

**Minutes for the first meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the
2020/21 Academic Session, held on Wednesday, 23rd September 2020, 2.00pm
via Microsoft Teams**

PRESENT:

Prof J Bonet	Chair, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (R&E)
Prof A Westby	Vice-Chair
Prof P Griffiths	Director of Research & Enterprise (GRE)
Prof B Cronin	PVC (BUS) Nominee
Dr M Yang	PVC (BUS) Nominee & ECR/PGR Nominee
Prof R Pacella	Director of Institute for Lifecourse Development
Prof C Monks	PVC (EHHS) Nominee
Prof D Wray	PVC (E&S) Nominee
Prof C Bailey	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Prof T Reynolds	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Ms R Nunn	Head of Commercialisation & Innovation
Prof A Mehra	Head of Research & Enterprise Training Institute
Mr N Cormack-Bissett	Head of Research Development Services
Mr S Mujunga	Student Union Representative
Ms M Femi-Obalemo	Student Union Representative
Mr P Angelo	Secretary

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Mrs W Curran	Finance Manager
Ms R Hassan	President of Doctoral Society

R&EC-20-1-1 ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reported that there would be some minor changes to the structure of the Research & Enterprise Committee for academic session 2020/21 with some of the financial/bidding data and other regular reports to be noted under 'Items for Information' to allow time to discuss more strategic items.

The Chair also invited the Committee to introduce themselves and welcome new members to the panel for the meetings this year. Dr. Mu Yang has joined as a second PVC (FBUS) Nominee as well as being the new ECR/PGR Nominee, and Rania

Hassan has also now officially joined as the President of the Doctoral Society following her invitation at the last Committee meeting of 2019/20.

R&EC-20-1-1.1 UK Research and Development Roadmap

The Chair briefed the Committee on a recently published Government paper relating to the UK Research and Development Roadmap. This was just for noting by panel members together with the consultation response from institutions within the University Alliance. One of the main highlights was that there would be continued investment in Research and Development from the Government to the value of 2.4% of GDP by 2027, but that this will mainly be for the industrial sector. This was positive news and one area of strategic focus moving forward will be a new 'R&D People and Culture Strategy' which hopes to increase the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers throughout the workforce, and that an 'Office for Talent' will be set up to take a new and proactive approach to attracting and retaining the most promising global science, research and innovation talent to the UK.

One other important point that was discussed by the Committee related to the 'UK R&D Place Strategy' that will take greater account of place-based outcomes in how decisions are made on R&D in the UK, and to ensure that any systems make a significant contribution to the levelling up agenda. The Chair highlighted that this was still to be worked into a policy but that it was encouraging that a commitment was in place.

The paper also emphasised a commitment to engage in collaborative research as an associate member in the new EU programme from January 2021 (Horizon Europe), but that this was dependent on the relationship between the UK Government and the EU Commission and ongoing Brexit negotiations. There may be more potential for international partnerships moving forward, but the Committee agreed that this was generally positive news and that any significant developments would be reported on at subsequent meetings.

R&EC-20-1-1.2 UKRI reducing unnecessary bureaucracy

The Chair presented a document to the Committee that detailed plans from UKRI to reduce bureaucracy when applying for research funding. These were recently outlined by the Universities Minister to Universities UK and set out initiatives around the selection process, assurance and capturing outcome, and broader systems and activities.

This was again for noting by the Committee but some of the main points included changing to a streamlined, two-stage application process for standard grant rounds, replacing varied approaches to

providing CV and track record information with a single format based on a template as used by the Royal Society, reducing the number of questions for mandatory reporting to Researchfish, and reviewing the approach and use of TRAC (Transparent Approach to Costings). There was also mention of the simplification of some of the terms and expectations on institutions to help minimise their own administrative burdens which was well received by panel members.

R&EC-20-1-1.3 QR + HEIF funding 2020/21 & VC PhD Scholarships

The Chair presented the Committee with a paper that set out both the QR and HEIF allocations to each of the Faculties for 2020/21. The Chair reminded the panel that £200k of the 2020/21 allocation had been moved to 2019/20 and that Finance had also requested a further reduction of £300k on QR and HEIF expenditure this year to help maintain the finances of the University as best as possible.

The breakdown of the standard allocations was based on the percentage of FTE being returned to REF 2021 but that they had been corrected for the reasons stated above and for both Research Fellows and VC PhD Scholarships. The standard allocations for 2020/21 were as follows;

FBUS – QR = £330k + HEIF = £55k (3 VC PhD Scholarships)
FEHHS – QR = £240k + HEIF = £50k (2 VC PhD Scholarships)
FES – QR = £295k + HEIF = £90k (2 VC PhD Scholarships)
FLAS – QR = £600k + HEIF = £90k (5 VC PhD Scholarships)
FES (NRI) – QR = £925k + HEIF = £85k (2 VC PhD Scholarships)

The Chair explained that the GRE budget had also been reduced as much as possible to help with this, but that there may be a further small amount of money made available by Finance before the end of the year. Some funds had also been kept aside to help support the PGR community as a contingency in the current COVID-19 crisis, but the Committee will be kept informed of any further developments as soon as they are confirmed.

R&EC-20-1-1.4 2019/20 Annual Report to Court

The Chair provided a draft version of the 2019/20 Research & Enterprise Annual Report to the Committee that was scheduled to be presented at the first meeting of Court next month. The Chair explained that extensive sections of the report highlighted data that had already been reviewed by this Committee, but that certain parts still needed to be completed and have text added. The report was positively received by panel members with a number of success stories, but **the Chair asked that any necessary amendments or additions be sent to him after this meeting so that the final version could be prepared and presented to Court as planned. The final version was to come back to the next Committee**

meeting in December for information, and that this would be made readily available across the institution to showcase all the achievements from the previous year.

ACTION: CHAIR/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE/HEAD OF COMMERCIALISATION & INNOVATION

R&EC-20-1-1.5 University Strategy 2020 – 2030 update

The Chair reminded the Committee that the new Vice-Chancellor had written a fresh strategic vision for the University for the next 10 years and that the latest relevant slides outlining this were presented for comment. The Committee will be tasked with informing the sections relating to Research & Knowledge Exchange and panel members discussed these slides at length.

The Committee provided positive responses but agreed that care needed to be taken with some of the wording when referring to Research and Knowledge Exchange and to recognise that Knowledge Exchange needs to be progressed and treated separately. The panel agreed that there should also be more mention of public engagement in the document, but were happy with the high level principles that have been put in place and the Chair will keep the Committee updated with developments and provide a copy of the next iteration once available.

R&EC-20-1-1.6 Representation of protected groups in PGR community (UKRI)

The Chair briefed the Committee that UKRI had published its first set of harmonised diversity data for all the research councils for the past five academic years and that the intention was for this data to now be published annually. The information presented included metrics on four protected characteristics (age, disability, ethnicity and gender) for PhD studentship starts, and that it was important for the institution to make comparisons with this data in order to promote, and potentially invest in, greater diversity and inclusivity.

Panel members discussed the data presented and felt that this reflected well with undergraduate students but that this needed investigating within the PGR community. After further discussion, **the Chair requested that the University figures be mapped against the national UKRI ones and that further guidance needed to be sought from HR. RETI was to take this forward with potential input from PAS (Planning and Statistics) by looking at HESA data as it was important that the institution demonstrated a commitment to this.**

ACTION: CHAIR/HEAD OF RETI/HR DIRECTOR/DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

R&EC-20-1-1.7 COVID-19 Task & Finish Group update

The Chair provided the Committee with a brief update from the COVID-19 Task & Finish Group and reported that most of the assigned tasks had now been completed but that there were two main issues that were still outstanding. The first of these revolved around the ongoing challenges that the PGR community were experiencing during the pandemic and how to best support those students, while the second related to the UKRI COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation (CoA) and the harmonisation of the distribution of these funds across all of the Faculties. Further meetings of the COVID-19 Task & Finish Group were planned, and the Committee will be kept informed of any significant developments.

R&EC-20-1-2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

R&EC-20-1-2.1 Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the 2019/20 academic session held on Wednesday, 1st July 2020

The minutes of the Research & Enterprise Committee held on Wednesday, 1st July 2020 were agreed by the Committee to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

R&EC-20-1-3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

R&EC-20-1-3.1 Please refer to the action sheet attached.

All the actions other than those mentioned below are now complete or are to be discussed in more detail at this or subsequent meetings.

Action points still in progress from previous meeting:

R&EC 19-6-5.5 The Chair requested that the Head of Research Development Services investigate this further and to determine whether the original principles stated in the 'Statement on the Responsible Use of Metrics' were still compatible with the new requirements of the Wellcome Trust, and to make any amendments if necessary.

R&EC-20-1-4 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2021 PREPARATIONS

R&EC-20-1-4.1 Summary of final staffing position

The Head of Research Development Services provided the Committee with a summary of the final staffing position for REF 2021 following the staff census date of 31st July 2020. This was for noting

by panel members and the data indicated that a total of just under 390 FTE would be submitted to the exercise. The totals for eligible staff FTE and SRR staff FTE were distributed by Faculty and Unit of Assessment (UoA) and the Committee agreed that the figures were healthy and represented a significant increase from REF 2014.

R&EC-20-1-4.2 Summary of outputs

The Head of Research Development Services also provided the Committee with a summary of the latest position with regards to outputs for each of the UoAs. The data was again encouraging and demonstrated that there were enough selected outputs against the required totals for each of these UoAs and the focus now was on identifying the strongest ones. The Head of Research Development Services added that a series of meetings for each UoA had recently taken place to determine the best way of achieving this and that a number of actions were in place.

R&EC-20-1-4.3 Summary of impact case studies

Following on from the previous item, the Head of Research Development Services also provided data relating to the latest position on the impact case studies that will be submitted to REF 2021. These were at different stages of development, with certain UoAs being more advanced than others, but a round of UoA meetings were scheduled for next month to discuss these in more detail in a similar way to those that took place for outputs. At this stage there were no real concerns, but it was clear that some needed extra attention, and these will be developed further with the input of the Impact Framework Manager.

R&EC-20-1-4.4 Summary of environment statements

The Head of Research Development Services reminded the Committee that a further series of meetings had been organised in December to go through the environment statement narratives. Work will continue on the development of the institutional level environment statement that will help inform the UoA ones, and further updates will be provided at a subsequent Committee meeting once these have taken place.

The Chair stressed the importance of everybody remaining engaged with the REF 2021 submission as the intention was still to have this nearly completed by the end of the year, so that the first three months of the new year could be used to tidy up any loose ends, and that all necessary checks could be carried out to ensure that the submission is fully compliant with all auditing requirements.

R&EC-20-1-4.5 Guidance on revisions to REF 2021

The Head of Research Development Services provided the Committee with a brief summary of the key points from the recently published document from Research England that described the revisions to the timetable for REF 2021 following the period during which the exercise was on hold, and the changes and additions made to the guidance to take into account the effects of COVID-19.

The main headline was that some minor additions were required to be made to the institution's Code of Practice to take into consideration the shift in timelines and the postponement of certain important meetings such as the REF EDI Committee and University EDI Committee. This updated version was due to be submitted in October and will also include amendments to reflect any implications of COVID-19 on the gathering of evidence of the impact case studies in development. The document was for noting by the Committee and no further issues were raised.

R&EC-20-1-5 GREENWICH RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-20-1-5.1 Performance dashboard

The Director of Research & Enterprise reminded the Committee of the conversations that were had at the last meeting as to how GRE could possibly work with the Faculties in a more strategic manner to optimise operational support. GRE had developed a dashboard of metrics which reflected the input and output from academic activity for both Research and Knowledge Exchange which consider Research/Enterprise Career Pathway FTE, unique PIs, and BAWs and the intention was to provide these on a quarterly basis.

The Director of Research & Enterprise added that the plan was for GRE to work more closely with Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise and to support Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange strategies, and that academic staff identified through these metrics will be encouraged to embrace wider research expectations around bidding. This dashboard of data will be presented at the next Committee meeting in December for further discussion and analysis.

R&EC-20-1-5.2 Faculty KEF strategy update

The Head of Commercialisation & Innovation reminded the Committee that the previously postponed KEF narratives were now due next month. Communication had taken place between the EDMs and all the research groups to help pull together content, and that any Knowledge Exchange from all the REF 2021 impact case studies had been interrogated and will also be curated into them.

Each of the narratives, except for the one around institutional approach, has a maximum word limit of 2,000 words and these will be made available to review for comment once finalised.

Meetings had been held with each of the Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise to discuss their KEF strategies and the Head of Commercialisation & Innovation stressed the importance that all the information from the KEF 'roadshows' that were held virtually earlier in the year be cascaded down to members of staff.

R&EC-20-1-5.3 Knowledge Exchange network update

The Head of Commercialisation & Innovation gave the Committee a brief update with regards to the Knowledge Exchange network and encouraged as many members of staff as possible to sign up to this on Yammer. All the latest updates were posted on there such as the launch of the Innovation Fund, so the more people that were informed the better, and again the Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise were asked to relay this message to staff in their Faculties.

R&EC-20-1-5.4 KEC strategy/GAP analysis

The Director of Research & Enterprise presented a paper to the Committee that provided a GAP analysis that had been carried out against the principles, enablers and descriptions of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat (KEC) to identify the areas where the institution needed to focus its attention. The Director of Research & Enterprise reminded panel members that the KEC had been created to facilitate the development, enhancement and transparency of the wide range of Knowledge Exchange activities performed by HEIs, and to support the partnerships integral to their success.

The areas marked in red/amber required the most improvement, and that some of these revolved around technology which was covered in the following agenda item. The Director of Research & Enterprise stressed that this was an initial analysis and that there was sufficient time to address the main concerns, but that it was a useful document for panel members to discuss. The Committee agreed that this was becoming more and more important and that the University appeared to be under prepared in some areas and that there needed to be a shift in culture with regards to Knowledge Exchange. The next steps were to further develop the Knowledge Exchange strategy at VCG level, but this was an important item that will come back to future Committee meetings for further discussion and action.

R&EC-20-1-5.5 Research & Knowledge Exchange Supporting IT systems

Following on from the previous item, the Head of Research Development Services presented a paper to panel members that summarised all of the current IT systems, subscriptions and software

that were used by the University. The Head of Research Development Services explained that tools such as Impact Tracker, RADAR, and Researchfish could help support the KEF by capturing and reporting on research impact, public engagement, as well as intellectual property and commercialisation, and that the institution was looking at ways in maximising the use of these throughout the academic community.

The Chair added that there had been significant investment into some of the systems listed in the document, and that despite research information management systems such as PURE being available that could perform many of these tasks, it was still more economically viable for the institution to use these tools and encouraged academic members of staff to broaden their use.

R&EC-20-1-5.6 UKRI COVID-19 allocation – Governance Plan

The Head of Research Development Services informed the Committee that the revised Governance Plan that related to the UKRI COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation (CoA) had been submitted earlier in the month. The introduced papers were just for noting by panel members, but the Governance Plan would appear to have been accepted as the first instalment of this additional funding had already been received by Finance.

The institution had been required to complete a template that described how the organisation was going to prioritise the use of any allocation and had the biggest impact on FES and FLAS as they had the most UKRI funded projects. The Chair reminded the Committee that this allocation of funding was only for those individuals that had needed to spend additional money, and that any speculative requests for these funds were to be discouraged. Following on from this, **the Chair called for any ‘COVID-19 Impact on UKRI Projects Questionnaires’ to be pre-populated with the requisite information so that they could be sent to Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise to collate the responses within their Faculties as per the Governance Plan.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-20-1-6 RETI

R&EC-20-1-6.1 University Alliance DTA Applied Biosciences for Health Summer School update

The Head of RETI provided panel members with a brief update on the University Alliance DTA Applied Biosciences for Health Summer

School that took place over two days in the summer which brought together PGR students from DTA cohorts from several institutions. This was just for noting by the Committee, but the event consisted of a number of workshops, skills presentations and group challenges that allowed the participants to learn new skills and share experiences with their peers. Despite the event being held remotely, the feedback from delegates was positive with the areas of networking and confidence building as positive take away messages.

R&EC-20-1-6.2 CEDARS survey update

The Head of RETI reminded the Committee that the University had signed up to the revised 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers' and that this was an agreement between research institutions, research managers, researchers, and funders, to improve the employment and support for researchers in Higher Education in the UK.

The results of a 'Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey' (CEDARS) that aligned to the principles of the Concordat were presented to panel members for discussion and comment. The highlighted headings in the tables in the paper identified areas for improvement, but the survey demonstrated that there were several elements of good practice throughout the University. The Committee agreed that despite the small sample size, the results of the survey were mixed, and **the Chair requested that RETI continue to work closely with HR to prioritise and initiate work on those sections that required attention.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RETI

R&EC-20-1-6.3 RETI training programme 2020/21

The Head of RETI provided the Committee with the new RETI training programme for 2020/21 and informed members that this had now been published and circulated. Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise were asked to promote this within their Faculties to encourage staff and students to make use of the training opportunities and to keep them engaged with some of the main sessions such as some of the 'Essentials' courses.

The Head of RETI added that all 'Term 1' training would be held online but that those in 'Term 2' would adopt a blended approach and that work had started on trying to incorporate some sessions around Knowledge Exchange, but that at this stage this was just for noting by the Committee.

R&EC-20-1-6.4 HR Excellence in Research Award

The Head of RETI informed the Committee that the University had been successful in gaining the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research accreditation, that demonstrated its commitment to improving the working conditions and career development of researchers. This accreditation was based on regular critical reviews of progress that direct its future activities and were expressed in a two-year action plan.

The Head of RETI added that the previously submitted action plan for 2020-22 had been formally approved in the summer, and that a press release would follow the current embargo period. The Committee discussed the summary of the main action points but agreed that this was an extremely positive development and panel members were asked to promote the principles stated in the action plan within their local environments where possible.

R&EC-20-1-7 ITEMS FROM FACULTY RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEES

R&EC-20-1-7.1 Faculty QR + HEIF expenditure reports 2019/20

The Director of Research & Enterprise reminded Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise that the Faculty QR and HEIF expenditure reports for 2019/20 were now due as per the requirements of the University's internal auditors. **The Secretary was to circulate the template form to Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise in order for these to be completed and presented at the next Committee meeting in December.**

ACTION: SECRETARY/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-20-1-8 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH MATTERS

R&EC-20-1-8.1 PGR completions for REF 2021 update

The Head of RETI presented the final figures for the total number of PGR completions for the current REF period for consideration by the Committee. The totals indicated that there would be just over 430 completions (PhD/EdD) for the REF period (including 41 from the Medway School of Pharmacy) which was extremely positive and would represent an approximate doubling of the amount submitted to REF 2014. The target had been to achieve 400 completions, so this was a significant achievement and the Chair thanked all those individuals who had contributed.

R&EC-20-1-8.2 Academic Regulations for the Masters by Research (MRes) – final version

The Head of RETI provided panel members with the final clean version of the Academic Regulations for the Masters by Research (MRes) following the discussions from the last Committee meeting. This was now a stand-alone document that had been separated from the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards and had been approved and was just for noting by the Committee.

R&EC-20-1-9 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

R&EC-20-1-9.1 UK Research and Development Roadmap – full version

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-1-9.2 Research & Enterprise End of Year Financial Summary Report 2019/20

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-1-9.3 Research & Enterprise End of Year Bidding Activity Report 2019/20

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-1-9.4 UoG CEDARS survey results - Jisc

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-1-9.5 RETI training programme 2020/21 – full version

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-1-9.6 PGR Completions – Recommendations for Committee

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-1-10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Head of Commercialisation & Innovation asked about the institution's processes for joining wider networks as a request had been made from an academic member of staff to join the ASPECT member network that pursue commercial and business opportunities from research in social science. This is supported by Research England and led by the London School of Economics but there were costs and other obligations involved and so the Chair requested that a paper be prepared

outlining all of the details and for it to be presented at the next Committee meeting for further discussion.

ACTION: HEAD OF COMMERCIALISATION & INNOVATION

No other business was discussed and the meeting was duly closed.

R&EC-20-1-11 DATES & TIMES OF 2020/21 MEETINGS

Meeting
December 9 th 2020, Avery Hill Campus, Room G104, 2.00pm
February 3 rd 2021, Medway Campus, Room P130, 2.00pm
April 14 th 2021, Greenwich Campus, Room QA075, 2.00pm
May 19 th 2021, Avery Hill Campus, Room G104, 2.00pm
June 30 th 2021, Medway Campus, Room P130, 2.00pm