



Academic Board

**RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2025 in Room 7X111 on Frenchay Campus.

**Present:** Amanda Coffey (Chair), Amana Conway, Mary Cramp, Beth Daniels, Olena Doran, Charlotte Edmunds, Marc Griffiths, Bernhard Gross, John Hancock, Enda Hayes, Khadiza Hossain, Tracey John (Secretary), Gerhard Kemp, Jessica Lamond, Helena Lewis-Smith, Marcus Olivant, Daniela Paddeu, Jenna Pandeli, Carinna Parraman, Darren Reynolds, Yarden Woolf, Noelle Quenivet

**Apologies:** David Barrett, Andrew Simpson, Mark Tomlinson

**In attendance:** Philippa Shelton, Lucy Wicksteed (item 6.1), David Young (Officer)

<b>RKEC.25.10.1</b>	<b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</b>
RKEC.25.10.1.1	New members were welcomed to the Committee. Apologies were noted in the usual way.
RKEC.25.10.1.2	No declarations of interest were noted.
<b>RKEC.25.10.2</b>	<b>ANNUAL BUSINESS</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.2.1</b>	<b>Terms of reference and membership</b> Paper RKEC.25.10.01 was received.
RKEC.25.10.2.1.1	RKEC received its updated Terms of Reference featuring an updated membership section previously approved at Academic Board in July 2025 following University Transformation Project and senior leadership role changes.
RKEC.25.10.2.1.2	It was noted that the Secretary role needs to be more clearly defined in the membership list, and that the correct job title for Dr Bernhard Gross needs to be added.
RKEC.25.10.2.1.3	Pending these amendments, members endorsed the terms of

	reference for submission to the Academic Board meeting on 10 December 2025 [ <b>Action:</b> Committee Officer].
<b>RKEC.25.10.2.2</b>	<b>RKEC business plan 2025-26</b> Paper RKEC.25.10.02 was received.
RKEC.25.10.2.2.1	The Secretary introduced the indicative business plan for the academic year, including possible deep-dive topics. It was noted that the plan was currently accurate, but changes may occur as the Committee progresses through its meetings.
RKEC.25.10.2.2.2	Members endorsed the business plan for submission to Academic Board on 10 December 2025 [ <b>Action:</b> Committee Officer].
<b>RKEC.25.10.2.3</b>	<b>Sub-Committee Terms of Reference</b> Paper RKEC.25.10.03 was received.
RKEC.25.10.2.3.1	RKEC received an update on planned changes to its sub-committee's Terms of Reference to reflect changed job titles post-UTP and the implementation of a new PGR student representation system recently approved by LTSEC Chair's action.
RKEC.25.10.2.3.2	The membership approved a minor change to the CRKEC Terms of Reference.
RKEC.25.10.2.3.3	It was noted that the Doctoral Academy Sub-Committee Terms of Reference is still being prepared and will be approved via Chair's action following the finalisation of membership proposals still in process [ <b>Action:</b> Committee Officer].
<b>RKEC.25.10.3</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.3.1</b>	<b>Previous minutes</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.04 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.3.1.1	Members received the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025. They were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.
<b>RKEC.25.10.3.2</b>	<b>Action sheet and matters arising</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.05 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.3.2.1	The following item was noted as being in progress: <i>RKEC.25.06.4.2.5 REF preparedness: discussion of the Code of Practice to be scheduled for Oct 25 meeting.</i>

RKEC.25.10.3.2.2	<p>UPDATE: Due to REF 2029 pause, further work is needed on the Code of Practice, with a revised window for its submission. Discussion to be postponed to the January 2026 RKEC meeting.</p> <p><i>Matters arising:</i>  <u>Health and Safety in Research Update</u>  The Head of Health and Safety confirmed in writing before the meeting that all Colleges have confirmed that health and safety in research is integrated into their health and safety management processes. The biannual health and safety reporting from Colleges to the University's H&amp;S Executive Committee (UHSEC) is now inclusive of health and safety research activity. This in turn ensures any escalation of research health and safety risk as appropriate, which as necessary can then be escalated to the RKEC.</p>
<b>RKEC.25.10.4</b>	<b>DEEP DIVE</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.4.1</b>	<b>Academic governance and the role of RKEC</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.06 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.4.1.1	The Secretary presented a slide deck to refresh members on the importance of academic governance at UWE and RKEC's role in providing advice and assurance to Academic Board as well as receiving assurance from its sub-committees within the academic governance structure.
RKEC.25.10.4.1.2	Key themes of the RKEC's broad yet specific remit were the need for assurance in the management of failure in research strategy, the monitoring of research quality, the scrutiny of policies and frameworks, and the awareness of external factors (e.g. REF and Research England) in UWE's research strategy. RKEC's two main interrelated roles can be summarised as the managing of risk and the monitoring of key performance indicators.
RKEC.25.10.4.1.3	Members were reminded that RKEC is part of a system of committee governance, hence has both an oversight and advisory role. Members should make decisions based on careful analysis of data and collective responsibility, bringing in a diversity of voices.
<b>RKEC.25.10.4.2</b>	<b>Strategic priorities of PVC Research and Knowledge Exchange</b> <i>Verbal update.</i>

RKEC.25.10.4.2.1	Professor Darren Reynolds provided members with his priorities and focus areas for 2025/26.
RKEC.25.10.4.2.2	<p>The PVC's main objective is to nurture and grow UWE's research space, to ensure there is consistent and innovative activity, to create impact and drive the research culture forward. More specific areas include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To champion early career pathways, to improve and (where needed) repair the talent pipeline. The need for mentorship and PhD funding bid support was mentioned in discussion.</li> <li>2) To ensure that agreed risk appetite underpins research processes.</li> <li>3) To increase local, regional and national engagement and build partnerships with other universities.</li> <li>4) To work with the Doctoral Academy and understand PGR growth areas via the RISE agenda.</li> <li>5) To be active in working with REE on research bids and to celebrate and showcase research excellence.</li> </ol>
RKEC.25.10.4.2.3	The PVC added that, in approximately twelve months' time, we need to have demonstrated success in our activities and endeavours. In the meantime, UWE needs to be a welcoming and supportive space for researchers.
<b>RKEC.25.10.5</b>	<b>STANDING AGENDA ITEMS</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.5.1</b>	<p><b>Update on Research Excellence Group (and REF preparation work)</b>  <i>Verbal update.</i></p>
RKEC.25.10.5.1.1	The Secretary assured that REG continues its work with impactful, high-quality research remaining the priority, even as the REF guidelines shift, the RE narrative changes, and all aspects of the process are reviewed.
RKEC.25.10.5.1.2	A future deep dive on QR was considered helpful as part of RKEC's need to be assured on narrative and staying current with the evolving REF landscape.
<b>RKEC.25.10.5.2</b>	<p><b>College research updates – thematic feedback and highlighted best practice for supporting research</b>  <i>Papers RKEC.25.10.08-10 were received.</i></p>

RKEC.25.10.5.2.1	The College Deans of Research and Enterprise were invited to report on their research objectives and strategic priorities for the year.
RKEC.25.10.5.2.2	Academic upskilling and progression pathways, together with supporting colleagues in high-quality bids, were noted as themes in common between the Colleges.
RKEC.25.10.5.2.3	The CATE Dean noted that their update was substantially aligned with the roadmap.
RKEC.25.10.5.2.4	The CHSS Dean noted that income was slightly above target following funded collaborative work, a cross-disciplinary approach in the research environment, and a focus on large bids (e.g. Dove Partnership).
<b>RKEC.25.10.5.3</b>	<b>Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers – update on action plan</b> <i>RKEC.25.10.11 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.5.3.1	The Deputy Chair presented a short interim report to assure the Committee that the published plan to implement UWE’s institutional commitment to the Concordat was on schedule. It was noted that this report will also go to PAAC in November to assure Board of Governors on action plan deliverables.
RKEC.25.10.5.3.2	Thanks were offered to the CHSS Dean in Research and Enterprise for her excellent work during 2024/25, the responsibility for progressing actions having now transferred to the PVC RKE.
RKEC.25.10.5.3.3	The full annual report will need to go to the Board of Governors in 2026, with the paper being initially considered at RKEC and Academic Board. A standing item on the Concordat to be reported at each RKEC during 2025/26.
<b>RKEC.25.10.06</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.6.1</b>	<b>Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) 5 - results analysis</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.12 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.6.1.1	The Secretary and the Assistant Director of REE (Business) presented RKEC with results analysis from the fifth iteration of the KEF assessment.
RKEC.25.10.6.1.2	It was reported that UWE continues to perform well regionally and within its comparator cluster (Cluster E), with consistent

RKEC.25.10.6.1.3	performance against the seven knowledge exchange perspectives. It was noted that data was taken from the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey (HEBCIS), with submission by UWE across five different areas.
RKEC.25.10.6.1.4	Challenges and opportunities include research-based CPDs and graduate start-ups. LLE introduces further changes in terms of potentially transforming how training is funded, structured and accessed.
RKEC.25.10.6.1.4	UWE researchers would benefit from further guidance on how the sharing of projects on WorkTribe feeds into HEBCIS data which then directly impacts on KEF and HEIF.
<b>RKEC.25.10.7</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR ASSURANCE</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.7.1</b>	<b>Research Strategy risk</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.13 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.7.1.1	The Secretary presented the risk register for research strategy, updating progress against critical actions and effectiveness of critical controls.
RKEC.25.10.7.1.2	In discussion of the refreshing of the threat levels, research funding concerns were reiterated as the main critical risk. Debate was then held on the appropriate threat level for research governance (the second listed risk threat on the descriptor). It was noted that significant progress in this area has been made in recent years, including the establishment of UEIC. However, further evidence will be required to reduce the threat level further. Recommended threat levels together with an agreed risk appetite statement to return to RKEC in January 2026.
<b>RKEC.25.10.8</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</b>
<b>RKEC.25.10.8.1</b>	<b>Chair's actions</b> <i>Verbal update.</i>
RKEC.25.10.8.1.1	It was noted that no further approvals or decisions were taken under Chair's action since the previous meeting.
<b>RKEC.25.10.8.2</b>	<b>External environment scan</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.14 was received.</i>

RKEC.25.10.8.2.1	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:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) New Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology.</li> <li>2) UKRI launch of the Local Innovation Partnership Fund.</li> <li>3) Horizon Europe 2028-2034 update.</li> <li>4) Continued impact of US policies on HE funding/attractiveness.</li> </ol>
RKEC.25.10.8.2.2	The research implications of the Government's Post-16 Education and Skills white paper to come to a future meeting of RKEC.
<b>RKEC.25.10.8.3</b>	<b>Health and safety update</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.15 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.8.3.1	No update to report.
<b>RKEC.25.10.8.4</b>	<b>Update from University Ethics and Integrity Committee</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.16 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.8.4.1	The UEIC Chair gave RKEC members assurance on the key priorities for the year in research governance and integrity.
RKEC.25.10.8.4.2	RKEC members were given highlights of the UEIC Business Plan for 2025/26, which includes Freedom of Speech, records retention, and the final draft of the revised Research Misconduct Procedure.
<b>RKEC.25.10.8.5</b>	<b>Library and Learning Services report</b> <i>Paper RKEC.25.10.17 was received.</i>
RKEC.25.10.8.5.1	The Open Research Services Manager assured RKEC on latest activity, including the installation of a control-accessed Safepoint room in the University Library. Part of the Brunel Centre, this will give access to unique datasets and will be accessible by external researchers if approved.
<b>RKEC.25.10.9</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
RKEC.25.10.9.1	The Chair thanked Yarden Woolf for her valuable contribution as the PGR student representative.
<b>RKEC.25.10.10</b>	<b>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>

RKEC.25.10.10.1

Next meeting dates for academic year 2025/26:

- 29 January 2026
- 24 March 2026
- 18 June 2026