MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Professor D McEachern) - Chair
Chair of the Academic Board (Professor G Martin)
Dean of the Graduate Research School (Professor R Owens)
President of the Postgraduate Students' Association (Mr B Jardine)
Mr S Anderson
Associate Professor H Barrett
Professor R Bartlett
Professor J Cordery
Professor B Gifies-Corti
Professor J Finlay-Jones
Professor S Houghton
Associate Professor A Lynch
Professor S Morgan
Dr G Parish
Professor S Powles
Professor C Raston
Associate Professor K Singer

RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING – 9 February 2006

The next meeting of the Research Committee will be held in the Senate Room on Thursday 9 February 2006 at 2.15pm.

Dr Campbell Thomson
Executive Officer, Research Committee

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

Confirmation

Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of the Research Committee held on 22 November 2005.
2. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES PLAN 2006-2008: RESEARCH PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS – F12186

Members will recall that at the May 2005 meeting of the Research Committee there was discussion about the next iteration of the University’s Operational Priorities Plan (OPP). The OPP is the component of the University’s Cycle of Planning and Accountability that provides the link between broad strategic and detailed operational planning by specifying the particular objectives that are to have the highest priority during a three-year period; in the case 2006 to 2008.

The particular research priorities for the 2006-2008 OPP are identified as:

- Improve the quality and impact, and productivity of research and research training:
  - Increase total research income from all sources as a share of the national total and on a per capita basis
  - Improve the impact of research outcomes
  - Increase the number of staff publishing in high quality journals
  - Increase the number of higher degree by research students and their completion rates
  - Improve the quality of HDR programmes and theses

The final stage of the process is to identify the performance indicators and targets for these research priorities, and following consultation with the faculties the attached (Attachment RC1) draft schedule of targets has been developed.

For noting.

PART 2 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. REPORT OF THE PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND INNOVATION)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) will report on items of interest which have arisen since the previous meeting.

4. ARC LINKAGE PROJECTS: CONNECTING WITH INDUSTRY – REF RA/1/490/1

In 2005 a sample of UWA’s ARC Linkage Project grant awardees and their industry partners were interviewed in order to improve our understanding of industry experiences of working with universities, so that the UWA might enhance its external relationships and thereby increase industry funding of research. Two reports were subsequently written; one from the perspective of UWA researchers (Attachment RC2) and one from the perspective of the industry partners (Attachment RC3).

The barriers to successful collaboration identified in the Reports were many and varied, but there is no doubt that the ‘cultural gap’ between academia and industry was recognised by both sides as a significant impediment. There was a consensus amongst researchers that industry, in general, had a poor understanding of academia. Similarly, many Linkage partners pointed to researchers’ limited understanding of industry needs and perspectives.

These Reports suggest a number of possible avenues for improving the attractiveness to industry of collaborating with researchers at UWA, and Dr Judy Berman, a UWA Research Development Officer, has been invited to the meeting to speak to this item.

For discussion.
5. COMMERCIALISATION TRAINING SCHEME

Attached (Attachment RC4) is an Issues Paper forwarded by DEST for the creation of around 250 awards each year for higher degree by research (HDR) students to study full-time for the equivalent of one semester to obtain a graduate qualification in fields such as commercialisation of research and management of intellectual property. These awards will be delivered through a new programme called the Commercialisation Training Scheme (CTS), with $5 million to be allocated annually for CTS stipends worth $12,325 and CTS tuition fees worth $8,000 to the host institution.

In 2006 the nominal allocation of CTS awards to UWA is 13 and discussions are being held with the Go8 universities as well as other WA universities about a joint approach to the provision of training in this area.

For discussion.

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

Attached (Attachment RC5) are the notes of a meeting of the Convenors of the subcommittees to assess the UWA Research Grants Scheme, which was held in November 2005. At this meeting there were several recommendations for minor changes to the guidelines for the UWA Research Grants Scheme, and these have been incorporated into the new Rules and Instructions to Applicants for Funding in 2007. These revised Rules are attached (Attachment RC6) for members information.

Additionally, a significant change to the eligibility criteria of the UWA Research Grants Scheme is proposed, which only allows early career researchers to apply for funding under the Scheme. In the upcoming round early career researchers are defined as having been awarded their PhD or equivalent qualification after 31 December 2000. In previous rounds, more experienced researchers have been eligible to apply under the UWA Research Grants Scheme to fund low cost projects and more recently to fund pilot studies.

For discussion and approval.

7. UWA SUPPLEMENTARY TRAVEL GRANTS FOR NEW ACADEMIC STAFF – REF F110

The UWA Supplementary Travel Grants for New Academic Staff is a scheme that provides funds for academic staff recently appointed at the University to present a paper at a national conference outside Western Australia. The Guidelines for the Scheme can be found at http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/page/77465.

A question has been raised recently by a new academic staff member as to whether the Supplementary Travel Grants can be used to attend international conferences, which are often high profile but more costly to attend.

In consideration of this request, members are asked to note that currently an allocation of $15,000 per annum is made to this Scheme, and that the maximum grant size is only $750. However, a carry-over of unallocated funds in past rounds has meant that in 2004 and 2005 there were 36 awards and 31 awards, respectively, at an average of $750 paid per award.

For discussion.

8. OTHER BUSINESS