



MONASH University
Education

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting No. 1/09

11 March 2009

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Meeting No 1/09 of the Research Committee of the Faculty of Education held on Wednesday 11 March, 2009, at 11.00am, in the Room G08, Education building, Clayton Campus.

Dr Chris Siva

Executive Officer

MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE

ACTION

1.1. Present

Professor Jane Kenway (chair), Professor Margaret Somerville, Professor Marilyn Fleer, Professor Ilana Snyder, Professor Terri Seddon, Professor Dennis Moore, Associate Professor Helen Watt, Dr Joel Windle, Associate Professor Phil Payne, Dr Michael Henderson, Ms Bronwyn Smith, Ms Hazel Tan.

1.2. In Attendance

Dr Chris Siva, Ms Sue Plowright.

1.3. Apologies

1.4. On Leave

2. *CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

2.1. Starring of Items

Items 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 were starred.

2.2. Notice of Motion

The Chair moved that for all items other than those starred the recommendations contained therein be adopted without discussion or the information noted.

3. MINUTES

3.1. Meeting No 5/08

Recommendation

The Minutes of Meeting No. 5/08 of the Research Committee held on Wednesday 19 November 2008 were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting pending one change.

Clarification was received for Sect 4.1 that Dr Alan Reid (Bath University) was funded at 50% as a Category 1 Visiting Scholar by the faculty.

The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

4. ITEMS FOR REPORT

4.1. *Chair's Report

The Chair moved to discuss item 4.2 Research Committee Budget due to the postponement of the Research Resourcing sub-committee meeting scheduled for February 25th 2009.

4.2. 2009 Research Committee Budget

The committee discussed the budget allocation to take forward to Research Resourcing sub-committee to refine.

The most significant issue raised was the number of staff not spending their commitments from previous year's allocations.

Recommendation: A strategy should be developed to assist staff in expenditure of their money.

Action: A plan will be circulated to the Research Resourcing sub-committee via email to seek approval.

JK, CS

Faculty Research Assistant: Nike Prince will be replaced by Ros Winter as research assistant to the faculty by August 2009. The salary for this position is now a line item in the research budget. The committee will recover that money when either Nike or Ros are employed in other projects. This process will require re-evaluation.

The committee discussed the allocation of \$250,000 budget in principle based on the breakdown from the previous year. Key points included:

1. Nodes

The committee recognised that nodes have developed in diverse directions and patterns. This has implications for node funding, the committee discussed whether funding should be tied to outcome assessment or should be linked to variable size of nodes?

Recommendation:

The committee agreed to allocate \$100,000 to nodes.

Part of the budget should be made available to establish new nodes. Any new node applications would be assessed by end of year to allow node to be established next year and included in next year's budget.

2. Early Career Researchers (ECRs)

Strategic initiatives should consider the significant cohort of ECR's perhaps the largest in any faculty in Australia (30 ECRs plus 10 PhDs still finishing). The committee agreed to provide structured support for ECR's – across all campuses.

Action: Committee to set up a small working group of ECR's.

Joel Windle, Michael Henderson, and extend an invitation to ECRs on Gippsland and Peninsula campuses to join the group. The committee agreed to allocate \$6000 toward ECR initiatives.

JW, MH

3. Faculty wide support

The committee agreed we need to focus on research groups in relation to faculty wide support.

4. Linkage Assistance (link assist)

Some concerns was raised over current funding for link assist including a lack of criteria for its allocation and the inadequacy of the amount funded to adequately support early stages of project development.

Recommendation: The committee agreed in principle to maintain the current allocation of \$10,000. If the money has not been spent by the end of the year then the committee will review this allocation and may distribute toward funding visiting scholars for 2010.

5. Staff Funding

The allocation for "Staff funding" includes research projects and dissemination grants. The committee agreed to review how the money was spent in 2008 with an allocation of \$60,000 with only \$20,000 spent.

Action: distribute names of researchers with unspent funding to the Research Resourcing sub-committee.

CS

The committee agreed funding decisions relating to items such as visiting scholars and grants can be decided by the Research resourcing sub-committee. Where a decision is required on operational and strategic matters then these need to be agreed to by the Research Committee.

Four strategic objectives were proposed by the ADR for 2009;

1. Support for Nodes.
2. Support for ECRs - Assist ECR's to increase their publication rate.
3. Facilitate Internationalisation of Research – How can we be strategic and increase international collaboration? (i.e. more support for international visitors) to align with requirements from the ARC and other funding bodies.
4. Support for ERA – The faculty should focus on quality publications – how do we publish in better journals and how do we produce more articles in these journals– Focus on the writing process.

5. *ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5.1. Evaluation of Nodes

It was proposed that Prue Madden support a working sub-committee on nodes. The Research committee will ask the working sub-committee to consider the urgency to get the money out quickly based on an appropriate set of principles to spend the money.

JW, DM,
MS, PP,
HW

Action: The committee agreed to set up a Node working group. The sub-committee will be made up of Dr Joel Windle, Professor Dennis Moore, Professor Margaret Somerville, Associate Professor Phil Payne and Associate Professor Helen Watt.

5.2. ARC Processes-

The committee proposed the development of process for ARC Discovery and Linkage applications that involve a minimum of 9 months planning in advance of project submission with a set of milestones for feedback and revisions.

HW, TS

Recommendation

The committee approved the setup of an ARC working group to look into the processes supported by Prue Madden. The working group will be made up of Associate Professor Helen Watt, Professor Terri Seddon (till mid year) and a nominee (TBA).

Action: HW and TS are to nominate a third member possibly outside of the committee.

5.3. Faculty Seminar Series

Attendance at the weekly Faculty seminar series had been in decline over recent years. This item was discussed at the last Research Committee meeting in 2008 and it was agreed that we need to encourage senior, high profile academics to give seminars. The Committee also discussed whether or not the time of the seminar series, 1pm-2pm every Wednesday, was appropriate.

Deferred.

5.4. Research Webpages

How do we best display our areas of research expertise or research strengths on the Faculty's webpages.

Deferred.

5.5. Research Month

At the last meeting of the Monash Research Committee in 2008, the Committee was given feedback on Research Month 2008 and asked to provide feedback on the proposal for 2009 (RC13/09). Faculties are encouraged to be much more active in organising events during Research Month.

Recommendation:

Research Committee is asked to suggest possible ways in which the Faculty can engage with the first Research Month and its theme of Sustainability, to be fed back via the ADR to Monash Research Committee.

Deferred.

RC13/09

6. OTHER ITEMS (STAR ITEMS ARE FOR NOTING ONLY)

6.1. Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)*

The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) initiative will undertake evaluations of the research in Australian higher education institutions at a discipline level according to research quality and activity. Evaluations will assess research excellence using a combination of indicators and expert review. The development of these indicators has been assisted by expert advice provided by the [Indicators Development Group](#) (IDG) and sub-groups, and consultation with the research and higher education sector. The IDG provided their recommendations to Professor Margaret Sheil in early-December 2008. After considering the recommendations, the ARC has developed two key documents for the Cluster One and Two evaluations and the full-implementation of ERA. These are the ERA Indicators and ERA Descriptors documents. These documents are available at:

<http://www.arc.gov.au/era/indicators.htm>.

Journal Rankings

The Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences (PCE) and Humanities and Creative Arts (HCA) journal rankings list are currently being reviewed by discipline-specific experts. This expert review has been requested to ensure your confidence in the journal rankings. It is expected that the final lists will be available in early 2009. The lists for other panels will follow.

6.2. Research Outputs and Authorship Policy*

The Research Outputs and Authorship policy and procedures document (RC14/09) is attached for information.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to consider the policy, particularly the paragraph of page 4 (marked with *) suggesting that the supervisor should always be a co-author on a publication and submit feedback, via the ADR, to the Monash Research Committee.

RC14/09

6.3. Monash University Draft Strengths and Themes*

The University has compiled draft Research Strengths. In it, some of the old Education Research Strengths were mentioned and not others. We have ensured that all Education Strengths have been included in subsequent versions. This document (RC15/09) was circulated to node leaders in August asking them to consider where they might see their node's work fitting. Also circulated was a report of a data collection exercise conducted by the Faculty of Business and Economics in response to the draft University Research Strengths document (RC16/09). In November, Research Committee was asked to consider whether it is worth the Faculty of Education doing a similar exercise. It was agreed that the Faculty needs to consider how our research agendas tie into the University Themes and the agendas of other Institutes. It was agreed that further information on how the five Themes are manifested within the University would be circulated to Committee members and nodes. This will allow the Faculty to map where our nodes fit and to drive a proactive research agenda which aligns with the University. Jane Holt from the Office of the DVC (R) to be invited to Research Committee for Meeting 209.

RC15/09
RC16/09

6.4. Other Business

A discussion was raised on whether senior researchers should be seen as advocates for their campus. In the case of the Gippsland campus there is a need to represent research constituents of Gippsland Education in faculty wide initiatives. The committee decided the node sub-committee should seek to clarify who senior researchers are representing at faculty committees. The committee agreed that Hazel Tan, representing MERC, can provide a HDR perspective to the sub-committee.

JW, DM,
MS, PP,
HW

Meeting adjourned 1pm

7. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 29th April, 2009

DISTRIBUTION

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Professor Jane Kenway (chair)
Professor Margaret Somerville
Professor Marilyn Fleer
Professor Ilana Snyder
Ms Bronwyn Smith
Elected Members:
Professor Terri Seddon
Professor Dennis Moore
Associate Professor Helen Watt
Dr Joel Windle
Dean's Nominees:
Associate Professor Phil Payne
Dr Michael Henderson
Student Representative:
Hazel Tan

FOR INFORMATION

Professor Sue Willis, Dean

Mr Peter Lawford, Faculty Manager
Ms Susan Plowright, Manager, Academic Services & Quality
Mr Romesh Perera, Manager (Finance and Resources)
Ms Anita Forsyth, Director Research Degrees
Mr Andrew Jackson, Assistant Manager, Research Development
Mr Mayur Katariya, Coordinator Research Degrees Administration
Mrs Halina Oswald, Director Research Office
Ms Winifred Hirst, Education Subject Librarian, Matheson Library