BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY   **CONFIRMED**

SENATE

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 2013

Present: Prof M Bennett (**Chair**); Ms M Barron; G Beards; Prof I MacRury; J Northam; H O'Sullivan; Prof S Page; Prof J Roach; Prof H Schutkowski; Prof R Stillman; Dr K Welham; Prof T Zhang.

In Attendance: Dr H Hartwell; Dr H Hassani; Prof A Innes; Ms F Knight; Prof S Noroozi; G Rayment; Ms L Rossiter.

Apologies: J Beard; Prof A Blake; Dr M Cash; Dr G Esteban; Prof B Gabrys; Prof M Hadfield; S Jukes; D Kilburn; Dr P Long; Prof S McDougall; D McQueen (University Board); Prof A Mullineux; Dr C Ncube; Prof A Newton; Prof J Parker; Prof D Patton; Prof K Phalp; Dr K Wilkes; Prof J Zhang.

1.   MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15th May 2013)

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

1.1   **Matters Arising not covered elsewhere in the Agenda**

1.1.1   *Circulate questions on the 2014 Festival of Learning Arrangements (minute 7.4)*: Ms Northam confirmed that the discussion questions had been circulated to members and thanked those who had provided feedback. It was agreed that this would form a discussion item at the next meeting of the Committee.

> **ACTION:** Place 2014 Festival of Learning on agenda for next meeting.
>
> **ACTION BY**: Clerk

1.1.2   *HEIF Management Panel (minute 10.1)*: The Chair confirmed that the HEIF Management Panel had been subsumed within URKEC and the relevant items had been incorporated into the agenda. Mr Stephen Jukes (Chair of the HEIF Management Panel) and Dr Philip Long had been invited to join the Committee membership (all other members of the HEIF Management Panel were already members of URKEC).

2.   GRADUATE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES UPDATE

2.1   **Graduate School Briefing Paper.**

2.1.1 This report was noted. Ms Knight reported that a number of studentships were still available. Schools were asked to ensure that any candidates were genuinely 'outstanding' in accordance with the agreed criteria (a 'first' at undergraduate level or 'distinction' at masters level, plus supporting evidence to justify an 'outstanding' assessment).

2.2 **Master by Research (MRes) Briefing & Specification.**

2.2.1 The report was noted.

2.3 **Professional Doctorate (Research Practice).**

2.3.1 The report was noted.

2.4 **PGR Management System (Converis Communications Plan).**

2.4.1 Following on from the discussion at the previous meeting, Prof Zhang presented a report setting out the draft Communications Plan for the PGR Monitoring system ('myPhDprogress'). The new system was designed to provide enhanced quality assurance for research degrees and ensure consistency of approach. In turn, it was anticipated that this would help to improve completion rates and the postgraduate student experience. The system would incorporate facilities for recording student personal development as well as generating business intelligence data. A detailed communication and launch plan was presented setting out the wide range of activities scheduled to take place through to October 2013.

2.4.2 Members debated the arrangements for the system launch. It was proposed that this take place from 16th September for all new students. Existing students would continue to use the current paper based system until January 2014. Some Members suggested that this phased launch may create confusion or dissatisfaction among existing students in the autumn when they realise that new students have access to the improved system. It was also suggested that information in respect of new student users would be more straightforward and consequently the system would not be as thoroughly tested as it would be if existing students were included in the initial roll-out.

2.4.3 Ms Knight agreed that the project Steering Group would review the plan in the light of these comments, and added that testing of the system was scheduled to take place from July. The representatives of the School of Applied Sciences and the Media School offered to be involved in this process. It was also noted that the system would be populated will all the relevant student data from September 2013, so it would be possible to provide data to inform the completion of the PGR enhancement reports (due in November).

2.4.4 The Committee asked to be presented with an updated Communications Plan, following the Steering Group's deliberations, at the next meeting. The revised plan should cover the full period of the launch (through to January 2014 or beyond).

> **ACTION:** Present updated Communication Plan to the next meeting of the Committee.
>
> **ACTION BY**: Prof T Zhang

3. REF THRESHOLDS AND UPDATE

3.1 The Chair informed Members that the REF Academic Steering Group (RASG) had considered the relevant Unit of Assessment (UoA) data and agreed provisional thresholds to be shared with UoA leaders in advance of the scheduled open forums on 10th and 13th June. Staff selection meetings would take place on 17th and 18th June and recommendations would be made by RASG to the Vice-Chancellor on 4th July.

3.2 Three categories had been agreed: (i) Staff without the necessary number of outputs at 2* and above and therefore not likely to be returned, (ii) staff with the necessary number of outputs at 2* and above and who may be returned, (iii) staff with the necessary number of outputs at 2* and above but for whom there were issues of strategic fit and who may be returned. Each individual output would be considered in accordance with the BU REF Code of Practice. Impact Assessment Panel meetings would also be taking place over the following 10 days. Staff-wide communications had been undertaken to explain the process and the Chair reiterated that there were no negative connotations attached to non-selection.

3.3 The Chair had undertaken an informal benchmarking exercise and provided examples of the wide variety of thresholds in place at a selection of other institutions. Most were using a threshold based on the grade point average (GPA) of an individual's set of outputs and the rationale for their decisions varied. BU's selection process is not out of step with the sector norm.

4. HIGHER EDUCATION INNOVATION FUND (HEIF)

4.1 **Terms of Reference**

4.1.1 The HEIF Management Panel Terms of Reference were noted and Ms Northam explained that these would be incorporated into the Committee's Terms of Reference.

> **ACTION:** Incorporate HEIF Management Panel Terms of Reference into the URKEC Terms of Reference.
>
> **ACTION BY**: Ms Northam

4.2 **Report on allocation of HEIF funding to date**

4.2.1 Ms Northam presented the HEIF summary of the funding made available to date and project status. The report was noted.

4.3 **Presentations and reports from existing HEIF Themes**

4.3.1 The Committee received the reports of major HEIF themes for the period February to April 2013. Further interest in possible KTPs was being pursued in respect of the Enterprise Security Consultancy and progress was on track to meet the projects business targets. Adrian Pinder had been appointed to lead on Aquatic Consultancy. A director had also been appointed to the Destination Development Programme. For the BU Dementia Institute progress had been generally good and it was hoped that the challenges in respect of staff resourcing would be resolved by September. The Centre for Entrepreneurship

continued to perform well in terms of its impact on the sector. The reports were noted.

4.4 **Funding for new HEIF themes**

4.4.1 The Chair reminded Members that HEIF funding was still available for innovative projects. Ms Northam suggested that one possible theme might be explored around the development of Mobile Applications. This would be a suitable theme to apply across Schools, based on the provision of consultancy services to Small and Medium Enterprises who were seeking to develop mobile applications. There was broad support from the Committee and it was agreed that Members would send Ms Northam the names of staff that might be involved in supporting the project and helping to develop a business case.

5. **BU's RKE PERFORMANCE**

5.1 The Chair reported that his individual meetings with Schools were continuing and that he would report to the Finance & Resources Committee on 14th June.

6. **ETHICS TRAINING MODULE**

6.1 Ms Northam presented this report which set out proposals in respect of research ethics training. The review of research ethics, presented previously to the Committee, had identified a need for mandatory research ethics training for all academic staff and PG research students. Subsequently, an on-line training package (Epigeum) had been procured which would meet this requirement and was widely used across the sector.

6.2 This e-module would be launched on 1st July to be completed by all academic staff (including demonstrators and technical staff) by 1st October. The e-module would take approximately 2 hours to complete (progress could be saved, allowing it to be completed in stages) and was currently being tested with a selection of key users.

6.3 The proposal also set out a communications plan and key engagement initiatives. The requirement to complete the e-module would be linked to applications for internal funding such as the Fusion Investment Fund and participation in internal development schemes such as the Grants Academy. It was suggested that the requirements for training could also be linked to staff appraisals and objectives. The Committee requested that the paper be tabled at ULT in July. The proposals were noted.

7. **EC HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD**

7.1 Ms Northam explained that a small steering group had been established to take forward the EC HR Excellence in Research Award implementation plan. It was proposed that the membership of this group be expanded. Dr H Hassani offered to join the membership and any additional volunteers should contact Ms Northam.

8. FESTIVAL OF LEARNING UPDATE

8.1   Ms Northam reported that 3,000 tickets had been issued for this year's Festival of Learning events and feedback so far had been very positive. The Committee would consider suggestions for next year's Festival in detail at its July meeting.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1   The Chair reported on two bids for Centres of Doctoral Training, which had successfully progressed to the final stage, and one successful AHRC bid.

Date of next meeting:

Monday, 1st July, 2.00pm, PG146, Thomas Hardy Suite.

Geoffrey Rayment
Committee Clerk
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