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Research and Enterprise Committee

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 22 November 2017**

Duration of meeting: **14:00 – 17:00**

Location: **G5.05**

Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Sean Mackney	Senior Management Team	Chair
Anne Evans	RED Unit	Ex-Officio
Stan Erraught	Design, Media & Management	Chair of University Ethics Panel
David Warnock-Smith	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Fiona McCormack	Society & Health	Nominated Member
Florin Ioras	Design Media & Management	Ex-Officio
Helena Chance	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Lyndon Buck	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Lynn Viatge	Society & Health	Nominated Member
Margaret Greenfields	Society & Health	Nominated Member
Richard Mather	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Mel Nakisa	RED Unit	Officer
Laura Bray	RED Unit	Officer

Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Rebecca Chandler-Wilde	RED Unit	Ex-Officio
Ciaran O'Keeffe	Society & Health	Nominated Member
Colin Martin	Society & Health	Ex-Officio
Dorin Festeu	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Julia Williams	Society & Health	Nominated Member
Keiran Henderson	Society & Health	Nominated Member
Neil Brownsword	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Niamh Morrin	Student representative	Member

Paul Morgan	Society & Health	Nominated member
Stephen Partridge	Design, Media & Management	Nominated Member
Douglas Burnham	Staffordshire University representative	Member
Rebekah Smith McGloin	Coventry University representative	Member

Absent

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership

Welcome

17.60 The Chair welcomed Members to the newly constituted Research & Enterprise Committee. Further members may be co-opted as required if additional perspectives were needed on matters relating to the Committee.

Apologies for absence

17.61 Twelve apologies were recorded and accepted by the Chair.

Terms of Reference & Membership

17.62 The new Research & Enterprise Committee incorporated the terms of reference of the previous Research Degrees Committee which was no longer a sub-committee. Members agreed to adopt the new Terms of Reference which would be revisited at a later date.

Declaration of conflicts of interest

17.63 No conflicts of interest were declared.

Minutes of the previous Research & Enterprise Committee meeting (11 May 2017)

17.64 The minutes from the meeting held on 11 May 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record.

Open Minutes of the previous Research Degrees Committee (11 May 2017)

17.65 The minutes from the meeting held on 11 May 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record.

Status of actions from the previous meetings

17.66 The Action Sheets from the previous Research and Enterprise and Research Degrees Committee meetings were reviewed and it was noted that all actions had been completed.

Chair's Actions taken since previous meeting (Open Business) (REC17.10)

17.67 The Chair reported that due to the timing of meetings he had taken Chair's action on two items that needed to be reported to a Joint Council/Senate meeting, namely the Report on Compliance with the Concordat to support research integrity and the Research Degrees Annual Summary report for 2016-17. Members endorsed both

actions. The Research Degrees report would be considered in more detail under Agenda item 12.

Chair's Report

17.68 The Chair had nothing to report as his comments would be included in a presentation later in the agenda.

Coventry University (REC17.11)

17.69 The Committee was provided with a minor update to the Code of Practice: Postgraduate Degrees (Coventry University) to ensure that all University documents aligned with regard to the Appeals process. The Committee approved this update.

Staffordshire University (REC17.12)

17.70 The Research Development Unit Manager reported that Staffordshire University had requested a report on Annual Monitoring of MPhil/PhD provision of Staffordshire registered research students. This was considered at a meeting held with Professor Douglas Burnham, Head of the Graduate School at Staffordshire University, in the role of Rapporteur. The final report was presented to the Committee for note.

17.71 The actions cited in the Report were noted which included ensuring updates to the website of current research activities to encourage research student applications in areas of research strength in the University. Concerns were also raised about the absence of staff profiles on the website. It was agreed that this would be followed up with the Digital team to obtain a timeline of when these would be available.

Action: Chair

Student Matters

17.72 The student representative raised one issue concerning the lack of car parking on site for research students. This concern had been raised by part-time students who often meet with supervisors or visit the library in the late afternoon or evening and have to walk back alone to public car parks. The students recognised that car parking was a University wide issue but that places were available later in the day. It was suggested that options such as a Green Permit for off peak usage could be explored with the Director of Estates and Facilities.

Action: Chair

Research Degrees Annual Summary Report 2016-17 (REC17.13)

17.73 The Research Degrees Annual Summary Report for the academic year 2016-17 was considered by the Committee. Points raised in discussion were as follows:

- The number of recent resubmission outcomes following viva voce examinations was relatively high. A number of contributing factors were noted. It can be a challenge for many part time students to complete within the time constraints of the degree alongside their other commitments; some theses have been submitted in the final week of the registration period when they were still at a draft stage. Some examiners have also been known to award a resubmission outcome to ensure the student has sufficient time to complete their amendments if it was considered that they could not be completed within 4 months due to work commitments. It was reported that the Epigeum resource

for supervisors “Approaching supervision” included advice for effective practice in supervising part-time students.

- A coordinated recruitment drive could be conducted for research students within defined research clusters.
- Work space, research ambience and availability of seminar programmes were regarded as important by the students.
- Incorporation of research students into wider communities of researchers which could comprise staff, innovators and start ups would be beneficial. Teaching opportunities, informal research sharing and social events would also help to integrate them into a community.
- Research student attendance at certain events could be made mandatory with clear expectations outlined at induction.
- There is a high withdrawal rate. It was noted this was a common problem with the demographic of research student at the University who were mainly mature professional people.
- It was noted that a large programme of development activities had been arranged in 2016-17.

PRES Report (REC17.14)

17.74 A report on the responses to PRES was presented to the Committee. It was noted that the aggregate score in the survey was just 1% lower than the sector benchmarking group and equivalent to that of the GuildHE benchmarking group.

17.75 The main issue raised by students was the suitability of their working space; concerns had been raised about noise from an adjacent room. The Chair noted that he felt the University should consider relocating research students, the Research & Enterprise Unit, Innovation Hubs and Institutes into the Gateway building which would have an additional advantage of being open 24 hours a day.

17.76 Facilities and computing resources were also highlighted as a concern. It was noted that some software licences, such as NVivo, were only available for use on site. Students had also reported issues to IT when changing passwords off-site. It was agreed that these issues would be raised with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Action: Chair

17.77 It was noted that supervisors were carefully selected when research students are first admitted, but if they leave the University it is not always easy to find replacement supervisors with the appropriate focus. This emphasized the need to grow and create critical mass in key research areas.

17.78 The most positive responses in the survey were in the ‘Progression’ and ‘Responsibilities’ scales.

Professional Doctorate Degrees

17.79 A Professional Doctorate Framework was now available through Staffordshire University and the University had expressed interest in validating programmes through this route. It was agreed that this was an appropriate route for certain types of students and particular disciplines. Opportunities would be explored across the University and a Lead appointed to take this forward. Expressions of Interest were reported in a number of areas in both Design, Media & Management and Society & Health. It was noted that Prof Florin Ioras agreed to be the institutional lead for this cross-University development.

Action: FI

BREAK for Reserved Student Business

University Research Ethics Panel Annual Summary Report (REC17.15)

- 17.88 A report of the activity of the University Research Ethics Panel for 2016-17 was presented to the Committee. It was noted that the Panel in its current format was now in its fourth year of operation. Dr Stan Erraught was appointed Deputy Chair supporting of Prof Tim Middleton as Chair at the start of the academic year. With Prof Middleton's departure in July, Dr Erraught had taken over the role of Chair.
- 17.89 Forty one submissions from staff and research students were considered for ethical approval by the Panel over nine meetings in 2016-17. The Panel operates by allocating two panel leads to each submission for detailed scrutiny, to lead discussion and verify any required amendments. Other Panel members contribute to discussion as appropriate. Researchers who submit proposals are encouraged to attend the meeting to answer any queries the Panel may have. Most submissions are approved with minor revisions.
- 17.90 Another major aspect of the work of the Panel is the oversight and monitoring of Sub-Committees for undergraduates and Masters projects, usually based at departmental level. A partner college of Bucks has also set up a sub-committee and the Lead has joined the Panel.
- 17.91 A Working Group to look at issues around pedagogic research resulted in the establishment of a pilot sub-committee to provide a lighter touch process when such research is deemed low risk.
- 17.92 All members have been encouraged to complete two online training modules and attend a follow up workshop. An external from Coventry University delivered two development sessions about the practical implications of practice-based related research in a lunchtime session and at an Arts and Creative Industries School meeting.

Key Performance Measures for Research & Enterprise (REC17.16)

- 17.93 The Chair reported that a number of Key Performance Measures had been established by Council alongside the strategic plan. The relevant measures for Research and Enterprise around income and research student numbers were presented to the Committee. It was noted that the targets for 2016-17 had not been met and that more needed to be done to meet targets for 2020/21.
- 17.94 It was noted that research and enterprise income in previous years has been dependent upon a small number of individuals, some of whom have left the University. The increasingly competitive environment in the sector was also recognised as a factor.
- 17.95 The Chair noted that further measures would be developed to enable the University to monitor progress in its research and enterprise agenda.
- 17.96 A report of income by project was noted for 2016-17. It was suggested that reports on some of these projects could be provided at future Committee meetings to enrich its understanding of such activities.
- 17.97 Concerns were expressed that some income did not appear on the report from last year, possibly due to incorrect coding. A discussion would be held with the Finance Team on coding to ensure our return was optimal.

Action: AE

- 17.98 It was noted that reporting on individual projects will be more straightforward in the new Finance system. A workshop had already been arranged for project leads on managing projects in Business Connect.

Research and Enterprise bids in progress 2017/18 (REC17.17)

- 17.99 A report on bids in progress for the current year was presented to the Committee. This would be monitored throughout the year to ascertain how performance was progressing against targets.

Projects approval and sign-off process (REC17.18)

- 17.100 Members were reminded that a central project initiation process had been approved by the Research & Enterprise Committee in February 2016 and piloted for use. The form was subsequently amended in September 2016 and its use disseminated more widely.
- 17.101 The process was presented to the Committee for consideration with a minor change to a required electronic signature from a line manager.
- 17.102 Members suggested that, for many projects, the indicated timeline would not be possible to implement as funding opportunities often came in at short notice which could be problematic in a commercial context or difficult to adhere to as a partner on a collaborative bid. However, it was recognised that the timeline was an ideal scenario which, where time permitted, would allow appropriate peer review and subsequent improvements to the quality of a bid which would lead to an increased success rate. It was agreed that the process should be followed regardless of whether or not the indicative lead times could be achieved.

Visiting Researcher Process (REC17.19)

- 17.103 The process for approval of visiting researchers was presented for consideration by the Committee. A minor amendment to the signatories was agreed.
- 17.104 The process ensured that the visit received appropriate approvals and provided a structured approach to ensuring that any resources required by the visitor were itemised and funded accordingly.

Research & Enterprise – The next 3 years (REC17.20)

- 17.105 Due to the limited time available at the meeting, the Chair reported that this item would be considered virtually to ensure that all members had an opportunity to input into the discussion.

REF update (REC17.21)

- 17.106 An update on the REF 2021 was presented.
- 17.107 The creation of a REF Steering Group comprising a Bucks REF Coordinator, together with the UOA Leaders and representatives from the RED Unit was proposed. The REF Steering Group will approve an internal schedule of work to be completed up to the submission point to include a dry run of outputs and emerging impact case studies in 2018. The Committee agreed the creation of the Steering Group and the Chair would appoint a Bucks REF Coordinator.

Action: Chair

- 17.108 A tailored programme of development sessions will be organised throughout the year by the REF Steering Group to support staff.

17.109 A Strategic paper will need to be written on the cost benefits of resources to support the REF preparations; to include payments for external reviewers.

Action: Chair and Bucks REF Coordinator

17.110 It was also noted that the Funding Councils had published further decisions on staff and outputs the previous day. A number of key points were highlighted from this latest document:

- a) All staff identified as having significant responsibility for research on the census date of 31 July 2020 would need to be returned to the exercise.
- b) The University will need to consult with staff on and develop a code of practice on the processes that would be followed to identify which staff are in scope for submission. Evidence will need to be provided that those eligible staff who are not submitted do not have significant responsibility for research.
- c) Staff with significant responsibility for research are those for whom explicit time and resources are made available to engage actively in independent research, and that is an expectation of their job role.
- d) The number of outputs required for each submission will be determined by the FTE of submitted staff. The average number of outputs required per FTE will be 2.5. A minimum of one output will be required for each submitted staff member and a maximum of five outputs may be attributed to an individual staff member.
- e) Arrangements will be put in place that allow staff to be returned without the required minimum of one output where certain exceptional individual circumstances arise.
- f) A transitional approach will be implemented for the non-portability of outputs in REF 2021, whereby outputs may be submitted by both the institution employing the staff member on the census date and the originating institution where the staff member was previously employed on the payroll when the output was first made publicly available.
- g) The open access policy will require outputs to be deposited as soon after the point of acceptance as possible, and no later than three months after this date (as given in the acceptance letter or email from the publication to the author). Certain deposit exceptions will be permitted.
- h) A minimum of two impact case studies will be required per Unit of Assessment for up to 15 FTE staff, plus one further case study for each further 15 FTE.
- i) The draft 'Guidance on Submissions' will be published in Summer 2018, with final versions of the 'Guidance on submissions' and 'panel criteria and working methods' published in January 2019.

Regional Business

17.111 It was noted that the ongoing work of the Apprenticeships Hub was creating many links with regional businesses that would also create further opportunities for consultancy and Professional Doctorates beyond the Apprenticeship schemes.

Updates (REC17.22)

17.112 A number of updates were reported to the Committee.

17.113 **a) Innovation Hubs.** The three incubator hub bids were noted: the Bucks Health and Social Care Innovation Hub; the Digital Innovation Hub; and the Creative Innovation Hub. Funding is available for the capital build for the Bucks Health and Social Care Innovation Hub from the Thames Valley LEP, although the University is

still awaiting the outcome of the ERDF bid to pay for the services of a hub director. The Digital Incubator Hub will be based at UCAV. The Creative Innovation Hub has not yet been awarded funding, with a proposal to be put to the LEP Board by the University in February 2018.

- 17.114 **b) Repository.** The University currently subscribes to a shared repository service through CREST. An upgrade is currently being implemented which will result in Bucks having a separate landing page with improved editing and reporting rights.
- 17.115 **c) JISC Research Data Shared Service Pilot.** The University is currently participating in a JISC funded Research Data Shared Service Pilot through CREST. The shared service will enable researchers to easily deposit data for publication, discovery, safe storage, long term archiving and preservation. This will provide sustainable access to research data so that it can be re-used in the future.
- 17.116 **d) Bucks Academic.** The Bucks Academic Framework re-calibrates the expectations of the University's academic staff to ensure their contribution is strongly aligned to the strategic purposes of the University. The Phase 1 pilot covering Principal Lecturers, Readers and Professors has been completed. Plans are currently being formulated to finalise the framework and deliver Phase 2 covering the remaining academic community of Senior lecturers and Lecturers.
- 17.117 **e) Academic Professional Apprenticeship.** Plans are underway to launch the Academic Professional Apprenticeship in early 2018 with a view to encouraging take-up by the University's own academic population. The aim is to support colleagues' development needs resulting from self-assessment against the Bucks Academic Framework, PDR process as well as help meet our longer term strategic objectives. Open to external candidates, it will also generate additional funds for Bucks as an Apprenticeship Provider.

Minutes of University Research Ethics Panel

- 17.118 The minutes of the University Research Ethics Panel meetings held on 21 April 2017, 26 May 2017, 23 June 2017 and 15 September 2017 were presented for note.

Date of next meeting

- 17.119 The date of the next meeting is 27 February 2018