Minutes for the fifth meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the 2018/19 Academic Session, held on Wednesday, 22nd May 2019, 2.00pm in B028, Medway Campus

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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
Prof P Maras	PVC (E&H) Nominee & uREC Chair
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
Mrs W Curran	Finance Manager
Mr P Garrod	University Secretary (invited)
Mr P Angelo	Secretary

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Prof T Reynolds	PVC (LAS) Nominee
Dr C Papaix	PVC (BUS) Nominee
Ms P Gibson	ECR/PGR Nominee
Mr A Papa	Student Union Representative
Ms U Arif-Fryer	Student Union Representative

R&EC-18-5-1 ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR

R&EC-18-5-1.1 University policy on ECRs and BAW points

The Chair presented a paper to the Committee that was an initial draft on how the University supports the development of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in relation to the allocation of BAW points. ECRs are to be supported through various mechanisms which include training and development, mentoring, workload allocation, and access to research funding. The paper was discussed at length by the Committee and panel members were in agreement with the detail and that no amendments were necessary.

The BAW allocation of 200 points to carry out relevant research out of a nominal 1000 for Research and Scholarly Activity (RSA) was deemed to be reasonable and fair, as were the guidelines that new academic staff were not be allocated more than 400 points for teaching duties in their first year. **The Chair will now circulate this policy amongst the Provost Group for further discussion and comment. The Head of RETI is to communicate this back to the ECR community via the ECR/PGR forum for their feedback which will be reported on outside of this Committee.**

ACTION: CHAIR/HEAD OF RETI

R&EC-18-5-1.2   Knowledge Exchange Concordat in England

The Committee was provided with an initial draft of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat in England that had been sent by Universities UK in conjunction with Research England for consultation. Institutional responses were expected by Monday, 1st July and this draft was discussed in detail by panel members. The Chair reminded the Committee that the University had provided a response to the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) consultation earlier in the year, but that this Concordat had a wider context within the sector, and institutions were expected to subscribe to a set of high-level principles with a view to enhancing the profile of Knowledge Exchange. As such, **the Chair requested that this be discussed at Faculty level through the Faculty Research & Enterprise Committees and that the item be put on the relevant agendas. Any feedback or comments were to inform the institutional response and were to be sent to the Director of Research & Enterprise a week before the deadline.**

ACTION: FACULTY DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE/DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE

R&EC-18-5-1.3   University Research Ethics Committee – Changes to 'Terms of Reference'

The University Secretary presented two papers to the Committee that proposed some revisions to the University's Research Ethics Policy along with the 'Terms of Reference'. One of the major changes that was suggested was to make the Faculty Research Ethics Committees responsible for reviewing and approving routine applications from PGR students in order to streamline the ethical approval process, so that the University Research Ethics Committee could focus on areas of greatest risk and reduce potential delays. The University Research Ethics Committee would continue to be responsible for the approval of research projects by staff, other than pilot studies, as at present.

Panel members discussed both papers at length, and after considerable deliberation, agreed with the proposed changes. For the purpose of the minutes, **the Committee endorsed the revised Research Ethics Policy and the University Secretary will now present this at the next Academic Council meeting on Wednesday, 12th June for ratification. The template 'Terms of Reference' for the Faculty Research Ethics Committees will be updated to reflect the revised policy which will come into effect in September 2019.**

ACTION: UNIVERSITY SECRETARY

R&EC-18-5-1.4 Strength in Places Fund (SIPF) update

The Vice-Chair provided the Committee with an update on the Strength in Places Fund (SIPF) proposal that was submitted earlier in the academic year. The bid had been developed together with the University of Kent and NIAB-EMR (East Malling Research) with decisions on which proposals that were to be invited for full applications having been delayed on a few occasions. The positive news was that the proposal had now been shortlisted and invited to be developed further, with the University receiving £50k to do so, and has a submission deadline in September. Three consultation events were now scheduled to take place in early June, at each of the partner locations, with the intention of involving interested stakeholders to strengthen the bid. The plan is for the University to deliver certain work packages around food processing and post-harvest management and would be worth in the region of £2m - £3m if successful. The Committee will be kept informed of developments but a second wave of opportunities is scheduled to be launched soon with significant funds being made available that will be of interest.

R&EC-18-5-1.5 Research webpages

The Director of Research & Enterprise briefed the Committee that a development group had recently been established to look at the University webpages and identify ways to potentially improve them. The Director of Research & Enterprise is part of this group and asked members of the Committee for any initial suggestions or comments relating to the Research webpages. This was particularly relevant to the REF 2021 exercise to ensure consistency with the submission and for Research Institutes/Centres/Groups to have an appropriate web presence. This was still at a preliminary stage but the Committee will be kept informed of any developments or requests in due course.

R&EC-18-5-2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

R&EC-18-5-2.1 Minutes of the fourth meeting of the Research & Enterprise Committee for the 2018/19 academic session held on Wednesday, 10th April 2019

The minutes of the Research & Enterprise Committee held on Wednesday, 10th April 2019 were agreed by the Committee to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

R&EC-18-5-3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

R&EC-18-5-3.1 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 18-4-1.5 The Chair reported that a paper setting out some guidance for individuals returning to work after periods of long absence (Research & Enterprise) was also in progress and would now be presented at the next Committee meeting scheduled in May. This also needed to be referred to in the Code of Practice so requires immediate attention.

R&EC-18-5-4 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2021 PREPARATIONS

R&EC-18-5-4.1 Code of Practice update

The Chair presented the final draft of the Code of Practice to the Committee following some amendments from the previous meeting and endorsement from Academic Council. The Chair stressed that the Code of Practice had now been approved at all the necessary levels which included Academic Council, the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), and the University Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDI). All the requisite appendices had now been added and after further discussion the Committee ratified this final version. **The Chair stated that the Vice-Chancellor or a designated nominee would now submit the Code of Practice, following endorsement at the Provost Group Meeting (to be held on Monday, 3rd June) to Research England before the Friday, 7th June deadline.**

ACTION: CHAIR

R&EC-18-5-4.2 GREAT 2019 update

The Head of Research Development Services updated the Committee with the latest developments regarding the GREAT 2019

exercise. The deadline for research outputs to be entered on GALA had now passed and a total of over 1,200 had been submitted by almost 300 members of staff. This figure is expected to rise slightly as there were some manual submissions that needed to be considered as well as there being some local extensions that were agreed to. Over 500 of these were new outputs that had not been assessed before. The Committee was reminded that staff had been able to select up to 6 outputs for assessment and rank them in order of quality based on previous GREAT exercises and their own judgment.

The Chair stated that these were encouraging figures and the next step was to identify the internal assessors again via the main panel leads. The internal assessor sheets were to be sent out before 1st July with an additional training forum being held in June to facilitate the process. External assessment will then follow as per previous GREAT cycles which was essential for calibration. The Committee agreed that the internal assessors were to be established by the middle of June and the Chair added that there would also be a UoA leaders forum next month with details to follow in due course.

Panel members were also reminded of the UoA environment statements and impact case studies submission deadline of 31st July as well as the Faculty REF Working Groups confirming the UoA configurations. The Chair stressed again that the environment statements were weak last year and needed significant work and development.

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

R&EC-18-5-5.1 Research & Enterprise Financial Summary Report 2018/19

The Committee noted the financial summary report by Faculty from 1st August 2018 to 30th April 2019.

The Director of Research & Enterprise reported that revenue figures were currently standing at £15.4m for the first nine months of the year which was on a par with academic session 2017/18. NRI was showing an increase of £1.8m for the same period as last year which offset decreases across some of the Faculties. Contracting figures were healthy and presently stood at £23.4m 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 was the current performance of FEH where both revenues and contracting totals were significantly below expectations.

R&EC-18-5-5.2 Research & Enterprise Bidding Activity Report 2018/19

The Committee noted the bidding activity report by Faculty from 1st August 2018 to 30th April 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. There had been a slight decrease in success rates for FBUS which may be due to a number of new members of research staff in that Faculty, and the Director of Research & Enterprise took the opportunity to remind the Committee 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.

R&EC-18-5-5.3   High Performance Computing update

The Director of Research & Enterprise presented an initial draft of the 'Terms of Reference' for the High Performance Computing (HPC) Steering Group that had recently been established and which was discussed in detail at the last Committee meeting. At this stage, this was just for noting by panel members, but there were two initial observations regarding the membership which were that it was a very male dominated group, and that it lacked any representation from either ECRs or PGRs. The Committee concurred that both may need addressing and **the Chair requested that this be circulated to the ECR/PGR community as there may be some individuals that are significant users of High Performance Computing in order to invite them to join the HPC Steering Group if appropriate.**

ACTION: DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE/HEAD OF RETI

R&EC-18-5-6 RETI

R&EC-18-5-6.1   PhD programme codes update

The Head of RETI informed the Committee that currently only FBUS had reported back on the paper that had been discussed on PhD programme codes earlier in the year and that feedback was still outstanding from the other Faculties. The consensus was that the

University uses too many PhD programme codes, presently the figure is 55, and this should be significantly reduced to ideally about a dozen. This could possibly work by having three per Faculty but was dependent on how each of them would like them structured. **The Chair stressed that this was an important item that needed resolving and requested that Faculty Directors of Research & Enterprise respond to the paper with proposals before the last Committee meeting of the academic session.**

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

R&EC-18-5-6.2   ECR/PGR forum update

The Head of RETI provided the Committee with a brief update on the main points that arose from the last ECR/PGR forum that was held on Thursday, 9th May. These were just for noting but included that the final response rate for PRES 2019 was 43% which was an increase on PRES 2018, the development of new ethics training, the recent IP workshop that had taken place, the successful 3MT competition, and the establishment of a Doctoral Society which was to be launched in the autumn. The forum was well attended and was the last one scheduled for this academic session. The ECR community were keen to hear the latest developments with regards to research and the allocation of BAW points that was discussed at the start of this meeting, and the Head of RETI will communicate this accordingly.

R&EC-18-5-6.3   Senior Researchers forum update

Following on from the previous item, the Head of RETI informed the Committee that the first ever meeting of the Senior Researchers forum had also recently taken place. The main items discussed were just for noting by panel members, but included the re-alignment of research activity following Brexit, the quality of PGRs and how to manage those that require extra support, REF 2021 with regards to the next steps and timelines, career pathways and best approaches to allow research active staff to focus more on research, and the best mechanisms to encourage greater engagement in the forum moving forward. A second forum will be arranged in the new academic session and the Committee will be kept informed of any significant discussion points.

R&EC-18-5-7 ITEMS FROM FACULTY RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEES

R&EC-18-5-7.1   Equality & Diversity issues

The Vice-Chair presented this item following a recent meeting of the FES Research & Enterprise Committee where concerns were raised

around the University losing its Athena SWAN accreditation, and despite still being a Diversity Champion, having not submitted a return to Stonewall this year. The University had recently been invited to join the London Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme (LIDo) consortium which is run by research intensive institutions such as UCL and KCL, but that they were apprehensive that the University no longer held the Charter. With interviews scheduled in July, this could be a significant problem moving forward as well as when working on high-profile research bids with other institutions. **The Chair agreed that the issue around Athena SWAN accreditation would need to be looked at again as this could have negative consequences moving forward and will duly raise it at the next Provost Group Meeting and discuss the next steps with the HR Director.**

ACTION: CHAIR

R&EC-18-5-8 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH MATTERS

R&EC-18-5-8.1   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-18-5-8.2   Summary of PGR related business by FRDCs for 2018/19 to end of Q3 (30th April 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 April 2019. This was for general noting by the Committee but the total of PGR students currently stood at just over 500, which was still lower than projected targets, although the expectation was that this figure would rise. The main concern was still the significant number of changes to registrations (RDA5), with current totals 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-18-5-8.3   Research & Enterprise Strategy 2016-2021 – Monitoring progress against PGR related targets for 2018/19 to end of Q3 (30th April 2019)

The Committee was presented with a number of tables and bar charts providing a summary of progress against PGR related targets for 2018/19 to the end of Q3. These again were for noting by the Committee but registrations currently stood at 73 against a target of 139 for the academic session, while there were only 35 doctoral award completions against a target of 86. Some Faculties were performing better than others, but the Committee agreed that some

consideration should be given to potentially reviewing these targets downwards for academic session 2019/20, as it was clear that they were too over-optimistic.

R&EC-18-5-8.4   **Student Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure**

The Head of RETI presented a revised version of the Student Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure to the Committee that required approval in order for it to be published for the start of the 2019/20 academic year. Panel members were informed that significant amendments had been made due to recommendations from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) in that certain aspects of the policy may be deemed unfair. The Committee discussed the proposed changes at length and suggested some minor corrections to the wording under section 6.1 'Scale of Offences'. In addition, **the Committee agreed that this policy and procedure should apply to members of staff who were also PGR students and the Chair requested that the Head of RETI take these comments back to the Training & Research Programmes Manager for the final changes to be made before being presented to Academic Council for ratification.**

ACTION: HEAD OF RETI/TRAINING & RESEARCH PROGRAMMES MANAGER

R&EC-18-5-8.5   **Interruptions for PGR students on 'Tier 4' visas update**

The Head of RETI informed the Committee that a meeting had taken place with the Assistant Director of Student Registry in order to try to find a way to better accommodate those students on 'Tier 4' visas that needed to take a legitimate break from their studies without being penalised. Unfortunately, this has proven to be a more complex issue than first envisaged, and a further meeting has been scheduled to come up with appropriate solutions. The Committee will be duly informed of any outcomes.

R&EC-18-5-9 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There were no items for information presented to the Committee.

R&EC-18-5-10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Director of Research & Enterprise notified the Committee of two important dates which were the Research Integrity workshop that was being hosted by the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) on Wednesday, 26th June which should be attended by as many senior research active staff as possible, and the GRE Research Awards 2019 that has a provisional date of Wednesday, 27th November. The

venue was still to be confirmed but the event should follow a similar format to last year which was a great success.

The Director of Research & Enterprise also informed the Committee that following recommendations from the University's internal auditors (BDO), there will be a change to the format to the Faculty QR and HEIF expenditure reports for 2018/19, and that they would now be submitted on standardised templates that will be provided after the year end.

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

R&EC-18-5-11 DATES & TIMES OF 2018/19 MEETINGS

Meeting
July 3rd 2019, Greenwich Campus, Room QA075, 2.00pm