UET meeting

Tue 17 October 2023, 10:00 - 13:00

Attendees

Board members

John Vinney, Jim Andrews, Karen Parker, Shelley Thompson, Susie Reynell (Finance Director), Keith Phalp

In attendance

Jane Forster, Julie Kerr

Meeting minutes

1. Minutes and Matters arising from the previous meeting

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Approval

Chair

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The minutes of the meeting were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting. There are some redactions and a couple of corrections required before publication.

Matters arising: 2 small corrections were made to the minutes

- Finance 2.1 - £0.9m is not coming back in next year in relation to the decarbonisation project
- 3.3 - should read Tim Gale as DHod.

Action Log:

The Action Log was noted and the following updated:

- Andy Scott will now share the awarded bids on a monthly basis with effect from 1 November
- Dora - mostly complete - statement has been in principle agreed with the trades unions to be publicised but still with them for final comments.

Action list:

📄 UET actions following meeting on 10th October 23.pdf
📄 Minutes_UET meeting_101023.pdf

2. Finance discussion

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Discussion

Susie Reynell

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2.1. Cash flow update

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Information

Susie Reynell

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📄 UET - Weekly Cashflow Forecast Narrative w-e 13 October 2023.pdf
📄 UET - Weekly Cashflow Forecast w-c 16 October 2023.pdf

2.2. Bids for approval

Approval

Susie Reynell

There were 2 pre-award proposals and no post-award proposals for discussion. It was noted that there is no commitment at submission stage for the proposals and the due diligence has been addressed in the Narratives, under the strategic value section.   Both bids were approved to go forward to the next stage.

RED ID	13926	BU PI	Lihua You
Project Title	Multiclass Analysis of Magnification-Independent Breast Cancer using Multimodal Clinical Images with Deep Learning		
RED ID	13937	BU PI	Vasilis Katos
Project Title	RADAR: Risk-Driven Open Source Vulnerability Management Assessment and Remediation		

📄 Narrative for UET meeting 17.10.23.pdf

2.3. Pensions Update

Information

Susie Reynell

The Pensions update for FRC was approved subject to a couple of small tweaks to the wording.

Other FRC Papers

- Management accounts: FRC paper included some relatively small changes. SR to circulate again to UET when completely finalised.
- Stats: now updated
- Student numbers: extension until Friday morning for the paper
- Workforce planning paper: KPa submitted to SR/JA for review - due in next week.
- Audit evidence: need a change of condition report
- Deadline is 17th October for FRC papers to be submitted.

📄 Pensions Update - FRC October 2023 vUET.pdf

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3. Theme: RKE

Brian, Lee and Ian joined the meeting.

📄 Link to Sept 2023 Sway.pdf

3.1. KE workstream update

- Concept Paper on RKE definitions and potential future arrangements
- Revising terms of reference and membership Guidance on HE-BCI from UET
- Development of a policy paper and scheme for BEKE

Brian talked through the slides presented in the papers

The RKE Project plan incorporates the actions from the three RKE priority Workstreams with the aim of establishing better resources, better process, better training and more support:

1. Research and KE culture and engagement - led by Tim Rees and Ann Hemingway - now complete
2. Bidding, approvals, processes, policy and practice and post-award – led by Jim Andrews and Susie Reynell
3. KE framework and infrastructure, policy and practice – led by Ian Jones and Lee Miles

1b Optimisation of Progress

- **Transfer of admin tasks from RDS to F&R teams**
  - This is largely complete.
- **Review of ITB form**
  - Will be going live in the next few weeks
  - It is now a shorter form, which allows savings throughout the process, including early notification function, incorporates KE, links form submissions into RED database, form sends notifications to Funding Development Team, DDRPPs (+Exec Dean in HSS), Research Contracts Manager, HoDs.
  - It has been tested with academics and BEKEs and there are still further changes to be made
- **Peer review process**
  - Draft of new peer review process created by Scott Wright– will link to the new ITB form.
- **Embedding RKE support in professional service**
  - More flexibility towards RKE projects – progress made with IT and Procurement
- **Continue to review and streamline RKE processes and develop dashboard report**
  - RKE Sharepoint site now up and running - it is a 'one-stop-shop' for all RKE related information.

2b Supporting the bidding lifecycle

- **Upgrade to RED system**
  - Costing tool has been integrated into RED which improves the user experience
  - PIs are now able to see which costs fall into which categories
  - Project alignments to UN SDGs
  - Other developments which have positive impact on RDS post-award team (Due Diligence, improved dashboard)
- **Review and enhance training provision for RKE**
  - RED training sessions delivered by RDS for PIs in all faculties - good attendance and positive feedback
  - Enhanced training provision

3A Onboarding projects post award

- **Crib sheet** with funder rules
    - Simplified and streamlined the process
    - UKRI, British Academy, Royal Society and Wellcome Trust shared with DDRPPs and PIs
- **Cash flow**
    - Cash flow approvals at pre-award stage set to £100k, positive change towards more streamlined and efficient research bidding process.
- **Develop and implement training sessions for PIs**
    - Includes training on preparing for research audits and budget managing
- **Reporting monthly underspend to Faculties and forecasting during project lifecycle**
    - Monthly meetings with RDS and each Faculty
- **Kick off meetings**
    - Trialled over the summer and now offered to each approved project - will be reviewed in January, brings relevant PS teams together with PI to plan the implementation of the project . Working well
- **Roles and Responsibilities and RACI**
    - Provides greater clarity of the roles of the PIs, RDS and other key stakeholders in terms of post-award project management

3C - Managing the Risk

- **Red Flag Monitoring**
    - New ITB captures legal and financial 'red flags' for early discussion of high-risk requests
    - Revised pre-award flow with approvals from Exec Deans/UET
- **New Contracts Manager in RDS in place**
    - Should help speed up the contract work - this will hopefully lead to reduced reference to the Legal Services team
- **Implement trusted funder protocols**
    - List of trusted funders, changes implemented in BU financial regulations,
    - Research bids as income, fEC or both between £100k-£500k will be exempt of requirement for cash flow approval if certain criteria are met: funder (UKRI incl. UK Research Council, EU Horizon Europe Scheme excluding ERC, British Academy or Royal Society); no legal commitment at pre-award stage; payments are no more onerous than quarterly in arrears; following regular credit checks by RDS, there is no indication of counterparty credit default risk; and the bid and award meet BU's target fEC recovery rates
    - Plan is to revise list to incorporate KE
- **Review of CAF process -** in progress
    - Aim is to establish more simple, consistent and robust governance for approvals

3D - Developing the culture of Project management

- **Project Management training for PIs**
    - Training on RED enables PIs to get more timely updates on their projects
    - Training with external facilitator on project management in July
- **Drop-in sessions**
    - Since March the RDS post-award team are offering drop-in sessions for new and existing PIs
- **Roles and Responsibilities document**
    - Greater autonomy for PIs to run projects
- **New QR funding Tool** - tool to support and manage the process
    - In place for FMC and working well - streamlined and well received
    - can be rolled out further to other faculties as required
    - face-to-face and online sessions to be available and flexible

QR yet to be approved by UET. Revised paper to be presented back to UET for approval. *(KPh, existing action)*

JA commented that there has been some great work done on this. A comms piece is now required. All to work with FMC on the communication which links everything together and move forward into wider

workstreams. Needs also to link into induction and training, including refresher training.

RED is not currently linked to the finance system. A new finance system would be required to enable this.

Knowledge Exchange - Lee

Lee started by thanking Brian for all the work he has done to build awareness and to successfully pull everything together in one place.

- **New ITB Form**
    - Knowledge Exchange is built into the new ITB form
- **Focusing on updating the fast-track costing mechanism**
    - Revised fast track route and mapping of other KE processes
    - Fast-track will be available to all staff
    - Looking to increased limit (currently under £25k)
    - Doesn't require work to be on BU T&Cs (although advised)
    - Separates the contracting process from the costing process
    - Currently working on cost/price limit, recovery targets, enhancing CAF exemption process and overhead contribution calculation
- **Dialogue with REF Committee**
    - Ensure reporting and communication between REF Committee and KE Working Group

REF committee terms of reference - outstanding: *existing action with KPh*

Next Steps:

- Concept paper on RKE definitions and future arrangements (UET Paper Nov 23)
- Implementation of KE and Innovation Funding Panel (Jan 24)
- Development of KE Champions/Fellows (UET Paper Nov 23) - Faculties have responded well so far
- Working group - need decision and direction from UET as to where to go now
- Training and Development: need to implement train the trainer sessions and roll out to staff
- Faculty Strategy : clarify the offer to business and the action plan
- KEF data return: data not being collected as it is now always clear what is required and, as a result, things get missed
- Start-ups - looked at around 200 so far but are likely to finish with around 30 - 40. Need to clarify the definition of start-ups.
- Needs to be brought together in one place so that data can be tracked and easily referenced each year
- Terms of reference required for the 2 streams
    - Technical monitoring and
    - strategic monitoring

The timeline isn't yet confirmed but, ideally, it would be imminent because of the knock-on effect it has on other areas including the new website. Otherwise decisions could be taken blindly.

JA confirmed that each Faculty has a plan in place but could not vouch for the quality of the plans. The Faculties are developing their own strategies but they are inconsistent -

- they have different strengths
- they are starting from different points
- some have included CPD, others haven't
- faculties need to be given a framework to work to which allows success to be gauged.
- Need to link RK, Policy, BEKE and business element.

JA requested that all plans are circulated to UET to review and comment.

ACTIONS:

- KPh to follow up with Sarah once in post on faculty research plans and how to manage the ongoing workstreams going forwards. Keith and Sarah should be bringing the updates to UET
- The cutlure and engagement workstream is now complete. The report is ready and needs to go to KPh and SB for review and to start to put in place the recommendations.

📄 RKE Workstream Update 101023 (3).pdf

3.2. RKE process update

SR confirmed that there has been a lot of work on the RACI document as it is fundamental to the project. This is now almost complete. There were previously a number of grey areas which have now been ironed out.

Scott will now pick up the peer reviews.

Brian was thanked again for a job well done.

3.3. REF committee terms of reference

This will come back to a future meeting - action on KPh to follow up with Einar

3.4. FRC report on RKE activity

FRC report is essentially an update on RKE activity

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📄 FRC-2324 RKE Activity 2022-23 DRAFT to UET 12Oct.pdf

4. Faculty performance

Executive Deans, Judi Roberts

The Deans joined the meeting with the exception of Lois who was attending an external event.

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- ██████ █ us on :
  - workload planning - will address with HoDs
    - spare capacity
    - teaching gaps
    - teaching allocations
    - priorities - eg what needs to be done in the current economic climate and what are nice to do in better times.
- Revalidation of courses
- Finding efficiencies across the Faculty
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KPh questioned whether weighting/tariffs were being used appropriately.:

- tariffs are indicative - inconsistencies across individuals, courses and faculties should be justified by the circumstances: a new lecturer with a new course will require longer preparation time than an established colleague rolling over a course from one year to the next
- need quality of workload and preparation planning now
- need to challenge perceptions of what is required

Anand

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- Confident that will meet Apprenticeships target in 2024. New software has made a difference to reporting. Very grateful to the Apprenticeships team for all the work they have done.
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- Looking at ToR - need to confirm reporting structure - Anand to follow up with JF
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- Looking at workload plans versus timetable plans

- Faculty operating well. Less stress within the teams.

KPh asked about the numbers for 2024:

- Anand confirmed that the data had only just been received so was not in a position to answer with confidence.
- Have been promised that placements will be guaranteed in 2024 therefore won't have the same constraints. Distance could be an issue though due to the increasing expense of travelling. Although travel costs should be reimbursed, it still might put students off if they have to find the money up-front.
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- The main issue is room and lab space availability.
- AQ and M & C have concerns about timelines for the validations
- **ACTIONS:** Anand to follow up with both AQ and M & C

Christos

- Christos was congratulated on his appointment as Executive Dean of FST.
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- Proposed that January 24 intake is more open and flexible than September in order not to have to turn students away, with the start date flexing within a maximum 3 week window. Would provide additional support for integration and student experience for late arrivals. For FST this proposal would really only apply to Computing and Informatics.

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Placements: SR asked about placements - no-one could comment as they hadn't yet seen the data as it won't be available until November. Although the deadline is 31st August, it takes time for the data to filter through the system. Anecdotally, there are fewer placements available this year and the appetite for placements seems to be lower due to the increased cost of living and the cost of placement fees which are capped at £1800.

Teaching quality: following feedback from SVEC, KPh felt that more debate is required as this is the area where we have moved furthest away from the sector. Deans to forward any thoughts/suggestions to KPh. Maybe consider Inset days to focus on training. FMC has trialled something similar which worked well.

- Ofsted requires there to be robust teaching plans in place for all sessions.
- Students need to be confident that they are acquiring skills
- PG Cert training will help
- Ongoing CPD - culture needs to be reinforced - seems to have been a decline in engagement in this area
- Look at grouping all of H & S and RKE - voluntary allocation and mandatory allocation and bring it into the appraisal conversation.
- Share good practice - staff are keen to share and peer observations tend to work well.

ACTION: KPh to follow up.

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The Deans were thanked for a useful discussion.

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5. Items for approval or note

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5.3. SQS papers for 3rd November

Teaching and learning plans

5.3.1. Annual quality and standards report and B3 update

Papers include:

- B conditions - now being tracked
- NSS focussed
- AMERs - not all complete - mixed bag - sharing best practice will be relevant here too.
- Data being scrutinised
- Starting to see good attendance capture
    - 66.7% attendance across BU
    - Best Faculty is HSS with 71.5% attendance
    - BUBS is lowest at 62%

Personal Tutors: ST confirmed that 1878 students have not yet been allocated a personal tutor. However, a number of these sit within the CPD programmes.

Only 10% of students have had contact time with their personal tutors noted in the note taking tool on Brightspace. ST investigating whether this is because they are not happening or just not being recorded.

41% of tutorials are group tutorials.

It is a work in progress to get to 100% .

🗎 2022-23 Quality and Standards Report (ASEC) v3 (1).pdf

5.4. Timetabling Policy

The policy was approved and will be reviewed annually. It was agreed that the implementation of the policy will require some careful consideration and planning.

ST expressed concern about the timetables becoming too compressed with very long days. Issues are generally caused by late staff requests, lack of space and staff adjustments.

🗎 UET cover sheet for Timetabling and Scheduling Policy update Oct 2023.pdf
🗎 BU Timetabling and Scheduling Policy 2023 FINAL Oct 2023.pdf

5.5. Draft Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.

The draft code was approved and will ensure that BU is compliant with UK guidelines. It is unknown as yet what the OfS guidelines will be but they are expected to be similar.

JA confirmed that events cannot be stopped due to the requirement for additional security. A £5K limit for security for any event was agreed as long as the formal approval process for the event has been adhered to.

Shona to finalise and publicise the requirements.

🗎 Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.pdf
🗎 Coverpaper CoP Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.pdf

6. Standing item: reportable events

Reportable events update
There were no new events reported.

7. Future Meetings

- The agenda for the strategy session was approved
- ULT agenda: to include a Finance slot to cover business planning. Updates to be requested on all SWOTs from last year.

🗎 UET agenda 24th October 23.pdf
🗎 UET agenda 31st October 23.pdf

8. AOB

<div align="right">Chair</div>

8.1. Student Payments

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Information

Susie Reynell

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8.2. Wellbeing and support

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Information

Shelley Thompson

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A message has now been posted on Brightspace to highlight that support is in place for anyone affected by any of the events currently happening across the world.