University of
Reading

RESEARCH COMMITTEES

WAYS OF WORKING

Introduction

A revised research governance structure has been put in place for the 2019/20 academic year. Principles guiding committees ways of working have been develop in order to support committees and our research community in adhering to the principles of accountability, leadership, effectiveness and inclusiveness which shape our governance model. These principles are set out below.

Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are organised in such a way that enables effective leadership in the committee's area.

Supporting papers provide sufficient and structured information for the committee to be able to have substantive discussion on long term strategy, and to make decisions during the meetings. At the meetings, committees are expected to focus on:

⇨ High level strategic discussions that provide principles for planning of activities, projects, and programmes, and changes in policy that deliver the committee's key objectives

⇨ Oversee the progress of activities, programmes and projects and discuss/approve changes to these where required; initiate new activities, programmes and projects as required

⇨ Agree on actions and sponsor responsible for those actions

Focusing on the above will enable committees to make timely decisions and provide sufficient guidance to the sponsor to initiate relevant actions. Discussions on detail and operational matters will be undertaken outside of committee meetings.

Guidance and templates have been develop to help committee chairs, members and secretaries in managing committee business. Templates and headings can be tailored to better meet the needs and type of business of each committee. However, committee chairs and secretaries should ensure that the principles above are adhered to, and that changes are broadly within the spirit of this guidance.

Agenda

Committee agendas will include three standing headings which enable the committee to effectively undertake its business. Generic heads can be tailored to the specific needs of each committee but are expected to include the following sections:

Strategy: This entails the articulation of the long term vision for the area and its strategic priorities in the context of the University Research and Innovation Strategy and in response to the changing internal and external landscapes; the review of management information and performance with consequent discussion

of strategies to address identified issues and strategic priorities; review of internal and external landscape developments, with a view to initiating activities addressing implications of changes in these landscapes.

The Chair of the committee is the sponsor for the first two items under this agenda heading. Relevant committee members will sponsor items under landscape developments.

Projects and programmes portfolio: This heading covers the review of status of any initiated activity highlighting significant developments and risks. It also covers decisions on any significant change/issue as required by projects/programmes in the portfolio or as required by changes in the landscape/strategy/priorities of the committee. Where a new project/programme is initiated as a result of strategy discussions, the developed case should be approved by the committee under this section.

Reporting on the status of the portfolio will be undertaken through a brief consolidated summary [see template] including a list of projects/programmes, briefly highlighting any significant development and including an indication of the status of the project/programme, ideally through a traffic lights system.

Updates to inform this report will be collated from project/programme leads by the Committee Secretary. The Chair of the committee is the sponsor of this section of the agenda.

Project/programmes issues are raised by the project/programmes leads, or by the Committee members in response to changes in the long term visions and strategy for the area covered by the Committee. These reports are sponsored by a committee member.

All project and programmes have a project/programme lead and an established project/programme board responsible for overseeing its implementation. The Chair of the project/programme board is responsible for providing required updates to the Committee as detailed in the Agenda Items section below, and for keeping the Sponsor informed of progress and issues.

Projects requiring additional resource can apply for RETF funding through the normal channels and calls

Policy: under this heading, the committee will discuss and propose any changes in policies emerging from the work of the committee, and approve implementation plans for those changes. Plans will include timescales of implementation, key actions, further approvals as necessary (i.e. UCRI, UBRI or UEB depending on the case), communications, etc. Items under this heading can be sponsored by any member of the committee.

Agenda items, minutes, actions and timescales

Committee members and any member of staff can propose additional agenda items. Where an agenda item is proposed by a colleague who is not a committee member, the proposer should engage with a committee member who will act as sponsor for the item. Where colleagues intend to propose an item, they are required to submit a request to the committee secretary at least 3 weeks in advance of the committee meeting for termly/quarterly committees, and at least 2 weeks in advance for other committees. Supporting papers should be submitted to the committee secretary 10 days in advance of the committee meeting for termly/quarterly committees, and 7 days in advance of the committee meeting for other committees.

Committee papers will be made available to Committee members at least one week before the meeting for termly/quarterly committees, and no later than the Thursday prior to the meeting for all other committees.

Agenda items are submitted in a pre-set template which will be readily available for all colleagues to access.

Minutes approved by the Chair are made available to committee members and other relevant colleagues (Heads of School, Heads of Function, RDLs) as soon as possible after the committee meeting has taken place.

Actions emerging from the meeting are allocated electronically (via MS Planner) during the meeting or as soon as possible afterwards.

Reports to overseeing committee

Committees will report to their corresponding overseeing committee within two weeks of the meeting by forwarding copy of the meeting's minutes. An end of year report will be provided by each committee at the end of the academic year and will include:

- A summary of the progress of the committee against each of the headings of the agenda, including developments in external landscape and how the committee is responding to those developments and any wider implications for the research strategy.

- A summary of risks and areas of concern, indicating the implications for the University strategy and proposed actions to mitigate those risks.

The Chair of the committee is responsible for this report. Reports are submitted in using the Committee annual report template.

Role of the Chair

The Chair is responsible for the following aspects related to the running of the committee:

- ⇨ Ensuring that the committee meet its key objectives and works within its terms of reference
- ⇨ Ensuring that the committee is run along the lines described above, and implementing any additional mechanism to ensure effectiveness of the committee.
- ⇨ Approve agendas
- ⇨ Approve draft minutes for circulation to committee members and other relevant constituencies (Heads of School, RDLs, Heads of Function)
- ⇨ Ensure that input from professional services and relevant academics is considered in all activities of the committee.
- ⇨ Ensure that all activities, projects and programmes emerging from meetings have an associated sponsor.
- ⇨ Ensuring appropriate reporting to the overseeing committee

The Chair is the Sponsor of specific items on the agenda as indicated in the previous section.

The Chair is supported by the Secretary to the committee on relevant items. The Chair will work with relevant professional services and academics as required in order to produce the documentation for agenda items he/she is responsible for.

Role of Committee members

All committee members are expected to actively contribute to the work of the committee. Committee members are expected to critically review all documentation, challenge assumptions and actively contribute to the strategic discussions of the committee.

Committee members are expected to sponsor agenda items and sponsor actions emerging from the committee meetings.

Role of the Sponsor

Agenda items: the Sponsor is responsible for presenting any agenda item under its sponsorship. Sponsored agenda items can be proposed by the committee member or any other colleague in the

University. Sponsored agenda items can be authored by non-member colleagues. The Sponsor is expected to familiarise himself/herself with the details of the item. The Sponsor can also request that the author of the item is present for the discussion.

Actions, activities, programmes and projects: The Sponsor is responsible for ensuring that activities, projects or programmes allocated to him/her by the committee are initiated.

The Sponsor is also responsible for communicating with those colleagues (academic and/or professional services) whose input is required to deliver the action or to shape programmes and projects. The sponsor does not need to lead programmes and projects, but it is responsible for working with relevant colleagues to identify a lead, and liaise with the lead to provide advice and receive interim updates on progress.

Role of the Secretary

The Secretary supports the Chair in the running of the committees. In discussion with the Chair, the Secretary prepares agendas for the committee using the agenda template. The Secretary supports the Chair in ensuring that the schedule of the committee is followed, that reports and presented in the appropriate format and that items are scheduled under the appropriate agenda heading.

The Secretary is responsible for coordinating attendance by invitation as required, scheduling committee meetings and makes arrangements for an appropriate venue and any requirement equipment.

The Secretary produces meeting minutes, taking into consideration that minutes will be distributed to colleagues beyond the membership of the committee. The Secretary is responsible for uploading minutes into the Research Governance internal webpages, and circulating minutes to relevant colleagues beyond the committee membership.

The Secretary is responsible for creating and maintaining the MS Teams allocated to the committee, including inviting members to the MS Team, defining the file structure for the team, and uploading agenda, papers and minutes in a timely manner. The Secretary will develop the Planner function of the MS Teams so that meeting actions can be categorised and assigned to the relevant committee member in a timely manner.

Annexes:

Research Committee Agenda Template

Research Committee Minutes template

Research Committee Agenda item template

Research Committee Project/Programme portfolio overview template

A meeting of the < add name of committee or group> will be held on
\<add day, date, year>> from \<add start time –add end time> in \<add room number, building, campus>

<add name of Secretary>
Secretary
<add your university email address>

AGENDA

1.   Welcome and Apologies for absence

2.   Minutes of the last meeting held on <add date> (enclosed) and actions

3.   Matters arising from the minutes (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

4.   Strategy

      a.   Vision, priorities and long term strategy <for discussion/approval>

      b.   Management information and progress against performance indications < to include data sets and analysis of management information relevant to the committee - for discussion, conclusions generate projects/programmes>

      c.   Landscape developments <for discussion, conclusions generate actions/projects/programmes>

5.   Projects and programmes portfolio

      a.   New project/programmes <for approval>

      b.   Project/programme overview, significant changes & issues <for approval>

6.   Policy

      a.   Revised/new policies <for approval>

7.   Reporting Committees

      a.   Minutes of Committee <Add committee name>

      b.   Minutes of Committee <Add committee name>

8.   Any other business

9.   Date of Next Meeting

      The next meeting will be held on <add next meeting date> at <add start time>

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE NAME
Date

Present

YY/NN   **Apologies for absence**

YY/NN   **Minutes of the previous meeting and update on actions**
Approval of minutes, amendments

YY/NN   **Matters arising**
Matters arising
Decisions:
Actions/Sponsor:
Timescale:

Strategy

YY/NN   **Vision, priorities and long term strategy**
Discussion & conclusions:
New project/programme/activity::
Actions/sponsor:
Timescale:

YY/NN   **Management information and progress against performance indicators**
Management information & analysis reports discussion & conclusions:
New project/programme/activity:
Actions/Sponsor:
Timescale:

YY/NN   **Landscape developments:**
Item:
Discussion & conclusion:
New project/programme/activity:
Action/sponsor:
Timescale:

Projects and programmes portfolio

YY/NN   **New project/programme**
Discussion & conclusion
Action/Sponsor:
Timescale:

YY/NN   Project/programme overview, changes & issues
Summary overview:

Project#:
Issue/change:
Action/Sponsor:
 Timescale:

YY/NN   Item

Discussion & conclusions:
Actions/sponsor:
Timescale:

Any other business

YY/NN   Item
Discussion & conclusions:
Actions/sponsor:
 Timescale:

University of Reading

Title: *[title of the item]*

Committee: *[name & date of meeting]*

Committee Sponsor: *[committee member presenting the item]*

Author/s: *[author/s of the document]*

Date: *[date of the report]*

Action required from the committee: *[actions requested from the committee, for instance: request of advise/guidance; approvals of recommendations; etc.]*

Report & summary recommendations: *[brief description of the background, context and, rationale for the recommendations and how they address identified needs; detail of recommendations; indication of other benefits in addition to those addressing identified needs]*

Research & Innovation Strategy priorities addressed by the recommendations: *[brief description of which strategic priorities the recommendations are aligned with and how they address them]*

Key Risks and mitigations: *[high level risks of implementing the recommendations, initial risk level (H,M,L) and overview of mitigation plans]*

Implications for staff, including E&D considerations: *[summary of how the recommendations affect staff – all or any specific groups - and what immediate steps are required to manage the impact – i.e. communication with relevant staff; communication with line managers/Heads of section; recruitment; etc. Please include potential implications, impacts, benefits or negative effects in relation to E&D considerations]*

Financial implications: *[summary of any financial impact of the recommendations and immediate steps required to manage these – i.e. request of resource through internal funding schemes, applications for external funding; discussions with budget holders; etc.]*

Communications: *[summary of how the recommendations will be communicated, to whom, when and by whom]*

Annexes: *[any detailed report, analysis or other documentation providing background or evidence in support of the recommendations in the paper]*

[Notes: the length of this document must not exceed 3 A4 pages. Any additional information can be provided through Annexes.]

RESEARCH COMMITTEE PROJECTS & PORTFOLIO - Updates and issues

No	Project/Programme name	Sponsor	Lead	Overall progress *(Red, Amber, Yellow, Green)*	Overall Risk *(Red, Amber, Yellow, Green - change up/down)*	Summary updates/issues/changes