Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2024-11-14
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 meeting was chaired today by Leon Tan, who 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. Leon Tan (Acting Chair)
2. Arun Deo
3. Daisy Bentley-Gray
4. Helen Gremillion
5. Nora Md Amin
6. Hamid Sharifzadeh
7. Kristie Cameron
8. Xinxin Wang
9. Kambiz Borna
10. Lian Wu

Total members represented: 10 members

Apologies

1. Hadley Brown

2. Khaled Ibrahim
3. Mel Wong (MIT)
4. Aiono Manu Fa'aea (MIT)
5. Tanya White

Total apologies: 5 members

Absent

1. Christine Fusio

Total absent: 1 member

MOTION

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

Moved: Kristie Cameron
Seconded: Nora Md Amin

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

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MOTION

That the committee approves the minutes of the 2024-10-10 meeting as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Helen Gremillion
Seconded: Lian Wu

MOTION CARRIED

Item 2.3   Mahia Atu | Matters Arising

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
2.3	Keep the committee updated on the submission to TKM on the difficulties Unitec's IT policies and procedures are posing to teaching and research endeavours.	Leon Tan / Hadley Brown	In progress. A memo was submitted to TKM's Sept meeting. Prof Martin Carroll, Chair of TKM, invited James Meyer, Digital Operations Lead, Rohe 1, Te Pūkenga to attend the TKM meeting during the discussion of this agenda item to respond to the concerns expressed in the memo.
James articulated the challenges he has faced in his role in navigating the regulatory framework around software licenses within Te Pūkenga, within which we remain implicated, and strongly

			expressed a willingness to co-design some solutions, especially now that Te Pūkenga is being devolved. James has been invited to attend a future URC hui for this purpose and will hopefully do so in the new year.
2.3	Obtain further details from A/P Marcus Williams, Director Research and Enterprise, on the rationale for the amendment to the recommended change to the Actions under Action Summary 'Review capability and plan for institutional research co-governance and leadership' of the Research Strategy Action Plan.	Hadley Brown	Complete. Hadley discussed this matter with Marcus, i.e., that the URC understood his rationale for the amendment, but that the revised Action statement didn't seem to align with his intent. Marcus agreed that the Action could be amended, and it will now read "Ngā Wai a Te Tūī leads the development of a research governance model in line with Te Tiriti o Waitangi for consideration and approval by the Academic Committee and Unitec ELT".
3.1	Provide Te Komiti Mātauranga with a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 Terms of Reference.	Brenda Massey	In progress. The confirmed ToR will be provided to TKM in December along with the URC's confirmed 2025 membership list, Work Plan and meeting dates, which are on this agenda for consideration.
3.2	Advise the Chair of the 2025 ECR Contestable Funding Grants Advisory Committee, A/P Marcus Williams, Director Research and Enterprise, that the membership of the GAC has been approved by the committee.	Brenda Massey	Complete
5.1	Discuss with Marcus Williams how Pacific and Māori research can be emphasised within School Research Group planning and given visibility within the School Research Group visual schematic.	Arun Deo / Hadley Brown	In progress. Schools are revising their School Research Plans (due 30 Dec) in preparation to the move towards group-based research dissemination funding. Arun will be reminding RLs of the deadline next week and will take the opportunity to request that Pacific and Māori research is given visibility within School Research Groups' visual schematics.

SECTION 3 – MEA HEI WHAKAAE | ITEMS TO APPROVE

Section 3.1   2025 URC Work Plan

The committee reviewed a Work Plan assembled for 2025 by the Secretary. It is based on last year's plan but includes some additional items of business that were requested to be included by the Chairs at various meetings throughout 2024.

MOTION

That the committee approves the 2025 Work Plan as presented.

Moved: Xinxin Wang
Seconded: Hamid Sharifzadeh

MOTION CARRIED

Action: Brenda Massey to provide a copy of the committee's 2025 Work Plan to Te Komiti Mātauranga.

SECTION 4 - WHAKAWHITI KŌRERO | ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Section 4.1   Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines Update

The committee discussed a proposal received from the Library that a working group be assembled to update the Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines, which have not been amended since March 2016. As the guidelines are jointly 'owned' by the Library and Tūāpapa Rangahau, the working group should include representatives from both areas.

The committee discussed whether it is an appropriate time to update the document with the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga and the potential Unitec/MIT merger. While we continue to operate in an environment of uncertainty, it was felt that putting this mahi on hold could result in indefinite delays, and meanwhile the scholarly communications environment is continuing to change and evolve.

It was queried how much work might be involved in updating the guidelines. It was noted, for example, that the current guidelines do not reference Unitec's Academic Integrity Procedure or Unitec's Research Output Types Evidence Guide. They refer to KRIS (Kiwi Research Information Service) which Unitec has not subscribed to for many years now. They do not touch on AI or give specific guidance on open access publishing. Since the guidelines were produced, Unitec has moved to a new Research Bank platform. So, there is potentially a huge amount of work involved, although it was noted that some preliminary work has already been undertaken by the Library.

There was support for the establishment of a working group to scope the extent of the work that will be required to update the guidelines. Committee members Arun Deo (Tūāpapa Rangahau) and Hamid Sharifzadeh (School of Computing, Electrical & Applied Technology) volunteered to form part of the working group.

The working group will be tasked with presenting the findings of the scoping exercise that they will undertake to the committee. The committee will then discuss whether to support updating the guidelines at this juncture, or putting the work on hold until Unitec's future direction is clearer.

MOTION

That the committee approves the establishment of a working group tasked with scoping the mahi required to update Unitec's Scholarly Communications Guidelines, and that the working group present their findings to the committee early in 2025.

Moved: Arun Deo
Seconded: Helen Gremillion

MOTION CARRIED

Action: Nora Md Amin to progress the establishment of a working group to scope the mahi required to update the current Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines, with the results of the scoping work to be presented to the committee in early 2025.

Section 4.2   University Advisory Group: Phase 3 Consultation

The committee discussed the University Advisory Group (UAG)'s Phase 3 consultation provocations. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

- Many of the questions are specific to the university system, and while Unitec is not a university, we are undertaking a lot of research. We should be listened to, and we should continue to have access to funding to support our research activities.
- Questions 3, 4, 9 and 10: Unitec and other ITPs are very good at partnering with industry. With the UAG looking at ways to spread some of the costs of research, industry partnering is a way to achieve this, while also giving opportunities to learners, whether they be undergrads or postgrads. A huge problem at the moment is that university graduates have nowhere to go because they're not ready to work. The objective should be to deliver industry ready learners.
- There needs to be more transparency as to how research funding is distributed. E.g. MBIE's new edict that ITPs can only submit one Smart Ideas proposal each, but universities and CRIs have larger caps on the numbers they can submit. Decisions like this need to be more transparent. ITPs and privately owned institutions, including Māori organisations, have particular strengths that the universities don't. If you want to decrease competition, then the system needs to be fair.
- Questions 4 and 11: our research voucher scheme is an example of one of the ways in which Unitec is being responsive to current and future skills needs. Such schemes don't exist within the university sector. Vouchers see Unitec researchers (staff and/or students) respond to a need of an industry or community group who provide some funding and then Unitec matches it.
- Local government and other entities, including private companies, while not generally funders of research per se, do have money, and Unitec has received funds from these types of organisations, particularly in the negotiated research student space. Our students then get experience working with stakeholders and working with industry partners. We want our PhDs and ECRs to get this experience, because when they get their first real job, they know how to talk to people, how to engage with iwi etc. Our message to the UAG needs to be 'listen to what we do'.
- Question 8: is relevant to Unitec. The cost of complying with PBRF requirements is huge. There's the time of panel members, who need to be trained and engage in discussing large numbers of evidence portfolios. The preparation of portfolios is very resource intensive in itself. PBRF does not necessarily capture the research that our students are doing. We need to minimise the compliance and resource intensive aspects of any type of evaluation.
- Unitec has industry, community and government focussed connections. These sectors have niche issues and research needs that the ITP sector is well suited to address.
- Number 10 (overheads). It would be good if all the universities had to be on the same page. If one starts charging 130% overheads, then another will do the same. There should be an opportunity to reinvest some of the overhead money that institutions are receiving directly into research and into their people. This could be either an internally or externally managed thing. The new Aotearoa New Zealand Tāwhia te Mana Research Fellowships opportunity

offers grants with a fixed overhead, so this isn't something that institutions have to calculate themselves, and it is an 'across the board' thing. TEOs and other research providers need to be on the same page, with everyone willing to reinvest in their own research and in their people.

Action: Brenda Massey to provide the committee's feedback to Martin Carroll and Jamie Smiler.

Section 4.3   2025 URC Membership

The committee reviewed its membership and composition requirements for 2025. No changes were mooted.

Action: Brenda Massey to provide a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 membership and composition requirements to Te Komiti Mātauranga.

SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

Section 5.1   2025 URC Meeting Dates

The committee noted the scheduled dates of 2025 meetings and the associated deadlines for agenda items. No changes were mooted.

Action: Brenda Massey to provide a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 schedule of meetings to Te Komiti Mātauranga and issue calendar appointments to all committee members.

Section 5.2   Classification of 2024 URC Agenda Items

The committee noted the classifications assigned to its 2024 agenda items. Members were pleased to see that the committee continues to operate according to its Terms of Reference and that the majority of items it considered in 2024 were strategically orientated.

SECTION 6 - KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA | CLOSING

Section 6.1   Ētahi Kaupapa Anō | Any Other Business

The Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC) has released application deadlines and meeting dates for 2025. These are appended below for the committee's information.

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).

The committee thanked Leon Tan for ably chairing today's meeting in Hadley Brown's absence.

Section 6.3   Karakia Whakamutunga | Closing Karakia

MEETING CLOSED:	1400 h

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
2.3	Seek James Meyer's (Digital Operations Lead – Region 1) input on how the difficulties Unitec's IT policies and procedures are posing to teaching and research endeavours could be navigated.	Brenda Massey / Hadley Brown	
2.3	Provide Te Komiti Mātauranga (TKM) with a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 Terms of Reference.	Brenda Massey	
2.3	Discuss with Marcus Williams how Pacific and Māori research can be emphasised within School Research Group planning and given visibility within the School Research Group visual schematic. Request RLs give Pacific and Māori research visibility within School Research Groups' visual schematics while they are in the process of updating their School Research Plans to align with the move towards group-based research dissemination.	Arun Deo / Hadley Brown Arun Deo	
3.1	Provide a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 Work Plan to TKM.	Brenda Massey	
4.1	Establish a working group to scope the mahi required to update the current Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines. Present the results of the scoping work to the committee in early 2025.	Nora Md Amin / Arun Deo / Hamid Sharifzadeh	
4.2	Provide the committee's feedback on Phase 3 of the University Advisory Group's consultation to Prof Martin Carroll, DCE Academic,	Brenda Massey	

	Unitec and MIT and Jamie Smiler, National Research Director, Te Pūkenga.		
4.3	Provide TKM with a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 membership and composition requirements.	Brenda Massey	
5.1	Provide TKM with a copy of the committee's confirmed 2025 schedule of meetings and send calendar invites to all committee members.	Brenda Massey	

APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES

UREC Committee Dates 2025

Deadline Date for Application Submissions	Meeting Date
29 January	19 February
26 February	19 March
26 March	16 April
30 April	21 May
28 May	18 June
25 June	16 July
30 July	20 August
27 August	17 September
24 September	15 October
29 October	19 November
26 November	17 December