

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD RESEARCH COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25th FEBRUARY 2009, CONFERENCE ROOM, TC LAMBLE BUILDING.

Present: Professor Ray Cooksey (Chair), Professor Paul Martin, Professor Heiko Daniel, Professor Kay Harman, Ms Anne Rocznio, Professor David Brunckhorst Mr Grahame Pearson, Ms Catherine Millis, and Belinda Snell (Secretary).

In Attendance: Ms Donna Santilli

1. Apologies

Professor David Cottle, Ms Eve Woodberry, Mr Jack Bedson

2. Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held 29th October 2008 were mistakenly omitted from the agenda and will be confirmed at the next scheduled meeting.

3. Business Arising/Action Sheet

3.1. Action Sheet

3.1.1 HDR Modules

Professor Kay Harman reported the modules are planned to be live on the web by end of February 2009 and trials are being run to ensure integrity and clarity of information.

3.1.2 Online Research Approval Form

Grahame Pearson and Anne Rocznio have been consulting with Brian Cameron from UNE Information Technology Directorate - the SMART Form software has been obtained and the initial forms should be ready by the third quarter of 2009.

3.1.3 BCSS PhD Scholarship

This will now cover all of UNE schools. See point 5.2 for more information.

3.1.4 AUQA Audit Preparation

Anne Rocznio is meeting with Debbie Martin and Jeannet van der Lee on 28th March 2009 to provide better data from initial data collection

3.1.5 Review of Policies

A combined draft of the 'Review of Research Centres' and 'Establishment, Approval, Administration and review of Institutions, Centres and Groups' policies for feedback and comment. See point 5.1 for more details.

The UNE 'Code of Conduct for Research' policy needs to be reviewed – this will be added to the March Academic Board Research Committee agenda.

3.1.6 E-Research

This will be ongoing and a working group has been identified with members showing enthusiasm in getting this started.

This contributes to the PVC Portfolio Group

4. Standing Items

4.1. Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)

Anne Rocniok and Grahame Pearson are starting to introduce the ERA 'trial' to the appropriate schools and identifying who needs to be reported. The full version of the ERA will commence in 2010.

The ERA reporting date has been changed from May 2009 to June (for Physics, Chemistry and Earth Science – PSE) and August (for Humanities and Creative Arts – HCA) 2009. Anne Roczniook stated that UNE will stay with the original date for UNE collection as this corresponds with the yearly publication collection for DIISR reporting.

The requirements for the ERA reporting have also been changed: research outputs will be captured by individual researchers but the research earnings will be reported as an institutional amount.

Professor David Brunckhorst queried how cross-disciplinary publications would be identified. These will be linked to several subject clusters which are judged per publication. PSE publications are metric based and not peer reviewed again as these are already refereed; but 20% of HCA publications will be peer reviewed. Also staff eligibility has changed – originally it was only available for academic staff but now includes all staff that produces publications. This brought up the issue of staff reports from HR – last year several staff members were left off the lists and therefore were not eligible to produce publications for the reporting.

Professor Ray Cooksey will send out a une-official email with the ERA update shortly.

Ray Cooksey introduced the Research Forum which will be held on 10th March 2009. All Heads of Schools or delegate and at least 2 research active staff members from each school are invited to attend to put forward concerns, ideas, provide feedback etc.

4.2. Dean of Graduate Studies report

Professor Kay Harman produced her report as well as updated the committee on the scholarships awarded at the previous days Higher Degrees Research Committee.

\$21,000 was awarded for the Keith and Dorothy MacKay scholarship scheme

10 UNE APA's awarded with 5 still available for the next round – there are 34 in total available for 2009

The Thai scholarship is unknown at this stage as the availability of funding is unknown. Ray Cooksey will contact Chris Patton regarding this. This needs to be solved soon as Universities Australia needs this information for reporting.

Kay also stated rewording of the electronic thesis submission policy is required as the current wording is confusing. This brought up the topic of the need for updated policies on the Research Services webpages. Who is responsible for the main UNE Policies webpages needs to be determined so these can be amended and then the Research Services links can be updated so there is only one version available.

5. Business

5.1. Revised Policy on the Review of Centres

Ray Cooksey brought up a few issues that he will pass onto the working group. Some of these included:

- Inconsistent determination of the role of the directors
- The use of the PPR scheme to calculate the centre's success
- There needs to be a clear upwards reporting line for the approval of centres and their review

Anne Roczniok will send the draft policy to Ray for feedback and more in depth comments, this will then go back to the working group for further editing.

David Brunckhorst brought up the issue of self-funded staff, i.e. staff whose salaries are derived from outside sources and grants. David and Ray will meet to discuss this further.

5.2. UNE Strategic Scholarships and funding

Ray Cooksey stated he would be meeting with the Financial Directorate to obtain more information on funding for strategic scholarships and also the whereabouts of the discretionary funds. This is linked to point 5.3.

5.3. School research strategy funding

Paul Martin brought up the issue of the need for a central authority or policy for all schools for this funding as some distribute funds freely for research purposes and others do not.

Until 2007, the spending of the RQ funds was reported back to the PVCR and how this was being spent - this is no longer happening.

Kay Harman raised the issue of whether Research Finance should be relocated to Research Services. Ray Cooksey agreed with this and would bring this up in his meeting with Finance.

5.4. UNE Indigenous Research

Paul Martin stated that the Faculty of the Professions had determined 3 strategic research areas – rural resurgence, indigenous and international. They are going to appoint a new indigenous adjunct position within the Faculty to provide Aboriginal input and guidance on this initiative.

Anne Roczniok flagged that she will be meeting with Diane Mumbler from Oorala about identifying Indigenous researchers as there are funding opportunities available for indigenous research activities. This brought up the news that a member of the PERATSI (Panel on Ethical Research Involving Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders) would go to the HREC (Human Research Ethics Committee) meetings and that there is going to be more emphasis on indigenous research being fed back into the indigenous community so they know what is happening.

5.5 Research red tape reduction: Action Plan

Paul Martin raised this but Ray Cooksey asked for this to be put on hold until after the Research Forum on 10th March as this will be a key issue raised there.

5.6 Centre for Applied Molecular Microbiology approval & report

This centre is a revised centre which has previously been closed and they require ABRC approval to be sent to Academic Board. The ABRC decided not to approve this as issues were raised about Key Performance Indicators and output measures and also the Higher Degree Research student supervision percentages which changes throughout the report. It was also stated that the revised report should be submitted via the new Head of School, Iain Young, and it would require his approval.

Further discussion raised issues for the new Centre Review policy and the need for a 'story' about the value added with such a centre.

6. Other Business

- 6.1.** The recommendation to the Academic Board regarding the Peer Review Policy rescinding was not included in the last agenda. Belinda Snell will follow up this up and hopefully get this added to the Standing Committee of Academic Board agenda.
- 6.2.** Ray Cooksey stated he would be starting a regular publication/newsletter, probably bi-monthly, with research news across UNE. Such as the number of research grant/tender applications submitted as well as the number of successes; what is being researched at UNE and if there are any significant developments; updates on policies and a Q&A section.

He will be contacting key people in the faculties and schools who look after the present newsletters to gather information.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 11.00 a.m. Wednesday 25th March 2009 in the Conference Room, TC Lamble Administration Building

The meeting was closed at 12:55pm.