

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Meeting 21 held on Tuesday 19th May 2015

UNRESERVED MINUTES (UNCONFIRMED)

Attendance List

Name of Member			Meeting 19 29-Oct-14	Meeting 20 4-Feb-15	Meeting 21 19-May-15
Staff members	Professor Peter Ayton (Chair)	PA	✓	✓	✓
	Dr David Barling	DB	A	✓	N/M
	Professor Michael Bromley	MB	R	N/M	N/M
	Dr Tom Davies	TD	N/M	✓	N/M
	Rory Fitzgerald	RF	A	N/A	A
	Dr Sebastian Gaigg	SG	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Ros Gill	RG	✓	A	A
	Professor Chris Greer	CG	N/M	N/M	✓
	Gail Marsom	GM	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Eugene McLaughlin	EM	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Ronen Palan	RP	✓	N/M	✓
	Professor Joseph Pearlman	JP	✓	R	✓
	Professor Rainer Schnell	RS	N/M	N/M	✓
	Andrea Tinson	AT	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Howard Tumber	HT	N/M	✓	A
Student members	Neil James Wilson	NJW	R	A	R

In attendance: Kim Edmunds (Secretary), Giovanni Mangraviti (for Neil Wilson)

Attendance key:

- ✓ Present
- A Apologies received
- R Representative in attendance
- N/A No apologies received
- N/M Period when not a member

Part One – Preliminary Items

1. Welcome and Apologies

All members were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were noted as per the above table.

2. Minutes (Paper A)

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2015 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising / Action Tracking

Item 3 (re Item 11 - Ethics): The Chair reported that he had not yet circulated an email to remind staff of their responsibility, for themselves and their students, to complete ethical approval applications for all projects but that this would be done shortly.

Item 9 - Ethics: The Department of Sociology Ethics policy had been approved by the Senate Research Ethics Committee.

Action: Chair to circulate School-wide email regarding the importance of Ethics approval.

4. Chair's Action

There were no items of Chair's Action to report.

5. Chair's Report

Minutes from the University Research & Enterprise Committee (REC) would now be included on the School Research Committee agenda for information.

6. Feedback from Student Representative(s)

The Committee noted that recently there had been noise disturbance in the Pool created by filming by Marketing & Communications staff. It was agreed that this designated quiet study space was not an appropriate location for such activity and EM would write to Ed Grover accordingly.

Action: EM to write to Ed Grover requesting that the Pool is not used for filming.

The Committee noted that PhD students were still awaiting 'out of hours' access to the Pool which it was understood Carmai Pestell was organising.

Action: Secretary to investigate progress with arrangements for 'out of hours' access to the Pool.

SG reported that users were still experiencing general operational issues with RAP and discussions were ongoing with Naomi Hammond to try to simplify the process. The Chair had recently received an email regarding insufficient compliance with the system by both staff and students. Questions were raised about the accuracy of the data, how the input was monitored, and repercussions for not using it.

Action: Chair to respond to the email regarding RAP compliance and raise issues of concern noted above.

Part Two – Items from University Research & Enterprise Committee

7. REF

- a) The Committee noted the document 'Planning for REF 2020 and beyond' which had been presented at the February 2015 meeting of the University REC. In summary, research output quality would continue to be monitored via the ARQM exercise, two high level planning groups (strategy and operations) would be established, and there would be an increased focus on impact.

The Chair reported that the PVC Research was planning a mock REF exercise for next year. The Committee could also have an input into the ARQM review to be held later this year. A School-level REF planning group would be established with departmental and research centre involvement to identify strategies for increasing impact and improving the research environment. REF planning was likely to be discussed further at the SASS Away Day on 20th May.

It was noted that the original function of ARQM had been for the University to monitor the general output of 3* and 4* papers, but it was now also being used to guide individual promotion decisions and accordingly there were concerns about the accuracy of output evaluations for these purposes.

- b) The Committee noted the minutes from the February meeting of the University REC. There had been an indication of interest from Queen Mary for DTC involvement and there would be approaches to sound out King's College and the LSE, as a liaison with Birkbeck was now looking unlikely.

Action: Chair to seek clarification on senior level progress regarding DTC application.

[Ronen Palan left the meeting]

Part Three – Items for Discussion

8. University Annual Research Competition

The following entries had been received for the University Annual Research Competition:

Applicant(s)	Department / School(s)	Project title
a) Newton Armstrong Miguel Mera Diana Salazar	Music	VØICE
b) Beatriz Calvo-Merino	Psychology	Data driven performing arts: a new approach to enhance emotion sensitivity in dance
c) Tina Forster	Psychology	Improving psychological wellbeing through attention to the body
d) Elliot Freeman	SASS/SHS/SMCSE	Improving speech comprehension by delaying sound

The competition rules allowed for two School applications and one cross-School application to be submitted. The Committee agreed to put forward project (a) Newton Armstrong, Miguel Mera and Diana Salazar, project (b) Beatriz Calvo-Merino, and project (d) Elliot Freeman.

Part Four – Items for Information

9. Ethics

- a) The Committee noted the submission of the School and Department 2014-15 Ethics reports. All departmental Ethics Policy documentation had now been submitted although it was not clear whether the International Politics document had been approved yet.

Action: AT to check status of International Politics Ethics Policy document.

- b) *SDrive*. The Committee noted that Ethics research forms were now available on the School's SDrive.

10. Conference Attendance and Research Support / Pump Priming

From information available, all departments had currently underspent on their Conference and Research budgets although it was noted that expenses were frequently being claimed against incorrect cost codes. The Committee noted that there would be insufficient time remaining this financial year for a School pump-priming round.

Action: Secretary to recirculate Conference and Research Budget cost codes to departments.

The Chair reconfirmed that it was for departmental research committees to decide which applications for conference and research funding they approved – including requests from PhD students – provided the activity had a REFable aim; unspent funds could not be carried over to the next financial year. It was unclear how Psychology experiment participant expenses could be set against this budget and this would be clarified.

Action: AT to clarify the position regarding the participant expenses code.

11. University and School PhD Studentships 2015

The Committee noted that all School PhD studentships had been awarded although the delay by the Graduate School in advertising the positions had been disappointing.

12. Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM)

The following points were noted in addition to discussion at paragraph 7(a) above:

- There had been a lack of University-level guidance for this process.
- Departments could use the Conference and Research Budget to pay for external reviewers.
- An additional requirement was being introduced for supervision of new PhD students: staff would require a GPA of 3 or above, as well as being classified as a category A supervisor by BoS (although there could be exceptions). This would apply to both research and professional doctorates. There was some concern about the accuracy of the requirement and the Chair agreed to seek clarification.

Action: Chair to check ExCo and Senate minutes to clarify new criteria for supervisors.

13. Insurance for Research Activity (Paper I)

AT and GM had circulated to School academic staff a letter regarding new rules for insurance cover for all research projects. These rules applied to both externally and internally funded projects carried out by academics or students. Insurance cover would now need to be assessed in the same way as ethics approval and health and safety.

14. Guidelines for Research and Consultancy Applications (Paper J)

AT and GM had produced updated guidelines which were available on the School's SDrive and would also be circulated via email. In summary, a minimum of eight working days would now be required for AT and GM to comment on applications.

15. Departmental Research/Ethics Committee Minutes

The minutes from recent departmental Research and Ethics Committee meetings from International Politics, Psychology and Sociology were received and noted. The Chair emphasised that minutes from these meetings were required from all departments.

Action: Secretary to remind departmental representatives to forward minutes of Research and Ethics Committee meetings.

Part Five – Items of Further Business

16. Actions

Actions from the meeting were agreed as follows:

- Item 3: Chair to circulate School-wide email regarding the importance of Ethics approval.
- Item 6: EM to write to Ed Grover requesting that the Pool is not used for filming.
- Item 6: Secretary to investigate progress with arrangements for 'out of hours' access to the Pool.
- Item 6: Chair to respond to the email regarding RAP compliance and raise issues of concern noted.
- Item 7: Chair to seek clarification on senior level progress regarding DTC application.
- Item 9: AT to check status of International Politics Ethics Policy document.
- Item 10: Secretary to recirculate Conference and Research Budget cost codes to departments.
- Item 10: AT to clarify position regarding participant expenses code.
- Item 12: Chair to check ExCo and Senate minutes to clarify new criteria for supervisors.
- Item 15: Secretary to remind departmental representatives to forward minutes of Research and Ethics Committee meetings.

17. Other Business

The Committee noted a request for recommendations or nominations for the forthcoming Times Higher Education Awards which it was agreed could be circulated accordingly.

18. Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

Meeting dates for 2015-16 to be confirmed.

Kim Edmunds
June 2015