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RESEARCH COMMITTEE:

Wednesday 8th February 2023 from 2:15pm

PRESENT: Professor A. Nagar (in the Chair), Professor M. Brennan, Professor C. Carroll-Meehan, Professor G. Cuthbertson, Professor N. Donnelly, Associate Professor Dr S. Harrop, Professor O. Khaiyat, Dr A. Ranasinghe, Professor D. Reid,

By Invitation: Mrs G. Smylie, Ms S. Murray, Mr A. Bibby, Dr. Abraham Ng'ang'a

Secretariat: Mrs C. Gallagher

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Professor N. Ferguson and Associate Professor Z. Kinsley, The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of Research Committee held on 26th October (RC 1158), which were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

Action	Progress/Update
Mrs Smylie to circulate the flowchart outlining the funding allocation process to all Heads of Schools and Departments again.	Circulated to all (RC 1132). Complete.
Mr Bibby to meet with Chairs of School and Department Research Committees to discuss management of the devolved research budgets.	Ongoing. School/Department Research Committee Chairs to inform Mr Bibby dates of School committee meetings for Mr Bibby's attendance.
The Chair to meet with Mrs. Smylie and Mr. Bibby to discuss reporting from the iREFund system so that spending can be reviewed by Heads.	The meeting took place and further software engineering work will need to be undertaken particularly around the reporting side of the software.
Professor Brennan to speak to the Director of the CCDS centre for circulation of opportunities to colleagues across the university.	Updates have been circulated., Potential cross over between CCDS and Medical Humanities and also Health Studies. Conversations are being had about the potential for creating networks for Research on this theme.
Mrs Gallagher to include Dr. Ng'ang'a (by invitation) to the next University Research Committee.	Complete
Ms Murray to look into School and Department research budgets to see if the budgets can include a section specifically for research books.	Ms Murray reported that there is already a central pot of funds available for research resources, however these funds are already committed. There is a small amount remaining in the PGR student funds for books and there is an approval process through Professor Nagar for these requests. The rest of the money is devolved to Schools/Departments. Ms Murray noted that we should be cautious due to exchange rates but there is around 4.5k left from this fund.
Mrs Smylie to generate an External Funding Projects report on a bi-monthly basis and send to Heads and Deans.	Report circulated by Mrs Smylie on 16/12/22. It was agreed that the report will be generated once a term rather than bi-monthly. Professor Cuthbertson added that the sharing of this report could be combined with the sharing of other news about research across the university.
Professor Carroll-Meehan to work with Mrs Smylie on an Intention to Apply form.	Ongoing. Professor Carroll-Meehan put forward a suggestion for the development of Agresso as the main source for logging these details. Mrs Smylie to send a copy of this proposal to Mr Bibby.
PGR Office to update funding information on the PGR webpages.	Completed

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Mrs Gallagher to alert School and Department Administrators once the external advertising links are live.	Completed
Mrs Gallagher to send lists of School and Department scholarship holders to Heads and the details of the event.	Completed

4. Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP)

As discussed at the Research Committee meeting in October, the REF is being reviewed under the umbrella of FRAP by the Funding Bodies. The outcome of this review, which concluded in late 2022, will now be published in late spring 2023. FRAP is exploring a wide range of options, ranging from the evolution of the current REF system to more substantial changes to the exercise. The timing of the next Research Assessment (RA) will depend on the outcomes of FRAP; and although no announcements have yet been made about how and when any future RA exercise may be run, our working assumption is that submissions will be due in 2027, with results announced during 2028, and that the REF rules on outputs, impacts and ratings will remain broadly as now. Professor Nagar encouraged all to keep the momentum in terms of producing outputs; and emphasised the importance of ensuring that our research outputs are eligible for submission, which we can be done by making them Open Access compliant: this means acting on acceptance. Other important areas to keep developing are Impact case studies as well as development, in terms of sustainability and vitality, of research environment including academic esteem indicators. Professor Nagar reminded members that essentially the next Research Assessment (RA) cycle has already begun as of 1st Jan 2021 (and for Impact and Environment as of 1st August 2020) therefore we are well into the next RA period.

The most recent REF Steering Group (REFSG) had to be postponed, however, a new date for this meeting to take place will be confirmed soon to ensure that new UoA coordinators are inducted in the role.

Prof Nagar informed that there has been no update on the appointment of an External Advisors. This is something to be looked at in the next academic year. Professor Brennan added that we need to have conversations about where the university sits with EDI and how we begin to think about this within our Schools and Departments across the university.

It was suggested that an ongoing and evolving REF position statement for each Unit of Assessment would be helpful as working documents that aim towards what we think a REF document might look like, with a focus on Units of Assessments. Professor Carroll-Meehan added that for the School of Education, a Research Strategy has been written with four identified themes for focus on including those that the School did not do so well on during the last REF. Out of this, a new Centre for Education Innovation is being proposed. This strategy will act as the School's working document. Professor Cuthbertson added that if Sustainability is being considered by Funding Bodies for the next RA, we need a university approach for looking at Sustainability.

Professor Brennan stressed the importance of talking about the aims and responsibilities of the research centres. It might be that thoroughly interdisciplinary research centres would work better or alternatively conversations need to be had around how the centres are rebadged. Discussions took place around making Research Centres more mainstreamed in the University and Professor Nagar commented that some of this is to be reviewed going forward as we look at the strategies guided by our new Vice Chancellor.

5. Reports from Research Centres

The Chair had requested a brief report from the Research Centre Directors outlining the key activities and plans.

a. CCDS

Members had received a summary report from CCDS (RC 1159) in advance of the meeting. Members noted the content of the report. Professor Brennan reported that the centre and its members are

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research-active and continue to produce a number of outputs, journal issues and funding bids. The centre also has an active social media presence. Members also contribute to more traditional media including TV and radio to optimise the sharing of research.

The centre is hosting its 6th annual conference at LHU in July at Hope Park Campus. Members are also taking part in a funded project on developing capacity for youth disability advocacy in East Africa.

A discussion took place on the membership of the centre. It was discussed that although the core membership of this centre is overwhelmingly within the School of Social Sciences, much of this previously would have sat within the School of Education. Professor Carroll-Meehan added that although there is a natural alignment with Disability Studies and other Health related programmes within Social Sciences. The wider sociological issue fits with Social Sciences however there are some really broad themes that can be collaborated on.

b. CEPA

Members had received a summary report from the Centre for Education and Policy Analysis (RC 1160 and 1161) in advance of this meeting. Members noted the content of the report and Professor Carroll-Meehan gave the following key update.

Professor Carroll-Meehan raised that as a university, we need to think about defining what the Research Centres at the university look like and their aims and objectives as there is currently lots of potential in terms of wide subject areas. Professor Carroll-Meehan plans to encourage colleagues within the School of Education to think deeply about strategic aims in the hope that research in Education is more inclusive. Colleagues will also be encouraged to explore income generation and how their work might be applied to other disciplines in order to build on Environment and Impact. A Research and Innovation strategy and a list of outputs will also be worked on at School level.

c. Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies

Members had received a summary report from the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies (RC 1162) in advance of this meeting. Members noted the content of the report. Professor Cuthbertson gave an update and raised that the questions needs to be asked around the role of the centre and more thought needs to be given to this. Prof Nagar commented that this Research Centre can be key for future research environment and impact case studies not just for UoAs in Humanities but for other UoAs across the University.

d. Andrew Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity

Members had received a summary report from the Andrew F Walls Centre (AWC) of the Study of African and Asian Christianity (RC 1164) in advance of this meeting. Members noted the content of the report. Prof. Nagar welcomed Dr. Ng'ang'a as the new Coordinator of the centre. Dr. Ng'ang'a gave the following update.

The Andrew Walls vision is multidisciplinary and so the centre must aim to reach out to other areas across the university outside of Theology. Dr. Ng'ang'a informed the committee that conversations with teams across the university have been taking place and there is a strong willingness to collaborate across disciplines. An international conference working with the Centre for Peace Studies will take place in January 2023 and a conference joint with CAPA has been planned to take place in June 2023.

Dr Ng'ang'a informed the committee that he is currently exploring the possibilities of distance learning programmes in collaboration with ACI, Ghana. The institution was the first centre in Ghana to be able to award graduate degrees and they only offer graduate studies in the subject area of African studies. Dr Ng'ang'a explained that if we are able to collaborate on this African studies programme at UG level, this would be the only programme in this area for the whole of Africa and we would be pioneers if we were able to pursue this link.

Dr Ng'ang'a informed that an application for Commonwealth scholarship for distanced based learning had been submitted in November 2022. The scholarship scheme was specific to do with distance learning within the Commonwealth, ideally third world countries.

Professor Cuthbertson asked for further clarity on how Dr Ng'ang'a fits with the School of Humanities with regards to being Director of the centre. Professor Nagar explained that Dr Ng'ang'a's role as the Coordinator of the centre, he is not on the academic staff list of any School or Department, however he is attached to the PVC research office and the steering of the centre is under Professor Nagar's responsibility.

Dr Ng'ang'a offered to meet with School and Department meetings to talk about Andrew walls centre. Dr Ng'ang'a commented on the importance of the AWC saying that it is worth recalling Andrew Walls's own envisioned place and role of the Centre as "a premier centre for resources for the study of missions and World Christianity". It is thus a unique resource, in that it contains works "not readily to be found elsewhere" and having been constituted into "the fullest and most comprehensive collection of materials on World Christianity available in the United Kingdom", the Centre is now positioned as a hub for research, fellowship and networking.

e. SEARCH

Members had received a summary report on SEARCH (RC 1165 and 1166) in advance of this meeting. Members noted the content of the report.

Prof. Nagar suggested that a sub-group could look at the consistency of the Research Centres and how each Research Centre contributes to the Units of Assessments they align to. Dr Harrop added that it would be useful to have a sense of trajectory, where the Centre sees themselves going in the future. If we hear about what will be happening in the future, it would be easier to think ahead and make links with other areas.

6. Library Resources Update

a. Library Update Report

Members had received the Student Learning Research Committee Report (RC 1167 and 1167b) and noted the content. Ms Murray gave an update on key points included in the report.

The process for electronic thesis submission is now live and new PGR students, including the VC doctoral Scholarships students, who started Sept 2022 onwards will use this system to submit their final thesis. Other students will be invited, if they wish to do so, to also use this system. Ms Murray thanked Mr Matthew Adams for his work on the new system.

There was discussion around Reference Management (RM) software and this is currently being looked into by the Library Services team. A discussion started on software that is used by areas within the university at the moment. RA software used currently being used across the university included Open Source BiBTeX (by colleagues in Mathematics, Computer Science, and Engineering), Mendeley and EndNote.

Action: Ms Murray to look into what is a preferred Reference Management System for the possibility of gaining an institutional subscription of software; ask if Mr Adams can undertake further research into this.

Dr Brennan requested if the licence for NVivo software, which has recently expired, could be reviewed.

Ms Murray informed that negotiations are currently taking place to agree Transformative deals with Springer Nature and IEEE publishers led by JISC on behalf of UUK.

Ms Murray informed that the Andrew Walls Archive arrived in November and work is taking place in order to categorise the collection. Dr I. Walls is continuing to work on some content including unpublished papers, correspondence and documents related to Professor Walls' academic, church and civic activities. Dr Walls and Mrs Smalley will be on campus in April to undertake further work on the archive.

7. Research Funding

a. Update on devolved Research budget

Members had received the 2022-23 Research Funding Update (October 22) report (RC 1168) ahead of the meeting and noted the content. Mr Bibby gave an outline of key points included in the report. Mr Bibby noted that the university has currently spent around 14% of the research budget, as expected for this time of the year.

Mr Bibby informed members that there have been some issues seen regarding expenditure coming through in September and October of this year relating to the 2021/22 budgets.

Action: Mr Bibby to meet with Chairs of School and Department Research Committees to discuss how budgets can be managed throughout the year.

b. Internal and External Bids and Grants

Members had received the External Funding Projects report for the academic year 2022/23 (RC 1169) and the Research and Innovation Update 30.01.23 (RC 1170) ahead of the meeting and noted the content. Mrs Smylie gave an outline of key points included and informed members that the purpose of the report is to be able to look at Research that is taking place within Schools and Departments. Currently, 31 academic members of staff are involved in funding bids for research, which is more than this time last academic year and Mrs Smylie added that there is an upward trend in activity.

Dr. Harrop noted that 2 project names for CAPA academics were marked against the wrong academic. Mrs Smylie stated that she would correct the error.

Mrs Smylie raised that a better process is required ensure university invoices for external project funding are managed and processed in a timely fashion. This also raises the need for an intention to apply process to come before projects have begun.

Professor Carroll-Meehan informed the committee that she would be happy to support with writing such intention to apply processes. It was agreed that strategic oversight is required at Dean or Head level.

Action: An intention to apply for funding process to be developed.

Mrs Smylie explained she had been working on an E3 bid and after having received interest from a number of Schools and Departments, the university submission was determined to be focussed on a Vision Cognition Centre of Research from Psychology led by Professor Donnelly. This project is to UKRI for the strategic development of a research centre that has aspirational growth and is sustainable.

The KTP (Knowledge Transfer Partnerships) Capacity Building Initiative funded by Innovate UK was launched on Monday 6th February 2023. The project is about developing potential to engage externally to bring in external funding for research. Liverpool Hope University has so much potential and we should be sharing it better with external partners.

Mrs Smylie informed the group that the total amount of research funding the university has secured so far this academic year is 65k. Current value of external funding applied for £4.5M+ which includes the strategic application to UKRI - Enabling Excellence in England (E3) as described earlier, and a major AHRC grant(Exploration of the Wellcome Collection led by Owen Barden) The total for 2022/3 academic year was 145k.

The Innovate-UK funded Knowledge Exchange (KE) capacity building programme was launched on Monday 6th February 2023. The project is about developing potential to engage externally to bring in external funding for research and KE and to build capacity in universities for external engagement. Mrs Smylie commented that recent data gathering exercise for HEIF AMS and KEF3 has shown that there is much potential for KE in the University, and we should be sharing these stories better in a better way.

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Professor Nagar reminded colleagues that the Route to Impact (RTI) and Research Environment Development Fund (REDF) applications are open to staff and requested for members encourage colleagues in their areas to apply. The deadline for the Route to Impact bid applications is Wednesday 15th February 2023 and this is an important initiative to pump-prime Impact activities. There is no deadline for REDF applications, however, colleagues will need to apply in good time as funds must be spent before July 2023. Prof Nagar informed that he has supported a number of requests for high-quality Open Access APC charges from the central Research Funds and likewise a number of HEIF related activities with potential for Impact Case Studies, e.g. CAPA based project entitled HMP 2 Hope, has been supported.

It was noted that a call for the third round of Summer Research Scholarships for level I students has been sent to Schools and Departments for advertisement. Feedback from colleagues who previously took part in the last rounds has been positive and many have commented how this scheme has been beneficial. Professor Nagar informed members that 55 applications were received for the 2021/22 round, and it is hoped application numbers will be higher for the current round that has been launched this academic year and so members were requested to encourage their colleagues to apply. A discussion started on whether this scheme could be extended to students at other levels. It was also agreed that a minimum percentage of attendance should be a requirement for student eligibility on the internships.

Action: Professor Nagar to include a minimum percentage of attendance as a requirement of eligibility for the Summer Level I Research Scholarship programme as part of the next round.

8. Research Degrees Sub-Committee matters

Professor Nagar explained to members that the most recent Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC) had to be rescheduled due to it coinciding with Foundation Day events. As Chair of the RDSC he confirmed that Newman University have now achieved validated status with us on 1st February 2023. The PGR weekly management group meets regularly to ensure admin related to PGR is dealt with effectively. Prof Nagar informed that currently there is no administrator for Research as the current post holder has left the University and an admin post of Research Support Officer is to be advertised.

a. VC Doctoral Scholarships update

Professor Nagar gave an update on the VC Scholarships (VCS) scheme. After a careful selection process 18 students have been accepted across Schools and Departments for a VC Scholarship of which 12 are home students and started on 1st February 2023. 6 are international students and are due to start on 27th February 2023. It was noted that also joining this cohort is one international student supported by scholarship from the Commonwealth Association of Universities on a Split-Site scheme. A number of Units in Schools and Departments have been awarded 2 VCS scholarships. Orientation days, as part of the PGR Induction programme, are due to take place on Tuesday 14th February for home students and Wednesday 8th March for international students. A follow up session will be arranged at a later date for any students who are not able to attend the orientation days. The Induction programme is mandatory for all VCS holders and includes a condensed course on Learning and Teaching (L&T) as some of the VCS may be involved in Teaching related activities of not more than 6 hrs per week; also L&T is an important skill set for PGR students in general. The PGR induction will also include a 'Research and Inquiry' Summer School and will take place in June (dates TBC) at which VC Scholarship students will be required to attend as a compulsory requirement. The Summer School will be open to all PGR students who started as of January 2022 onward.

There are currently some vacancies on the VCS scheme across some of the UoAs still to be filled including a vacancy in Creative and Performing Arts; and Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering, and these will be re-advertised shortly.

9. Research Ethics Sub-Committee

a. Minutes of Research Ethics Sub-Committee

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Professor Nagar outlined key points from Professor Ferguson recorded in the minutes of the meeting of RESC on 20th October 2022 (RC 1173). Software related development that have been progressed. The sub-committee have been exploring ethical issues related with the UK advice on safeguarding international research partnerships so that information and data are handled safely which will be brought to the next sub-committee meeting.

10. Items for Note from School/Department Research Committees

Members had received summary reports of the noteworthy items from School/Department Research Committees (RC 1174-1184). Members noted the content of these reports. It was noted that reports had not been received by Education, Humanities (committee has not yet met), CAPA, MCSE, Geography and Environmental Science and Law and Criminology.

Professor Nagar reminded members that all minutes from School and Department Research Committees should be received by the committee.

Mrs Smylie gave an update on the Early Career Researcher sessions recently ran. Three one-hour sessions have taken place including one specifically for Law and Criminology which covered types of funding bids colleagues should look into. It was discussed that it would be useful if colleagues at the planning stage of a project would be required to plan what impact the project would have upon completion rather than having to think back on the project. Workshops on Impact would be welcomed.

Action: Professor Nagar to organise and deliver Impact workshops training as part of Staff Development sessions.

11. Monitoring Strategic/Corporate Goals update

Professor Nagar and Mrs Smylie have now finished visiting Schools and Departments for the research consultation session workshops. The sessions provided useful feedback. Key ideas that came out of the visits include EDI, plans to improve the Environment, the possibility of VC Scholarship students becoming post-doctoral researchers, a mentoring scheme, Research and Inquiry programme which is being led by Prof Simon Marwood, alternative schemes to the VC Scholarship scheme, Level I summer scholarships and extension of these to other levels, including masters students, and Impact workshops. Prof Nagar advised that he is in the process of advertising dates for regular Impact workshops he delivers in the University (as in action point in 10 above).

As this work on updating the Research and Scholarship Development Plan (R&SDP) progresses, members will be asked for their views and input related to the drafts produced.

12. Chair's Business

Professor Nagar informed members that the university receives some HEIF funding and each year we are required to submit annual monitoring statement (AMS) for AY 2021/22; the deadline for submission of AMS this year is 12:00 noon - Wednesday 22 February 2023. Schools and Departments will be contacted in order for details to be provided in relation to activities the funding has been used for. The deadline for the statement to be submitted is 20th February 2023. HEB-CI submission was made in December/January for AY 2021/22.

Members were made aware that KEF3 submission will soon be taking place (deadline 12 noon – Wednesday 29th March 2023). Prof Nagar explained what KEF3 is and this it is not dissimilar to KEF1 and although there is not a financial incentive to take part in KEF, the university has committed to take part in the exercise. Schools and Departments have been requested to provide information for this submission. Professor Nagar added that it is intended that the draft will be finalised by the end of February so that Vice Chancellor Professor Ozanne can review the draft and provide feedback before the submission is made.

13. Dates for future meetings

Wednesday 10th May 2.15pm.

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Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Progress/Update
6.	Ms Murray to look into what is a preferred Reference Management System for the possibility of gaining an institutional subscription of software; ask if Mr Adams can undertake further research into this.	Ms Murray	Ms. Murray updated members that Matthew Adams has had discussions with PGR students and also Prof. Simon Marwood and has proposed that Zotero and Mendeley software would be suitable tools to store and manage articles in the library. Matthew will produce guidance for students and staff and would also provide training sessions.. Ms Murray indicated that both programs are free open access software and subscribing to both would give people a choice and a pro and con list of both software would also produced by Matthew. Both are open access. Action: Ms Murray to liaise with Matthew on proceeding with implementing Zotero and Mendeley and producing the materials for training staff and students.
7a.	Mr Bibby to meet with Chairs of School and Department Research Committees to discuss how budgets can be managed throughout the year.	Mr Bibby	Complete. Mr Bibby has met with the Chairs of School and Department Research Committees to discuss management of the budget, an update on which is included in the report submitted by Mr Bibby ahead of the meeting.
7b.	An intention to apply for funding process to be developed.	Prof Carroll-Meehan; Mrs Smylie	Ongoing. Prof. Carroll-Meehan had met with Mrs Smylie and this is currently being looked into. Unit 4 based forms are currently in development.
7b.	Professor Nagar to include a minimum percentage of attendance as a requirement of eligibility for the Summer Level I Research Scholarship programme as part of the next round.	Prof Nagar	Complete.
10	Prof Nagar to organise and deliver Impact workshops training as part of Staff Development sessions.	Prof Nagar	Impact workshop training events have been scheduled to be delivered by Prof. Nagar in June.