



## UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE MINUTES 3 MARCH 2020

*Minutes* of Meeting 01/2020 of the University Research Committee held on 3 March 2020 in the Council Room, Building 36.

**Present:**

Prof J Martin (*Chair*)

A/Prof H Chen  
Prof K Clapham  
D/Prof N Dixon  
Prof K French  
S/Prof C Gibson  
A/Prof P Kelly  
S/Prof R Lewis  
Prof T Marchant

Ms S Martin  
A/Prof D Mercer  
S/Prof A Okely  
A/Prof G Peleckis  
Prof W Price  
Prof M Randle  
D/Prof R Roberts  
S/Prof D Steel

Mr G Tomka  
D/Prof A van Oijen  
Prof W Vialle  
S/Prof S Ville  
Dr M Voyer  
S/Prof G Waitt

**Minute Secretary:**

Ms J Evans

### **PART 1 OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

**1.1 Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Prof S Carter, Prof L Kervin, Mr O Khalifa, Prof J Beck, D/Prof Z Guo, S/Prof P McGuirk and Dr N Abdulaziz.

A/Prof P Kelly representing Prof L Kervin, Prof K French representing Prof J Beck, S/Prof G Waitt representing S/Prof P McGuirk

**1.2 Arrangement of the Agenda**

**1.2.1 Conflicts of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

**1.2.1 Starring of Items**

Agenda items 1.2, 1.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 were starred for the meeting.

***Resolved (01/20)***

*That the University Research Committee adopt the draft resolutions for the un-starred items.*

**1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

***Resolved (02/20)***

*That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 November 2019, as attached to the agenda paper, be confirmed and signed as a true record.*

#### **1.4 Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

#### **1.5 Chair's Business**

##### **Intellectual Policy Update**

The Chair noted the following:

- Due to staff changes in ICR, work on the IP Policy Review has been re-allocated to colleagues in the Governance and Legal Division for finalisation;
- Given this shift, the decision has been made to pause the work on the related Commercial Research Policy, to enable greater focus on finalising the key IP Policy document;
- Work is progressing to make final adjustments to the IP Policy to factor in previous feedback from VCAG members, and feedback received from staff during February as a result of the latest round of consultation;
- The team is working to original timeframes of having the IP Policy document ready for endorsement at Academic Senate in March, with the updated IP Policy circulated to URC members out of session via email.

##### **DVC-RI Research Strategy Planning Retreat**

The Research Strategy Planning Retreat was held on 28-29 January at the Sebel in Kiama, where participants developed strategic objectives for Goal 2 of the 2020-2025 UOW Strategic Plan, *Creating Knowledge for a Better Future*.

The Draft Strategy is currently being reviewed by the RAID leadership group and will be submitted to VCAG for endorsement on 16 March. A consultation draft strategy will then be circulated to the campus community with two forums planned: an All Staff Forum on 24 March and a HDR Student Forum at a date to be determined. The final strategy will be submitted to URC and Academic Senate in May, followed by Council in June 2020.

##### **Gender Equity and Diversity**

On 10 March, the Linking Women Network along with the Vice-Chancellor and DVC-RI will hold a morning tea to celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) and the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. A range of staff will share their stories and insights in the spirit of this year's theme #EachforEqual – an equal world is an enabled world. RSVP via Eventbrite (in Universe).

The UOW SAGE/Athena Swan Implementation (SASI) Committee has awarded 2 UOW Gender Equity Conference Sponsorships of \$5,000 each, for funding to support the Conference Organising Committee to promote and prioritise their gender equity goals as follows:

- A/Prof Danielle Skropeta for the Organic and Medicinal Chemistry Conference; and
- A/Prof Aaron Oakley for the Crystal 33 Conference

UOW Faculties have now agreed to appoint Associate Deans (Equity, Diversity & Inclusion), reporting directly to the Executive Deans, with most expected to be in place by July 2020. The position is 0.4 FTE and the AD-EDI role includes:

- communicating and educating Faculty members in Athena SWAN initiatives;
- attending SASI committee meetings as delegates for EDs;
- collecting Faculty data and reporting on Athena SWAN outcomes;
- involvement in recruitment to ensure policies are implemented appropriately, and
- working together as a group across UOW to develop and implement best practice initiatives.

##### **Vice-Chancellor's Research Excellence Awards 2020**

The Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Awards nominations open 13 March 2020 and close 15 May 2020. The research awards are:

- Researcher of the Year;

- Emerging Researcher;
- Interdisciplinary Research Excellence;
- Research Supervision; and
- Research Partnership & Impact

The Chair encouraged the committee to nominate colleagues, reminding them to think about equity and diversity when nominating. The Awards ceremony is scheduled to be held on Thursday 13 August.

### **Current URC Working Groups**

The Chair advised that there are a number of URC Working Groups currently in process.

#### ***Research Active Working Group***

The Working Group has been established to review the policy and seek to:

- Strengthen the expectations of UOW in relation to academic staff who have Research defined as one of their key responsibilities and improve the value and clarity of definitions;
- Improve alignment with UOW's academic performance and promotion frameworks to reiterate the importance of maintaining research active status for career development.

The Working Group, chaired by the DVC-RI, will include the Dean of Research, Dean of Graduate Research, ADRs, Director, Governance and Legal; Director, Human Resources; Manager, PODS; and the RSO. The first meeting is scheduled for 23 March 2020.

#### ***Research Misconduct & Complaints Working Group***

A Working Group established to conduct a review of the UOW Research Misconduct and Complaints Policy and Procedure. The objectives are to:

- Benchmark against the research misconduct policies and procedures at other Universities;
- Align with principles of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research;
- Align with UOW policies and processes to streamline investigation and appeals processes; and
- Provide for the use of external third-party services in relation to investigation of research breaches and appeals process.

The Working Group, chaired by the DVC-RI, will include the Dean of Research, Dean of Graduate Research, ADRs, relevant administrative units and the RSO. The first meeting is scheduled for 11 March 2020.

The ***Predatory Publishing and Conferences Working Party*** has been established. Chaired by the Dean of Research, the first meeting was held on 11 February 2020. The URC Chair asked the Dean of Research to provide an update of this Working Party at the next URC Meeting.

### **New ARC Special Research Initiative**

The ARC has released new guidelines for the Special Research Initiative for Australian Society, History and Culture. Up to \$12 million will be available to support research grants of up to 3 years. Applications close 22 April 2020 and funding is available for research on Australian and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society, history, culture, literature, art, music, politics and geography. An information session will be held with Professor Joanne Tomkins, ARC Executive Director on 31 March 2020. Further details will be advertised in Universe.

### **URC Meetings for 2020**

The Chair advised that the URC Meeting dates for 2020 will likely change and lunch will no longer be catered.

## **PART 2 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

### **2.1 No confidential business.**

## **PART 3 GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **3.1 Research and Innovation Report**

#### ***Resolved (03/20)***

*That the University Research Committee note the Research and Innovation Report for the 3 March 2020 URC Meeting, as provided in the agenda papers.*

### **3.2 Higher Degree Research (HDR) Student Update**

The Acting Dean Graduate Research advised that approximately 100 new HDR students were welcomed last week. The re-introduction of candidature forms for HDR Students also commenced, where students and supervisors agree to their roles and expectations for the students candidature. These forms should be returned to the Graduate Research School. HDR Supervisors should also be reminded that they will need to provide commencing students with the relevant Work Health and Safety Inductions before any experimental work begins.

An update on HDR enrolment numbers for Autumn 2020 was provided, however, the following correct numbers were provided directly following the URC Meeting:

- 92 domestic HDR students, a decrease of 12% from 2020
- 45 international HDR students, down from 98 students in 2019.
- 137 commencing students as of 2 March 2020; the total HDR enrolments by headcounts were 1,657 (as of 2 March 2020).

The use of EFSTL, as opposed to headcount for the 2019 Autumn commencement numbers, resulted in a miscalculation of the commencement trends. Revised commencement trends are as follows:

- domestic HDR commencements down by 12% (as of 2 March 2020)
- international HDR commencements are down by 54% (as of 2 March 2020)

The compulsory Responsible Research Training subject has been re-designed to include three modules as follows: Responsible Conduct of Research; Research Impact; Understanding Innovation. These modules will be made available to PhD Integrated students. From July 2020 these modules will be made available as a one day induction workshop for all PhD and MRES students.

For the December 2019 Scholarship rounds:

- 30 offers to international students (30 accepted)
- 83 offers to domestic students (70 accepted)
- Increasing scholarship offers has increased total enrolment numbers
- 21 matching scholarship applications received with outcomes announced next week, with approximately 10 to 12 expected to be offered in this round

The second round of the UOW and University of Surrey joint PhD Program has been announced with applications closing on 3 April. Four scholarships will be offered and each applicant will be required to complete three different applications – one application to each university for their candidature and an application for the scholarship. Applications this round will be administered by Surrey and HDR students are encouraged to apply. The last round had a strong representation from the STEM disciplines, with more applications from HASS and Social Sciences encouraged. Committee members asked if there was a plan to offer a joint PhD with other UGPN Institutions. It was noted that the UK style of PhD was the most similar to an Australian PhD,

while those in the US and Brazil are structured quite differently, so while it is a great idea, it would be a challenge to come up with a joint PhD program.

***Resolved (04/20)***

*That the University Research Committee note the Higher Degree Research (HDR) Student Update, as presented by the Acting Dean Graduate Research, at the URC Meeting.*

**3.3 Graduate Research School Review Outcomes**

The DVC-RI provided an update on the Graduate Research School Review Outcomes. The report provided 9 commendations highlighting the many dedicated UOW staff, and 25 recommendations that touch on all aspects of HDR Operations and are framed to assist in achieving our long term institutional HDR aspirations.

The recommendations were fully endorsed by the Senior Executive at VCAg in February 2020. One of the first actions is the establishment of a new position, the Dean of Graduate Research. This position will sit alongside the Dean of Research and has stewardship of all HDR matters. The Review Panel emphasised the increasingly complex HDR portfolio, with the new leadership structure seeking to position UOW more sustainably for the future. Recruitment is currently underway for the new position and A/Professor Honglin Chen will act in the position in the interim.

An all staff forum was conducted on 18 February 2020 to discuss implementation of the review outcomes. The Chair asked for any further comments or questions – there were no further comments or discussion from the committee.

***Resolved (05/20)***

*That the University Research Committee note the Graduate Research School Review Outcomes, as provided in the agenda papers and presented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation, at the URC Meeting.*

**3.4 UOW Research Impact Strategy Update**

The Chair of the Researcher Development and Impact Reference Group updated the Committee on the Researcher and Development Impact Strategy Implementation Plan. The Plan is a result of the UOW Research Impact Strategy White Paper, and sets out governance, roles and responsibilities for delivering the UOW Impact Framework.

The Reference Group, established as part of the Plan, is working towards implementing the 19 recommendations in the White Paper. Feedback is being sought on the following:

- the composition of the Reference Group and its Terms of Reference; and
- the establishment of Impact Champions and their roles and responsibilities.

Any feedback from Committee members should be provided directly to the Research Impact Manager within the next week.

Of the 19 recommendations, the first three short term recommendations are already complete, with a number of others in progress. The first meeting of the Reference Group is expected before the end of March, with quarterly meetings thereafter.

***Resolved (06/20)***

*That the University Research Committee:*

- (i) note the Researcher Development & Impact Strategy Implementation Plan as provided in the agenda papers; and*
- (ii) note the draft Researcher Development & Impact Strategy Reference Group Terms of Reference as provided in the agenda papers; and*
- (iii) provide any feedback directly to the Research Impact Manager.*

### **3.5 Global Challenges Program Update**

The Global Challenges Director provided an update to the Committee. The 2019 Annual Report has been published and a copy was provided to Committee Members. It was emphasised that the information contained in the report has been reported by researchers about the projects, and that the publications, grants and associated results remain with schools, research centres/teams and faculties. The Report also articulates the Global Challenges values and purpose, which will filter through to the various seed and project funding guidelines, criteria and value statements.

The annual Global Challenges Seed and Project Funding rounds will open next week and close on 7 May 2020. The guidelines and criteria have been reviewed this year based on feedback from previous recipients. Information about these schemes will be distributed/available as follows: on the Global Challenges internet site; drop-in sessions every Tuesday in the Global Challenges Offices; contact via Heads of School in the coming weeks; and scheduled morning teas in faculties.

The first round of the Olivier Ferrer Fund will run in conjunction with the Seed and Project Funding Rounds this year. This funding is the result of a private donation of \$500k over 3 years to fund action-orientated projects on climate and social justice. Each year there will be a tailored call for proposals on a specific theme, as agreed with the donors. The specific theme for this year is 'the politics of refugees' and 'climate leadership'. A research development workshop will be held next week with 20 UOW researchers and will be an opportunity for researchers to interact with the donors and to assist with the development of their projects.

Further initiatives/projects for the Global Challenges Program include:

- Workshop in January regarding the recent bushfire response and addressing bushfire recovery; and
- Mapping projects to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and providing training to researchers to help them map their own research against the SDG's.

#### ***Resolved (07/20)***

*that the University Research Committee note the Global Challenges Program Update, as presented by the Director Global Challenges, at the URC Meeting.*

## **PART 4 BUSINESS FROM UOW COMMITTEES**

### **4.1 Research Integrity Committee**

#### ***Resolved (08/20)***

*That the University Research Committee note the minutes of the 3 October 2019 and 5 December 2019 Meetings of the Research Integrity Committee.*

### **4.2 Thesis Examination Committee**

#### ***Resolved (09/20)***

*That the University Research Committee note the meeting summaries of the 7 October 2019, 4 November and 2 December Meetings of the Thesis Examination Committee.*

### **4.3 Research IT and Systems Committee**

#### ***Resolved (10/20)***

*That the University Research Committee note the minutes of the 26 November 2019 Meeting of the Research IT and Systems Committee.*

#### 4.4 SAGE Athena Swan Implementation Committee

**Resolved (11/20)**

*That the University Research Committee note the minutes of the 12 December 2019 Meeting of the SAGE Athena Swan Implementation Committee, as provided in the agenda papers.*

### **PART 5 FINAL BUSINESS**

#### 5.1 Other Business

The Committee asked the Chair to provide an update on the delays and financial implications of the current environment concerning COVID-19, especially with regard to research funding. Whilst advising that its impact at the moment is unknown, the Chair noted the following:

- new expenditure controls have been implemented across the whole University;
- research funding from external sources should remain unchanged.

Committee members noted that changes within faculties had already occurred as follows:

- cuts to part time teaching budgets;
- suspension of internal grant schemes; and
- equipment purchases delayed to later in the year.

#### 5.2 Next Meeting

The next meeting of the University Research Committee to be advised.

The meeting closed at 1.30pm.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- 1.3 J Evans – file URC Minutes 4 November 2019
- 3.4 All Members – provide any feedback to the Lia Sherwood, Research Impact Manager
- 4.1 L Lynch – file RIC Minutes
- 4.2 S Flint – file TEC Summaries
- 4.3 M Oakman – file RITAS Minutes
- 4.4 K Lindenau – file SAGE Minutes

Signed as a true record



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Chairperson 06/08/2020