Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2023-09-14
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. Daisy Bentley-Gray
3. Nora Md Amin
4. Helen Gremillion (until 2pm)
5. Arun Deo
6. Hamid Sharifzadeh
7. Tanya White
8. Becca Wood (proxy for Leon Tan, until 2pm)
9. Lian Wu
10. Kristie Cameron

Total members represented: 10 members

Apologies

1. Yusef Patel
2. Leon Tan

3. Kate Zeng
4. Helen Gremillion (for early departure)
5. Becca Wood (for early departure)

Total apologies: 5 members

MOTION
That the committee accepts the apologies for today's meeting.
Moved: Hamid Sharifzadeh **Seconded: Daisy Bentley-Gray**
MOTION CARRIED

Quorate Status

A minimum of seven 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 2023-08-10 meeting as a true and accurate record.
Moved: Kristie Cameron **Seconded: Lian Wu**
MOTION CARRIED

Item 2.3   Mahia Atu | Matters Arising

Four online workshops, open to all Unitec and MIT researchers, have been scheduled to review the new PBRF portfolio format and discuss the changes that are the result of the 2019 PBRF review. These are significant changes, and it is important that MIT Academic Leads (Research) and Unitec Research Leaders are familiar with them.

AL(R)s and RLs have been asked to forward the workshop details to the researchers in their teams. There are no limits to how many people can attend, but AL(R)s and RLs have been encouraged to exercise discretion because beginner researchers are not likely to benefit from an investment of time in the workshops. The workshops are all the same, it is not necessary to attend more than one workshop.

Marcus Williams (Director of Research) and Arun Deo (Research Adviser) are happy run workshops for schools or centres on request, where a reasonable attendance is expected. Enquiries to Marcus or Arun please.

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
3.1	Distribute the 2022 Unitec Research Report to the following stakeholders: • Research Leaders • Heads of School	Arun Deo	In progress. The report needs to be accepted by TKM before it is

	• 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)			distributed and TKM did not make it through its last agenda. It will be re-tabled at the next TKM hui.
3.2	Draft a definition of an emerging researcher at Unitec for tabling at the next meeting.	Kristie Cameron / Marcus Williams		Complete – on agenda
	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		Complete – on agenda
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		Complete
5.1	Table School Research Plans at the next committee meeting along with a visual schematic of all of Unitec's research groups.	Arun Deo		Complete – on agenda

SECTION 3 – MEA HEI WHAKAAE | ITEMS TO APPROVE

Section 3.1   Definition of an Emerging Researcher at Unitec

At its last meeting, the committee approved the Unitec Early Career Researcher Forum Terms of Reference, whose purpose includes ensuring that emerging researchers are also supported and included where practicable. The committee determined that, for clarity, an emerging researcher at Unitec should be formally defined.

Kristie Cameron and Marcus Williams have worked together to develop a definition, attempting to be as inclusive as possible. It is not intended that anyone who does not fit the definition of either an emerging or early career researcher at Unitec be excluded from doing research. The definitions have been established in order to provide clarity on who is able to access Unitec-funded research resources (e.g., ECR funding, PD, research dissemination funding etc). A summary of the committee's discussions is as follows:

- Q: How can non-degree teaching staff who are doing research be supported? A: There is the Non-Degree Teaching Research Track (NDTRT), which exists to ensure that all staff who are achieving excellence in research can be supported. Research Partner Penny Thomson can assist eligible staff who are interested in accessing this mechanism.
- Q: If a staff member is not teaching at degree level or higher then they do not meet the inclusion criteria for the RPTL and in order to be defined as an emerging researcher they would need to be able to show they're working towards submitting a competitive PBRF portfolio. Is this too high a bar? A: Resourcing, especially funding, for research at Unitec is limited and needs to be prioritised for those who are required by statute to do research. Not being defined as an emerging researcher does not exclude you from doing research, it

simply means that you will not be on a mailing list to receive information about opportunities that you are not eligible for.

- All staff have access to research related PD opportunities, except for the research writing retreats which are contestable.
- The NDTRT is only available to Unitec staff. Tūāpapa Rangahau does not have the capacity to bring new policy in at MIT at this juncture.
- Limited tenure staff are normally not eligible and casual staff are not eligible to apply for NDTRT and other of Unitec's funded research products. This does not prevent them from undertaking research. Several ECR funding applications have included limited tenure and casual staff on research project teams. This is also true of sub-degree teachers and students.
- One of the benefits of having a formal definition of different types of researchers is clarity, especially for Research Leaders who support a range of researchers.

MOTION

That the committee approves that the definition of an Emerging Researcher at Unitec as follows:

An emerging researcher at Unitec is a person who:

- **Meets the inclusion criteria for the Research Productivity Traffic Light or has been accepted onto the Non-Degree Teaching Research Track.**
- **Has an approved Individual Research Plan which identifies clear effort toward a recognised research output within the next 12 months.**
- **Is a named member of a Research Group in an approved School Research Plan.**
- **Has an ORCID number.**

Moved: Kristie Cameron
Seconded: Daisy Bentley-Gray

MOTION CARRIED

Action: Brenda Massey to add the definition of an early career researcher and an emerging researcher at Unitec as an appendix to the Early Career Researcher Forum Terms of Reference and arrange for the updated document to be placed on Te Aka | The Nest.

Section 3.2   2024 ECR Contestable Fund GAC Membership

The committee was asked to approve the membership of the 2024 ECR Fund Grants Advisory Committee (GAC), a sub-committee of the Unitec Research Committee, who will assess applications for 2024 Early Career Researcher Contestable Funding.

A couple of members of the committee are intending to submit applications for ECR funding. The committee did not consider that these members should be excluded from considering the motion below, as members are not being asked to determine who will be selected by Tūāpapa Rangahau to assess specific applications.

It is important that the GAC includes someone with mātauranga Māori and kaupapa Māori expertise. Jamie Ihimaera Smiler is an experienced research manager and an active kairangahau from Weltec. He has been asked to participate as there are very few staff at Unitec with the appropriate expertise and those that there are, are either unavailable or will have a conflict of interest.

SECTION 4 - WHAKAWHITI KŌRERO | ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Section 4.1   PBRF Quality Evaluation 2026 – Consultation on Guidelines and Audit Methodology

The draft TEO PBRF Quality Evaluation 2026 Guidelines, Assessment Guidelines and the revised audit methodology were presented to the committee for feedback. They incorporate the in-principle decisions made by the TEC on the basis of feedback provided by the sector during the consultation process which this committee has actively participated in.

The Guidelines for TEOs participating in the Quality Evaluation now classify Contributions to the Research Environment (CRE) into six types (pg 80).   The committee provided specific feedback on this as follows:

- The definitions provided for the six types are a bit broad. For example, one of the six types of CRE is "Student development and support activity which contributes to growing a vibrant and inclusive research workforce". Previously researchers would detail all of their supervision assignments and what resulted from those (e.g., graduation) in the CRE section. It is not clear from the new guidelines whether this information still needs to be provided. Staff are currently carefully tracking this information and if they're no longer required to do so it would be good to know.
- It would be useful to know what, if anything, counted before but does not now count as a CRE since CREs have been reduced to six types. A comparison between the previous and new guidelines around CREs would be useful.

The committee's feedback will be conveyed to the Rangahau Research Forum (RRF). The RRF will collate a response for input/submission to TEC by Te Pūkenga. Individual submissions, as always, can also be made.

The committee was reminded that the four PBRF workshops that Marcus Williams and Arun Deo are running start next week (refer to 'matters arising' above for further information).

Action: Brenda Massey to convey the committee's feedback to the RRF via Megan Allardice (EIT).

SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

Section 5.1   School Research Plans

The committee received School Research Plans for the period 2023-2024 and the visual schematic of research groups at Unitec.

The plans are an important resource for when moderators visit, and programme reviews occur. They contain productivity data and also articulate schools' aspirations, particularly around Vision Mātauranga.

The Chair thanked Arun Deo for leading this piece of work.

Section 5.2   2023 Early Career Researcher Funding Progress Reports

The committee received progress reports from each of the 2023 ECR funding recipients.

Unitec's ECRs continue to operate in a challenging environment. Despite this, each of the PIs are doing well, managing often complex projects, developing their leadership expertise, and engaging with external partners including community groups, councils, businesses and iwi/hapū. The committee were pleased with each project's progress.

Action: Brenda Massey to draft letters to each of the report writers thanking them for their reports.

Section 5.3   Research Related Documents on Te Aka | The Nest

Brenda Massey led a demonstration of where all Unitec's research related guidelines, policies, and procedures are located on Te Aka | The Nest and where information, application forms and guidelines can be found for Tūāpapa Rangahau's research support offerings (e.g. funding and PD opportunities).

Current policies, procedures and guidelines around research will remain in place until they are eventually superseded by Te Pūkenga polices, procedures and guidelines.

Action: Brenda Massey to thank Penny Thomson on behalf of the committee for creating the research documents repository, and to ask her to schedule a similar demonstration at a future Research Leaders hui.

SECTION 6 - KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA | CLOSING

Section 6.1   Ētahi Kaupapa Anō | Any Other Business

The committee sought an update on progress towards a structure for the management of research in Te Pūkenga. While the confirmed structures for Tāraia te anamata | Creating our futures will be announced next week, research is not within its scope and therefore there is no update at this juncture.

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:	1420 h

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
3.1	Add the definition of an ECR and an emerging researcher at Unitec as an appendix to the ECR Forum ToR and arrange for the updated document to be placed on Te Aka | The Nest.	Brenda Massey	
4.1	Convey the committee's feedback on the latest SRF PBRF consultation to the RRF via Megan Allardice (EIT).	Brenda Massey	
5.2	Draft letters to each of the 2023 ECR progress report writers thanking them for their reports.	Brenda Massey	
5.3	Thank Penny Thomson on behalf of the committee for creating the research documents repository and ask her to schedule a demonstration of how to locate the repository, and research related policies, procedures and guidelines, at a future Research Leaders hui.	Brenda Massey	