Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2023-02-09
Scheduled Start:	1300h
Scheduled End:	1500h
Location:	Microsoft Teams

MEETING OPENED:	1300h

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. Nora Md Amin
3. Kristie Cameron
4. Daisy Bentley-Gray
5. Mitra Etemaddar
6. Helen Gremillion
7. Hamid Sharifzadeh
8. Yusef Patel
9. Yusef Patel
10. Lian Wu

Total members represented: 10 members

Apologies

1. Cat Mitchell
2. Robyn Gandell

Total apologies: 2 members

Absent

1. Arun Deo
2. Duaa Alshadii

Total absent: 2 members

MOTION
That the committee accepts the apologies for today's meeting.
Moved: Mitra Etemaddar **Seconded: Nora Md Amin**
MOTION CARRIED

Quorate Status

A minimum of 9 representatives is required; the meeting was quorate.

Hunga Mahi | Staff in Attendance

1. Brenda Massey, Acting Secretary

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

MOTION
That the committee approves the minutes of the 2022-10-13 and the 2022-11-10 meetings as a true and accurate record.
Moved: Mitra Etemaddar **Seconded: Nora Md Amin**
MOTION CARRIED

Item 2.3   Mahia Atu | Matters Arising

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
2.2 & 3.1-3.4	The minutes of the 13 Oct meeting and the approval of agenda items 3.1-3.4 will need to be ratified at the next quorate meeting.	Marcus Williams/ Brenda Massey	Ratified today (item 2.2)
3.3	Schedule 'discuss the possibility of a Northern Sector Research Symposium (NorthTec, Unitec, MIT)' for April 2023 in the committee's Work Plan (not June).	Brenda Massey	Complete
4.1	Update the committee's composition requirements as follows: • Remove the requirement to have representation from Industry Workforce Development. • Change 'Knowledge Specialist' to 'Subject Librarian'. • Change 'Pacifika representation' to 'Pacific representation'. Prepare a memo with the committee's 2023 membership list, meeting dates, Terms of Reference and Work Plan for Te Komiti Mātauranga for the Chair to approve.	Brenda Massey	Complete Complete

SECTION 3 – MEA HEI WHAKAAE | ITEMS TO APPROVE

Section 3.1   Amendments to the RPTL audit for new staff

The committee considered the memo authored by A/P Samantha Heath, School of Healthcare and Social Practice, requesting the requirement to include newly appointed staff in the Research Productivity Traffic Light (RPTL) audit be reviewed. A summary of the committee's discussion is as follows:

- The RPTL was commissioned by the then Academic Board and as such the committee cannot make changes to its Terms of Reference without the approval of Te Komiti Mātauranga (TKM).
- There are some courses that require staff to be research active in order for them to teach on them, particularly Masters. The proposed exemption should not apply to them.
- Priority should be given to recruiting research active staff over non-research active staff. If managers are offered 'an out' it may make it easier for them to employ staff who are not research engaged.
- In some areas of Unitec, e.g., nursing, staff come to Unitec from practice and have not been expected to have been doing research, publishing papers etc. They should be given time and support to transition to research activity. In other areas you have to have a research degree to become registered in your field, e.g., Architecture.
- The proposal posits that 'newly employed staff *can be* exempted', not that newly employed staff, who might have been publishing for example, *will be* exempted.
- The RPTL expectations are already relatively low and modest, (i.e., one non-QA output per year for fulltime staff), so should these expectations be lowered even further?
- ITP Research Offices are being restructured in June and following this there will be a new structure for research across Te Pūkenga. Processes around measuring research productivity could change.

The committee agreed that the proposed exemption should not apply to staff teaching on Masters programmes. They then voted on whether to support the motion with that caveat. Of those present, seven were in support, two were against, and one abstained, therefore the motion was carried as outlined below.

MOTION

That the committee requests TKM approve a change to the RPTL ToR as follows:

- Newly employed staff, excluding those teaching on Masters programmes, can be exempted from the first RPTL audit that occurs after they are employed. Assuming that RPTL audits continue to take place in S1 of a given year this provision means that: for staff who begin their employment during S1 of a given year, an exemption from that year's RPTL exercise can be granted; for staff who begin their employment during S2 of a given year, an exemption from the following year's RPTL exercise can be granted.

- In either case, for the next RPTL audit that takes place after a new staff member is employed, only one output will be required for such staff (who are full-time).

- In the years after that, the normal RPTL criteria will apply to these staff.

                                                                                            MOTION CARRIED

TKM next meets at the end of March so their decision on the proposal will be received in time for the next RPTL audit.

Action: Marcus Williams to seek approval of the proposed change to the RPTL Terms of Reference from TKM.

SECTION 4 - WHAKAWHITI KŌRERO | ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Section 4.1   PBRF Sector Reference Group – Consultation Paper 9

The committee reviewed and considered the PBRF Sector Reference Group's ninth consultation paper: Technical Matters/detailed EP structure and submission requirements. Feedback will be conveyed to the Rangahau Research Forum as follows:

Do you support the proposed changes to the Platform of Research - Contextual Summary?
The proposed reduction of the Platform Statement is too great, it is important to be able to articulate a narrative here, efficacious for assessors and the opportunity for an overview for researchers

Do you support the proposed changes to the Core Research Output request and supply processes?
Yes

Do you have any feedback on the proposed research activity descriptions as set out in the proposed detailed EP structure and submission requirements document and the Illustrative EP template?
No

Do you have any feedback on the proposed changes to the overall EP structure and submission requirements as set out in the Proposed detailed EP structure and submission requirements, the Proposed guidance to determining Examples of Research Excellence submission requirements, and the Illustrative EP template?
Notwithstanding the need to specify some narrative against each output and activity in the ERE, emphasis on this approach will create a scattered outcome. Challenging for the assessors who have to click around each "pane" and for the submitters who are trying to create an overview of their research excellence in the round. We encourage opportunity for centralised narrative such as in the platform statement and/or in overview statements for each ERE. Better to have a general and lengthier contextual opportunity for each ERE. The importance of good panel training needs to be reiterated here.

Do you have any feedback on the proposed changes to the Contributions to the Research Environment types and descriptions as set out in the Proposed detailed EP structure and submission requirements document and the Illustrative EP template?
We advise to stick with the six CRE types, don't offer an "other" option, as it will solicit the very types of responses that were rejected by the review panel in 2019. we need to focus on those who lead opportunity for the research community. CRE should be called CRE.

Do you have any further comments on the proposals set out in Consultation Paper #9?
The overarching QE template needs to specifically refer to industry/community engagement and impact in ALL its prompts, otherwise it risks losing the intent of the outcome and recommendations of review of PBRF to create a more capacious definition of research excellence.

SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

Section 5.1   2023 Unitec ECR Contestable Fund outcomes

The Committee noted the outcomes of the 2023 Unitec Early Career Researcher (ECR) Fund.

Tūāpapa Rangahau is working to support the two researchers who are required to modify their proposals before their funding will be released.

Section 5.2   2023 Unitec ECR Fellowship outcomes

The Committee noted the outcomes of the applications received to the 2023 Unitec Early Career Researcher (ECR) Fellowship scheme.

All three applications received were worthy of support. The two applications whose outcomes are still pending will be supported if Tūāpapa Rangahau's budget permits.

Section 5.3   Library resources budget cut impact

The committee received information regarding recent cuts the Library was required to make to its budget.

The cancellation of the resources listed in the information memo will impact many Unitec researchers.

The cancellation of the IEEE / IET Electronic Library (IEL) is being particularly lamented by those in the School of Computing. Its loss will have a deleterious impact on research in the School, with the resource having been utilised by both staff, particularly PBRF-active staff, and students, particularly postgraduate students.

The Library provided opportunities for feedback before making a decision on which resources to cancel. The School of Computing posited that the period the Library's review of IEL's usage statistics covered included the Covid lockdowns and associated border closures.

IEL will be replaced by a cheaper alternative IEEE product (CSDL). While this will still be a useful resource for students it is not comparable to IEL. It is hoped that when Te Pūkenga considers library resourcing a subscription to IEL might be considered, particularly if access to it would be more widely available (i.e. across multiple subsidiaries).

Section 5.4   Classification of the URC's 2022 agenda items

The Committee noted the classifications assigned to its 2022 agenda items. The exercise demonstrates that the committee is overwhelmingly strategic in its activities.

The Chair requested that instead of classifying items as 'Forward Looking' or 'Backward Looking' they be classified as 'Strategically Orientated' or 'Review Orientated'.

Action: Brenda Massey to make this change. Marcus Williams to present the classification data via memo to TKM.

Section 5.5   Free NVivo webinars

The Committee noted the availability of free online NVivo webinars.

Nora Md Amin advised that NVivo is able to be downloaded to the individual devices of those who need it.

SECTION 6 - KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA | CLOSING

Section 6.1 Ētahi Kaupapa Anō | Any Other Business

As per the committee's 2023 Work Plan, Tūāpapa Rangahau needs to request, via Arun Deo, that Research Centre Directors provide Annual Reports on their 2022 activities for the committee's review at their May meeting.

A committee member queried whether the research leader roles, which attract FTE allocations, could be affected by the restructure of research across Te Pūkenga. Research leaders are a function of schools, are funded by schools and serve schools. Any review of research leader positions is more likely to be timed with the review of the function of schools.

MIT's research office has been disestablished and Marcus Williams is now managing research at MIT. MIT has a research committee and Marcus will be meeting them to discuss how they see themselves operating going forward. It is important that their committee looks after the business that exists until the restructure of research across Te Pūkenga occurs.

The Chair sought the committee's opinion on how the two committees might function in relationship to one another. The committee appeared to need more time to consider this item and so were invited to contact the Chair at a later date if they had any input. No decisions will be made without appropriate consultation with the committee.

Section 6.2 Komiti Self-Assessment

An opportunity was given for the committee to reflect on their self-assessment provocations. The committee is reminded that feedback on any aspect of the committee's operation can be emailed to the Chair or the Secretary at any time (in confidence if requested).

Section 6.3 Karakia Whakamutunga | Closing Karakia

MEETING CLOSED:	1430 h

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
3.1	Develop a memo for TKM requesting a change to the RPTL Terms of Reference.	Marcus Williams	
5.4	Reclassify the categorisation of the URCs 2022 agenda items as 'Strategic Orientated' or 'Review Orientated'. Present the classification data via memo to TKM.	Brenda Massey Marcus Williams	

6.1	Request that Research Centre Directors provide Annual Reports on their 2022 activities for the committee's review at the May meeting (NB: the agenda for the May meeting closes 28 April).	Arun Deo	