



# minutes

## Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2023-08-10
Scheduled Start:	1330h
Scheduled End:	1500h
Location:	Microsoft Teams

MEETING OPENED:	1330h
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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. Arun Deo
3. Kristie Cameron
4. Nora Md Amin
5. Tanya White
6. Helen Gremillion
7. Carly Van Winkel
8. Kate Zeng
9. Leon Tan
10. Hamid Sharifzadeh (from 1.45pm)

Total members represented: 10 members

##### Apologies

1. Daisy Bentley-Gray
2. Yusef Patel

3. Hamid Sharifzadeh (for lateness)
4. Lian Wu

Total apologies:

4 members

#### **MOTION**

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

**Moved: Helen Gremillion**

**Seconded: Leon Tan**

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **Quorate Status**

Due to vacancies on the committee, a minimum of seven representatives is now 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 2023-05-11 and 2023-07-13 meetings as a true and accurate record.**

**Moved: Kristie Cameron**

**Seconded: Tanya White**

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **Item 2.3 Mahia Atu | Matters Arising**

<b>Agenda Item(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
3.1	Advise Dr Hinekura Smith of the approval of the appointment of Dr Byron Rangiwai as an Honorary Research Fellow within Ngā Wai a Te Tūi.	Marcus Williams/ Brenda Massey	Complete
3.2	Develop terms of reference for the ECR Forum Committee that includes committee membership, forum membership, meeting times etc. The committee's feedback from today's meeting should be considered and incorporated. The draft terms of reference should be presented at the committee's next meeting for approval.	Kristie Cameron/ Marcus Williams/ Brenda Massey	Complete – on agenda
3.3	Tūāpapa Rangahau to add Pacific and Māori focussed journals and conferences to the directory of research dissemination opportunities.  Set up a meeting with Daisy Bentley-Gray and her MIT counterpart in early September to progress the idea of running a Pacific research talanoa, shared across Unitec and MIT, to be held in late October or early November 2023.	Marcus Williams/ Brenda Massey	Complete
		Marcus Williams	Complete
		Marcus Williams	Complete

	Circulate the updated list of journals/conferences and the external funding opportunities list through the research leader networks at Unitec and MIT.		
5.1	Draft letters to the research centre annual report writers thanking and acknowledging them for their reports and mahi.	Brenda Massey	Complete

## SECTION 3 – MEA HEI WHAKAAE | ITEMS TO APPROVE

### **Section 3.1                      2022 Unitec Research Report**

This item should have been submitted ‘for information’ not ‘for approval’ as the report is commissioned by Te Komiti Mātauranga not Te Komiti Rangahau.

The committee enthusiastically received the 2022 Unitec Research Report which reports on the third year of the Unitec Research Strategy 2020-2024.

**Action:** Arun Deo to distribute the report to:

- Research Leaders
- Heads of School
- Senior Leadership Team
- Executive Leadership Team
- Supervision Register
- ECR Forum
- Academic Programme Managers
- Te Rōpū Mataara (via Tanya White)
- Pacific Centre Director
- The six Research Centre Directors
- Ngā Kaitiaki (via Tanya White)

### **Section 3.2                      Early Career Researcher Forum Terms of Reference**

The committee reviewed the proposed Early Career Researcher (ECR) Forum Terms of Reference (ToR).

The ToR state that the ECR Forum should ensure that emerging researchers are also supported and included where practicable. It was queried whether the Scope of the ToR should therefore also apply to staff who meet the definition of an emerging researcher, and it was agreed that they should, notwithstanding that the funding available is not relevant to this cohort.

The committee then discussed how emerging researchers should be defined.

The PBRF guidelines refer to ‘new and emerging researchers’, and state that new and emerging researcher status is specifically for staff members who have started their research career in the 2026 Quality Evaluation assessment period (1 January 2018 – 31 December 2025).

At Unitec, emerging researchers have tended to be positioned as ‘pre-early career’, which does not align with the PBRF definition and is a broader descriptor. There is not currently a formal definition of what constitutes an emerging researcher at Unitec.

It was agreed that a definition of an emerging researcher at Unitec needs to be established.

**Action:** Kristie Cameron and Marcus Williams to draft a definition of an emerging researcher at Unitec for tabling at the next meeting.

**Action:** Brenda Massey to add emerging researchers to the scope of the ECR Forum ToR and arrange for the ToR to be published on Te Aka | The Nest.

The requirement for a Māori Co-Chair of the ECR Forum Committee was supported by the committee, but it was recognised that it may be an aspirational goal at this juncture. There are currently very few Māori researchers at Unitec, all of whom are significantly stretched. It is hoped that Te Pūkenga is prioritising the recruitment of Māori academics.

#### **MOTION**

**That the committee approves that the Unitec Early Career Researcher Forum Terms of Reference, subject to its scope being revised to include emerging researchers.**

**Moved:** Kristie Cameron

**Seconded:** Marcus Williams

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **SECTION 4 - WHAKAWHITI KŌRERO | ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### **Section 4.1                      Communication Strategy for 2026 PBRF Quality Evaluation**

Arun Deo drafted an illustrative 2026 PBRF Evidence Portfolio (EP) template which was presented to the committee alongside a document that highlighted the differences between the 2026 and 2018 EP templates.

A summary of the discussion of some of the main changes is as follows:

- The ‘Extraordinary Circumstances’ provision has been renamed as ‘Researcher Circumstances’ and covers circumstances such as force majeure, which includes pandemics.
- Staff can now indicate if they worked part-time during the assessment period, in which case there are reduced submission requirements.
- The character limit for the contextual summary section has been reduced but the character limit for the contextual narrative (ERE) section has increased. This is because EPs are now based on examples of research excellence, with a change of focus to a more capacious understanding of what excellence means, including, but not exclusive to, research outputs.
- EP weightings remain the same: 70% on research excellence and 30% on research contributions.
- In 2026 submitters can select up to three ERE (evidence of research excellence), while in 2018 they could select up to four NRO (nominated research outputs).

- Submitters can link up to three supplementary research outputs to their EREs, i.e., ‘here is the example of research excellence and here are the outputs associated with it, e.g., journal paper, conference, book chapter etc’. An ‘additional information’ field is also available for submitters to explain any additional activities (not only outputs) associated with the ERE.

The committee were asked to consider a communications strategy for staff who will be participating in the 2026 PBRF Quality Evaluation (QE). A summary of discussions is as follows:

- While Te Pūkenga will be approaching the QE as a national kaupapa, the committee felt it would be useful to circulate the information that is known at this time to staff forthwith.
- If the illustrative 2026 PBRF EP template and document that highlights the differences between the 2026 and 2018 templates are circulated, the inclusion of narrative blurbs to clarify some of the above discussion points might be useful.
- The provision of short workshops for interested staff would be useful.
- Research Leaders or dedicated Research Champions (perhaps staff still at Unitec who participated in the last PBRF round) could be engaged to circulate information from the Research Office within their Schools and to assist staff in their areas who have been identified as eligible to submit EPs.
- The PBRF 2026 QE Guidelines and Summary of Decisions has not yet been released by TEC, and Te Pūkenga has yet to determine the software platform that staff will be using to prepare their EPs. Workshops and one-on-one support sessions would generally be offered by Tūāpapa Rangahau closer to the EP submission date which is still two years away. It was clarified that the communication strategy under discussion today represents a cursory and early divulgence and explanation of what is known so far to have changed.
- Wānanga would provide a valuable platform to share information with kaimahi Māori and to raise their awareness of the PBRF pathway. Te Rōpū Mataara could provide a vehicle for this.
- Mid-semester break (25 Sept to 6 Oct) might be good timing for workshops. Most staff won’t be teaching, and although some may be on leave, they could catch up later (e.g. through the above-suggested Research Champions). If sessions were run that were open to everyone, but were also targeted at Research Leaders and/or Research Champions, these staff could then run their own, later sessions, thereby enhancing Tūāpapa Rangahau’s capacity to communicate details of the QE. Te Rōpū Mataara and Pacific representatives could also attend sessions, and special effort could be made to articulate the potential that the PBRF QE has for emerging kairangahau careers.
- An online workshop forum should improve attendance rates and today’s discussions demonstrate this is a feasible option.
- Opportunities for participation could be made available to both Unitec and MIT staff.
- Arun Deo is happy to write a detailed instruction manual once the PBRF structure is finalised and once the submission platform is decided by Te Pūkenga. It would include screenshots, which users have found useful in the past.

**Action:** Marcus Williams to develop and implement a communications strategy for staff who will be participating in the 2026 Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) Quality Evaluation (QE) based on the committee’s feedback.

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## SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

## **Section 5.1**                      **School Research Plans**

All Schools have submitted updated School Research Plans.

The plans provide useful information for degree moderators and programme monitors and for the identification of new research groups which sometimes flourish into new research centres.

**Action:** Arun Deo to table the completed plans at the next committee meeting along with a one-page visual schematic of all of Unitec's research groups.

## **SECTION 6 - KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA | CLOSING**

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

N/A

### **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**

<b>MEETING CLOSED:</b> 1445 h
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## **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

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<b>Agenda Item(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
3.1	Distribute the 2022 Unitec Research Report to the following stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research Leaders</li><li>• Heads of School</li><li>• Senior Leadership Team</li><li>• Executive Leadership Team</li><li>• Supervision Register</li><li>• ECR Forum</li><li>• Academic Programme Managers</li><li>• Te Rōpū Mataara (via Tanya White)</li><li>• Pacific Centre Director</li><li>• The six Research Centre Directors</li><li>• Ngāi Kaitiaki (via Tanya White)</li></ul>	Arun Deo	
3.2	Draft a definition of an emerging researcher at Unitec for tabling at the next meeting.	Kristie Cameron / Marcus Williams	

	Add emerging researchers to the scope of the ECR Forum ToR and arrange for the ToR to be published on Te Aka   The Nest.	Brenda Massey	
4.1	Develop and implement a communications strategy for staff who will be participating in the 2026 Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) Quality Evaluation (QE) based on the committee's feedback.	Marcus Williams	
5.1	Table School Research Plans at the next committee meeting along with a one-page visual schematic of all of Unitec's research groups.	Arun Deo	