

**Minutes for the sixth meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the
2018/19 Academic Session, held on Wednesday, 3rd July 2019, 2.00pm in
QA075, Greenwich Campus**

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 C Papaix	PVC (BUS) Nominee
Dr C Monks	PVC (E&H) Nominee
Prof D Wray	PVC (E&S) Nominee
Prof C Bailey	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Prof A Mehra	Head of Research & Enterprise Training Institute
Mr N Cormack-Bissett	Head of Research Development Services
Mr S Mujunga	Student Union Representative
Mr P Angelo	Secretary

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Prof P Maras	PVC (E&H) Nominee & uREC Chair
Prof T Reynolds	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Mrs W Curran	Finance Manager
Ms P Gibson	ECR/PGR Nominee
Mr A Papa	Student Union Representative
Ms U Arif-Fryer	Student Union Representative

R&EC-18-6-1 ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

R&EC-18-6-1.1 Return to work guidance (Research & Enterprise)

The Chair presented a paper to the Committee that provided an initial draft of advice and guidance to both research active staff affected by a period of absence during their academic career and their line managers. The paper was discussed at length by the Committee and panel members were in general agreement with the detail but that two minor amendments should be made. Firstly, that a sentence should be added to say that a mentor would be assigned to more junior members of staff (ECRs) to facilitate their return after

such a period of absence, and secondly, that the section relating to 'Return-to-Work' briefings be changed as doing these on a quarterly basis was considered to be too long and that a summary document could be produced between GRE/GLT/HR for immediate circulation prior to such meetings. **The Chair agreed to make the amendments before presenting the final version of the paper to Provost Group for final approval.**

ACTION: CHAIR

R&EC-18-6-1.2 Research Structure update

The Vice-Chair updated the Committee with regards to the Research Structure paper that had been presented at an earlier meeting in the year. All the Faculties had now provided feedback and the document that was discussed incorporated all the comments and provided the definitions of Research and Enterprise groupings throughout the University. The Committee agreed that this was an important issue as there needed to be an appropriate web presence for these institutes/centres/groups for the purposes of the REF 2021 exercise in that assessors will be looking at these when reviewing outputs, environment statements, and impact case studies. After some general discussion, the Committee approved this amended version and **the Vice-Chair was to send a final clean version to the Secretary for GRE records and that the Chair would then decide whether the paper needed to go to Provost Group for ratification.**

ACTION: CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR/SECRETARY

R&EC-18-6-1.3 Internal Audit Report – Enterprise & Commercialisation

The Chair presented the outcomes of the recent internal audit report that was carried out relating to 'Enterprise Activities and Commercialisation' within the University. The audit was performed by BDO who spoke to several members of staff and sampled 15 projects to evidence the policies and procedures of the institution. Unfortunately, the auditors identified a number of shortcomings with the Enterprise activities and these were discussed at length by the Committee. Based on the findings raised, the auditors were only able to provide limited assurance over both the design and the effectiveness of the controls in place for such activities at the University.

Some of the issues that were highlighted stemmed from the fact that there are a significant number of projects in the Enterprise space that are less than £5k in value and do not come through GRE. However, it was still apparent that there were gaps in some of the internal approvals and due diligence processes, and as such, **the Chair requested that a new set of recommendations be drawn up and**

presented at a subsequent Committee meeting in the next academic session to address the concerns expressed in the report that could be implemented.

ACTION: DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE/HEAD OF COMMERCIALISATION & INNOVATION

R&EC-18-6-1.4 Knowledge Exchange Concordat in England update

The Director of Research & Enterprise briefly updated panel members that the feedback requested at the last Committee meeting had been received from some Faculties and that this had helped to inform the institutional response to the consultation on the Knowledge Exchange Concordat in England. This had been submitted before the deadline as planned with no further issues or comments and was just for noting by the Committee.

R&EC-18-6-1.5 Expanding Excellence in England (E3) update

The Chair informed the Committee that the outcomes of the Expanding Excellence in England (E3) bids had just been published and that the proposal that the NRI had submitted had been successful. This was extremely positive news and a major achievement for the University as the bid was worth a total of £7.5m. There will now be extensive recruitment of both new members of staff and PhD students to grow the research activity in this area. The Vice-Chair added that there will be further E3 funding opportunities from Research England in the future, and the hope is that this funding will lead to world leading research and a significant number of 4* outputs. The Committee was reminded that any funding can't be spent outside of England and that any future bids need careful planning and consideration, but this was a notable success story as only 13 proposals out of around 130 in total were awarded.

R&EC-18-6-1.6 Membership for 2019/20 meetings

The Chair took the opportunity to review the membership of the Committee for academic session 2019/20 as this was the last meeting of the year. There will be some changes to the Student Union Representatives as they come to the end of their tenures and there being new elections, but the Secretary will confirm these for the first Committee meeting scheduled for September. The Committee also agreed that the new Head of Commercialisation & Innovation was to be invited to attend when in post, which the Secretary will also co-ordinate in due course.

R&EC-18-6-2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

R&EC-18-6-2.1 Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the 2018/19 academic session held on Wednesday, 22nd May 2019

The minutes of the Research & Enterprise Committee held on Wednesday, 22nd May 2019 were agreed by the Committee to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

R&EC-18-6-3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

R&EC-18-6-3.1 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 18-5-5.3 The Chair requested that the 'Terms of Reference' for the High Performance Computing Steering Group be circulated to the ECR/PGR community as there may be some individuals that are significant users of HPC in order to invite them to join if appropriate.

R&EC-18-6-4 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2021 PREPARATIONS

R&EC-18-6-4.1 GREAT 2019 update

The Head of Research Development Services provided the Committee with an update on the latest developments with regards to GREAT 2019. Panel members were reminded that the deadline to enter research outputs on GALA had passed and that the total received was in excess of 1,500 and had been submitted by just over 380 members of staff. Nearly 700 of these were new outputs that had not been assessed before. These were very encouraging figures and the process had already started to allocate these for internal assessment.

The Chair reminded the Committee that a high level of engagement from members of staff was required, as the timelines were tight and that a percentage of these would also need to be sent for external assessment. This was going to be an extremely busy period for the institution until the final REF 2021 submission, and it was important that deadlines were adhered to due to the significant amount of co-ordination required. As such, **the Committee was reminded that the deadline to submit both the impact case studies and environment statements was Wednesday, 31st July and that the final outcomes of GREAT 2019 were expected to be presented at the first Committee meeting of the new academic session.**

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

R&EC-18-6-4.2 Research England REF 2021 Briefing

The Head of Research Development Services provided the Committee with a set of slides summarising the latest developments with regards to the REF 2021 exercise recently published by Research England. These were part of a briefing event and were for general noting and discussion by the Committee. There were no concerns over any of the new information, but the Chair took the opportunity to remind panel members that it was imperative that all UoA leaders read and fully understand all the guidance documentation as this will be taken as gospel.

R&EC-18-6-4.3 REF 2021 Audit Guidance

Following on from the previous item, and as part of the same set of slides, Research England had now published some guidance on the audit and data verification procedures for REF 2021 to ensure that the data submitted was both accurate and verifiable. These again were for noting by the Committee, but the Head of Research Development Services explained that there were potential GDPR considerations around individual staff circumstances that required further conversations with Human Resources. These essentially concerned the requirement of evidence of the 'effect' of any such circumstances, but the Committee will be kept informed of any developments.

R&EC-18-6-5 GREENWICH RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-18-6-5.1 Research & Enterprise Financial Summary Report 2018/19

The Committee noted the financial summary report by Faculty from 1st August 2018 to 31st May 2019.

The Director of Research & Enterprise reported that revenue figures were currently standing at £17.6m for the first ten months of the year which was down by about £500k for the same period compared with academic session 2017/18. NRI had performed strongly this year but this offset decreases across some of the Faculties. Contracting figures were healthy and presently stood at £24m which was an increase of £10m on the same time last year. This again was mainly in NRI, but both FES and GRE were showing favourable increases. The only concern of note continued to be the current performance of FEH where both revenues and contracting totals were significantly below expectations.

R&EC-18-6-5.2 Research & Enterprise Bidding Activity Report 2018/19

The Committee noted the bidding activity report by Faculty from 1st August 2018 to 31st May 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 positive bidding profiles. The Committee was reminded that Research Development Services had now produced lists of members of staff that had no/unsuccessful recent bidding activity, and to get research active individuals from their Faculty to engage with the team as there were resources available to advise and support them.

The other main headline from the bidding data was the continued shift away from EU bidding to UK funding schemes by bidding value which was not surprising in the current political climate and all the ongoing uncertainty surrounding Brexit. This was just for noting by the Committee, together with the unique PI data, which had now been separated out by career pathway and that followed a similar pattern to that discussed at previous meetings. The end of year figures were scheduled to be presented at the first Committee meeting in academic session 2019/20.

R&EC-18-6-6 RETI

R&EC-18-6-6.1 PhD programme codes update

The Head of RETI updated the Committee on the latest developments with regards to the exercise to reduce the total number of PhD programme codes used by the institution. Panel members were reminded that the intention was to lower the number of codes from the current figure of 55. Feedback had now been received from all the Faculties, except from FLAS, but that this was proving to be a challenging task. Further discussions were required with the Director of Strategic Planning as the current proposals only suggested minor reductions. FBUS intended to continue using 11, FEH would decrease from 9 to 5, FES from 15 to 12 (from which NRI proposed a reduction from 9 to 6), and FLAS was yet to be determined but presently used 20. **The Chair stressed that this remained an important item that needed resolving and requested further consultation between RETI, Strategic Planning, the Faculties, as well as the students themselves to propose a final structure before it can become operational.**

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

R&EC-18-6-6.2 FRDC annual report 2017/18

The Head of RETI provided the Committee with the main headlines from the consolidated report from all the Faculty Research Degree Committees (FRDC) annual reports for 2017/18. The report was just for noting by members and was available from the Secretary upon request, but the issues raised have been discussed at length in previous Committee meetings and now have action plans in place.

R&EC-18-6-7 ITEMS FROM FACULTY RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEES

R&EC-18-6-7.1 Contribution of MPhil/PhD students to the revision of PGR training

The Vice-Chair informed the Committee that following a series of constructive conversations, there were a group of MPhil/PhD students in FES that would like to contribute to potentially modifying some of the training provision for them to better suit their requirements. The Head of RETI agreed to discuss this with them and arrange further open meetings to develop the sessions with their input and the Committee will be kept informed of any changes that are made.

R&EC-18-6-8 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH MATTERS

R&EC-18-6-8.1 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-18-6-8.2 Summary of PGR related business by FRDCs for 2018/19 to end of 30th June 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 30th June 2019. This was for general noting by the Committee with the figures being very similar to the previous meeting, but the total number of PGR students currently stood at just over 520. The main concern was still the significant number of changes to registrations (RDA5), with current figures showing that over 10% of the PGR population were either interrupting or extending. The Committee agreed that these figures were too high and will need constant monitoring.

R&EC-18-6-8.3 Interruptions for PGR students on ‘Tier 4’ visas update

The Head of RETI briefed the Committee that further meetings had taken place with the Assistant Director of Student Registry in order to try and find better ways to accommodate those students on 'Tier 4' visas that needed to take a legitimate break from their studies without being penalised. **The Head of RETI confirmed that revisions will be made to the PGR Students and Supervisors Handbook to reflect these discussions, and that any amended sections will be sent to the Student Union Representatives for their comment and review before a final clean version is presented at a subsequent Committee for approval.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RETI/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF STUDENT REGISTRY/STUDENT UNION REPRESENTATIVES

R&EC-18-6-8.4 Staff members undertaking PhDs and BAW points

The Head of RETI brought this item as one of the 'Matters Arising' from an FRDC meeting in FLAS that sought clarification on the minimum part-time hours/BAW implications for members of staff undertaking a PhD as part of their employment contract. The view of the Committee was that this issue was clear in the recent BAW allocation paper but that there may be variation across different Faculties in how this is being applied. **The Chair requested that clarification be sought on this particular matter and that it be taken back to the Faculty in question for more specific details. This is to be brought to the first Committee meeting of the new academic session for further discussion.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RETI/PVC (LAS) NOMINEE

R&EC-18-6-9 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

R&EC-18-6-9.1 VC PhD Scholarship Prize

The Director of Research & Enterprise informed the Committee of the winner of the VC PhD Scholarship Prize for this academic year that had been decided by an independent panel and requested that the Committee officially approve this decision. The successful candidate was from FES and had undertaken an industry-based PhD and had performed extremely well at the oral examination, as evidenced by the examiners academic reports. A number of high quality presentations and outputs had also been produced and the Committee duly ratified this decision.

R&EC-18-6-10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

R&EC-18-6-11 DATES & TIMES OF 2019/20 MEETINGS

Meeting
September 25 th 2019, Greenwich Campus, Room QA075, 2.00pm
December 4 th 2019, Avery Hill Campus, Room G104, 2.00pm
February 5 th 2020, Medway Campus, Room P130, 2.00pm
April 8 th 2020, Avery Hill Campus, Room G104, 2.00pm
May 20 th 2020, Medway Campus, Room P130, 2.00pm
July 1 st 2020, Greenwich Campus, Room QA075, 2.00pm