Minutes of meeting 01/05 of the University Research Committee held on 20 April 2005 at 9:00am in Kemira Rooms 3 & 4, Building 11.

PRESENT: Professor M Sheil (Chair)  
A/Professor L Astheimer  
Professor D Ayre  
Professor H Brown  
Mr T Browne  
Professor J Chicharo  
Professor C Cook  
Professor P Crookes  
Professor R Dippenaar  
A/Professor S Dodds  
A/Professor S Dolnicar  
Professor S Dou  
Professor P Eklund  
Professor J Glynn  
Professor D Griffiths  
Professor B Harper  
Dr V Haverd  
A/Professor S Jones  
Professor S Kaye  
Professor A Lawson  
Dr M Lerch  
Ms H Mandl  
A/Professor P McLennan  
Professor J Norrish  
Professor I Ring  
Ms K Roser  
Dr S Robinson  
Professor G Scheimer  
A/Professor P Sharrad  
Professor D Steel  
Professor A Vickers  
Professor G Wallace  
Professor J Wright

MINUTE
SECRETARY: Sharon Hughes

PART A - PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A1 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies had been received from Ms Natalie Peters, Mr Aapo Skorulis, Professor Julie Steele, and Professor Martin Tsamenyi.

Professor C Woodroffe was representing Professor L Head; Professor A Lawson was representing Dr E Loo, Ms H Mandl was representing Ms F McGregor, Professor I Ring
was representing Professor K Eagar, Professor A Schultz was represented by Prof G Scheimer, and Professor A Wells was represented by Professor A Vickers.

The Chair welcomed Professor Peter Eklund, the new Faculty Research Chair for Commerce.

The Chair thanked Mr Tim Browne, attending his last meeting, for his contributions to the Committee as an HDR student representative.

A2  Business from the Last Meeting

A2.1  Minutes of previous meeting (8 December 2004)

**RESOLVED (01/05)**

That the minutes of the University Research Committee meeting held on 4 December 2004 (03/2004) be confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

ACTION: Sharon Hughes

A3  Chair’s Business

A3.1  Academic Appointments

Offers have been made for the positions of Professor of Organic Chemistry and Professor of Statistics.

A3.2  3M Science Prize

Professor Hugh Brown was congratulated for receiving the 3M Adhesion Society Award for Excellence in Adhesion Science. The award is the most prestigious acknowledgement for outstanding achievement in scientific research relating to adhesion.

A3.3  Innovation Campus: links with India

The Chair reported that the university was continuing to pursue links with IT companies in India. This follows from a visit by the Chair to India in November last year which focussed on signing agreements with IT companies: Wipro Technologies and Tarta Consulting Services.

A3.4  UOW Partnership in new Medical Bionics Research Centre

The Prime Minister recently announced $5M in funding for the Bionic Ear Institute’s world’s first Australian Centre for Medical Bionics and Hearing Science. The Intelligent Polymer Research Institute and ARC Centre for Nanostructured Electromaterials led by Gordon Wallace is a key partner and will provide selected bionic materials for the new Centre.

A3.5  ARC Centres of Excellence Applications
Prof Gordon Wallace’s Centre of Excellence – Australian Centre for Electromaterials Science application has been shortlisted for interview on 8 March. Only 17 out of 100 applications were shortlisted nationally. Prof Christoph Antons is a CI on the Centre of Excellence for the Australian Creative Innovation System lead by QUT which was also shortlisted. It is anticipated that 10 COEs will be funded. An announcement is expected by June 2005.

**A3.6 Higher Education Summit**

The Chair reported that the main issues coming out of the recent Higher Education Summit are:

- Voluntary Student Unionism
- Workplace Relations Reforms
- Review of protocols for what defines a university
- Research Quality Framework

**PART B – GENERAL BUSINESS**

**B1 AUQA Update**

Heather Sainsbury spoke to this item and tabled an AUQA progress report.

The following was discussed:

- Members were urged to familiarise themselves with the Research Chapter prior to the Audit which will take place 16-19 May 2005.
- Research themes to be considered include:
  - Research leadership
  - Research strengths
  - Research student supervision
- Academic and research units to be included in audit:
  - Faculty of Education
  - Commerce: School of Management and Marketing
  - Engineering: Mechanical, Materials and Mechatronic
  - Science: Biological Sciences
  - CAPSTRANS
  - Bluescope Steel Institute
  - Institute for Biomolecular Science
  - Institute for Conservation Biology and Law.

- Briefings will be provided to participants involved, it is expected that up to 8 people will participate in each interview session.

Margaret Sheil made the following comments:

- Issue of Register of HDR student supervisors – we have made a deliberate decision not to introduce this policy. The Code of Practice Supervision adequately covers the needs and requirements for supervisors and co-supervisors. UOW keeps a record of all staff who undertake supervisor training.
- Review of research strengths/faculty plans – we have deliberately given time to all research strengths to get up and running and minimised reporting requirements to a mid-term review in July 2005.
• Statement of minimum resources for research students – we have delayed introduction of this, if developed earlier this would have lowered not raised the bar.
• Emerging research areas – Strategic Research Initiative guidelines to be finalised by June. Initiatives will involve a shared investment by faculty(ies) and the PVCR.

B2  Research and Innovation Division Report

The Research and Innovation Division Report was tabled and noted.

B3  Research Quality Framework (RQF)

A/Professor Lee Astheimer spoke to this item. The DEST RQF Issues Paper poses a number of questions:
• whether universities and other higher education providers (eg, CSIRO) should be assessed in the same manner.
• What is the unit of assessment, eg, universities, research clusters, schools/departments, individuals. Margaret Sheil commented that for UOW it would be best if the unit of assessment is a research cluster or grouping, not the university as a whole, eg, health and medical, information technology and materials clusters.
• Who will be assessing, how frequently will this be done.
• Inclusion of performance indicators to measure research quality and impact. This will be a difficult issue for UOW, eg, Creative Arts where production of an art piece is the final product. It is not clear at this point how these types of research will be included.
• Should HDR students be included. There is a strong view that students are already being addressed through AUQA.

The URC Working Party established to consider the research quality and accessibility framework will meet tomorrow. The agenda for the meeting was tabled. One of the working party’s first tasks will be providing input to the UOW response to the Issues Paper, due 2 May 2005. Its second role will be to look at the development of a UOW research quality and assessment framework. In preparation for the national RQF, UOW needs to start putting in place quality indicators for research strengths and faculties. Guidelines will be developed to allow units to nominate main forms of impact.

The mid-term review of research strengths and faculties will also include some quality indicators. Draft guidelines for the mid-term review will be circulated at the next URC meeting.

Margaret Sheil advised individuals or groups who wished to submit a response to DEST could do so. This is an opportunity for disciplines disenfranchised by the current system to have a say. Margaret Sheil advised that the university submission would be circulated to Deans and Faculty Research Chairs, however, given the tight timeframe, this would not be an iterative process.

RESOLVED (02/05)

1. That the membership of the URC Working Party be provided to interested members.
2. That the UOW response to the DEST Issues Paper be circulated to Deans and Faculty Research Chairs.
3. That draft guidelines for the mid-term review of research strengths and faculties be provided at the next URC meeting.

ACTION: Margaret Sheil, Lee Astheimer, Sharon Hughes

B4  Draft Faculty Research Committee Terms of Reference
RESOLVED (03/05)
1. That the University Research Committee approve the Faculty Research Committee Terms of Reference pending members providing final comments directly to Sharon Hughes.

ACTION: Sharon Hughes

B5 URC Action Plan: 2005

The URC Action Plan for 2005 was tabled. Margaret Sheil indicated that the Research Action Plan is supported by a more detailed Research & Innovation Division Plan. Members are welcome to request a copy of this document. Members were asked to provide any comments on the plan to either Margaret Sheil or Sharon Hughes after the meeting.

RESOLVED (04/05)
1. That URC members send feedback regarding the URC Action Plan: 2005 directly to Margaret Sheil.

ACTION: URC Members, Margaret Sheil

PART C – ITEMS FOR NOTING

C1 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 (05/05)
That the University Research Committee receive the minutes of the University Thesis Committee of 3 November 2004, 8 December 2004 and 9 February 2005.

ACTION: Julie King

C2 University Ethics Committee

RESOLVED (06/05)
That the University Research Committee approve the name change from University Ethics Committee to University Ethics Policy Committee

ACTION: Eve Steinke

C3 2004 Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ)

The results of the 2004 Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire were noted.
PART D – NEXT MEETING AND OTHER BUSINESS

D1  Next meeting – 9.30 am, Wednesday, 22 June 2005, Kemira Rooms 3 and 4, Building 11

The meeting closed at 10.25am.

ACTION ITEMS:

Action A2  S. Hughes to file previous URC minutes.
Action B3  L Astheimer and S Hughes to provide membership of the URC Working Party to interested URC members.
Action B3  M Sheil and L Astheimer to circulate UOW response to the DEST Issues Paper to Deans and Faculty Research Chairs.
Action B3  M Sheil and S Hughes to develop draft guidelines for the mid-term review of research strengths and faculties for the next URC meeting.
Action B4  S Hughes to finalise FRC Terms of Reference incorporating URC members comments.
Action B5  URC members to send feedback to M Sheil regarding the URC Action Plan: 2005.
Action C1  J King to file Thesis Committee minutes endorsed at this meeting of the URC.
Action C4  E Steinke to note that the URC has endorsed the name change from University Ethics Committee to University Ethics Policy Committee.

Signed as a true record ......................................................
Chairperson            ../..../ 05