

**RKEC15.11M**

**ACADEMIC BOARD**

**RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE**

CONFIRMED

**Wednesday 11 November 2015**

**14.00 – 16.30**

**Dartington Suite, Frenchay**

**Present:** Professor Martin Boddy (Chair), Professor Jenny Ames, Richard Bond, Amanda Conway, Professor Myra Conway, Professor Olena Doran, Tracey John, Professor Julie Kent, Professor Glenn Lyons, Jane Newton, Professor Nicholas O’Regan, Professor Peter Rawlings, Mandy Rose, Professor Jon Tucker, Dr Neil Willey, Dr Heidi Williamson.

**Apologies:** Liz Broadbent, Keith Hicks, Tracey Horton, Paul Manners, Dr Chris Potter, Dee Smart, Professor Mel Smith.

**In attendance:** Alison Vaughton (Officer), Ros Rouse (Research Governance Manager – for items 8 and following)

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|  | **Welcomes, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  |
| RKEC15.11.1 | The Chair welcomed Dr Heidi Williamson as the representative of Research only staff.Apologies were received from Liz Broadbent, Keith Hicks, Tracey Horton, Paul Manners, Dr Chris Potter, Dee Smart and Professor Mel Smith. |
|  | **TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION and membership** |
| RKEC15.11.2 | It was noted that there was currently no student representative on the Committee. The Officer was in contact with Students Union to try to get this resolved. The Chair invited members to nominate/encourage students to put themselves forward for this.**Action: Officer** |
|  | **Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising** |
| RKEC15.11.3 | The minutes of the previous meeting (10 June 2015) were confirmed as an accurate record.  |
| RKEC15.11.4 | RKEC15.6.15 - R Bond reported that benchmarking data on research income for comparator HEIs had been provided for Strategy discussions and could be made available to the Committee on request. |
| RKEC15.11.5 | RKEC15.6.20 – The Chair reported that he and Professor Lyons had discussed KPIs for research with colleagues in Business Intelligence, and that two headline indicators had been incorporated into the corporate scorecard. |
| RKEC15.11.6 | RKEC15.6.34 - The Chair noted that the University should continue working towards compulsory research governance training for all supervisors of taught student projects, and that a working group had been established, chaired by Professor Lyons, to review research development provision across the University. |
| RKEC15.11.7 | All other actions had been completed or were discussed as agenda items at the meeting. |
|  | **Chair’s report** |
|  | ***RESEARCH STRATEGY*** |
| RKEC15.11.8 | The Chair reported that the Research Strategy had been approved by Academic Board in September. The draft ratified by this Committee in June had been taken to the July meeting of Academic Board, where a number of issues had been raised. These had been addressed, and the revised document was approved by Academic Board without further issues. It had been stressed that the Strategy was very much a headline document, with underlying faculty implementation plans which will be regularly updated. The Strategy document is supported by the Research Metrics report and Research Impact strategy. Professor Boddy noted that the actions following from the Strategy would represent significant changes going forwards. |
| RKEC15.11.9 | While the present confirmed version of the Research Strategy was an internal document at this stage, a further version would be prepared for external use and to be uploaded to the University’s webpages. The Research Metrics paper and Research Impact Strategy would remain as internal documents only. It was proposed that Marketing might be asked to use the document as an opportunity to showcase the new UWE branding.**Action: Chair** Separate version of the Research Strategy to be prepared for external use, in discussion with Marketing. Agreed this document should be used an example for new UWE branding. |
| RKEC15.11.10 | The Chair updated members on University investment in research. He would be talking to each faculty individually about their plans for taking forward new recruitment of research staff (new blood and research leaders).**Action: Chair** |
| RKEC15.11.11 | The Chair reported on the recent publication of the Green Paper on Higher Education, and specifically the parts relating to research, indicating the headlines – including the continuation of dual funding and impact. There will continue to be a degree of separation between QR and Research Council funding, and commitment to fund excellence wherever it is found, and funding for new and emerging research. The outcome of the Nurse review of the Research Councils was still awaited. The Green Paper implied that HEFCE will go, and it was not clear where the next REF would be administered, although there is a commitment to the next exercise. There were no clear messages about HEIF.  |
| RKEC15.11.12 | In anticipation of the Comprehensive Spending Review (25 November) the Chair commented that while BIS was likely to undergo significant cuts over the coming three years, as UWE’s research funding is predominantly from sources other than central government, the impact of any cuts in the science budget while disappointing, should not be disastrous. The University’s finances had, however, been impacted by a shortfall on target student numbers and this was in part the reason for the delay/reduction in the new blood and professorial appointments anticipated earlier in the year. Where possible these were still going ahead. There was ongoing work to identify funds for this and other investment.  |
| RKEC15.11.13 | Asked whether there was likely to be a University response to the Green Paper consultation, the Chair confirmed that UWE would contribute to the University Alliance response. It was not clear whether the University would also respond independently. |
|  | **faculty, Research centre, Institutes and departmental annual reports**  |
| RKEC15.11.14 | Richard Bond reported that a slightly different approach to reporting had been adopted this year so as to provide a more comprehensive overview, with reports requested from all centres and institutes (and from departments in ACE), and including research groups in HAS and FET, as well as faculty overview reports. A review of all of the reports submitted (summarised in paper RKEC 15/11/5) demonstrated the diversity and wide range of research across the University. All reports were available to members on the SharePoint site. |
| RKEC15.11.15 | Issues raised in the reports included requests for more time and resources, particularly the need for focussed investment in research staff at the early and mid-stages of their career. Linked to this is the University’s limited ability to offer promotion opportunities to key staff (who are thus vulnerable to opportunities offered elsewhere), and to replace senior staff who retire or move on.  |
| RKEC15.11.16 | Greater visibility and more designated physical spaces for showcasing research were also highlighted. Concerns were raised in some reports about the need for more timely, accurate and more easily managed WAMS data in support of research management, and some Centres felt that the lack of local administrative support post-OUA impeded their day-to day running.  |
| RKEC15.11.17 | Professor Rawlings presented the ACE Departmental reports (RKEC 15/11/6). He noted in particular the creation of the city campus, being the first UWE footprint in the city centre. This would provide a good focus and concentration on research activity, and would contribute to the strategy for recruiting to the ACE professoriate. The ACE reports recognised the high proportion of staff entered to the REF and the high quality outputs submitted. The reports noted the bidding challenges across the faculty, and also the challenge of consolidating research activity into research outputs. The Education Department report noted good practice in writing and reading workshops, but also the departure of several professors with none currently in post, although one was to be appointed. |
| RKEC15.11.18 | The FBL Faculty report (RKEC 15/11/7) was presented by Professor O’Regan, who reported the strong increase in bidding successes during the period. Staff were required to bid and to do so often. Despite being important, REF was not the only measure of research excellence. Professor O’Regan planned to discuss the present arrangements for organising research within the Faculty with the incoming new Dean. He noted in particular the strength of Leadership and Economics going forward, and in collaboration with other parts of UWE. |
| RKEC15.11.19 | Professor Lyons presented the FET Faculty report (RKEC 15/11/8) and felt that the preparation of the annual reports had been a valuable learning and awareness process in the faculty. Overall, research activity in the faculty was going well with a real research culture at its heart. The Faculty has about 120 members of staff actively bidding for funds, though the outcomes are still to be tested. Professor Lyons felt that these reporting arrangements had raised the issue of the distinction between research centres and groups, and that this might be explored further by RSIG. |
| RKEC15.11.20 | Professor Lyons offered a comment for the Green Paper consultation on the benefit of the REF to HEIs: he believed that it provided a framework for the University to measure itself against and to keep itself on track. On the issue of talent recognition, flagged in a number of the reports, Professor Lyons noted that this had been raised at the Performance 2020 Board, on which he was a member, and that he would be happy to be a conduit for comments from this Committee. |
| RKEC15.11.21 | For HAS, Professor Ames presented the Faculty’s annual report (RKEC 15/11/9) and remarked upon the complex environment within the Faculty, with staff across the range engaging in research and making it very challenging to provide appropriate support. The REF results had been extremely encouraging, and it was hoped that, going forward, these could be maintained and enhanced. Research income during the year had increased by around 10% and there was particularly active partnership working. Of especial note was the recent appointment of a Clinical Associate Professor from Oxford University in CHCR (funded jointly by UWE, University of Bristol and United Hospitals Bristol). Equally noteworthy was the progress with Athena Swan, with all three departments to be accredited shortly. Other notable activity in the Faculty included: ensuring research feeds into teaching programmes (particularly strong in CRIB); appointment of 6 impact champions, working with a former REF panel member on a continuing basis to ensure awareness of panel thinking; and staff mentoring. The Centres generally are performing very well, and all reports had been shared and would receive feedback. Professor Ames also noted the creation of two research groups. A key priority for the coming year is staff development, aiming to support staff across the piece. |
| RKEC15.11.22 | The Chair welcomed the reports, noting that they provided valuable overviews of research activity in each faculty, and that they would usefully feed into the strategic view of the University’s research. In the following years the KPIs and metrics would encourage research managers to reflect on their objectives. They would be looked at in more detail by RSIG.**Action:** Research Centre, Institutes and Departments annual reports – to be looked at in more detail by **RSIG** – extract good practice and consider how best to support; review any proposals for reconfiguration and patterns of investment; focus on research effort and visibility; distinction between research centres and groups. |
| RKEC15.11.23 | It was noted that many reports highlighted cross-faculty collaborations, and a request was made for a central fund to be established to facilitate these. The Chair proposed that this should be considered further by the RSIG.**Action:** RSIG to consider the possibility of a central fund for interdisciplinary work. |
|  | **University research and knowledge exchange committee annual report 2014-15** |
| RKEC15.11.24 | The Chair presented paper RKEC15/11/10 noting that this was the Committee’s formal report to Academic Board and records the business of the Committee for the academic year 2014-15. The highlights section was still to be added. Committee members were asked to send through to the Officer any comments on the content, and in particular any missing content, and the Chair, with Richard Bond, would give further thought to flagging up research highlights for the year.**Action:** Members to flag any omissions from the draft report to RB/AV. MB/RB to consider most appropriate way to report research highlights. For submission to Academic Board. |
|  | **BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT** |
| RKEC15.11.25 | Mrs John was unwell and left the meeting. This item was not discussed. |
|  | **PROCEDURE FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT** |
| RKEC15.11.26 | Ros Rouse, Research Governance Manager, presented paper RKEC15/11/11 Procedure for the investigation of research misconduct. Mrs Rouse noted that the present procedures were designed to replace the existing policy which had now become out-of-date and non-compliant with the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The paper had been through Trades Unions consultation. Mrs Rouse explained that the policy comprised two documents: a summary of the process and a comprehensive paper with the detailed procedures. One key change from the previous policy was the confirmation of a ‘Responsible Person’ (PVC R&BE) to oversee and be responsible for the whole process. The purpose of this process is to investigate whether or not research misconduct is deemed to have taken place, at which stage UWE conduct procedures are enacted. Mrs Rouse sought the Committee’s approval to take this policy forward to Academic Board. |
| RKEC15.11.27 | It was requested that the title of the current document should explicitly state that it relates to staff only. This was agreed, and the Committee was informed that research student misconduct would be considered as a second stage. Dr Willey would take this matter up at the Graduate School Committee. One member expressed concern over the inter-relationship of the procedures with staff conduct arrangements. It was stressed that the Unions had agreed the revised procedures and any concerns would be looked into outside the meeting. |
| RKEC15.11.28 | The Chair thanked Mrs Rouse for her work in producing the procedures, which were approved for submission to Academic Board.**Action**: RR to amend title to make clear that this is for staff only at this stage. **NW** to take to Graduate School for consideration with reference to research students.  |
|  | **RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY**  |
| RKEC15.11.29 | Richard Bond presented paper RKEC15/11/12 Research Data Management Policy noting that the University does not currently have such a policy, but that increasingly there are expectations from a range of stakeholders and changes to regulatory requirements. The present document had been widely consulted on in the University, and RBI staff had worked closely with colleagues in Library Services and ITS. It was noted that this was an aspirational policy, and that it was intended that guidance to support the policy would follow. To ensure the widest possible awareness and engagement it was agreed that the headline detail should be kept brief and succinct. The policy was welcomed by Committee members as something that was urgently needed, but that there still remained work to do on awareness and understanding.  |
| RKEC15.11.30 | The paper was endorsed as a policy by the Committee noting that important progress had been made. Richard Bond would confirm whether this requires Academic Board approval. Once fully approved further thought would be given to how the policy would be implemented.**Action:** RB to check whether this needs Academic Board approval. |
|  | **Library services**  |
| RKEC15.11.31 | Mrs Conway presented paper RKEC 15/11/13 Research Repository Annual Report and noted the increase in activity on the Repository, caused in part by the HEFCE requirements on open access. She noted that there still remained parts of the University which needed further encouragement to engage and that the Library was working on this. The Repository was a key method for increasing visibility not only for REF activity but for all UWE research. Mrs Conway clarified the HEFCE requirement for open access publishing and recommended that in cases where a member of staff is a joint author on an output, they were encouraged to use the UWE repository whether or not they were the lead author. Staff were to be encouraged to upload their work as soon as practicable, irrespective of some confusion over what constituted ‘acceptance’ and Mrs Conway reminded members that the Repository team would be happy to advise. The Chair welcomed this excellent report. |
| RKEC15.11.32 | Mrs Conway presented her Library Services update (paper RKEC15/11/14). She noted that funds remained available for open access publishing of RCUK funded work. The Library continued to raise awareness of this where possible. |
| RKEC15.11.33 | The Library was working towards UWE joining the JISC ORCID consortium to acquire institutional ORCID membership. It was hoped that this would facilitate reporting and complying with open access mandates. Dr Willey reported that the Graduate School Committee was proposing to use a cohort of PGR students to trial the ORCID system.  |
| RKEC15.11.34 | Mrs Conway reported that the UWE Research Data Repository was now available for use, providing an opportunity for recording and making publicly available metadata for research data. She hoped that the new policy on research data management would help to engage researchers, and noted that the Library was working with ITS on an archiving tool for long term preservation. |
|  | **Graduate School Committee** |
| RKEC15.11.35 | The Graduate School Director, Dr Willey, presented the Graduate School Committee’s annual report for 2014-15 (RKEC15/11/15). He noted in particular that PGR student numbers had increased slightly on the previous year and reported on completion rates. He noted that the registration periods for students had altered over recent years, and this together with relatively small improvements in completion times should result in completion rates increasing significantly in the next few years. |
| RKEC15.11.36 | Other points of note included the Chief External Examiner's report with complete confidence in PGR processes and another successful residential South West GradSchool led by UWE, and including students from Plymouth and Bath Spa Universities, which Dr Willey noted as a very cost-effective way of delivering development opportunities to the University’s PGR students. |
| RKEC15.11.37 | The results of the PRES (Postgraduate Researcher Experience Survey) had been very positive overall with UWE in the upper quartile. The results were slightly lower than in 2013, having slipped back by 1%, but this might have been expected given changes to many processes. In two areas the results had been disappointing: teaching and research culture. Work was already in train to address the issue around teaching and included reminders that PGRs need mentoring and training. The low scores on research culture had been recorded across the board and needed further consideration and action both by the Graduate School Committee and by URKE Committee. It is possible that some of the more negative responses were due to misunderstanding the PRES questions, and it was suggested that for future surveys it would be helpful to engage with the students ahead of the survey to ensure that their understanding of the PRES questions is correct.**Action:** Need to address concern identified in PRES results that students did not feel a strong sense of research culture – **MB, NW** |
|  | **UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE** |
| RKEC15.11.38 | Professor Kent, Chair of UREC, presented the Committee’s annual report (RKEC 15/11/16) and highlighted the key issues raised in it. She noted the inconsistency in the arrangements for undertaking risk assessments, with a discrete system in HAS, and stated that it would be helpful to have clarification on the University’s requirements. Professor Ames noted the comments on risk assessment and stated that it may be possible to change the process. She would discuss this with Professor Kent outside the meeting.**Action:** JK and JA to review arrangements for health and safety risk assessments of research in HAS   |
| RKEC15.11.39 | A review of the time taken to process applications for ethical review in the four faculties and by UREC had revealed that the target of 6 weeks was not always met. One reason for this was the pressures on scrutineers, and it was proposed that there should be a formal two-week closure of the Research Ethics ‘office’ during the summer vacation. Professor Kent noted the hard work of the Research Ethics team and expressed her thanks to them. |
| RKEC15.11.40 | Professor Kent welcomed the work discussed earlier in the meeting on research data management, but noted that there still remained much to be addressed around data protection, and she asked the Committee to give further consideration to resourcing this and taking ownership of the issue. She proposed that UREC would focus on research data management, storage, security and sharing at its annual training event. |
| RKEC15.11.41 | Professor Kent noted the additional work undertaken in RBI to develop local systems for processing and storing ethics applications in the absence of a central research information system.   |
| RKEC15.11.42 | A further piece of work was currently underway to produce guidance on security sensitive research, addressing the Prevent duty on universities. This would flag the need for ethical clearance for security sensitive research, raise awareness, and clarify the roles of supervisors and FRECs. Professor Kent would bring a further paper on Prevent to the Committee in due course.**Action:** JK to draft a paper on the Prevent Agenda for a future meeting of the URKEC |
| RKEC15.11.43 | Professor Kent was congratulated for this excellent report and the Chair thanked Professor Kent, and members of UREC and the FRECs for the valuable and important work undertaken, recognising the challenges of resourcing.  |
|  | **human tissue sub-committee** |
| RKEC15.11.44 | Professor Conway provided a verbal update on Human Tissue Sub-Committee activity, and reported that she would bring an annual report to the Committee following the ongoing consultation on the Human Tissue Quality Management System. She reported on activity to monitor human tissue holdings, establishing a pool of excellence, improved records management procedures and active engagement with external policies and practices. **Action:** MC to present HTSC Annual Report for 2014-15 to next meeting of URKEC |
|  | **BIDDING AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE DATA** |
| RKEC15.11.45 | The Committee received paper RKEC 15/11/17 Bidding and Knowledge Exchange data. The paper was not discussed.  |
|  | **research Centre update** |
| RKEC15.11.46 | The Committee noted the appointment of Dr Felix Ritchie as Acting Director of the Bristol Economic Analysis Research Centre. |
|  | **Concordat on Open Research Data** |
| RKEC15.11.47 | The Committee noted that a consultation had been conducted on the draft RCUK Concordat on Open Research Data (Paper RKEC 15/11/18). |
|  | **HEALTH AND SAFETY** |
| RKEC15.11.48 | The Chair reminded members of the Committee that the Health and Safety Unit has produced guidance on the safety of social researchers (RKEC 15/11/19). He asked members to send any comments or feedback on this document to the Committee Officer, emphasising that this is a very important issue and is relevant to all researchers, and noted that developments in communications and social media would all need to be addressed when updating the document. He is actively speaking with the UWE Health and Safety Manager on this. **Action:** Committee members to review current guidance note (Safety Guidance Note GO17 - The Safety of Social Researchers) and send feedback and comments to AV to forward to Alison Weeks and for review at a future meeting. |
|  | **Any Other Business** |
| RKEC15.11.49 | Professor Boddy noted the need to give thought to implementing the codes and policies recently approved by the Committee. There were opportunities to use web-based resources and rapid-fire training to ensure awareness-raising and aim for compliance. This would also link to the ongoing work of the Researcher Development Programme Working Group, chaired by Professor Lyons. |
|  | **FUTURE MEETING DATES** |
|  | Wednesday 3 February 2016, 14.00-16.30, Dartington SuiteWednesday 20 April 2016, 14.00-16.30, Dartington SuiteWednesday 8 June 2016, 14.00-16.30, 3A022 Frenchay Campus |
|  | The meeting closed at 16.30. |

**Actions:**

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| RKEC15.11.2 | The Officer to contact Students Union to recruit a student representative to the Committee.  | **AV** |
| RKEC15.11.9 | Separate version of the Research Strategy to be prepared for external use and with new UWE branding. | **MB** |
| RKEC15.11.10 | The Chair to discuss with each faculty their plans for taking forward new recruitment of research staff (‘new blood’ and research leaders). | **MB** |
| RKEC15.11.22 | Research Centre, Institutes and Departments annual reports – to be looked at in more detail by RSIG.  | **RSIG** |
| RKEC15.11.23 | RSIG to consider the possibility of a central fund for interdisciplinary work. | **RSIG** |
| RKEC15.11.24 | Members to flag any omissions from the draft URKEC annual report to RB/AV. MB/RB to add research highlights. For submission to Academic Board. | **MB, RB and all Members** |
| RKEC15.11.28 | Title of the Procedure for the investigation of research misconduct to be amended to make clear that this is for staff only at this stage. NW to take to Graduate School Committee for consideration with reference to research students.  | **RR, NW** |
| RKEC15.11.30 | RB to confirm whether the Research Data Management policy requires Academic Board approval. | **RB** |
| RKEC15.11.37 | Need to address concern identified in PRES results that students did not feel a strong sense of research culture. | **MB, NW** |
| RKEC15.11.38 | JA and JK to review arrangements for health and safety risk assessments of research in HAS.  | **JA, JK** |
| RKEC15.11.42 | JK to draft a paper on the Prevent Agenda for a future meeting of the URKEC. | **JK** |
| RKEC15.11.44 | MC to present HTSC Annual Report for 2014-15 to next meeting of URKEC. | **MC** |
| RKEC15.11.48 | Committee members to review current guidance note (Safety Guidance Note GO17 - The Safety of Social Researchers) and send feedback and comments to AV to forward to Alison Weeks and for review at a future meeting. | **All Members** |