

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED

Wednesday 12 June 2019

14.00 – 16.30

Room 7X111, Frenchay Campus

Present: Professor Martin Boddy (Chair), Professor Richard Bolden, Dr Alistair Clark, Amanda Conway, Professor Myra Conway, Professor Olena Doran, Dr Stephen Draper (Hartpury College), Hazel Edwards, Dr Farnon Ellwood, Richard Falle, Tracey John, Ray McDowell, Mandy Rose, Professor Neil Willey.

Apologies: Richard Bond, Professor Lauren Devine, Professor Di Harcourt, Professor Catherine Hobbs, Paul Manners, Heather Moyes, Jane Newton, Emma O’Connell, Professor Mel Smith, Dr Heidi Williamson.

In attendance: Alison Vaughton (Officer), Amanda Oliver (SAS, for item 13)

WELCOMES AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RKEC19.06.01 Apologies were noted from Richard Bond, Professor Lauren Devine, Professor Di Harcourt, Professor Catherine Hobbs, Paul Manners, Heather Moyes, Jane Newton, Emma O’Connell, Professor Mel Smith and Dr Heidi Williamson.

RKEC19.06.02 Professor Boddy informed the Committee that Mrs Tracey John had recently been appointed Director of RBI.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 3 APRIL 2019 AND MATTERS ARISING

RKEC19.06.03 The minutes of the meeting on 3 April (RKEC19.04M) were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

RKEC19.06.04 RKEC19.04.04 The Chair to write to PGR students to encourage them to consider standing as a student representative on URKEC. Action outstanding.

Action: Chair

RKEC19.06.05 RKEC19.04.11 The Chair to circulate the UWE briefing note on civic university status. Action outstanding.

Action: Chair

CHAIR'S REPORT

- RKEC19.06.06 The Chair undertook to circulate a report on TRAC benchmarking. This was an annual return to HEFCE/Research England on the costs of activities and recovery, and benchmarking against our designated benchmark group, and against other groups.
- Professor Boddy highlighted the University's continuing under-investment in research (compared with our benchmark group). For 2017/18 UWE spent (through internal investment) 12.2% on research compared with 16.6% by the benchmark group (indeed UWE internal investment was lower than the group comprising less research-intensive HEIs). Equally, the percentage of staff time allocated to research was lower than comparator institutions, however UWE's recovery rate remained higher than other groups, including Group A.
- RKEC19.06.07 Professor Boddy explained that these figures had supported the securing of Wallscourt Foundation funding (£3M over 3 years). To date 10 of 16 Wallscourt Fellowship/Professor posts had been filled, and the remainder were being re-advertised. While TRAC was not a perfect mechanism it was considered to be quite robust.

Action: Chair

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK - REF2021

- RKEC19.06.08 The Officer updated the Committee on REF preparations (paper RKEC19.06.01). The Code of Practice had been submitted ahead of the 7 June deadline, and comprises over 90 pages including appendices. The deadline for the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP) to respond was 16 August, and if revisions were required the deadline for re-submission would be 20 September.
- RKEC19.06.09 In preparation for next year's submission, a mock REF would be conducted over the summer and into the autumn. This would identify, provisionally, staff with significant responsibility for research, and all academic staff would be informed of their REF status. At this stage, the submission was looking to include the outputs of around 400 staff, ie 33% more than to REF2014, reflecting the more inclusive approach, but nevertheless subject to change. Staff would have the opportunity to query their designation, and have the option to appeal. Staff would also be given the opportunity to advise the UWE REF team of any circumstances which might be used to apply for a reduction of the number of outputs to be submitted in a given unit of assessment.
- RKEC19.06.10 The Chair reported on progress with PIMS. The REF module was being put in place and would be used for the mock exercise. Considerable progress was now being made, and the system would aid a more efficient and effective submission. He was pleased that it would be available for the mock exercise.

UPDATE ON KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FRAMEWORK (KEF)

- RKEC19.06.11 Mrs John gave a presentation on the KEF. She reported that the end of the pilot (of which UWE had been a participant) had now been reached and that the Concordat had been published for consultation with a deadline for responses of 1 July. The final version of the Concordat was due to be published in the autumn (2019) with HEIs expected to sign up to it at that stage.
- RKEC19.06.12 The purpose of the KEF was to drive practice around knowledge exchange, give HEIs the information to draw comparisons with each other, and provide businesses and users of HEIs with information about their potential for partnerships and strengths. On reflection, this may have been over-ambitious. UWE was quite well-placed and well-tuned into the KEF's requirements, and it had been particularly useful to have been part of the pilot. The output from the exercise would be a public metric dashboard, reports to Research England and evidence of how good HEIs are at delivering knowledge.
- RKEC19.06.13 The radar diagram for activity within UWE's cluster demonstrated that the University was performing very well in some areas and the exercise to date had made clear that different clusters were seeking to achieve different things. UWE's cluster (Cluster E) was proving to be a useful group to be a part of, with other pilot institutions being Coventry, Manchester Met and Portsmouth.
- RKEC19.06.14 The next stage in the development of the KEF would be a report comprising the outcome of the Concordat consultation and pilot workshop feedback in July. HEIs involved in the pilot would see the report ahead of its being made public. Final decisions were due to be made in September/October 2019, although it was thought likely that this timing may be impacted by current political issues.
- RKEC19.06.15 Mrs John explained that insights from the pilot included the sense that there was an acceptance that the sector should not be further burdened by requiring new data, so that what was sought was smarter use of data already collected. The need to be aware of one's audience had come through strongly in workshops. Data provided would be used to direct funding to clusters. It was likely that an overall narrative would need to be provided. Participation in the pilot had proved more time-consuming and involved more work over a shorter timescale than envisaged at the outset, but had been extremely useful.

DEVELOPING UWE'S RESEARCH STRATEGY 2030

- RKEC19.06.16 The University's current Research Strategy (2020) had been circulated to members and the Chair noted that this covers the whole of the period for the present REF (2021). He further noted that the UWE Strategy 2030 was close to being finalised (having gone to the Governors' Committee earlier in the week), with publication anticipated in September.
- RKEC19.06.17 Professor Body invited comments, from a RKE perspective, on the new UWE Strategy 2030 and asked members to flag those aspects which should be rolled forward in the research strategy. A key question was which parts of the 2020 research strategy remained valid, and should be retained, and which parts would

require refreshing or updating or complete revision. His overall thinking was that a fair amount still stood, although some was rather dated (eg using the Alliance Group as a comparison, with its membership having changed very significantly over recent years). It might be appropriate to think about alternative benchmarking/reference groups.

RKEC19.06.18 Thinking about the timing for revising the research strategy, and taking into account that the results of REF2021 would not be published until December 2021, it would be sensible not to rush into developing a new strategy without taking account of UWE Strategy 2030, but would be good to make a start before the REF results are published.

RKEC19.06.19 The Chair confirmed that it was not the intention to close off research areas which do not align with the research beacons. People with enthusiasm would continue to get support from RBI for external bidding, but other resources (QR, HEIF, etc) would be focused on the beacon research areas. He noted the concern that some researchers across the University were feeling excluded from funding, but reminded that researchers in areas such as business and management and law would have opportunities to collaborate on research aligned to beacon areas.

RKEC19.06.20 Professor Boddy confirmed that there would be further discussion on the beacons and noted that the Research Strategy 2020 had focused on priority research themes but that this had not been strongly applied. Given the challenges of the current funding environment stronger focus was now needed. The beacons were intended to be fairly wide and inclusive. It was proposed that sessions might be arranged to give further thought out how the beacon themes could be embedded and engaged with. This was welcomed as a suggestion to be taken forward.

RKEC19.06.21 Professor Willey reported that the UWE Strategy 2030 had been discussed by the Graduate School Committee and he requested that two comments be taken forward if agreed by the Committee. The phrase 'From pre-school to PhD' was welcomed insofar as it recognised PGR but would better be phrased as 'from pre-school to doctorate' to acknowledge all doctorate level study. Secondly, Professor Willey proposed that the aim for all courses to have student satisfaction scores above 92% should apply to PGR also. The Chair stated that he would be happy to take both comments back.

Action: Chair

RKEC19.06.22 One member noted that the research beacons had been identified and defined on UWE's strengths and in line with external opportunities. However there needed to be some scope for flexibility around the potential for external opportunities to change and our approach to change accordingly. While it was important to prioritise investment in the beacons initially, it may be wise to retain some funds for emerging areas.

EXTERNAL FUNDING - £15M TARGET

RKEC19.06.23 The Chair explained that a target of £12M of external research funding had been set and was built into the research KPIs and corporate scorecard. As the £12M target had been reached, the target had been raised to £15M. He set out a plan (tabled paper) for how the University might try to increase its external research funding income and achieve the target. Professor Boddy noted that some of the

activity outlined in the plan had already been implemented, for example responses to the Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges and through regular bulletins advising staff of opportunities to bid for funding. The VC Early Career Researcher Scheme had now been running for 10 years, and the VC Interdisciplinary Challenge Fund – in its first year – had identified and funded some exciting projects. Additionally, an Accelerator programme for mid-career academics was now being launched. On KTPs, UWE continued to do very well, with an excellent support team, but had the potential to do even more. The KTPs provided research opportunities for academics across the board. Professor Boddy invited members to highlight anything that might be missing from the plan or suggestions as to where activity might be focused or, if appropriate, stopped.

RKEC19.06.24 Asked whether external PGR income was included in the target, the Chair explained that if this was a Research Council funded studentship then it would not be included, but if part of a bigger grant then it would. Professor Willey felt that more thought was needed to see how PGR income might contribute more to the target, and felt that other comparable HEIs were probably better at bringing in PGR income and reporting in these terms.

RKEC19.06.25 It was suggested that the VC Interdisciplinary Challenge Fund might be expanded as a mechanism for funding smaller cross-faculty initiatives. Further thought would be given to this, potentially at a local/Faculty level as well as UWE-wide.

RKEC19.06.26 Other suggestions around increasing income included better succession planning (including consideration of flight risk) and engagement with top bidders. Members were asked to feed in their thoughts to Tracey John. It was suggested that research beacon workshops might be held in the autumn ahead of the next round of internal funding schemes.

LIBRARY SERVICES UPDATE

RKEC19.06.27 Mrs Conway had presented to the Committee on Plan S at its previous meeting and she reported that following consultation and feedback the launch had now been moved forward a year to 1 January 2021. This was welcome news as it would give people time to prepare. Library Services were keeping an eye on progress and were looking closely at journal renewals, with a move away from the subscription model.

RKEC19.06.28 Mrs Conway reported that funds remained available for open access publishing, and any queries should be directed to the Library research team.

URKEC SUB-COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS

RKEC19.06.29 *Human Tissue Sub-Committee (HTSC)*

Professor Conway presented the HTSC annual report (paper RKEC19.06.07). It had been a successful year with no problems to report (other than the skeletons in the cupboard reported at the previous meeting!). Professor Boddy thanked Professor Conway and her committee.

RKEC19.06.30 *Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee*

Dr Ellwood presented the annual report for AWEC (paper RKEC19.06.08), noting applications received and reviewed for both research and teaching. Two new members had been appointed in accordance with the request from this Committee (URKEC). Following the departure of one of the two vets on the Committee attempts were now being made to recruit a second vet. Dr Ellwood described Safe Systems of Work (SSOWs) and explained how these had expedited applications and streamlined processes. The Committee was continuing to look into ways that students may directly contribute to excellent ethical practice, including a competition or scheme to facilitate this.

RKEC19.06.31 Dr Ellwood confirmed that teaching applications were dealt with differently from research applications. For research projects the PI is responsible for all ethical considerations. For the use of animals and animal by-products in teaching, the lecturer/supervisor must take responsibility. The AWEC uses separate coding for research and teaching applications, and all are completely auditable.

To ensure that all new projects are captured and that new staff are aware of their responsibilities, the Committee had conducted an audit, and tried to be as proactive as possible about informing people, including providing information in some induction programmes.

Dr Draper reported that UWE PhD students at Hartpury go through Hartpury Ethics Committee rather than AWEC.

RKEC19.06.32 Professor Boddy advised that the University regularly receives Freedom of Information requests about the use of animals in research, but noted that UWE staff and students do not carry out work (at UWE) with live animals of the type that requires UWE to hold a licence. He thanked Dr Ellwood and his committee.

GRADUATE SCHOOL

RKEC19.06.33 *Annual Report*

Professor Willey presented the Graduate School's annual report (paper RKEC19.06.09) which was to be submitted to Academic Board the following week. He noted the following highlights:

1. PGR numbers continue to grow and the number of students completing within the UKRI threshold continued to rise.
2. Increase in the number of externally funded studentships: 268 externally funded including some from Hartpury.
3. Significant progress had been made in offering a flexible format for PhD submissions

RKEC19.06.34 Professor Willey reported that the University had been given its PRES results for the current year, but that these had not yet been benchmarked so it was difficult to know how they should be read in terms of reporting on UWE's position in

relation to the whole sector. With an overall score of 82% the University's standing may be very good, or not.

RKEC19.06.35 As in previous years research culture was a problem – without this UWE's score would be around 87%. Despite all efforts to address this challenge the score for research culture had not moved. It was suggested that with a low response rate it may not be appropriate to make sweeping judgements and it might be useful to carry out our own analysis so as to be able to fully understand what PGR students expect from a research culture. Professor Willey sought the Committee's advice on how best to present the information currently available. The Committee confirmed that it was happy for Professor Willey to present the results and explain the issues, and was happy for the report to go forward to Academic Board.

RKEC19.06.36 *Amendments to regulations and procedures*

Professor Willey reported that all the proposed changes highlighted in red in paper RKEC19.06.09b had been agreed by the Graduate School Committee on 11 June 2019. All were confirmed by the Committee.

RKEC19.06.37 *Proposal to mandate deposit of doctoral research data into UWE's data repository*

PGR students will be required to complete a research data management plan and upload this to the research governance record. Part of this process would involve doctoral students considering their long-term data preservation and sharing options. The present proposal was that the 2019-20 PGR cohort (with support from Library Services) would trial the depositing of research data into UWE's data repository (as appropriate) with a view to mandating the practice from September 2020. Any decision to mandate would be brought to this Committee.

RKEC19.06.38 Members agreed that it would be good to test the approach over the coming year, taking on board any issues, including any ethical considerations.

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

RKEC19.06.39 Amanda Oliver attended for this item and explained the rationale for the proposals to amend the current academic governance structure. The intention of the changes was to smarten up the structure following the review of academic governance arrangements in 2017, and to take on board good practice. There were recommendations around reporting lines and responsibilities, protocols, updated terms of reference (for clarity and consistency), and a community of practice.

RKEC19.06.40 The review had recognised that there were currently unwieldy groupings outside the governance structure, with confusion around decision-making and reporting lines, overly long meetings and some lack of engagement when decisions are taken elsewhere.

RKEC19.06.41 Mrs Oliver stated that the main changes proposed were around behaviours rather than structure, eg lack of reference to terms of reference. In the proposed revised structure the top tier would remain as now. The Strategy Implementation Group

would now become part of the formal structure (as a committee) which Ms Oliver stated was an important step forward, and would be mirrored on LTSEC. There would be an opportunity to establish task and finish groups, special interest groups, as needed. The FRDCs and RDAB (which currently report to the Graduate School) would in the new structure report directly to Academic Board. She stated that the proposals were currently in draft and all would have an opportunity to comment.

RKEC19.06.42 Members noted that in the new structure FRKECs would report to Faculty Boards. Ms Oliver stated that Departmental Committees were currently thought to be ineffective, with decision making taking place at Faculty Executives. She maintained that there would still be linkages between committees, even where reporting lines were changed. The membership of Faculty Boards would be changing.

RKEC19.06.43 A consultation was due to be launched shortly, to run from 17 to 28 June. Student and Academic Services had been consulting with chairs and Executive Deans since the beginning of the year and their comments had been used in developing the proposed structure. It was planned to present the new structure to Academic Board on 3 July, for subsequent approval by Board of Governors.

RKEC19.06.44 Issues raised by members about the proposals included:

- There is no formal grouping for research governance in the structure and this might merit further thought and discussion.
- By changing the reporting line for FRKECS from URKEC to Faculty Boards there was a danger that the linkage with URKEC would be broken. It was also not clear how Departmental Executives reporting to Faculty Boards would be workable.
- Concern about implied (rather than actual) linkages which would likely result in convening additional meetings and altering reporting timelines.
- Faculty Research Degrees Committees currently reported into the Graduate School Committee and to the Research Degrees Awards Board. As their role includes aspects of formal progression there could be issues around direct reporting to Academic Board.

RKEC19.06.45 The Chair proposed that discussion be halted at that stage, advised members to look out for the consultation and encouraged them to send in their feedback.

RESEARCH UPDATES FROM ASSOCIATE DEANS (RKE)

RKEC19.06.46 Faculty research updates were provided for each of the faculties.

RKEC19.06.47 FBL (paper RKEC19.06.10) Mr McDowell reported that funding had been quiet, but that there had been a lot of bidding activity, much to Innovate UK. Review of potential outputs for REF submission was ongoing.

RKEC19.06.48 FET (paper RKEC19.06.11) Dr Clark stated that Professor Glenn Lyons was helping with the development of impact case studies, and a recent writing retreat on

impact had been particularly successful and was a model which might possibly be used in other parts of the University. A FET/HAS session was planned to explore the possibilities of joint working.

RKEC19.06.49 HAS (paper RKEC19.06.12) Professor Doran made a correction to page 1 of her report. The total project value of the EPSRC award (PASS reference HAS-AHP-17-034) should read £1.3M, with £329,520 to UWE. She highlighted some of the excellent work and activity going on in her faculty.

RKEC19.06.50 ACE (paper RKEC19.06.13) Ms Edwards reported on research appointments made, including Wallscourt Fellows with two further positions going out to re-advertisement; a new internships initiative over the summer; and the ACE research celebration event on 28 June.

RKEC19.06.51 On the Wallscourt Fellow and Professorial appointments, Professor Boddy stated that he would circulate details to the Committee once the Wallscourt Foundation had been informed.

Action: MB

RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY UPDATE

RKEC19.06.52 The University's Research Data Management is intended to ensure that data produced by UWE Bristol researchers are created, stored, used and where appropriate re-used, and archived or destroyed according to good research practice and ethical requirements, legal and regulatory frameworks and funder requirements. Professor Boddy reported that the policy had now been revised and updated to comply with GDPR and the availability of UWE's Information Security Toolkit.

RKEC19.06.53 It was noted that the requirement to use OneDrive for Business as the only cloud storage provision, and to use UWE-managed devices for creating, sorting and processing restricted or confidential information created some challenges, including whether this would be effectively resourced. Members considered it important to make sure that the policy was made workable, and that people have a good understanding of using OneDrive. With those provisos the updated Research Data Management Policy (for staff research) was approved.

EXTERNAL BIDDING DETAILS

RKEC19.06.54 The report on successful research bidding (paper RKEC19.06.15) was received without comment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

RKEC19.06.55 The Committee noted the Health and Safety Quarterly Briefing (paper RKEC19.06.16). No other health and safety issues were raised.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RKEC19.06.56 Professor Boddy alerted members to a forthcoming conference event on 12 July focusing on Technicians, 'Technicians towards 2030'. It was being held at Glenside, introduced by the Vice Chancellor and would include an address by Kelly Vere, HE and Technician Commitment Lead for the Science Council. The event would include workshops showcasing the work of technicians and tours of the new facilities at Glenside (CT scanner, babies, ophthalmology). He encouraged everyone to attend.

MEETING DATES FOR 2019-20

Wednesday 23 October 2019, 14:00-16:30

Wednesday 29 January 2020, 14:00-16:30

Wednesday 1 April 2020, 14:00-16:30

Wednesday 24 June 2020, 14:00-16:30

Actions:

RKEC19.06.04	The Chair to write to PGR students to encourage them to consider standing as a student representative on URKEC	MB
RKEC19.06.05	The Chair to circulate the UWE briefing note on civic university status	MB
RKEC19.06.07	The Chair to circulate TRAC data to members	MB
RKEC19.06.21	The Chair to report back the Graduate School Committee's comments on the UWE Strategy 2030	MB
RKEC19.06.51	The Chair to circulate details of Wallscourt Fellows and Professors once the Wallscourt Foundation has been informed	MB