GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 November 2011

PRESENT:	Professor F. Cheater, Professor J. Craft, Dr R Emmanuel, Professor P. Flowers, Professor D. Harrison, Professor J. Marshall, Dr S McMeekin, Professor S. Scott (Chair), Professor D. Smith, Professor J. Tombs, Dr R Wheate
APOLOGIES:	Professor C. Donaldson, Dr L. Gray, Professor B. Hughes, Professor R. MacDonald, Professor A. McKay, Professor B. Steves, Professor B. Stewart, Professor J. Stewart
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr P. Woods (Secretary)

MINUTES

011.39 Considered: The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2011 (**REC11/15/1**).

011.40 Resolved: That subject to the following amendments, the minutes be approved as a correct record:

1. That some clarifications be made to the School of Health and Life Sciences section, particularly on the reason for the single submission strategy and other clarifications on the process used.
2. That "lack of critical mass" should be re-examined to ensure that it should not be simply "lack of numbers".

MATTERS ARISING

011.41 Considered: Any matters arising on the above minutes not considered elsewhere on the agenda.

011.42 Resolved: That there were no matters arising.

CHAIR'S REPORT

011.42 Reported: By the Chair that following the mock exercise, the Chair had reported the outcome to the Executive Board. Further funding and support had been allocated to strategic appointments and it was hoped these would be in place in 2012.

The Chair had presented to Senate on REF and the direction of travel after the mock. She noted that she had received some special pleading around education and cultural business. The staff would be welcome to make a case.

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2014

011.43 Considered:

1. An update from the REF 2014 Management Group (RMG);

011.44 Reported: By Professor Marshall the Group was now formally constituted and had met earlier in the day. The following had been agreed:

i. That the REF 2014 management group should remain the core group of PVCR, Director of Academic Research Development and Associate Deans for Research with the facility to invite research leads and other advisors as appropriate

ii. That REF 2014 management arrangements within Schools, including the role of research leads and any other UoA representatives, must be described fully and documented in the institutional Equality and Diversity Code of Practice for REF 2014. An updated Code of Practice would be brought to the next meeting of the RMG

iii. That the School management arrangements must include a role for the Heads of Department, in their capacity as managers of research staff

iv. That the REF Research Impact Group and REF Data Management Group are convened before the next REF Management Group meeting.

4. REF 2014 Communication Strategy;

011.45 Reported: By Professor Marshall that there had been discussion of communication at the RMG and it had been agreed that there would be a range of methods including briefing sessions, discussions with staff, website updates and provision of subgroup minutes to the University Research Committee.

5. Equality and Diversity; (**REC11/18/1**)

011.46 Reported: By Professor Marshall that the RMG was being advised by Adrian Lui the University Equality and Diversity Advisor. The intention was to produce the Code of Practice for submit to REF in April 2012, although it was as yet unclear when there would be any feedback on the Code of Practice. Some key points to remember were:

- Selection on the basis of research quality is the overarching principle
- All decision makers, including external advisors, in the process, at whatever level, will be governed by the REF 2014 Code of Practice
- Selection processes must be transparent and the University must be confident that it is aware of all eligible members of staff
- Selection processes must be consistently applied
- Training will be provided on the advice of Adrian Lui.
- There will be an equality impact assessment of the final submission which will be published
- Staff who are not selected are required to be given feedback, including feedback from external peer review

The draft document pinpointed some areas for further discussion, including the quality threshold criteria. The RMG had agreed that Schools would have degree of subsidiarity in the selection process but there was a need to be consistent across the board and to record evidence for decisions.

6. REF 2014 latest updates and news

011.47 Reported: By Professor Marshall that the University's response to the consultation had been submitted. There was no feedback as yet but REF had already changed the process for discounting outputs for staff with periods of maternity leave during the assessment phase.

The contract for the software system had been awarded to Elsevier (SCOPUS) and citations would automatically appear next to outputs (where Panels are using citations for assessment).

The University would be submitting to REF through the PURE system – there will be a REF pilot system in late 2012 and it will go live in 2013.

That Professor Marshall would now be the main institutional contact point for all REF inquiries and any communication with the REF team will be made through Professor Marshall in the first instance.

5.   Biomed subscription renewal and publication process (**REC11/19/1**)

011.48 Reported: By Professor Cheater that the Chair had agreed to fund the subscription for another year. The Committee had previously agreed, in principle, that open access publishing funds would be released only where the University would have a perceived benefit, such as enhancing the REF submission.

011.49 Discussion: Members queried a potential conflict with the Code of Practice, if the screening was related to Ref quality. Professor Marshall clarified that if the criteria were specifically related to the REF submission, it should be consistent with the Code of Practice.

011.50 Resolved: That Professor Cheater discuss a screening process with relevant Library staff to ensure an appropriate level of gatekeeping. This will be consistent with REF 2014 selection procedures and quality threshold.

RESEARCH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

011.51 Reported: By Professor Marshall that some technical difficulties had been encountered in creating the "views" or interface to PURE and two GCU systems had to be moved to a server environment and made live. Information has now been successfully imported into PURE from GCU systems but with errors detected by Atira related to inconsistencies in data hierarchies in existing GCU systems. A research flag (unique identifier) has been added now to select research staff using lists provided to the University Research Committee by Schools and this flag will have to be added to HR records for any new research active staff henceforth. All GCU databases have been updated with HR person identifiers.

All databases have had to be updated with new HR organisational structure affiliations. A hierarchy has needed to be developed for research "organizations" to import HR information as the basis for PURE structures. The current organisation hierarchy is now in place and is being tested. Old organisation structures for legacy import of pre-August 2011 data is being created and will be tested this week.   The Repository legacy import has all but 180 (out of 2100) of the publications imported with some errors relating to organizational affiliation. A final legacy dump from Digital Commons will be carried out prior to going live.

A Finance Office code for live projects has now been added to the RIE database to create an automatic live project list in PURE. A new librarian post has been approved by the Executive to support publication input to the external repository on a 1 day per week basis in the lead up to REF.

Atira operates a project management wiki and all support staff (HR, IT, Grad School, RIE, FNO, JM) currently involved in the development at GCU have access via a protected link . School Staff have also been nominated for the user phase, and internal GCU project meetings will begin once there is data to see in PURE. The UK PURE user group also has an on-line forum and Professor Marshall has access to that. Improvements to the research student and research group functionality are proposed for version 4.12. There will be a meeting on 25th November in Edinburgh to discuss the PURE student module development.

Because of this additional technical work, the project will not now be live until the New Year. If the current technical work on the HR database people/organisation is resolved, the next priority will be: Graduate School database (student/staff organisational relations and person issues), Project database (RIE and Finance data import), PURE user definition including reports.

These would be followed by functionality testing by GCU and Atira, final data import form GCU databases and acceptability testing by GCU for final milestone payment.

011.52 Resolved: That Professor Marshall be thanked for this update and all of the work he has put into the project thus far. Thanks were also due to IT Services, the Graduate School, RIE and HR representatives for their efforts.

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH STRATEGY REALIGNMENT

011.53 Considered: A review of the current Strategy document (**REC11/16/1**).

011.54 Reported: By the Chair that the strategy dated from 2006 and required to be refreshed. The Chair asked if the Committee would be content for her to undertake a review in consultation with Professor Marshall and to report back to the Committee.

011.55 Resolved: That the Chair undertake the strategic review in consultation with Professor Marshall and bring a draft strategy to the Committee for consideration.

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

011.56 Considered: 1. To review structures, reporting lines and/or remits of Committees (i.e. Higher Degrees Committee, Ethics and Governance (Sub) committee, School Research Committees) dealing with research and/or research related activity. (**REC11/20/1**).
2. University Research Committee Terms of Reference **(REC06/2/4).**
3. University Research Committee Composition and Membership **(REC11/11/1)**

011.57 Reported: By the Committee Secretary that this item aimed to provide discussion on the various Committees within the University whose main activity was research or research-related and how they should relate to the University Research Committee as the primary strategic committee for research matters. The document included the terms of reference and composition of these groups and suggestions were invited on any aspects that should be reconsidered post restructuring or in terms of the strategic review (as mentioned above). It was also noted that the School Committee details were in draft form.

011.58 Discussion: It was proposed that the Higher Degrees Committee should come under the auspices of the Research Committee i.e. that the HDC become an operational subcommittee of URC. It was also noted that Schools were doing things differently from each other but that the Committee was comfortable with that as long as the key issues of research ethics and governance were properly considered and documented. It was reported that the Chair of the Research Ethics and Governance Committee had already done some preparatory work on revamping that Committee and it would be better to reconsider this at a future date.

Regarding the Research Committee, members felt that it was important to have a broad "representation" and as such the proposed co-opted members would be better absorbed in to the core of academic staff members, i.e. a "group of academic staff".

011.59 Resolved: 1. That a proposal be made to Senate that HDC become a subcommittee of the University Research Committee.
2. That there is no need to be prescriptive about the form and function of the School Committees but that reports from the Associate Deans (as Chairs of the School Committees) be added as a standing item to Research Committee agendas.
3. That the Research Ethics and Governance Committee be reviewed at a later date.
4. That the Research Committee terms of reference be approved.
5. That the Composition and Membership be regularised.

PHD STUDENTSHIPS

011.60 Considered: A report on the outcome of the 2011 process (**Doc REC11/17/1**).

011.61 Reported: By the Committee Secretary that the paper reflected the outcome of the process in May 2011 and the subsequent changes. Also another change had been reported this week which required updating

011.62 Discussion: Members asked the Chair if the process would be the same for the next round both in terms of process and timing. The Chair felt that it would be useful to review operations and also to try to implement the process earlier than in 2011.

011.63 That the process be reviewed at the next meeting.

LIVE ISSUES

UKBA audit

011.64 Reported: By Professor Craft that data requests had reached a level which appeared to be intrusive in terms of evidence of student contact.

011.65 Reported: By the Chair that it was important to get appropriate advice as there was still some misunderstanding about the requirements. In the case of laboratory based students, normal procedures for recording student contact would be sufficient evidence.

Project Approval Process

011.66 Reported: By Professor Emmanuel that the project approval form required to be updated to reflect the new University structure.

011.67 Resolved: That the Chair undertake to review the project approval and grant approval processes.

OTHER ACTIVITY INDICATORS

011.68 Received: The finalised University return to the Scottish Funding Council (**REC11/8/2**).
*Note by Professor Marshall that a potential inaccuracy in the return had been flagged to the Finance Office. He would clarify this with the Finance Office and the Funding Council, if necessary, and bring any revised return back to the Committee for information.

STRATEGIC RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT GRANT (SRDG) REPORTS

011.67 Received: 1. The University's annual SRDG report to the Scottish Funding Council (**REC11/22/1**)
2. The Final HealthQWest SRDG report (**REC11/23/1**).

RESEARCH COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

011.68 Received: The revised Research Committee Annual Report 2010-11 (**REC11/12/1**).

HR BADGE OF EXCELLENCE

011.69 Received: The University submission to the HR Excellence in Research process (**REC11/21/1**).

EPSRC CHANGES TO PEER REVIEW

011.70 Received: A note of changes to EPSRC's peer review criteria (**REC11/22/1 – attached**).