



Academic Board

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025 in Room 7X111 on Frenchay Campus.

Present: Amanda Coffey (Chair), Fiona Cramp, Olena Doran, Andrew Geary, David Greenham, Bernhard Gross, John Hancock, Khadiza Hossain, Tracey John (Secretary), Jessica Lamond, Helena Lewis-Smith, Noelle Quenivet, Andrew Simpson, Robin Thorn

Apologies: Amanda Conway, Gareth Edwards, James Green, Daniela Paddeu, Jenna Pandeli, Darren Reynolds, Philippa Shelton, Danielle Sinnett, Yarden Woolf

In attendance: Amanda McLay (item 6.1), Nicola Temple (item 6.2), David Young (Officer)

RKEC.25.06.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

RKEC.25.06.1.1 Members were welcomed to the Committee. It was noted that Andrew Simpson was attending today (alternate for Gareth Edwards). Apologies were noted in the usual way.

RKEC.25.06.1.2 No declarations of interest were noted.

RKEC.25.06.2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RKEC.25.06.2.1 Previous minutes

Paper RKEC.25.06.01 was received.

RKEC.25.06.2.1.1 Members received the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2025. They were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

RKEC.25.06.2.2 Action sheet and matters arising

Paper RKEC.25.06.02 was received.

The following items were noted as being in progress:

RKEC.25.06.2.2.1 *RKEC.25.01.5.1.3 The Secretary/ Director of REE introduced a paper proposing a moment-in-time "sense-check" of UWE's risk appetite in the research space.*
UPDATE: Has been added to 25/26 indicative business plan (see item 5.3). Action closed

RKEC.25.06.2.2.2 *RKEC.25.04.4.2.3 From a corporate scorecard perspective, RKEC should look at trends from across the research and KE data to ascertain a sensible stretch-target across the Colleges. The Committee should also consider whether a more meaningful and more holistic corporate KPI might be total external RKE income, rather than just research income.*
UPDATE: Has been added to summary action plan section on annual assurance report. Action closed

RKEC.25.06.3 THEMATIC DEEP DIVE

RKEC.25.06.3.1 Combined Local Authority Growth Plan *Presentation was received.*

RKEC.25.06.3.1.1 The Director of REE presented a slide deck on regional activity and the local growth plan proposed by the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA).

RKEC.25.06.3.1.2 After the national growth mission was introduced, discussion focused on the regional plan and its "cross-cutting enablers": five evidence-led sectors which all successfully align with the UWE mission, including its RISE agenda. The University connects well to this innovative place-based approach, with its activities in research and development, new skills pathways and eco projects within the greener economy.

RKEC.25.06.3.1.3 It was recommended that the University focuses upon a shortlist of projects within each sector of the growth plan, with specific development needed in Clean Energy Industries. It was noted that the MCA is keen to speak to relevant UWE staff, and REE will facilitate this future engagement.

RKEC.25.06.3.1.4 In the discussion, it was noted UWE will be involved as much as possible in the beginning stages of the plan, both to ensure a co-creating voice and to be well placed for future funding calls.

RKEC.25.06.4 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

RKEC.25.06.4.1 Research Metrics and Bidding Data

Paper RKEC.25.06.03 was received.

RKEC.25.06.4.1.1 The Director of REE introduced the Monthly Bidding Report for YTD May 2025 prepared by the Business Intelligence Analyst (REE). A summary of top-level headlines was also included.

RKEC.25.06.4.1.2 It was noted that there has been an encouraging increase in large bids, although small bids still need to be supported. KE metrics remain variable.

RKEC.25.06.4.1.3 Members were reminded that REE can support Colleges in their bidding activity. This offer was welcomed by members, particularly for support in interdisciplinary bids and work with collaborative partners.

RKEC.25.06.4.2 REF preparedness work

Verbal update.

RKEC.25.06.4.2.1 Following the Research Excellence Manager's substantive update at the April meeting, the Chair updated the Committee on current REF 2029 preparations.

RKEC.25.06.4.2.2 It was reported that indicative decisions on UoA configurations will need to be made by the end of the summer, with recommendations going to VCE. Furthermore, a strong narrative will need to be formulated to effectively present the work that has gone into fostering People, Culture and Environment (PCE) at UWE.

RKEC.25.06.4.2.3 It was also noted that the HESA Staff record for 2024/25 is being used as a pilot year for REF 2029 to allow institutions to practice and test their data compilation methods for the future volume measure. As such, it would be beneficial for the HESA return to be front-facing and proactive during the current period.

RKEC.25.06.4.2.4 The publication of the re-agreed Code of Practice to be submitted by December 2025, ahead of the February 2026 deadline. A consultation period will be necessary, including initial discussion and modelling.

RKEC.25.06.4.2.5 Discussion of the Code of Practice to be included on the 2025/26 Business Plan and scheduled for the October 2025 meeting
[ACTION: Committee Officer]

RKEC.25.06.5 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**RKEC.25.06.5.1 PRES results**

Paper RKEC.25.06.04 was received.

RKEC.25.06.5.1.1 The Academic Director of the Doctoral Academy updated members on results and learnings from the 2025 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey. It was noted that a fuller statistical presentation recently went to LTSEC.

RKEC.25.06.5.1.2 The need to develop appropriate responses to PRES at various levels was highlighted, from UWE as an institution to the more local research centre/group/school level.

RKEC.25.06.5.1.3 Also highlighted were the nuances and complexities of addressing the culture and community challenge. Embedding the PGR culture in research centres and facilitating access for those doctoral students not currently situated in centres were discussed. As opportunities for wider interaction are created, the finding that 30% of doctoral students do not consider the research community important needs to be carefully reflected upon.

RKEC.25.06.5.1.4 Questions from PRES addressing the sense of community within the PGR experience were noted as particularly important as this survey is tagged as an official data set within the PCE strand of REF 2029.

RKEC.25.06.5.1.5 The following comments were made by members:

1. Prof docs and part-timers may find it particularly difficult to feel part of the student research community.
2. Effective communication is important in highlighting the various opportunities that already exist.
3. Bringing in motivated PGRs enhances the sense that doctoral students are co-creating opportunities.
4. PGRs will have their own Freshers' Fairs in 2025/26 (in October, January and April).
5. The College Conferences could be opened to more College students.

RKEC.25.06.5.1.6 The Chair concluded the discussion by stating that there is a role for the Doctoral Academy to bring all these opportunities together and promote them regularly and effectively.

RKEC.25.06.5.2 Clarification of the functioning of UEIC and RKEC within the academic governance structure

RKEC.25.06.05 was received.

RKEC.25.06.5.2.1 The Chair noted an information flowchart and report into the respective roles and relationship between the two committees.

RKEC.25.06.5.2.2 In the discussion, it was noted that understanding ethics issues is good for RKEC, but the mechanism for information flows could be more structured. The pipelines into RKEC from UEIC, and from RKEC into UEIC, need to be effective to ensure the committees do not miss any essential updates.

RKEC.25.06.5.3 Indicative Business Plan 25/26

RKEC.25.06.06 was received.

RKEC.25.06.5.3.1 The Secretary introduced an indicative schedule of business for the 2025/26 academic year.

RKEC.25.06.5.3.2 As well as continued research centre spotlights and invitations for further engagement into RKEC business, the following deep dive areas were suggested by members:

- 1) The REF landscape;
- 2) The funding landscape (in particular, areas of success in the corporate KPI);
- 3) The impact of funding;
- 4) REE and the support it can offer.

RKEC.25.06.6 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR ENDORSEMENT

RKEC.25.06.6.1 Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers – action plan

RKEC.25.06.07 was received.

RKEC.25.06.6.1.1 The CHSS Dean in Research and Enterprise, the institutional Concordat lead, presented the latest draft of the three-year action plan that will need to be published in July 2025 as part of UWE's institutional commitment to the Concordat.

RKEC.25.06.6.1.2 It was noted that added scrutiny and deeper readings were given by RKEC "critical readers" representing specific audiences of relevance.

RKEC.25.06.6.1.3	<p>The following points were noted by critical readers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is a comprehensive plan; ambitious and fit for purpose. 2. A number of longer-term actions directly relate to Workforce planning, training and development. 3. Crossovers into the academic workload review project and Academic Careers Pathways, so alignment is needed to ensure we build upon things in place. 4. The action plan needs to consider that not all academics are invested in the PDR process, and work to better embed will be important. 5. Training on resilience, well-being and time management should be framed to not “individualise” institutional problems. 6. Research ethics training may be better delivered through a workshop, rather than online. 7. The innovation internship scheme is positive (although the University needs to help build links for staff). 8. A few typographical errors to be addressed prior to publication.
RKEC.25.06.6.1.4	<p>The Chair commented that a whole University approach is needed on the Concordat, with efforts needed to mainstream a researcher lens on our activities and initiatives. We also, in due course, require a far more detailed implementation plan incorporating the <i>how</i> and the <i>who</i>.</p>
RKEC.25.06.6.1.5	<p>Pending the incorporation of “critical reader” feedback, plus a detailed proof-read, members were assured that this final draft of the Concordat action/implementation plan could be endorsed for Academic Board approval prior to external publication [ACTION: Committee Officer].</p>
RKEC.25.06.6.1.6	<p>Progress on measurables to be tracked at RKEC in 2025/26.</p>
RKEC.25.06.6.2	<p>UWE Intellectual Property Policy <i>RKEC.25.06.08 was received.</i></p>
RKEC.25.06.6.2.1	<p>The Head of Innovation and Impact introduced amendments to this delegated policy in accordance with the revision schedule of the Academic Board Policy Framework.</p>
RKEC.25.06.6.2.2	<p>It was noted that the changes reflected recent structural changes (initially College restructuring, now UTP). The proposed</p>

amendments also introduced more positive language around the assignment of student-owned IP to the University, as well as embedding UWE's commitment to the recommendations of one Spin-Out Review.

RKEC.25.06.6.2.3

The following member comments were noted:

1. Further clarification was requested on ownership as regards collaboration/joint IP (perhaps with examples).
2. Examples also requested on software/design work.
3. Verification needed that the IP Policy aligns with the Open Access Policy (now known as the UWE Research Publication Policy).

RKEC.25.06.6.2.4

Pending further tightening of language and clarifying the alignment with the UWE Research Publications Policy, the amended IP Policy was approved on behalf of Academic Board.

RKEC.25.06.7

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

RKEC.25.06.7.1

Chair's actions

Verbal update.

RKEC.25.06.7.1.1

It was noted that no further approvals or decisions were taken under Chair's action since the previous meeting.

RKEC.25.06.7.2

External environment scan

Paper RKEC.25.06.09 was received.

RKEC.25.06.7.2.1

The Committee noted a scan of recent external factors that potentially impact upon research, knowledge and enterprise at UWE, and which would merit attention going forward. Specific factors included:

- 1) Research England to track how REF funding improves EDI outcomes.
- 2) The impact of US political decisions on research funding/collaborations.
- 3) A new researcher career tracking development from CRAC-Vitae.

RKEC.25.06.7.3

Update from University Ethics and Integrity Committee

Paper RKEC.25.06.10 was received.

RKEC.25.06.7.3.1 Members noted the decisions, debates and escalations undertaken in May 2025 by the University committee with oversight of research governance and academic ethics and integrity.

RKEC.25.06.7.4 Library and Learning Services report

Paper RKEC.25.06.11 was received.

RKEC.25.06.7.4.1 The Committee noted that JISC is leading negotiations for the UK university sector with the "Big 5" publishers, with the aim to reduce costs and move away from high publishing charges.

RKEC.25.06.7.4.2 Members also noted updates on UKRI's draft research data management policy which proposes new expectations for sharing and managing research data including algorithms, software code and workflows.

RKEC.25.06.8 ITEMS FOR ASSURANCE

RKEC.25.06.8.1 Review of Chair's actions taken on behalf of the Committee during 2024/25

Paper RKEC.25.06.12 was received.

RKEC.25.06.8.1.1 Members endorsed the outcome of the annual audit of Chair's actions undertaken by the Chair of UEIC.

RKEC.25.06.8.2 Research Strategy risk

Paper RKEC.25.06.13 was received.

RKEC.25.06.8.2.1 The Chair and Secretary introduced the latest version of the risk descriptor for research strategy.

RKEC.25.06.8.2.2 Members were informed that the current document was a fuller register which now included actions to control the critical risk in failing to attract external funding.

RKEC.25.06.8.2.3 It was further noted that the risk threat of 3 in the "impact of research" section reflects the current situation that REG does not yet have full confidence in the impact pipeline, but that this should soon start to improve because of the mitigations now specified.

RKEC.25.06.8.2.4 RKEC updates to be included in the Academic Performance and Risk Report (Academic Assurance) going to the 2 July Academic Board.

RKEC.25.06.8.3 Sub-Committee Annual Assurance Reports

Papers RKEC.25.06.14-17 were received.

RKEC.25.06.8.3.1 The Chairs of the RKEC sub-committees introduced their annual assurance reports.

RKEC.25.06.8.3.2 Members were assured that the Doctoral Academy Sub-Committee and the College RKECs had effectively discharged their duties in alignment with their Terms of Reference.

RKEC.25.06.8.4 RKEC Annual Assurance Report to Academic Board

Paper RKEC.25.06.18 was received.

RKEC.25.06.8.4.1 The Committee considered a draft of the annual assurance report with members agreeing that, in the academic year 2024/25, RKEC effectively discharged its duties in alignment with its Terms of Reference. It was noted that some areas would be revisited in 2025/26.

RKEC.25.06.8.4.2 The RKEC annual assurance report was endorsed to the Academic Board meeting on 2 July [**Action:** Committee Officer].

RKEC.25.06.9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Equitable Remuneration in Co-produced Research

RKEC.25.06.9.1 The CATE Dean Research and Enterprise raised the issue of support for research partners and participants, an issue previously raised at the CATE RKEC and UEIC.

RKEC.25.06.9.2 Members discussed the EDI implications of policies and guidelines on research project collaboration, specifically those relating to remuneration for both collaborators and participants in co-produced research.

RKEC.25.06.9.3 The Chair concluded that substantive discussion on this matter should be scheduled on the 2025/26 RKEC Business Plan, with a view to creating a possible framework for equitable remuneration [**ACTION:** Committee Officer].

RKEC.25.06.10 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

RKEC.25.06.10.1

Next meeting dates for academic year 2025/26:

- 21 October 2025
- 29 January 2026
- 24 March 2026
- 18 June 2026