



Department of Governance

<b>GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY</b>		
<b>UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE</b>		
Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2020		
<b>Present:</b>	Professor K. Currie, Professor C. Donaldson (Chair), Professor L. Elliot, Dr L. Gray, Professor J. Harris, Dr D. Lukic, Professor O. Pahl, Professor B. Steves, Dr J. Thomson, Professor J. Woodburn	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Ms M. Daly, Ms D. Donaldson, Mr A. O'Neill, Mr G. Steele, Mr P Woods (Secretary)	
<b>Apologies</b>	Mr M. Anderson, Professor S. Mickovski, Ms T. Nyariki	
<b>MINUTES</b>		
<b>020.030</b>	<b>Considered</b>	The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2020 ( <b>REC19/29/01</b> ).
<b>020.031</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>		
<b>University wide Knowledge Exchange Group (arising on URCM 020.007)</b>		
<b>020.032</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Chair that the proposal had now been approved by the Executive Board and the University will be signing the KE Concordat.
<b>REF2021 UPDATE</b>		
<b>020.033</b>	<b>Considered</b>	An update on preparations and to note that all staff submitted for REF now have an ORCID id.
<b>020.034</b>	<b>Reported</b>	<p>By the Chair that good progress had been reported to the REF2021 Management Group this month. The window for proposing new outputs had closed and the research outputs submission was largely complete, impact case studies and environment statements were progressing, although with further work was still required. Data checking and tidy up was ongoing. All GCU staff to be submitted for REF 2021 now have an ORCID unique identifier.</p> <p>Other aspects under consideration were the post-REF2021 landscape, with a REF review having been announced by the UK Government, and GCU activity planning. A report on the REF Codes of Practice by the REF Equality and</p>

		<p>Diversity Advisory Panel had been received and GCU had shown up comparatively well.</p> <p>The Chair informed members that when the REF submission process was complete he intended to convene a joint meeting of URC and the RMG to discuss the REF review.</p>
<b>020.035</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Committee note the update.</li> <li>2. To note that all GCU staff to be submitted for REF 2021 now have an ORCID unique identifier.</li> </ol>
<b>DIGITAL RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>020.036</b>	<b>Considered</b>	1. Results of a SHLS-led pilot project on the Aridhia platform ( <b>REC20/07/01</b> ).
<b>020.037</b>	<b>Reported</b>	<p>By Professor Woodburn that the report concerned a SHLS funded project in a cloud-based digital research environment provided by Aridhia. The context was the increasing complexity for health researchers in data governance particularly in relation to externally funded programmes, crossing discipline and sector boundaries with growing national, European and international collaboration.</p> <p>Between December 2019 to May 2020 SHLS conducted 4 pilot projects using the platform, chosen to reflect current scale and complexity of health research at GCU.</p> <p>The objectives were to test the aridhia platform capability to draw together, organize and analyse datasets that currently sit within multiple software systems and assessing productivity, efficiency, standardisation, multi-user access and control, data security, as well as connectivity/compatibility between proprietary software systems and the aridhia platform.</p> <p>The project was now concluded and advantages over current arrangements were identified in user experience and meeting demands of funders. It was also thought that the platform would be cross applicable for GCU research outside of SHLS and there was possible integration with Safepod.</p> <p>The pilot had focused on user experience and research leaders within SHLS were supportive of taking the project to the next phase at University level and consultation with IT Services.</p>
<b>020.038</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Professor Woodburn was asked if the pilot project had worked well with remote working. He confirmed that it had worked well and had been particularly helpful in that context.</p> <p>A members asked if there had been any scoping of other providers. Professor Woodburn replied that there were other platforms available but the available funds only allowed for one pilot project. Airidhia had been chosen as it had been identified as leading edge.</p> <p>The Director of IT welcomed the paper and felt it had covered important details such as internal and external integration and cybersecurity. He noted that this was a highly resilient platform but asked if there was backup included. He also noted the project segmentation cost model and felt there</p>

		<p>required to be clarity on costs and available funding.</p> <p>Professor Woodburn agreed and highlighted that costs can be recovered against grant funding.</p> <p>Members agreed that the outcomes appeared to be positive and it was a timely report.</p>
<b>020.039</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That progression to the next phase be endorsed.
<b>020.040</b>	<b>Considered</b>	2.A discussion on URC input to the Strategy 2030 Technology Enabling Plan.
<b>020.041</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Director of IT that he was looking for feedback from the Committee in relation to Strategy 2030. The final stages to the Strategy were being put together and he was tasked with putting together the enabling plan in relation to technology, informed by the Strategy and learning and teaching priorities. So far he had not had interaction with the research community, other than proposals for elastic computing and storage. He intended to engage with researchers before submitting the draft at the end of February 2021.
<b>020.042</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	It was suggested that a working/discussion group should be set up with stakeholders. ADR representatives suggested that this should involve representation of those with relevant expertise. It was also suggested that there be representation of Graduate School and Library, Yunus, GCU London.
<b>020.043</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That a representative working group be convened ( <b>Action: Director IT/Secretary URC</b> ).
<b>RESEARCH METRICS</b>		
<b>020.044</b>	<b>Considered</b>	A report from Strategy and Planning on various league table rankings ( <b>REC20/11/01</b> ).
<b>020.045</b>	<b>Reported</b>	<p>By Ms Daly that the report covered research metrics in league tables, specifically THE World University Rankings, THE Young University Rankings, QS World University Rankings, Sunday Times Good University Guide and the Complete University Guide.</p> <p>She briefly discussed each in turn noting that GCU is the top ranked Scottish modern university in THE and the University outperforming the Scottish modern sector for both of these metrics as well as for Research quality and Entry standards in the Complete University Guide 2021.</p> <p>The differing metrics and weightings of metrics for these and the other league tables were highlighted.</p>
<b>020.046</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Members agreed that the report was interesting and provoked consideration of the influence of metrics on research strategy and culture, what actions and/or investments could be taken to improve rankings and what return might we expect and whether or not the metrics dovetailed with the University's common good mission.</p> <p>Members discussed what the impact of the rankings were on key indicators such as grant income or student recruitment. Ms Daly replied that there was some evidence that international students may be influenced and it be helpful to them in securing funding form their home government.</p> <p>Another point made by members was whether there was a hierarchy of</p>

		rankings, with some more important than others.  It was noted that REF underlay all or most of the rankings, directly influencing income. There was tactical/strategic discussion to be had on how the rankings could be influenced without detriment to the Common Good mission.
<b>020.047</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That there is further consideration of how the rankings feed into strategic and tactical discussions ( <b>Action: Chair</b> ).
<b>RESEARCH INTEGRITY ACTION PLAN</b>		
<b>020.048</b>	<b>Considered</b>	The Research Integrity Action Plan 2020-21 ( <b>REC20/10/01</b> ).
<b>020.049</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Secretary that the action plan was presented for discussion.
<b>020.050</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	Members agreed that the key decision was allocating responsibility to the various items and an overview of the plan in general. The Secretary explained that the reconstitution of the Research Integrity and Ethics Subcommittee had been foregrounded as an action partly in response to the need for a forum to oversee the action plan on behalf of the University Research Committee. Other actions would fall under the remit of, for example, DARE, particularly in relation to the overlap with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.  Reviewing the evidence of interventions was proposed as an addition to the action plan.
<b>020.051</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	Revise tor and composition of the REISC ( <b>Action: Chair/Secretary URC</b> )
<b>CEDARS 2020</b>		
<b>020.052</b>	<b>Considered</b>	A preliminary report on the CEDARS survey conducted in July 2020 ( <b>REC20/12/01</b> ).
<b>020.053</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Director of the Graduate School that the paper gave a preliminary report on the GCU results of the Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS), a national survey supported and managed by Vitae. The survey was open for 3 weeks in July-August 2020. In total, 189 responses were received, from a target population of 96 PIs, 93 ECRs and 460 PGR's. 51% of PIs responded, 75% ECRs and 12% PGR's.  Further analysis will be undertaken by the Graduate School and the final report will feed into the Researcher Development Concordat gap analysis and Action Plan.
<b>020.054</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	Members welcomed the initial analysis. The interest in increased training opportunities was noted.  The Director was asked if the Concordat referred to careers and fixed terms contracts. She replied that the revised Concordat was aimed at better career and talent management and routes to careers both inside and outside research. GCU would require to measure its own action plan against the Concordat aims.  Another member stated that there was also an issue where work has been done on training and PDAR but where we still lose staff. The Chair stated that he was aware of this and that it was a sector-wide issue.
<b>020.055</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the report is noted and endorsed.

<b>RESEARCH STUDENT EXPERIENCE ACTION PLAN (REAP)</b>		
<b>020.056</b>	<b>Considered</b>	1. A review of REAP in 2019-20 ( <b>RDC20/08/01</b> ).
<b>020.057</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Director of the Graduate School that review highlighted actions taken throughout 2019-20 including actions taken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Actions that are continuing are taken forward into the REAP 2020/21.
<b>020.058</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	A member asked if there had been action with regard to closing the feedback loop and communications to students. The Director of the Graduate School stated that there were now regular emailed researcher updates.  It was also pointed out that there was still a degree of disconnectedness in some outcomes and how these could be linked going forward. The Director of the Graduate School responded that a lot of work had been done in a short space of time but the intention would be to link more closely to the CEDARS outcomes going forward.
<b>020.059</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the REAP review be approved.
<b>020.060</b>	<b>Considered</b>	2.REAP Action plan 2020-21( <b>RDC20/11/02</b> ).
<b>020.061</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Director of the Graduate School that the plan had been updated based on comments from the Research Degrees Committee. The aim was to prioritise and appropriately distribute the actions to responsible areas.
<b>020.062</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	Members felt that the plan was comprehensive and agreed with the need to prioritise.
<b>020.063</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the REAP action plan be approved.
<b>RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE (RDC)</b>		
<b>020.064</b>	<b>Considered</b>	1. Summary report of the 30 September 2020 meeting ( <b>REC20/09/01</b> ). 2.RDC Annual Report 2019-20 ( <b>RDC20/02/01</b> ).
<b>020.065</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	1. The summary report be noted. 2. The annual report be approved.
<b>URC COMPOSITION, MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE 2020/2021</b>		
<b>020.066</b>	<b>Approved</b>	An updated URC Composition, Membership and Terms of Reference for Session 2020/21 ( <b>Doc REC20/03/02</b> ).
<b>REGULATIONS FOR AEGROTAT AND POSTHUMOUS AWARDS</b>		
<b>020.067</b>	<b>Approved</b>	Regulations for the award of aegrotat and posthumous research degrees recommended by RDC( <b>RDC20/04/01</b> ).
<b>RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION &amp; MEMBERSHIP UPDATED FOR 2020-20</b>		
<b>020.068</b>	<b>Approved</b>	The Terms of Reference and Composition and Membership 2020/21 ( <b>RDC20/01/01</b> ).
<b>LIVE ISSUES</b>		
<b>Research Continuity Update</b>		
<b>020.069</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Chair the Research Continuity Group continued to meet on a fortnightly basis and were monitoring progress on remote vivas, PgR student and research project mitigations and safe return to campus and Tier 4 implications.

<b>Professor Jim Woodburn</b>		
<b>020.070</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Chair that that this would be Professor Woodburn's last meeting and he wished to record his thanks for the immense contribution made by Professor Woodburn both to this Committee and to the research standing and capacity of the University.
<b>REF 2021 MANAGEMENT GROUP</b>		
<b>020.071</b>	<b>Received</b>	1. The confirmed minutes of the meetings held on 26 August 2020 ( <b>RMG20/03/01</b> ). 2.The confirmed minutes of the meetings held on 21 October 2020 ( <b>RMG20/09/01</b> ).
<b>RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>020.072</b>	<b>Received</b>	The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020 ( <b>RDC19/29/01</b> ).
<b>SCHOOL RESEARCH COMMITTEES</b>		
<b>020.073</b>	<b>Received</b>	1. Confirmed minutes of the SCEBE RC meeting 20 May 2020 ( <b>SCEBE/RC/20/02</b> ). 2.Confirmed minutes of the SHLS RC meeting 20 May 2020 ( <b>HLS/RC/19/45/01</b> ).
<b>DARE STEERING GROUP</b>		
<b>020.074</b>	<b>Received</b>	Confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2020 ( <b>DARE20/01/01</b> ).