GCU Glasgow Caledonian University

Department of Governance

GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY		
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE		
Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2021		
Present:		Mr M. Anderson, Professor K. Currie, Professor C. Donaldson (Chair), Professor L. Elliot, Dr L. Gray, Professor J. Harris, Dr D. Lukic, Professor S. Mickovski, Professor O. Pahl, Dr B. Parkinson, Professor B. Steves, Dr J. Thomson
In attendance:		Ms M. Daly, Ms D. Donaldson, Mr A. O'Neill, Mr R. Ruthven, Mr P Woods (Secretary)
By Invitation		Professor Alastair Robertson, Director Academic Development and Student Learning
Apologies		Ms T. Nyariki
MINUTES		
020.107	**Considered**	The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2021 **(REC20/13/01)**.
020.108	**Resolved**	That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
MATTERS ARISING		
Digital Research Environment (arising on 02.043)		
020.109	**Reported**	By the Secretary that the Technology Enabling plan had been circulated to stakeholders as discussed.
REF2021 UPDATE		
020.110	**Considered**	An update on preparations for REF2021.
020.111	**Reported**	By Mr. Anderson that REF data requirements in REF1, 2, 4 and 6 were complete. Some further work was required on the REF3 (Impact Case Studies) and REF5 (Environment Statements).
020.112	**Discussion**	The Director of Library Services confirmed that most of the preparation work was done. The Chair stated that the work of the staff involved, particularly RIO, the Library and Professional Support Services was intensive and the efforts shou8ld be

		noted. He added that the intention was to have a joint meeting of RMG and URC before conclusion of RMG remit. Mr Anderson stated that there would be work requiring RMG oversight beyond the submission, including the mock audit planned on sigres. Mr Ruthven added that the RMG had been invaluable and he hoped there would be an ongoing role for the group. Other members were supportive of the continuation of RMG particularly in relation to research activity planning and an agreed process for sigres, as well as data reporting.
020.113	Resolved	That RMG should continue as a subgroup of URC.
RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY		
020.114	Considered	Revised terms of reference of Research Ethics and Integrity Subcommittee (**REC20/19/01**).
020.115	Reported	By the Secretary that the terms of reference had been revised to take account of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and specify an oversight role for the subcommittee in monitoring progress of the Research Integrity Action Plan. Also added was a role in identifying training requirements both for its own members and for the wider University. The composition had been updated in line with URC decisions and included a vice Chair, a University level research integrity champion and local champions. Also included was a nominee from the Graduate School to take account of some crossover with DARE and the Graduate School's training responsibilities. Professional Services staff with responsibilities for research ethics were also included as well as two lay members and a PGR student representative. He highlighted that one issue to be determined would be whether or not a payment of an honorarium to the lay members was required. Another issue for the Committee to consider was the stipulation that the Chair should not be concurrently chair of a School-based ethics committee and whether this was required.
020.116	Discussion	There was discussion on whether the Chair being concurrently a chair of a School-based committee was a conflict of interest. Concern was expressed that there should be a clear distinction in relation to decision making between these roles and should not be implemented in a workaround. Following further discussion, it was agreed that it should be specified in the subcommittee terms of reference that conflicts of interest be declared when considering ethical applications originating in the Chair's School-area and that it was intended that a review process for applications would not involve the whole subcommittee but rather a first and second reviewer drawn from the membership. There was discussion on lay members and that HRA guidance was that there should be an honorarium of some kind. Also that the lay members should have different attributes, possibly with one from a health background and one from a different background. The Chair stated that it was possible that the Assistant Vice Principal Research role, previously held by Professor Woodburn, may be replaced and that role

		would be suited to the University Research Integrity Champion. It was, for the moment, a vacancy. He asked how to identify School level champions.
		School of Health and Life Sciences members informed the Committee that they had identified a local champion, currently in the role of Senior Clinical Research Governance Manager. Members felt there required further thought on the role criteria and potential workload and possibly widening the scope beyond a representational School-based role.
020.117	Resolved	1. That the terms of reference are updated to delete the stipulation that the Chair should not be concurrently chair of a School-based ethics committee. 2. That a process be developed to indicate how conflicts of interest would be declared before consideration of applications and more detailed process for review be developed. 3. That there is further consideration of the School Champion role and whether this should be on a wider, non-representative basis. 4. There is further consideration of the lay members and payment requirements. (**Actions: Chair of REIS/Secretary of REIS**).

RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

020.118	Considered	A Summary report of the 25 November 2020 meeting of RDC (**REC20/14/01**).
020.119	Reported	By the RDC Chair that this was a brief summary of RDC business for noting.
020.120	Resolved	That the summary be noted.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING OVERSIGHT GROUP

020.121	Considered	1. Summary report of the 8 December 2020 meeting (**REC20/15/01**). 2. PGR International Stipends (**REC20/18/01**).
020.122	Reported	By the Director of the Graduate School that this was a summary of the first meeting since beginning of the Covid pandemic and was largely a stock take of current circumstances. She added that since the meeting the new SIMS system for admissions had gone live. Otherwise PGR student recruitment was going well.
020.123	Discussion	A member asked if there was any noticeable impact of Brexit. The Director of the Graduate School replied that it was too soon to know but added that EU students would pay international fees from 2021-22 so there will be an impact. Existing EU students would not be liable for international fees. Another member asked if there was any feedback from GCU London students in relation to Covid restrictions as there had been news reports of students, more generally, in London struggling. The Director of the Graduate School that so far GCU London students seemed to be happy with the University response to Covid. The GCU London Research Lead added that the PGRT and GCU London Student Life Manager were overseeing any welfare issues.
020.124	Resolved	That there is a general follow up on any PGRS hardship related issues (**Action: PVCR/Director Graduate School**).
020.125	Reported	By the Chair that the proposals on PGR international stipends were intended to adopt a fairer approach for international students in relation to fees. For students in receipt of external awards, the waiving of the international fee would now be automatic. For international students in receipt of a GCU REG-funded studentship this would apply on a case by case basis for "outstanding"

		candidates. The criteria were being developed. The Director of the Graduate School added that there was no cap on the number but an obligation to monitor the cost of this decision.

DARE GROUP

020.126	Considered	A summary report of the 4 December 2020 meeting of DARE (**REC20/20/01**).
020.127	Reported	By the Director of the Graduate School that this was also a summary report of the recent meeting highlighting ongoing matters such as CEDARS, the developing DARE to LEAD workshop programme and the Researcher Development Concordat gap analysis.

STRATEGY 2030

020.128	Considered	1. A presentation on the 2030 Technology Plan (**REC20/16/01**) 2. Discussion with Director of Academic Development and Student Learning on the Strategy for Learning in relation to PGR students and Research Strategy. 3. Draft Research Strategy (**REC20-17-01**)

2030 Technology Plan

020.129	Reported	By the Director of IT that this was an enabling plan for strategies under Strategy 2030 such as learning, teaching and research. The current version was based on feedback received so far. Broadly the plan attempted to align with Strategy 2030 and GCU values. The presentation outlined the Headline Objectives: 1. Data Management/Science and Artificial Intelligence 2. Cloud-hosted Virtual Desktop and Infrastructure 3. Teaching, Research and Collaboration Spaces 4. Learning Content Development, Delivery and Assessment 5. CRM Engagement and Services Platform 6. Corporate Applications and Platforms
020.130	Discussion	Members welcomed the presentation and the inclusion of research spaces in particular. There was also some discussion on how research can influence learning objectives. The distinction between data management and data science was also discussed and differing platforms that may be required. The Director of IT stated that the implementation is not solely an Information Services matter and there may be a role for the Library (or others) in, for example, data science objectives. The Director of Library Services commented that this fitted with the Library's management of the research data cycle.
020.131	Resolved	1. That the Director of IT be thanked for this presentation. 2. That the updated presentation be circulated to URC and stakeholders (**Action: URC Secretary**).

Strategy for Learning

020.132	Reported	By Professor Robertson that the key goal for the SfL was transformative education and included thinking about what the world and the University look like in the next 10 years. The presentation covered global trends, diversification of provision e.g. on and off campus, upskilling, CPD and microcredentials. Technology developments, graduate attributes and employability were also highlighted along with support for staff development.

		Professor Robertson also added that there was a need to enhance education research in GCU.
020.133	Discussion	Members welcomed the presentation and discussed employability in the post-Covid world, including FE/HE linkage, work placements and broader societal challenges. Staff support for technological developments was stressed and professional recognition. Members were intrigued by possibilities around virtual mobility and the possibility of virtual placements.
020.134	Resolved	That Professor Robertson be thanked for the presentation.
Draft Research Strategy		
020.135	Reported	By the Chair that the draft has been developing day by day and there has now been consultation with Deans, Strategy and Planning and research support colleagues. This had followed earlier consultation with research leaders and the Executive Board. Also to note were consultation events with Schools, GCU London and Yunus Centre. There would be further consultation with colleagues in the Graduate School and the Library. The Chair highlighted, in particular, staff development, including research support staff development, post-Covid research recovery and working more closely with industry. The final version would be put forward for approval at EB, Senate and Court.
020.136	Resolved	That the Chair's update be noted.
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING OVERSIGHT GROUP		
020.137	Approved	An updated Composition, Membership and Terms of Reference for Session 2020/21 (**Doc PGRM20/01/01**).
REF 2021 MANAGEMENT GROUP		
020.138	Received	1. The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2020 **(RMG20/03/01).** 2.The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020 **(RMG20/09/01).**
RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE		
020.139	Received	The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2020 (**RDC20-12-01**).
SCHOOL RESEARCH COMMITTEES		
020.140	Received	The confirmed minutes of the SCEBE Research Committee meeting held on 17 September 2020 (**SCEBE/RC/20/04**).
DARE STEERING GROUP		
020.141	Received	The confirmed minutes of the DARE meeting held on 23 October 2020 (**DARE20/08/01**).