3 new initiatives will be funded per year.

It was suggested that applications from members of Research Strengths would need to demonstrate a substantially new activity not covered by the current portfolio and involving others outside the strength. In this case, the Director of the Research Strength should provide a letter indicating support and verifying that this new activity is not in an area of overlap.
It was also suggested that the degree of support from the Faculty (or Faculties) should be included in the selection criteria.

**RESOLVED (11/05)**

*That the University Research Committee approve the Strategic Research Initiatives guidelines subject to the following amendments:*

1. **Selection Criteria** – include ‘The degree of support from the Faculty (or Faculties).’

2. **Eligibility** – include ‘Applications from members of Research Strengths would need to demonstrate a substantially new activity not covered by the current portfolio and involving others outside the strength. In this case, the Director of the Research Strength should provide a letter indicating support and verifying that this new activity is not in an area of overlap.’

**ACTION:** Sharon Hughes

**C1.3 Final URC Action Plan 2005**

Noted.

**C1.4 Amendments to HDR Student Grievance Policies**

Noted.

**C2 Thesis Committee Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of 3 November 2004 (10/04), 8 December 2004 (11/04) and 9 February 2005 (01/05) were noted.

**RESOLVED (10/05)**

*That the University Research Committee receive the minutes of the University Thesis Committee of 16 March 2005 and 13 April 2005.*

**ACTION:** Julie King

**PART D – NEXT MEETING AND OTHER BUSINESS**

**D1** Next meeting – 9.30 am, Wednesday, 28 September 2005, Kemira Rooms 3 and 4, Building 11.

The meeting closed at 10.40 am
ACTION ITEMS:

Action A2  S. McGaffin to file previous URC minutes.
Action B1  S. Hughes setup a brainstorm session to discuss Linkage Projects.
Action B2  S. Hughes forward the endorsed URC Terms of Reference to Academic Senate.
Action B4  K. Roser to make the recommended amendments to the 2006 UOW Honours Year Scholarships.
Action C1  S. Hughes to make the recommended amendments to the Strategic Research Initiatives Guidelines.
Action C2  J King to file Thesis Committee minutes endorsed at this meeting of the URC.

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

Chairperson        .../.../05