



# minutes

## Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2025-08-14
Scheduled Start:	1300h
Scheduled End:	1500h
Location:	Microsoft Teams

<b>MEETING OPENED:</b>	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 meeting was chaired today by Leon Tan, who warmly welcomed members of the committee to the meeting including Adrian Jenkins (proxy for Nora Md Amin) and Christina Masae (proxy for MIT's Aiono Manu Fa'aea, MIT Research Committee).

### SECTION 2 – STANDING ITEMS

#### **Item 2.1 Ngā Whakapāha | Attendance, Apologies & Quorate Status**

##### **Members Present**

1. Leon Tan (Acting Chair)
2. Linda Kestle
3. Kristie Cameron
4. Daisy Bentley-Gray
5. Hamid Sharifzadeh
6. Adiran Jenkins (proxy for Nora Md Amin)
7. Helen Gremillion
8. Lian Wu
9. Xinxin Wang
10. Kathryn George
11. Arun Deo (from 1.40pm)
12. Hinewai Reihana-White (from 1.40pm)

Total members represented: 12 members

## Apologies

1. Hadley Brown
2. Nora Md Amin (proxy Adrian Jenkins)
3. Aiono Manu Fa'aea, MIT Research Committee

Total apologies:

2 members + 1 MIT representative

### MOTION

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

**Moved: Kristie Cameron**

**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
4. Christina Masae, proxy for Aiono Manu Fa'aea, MIT Research Committee
2. Deb Heke, Ngā Wai a Te Tūi (1-1.20pm)

*Item 4.1 was presented here, see below for a summary of the discussion.*

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

### MOTION

**That the committee approves the minutes of the 2025-07-10 meeting as a true and accurate record.**

**Moved: Linda Kestle**

**Seconded: Kathryn George**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### Item 2.3 Mahia Atū | Matters Arising

Adrian Jenkins advised the committee that Nora Md Amin is leaving Unitec. The new committee representative from the Library will be Sana Saleem.

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
2.3	Martin Carroll has asked that the committee reviews the criteria for setting up a research centre to ensure that resilience is built into their business cases.	Hadley Brown	In progress - on agenda for discussion
2.3	Work with the Head of Applied Business to recruit a new committee	Hadley Brown	In progress

	representative from the school.		
2.3	Present the reviewed and updated Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines to the committee's August meeting for approval.	Nora Md Amin	Complete - on agenda for approval
2.3	Update the committee's self-assessment document to include the framework within which committee members can provide feedback on any aspect of the committee's operation and processes confidentially and outside of the live meeting.	Brenda Massey	Complete
3.1	Advise the nominator of the approval of Dr Melissa Vera as a Unitec Honorary Research Fellow.	Brenda Massey	Complete
5.1	Discuss with the new Research Director the possibility of establishing a scheme for projects led by senior researchers that include researchers who need support to achieve research outputs for the RPTL.	Hadley Brown	In progress. This conversation will be held once the new Research Director is on board.
6.1	Invite Deb Heke to the next meeting.	Hadley Brown / Brenda Massey	Complete

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

#### **Section 3.1 Updated Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines**

The Committee reviewed the updated Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines. They were particularly impressed with the guidance around open access and predatory publications, and with the new section 4.2 Māori Knowledge Systems and Scholarly Communication.

It was noted that there are a couple of typos in the updated document and Helen Gremillion offered to attend to these before the guidelines are published on Te Aka | The Nest.

The committee thanked the working group of Nora Md Amin, Arun Deo, Hinewai Reihana-White and Hamid Sharifzadeh for their mahi.

#### **MOTION**

**That the committee approves the updated Unitec Scholarly Communication Guidelines, subject to the minor typos in the document being amended prior to their dissemination.**

**Moved: Adrian Jenkins**  
**Seconded: Helen Gremillion**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Action:** Helen Gremillion to attend to the minor typos in the updated guidelines document and send the final version to Arun Deo. Arun Deo to arrange for the updated guidelines to be published on Te Aka | The Nest.

### **Section 3.2 Updated Pacific Research: Guidelines for Social & Cultural Responsiveness**

The Committee reviewed the updated Pacific Research: Guidelines for Social & Cultural Responsiveness.

The review was undertaken in consultation with the Pacific Research Fono.

The committee thanked Daisy Bentley-Gray and Dion Enari for their mahi.

#### **MOTION**

**That the committee approves the updated Pacific Research: Guidelines for Social & Cultural Responsiveness.**

**Moved: Hinewai Reihana-White**  
**Seconded: Helen Gremillion**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Action:** Daisy Bentley-Gray to arrange for the updated guidelines to be published on Te Aka | The Nest.

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

### **Section 4.1 Introducing A/P Deb Heke, Director Ngā Wai a Te Tūī, Māori & Indigenous Research Centre**

This item was addressed between items 2.1 and 2.2.

Deb Heke introduced herself to the committee. Deb joined Unitec and Ngā Wai from AUT where she was a lecturer and senior lecturer in the Faculty of Health & Environmental Sciences, specifically at Taupua Waiora, the Centre for Māori Health Research. Deb has also worked in community mental health and has a background in exercise science and exercise physiology. Most recently Deb's work sits around mana wahine theory and praxis, and what it means to be a Māori woman today. Deb runs MAI (Māori and Indigenous) ki Wairaka, which is part of a doctoral scholar support network funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga.

Ngā Wai researchers include A/P Byron Rangiwai whose research interests lie in the area of neurodiversity and Māori perspectives and approaches to neurodiversity; A/P Dion Enari a Pacific researcher whose research interests include sport and diaspora; and Hinewai Reihana-White. The centre is supported by Hadley Brown and Aki Te'evale.

Ngā Wai is hosting an open day on Wednesday, 27th August, 9:30am – 2:30pm at their base in Building 111, Mt Albert. This will provide an opportunity to meet the team, hear about some of their research, and discuss potential collaborations and partnerships on future projects. Staff can drop in at any time throughout the day. A Strategic Ideation Session will be held from 12:00pm – 1:30pm. This will be a focused session to explore collaborative research ideas and strategic partnerships to advance current and prospective research projects.

It was raised that it would be good if Ngā Wai researchers could attend schools' staff meetings to provide an overview of their research with a potential for identifying potential collaborative research and postgraduate research opportunities.

It was queried what Ngā Wai's relationship is with teaching and supervision. Deb responded that Ngā Wai researchers don't have time allocation for anything other than research. She acknowledged that Ngā Wai staff have a particular set of skills that would be very valuable to the schools, and they are looking at options for making their expertise accessible to Unitec and MIT.

#### **Section 4.2                      Unitec Research Centre Procedure**

The committee discussed research centres at Unitec. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

- A number of important externally funded opportunities have been disestablished that might have once supported the activities of our research centres. Should we be concentrating instead on building up our increasingly robust research groups across Unitec?
- The resilience of research centres is dependent on external funding, and funding is generally allocated to buy out the time of a specific researcher, generally the Research Centre Director.
- The work of centres should be integrated into the work that research groups are doing. Research groups are embedded in schools and in teaching and learning and are therefore likely to be more stable and resistant to the risks of one or two people suddenly leaving Unitec.
- Any discussion about the future of research centres at Unitec will need to be cognisant of the implications on our currently existing and viable centres.
- A successful research group could stand up as a centre, or a centre could devolve into a group.

**Action:** the committee wishes to revisit this matter once the new Research Director has started.

#### **Section 4.3                      What does the Unitec/MIT merger mean for Unitec?**

The committee considered opportunities and concerns about the Unitec/MIT merger in the research space. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

- MIT doesn't have PBRF funding, or research degree completions funding. Unitec's research productivity is good because we utilise this funding to support research. If this resource needs to stretch to another cohort of researchers, Unitec researchers could be disadvantaged.

- With external funding, funds stay with the people that win the grant. In fairness, funding that is earned by a particular cohort of researchers should stay with them. If this is not going to be the case, then people's motivation to undertake research will diminish.
- Transparency is important. Research degree completions funding should benefit the schools who produced the graduates, to keep supervisors and PBRF eligible staff research active.
- We need to invest in growing research culture and invest in research capacity building, particularly in MIT which is in a very different state than Unitec. The Research Office, under Marcus Williams' guidance, has always been very strong around this developmental aspect, e.g. they have identified funding for different levels of researchers and have proactively engaged in supporting people to grow. People who don't already have outputs and research capacity can't really develop that unless they get resourcing and support.
- It everything that Unitec has 'gets spread out over everybody', from Unitec's point of view that would be a negative outcome.
- There is pressure in terms of the direction the government is currently going in, which is to cut anything that looks like developmental funding or grass roots engagement to support researchers.
- There is a tension between caring about the research we're doing and at the same time wanting to support MIT and see them succeed in the research space. There needs to be a balance and some strategic thinking.
- There are indications that the new Research Director is likely to be very focussed on gaining external funding to support research, which is understandable, but we can't rely on winning external funding because the playing field for external funding is not level between different fields and different activities and different ends.
- MIT doesn't have any active postgraduate programmes at the moment, so resources like our postgraduate scholarships and anything else that goes to postgraduate students should remain as it is at Unitec.
- It will be important to ensure that, if research funds are accessible to both MIT and Unitec research staff, that it's an equitable system, whereby the people that are doing the work are being acknowledged for their work and that the funding that is being allocated for their work is targeting them so that they are able to develop.
- It will be important that researchers from MIT are able to access funding the way that staff at Unitec are accessing funding so that they can also develop capability to not only apply for funding but also be successful in gaining funding.
- It was queried what the place of Unitec's partnership agreement, Te Noho Kotahitanga, that currently underpins our research infrastructure and policies etc is. What is the place of Te Noho Kotahitanga as we merge with MIT?
- There could be three categories of funding: some for staff who are exceeding their research outputs, some for staff who are just meeting their research outputs, and some for staff that are not doing any research.

**Action:** the committee wishes to revisit this matter when the new Research Director is in attendance.

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## SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

### **Section 5.1                      2024 Annual Unitec Research Report**

Arun Deo presented the 2024 Unitec Annual Research Report to the committee, noting that it needs to be approved by Te Komiti Mātauranga before it is distributed.

There are a lot of items in the report that we can celebrate, and the committee congratulated Arun Deo and the Research Office for their work in assembling it.

## **Section 5.2**            **New Director Research & Enterprise**

The committee was advised that Dr Rosanne Ellis will be joining Unitec on Monday, 18 August as the new Director Research & Enterprise, Unitec & MIT.

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

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

Adrian Jenkins passed on Nora Md Amin's thanks for the committee's support of her role on the committee. Nora is moving on to Massey University.

The committee expressed its appreciation for the work that Nora has done for the committee; she has been a valued member.

### **Section 6.2**            **Komiti Self-Assessment**

Any feedback about this meeting, or about how the committee is operating in general, should be directed to Delphine Gesche [dgesche@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:dgesche@unitec.ac.nz).

General comments or queries are also welcome to be provided to either the Chair or the Secretary, either inside or outside of meetings.

### **Section 6.3**            **Karakia Whakamutunga | Closing Karakia**

<b>MEETING CLOSED:</b> 1430 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>
2.3 & 4.2	Martin Carroll has asked that the committee reviews the criteria for setting up a research centre to ensure that resilience is built into their business cases.  Schedule a further discussion of this matter when the new Research Director is in attendance.	Hadley Brown  Brenda Massey	
2.3	Work with the Head of Applied Business to recruit a new committee representative from the school.	Hadley Brown	
2.3	Discuss with the new Research Director the possibility of establishing a	Hadley Brown	

	scheme for projects led by senior researchers that include researchers who need support to achieve research outputs for the RPTL.		
3.1	Attend to amending the minor typos in the updated Scholarly Communication Guidelines and send them to Arun Deo.  Arrange for the updated guidelines to be published on Te Aka   The Nest.	Helen Gremillion  Arun Deo	
3.2	Arrange for the updated Pacific Research: Guidelines for Social & Cultural Responsiveness to be published on Te Aka   The Nest.	Daisy Bentley-Gray	
4.3	Schedule a further discussion of the opportunities/concerns that the Unitec/MIT merger could represent, in the research space when the new Research Director is in attendance.	Brenda Massey	