



minutes

Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2021-06-10
Scheduled Start:	1300h
Scheduled End:	1500h
Location:	Microsoft Teams

MEETING OPENED:	1300h
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SECTION 1 – NGĀ KUPU ARATAKI | PRELIMINARIES

Item 1.1 Karakia Tīmatanga | Opening Prayer

Item 1.2 Mihi Whakatau | Welcome from the Chair

The Chair warmly welcomed members of the committee to the meeting.

SECTION 2 – STANDING ITEMS

Item 2.1 Ngā Whakapāha | Attendance, Apologies & Quorate Status

Members Present

1. Marcus Williams (Chair)
2. Susan Eady
3. Maryam Mirzaei
4. Hamid Sharifzadeh
5. Lian Wu
6. Leon Tan

Total members represented: 6 members

Apologies

1. Helen Gremillion
2. Tui Matelau (proxy for Robyn Gandell)
3. Kristie Cameron
4. Arun Deo
5. Daisy Bentley-Gray
6. Roger Birchmore
7. Jenny Lee-Morgan

Total apologies: 7 member/s

Absent

1. Yusef Patel

Total absences: 1 member

MOTION

That the committee accepts the apologies for today's meeting.

Moved: Marcus Williams

Seconded: Susan Eady

MOTION CARRIED

Quorate Status

A minimum of 9 representatives is required; the meeting was not quorate.

Hunga Mahi | Staff in Attendance

1. Brenda Massey, Acting Secretary

Item 2.2 Pitopito Kōrero o Ngā Hui | Minutes of Previous Meeting

The meeting was not quorate therefore the minutes of the 2021-05-13 meeting will need to be ratified at the next quorate meeting.

Item 2.3 Mahia Atu | Matters Arising

Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Outcome
4.1	Discuss with the Research Partners: could Tūāpapa Rangahau launch a new product specifically to support research into innovative pedagogies or could this type of research be supported through an existing product, eg the ECR Fund.	Marcus Williams	<p>This has been considered and decided against for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We already have a funding round which explicitly includes Innovative Pedagogies (20% of the 2021 ECR fund went to Innovative Pedagogies).- Implementing and administering separate funding rounds is time intensive and removes support capacity from

			other areas of focus Tūāpapa Rangahau will ensure that innovative pedagogies are clearly encouraged in future funding rounds.
4.1	Write a letter to APMs and HOSs emphasising the importance of supporting their staff to undertake PD, explore opportunities for research collaboration and to engage with Tūāpapa Rangahau's suite of research support products.	Marcus Williams	Complete
5.1	Write to each of the Centre Directors on behalf of the committee thanking them for their reports and summarising the committee's feedback.	Marcus Williams / Brenda Massey	Complete
5.2	Work together to 1) amend the proposed internal PBRF review timeframes to incorporate a 15 October deadline for staff to have completed their review documentation and 2) discuss how to resource this piece of work.	Marcus Williams / Arun Deo	Complete
5.2	Schedule online sessions for those who couldn't attend the School-based roadshows.	Marcus Williams	Complete
5.2	Ensure that the Pacific Centre (via Daisy Bentley-Gray), Ngā Wai a Te Tūi (via Ngahuia Eruera), Bridgepoint (via Tui Matelau) and Learning and Achievement (via Susan Eady) are included in PBRF-related communications, workshop invitations etc.	Marcus Williams	Complete
6.1	Call for a Unitec Research Symposium Advisory Committee from the Research Leaders, the URC the Pacific Centre, Ngā Wai a Te Tūi, Bridgepoint, Learning and Achievement, the Library and Corporate Communications.	Marcus Williams	Complete

SECTION 3 – MEA HEI WHAKAAE | ITEMS TO APPROVE

There were no items to approve this month.

SECTION 4 - WHAKAWHITI KŌRERO | ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Section 4.1 Internal Research Funding Approval Processes

Tūāpapa Rangahau has operated various internal research funding frameworks over many years. URC oversight of these products, old and new, has been responsive to change but has not been scrutinised as a whole funding system. The Chair wanted to provide an opportunity for the committee to consider the processes that are in place to assess eligibility for funding, and to determine which applications will and will not be funded.

A summary of the committee's discussions is as follows:

It was queried whether the priorities of each of the funding offerings reflect the new Unitec Research Strategy, specifically in regards to supporting research by, with and for Māori and to supporting student integrated research.

The Research Strategy Action Plan lists specific actions that will be taken to support and resource Māori research and research leadership at Unitec. The formation of the new Wairaka Natural Environment, History and Culture Fund for example, responds to the strategy's aim to foster research into Wairaka, our place; the natural environment, history and wairua.

While Māori staff and staff undertaking research that will benefit Māori are eligible to apply for funding through many of the products currently on offer, the committee could consider if a specific scheme should be developed to support Māori-led and focussed research. Consideration would need to be given to the number of applications that could be expected to be received versus the resource required to administer another funding mechanism. Unitec's Māori committee members, not present today, should be part of any discussion around this.

Applicants for internal funding are asked to describe the level of student involvement in their research projects. The Grants Assessment Committee (GAC) has a comprehensive list of assessment criteria, and while successful applicants will likely have clear plans around integrating students into their research, not all successful proposals will meet this criteria, as successful proposals don't necessarily have to meet all of a product's priorities in order to qualify for funding.

The possible development of a new, dedicated product to prioritise and resource student integrated research projects was discussed. The advantages of creating a new product would need to be weighed up against the resources required to administer it. The Chair noted that there are already several products available that can and do support student integrated research.

Action: Marcus Williams to discuss with the research partners the possibility of creating a new product dedicated to supporting student integrated research.

Roger Birchmore, not in attendance, provided feedback on this agenda item ahead of the meeting which was conveyed to the committee by the Acting Secretary. Roger supports the current internal funding processes. For the last two years he has been part of the GAC. The assessors' packs provided by Tūāpapa Rangahau have helped to make the assessment process efficient and effective. The face to face meeting of the GAC is valuable. There have not been huge differences of opinions on applications between different assessors, which points to the objectivity and clarity of the assessment guidelines. Roger raised two queries as follows:

Does the range of funding "products" available dilute the scale of funding to amounts that mean no application is awarded anything significant?

This is a counter-response to the idea that new and more specific products could be created. The Chair noted that Tūāpapa Rangahau is constantly experimenting with how they can encourage research at Unitec and how they can better serve staff. They have strived to provide a service that is responsive to actual need, e.g. by allowing funds to be used to release staff to do research.

If one product has few successful applications can funding be transferred to another product with a higher uptake?

If funding is not used in one area it is moved to another area. We never know, for example, how many ECR Post Parental Leave Funding applications we might receive in any given year. If funding is not allocated via this product there is flexibility to divert funds to another product.

The Chair thought it might be useful for the committee to examine all of the application forms and guidelines for the various products to ensure that there is a relationship between the strategy and the products that have been made available to help to achieve the strategy. The guidelines and templates are currently being standardised in terms of formatting, nomenclature etc, but can be presented to the committee once this exercise has been completed.

Action: Marcus Williams to table the application forms and guidelines for all the internal funding products for the committee's review.

Section 4.2 **Internal PBRF Review**

The Ministry of Education's announcement on the outcome of the PBRF review is imminent. A detailed, revised timeline of how the internal PBRF review will operate was presented to the committee.

Three clusters comprised of four assessors will be engaged to review portfolios from 1) Business and Computing 2) Architecture and Creative Industries and 3) Health, Social Practice and Environmental Science.

A call will be made for anyone who is PBRF eligible to engage with the review process. There will be people who may want to engage but who have low productivity and are therefore unlikely to rate, while there will be others who are very productive that may need to be cajoled to participate in the review process.

Workshops will be held to assist staff to assemble portfolios for assessment by the clusters. Feedback will be provided in the new year. Portfolios will be assessed as 'not rate', 'rate' or 'rate highly'.

Roger Birchmore provided feedback on this agenda item ahead of the meeting which was conveyed to the committee by the Acting Secretary. He supports the internal review process but noted that the deadline proposed for staff to have prepared their portfolios (15 October) clashes with one of the most intensive teaching periods for Bachelor of Construction research staff teaching Level 7 courses. Roger asked if this deadline could be reviewed and hopefully revised.

Action: Marcus Williams will interrogate the timeline to see if the deadline for staff to submit their portfolios could be extended in order to accommodate staff in the School of Construction.

SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

There were no items to receive this month.

SECTION 6 - KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA | CLOSING

Section 6.1 **Ētahi Kaupapa Anō | Any Other Business**

The Chair updated the committee on the work of the Rangahau Research Forum, the collective of Research Directors across the 16 ITPs who meet monthly. The forum in its name and its activities is committed to biculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and has strong Māori representation.

The forum has established 12 workstreams, with Marcus leading two of these: PBRF and ERI (external research income). The PBRF review that Unitec is implementing is being shared and replicated across the country for the benefit of Te Pūkenga.

The forum is advocating for the research capability of the ITP sector and is working to ensure that key people in Te Pūkenga are appraised of this and our successes in general. In 2020, Expressions of Interest were called for by the ERI workstream, from researchers from the 16 ITPs who wished to seek support from the Unitec grants development team to submit applications for external funding. Projects were to have involved staff from two or more ITPs. Three pilot projects were selected for support. Two have been very successful. The first, led by a researcher at SIT, has been awarded a grant from the Lottery Environment and Heritage Fund for a project on microplastics in waterways. The second, led by a researcher at Toi Ohomai, has applied for MBIE Endeavour Fund Smart Ideas funding for a project on precision pest management using drones. The Concept was ranked 'Quintile 1', the highest ranking, and the Principal Investigator was invited to submit a Full Application, the outcome of which will be announced in September. The Rangahau Research Forum sent an update on the pilots to Dr Angela Beaton, DCE Delivery and Academic, Te Pūkenga. Angela responded very positively and has asked to be kept informed.

The forum is also operating a workstream on the Creative Industries. ITPs perform strongly in the PBRF in this area. A wānanga was held at Unitec earlier this year and this has led to the creation of an enduring national network.

Te Pūkenga has formed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a Research and Innovation Committee. The Rangahau Research Forum has provided feedback on the constitution and TOR for that committee.

The 7th annual ITP Research Symposium will be co-hosted by the Open Polytechnic and Weltec later this year. The early call for proposals has gone out via research leaders. Last year's symposium, hosted by Toi Ohomai, was held entirely online due to Covid-19. Unitec last hosted the symposium in 2017 with the very successful Māori Innovation Symposium.

Susan Eady asked if the Chair could find out via the Rangahau Research Forum how many research active staff are working across the sector.

Action: Marcus Williams to ask Rangahau Research Forum Research Directors for information on the numbers of research active staff at their institutions, then report back to this committee.

Section 6.2 **Komiti Self-Assessment**

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.

It's important that members feel they can criticise or compliment and that the committee is constantly self-reflective. Unfortunately the committee wasn't quorate today but those present did move discussions forward, particularly around the research funding products.

Additional feedback can be emailed to the Chair or the Secretary following the meeting (in confidence if requested).

Section 6.3 **Karakia Whakamutunga | Closing Karakia**

MEETING CLOSED: 1355 h

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Agenda Item	Action	Responsible	Outcome
4.1	Discuss with the research partners the possibility of creating a new product dedicated to supporting student integrated research.	Marcus Williams	
4.1	Table the application forms and guidelines for all the internal funding products for the committee's review (to ensure there is a relationship between the new Research Strategy and the products that have been made available to help to achieve the strategy, particularly with reference to research by, with and for Māori and student integrated research).	Marcus Williams	
4.2	Interrogate the internal PBRF review timeline to see if the deadline for staff to submit their portfolios could be extended in order to accommodate staff in the School of Construction who have teaching commitments during the mid-semester break.	Marcus Williams	
6.1	Ask Rangahau Research Forum Research Directors for information on the numbers of research active staff at their institutions, then report back to this committee.	Marcus Williams	