PRESENT

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Professor D McEachern) – Chair
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) (Professor R Owens)
Nominee of the Chair of the Academic Board (Professor K Simmer)
President of the Postgraduate Students' Association (Ms B Crowe)
Professor H Barrett
Professor J Cordery
Professor J Finlay-Jones
Associate Professor A Lynch
Dr G Parish
Mr M Thomas
Professor G Yeoh

By Invitation:
Associate Professor I McLean
Professor D Sampson

Dr J Berman
Dr C Thomson (as Executive Officer)

Apologies
Mr S Anderson
Professor B Giles-Corti
Professor S Dunlop
Professor S Houghton
Associate Professor I McArthur
Professor C Raston
Professor Z Rengel

1. MINUTES – REF F14660

Confirmation

RESOLVED – 8

To confirm the minutes of the Research Committee meeting held on 9 August 2007.

2. RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING DATES IN 2008 – REF F14662

Members noted the following meeting dates of the Research Committee in 2008:

Thursday 14 February
Thursday 8 May
Thursday 14 August
Thursday 13 November
3. MAJOR GRANT ROUND 2008 OUTCOMES – REFS RA/1/54/1, RA/1/31/1

Members noted the attached (Attachment RC1) summary report of the 2008 funding outcomes for UWA in the major grant rounds of the ARC and NHMRC. The Report provides comparisons with the previous five years.

Of particular note is the strong result for ARC Linkage Projects with UWA winning more in the first round than any previous round (there are two rounds of funding each year). This reflects progress on an 18-month project undertaken by Research Development Officers focussing on linking research with industry as a foundation for competitive ARC Linkage grants.

4. UWA SUPPLEMENTARY TRAVEL GRANTS FOR NEW ACADEMIC STAFF – REF F896

Members noted the attached (Attachment RC2) final reports of Dr Brad Stappenbelt School of Oil and Gas Engineering, Dr Martina Kocan Centre for Medical Research, Dr Mark Edele School of Humanities, Dr Peter Noble School of Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, Dr Kevin Pfieger Centre for Medical Research, Dr Kyungrock Paik School of Environmental Systems Engineering, Dr Lisa Nimmo School of Psychology, Dr Jacqueline Van Gent School of Social and Cultural Studies, Dr Romola Bucks School of Psychology, Dr Joseph Clare School of Law, and Dr Min Zhang School of Population Health, for their Supplementary Travel Grants for New Academic Staff.

5. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND INNOVATION)

(a) Comparative Research Performance

A report on the comparative research performance of UWA over the period 2003 to 2006 is currently being prepared and will be circulated widely once finished. Early indications are that UWA has performed well against the Go8 average over this time. Total research income for UWA increased by 29.3% from 2003-2005 compared with 21.6% for the Go8, and by 53.6% from 2003-2006 compared with Go8 average of 50.4%, which includes the elevated figure reported by the University of Sydney in 2006. Total publication citation data also showed that UWA is slightly higher than the Go8 average, and this is in contrast with what has been previously been reported.

(b) Research Quality Framework – Ref F13785

In the lead up to the Federal election the Opposition’s position on the implementation of the Research Quality Framework (RQF) has remained unchanged, in that the RQF will not be progressed in its current form or under the current timeframe.

In the meantime it is likely that UWA will push ahead with aspects of the RQF which includes the requirement for eligible staff to select their four best publications over the period 2001 to 1006, and the nomination and training of stewards as coordinators for each UWA research group.

6. UWA RESEARCH GRANTS SCHEME – REF RA/1/485/1

Members recalled that at the February 2007 meeting of the Research Committee it was decided that as a result of suggested changes to the UWA Research Grants Scheme by the 2006 Subcommittee Convenors, that a working party would be convened to look at the intent of the scheme with the view to recommending changes for future rounds.

The Chair of this Working Party, Professor Robyn Owens, presented the Working Party’s findings and recommendations, highlighting the major recommendation which was to abolish the existing scheme and replace it with two new schemes: the UWA Research Development Award scheme for early career researchers ($1.275 million awarded annually); and the UWA Research Grant
Seeding Award scheme for mid-career and established researchers ($0.3 million awarded annually).

Members were invited to comment on the Working Party’s recommendations and the major points arising from the discussion were:

- Applicants for both the UWA Development Awards and the UWA Research Grants Seeding Awards should not have received $30,000 or more external grant income in the previous year.
- UWA Research Grant Seeding Award applicants must be allowed to apply in successive years if their previous years’ applications were unsuccessful.
- General staff should be eligible to apply for both UWA Development Awards and UWA Research Grants Seeding Awards and it was noted that the current drafting of the eligibility criteria would allow for this.
- Teaching relief should be used to support release from teaching and/or administrative duties.

RESOLVED – 9

To endorse the attached (Attachment RC3) report and recommendations of the UWA Research Grants Scheme Working Party, incorporating the changes suggested by members of the Research Committee, and to forward the recommendations to the University Executive for discussion prior to the Report being forwarded to Academic Council for final approval.

7. REPORT ON CITATIONS, RANKINGS AND RESEARCH QUALITY

The Vice-Chancellor’s International Reference Group requested a paper be written on the issues surrounding the parameters used in the Shanghai Jiao Tong University ranking system. Attached (Attachment RC4) is the paper authored by Professor Robyn Owens, Natalie Mast and Dr David Glance, which focuses primarily on the parameters of citations and journal quality and what UWA could do in order to improve its rank position.

Professor Robyn Owens introduced the Paper by commenting on the major components used to compile the Shanghai Jiao Tong University rankings which include:

- Alumni winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals (10%)
- Staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals (20%)
- Highly-cited researchers in 21 broad subject categories (20%)
- Articles published in *Nature* and *Science* (20%)
- Articles indexed in the Science Citation Index, Social Sciences Citation Index, and Arts and Humanities Citation Index (20%)
- Size of the institution (10%)

Typically, UWA staff publish in more than 1700 journals each year with only 48% of these journals being indexed by Thomson ISI. On average 2.5% of UWA publications appear in the top 300 highest impact factor journals, and so the result is that UWA publications are perceived to have little impact, particularly for the Jiao Tong ranking exercise.

The paper explores ways in which UWA could improve its world ranking by changing its publication practice. A number of strategies and incentives to improve citations are recommended, including a financial incentive of $10,000 to the UWA authors publishing an article in *Science* or *Nature*. The Vice-Chancellor announced the implementation of this incentive scheme in an all staff email in October 2007.
During subsequent discussion by members the following points were made:

- Consideration needs to be given to the Humanities where publishing books is a more common practice.
- Should the University maintain a public list of highly cited UWA authors and provide appropriate mentoring to encourage other staff to strive to get on this list.
- Should the University maintain a list of the top highly cited journals and encourage UWA staff to submit articles to these journals whenever possible.

The discussion concluded with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) reiterating that if the University was serious about improving its Jiao Tong ranking then its staff needed to improve their publishing practice. It was agreed that a memorandum should be sent to all university staff reminding them of the importance of publishing with the UWA by-line.
8. ESTABLISHMENT AND REVIEW OF UWA CENTRES

(a) Proposal to Establish a Centre for Integrated Human Studies

Members were asked to consider a proposal to establish the Centre for Integrated Human Studies as a UWA Research and Training Centre in the School of Anatomy and Human Biology, Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences. The proposed Centre is interdisciplinary in nature and involves collaboration with staff in the UWA Schools of Psychology (FLAPS), Social and Cultural Studies (FAHSS), Animal Biology (FNAS) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and has the support of all parties. The Centre has financial support for three years from the Vice-Chancellor's Discretionary Fund (VCDF).

RESOLVED – 10

To endorse the attached (Attachment RC5) proposal to establish the Centre for Integrated Human Studies for three years from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2010, and to forward this application to Academic Council for their approval.

(b) Proposal to Establish the Marshall Centre for Infectious Diseases Research and Training – Ref F15628

Members were asked to consider a proposal to establish the Marshall Centre for Infectious Diseases Research and Training as a UWA Research and Training Centre in the School of Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences. The stimulus for this Centre was the award of the Nobel Prize in 2005 to Professor Barry Marshall and Emeritus Professor Robin Warren for their work on the causative role of *Helicobacter pylori* in peptic ulcer. The proposed Centre will build on the existing strength in infectious disease at UWA. It involves collaboration with the Western Australia Department of Health and PathWest, and will be located in L Block at the QEII Medical Centre. The Centre has the support of all parties and has strong financial support from the Federal Government ($4 million), the Health Department of WA ($2.7 million) and the Vice-Chancellor ($1.2 million).

RESOLVED – 11

To endorse the attached (Attachment RC6) proposal to establish the Marshall Centre for Infectious Diseases Research and Training for 5 years from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012, and to forward this application to Academic Council for their approval.

Confirmed

CHAIR

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