1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS
   1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence
   Apologies were received from: Prof R Safavi-Naini
   The following member is currently on leave: A/Prof J Rayner

   1.2 Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of 13 November 2003
   The minutes of the meeting held 13 November 2003 were confirmed.

   1.3 Business Arising from Previous Meeting
   A/Prof Marchant noted that applicants the Faculty short-listed for fast-tracked
   postgraduate research scholarships were removed from the list at the University-
   level because they were deemed not to be within a research strength or area of
   priority. He was concerned that excellent applicants were ranked lower than
   others simply because the area of research is not perceived to be a ‘priority’.
   It was noted that other areas of the University were also affected by this
decision.

   The Chair also noted that the coversheet for 2005 scholarship applications has
been revised such that information regarding resources and availability of
supervisors is required for every application. The Chair agreed to forward a
 copy of the draft revised coversheet to Committee members for information,
subject to approval from the PVC(R).

2. REPORT FROM CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT
   2.1 ARC Grant Applications
   • 23 applications from Informatics submitted for ARC Discovery Project Grants.
   Faculty List tabled for information. 115 applications submitted across campus.
   It is hoped that the Faculty will be successful with at least 6-7 applications.
   • Applications for ARC Linkage International Fellowships are due to Office of
   Research by Monday 8 March.
   • Applications for ARC Research Networks are due to Office of Research by
   Friday 19 March.
2.2 HDR Student Welcome Day

Faculty proceedings for HDR Student Welcome Day commence with a lunch in the Level 1 foyer of Building 3 at 11.50am on Tuesday 9 March. A cocktail function will be held at 5.30pm.

2.3 Report from URC Meeting of 26 February

2.3.1 AUQA Audit

In light of the impending AUQA Audit, the University has identified the following areas require attention in terms of quality assurance:

- HDR Student needs – practices in Faculties to be reviewed and recent WUPA review should also be taken into account.
- Commercialisation Plan (R&D Paper #7)
- Planning and implementation phase of recent changes to research structure, eg. FRC Terms of Reference need to be consistent across campus and reflect current research structure.

2.3.2 Restructure of Office of Research

The Office of Research will be restructured into 3 divisions with Aapo Skorulis remaining the General Manager:

- Research Student Centre - Kim Roser, Manager.
- Research Services - Sharon Hughes, Manager. An extra level 8/9 will be employed reporting to Sharon. Research Services is responsible for grants, ethics, ARC etc.
- Office of Innovation and Commercialisation - Aapo Skorulis. Responsible for contract research, CRCs, commercialisation etc. There will eventually be 3 persons located in the Faculties responsible for commercialisation. Troy Coyle will be based in Engineering and responsible for Science and Engineering, Others (to be employed) will be based elsewhere. The intention is that these people will be in at the ground level for ARC-Linkage negotiations.

2.3.3 Research Strength Performance Study

A research strength performance study has been undertaken to determine the base level of funding appropriate for each area. The results will be sent out to the research directors for checking and feedback. The feedback will be used to determine if the base funding levels are appropriate.

2.3.4 Cooperative Research Centres

- Two new CRCs - another Telecommunications and one in Polymers - are under discussion.
- The CRC for IMST and Welded Structures CRC are up for renewal.
- The PVC(R) would like UOW to be involved in at least two more CRCs.
2.3.5 ARC Research Networks
There have been numerous requests to the PVC(R) for ARC Research Network funding. The PVC(R) is ambivalent towards the idea of being involved in these networks and each researcher is being asked “What does UOW get out of their proposal”. It appears that the costs often outweigh the benefits gained.

2.3.6 Research Profile Booklets
There University is currently constructing a glossy research profile booklet for publication. Initially it will have 12 single page spreads for each of the areas of research strength and a section for research highlights. At a later stage a single page spread for each of the Faculties will also be included. The PVC(R) is supportive of Faculties producing their own glossy research publication.

2.3.7 Other Items of interest
- Space is an issue campus-wide for research groups as a result of successful funding and attraction of high profile researchers/groups.
- Backing Australia’s Ability #2 - emphasis on commercialisation of research rather than ‘public good’ CRCs.
- Digital TV compliance initiative is ongoing.
- UOW has been approached by a large pharmaceutical company interested in research collaboration.
- Bluescope Steel close to signing renewal for the Steel Institute.
- R&D Discussion Paper #7 still under construction and there will be a HDR Student-related R&D Discussion Paper produced in the future.
- Strategic Initiative Funding guidelines needed as implementation has been held up without guidelines.
- Faculty Research Plans are needed. At present the PVC(R) does not have the plan for Informatics but understands the limitations. This will need to be finished as a matter of priority.
- There are numerous opportunities for research collaboration with Irish research institutions, keeping in mind that Irish researchers have access to European Framework funding.

3. REVISION OF FRC TERMS OF REFERENCE
The Chair noted that the Terms of Reference need to be revised to reflect the new Institute/Areas of Research Strength structure, however the Faculty does not want to exclude Mathematics/Statistics and the Intelligent Software initiatives. It was agreed that the FRC needs to represent the Faculty’s own areas of research strength, rather than just the University-recognised areas of research strength.

Members made the following suggestions regarding the Terms of Reference and FRC generally:
- That School Postgraduate Co-coordinators, or equivalent, should be included as formal members of the Committee. Currently it is common practice only that Postgraduate Coordinators attend as the Head of School’s nominee.
- There should be a requirement that the Faculty representative on the Postgraduate Research Policy Committee (PRPC) must report to FRC on meetings as many important issues are discussed and decisions made by the PRPC.
• The FRC needs to manage the link between Institutes and Schools/Faculty to ensure that dichotomy is removed and to ensure students are managed appropriately and have a sense of belonging to both Schools and their Research Institute or area of research strength.

The Committee agreed that it was difficult to move much further with discussions regarding the composition and responsibilities of FRC until there is clarification from the PVC(R) regarding funding, including funding for the maintenance of students assigned to research strengths and non-research strength areas.

4. FACULTY PLANNING AND RESOURCE REPORT

The Chair explained that, as part of the University’s Annual Planning Process, FRC must:

1. Review Faculty progress against the research objectives in the 2004 Faculty Planning and Resource Report, and

2. Provide recommendations to the Dean regarding revision/addition/removal of objectives and strategies for the 2005 Faculty Planning and Resource Report.

The Chair noted that the research section of the Planning and Resource Report requires further information regarding outcomes and progress against objectives. Members indicated that most of the information should be obtained from the Office of Research.

The Chair explained that a small working group, consisting of the Dean, Heads of Schools, FRC and FEC Chairs, International Manager and Faculty Executive Officer had met to undertake a SWOT analysis to assist with the completion of the 2005 Plan. The Dean will distill overall aims and objectives, which will be used to frame the planning in each section of the report.

Members made the following comments, listed under the relevant objective:

- **To increase the number of quality research students, especially domestic students**
  - Advertising is not an appropriate strategy for increasing the number of quality research students as it is expensive and the target market is difficult to reach. It was agreed that the two advertising strategies listed should be removed from the 2005 report.
  - More appropriate strategies would be improvement of scholarship offerings by seeking funding from industry and through grants; Push for recognition of Faculty research areas as University research strengths so that quality students in these areas have better access to research scholarships.
  - Groom quality undergraduate students for PhD via the introduction of Dean’s Scholars degrees and through the Faculty Vacation Scholarship program.

- **To provide a quality research training experience for current research students**
  - Strategies regarding postgraduate lunch and Dinner with the Dean are less important strategies and should be moved to end of the list for achieving this objective.
  - Faculty should survey current research students to identify what the training needs are, and then organise appropriate training in these areas of need (eg software tools, citation skills etc). This need not be intensive, comprehensive training, but could provide the basics which will fast-track a student’s training in that particular area.
  - Encourage students to attend conferences
To reduce the number of overtime students and improve completion rates without compromising quality research outputs

- Need to instigate a six monthly review rather than just the required Annual Report to identify problems early.
- Collaborate with Learning and Teaching Centre to assist with writing skills etc (currently undertaken successfully in SECTE)

To ensure that the University Research Graduate Attributes are incorporated into the training of research students

- It was noted that this objective stems directly from the recommendation from Senate, at the time the Research Attributes were introduced, to encourage research students to undertake the ILIP subject.
- Perhaps a strategy regarding plagiarism literacy would be useful here.

To increase the number of quality supervisors

- In conjunction with Office of Research, conduct seminars on research supervision and encourage all staff (experienced and novice alike) to attend.
- Remove strategy 3 (re second supervisor) as second supervisors will now be required as part of the new applications for postgraduate research scholarships.

To increase the number of successful quality grant applications (eg ARCs, CRCs, etc)

- Faculty to strategically employ research-oriented staff and focus on attraction and retention of these staff.
- Staff mentoring and workshops in conjunction with CDU/CEDIR/OoR

Facilitation of international and/or inter-institutional research

- Current strategy not suitable – should be trying to create opportunities for research collaboration rather than simply inviting international academics.

Support research-active staff

- Strategy 2 wording to be revised: Encourage highly competitive research staff to apply for teaching buy-outs

Enhance relationship between teaching and research

- It would be more appropriate to focus on UG final year projects when discussing the integration of research into teaching.

Provide infrastructure support for Research within the Faculty

- Focus on the successful implementation of the Mathematics/Statistics and Intelligent Software initiatives as recognised areas of research strength.
- It was noted that the retention or removal of the strategy regarding the creation of a Research Office is a decision to be made by the Dean.

The Committee agreed that a permanent working party is required to make recommendations regarding the research future of the Faculty and to implement the research planning objectives.
5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

6. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 22 April, 2004 Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/105A

Please note that RIBG Applications will be ranked at this meeting.

Dr Steve Gower
Chair