

**Minutes for the third meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the
2020/21 Academic Session, held on Wednesday, 3rd February 2021, 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
Dr J Lopes-Ramos	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
Ms R Hassan	President of Doctoral Society
Mr P Angelo	Secretary

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Prof T Reynolds	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Mrs W Curran	Finance Manager
Mr S Mujunga	Student Union Representative
Ms M Femi-Obalemo	Student Union Representative

R&EC-20-3-1 ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair invited the Committee to introduce themselves to Dr. Jorge Lopes-Ramos who had now joined the Committee as a third PVC (LAS) Nominee as agreed at the previous meeting, and who will represent the 'Panel D' subjects with regards to the REF 2021 submission.

R&EC-20-3-1.1 Horizon Europe update

The Chair briefed the Committee on the latest developments with regards to Horizon Europe following Brexit negotiations and reminded panel members that the UK had been granted associate membership. This was a positive outcome which meant that UK HEIs could participate in the Horizon Europe programme which was a continuation from Horizon 2020. Universities were awaiting formal confirmation and sign-off from the relevant authorities as there were some delays that the EU Commission and UK Government were working through, but research active members of staff will be encouraged to engage in the programme.

The Chair informed panel members that UKRO had been invited to present a couple of webinars to the academic community in March that set out the structure of the Horizon Europe programme, with particular focus on some of the main schemes, and reminded the Committee that this was a great opportunity for the institution to apply for EU research funding.

R&EC-20-3-1.2 University Strategy 2020 – 2030 update

The Chair presented the latest working draft of the University Strategy for the next 10 years that had been developed by the Vice-Chancellor that included updates from the previous iteration. The Chair reminded the Committee that this was the 'umbrella strategy' for the institution and that the new Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy would be informed by this. This was now to be sent to the governing body in the coming weeks for review and approval.

The Chair re-iterated that this had been informed by various Committees and other fora and that most of the feedback provided had been incorporated in this updated draft. There was still some work to be done, as the general feeling was that it currently lacked international focus, but that this would be corrected in any final version. The Chair invited the Committee to comment, and after considerable discussion, it was agreed that this was now particularly well developed and that most of the targets met the appropriate level of ambition. There needed to be more clarity on the revenues target being 15% of total turnover, as this would be linked to undergraduate provision, as well as more conversations around the definitions of academic impact. **The Chair commented that the Committee would continue to inform this strategy and requested that any further suggestions and feedback be sent to him directly as soon as possible which could potentially be included in any final iteration prior to formal approval.**

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

R&EC-20-3-1.3 Technician Commitment discussion

The Chair informed the Committee that the University had made it a priority to sign up to the Technician Commitment which recognised the need to support research technicians and technology specialists in academia to maximise their research effectiveness and individual potential. The Chair added that a number of other HEIs had already signed up to this, but that there were several strands to the Technician Commitment that required more detailed discussion, not only in this Committee, but also the involvement of other departments. One component of this was to look at the career development of such individuals and to explore what training opportunities they currently had available to them.

After considerable discussion, **the Committee agreed that an action plan be put together to progress this and that a starting point would be to investigate what training provisions there were for technicians and to initiate discussions with HR as to identify any potential career pathways. Any developments were to be reported at a subsequent Committee meeting as it was important that the University sign up to this.**

ACTION: CHAIR/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE/HEAD OF RETI/HEAD OF ORGANISATIONAL & PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

R&EC-20-3-1.4 Outcomes of RCIF applications 2020/21

The Chair communicated the outcomes of the recent round of RCIF applications for 2020/21 to the Committee. A total of 9 proposals were received by GRE (FEHHS = 3, FES = 3, FLAS = 3) with 4 being awarded funding in full, and one other receiving just under 50% of what was requested. A summary table was presented showing those bids that were successful, and all the applicants, as well as Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise, had been notified of the results and had received feedback from the panel.

The Chair reminded panel members that the deadline to spend these funds was 31st March and Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise confirmed that they were confident that there was sufficient time in which to do this for each of the projects. This was essentially for noting by the Committee, and apart from the obvious disappointment from those applicants that were unsuccessful, there were no outstanding issues.

R&EC-20-3-1.5 Outcomes of UKRI World Class Laboratories (WCL) Fund 2020/21

Following on from the previous item, the Chair also summarised the outcomes of the UKRI World Class Laboratories (WCL) Fund

2020/21. The Chair reminded panel members that the funding that had been made available from this scheme was different from RCIF 2020/21 in that it was intended to be spent on the maintenance of existing equipment rather than the purchase of new items. In this instance, a total of 7 proposals were received by GRE (FEHHS = 2, FES = 3, FLAS = 2) with 4 of them being partially funded. Another summary table revealed those bids that had received investment, and all the applicants, as well as Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise, had again been notified of the results and had received feedback from the panel.

The Chair reminded the Committee that the deadline to spend these funds was also 31st March and added that Finance were now in the process of creating all the necessary budget codes which would be communicated in due course.

R&EC-20-3-1.6 COVID-19 allocation extension

The Chair briefly outlined the recent communication from UKRI explaining the COVID-19 allocation extension that had been granted. Organisations that required an extension to the CoA needed to complete their 'Final Expenditure Statement' and 'Final Report' as normal and submit them before the current deadline of the end of the year. In cases where there had been an underspend due to unforeseen circumstances relating to COVID-19, institutions would be permitted to request that UKRI return this underspend in the form of an additional allocation. The Chair added that any such additional allocation would be held under the same modified 'Terms and Conditions' as the current CoA but this was essentially just for information and didn't require any further immediate action.

R&EC-20-3-2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

R&EC-20-3-2.1 Minutes of the second meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the 2020/21 academic session held on Wednesday, 9th December 2020

The minutes of the Research & Enterprise Committee held on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 were agreed by the Committee to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

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

R&EC-20-3-3.1 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 20-2-1.2 The Chair concluded that this was another great opportunity for the institution to build on its past success with this eminent scheme, and requested that a communication group be set up involving Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise, the Head of Research Development Services and the Impact Framework Manager to identify the strongest impact case studies for any potential submissions.

R&EC 20-2-1.4 The Committee agreed that a working group be formed to develop an approach to research evaluation which should include having an implementation plan and monitoring process. The working group was to have broad representation from across the majority of academic disciplines and involve members of staff from all REF panels.

R&EC 20-2-1.5 The Chair requested that any potential future in-house journal publications be reviewed by this Committee and that the process should be formalised. As such, a business case and some guidance would be put together and brought to a subsequent meeting for further deliberation and agreement.

R&EC 20-2-5.7 The Chair requested that the Head of Commercialisation & Innovation take this forward with the academic that originally proposed this and that the institution formally join the ASPECT member network.

R&EC-20-3-4 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2021 PREPARATIONS

R&EC-20-3-4.1 UoA meetings update

The Chair reminded panel members that by the next time the Committee convened the REF 2021 submission would have happened. As a result, it was important to focus attention on some of the loose ends and that the next round of UoA meetings were scheduled to start the following week. Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise were prompted that the final lists of ranked outputs for each UoA, as well as the developed environment statement narratives and the latest iterations of all the selected impact case studies were to be discussed in detail.

The Chair continued that a final set of UoA meetings had been organised in early March to finalise the submission and that it was important for those individuals with key roles to allocate sufficient time and resources to complete all necessary REF related tasks, as it was clear that despite much progress being made, some UoAs were further advanced than others.

R&EC-20-3-4.2 UoA progress report update

Following on from the previous item, the Head of Research Development Services provided the Committee with the updated UoA progress report that had been designed to capture the latest position with regards to outputs, environment statements, and impact case studies. The spreadsheet also indicated where GRE were with uploading various documents on to the REF submission system and which would feature in each of the UoA meetings next week.

It was apparent that good headway had been made in relation to outputs, but that more work needed to be done to collate the requisite additional statements. There were also significant gaps in the capture and presentation of esteem factors for some of the environment statements and that external feedback still needed to be incorporated into many of the impact case studies. One general concern from the Committee was that it was evident that there were still issues around having the appropriate web presence for some of the research groups, but the Chair confirmed that the discipline pages would be a priority area after March once the submission had been finalised.

R&EC-20-3-4.3 REF Team contingency plans

The Chair briefed the Committee on the letter that had recently been sent by the REF Team to all HEIs that outlined further contingency measures following the increase to the COVID-19 infection rate. This was essentially for noting by panel members, but the headline message was that despite there being some extra flexibility around certain aspects of the REF 2021 submission, the 31st March deadline remained unchanged.

The Chair stressed that all existing internal deadlines continue to be adhered to, and for the avoidance of any confusion, there would be no further general delay to the process. The REF Team did not wish for additional resource to be invested by institutions beyond what was already needed to complete the submission process.

R&EC-20-3-5 GREENWICH RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-20-3-5.1 Performance dashboard

The Director of Research & Enterprise presented the latest performance dashboard of metrics to the Committee and reminded members of the conversations that were had as to how GRE could possibly work with the Faculties in a more strategic manner to optimise operational support.

The dashboard that GRE had developed reflected the input and output from academic activity for both Research and Knowledge

Exchange and took into consideration Research/Enterprise Career Pathway FTE, unique PIs, and BAWs.

These were for noting by the Committee, but the Director of Research & Enterprise commented that there were some concerns with the figures when comparisons were made to those at the same stage last year. This was perhaps understandable given all the disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and although bidding activity remained strong over the previous 12 months, contracting totals were significantly down when measured against last year. There were many grants in the system that presently had a 'pending' status, but it was discernible that the University was much better at winning smaller grants than larger ones. This needed to be reflected upon given the earlier conversations around revenues targets in the new University Strategy and something that could be addressed by working more collaboratively with other institutions on more significant proposals.

GRE would continue to work closely with Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise and to support Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange strategies, and that academic staff identified through these metrics were to be encouraged to embrace wider research expectations around bidding and success and to help embed a richer research culture.

R&EC-20-3-5.2 PGR systems – IT Strategy Committee

The Director of Research & Enterprise informed the Committee that the contract for PULSE (Postgraduate & Learning Skills Enhancement) had now been signed and that the project had started and which was scheduled to be delivered in phases over the next 18 months. The intention was to minimise some of the bureaucracy around the current RDA forms relating to PGR activity and to better manage the PGR community and some of their training requirements. Progress had already been made with the integration with Banner and panel members would be kept informed of future developments at subsequent meetings.

R&EC-20-3-5.3 Knowledge Exchange discussion

The Head of Commercialisation & Innovation provided the Committee with an update on the latest position of the University relating to Knowledge Exchange. Panel members were reminded that for an institution like the University of Greenwich the relevance of Knowledge Exchange was going to be positioned differently to Enterprise activity, but that the touch points with research were still significant. It was important to stress that Knowledge Exchange was about public and community engagement, local growth and regeneration, the civic agenda, and Knowledge Exchange Partnerships and that this was a competitive space where dynamic

change was required to address some of these challenges. After further discussion, **the Committee agreed that once the next layer of the new University Strategy had been established that a working group be formed outside of this forum to develop a more in depth understanding of the Knowledge Exchange agenda for each of the Faculties.**

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

R&EC-20-3-6 RETI

R&EC-20-3-6.1 CEDARS survey analysis and mapping against HR Excellence in Research Award

The Head of RETI presented a paper to the Committee that highlighted further analysis of the recent CEDARS survey which had now been mapped against the HR Excellence in Research Award. Panel members were reminded that CEDARS (Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey) aligned to the principles of the revised Researcher Development Concordat and provided institutions with critical information on their progress in implementing them. It was managed and supported by Vitae, but this was essentially for noting by the panel.

The Committee reviewed the main points raised by the document and spoke at length about the areas that required further attention. The Head of RETI added that CEDARS would run every year but that the University would only partake in alternate years and would be co-ordinated between RETI and HR.

Panel members highlighted that one potential area of improvement was around industrial sabbaticals and placements, as these could have significant benefits for certain individuals. The allocation of BAW points was still an ongoing issue and a perennial problem throughout all the Faculties, but the Committee would be kept informed of any developments at subsequent meetings.

R&EC-20-3-7 ITEMS FROM FACULTY RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEES

No items were brought to the attention of the Committee.

R&EC-20-3-8 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH MATTERS

R&EC-20-3-8.1 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2021

The Head of RETI introduced a paper that set out the plans for PRES 2021 and reminded the Committee that the University was scheduled to participate this year following the last submission in 2019. PGR students will be invited to complete the survey over a 7 week period between 29th March – 17th May and will be administered by Planning and Statistics (PAS).

The Head of RETI explained that the process was to run differently this year and would need to be done virtually which required new marketing strategies to ensure high response rates. Advance HE who co-ordinate PRES had circulated a questionnaire to all institutions to help structure this which the Committee was invited to discuss. An additional section on COVID-19 and PGR support provision had been included that panel members were happy with, but **the Chair invited the Committee to send any comments to the Head of RETI to help inform the response to Advance HE, together with input from PAS, in order to finalise the details of the survey for PRES 2021.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RETI/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-20-3-8.2 Response to PRES 2019 Faculty co-ordinated action plan

Following on from the previous item, the Head of RETI reminded the Committee of the PRES 2019 co-ordinated action plan which had been implemented following the outcomes of the previous survey. This had been informed by input from all the Faculties and panel members went through this in detail again as a reminder of the main issues that arose from PRES 2019.

One of the main challenges was for the institution to improve its research culture and its 'resources' provision to the PGR community and the Head of RETI asked Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise to highlight anything from the listed actions that RETI could support with. The recommendations made around flexibility in the delivery of training were noted and were to be progressed outside of this meeting.

R&EC-20-3-9 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

R&EC-20-3-9.1 Research & Enterprise Financial Summary Report 2020/21

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-3-9.2 Research & Enterprise Bidding Activity Report 2020/21

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-3-9.3 PGR Completions – Recommendations for Committee

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-3-9.4 Summary of PGR related business by FRDCs for 2020/21 to end of Q2 (31st January 2021)

The Committee noted this item for information.

R&EC-20-3-10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The PVC (BUS) Nominee briefly asked the Committee if any consideration could be given to extending the fee waiver to all international VC PhD Scholarship students following Brexit. The Chair explained that there were significant legal complexities around this that required extensive discussions with Legal Services and Finance, but that this would all be worked through when agreeing the number for 2021/22. The Committee would be kept informed of any decisions that were taken that impacted on the VC PhD Scholarship scheme.

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

R&EC-20-3-11 DATES & TIMES OF 2020/21 MEETINGS

Meeting
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