

**Minutes for the fourth meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the
2018/19 Academic Session, held on Wednesday, 10th April 2019, 2.00pm in
G104, Avery Hill Campus**

PRESENT:

Prof J Bonet	Chair, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (R&E)
Prof P Griffiths	Director of Research & Enterprise (GRE)
Prof B Cronin	PVC (BUS) Nominee
Prof P Maras	PVC (E&H) Nominee & uREC Chair
Dr C Monks	PVC (E&H) Nominee
Prof D Wray	PVC (E&S) Nominee
Prof T Reynolds	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Dr H Lu	PVC (LAS) Nominee (invited)
Prof A Mehra	Head of Research & Enterprise Training Institute
Mr N Cormack-Bissett	Head of Research Development Services
Mr A Papa	Student Union Representative
Ms U Arif-Fryer	Student Union Representative
Mr M Batmaz	ILS Head of Infrastructure (invited)
Mr B Kelland	ILS Team Leader - Platform & Systems (invited)
Mr P Angelo	Secretary

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Prof A Westby	Vice-Chair
Prof C Bailey	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Dr C Papaix	PVC (BUS) Nominee
Mrs W Curran	Finance Manager
Ms P Gibson	ECR/PGR Nominee

R&EC-18-4-1 ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

R&EC-18-4-1.1 UoG Research Fellowships update

The Chair provided the Committee with an update on the Research Fellowships that were to be appointed for a fixed term period of three years to support and strengthen the REF 2021 submission. There are 12 proposed Fellowships that are to be distributed across all of the Faculties, and a considerable number of interviews had now taken place, with some offers having been made and others still at

the shortlisting stage. In some instances, the Fellowships were to be re-advertised as an appointment could not be made and the Committee was reminded that the Chair will sit on all the panels with the appropriate Faculty Director of Research & Enterprise together with the academic leads for each discipline.

The Chair also explained that there had been some issues with candidates not being sufficiently able to demonstrate research independence as well as not having research outputs of high enough quality that could be considered for the REF 2021 exercise. The Committee will be kept informed of subsequent appointments in due course.

R&EC-18-4-1.2 KEF consultation document update

The Chair presented the final version of the Knowledge Exchange Framework consultation document that had recently been submitted to Research England. This was for general noting by the Committee as the comments and feedback that had been received had informed the response, and the Chair thanked those that had contributed. The Committee was reminded that Research England had applied a number of benchmarking metrics to sort institutions into clusters, and that the University had been grouped in 'Cluster E', along with other HEIs with similar discipline portfolios that generate a mid-level amount of world-leading research across all disciplines.

There were no particular concerns at this stage, but **it was becoming apparent that it would be advantageous for the University to start working more closely with individuals outside of academia, such as industry, and to have research outputs with external/third party collaborators. Funding from Innovate UK will also be an important metric, and as such, there will be renewed focus on increasing the number of KTPs that the University is involved with. The Chair requested that these observations be disseminated at Faculty level via the appropriate Faculty Research & Enterprise Committee meetings.**

ACTION: FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-18-4-1.3 VC PhD Scholarships 2019/20

The Chair informed the Committee that discussions had been held with the Director of Finance to determine the allocation of VC PhD Scholarships for 2019/20. A total provision of 18 had been decided, but 2 of these form part of the ongoing commitment to the Doctoral Training Alliance for Energy. The remaining 16 had been distributed amongst the Faculties as follows; FBUS = 3, FEH = 3, FES = 5, FLAS = 5. The Chair emphasised that the quoted numbers were for fully funded students but that the expectation would be for some of these to be funded at 50% to potentially maximise the number of

registrations. So, for a Faculty that had been allocated 3 VC PhD Scholarships, 2 could be fully funded with 2 others at 50% each.

The Chair commented that the letter from Research England confirming the amount of QR funding that the institution would receive next year had not yet been received, but that the expectation was that the figures would be very similar to the current one. Following some general discussion, it was agreed that Faculties could be flexible in how they decide on the numbers that would be fully funded and those that would be split, but that these VC PhD Scholarships would not be eligible to receive the London Weighting Allowance as discussed and agreed at a previous Committee meeting. **The Chair requested that this information be communicated throughout the Faculties as soon as possible so that the recruitment process could start in earnest. As in previous years, this was slightly later than anticipated so should be advertised in the coming weeks to avoid any further delays.**

ACTION: FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-18-4-1.4 University policy on ECRs and BAW points

The Chair briefed the Committee that a paper was still being developed that would form the basis of a University policy relating to ECRs and BAW points. This had originally been planned to be presented at this Committee meeting, but due to time constraints, it would now be scheduled for the next meeting in May. A 'BAW Review Group' had been set up and there were ongoing discussions that will influence what goes into the paper and which will also need to be reflected in the Code of Practice.

R&EC-18-4-1.5 Return to work guidance (Research & Enterprise)

Following on from the previous agenda item, **the Chair reported that a paper setting out some guidance for individuals returning to work after periods of long absence (Research & Enterprise) was also in progress and would now be presented at the next Committee meeting scheduled in May. This also needed to be referred to in the Code of Practice so requires immediate attention.**

ACTION: CHAIR

R&EC-18-4-1.6 Research Capital Investment Fund (RCIF) 2019

The Chair presented the outcomes of the recent Research Capital Investment Fund for 2019 which were for noting by the Committee. A total of 7 applications out of the 9 received were to be funded, which was more generous than in previous years. An independent panel had reviewed the applications, and those that were successful were

distributed across the Faculties that had applied. The Chair reminded the Committee that the funds were for the purchase of equipment and that the money was to be spent before the deadline of 31st July.

R&EC-18-4-1.7 High Performance Computing

The Chair invited the ILS Head of Infrastructure to present a paper that had been developed together with the Director of Research & Enterprise that detailed the High Performance Computing (HPC) business plan for the University for the next five years. HPC had been introduced a few years ago to help provide a high-quality central service for staff to carry out computer intensive tasks and the processing of large datasets with ease. This had proved a success, and over time there had been more uptake and demand for HPC, and it had now become clear that there were insufficient staff resources to continue to support users and provide a professional service.

The paper proposed that to ensure that research active staff, other academics, and collaboration partners had the computing resources that they needed, that a much larger and more powerful shared HPC resource pool be created that would be supported by two dedicated staff members from ILS. The Committee was asked to potentially support and help fund both the procurement of new cutting-edge HPC infrastructure with increased capacity, and for the two posts (SG5/SG8) that had been identified to manage and support the central HPC service.

Following some general discussion, **the Committee agreed that an 'HPC Steering Group' be set up that had appropriate representation from the research community and HPC users. This would ultimately be led by ILS but the Chair requested that Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise co-ordinate the relevant input from the research community and heavy users of HPC (School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences, NRI, FBUS etc). The 'Terms of Reference' were to be drawn up and that this 'HPC Steering Group' should be formed as soon as possible to drive this forward. The Committee will be updated accordingly at the next meeting in May with the latest developments.**

ACTION: DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-18-4-2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

R&EC-18-4-2.1 Minutes of the third meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the 2018/19 academic session held on Wednesday, 6th February 2019

The minutes of the Research & Enterprise Committee held on Wednesday, 6th February 2019 were agreed by the Committee to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

R&EC-18-4-3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

R&EC-18-4-3.1 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 18-3-6.1 The Chair requested that Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise communicate this paper on PhD programme codes at their own Faculty Research & Enterprise Committee meetings and that any feedback be reported back to this next Committee scheduled in April. This was an important item that will need further attention and action.

R&EC 18-3-6.4 The Chair will continue to expand on this paper concerning ECRs and BAW points which is scheduled to be presented at the next Committee meeting in April for further discussion and approval.

R&EC-18-4-4 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2021 PREPARATIONS

R&EC-18-4-4.1 Code of Practice update

The Chair presented two papers to the Committee that both related to the Code of Practice that was being developed for the REF 2021 exercise. The first set out comments and issues from the recent staff consultation workshops that had taken place. There were some common themes that had been summarised for general discussion by the Committee. There had been a good level of engagement at the workshops and the questions/feedback that had arisen from them were noted by panel members.

The second paper was an updated draft of the Code of Practice which now needed careful consideration as it was in the process of being finalised. There were ongoing discussions with the relevant Unions (UCU/Unison) and the final draft was scheduled to be presented at the next meeting of Academic Council on Wednesday, 24th April. After some considerable discussion, **the Committee agreed to some minor amendments, and once these had been made, the Chair requested that this version be made available on the University webpages. The Chair highlighted that the**

purpose of this was not to invite further comments as it was to be this draft that required ratification by Academic Council.

ACTION: CHAIR/HEAD OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

R&EC-18-4-4.2 GREAT 2019 timelines and guidance

The Chair briefed the Committee on the guidance and timelines that had been established for the GREAT 2019 exercise. The expectation was for staff to select up to 6 outputs for assessment, covering the entire current REF period, and that these needed to be entered on GALA as soon as possible. The original proposed deadline of 1st May was pushed back to 20th May to accommodate the Easter break and a busy period for academic staff. Individuals will need to select their outputs in ranked order of quality, based on their own judgment, or feedback from previous GREAT exercises. The Committee understood the importance of this as the intention was to use the GREAT 2019 exercise as a dummy run for the actual REF 2021 submission. Following the deadline, all submitted outputs are to be re-assessed which will require significant time and resources from all those members of staff involved.

In addition to this, it is expected that Faculty REF Working Groups confirm the likely Units of Assessment (UoAs) by this deadline, and that this information be communicated to the Head of Research Development Services. UoA environment statements and impact case studies were to be submitted by 31st July, as well as Faculty REF Working Groups confirming UoA configurations. **The Chair stressed the extra importance of the exercise this year and requested that these GREAT 2019 timelines and guidance be communicated through the appropriate Faculty channels to UoA leads and other members of staff directly after this meeting.**

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

R&EC-18-4-4.3 Notes from last RSWG meeting

Following on from the previous agenda items, the Head of Research Development Services confirmed that all the actions from the last meeting of the REF Strategy Working Group had been discussed and were either complete or in progress. There were no other issues or concerns and were for noting by the Committee.

R&EC-18-4-4.4 REF 2021 provisional timeline

The Head of Research Development Services provided the Committee with a paper that set out provisional timelines for the REF 2021 submission. The Committee discussed these and agreed that

they were appropriate and needed adhering to. This document will be monitored carefully and updated accordingly as the submission deadline approaches.

R&EC-18-4-5 GREENWICH RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-18-4-5.1 Research & Enterprise Financial Summary Report 2018/19

The Committee noted the financial summary report by Faculty from 1st August 2018 to 28th February 2019.

The Director of Research & Enterprise reported that revenue figures were currently standing at £12.4m for the first seven months of the year which was an increase of about £500k on the same period last year and which was mainly showing in NRI. Contracting figures showed a substantial increase on 2017/18 and currently stood at £17.5m with both FES and NRI performing well. There had been several recent successes across most of the Faculties, and overall the figures at this stage of the year look promising. The only concern of note was the current performance of FEH where both the revenues and contracting totals were significantly below expectations.

R&EC-18-4-5.2 Research & Enterprise Bidding Activity Report 2018/19

The Committee noted the bidding activity report by Faculty from 1st August 2018 to 28th February 2019.

The Director of Research & Enterprise briefed the Committee on all the bidding data currently for 2018/19 and most of the Faculties were showing healthy profiles with strong activity compared to the previous year. Some preliminary work had been done on calculating monthly bidding totals by Faculty and the Director of Research & Enterprise proposed that this could be a valuable metric moving forward but that this required further discussion outside of this meeting.

In addition to this, Research Development Services had now started work on producing lists of members of staff that had no/limited bidding activity over the last three years that were on Research career pathways. Data was also now available relating to staff that had submitted bids that were not on a Research career pathway. **This information was particularly valuable and with the academic appraisal cycle scheduled to start soon, the Chair requested that these spreadsheets be updated and shared with Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise so that this could be communicated to appraisers and form part of the appraisal.**

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

R&EC-18-4-6 RETI

R&EC-18-4-6.1 PRES 2019 update

The Head of RETI provided the Committee with a brief update on the latest developments with regards to PRES 2019. The survey is scheduled to close in early May and the response rate currently stood at 23%. This was disappointing at this stage despite a wide-ranging effort to get students to engage. The window to complete the survey was still open and the hope was that this figure would rise over the coming weeks. The Student Union Representatives explained that there had been a big push, both through marketing and social media, to get individuals to engage and will continue to send communications throughout April. The hope was that the final response rate would be higher than that for PRES 2018 which was 38%.

R&EC-18-4-6.2 IP workshops with Vitae

The Head of RETI informed the Committee that Vitae had recently selected 15 institutions from across the country to host Intellectual Property (IP) workshops and that the University had been successful with its application. The event was taking place later in the week with a healthy number of delegates and included individuals from other institutions based in London. Certain members of GRE will be involved with the event but this was just for noting by panel members.

R&EC-18-4-7 ITEMS FROM FACULTY RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEES

R&EC-18-4-7.1 Research Structure update

The Chair invited Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise to comment on the discussions that had taken place at Faculty level on the proposal put forward by the Vice-Chair at an earlier meeting to redefine the criteria that were currently being used for the naming of certain research structures throughout the University.

These discussions were still outstanding in FLAS, and as such, comments were to be sent to the Secretary once they had taken place. The Chair requested that the Secretary then pass these on, along with feedback from the other Faculties, to the Vice-Chair so that the original paper could be developed further before coming back to the Committee for further discussion and approval.

ACTION: PVC (LAS) NOMINEE/SECRETARY

R&EC-18-4-8 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH MATTERS

R&EC-18-4-8.1 PGR Completions – Recommendations for Committee

The Committee approved the list of postgraduate research degree awards recommended by examiners and considered at recent meetings of Faculty Research Degrees Committees.

R&EC-18-4-8.2 Summary of PGR related business by FRDCs for 2018/19 to end of 31st March 2019

The Head of RETI provided a summary of FRDC activity in terms of submissions of various RDA forms across all four Faculties to the end of 31st March 2019. This was for general noting by the Committee but the total of PGR students currently stood at just over 500, which was still lower than projected targets, although the expectation was that this figure would rise. There was ongoing concern over the significant number of changes to registrations (RDA5), especially around new supervisors, which have mainly arisen from the University restructure last year and will need to be monitored closely as these numbers may continue to increase towards the end of the year. However, overall the figures were generally positive and will be reported on again at subsequent meetings.

R&EC-18-4-8.3 PGR completions for current REF period update

The Head of RETI presented some updated calculations for the total number of PGR completions for the current REF period for consideration by the Committee. The new totals indicated that there would be approximately 330 completions (PhD/EdD) for the REF period, but that in a best case scenario, this could possibly be just under 400. These numbers were slightly different to those presented at the last meeting, and there will be particular focus on this over the next 12 months to maximise the level of completions. The expectation was that the writing retreats that had been recently introduced, together with other support provision, would contribute to this and the Committee will be kept informed of developments.

R&EC-18-4-8.4 PGR Students – Allowed teaching duties update

The Head of RETI provided the Committee with a brief update on the allowed teaching duties for PGR students following some further discussion with the University Director of Learning and Teaching. There were still concerns over PGR students being allowed to mark exam papers and projects and there was agreement with the

previous decision that the Committee had taken that they should not be involved in critical assessments. Some further general discussion followed but the Committee confirmed this final position.

R&EC-18-4-9 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There were no items for information presented to the Committee.

R&EC-18-4-10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The PVC (E&H) Nominee & uREC Chair informed the Committee that the 'Terms of Reference' for the University Research Ethics Committee were currently being reviewed together with the University Secretary. One of the aims was for PGR research applications that required ethical approval to be moved to the Faculty Research Ethics Committees in order to speed up some of the processes and improve efficiency. At this stage, this was for noting by the Committee as any changes to the 'Terms of Reference' would need to go to Academic Council for ratification.

A secondary point for consideration related to the increasing number of research applications that were coming to the University Research Ethics Committee for approval that appeared to be methodologically weak and ideally needed more scrutiny at Faculty level. **The Committee agreed that Faculties should contemplate introducing more quality control processes to research applications before being passed to the University Research Ethics Committee for approval. This required further discussion outside of this meeting and will be addressed again at a subsequent Committee.**

ACTION: PVC (E&H) NOMINEE & uREC CHAIR/FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

The Head of RETI raised an issue surrounding PGR students who have 'Tier 4' visas that are not legally allowed to interrupt their studies without potentially losing their visa. These students are entitled to take an authorised leave of absence but this complicates timelines for completion and financial arrangements. This has resulted in some appeals and there should be clearer guidance as to how these individuals can be supported under those circumstances.

The Committee agreed that this was an important matter and **the Chair requested that the Head of RETI seek advice from the Assistant Director of Student Registry in order to find a way to better accommodate those students on 'Tier 4' visas that need to take a break from their studies for a variety of perfectly valid reasons without being penalised.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RETI

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

R&EC-18-4-11 DATES & TIMES OF 2018/19 MEETINGS

Meeting
May 22 nd 2019, Medway Campus, Room B028, 2.00pm
July 3 rd 2019, Greenwich Campus, Room QA075, 2.00pm