**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th January 2014 at 9am, Boardroom, Poole House**

Present: Prof J Fletcher (**Chair**); G Beards; J Garrad; S Gates; Prof M Hadfield; Prof V Hundley; Dr F Knight; Prof I MacRury; Prof S McDougall; Prof A Mullineux; J Northam; Prof S Page; Dr K Wilkes; Prof T Zhang

In Attendance: Prof A Blake; J Hastings Taylor; Prof A Innes; D Kilburn; Dr P Long; Prof A Newton; Prof C Shiel

Not in attendance: Prof S Allan; Prof B Gabrys; Dr Rob Britton; P Hardwick; S Jukes; Prof M Kretschmer; Z Lovaszy; Dr C Ncube; Prof S Noroozi; Dr J Oliver; H O’Sullivan; Prof K Phalp; J Piesse; E Powis; Prof B Richards; Dr Kate Welham; Prof J Jun Zhang

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| **AGENDA** | | |
| **1** | **WELCOME & APOLOGIES** |  |
|  | The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting.  Apologies were received from: Dr M Cash; Dr G Esteban; Dr H Hartwell; Dr H Hassani; Prof D Patton; Prof J Roach; Prof H Schutkowski; Prof R Stillman; Prof E Van Teijlingen | |
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| **2** | **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (4 December 2013)** | |
| **2.1** | The minutes were approved as an accurate record. The Chair acknowledged the action and progress log and confirmed the outstanding action regarding research definitions would be discussed during AOB. | |
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| **3** | **GRADUATE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES UPDATE** | |
|  | Dr Fiona Knight updated the Committee on the changes to the student journey review and explained how the Graduate School will work with each School to minimise impact regarding the review outcomes. Dr Knight also provided an update on ResearchPAD testing and explained the system will be rolled out to new students and academic staff throughout February. Lastly, the Studentship deadline was on 6th January and the Graduate School received quite a few applications. A meeting will be held on 20th January to decide the recipients of the Studentship awards. | |
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| **4** | **FAST TRACK STATUS** | |
|  | Jo Garrad presented a paper to the Committee for information on measures to fast track small responsive knowledge exchange activity. She explained that those with a track record in successful knowledge exchange activities suggested that the University’s processes did not offer them enough flexibility to operate effectively in commercial markets. As such, RKEO, together with key academics reviewed current processes, and together with Legal Services, put forward recommendations. This formulated a new process called ‘Fast Track Status’, which will allow for academics to operate in a more entrepreneurial manner. | |
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|  | Ms Garrad explained that this status requires individuals or units to go through an application process in order to ensure: that the status will be used sufficiently enough to warrant the effort required by RKE Ops and Legal Services; that the application form will be endorsed by the Dean and will therefore negate the need for signed APF’s for activity under the status; and will give an idea of the types of activities to be undertaken, which will assist in providing legal documents and daily rates for costs. | |
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|  | Daily rates will not necessarily follow fEC rules and overheads will not be calculated as a flat rate, which should make BU’s rates more competitive. However, daily rates will need to ensure a positive recovery rate is achievable. All rates will be agreed with F&P at the implementation stage, allowing academics to cost projects when meeting clients as they will have a standardised model. | |
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|  | Ms Garrad further explained that Fast Track Status will give academics access to a suite of bespoke letters of agreement using standard BU T&C’s, which can be used ‘off the shelf’, especially for repeat business. If the status is successfully utilised, BU may look to remove the need for a CAF in the future. | |
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|  | Implementation will take approximately ten weeks, which includes the application process. Ms Garrad noted that the status is not appropriate for all KE activity. | |
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|  | Those with a proven track record should apply and the status will allow them to operate under licence outside of normal processes. There is set criteria against which units can apply. The status will be subject to audit to ensure that units operate within the spirit of the agreement. The scheme will take place annually with the option for renewal for existing status-holders. The Dean of School/faculty will confirm whether it aligns with the Schools KE strategy. | |
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|  | Conditions of fast track status may vary depending on the unit but might include: repeat business; similar business of low value between a minimum price and a maximum of £25k for each project; commitment to RKE Ops procedures; approval from the Dean; and submitting records for auditing. Exclusions are currently anything over £25k, competitive research and KE activity to certain funders, such as RCUK, and studentships. | |
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|  | Details of all projects must be passed to RKE Ops so that a RED record can be created regardless of whether the project received funding. For those that are funded, RKE Ops will issue an activity code once the RED record is created. RKE Ops will continue to undertake all invoicing for projects. If units have the staffing capacity and financial expertise to issue invoices they may do so for Fast Track Status activities. | |
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|  | Ms Garrad stated that Legal Services are prepared to give training to those within the School who will be responsible for ensuring the quality and accuracy of any templates. Units can propose innovative solutions as part of their application process. Additionally, the BU contract signatory can be the PI if they have the required financial authority limits and meet the contract signing procedures. | |
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|  | For those who undertake a significant amount of knowledge exchange activity but don’t feel that Fast Track Status is for them, they will continue to operate under the standard procedures currently in place. | |
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|  | Ms Garrad noted that she will amend the appeal process so that Prof Tim McIntyre-Bhatty will review any appeals as opposed to Prof John Fletcher. | |
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|  | Ms Garrad concluded her presentation and opened the floor to questions. | |
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|  | The Chair queried what factors would be reviewed regarding an applicant’s track record. Ms Garrad clarified that an applicant’s track record would take into consideration several factors, to include the number of projects applicants had applied for, what their success rate was, what their recovery rate was and the types of values that they have previously applied for. She noted that the application form will provide details of past track record and that Legal Services will look at past contracts and other legal matters. The Chair stated that we should be clear to applicants about what will form the track record and Ms Garrad agreed. | |
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|  | The Chair asked if the scheme will be reviewed annually to determine if the limit of £25K can be increased. Ms Garrad confirmed the scheme will be reviewed annually and, in some cases, the limit may be increased for existing status holders on renewal. | |
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|  | Prof Stephen Page questioned the decision on the limit of £25K. Ms Garrad noted the limit of £25K was determined by looking at the number of past KE projects and their value, of which the majority by 75-80% fell under £25K. Additionally, the £25K limit takes into consideration financial risk. Prof Page asked for clarification on what risk is associated with this scheme. Ms Garrad and Prof Adrian Newton echoed that several risks were apparent to include defaulting on the contract and not operating under BU regulations. Prof Page noted that individuals and units approved under this scheme shouldn’t carry potential risk and that £25K is a small amount relative to the University’s KE activity. The Chair reminded the Committee this is a new scheme and therefore £25K was a start point and could potentially be increased in the future. | |
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|  | Prof Iain MacRury welcomed the paper on behalf of the Media School. He noted the increased level of activity required of the Deans and queried the flexibility to delegate some responsibility to the DDREs. Ms Garrad replied that the Deans have to confirm that the application is in line with the School’s KE strategy and that it is expected that the Deans will consult with DDREs on each application. | |
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|  | Prof MacRury asked for clarification on who could apply for fast track status and Ms Garrad confirmed that both individuals and units could apply. If units apply then they will be asked to list all names on the application of those who would be granted the status for the types of activities listed within the application form and connected to the unit. | |
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|  | Prof MacRury noted his appreciation for Legal Services’ offer of training regarding contracts but expressed concern that Legal Services support would potentially cease for grants under this scheme. He queried if Legal Services will still be able to offer support with contracts for those activities under fast track status and noted that he would like confirmation that Legal Services will continue to be actively responsive for activity under this scheme. Ms Garrad confirmed that Legal Services was on-board and will continue to offer support regardless of training given. Prof Anthea Innes noted she recently met with Legal Services in an effort to streamline processes and that Legal Services had numerous innovative ideas and she felt reassured of Legal Services’ continuing support for research and KE activity. | |
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|  | Prof Mark Hadfield queried if KTPs would fall under this scheme. Ms Garrad confirmed that they would not. | |
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|  | Prof Adam Blake stated that he understands the necessity for the limit of £25K, but highlighted that this could lead to clients reducing the amount given in an attempt to get a contract signed quickly. The Chair responded that this shouldn’t be the case because clients shouldn’t be made aware of the £25K limit. | |
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|  | Prof MacRury queried whether academics would be expected to complete RED. Ms Garrad confirmed that the inputting of information to RED would remain within RKE Ops. She reiterated that the only difference for academics was that they would be able to cost projects and draw up contractual documentation. | |
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| **5** | **ETHICS RESTRUCTURE** | |
|  | The Chair updated the Committee on the ethics restructure. He noted the restructure had been approved in December and would be fully implemented across the University on 28 February. He added that Implementation Plans had been drafted for each School and that a meeting with the newly appointed Research Ethics Panel Chairs was being held directly after URKEC. | |
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| **6** | **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR RKE** | |
|  | The Chair noted the Institutional Development Plan for RKE was moving forward in a developmental way and that he had received several good points from colleagues that would be taken into consideration. He confirmed that the deadline for the RKE Development Plan engagement exercise has been extended to 17th January and he encouraged the Committee to provide feedback. It was noted that feedback could be made via the RKE Plan website or confidentially via email to the Chair directly. | |
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| **7** | **HIGHER EDUCATION INNOVATION FUND (HEIF)** | |
|  | The Chair confirmed that funding had been approved for a new HEIF project – a leadership institute based in HSC. Prof Gail Thomas and Keith Brown will be taking this forward and a meeting has been set up in mid-January to discuss details.  Prof MacRury updated the Committee on progress with setting up the HEIF funded Apps Project. The project plan is currently being drafted and recruitment is planned to commence in February/March.    It was noted that RKEO will contact HEIF team leaders in the coming months to ensure money is being spent so it is not clawed back from HEFCE. The Chair asked for updates from HEIF and Research Theme leaders. | |
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|  | Prof MacRury updated the Committee on the VFX Hub and stated this would no longer be a standalone competition, but would broaden into the Silicon South initiative. | |
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|  | Prof Hadfield provided an update on the Cyber Security Unit and stated that they recently recruited a new consultant and are bidding heavily on KTPs. He noted the Unit has big plans and is moving ahead on schedule. | |
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|  | Prof Innes informed the Committee that she and her team recently moved into a new space in the EBC; she noted this was not solely used by BUDI but also served as a space for the Ageing and Dementia Research Theme. She noted their progress is in line with the research definitions paper and highlighted the theme’s ongoing bidding activity. | |
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| **8** | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** | |
|  | Prof Page queried whether the quarterly research income meetings could be rolled into the quarterly finance meetings. The Chair noted that finance data is different to research data, but would look into this. | |
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|  | **ACTION:** Query if the quarterly research income meetings could be rolled into the quarterly finance meetings.  **ACTION BY:** Prof John Fletcher | |
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|  | Prof Hadfield asked for clarification regarding the ethics restructure if the School ethics committees would be dispersed. The Chair stated that all School ethics committees would be defunct as of the 28th February implementation date. | |
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|  | Several members of the Committee expressed confusion and concern regarding Research Theme leaders signing-off the internal bids for the PGR studentship competition, arguing that Theme leaders never agreed to this. There is much confusion around the Research Themes and what purpose they are meant to serve (i.e. shop windows or management structures) and how they connect to the UOAs. | |
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|  | Prof Sine McDougall argued that the major motivation behind the Research Themes is cohesion, but this requires that all research fits into a certain category; however, interdisciplinary research units are more flexible and can change in time as research interests change. | |
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|  | The Chair agreed that the whole concept needs to be further investigated and that there is an issue with Theme leaders signing-off bids. Additionally, the Chair confirmed it will be important to have a debate regarding the Research Themes, particularly the theme leaders’ role and how the connect with the UOAs. | |
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|  | Prof Tiantian Zhang strongly endorsed a review of the Research Themes as they are currently not ideal for PGRs. | |
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|  | **ACTION:** Convene Working Group to review the Research Themes.  **ACTION BY:** Prof John Fletcher | |
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|  | Prof Newton reiterated his concern regarding the Research Themes and the draft Institutional Development Plan for RKE and noted particularly the importance of URKEC’s direct involvement in the review. | |
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|  | The Chair noted that URKEC membership had grown organically, so this will also require a review. | |
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|  | **ACTION:** Review URKEC Membership.  **ACTION BY:** Prof John Fletcher | |
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|  | Sally Gates informed the Committee that the 3rd edition of the Bournemouth Research Chronicle was recently published. She noted that the BRC would be distributed to BU academics, the OVC VIP list and several BU alumni. | |
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|  | Prof MacRury suggested that the DDREs meet more regularly as there currently is not a forum to meet. Prof Hadfield noted that in previous years the DDREs took part in away days. Prof MacRury invited members to get involved in the BU Research Blog Review Group, which decides on the editorial strategy and will help to create a new structure for the Blog. | |
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|  | The Chair thanked the Committee and adjourned the meeting. | |
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|  | **Date of next meeting:** | |
|  | Thursday 6th February, 9am, Board Room, Poole House | |
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|  | Julia Hastings Taylor  Committee Clerk  RKE-1314-01 Minutes 9 January 2014 | |