1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

1.2 Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of 3 November 2005

The minutes of the meeting held 3 November 2005 were confirmed.

1.3 Business Arising from Previous Meeting

Professor John Fulcher noted that it was useful to include a list of the scholarship winners in the previous minutes.

2. REPORT FROM CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT

The Chair’s report encompassed the following:

- University Planning Day. The main points of focus for 2006 will be the University’s international ranking and industry linkages.
- ARC Discovery Grants. The Faculty has about 25 grants being drafted and the process of getting drafts read by a number of people appears to be working well.

3. RESEARCH QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The Chair gave an update on the Research Quality Framework (RQF). He noted that he was involved in discussions with the Director of TITR, Head of SECTE and the Dean.

There will be a lot of work involved with the RQF, however the main tasks for action now are:

- the mapping of groups to be assessed and
- the formation of a high level steering committee within the Faculty.

The Chair advised that the reference period of this RQF is 2000-2005.
4. RESEARCH STUDENTS’ WORKSHOPS

The Chair discussed the idea of holding regular, weekly workshops for newly enrolled research students. He proposed that the workshops commence in Week 4, where students can listen to guest speakers and receive information on various aspects of research. The workshops would be informal in the first year, but may lead to a formal subject for research students.

The topic raised the following discussion:

- Concerns were raised that the workshops would duplicate information provided by the Research Student Centre’s orientation session and at the Schools’ individual seminars.
- The notion of supervisors and new staff attending the workshops was raised.
- Topics suggested included IP, ethics and research methodologies for all postgraduate students.
- It was suggested that the workshops take place in Spring session, allowing students to settle into university life, as well as capture students enrolling mid-year.
- Making attendance at the workshops compulsory – similar to ILIP.

The Chair advised that the workshops would not duplicate information already provided elsewhere, merely reinforce it and encourage students to attend other more in depth programs (eg. Research Methodologies). He agreed to draft a proposal and circulate to the Committee for feedback.

ACTIONS: Chair to draft workshop program proposal and circulate to the Committee.
- SITACS and SECTE to seek volunteers to present at workshops.
- Heads of Schools to nominate a contact to provide input on the design of the workshops and dissemination of information on workshops.

5. ARC LINKAGE GRANTS – PLANS

The Chair advised that the next rounds of ARC Linkage Grants will be in May and October and called for discussion on what can be done in terms of grants for 2006. Suggestions and comments included:

- Encourage more staff to apply for grants;
- Use the available resources to apply for larger grants, as well as encourage proposals including more than one industry partner;
- Consider using the Faculty’s MICD more effectively, perhaps even as a ‘broker’ type role to identify potential grants available;
- Hold “Open Days” where the Faculty is able to showcase projects, etc to industry;
• Develop relationships with industry with the view to proposing linkage partnerships.

6. INTERNATIONAL PROFILE

The Chair spoke to the need to raise the Faculty’s international profile, and specifically to be included on the Shanghai index in order to achieve a high ranking.

One of the strategies discussed by the Committee was to invite international visitors to the campus to raise the UOW profile. The Chair welcomed related FIRDS applications.

7. HDR STUDENT RECRUITMENT

The Committee discussed potential strategies to recruit more research students to the Faculty. The discussion focused on the following:

• Scholarships;

• Advertising nationally and internationally in June of this year, the key areas which require strengthening within the Faculty, for which potential students could apply to research.

8. PROCESSES FOR 2006

The Chair reported that there were several improvements in key areas in 2005. He also discussed the following processes and potential improvements:

• ARC Discovery Grants: encourage grant applicants to seek several readers to review the application early on in the process.

• RIGBs: identify apparent duplications with research infrastructure in other faculties.

• URC Smalls: the process and quality of the applications was good in 2005. The main thing to keep in mind is to give frequent reminders to potential applicants to prepare good quality applications with plenty of time.

• Scholarships: need to improve the way in which the international applicants are judged. Must ensure the quality of the applicants’ publications and institutions. A member suggested that the Research Services Office (RSO) would have a list of good quality institutions.

ACTION: - Obtain list of good quality institutions from RSO.

9. PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

The Chair called for a nominee from SITACS and SECTE to work with him on the professional doctorate proposal.
10. OTHER BUSINESS
10.1 Non-members attendance at meetings

The Chair raised the issue of allowing non-members to attend FRC meetings as observers. The Committee agreed that staff should be allowed to attend non-ranking meetings.

10.2 FIRDS guidelines

Professor John Fulcher requested that the FIRDS guidelines be reviewed to clarify what is considered acceptable for funding.

The Chair agreed to review the guidelines.

**ACTIONS:** Chair to review FIRDS guidelines, clarifying what is acceptable for potential funding.

4. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 6 April.