

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE
Meeting No. 1, 2008

Meeting No. 1, 2008 of the University Research Committee was held on Tuesday 11 March 2008 at 2.00 pm in the Ross Hohnen Room of the Chancelry.

Present: Professor Cram, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair); Professor Deane; Professor Stanton; Professor Thomas; Professor Gatenby; Dr Golley; Professor Hill; Professor Jeffrey (for Professor Morris-Suzuki); Dr Jones; Professor Kirk; Dr Leigh; Dr McMahon; Professor Peterson (for Professor Merlan); Professor Smith; Mr Smyth; Professor Stoljar; Professor Williams; and Professor Williamson.

By invitation: Dr Bain; Mr Elliott (Item. 10)

In attendance: Ms Bruce

Disclosure of Pecuniary or Material Personal Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary or material personal interest in matters listed on the agenda.

Use of Inside Information or Position

Under sections 24 and 25 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, a member of the University Research Committee must not make improper use of his or her position or of inside information to gain an advantage for himself or herself or to cause detriment to the University or to another person.

MINUTES

PART 1: GENERAL ITEMS

ITEM 1. MINUTES

The minutes of Meeting No. 4, 2007 of the University Research Committee (996/2007) held on 25 October 2007 were confirmed (published at http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/060PP_Research/meetings.asp)

ITEM 2. MATTERS ARISING

ITEM 3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES

3.1 Apologies were received from: Professor Carroll, Mr Choo, Professor Merlan and Professor Wheeler.

3.2 Announcements

3.3 Confidential Items

There were no confidential items. Mr Angel, Mr Elliott, Ms Goldwater, Dr Osborne and Ms Rayner attended as observers.

PART 2: REPORTS AND POLICY MATTERS**ITEM 4. UNIVERSITY POLICY COMMITTEES**

Members noted the current provisions for the operation of the University's Research policy Committee as detailed in the:

- . *Academic Board and University Policy Committees Rules 2007* (published at <http://www.anu.edu.au/cabs/rules/acadboard&subcteesrules.pdf>) approved by Council, at its meeting on 7 December 2007.
- . An extract (70/2008) from the *Rules* relating to the membership, terms of reference, conduct of meetings and provisions relating to alternates
- . The updated *Membership and Operating Procedures* of the University Research Committee (69/2008) (published at <http://www.anu.edu.au/cabs/rules/acadboard&subcteesrules.pdf>)
- . The following membership changes from 2008 were noted (see: http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/060PP_Research/membership.asp):
 - Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education): Professor Elizabeth Deane
 - ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences representative: Dr Andrew Leigh
 - ANU College of Medicine and Health Sciences: Professor Paul Gatenby
 - President, ANUSA, or nominee: Mr Mark Smyth (nominee)
 - President, PARSA, or nominee: Mr Winstonne Choo (nominee)

ITEM 5. RESEARCH GOVERNANCE MATTERS

The Chair spoke to the item noting that the 2007 AUQA *Report of an Audit of the Australian National University* recommended that "ANU, in order to achieve a seamless research structure with effective planning and monitoring, ensure that college research committees have consistent terms of reference that link directly to those of the University Research Committee". Standard terms of reference had been proposed to address the issue (paper 'Research Committee Governance Matters' 72/2008), and read:

"The College Research Committee will advise the Chair, the Dean and the College advisory body on:

- 1) College Research Plans which feature:
 - a) consistency with broader University objectives and values
 - b) indicators and targets relating to research performance
 - c) timetables for monitoring and evaluation
 - d) disposition of resources to support the best activities in selected priority areas
- 2) the quality of research using criteria set out in the College Research Plan
- 3) research administration and research development in the College.

The College Research Committee will engage with the University Research Committee through the CRC Chair or College Dean to:

- 1) remain informed of university wide policies and issues
- 2) discuss and comment on university wide issues raised at the University Research Committee."

The Committee also noted the current sub-committee structure of the University Research Committee comprising three concerned with ethical and legislative requirements for research at ANU (i.e. the Human Research Ethics Committee, Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee, and Recombinant DNA Monitoring Committee) and a fourth, the Major Equipment Committee (MEC). Revisions to the terms of reference of the MEC and the formation of two sub-committees of the MEC, i.e. the Electron Microscopy Management Committee and the ANU Bioscience Services Advisory Committee were being proposed.

The Committee endorsed, in accordance with the proposals contained in the paper 'Research Committee Governance Matters' (72/2008):

- (i) The standard elements for the terms of reference for College Research Committees, noting that some Colleges will build these elements into their broader statements and reporting requirements;
- (ii) The revised terms of reference for the Major Equipment Committee as a sub-committee of the University Research Committee;
- (iii) The terms of reference for the Electron Microscopy Management Committee and the ANU Bioscience Services Advisory Committee, noting that both were being established as sub-committees of the Major Equipment Committee.

ITEM 6. REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported on current issues:

- **University Retreat** (Presentations published at: http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Executive/070PP_Reports_and_Papers/index.asp)
 - . 'Supporting Research at ANU' presentations by Professor Thomas on 'Research Performance and Opportunities' and by Professor Cram on 'Organising Research and Innovation' are of particular interest to Colleges
 - . maintaining research performance would be a focus
- **Major Equipment Committee (MEC):** Report of the 2007 funding round (71/2008) Issues about the use of the NH&MRC Equipment Grant were raised. The grant has been used to fund small equipment items up to the \$50k threshold. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor noted that the most likely alternative sources were the funds available for distribution by Budget Unit Heads for support of infrastructure, and IAS block funding for eligible areas. The MEC threshold should be maintained and the funds (about \$350k) allocated more strategically rather than for small equipment items. He undertook to come back to the item through the MEC and College Research Committee where medical research is relevant.
- **Reviews:**
 - Bioscience
 - Report published at: http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Executive/Files/anu_only/Biosciences_Review_Report.pdf
 - The Vice-Chancellor would respond to the review within the next 6 weeks.
 - Review of Information Services
 - . Quality and cost effectiveness of services delivery were the main focuses
 - . The review report was in progress

- Chemistry: Review underway
- **NCRIS: Platforms for Collaboration developments**
 - . ANU would make nominations for the review of the roadmap of areas in which NCRIS has invested
 - . research data was a likely addition to the platforms
 - . ANU is deeply engaged in building the Information Infrastructure Platform (see Item 9.)
- **ANU-Yale Fellowship Scheme**

The mechanics for visiting research fellowships have been published at http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/US_Development_Office/010PP_Programs/files/ANUYaleFellowship_finalv1.pdf
- **Go8 DP09 Comparisons**
 - . ANU's proposals have increased by 11% in a very slight overall trend increase
 - . contributing factors may be the 3-year cycle of IAS entry which has a bigger impact than the regular cycles at other universities, and the level of engagement by researchers in the DP round
 - . the Deputy Vice-Chancellor thanked and congratulated all who have contributed to this outcome

ITEM 7. INNOVATION AND EDUCATION

Members received an overview of new Government arrangements and proposed future funding arrangements from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

- **Departmental structures, arrangements and Ministers:** organisational chart of the DIISR and the DEEWR (viewed at the meeting)
 - . Higher Education and research were small components in the two large portfolios with research having been decoupled from education
 - . research associated matters affecting ANU were overwhelmingly in DIISR
- **Future of RQF**

Replacement of the RQF by the *Excellence in Research for Australia* initiative was announced in late February. Initial indications were that the ERA:

 - would be overseen by ARC
 - was not directly related to funding at present
 - would roll out over a few years with science and technology first, followed later by the humanities and social sciences
 - the assessment of research quality would be based on bibliometrics combined with expert peer review
 - would be put in place from the 2009 budget in all likelihood

Actions proposed for ANU were:

 - to activate the 13-14 groupings formed for the RQF as the ERA process and to ensure that ANU understands fully the quality measures of its research
 - groups would be subdivided or aggregated as necessary once the ERA configuration became clearer
- **Compacts and Hub and Spoke**
 - compacts may be coupled into Education & community outreach and Research & innovation transfer
 - an announcement for a review of higher education was expected. This would delay the progress of the education compact

- much work would be devoted to preparing for compacts, which were expected to become effective levers for policy and practice
- ANU Colleges should consider their research strengths and relate them to other institutions in order to identify partners with complementary capacity and capability
- **2020 Summit**
 - nominations have closed
 - ANU 2020 Action would be to
 - engage with the Summit topics to end of 2008 in Australian Economy; Infrastructure; Sustainability and Climate Change; Rural Australia; Health; Communities and Families; Indigenous Australia; Creative Australia; Australia's Governance; Australia's Future in the World
 - register through APOLLO page
 - support writing, media, workshops
- Information would be distributed in about two-weeks time
- **Review of National Innovation System**
 - Dr Terry Cutler, Director of CSIRO and Chair of the Advisory Board for the Centre for Excellence for Creative Industries will chair the panel appointed for the comprehensive review of Australia's innovation system
 - As part of the review, a working group led by panel member Professor Mary O'Kane will examine CRCs program
 - This was a highly important review for the University with the findings likely to impact on Research and Innovation for the life of Government
 - Timeframe:
 - Submissions close at the end of April
 - Green paper end of July
 - White paper (2 Ministers) by end of year
 - Research Evaluation and Policy Project
 - Six topics for national workshops
 - A consultant was being commissioned to assist ANU prepare its submission
 - The aim would be to position ourselves as Australia's top research institution at the "centre" of the National Innovation System

The 'Government Innovation and Research Agenda' presentation to the Leadership Retreat has been published at:

http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Executive/070PP_Reports_and_Papers/index.asp

The Committee noted the overview and matters arising in discussion.

ITEM 8. HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH TRAINING REVIEW

Professor Thomas spoke to the ANU review of higher degree research. Higher degree research training was a focal point for Senator Carr's innovation agenda. Doubling the number of students receiving APAs accompanied by a request for an increase in value and duration, and 1000 mid-career Future Fellowships for researchers were some of the initiatives intended to realign Australia with international standards and needs of the workforce. Responding to a need to increase the number of students and the quality of research training at ANU had been central to the review.

The Committee noted the following papers:

- *2007 Review of Higher Degree Research at ANU Summary Report*, January 2008 (48/2008) See:
http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/040PP_Education/uecmtg1_2008/48_SummaryReport2007RHDRFinalfeb08.pdf
- *2007 Higher Degree Research Review Recommendations and Implementation Plan* (49/2008) See:
http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/040PP_Education/uecmtg1_2008/49_HDRreviewrecimplanfeb08.pdf
- Establishment of the Higher Degree Research Committee (65/2008)

Principal comments arising in discussion were:

- . the absence of references to networking in the report
- . 'overseas institutions' for training includes businesses (r13.)
- . r19. refers to the 'degree of participation in graduate education' without addressing the quality of supervision as a measure of performance or mentioning the quality of incoming students
- . the PhD examiners form has been changed to address quality questions and will allow comparisons to be made between areas of the University. Other measures could also be pursued
- . as indicated in '4.2 Orientation', coursework was not a requirement where students already have the necessary skills, and was subject to the availability of funding
- . additional time and scholarship funding beyond three years was a very important issue, especially for students required to undertake fieldwork, and one that was paramount for the University to continue to pursue
- . the need to communicate with DEEWR that accommodating greater flexibility with regard to course length, inclusion of coursework etc is vital

The Committee:

- (i) Noted the *2007 Review of Higher Degree Research at ANU Summary Report*, January 2008 (48/2008) and that implementation of the recommendations of the *2007 Review of Higher Degree Research at ANU Recommendations and Implementation Plan* (49/2008) has commenced following approval from the Vice-Chancellor;
- (ii) Noted the proposed establishment of the Higher Degree Research Committee as a sub-committee of the Education Committee (65/2008).

ITEM 9. COMPUTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Professor Jim Williams, Chair of the ANU e-Research Task Force, spoke to the major findings of the ANU e-Research Task Force Report to the Committee. His presentation addressed:

- The terms of reference to:
 - . Review e-Research at ANU
 - . Review the provision of Central resources
 - . Survey users
 - . Better harness and coordinate resources across ANU
 - . Take account of external drivers: APAC, NCRIS and National e-Research agenda

- Gaining open access for staff under NCRIS, which is more prescriptive than the former APAC located at ANU, through greater co-ordination and visibility of our research
- A snapshot of ANU e-Research projects by Research School/Faculty, which indicated that computing was becoming with the gap between the humanities and social sciences and science closing
- The establishment of a cohesive cross-campus e-Research Centre, with a full-time Director (R1. and R.2) and appropriate Governance arrangements: i.e. a Director; an e-Research Steering and Policy Committee evolved from and with a broader role than the AITAC (R3.); a Merit Allocation Committee to recommend on resources similar to the MEC (previously the Time Allocation Committee); an enabling environment (R.5); building upon the successful ANU supercomputer facility as the central resource for e-Research services; staff career structure (R6.); mechanisms and processes to facilitate full internal and external engagement(R7.);
- Regularisation of funding arrangements with an annual recurrent allocation of around \$1.5million to service requirements (R.4)
- The ANU NCI organisational structure. The Director and the NCI Steering Committee would report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stanton
- Establishment of a working party to investigate present and future needs of e-Education (R8.), i.e. advanced computing techniques. It was expected that the proposed Advisory Group to the new Director would take the issue forward.

The Committee noted the presentation on the Review and that the full report and recommendations were currently with the Vice-Chancellor.

ITEM 10. OPEN ACCESS: DIRECTIONS

Professor Stanton, Pro Vice-Chancellor, introduced discussion about a framework of policies and platforms for researchers to make known their work to the wider community as described in the papers:

- *Openness: facilitating access to knowledge (75/2008)* from the Pro Vice-Chancellor
- *Open Access: A Response to Changes in Modes of Scholarly Communication (76/2008)* prepared by the Director, Scholarly Information Services

The proposals were aimed at reshaping the institution to become more accessible than in the past and committing to “openness” as a value that facilitates the core knowledge function and promotes the two engagement and service values of *ANU by 2010*. It would involve an examination of how “openness” interplays with IP, privacy and academic freedom.

Mr Elliott drew attention to the definition of open access, the international, historical and national contexts, and cited recent examples of open access having become a public policy issue. The approach to open access at ANU for both articles and research data was consistent with international and national principles and practices and supported by a range of self-archiving and publishing conditions.

Comments arising in discussion related to:

- . embargoes issues and constraints imposed by publishers
- . friction between different values, i.e. between the concept of open access and a perception of a more secretive and protective society
- . the need for guidelines about when to publish
- . the need for careful consideration about placing raw data on the web, particularly in the social sciences
- . the development of policies over a period of 2-3 years

The Committee:

- (i) Noted the paper *Open Access: A Response to Changes in Modes of Scholarly Communication* (76/2008), achievements to date, and opportunities for the immediate future;
- (ii) Agreed to establish a Working Party, to report back to the University Research Committee on the development of a position statement and associated impact on existing policies;
- (iii) Recommended that the membership of the Working Party be determined by the Pro Vice-Chancellor and include ANU College representatives and persons with appropriate expertise in the field.

ITEM 11. RESEARCH INTEGRITY

The Committee noted the following update on the ARIES Ethics and Biosafety Modules development and function provided by the Director, Office of Research Integrity:

- **Release of the ARIES human research ethics module:**
The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research was released last year and the Office of Research Integrity revised its human research ethics processes accordingly, at the same time taking the opportunity to introduce the ARIES on-line application process.

A new three-level classification of ethical risk is used to simplify the preparation and ethical review of protocols, and to streamline the ethical review of low-risk protocols.

The three levels are:

- a. Low-risk protocols E1 (Expedited Level 1 - E1). These engage participants only in activities that they would encounter in normal everyday life.
- b. Low-risk protocols E2 (Expedited Level 2 - E2). These engage participants who are fully competent and not vulnerable in research settings that are in a relatively benign way not what the participants would encounter in everyday life.
- c. High-risk protocols (Full review - F) engage participants who are in some way vulnerable, or research settings that are particularly unusual or uncomfortable.

E1 protocols are reviewed by the Chair or Deputy-Chair of the HREC. The aim is for a 5-day turn around with regard to E1 protocols

The ANU established two new Delegated Ethics Review Committees (DERCs) to review E2 protocols. One DERC reviews research in the humanities and social sciences (i.e. researchers within CASS, CAP, CBE and ACoL) and the other reviews research in science, medicine, and engineering (i.e. researchers within COS, CMHS and CECS). In respect of membership, committee procedures, ethical review, and ethical clearance, the DERCs largely followed the format of the previous LESC. However, the business processes supporting the DERCs was revised to capture the efficiencies of on-line processing - for example, administrative services for DERCs is provided by the Ethics Office rather than the Colleges.

From the perspective of users, ethics administrators and review committees the new system is being met with approval. The expedited review of E1 and E2 protocols offers considerable time efficiencies to researchers. Administrative processes have been streamlined. To facilitate on-line application processes weekly training sessions are being conducted by the ORI.

- **ARIES Recombinant DNA (Biosafety) module:**
This module is in development. It is expected that a trial version will be delivered during March. Following this the system will be trialed with input from stakeholders.
- **ARIES Animal Ethics Module**
The ARIES animal ethics module has been running for two years. It has considerably facilitated reporting to a number of State and Territory governments and the NH&MRC, however it needs upgrading in order to facilitate the ease of on-line application. Work has commenced with regard to this.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor summarised that the software for human research ethics was now operational and much appreciated by users. The module for rDNA was under development and the animal ethics module would be upgraded in line with the HRE module.

ITEM 12. RESEARCH RELATED POLICIES

12.1 EMU Annual Report for 2006

The Committee noted the Report and that the establishment of an Electron Microscopy Management Committee had been addressed at Item 5.

12.2 Human Research Ethics Committee terms of reference (56a/2008)

The revised terms of reference, which include a section (Section 2) detailing research that can be exempted from review, were noted.

12.3 Changes to policies

- *Undertaking Individual Consultancies and Professional Practice (52-day rule)* (at http://info.anu.edu.au/Policies/_DRO/Procedures/52_Day_Rule.asp)
Members noted that the Human Resources Division has updated the policy for the purposes of clarifying:
 - . The ANU College structure
 - . Providing scope with respect to area of professional practice and the need for staff to take out their own professional indemnity
 - . Reference to the Additional Services Guidelines and the web link

- . Addressing conflicts of interests with competing Universities
 - . Defining University resources that include stationary, computing equipment, telephone, use of laboratories or use of other University equipment
 - . Addressing issues about undertaking the consultancy
- Responsible Practice of Research
Policy: Responsible Practice of Research (draft 74/2008)
 The Committee noted that the draft reflects changes required by Part A of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Practice of Research (2007)*. Further changes would need to be adopted once Part B becomes available. Issues raised in discussion included:
 - . peer review prior to public comment - the Code was more prescriptive (Section 4) than the draft Policy (4.4) which is consistent with the broader University policy position, but even the University position does not reflect common practice in social science areas
 - . authorship and written records of authorship were very complex and problematic areas: e.g. some journals require signed statements from all authors; acceptable and unacceptable authorship (5.4) may differ from one discipline to another, i.e. in relation to the collection of data; disclosure of duplication of results can be difficult to manage;
 - . order of authorship - the Harvard Medical School guidelines were a useful reference

The Committee:

- (i) Recommended the release of the draft policy for wider consultation to ANU College Research Committees and Deans, with the request that issues relating to peer review and authorship be flagged for comment;
- (ii) Noted that a revised paper would be put to a future Committee meeting.

12.4 National Higher Education Accreditation

The Committee noted ANU's Submission, dated 27 February, to the *Joint Committee on Higher Education Inquiry into the desirability of a national higher education accreditation body – Consultation discussion paper* (at http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/040PP_Education/uecmtg1_2008/JC_HEConsultationDiscussionPaper.pdf)

ITEM 13. REPORTS FROM ANU COLLEGES

Reports were not presented due to lack of time.

PART 3. ITEMS OF OTHER BUSINESS

ITEM 14. OTHER BUSINESS AND QUESTION TIME

14.1 Grants and Consultancies

Reports on grants and consultancies for the period 1 October 2007 to 31 January 2008 (64/2008 and 63/2008), published at the Committee website, were noted.