

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Matters for note by Senate arising from the meeting of Research Committee on 22 June 2022

1. Update on the Professional Services Delivery Workstream

The Committee considered an oral report on the Professional Services Delivery Workstream. The following points were noted:

- (a) A number of key issues had emerged as part of the workstream, for example the importance of process clarity, efficient systems and training opportunities. Currently the implementation group were working to assess the current situation, and this work would be supported by a process-mapping workshop and a series of end-user focus groups.
- (b) The next steps for this area were to extract the key points thus far and make them available on the PSD Google Site, as well as to finish the assessment of the current situation. Following this a baseline proposal would be developed for a new Professional Services Delivery model (determined via an options analysis). Task and Finish groups would be established to focus on specific aspects.
- (c) The Design Phase would take place from approximately June - August 2022, with an intended overall end date of January 2023. Review would be undertaken following this.
- (d) The importance of maintaining consistency alongside the streamlining of processes was noted, as was the role of funder expectations in service provision. It was clarified that Faculty- and Department-level differentiation would be maintained as appropriate, suitable to the needs of researchers.

2. Membership of Learned Societies

The Committee discussed a paper outlining the payments process for membership of learned societies. The progress thus far was noted, and it was recognised that this was a complex area in need of nuanced consideration. It was reported that membership with the sole aim of attending a conference was looked upon more favourably in terms of the HMRC regulations than membership with associated benefits. More organisations had been added to the HMRC list of approved groups.

An update on this area would be presented to the Research Operations Contingency Group (ROCG) in early-July. The Committee expressed appreciation for the incremental progress being made, however it was acknowledged that operational requirements were a consistent obstacle at the University, and a more widespread consideration of solutions would be necessary in the future.

3. Proposals concerning rights retention work ongoing within the N8

The Committee considered an update on rights retention work ongoing within the N8, and endorsed the draft Statement prepared by the N8 on this issue. It was clarified that the Statement was intended for an internal audience, as well as publishers, and that the focus on staff (as opposed to PGRs) was due to a need for consistency across all N8 institutions; further work would take place internally to support PGRs in this space.

Work continued at York to support rights retention, both in partnership with the N8 and individually. Legal advice had been passed onto the Legal team to further assist in this area. A Policy Officer was to be appointed to support such work. The aim was to produce a robust and supportive approach which could effectively resolve the tension between funder and publisher policies.

4. Annual Statement on Research Integrity for 2021/22

The Committee approved the Annual Statement on Research Integrity for 2021/22, subject to a few minor amendments. The Annual Statement is included elsewhere on the agenda.

5. Results of the REF 2021 for the University of York

The Committee considered a report on the results of the REF 2021 for the University of York, and noted the following:

- (a) The University had achieved great success in the results of the REF 2021 across the board. National level data would be analysed in more depth once available in order to better situate the performance of York in a sector context. An internal reflection process was under development in conjunction with the Associate Deans (Research); it was requested that such reflection included a broad range of staff, as well as Faculty-level discussion. Further, time within URC for detailed discussion of the results would be appreciated.
- (b) York had received positive feedback concerning the increased number of PGRs at the University, however there was no current strategy in place to further increase enrolment. It was suggested that this be considered in further detail.

The Committee thanked the Head of PIP for his work pulling together the data, and requested that further analysis be brought to the Committee as relevant.

6. Other Business

- (a) A recent visit to the University from colleagues at CITY College, Thessaloniki had been successful, and had initiated a series of conversations around research and teaching collaboration.
- (b) The Committee noted the £1.5M UKRIPF grant received by the Institute for Safe Authority, and recognised the value 'living lab' opportunity this presented. Similarly, the Guildhall in the centre of York represented an important opportunity for the University due to its status as a prime entrepreneurial space.
- (c) The Committee approved proposals for the management of the online Research Integrity Tutorial. Revisions would be brought to the Committee for approval as necessary.
- (d) The new Dean of Social Sciences had recently started in post, and would bring new and interesting perspectives to the Faculty. Productive conversation was expected as a result. The Faculty was engaged in a series of discussions concerning REF results and ESRC priorities, all of which would be valuable going forwards.
- (e) A range of work was noted in the RI&KE. The first meeting of the Research Culture Working Group had been held earlier in the week, and a co-ordinator had recently been appointed. Further to this, a review of the PIP Office and an internal audit of University support for due diligence would inform decision-making in the Directorate. An operational plan was in development for the Directorate as a whole, which URC would feed into in due course.
- (f) Concerns from PGRs regarding the cost of living and inflation would be passed on to UKRI; the Graduate School requested that example cases be referred to the School in order to build an evidence base.
- (g) The YGRS had submitted a response to the UKRI Consultation on the New Deal for Postgraduate Researchers, and had included in the response a number of comments regarding the sustainability of the funding model for PGR training, as well as pushing back on proposals to categorise PGRs as staff.
- (h) The YCEDE had launched at the end of May, and a series of internships for both taught students and external candidates were to follow. The first workshop, on the topic of equity in doctoral assessment, would take place in July.
- (i) YGRS continued to work on increasing engagement with industry via placements, and it was clarified that further data would be sought on a range of factors affecting inequality, for example socio-economic status - in order to justify positive action on other categories.
- (j) The Committee received an update on research grant income, applications and awards, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- (k) The University had agreed to underwrite current Horizon Europe grants, but would not do so for grants awarded beyond 2022. The internal process for doing so had settled down and bedded in somewhat,

however questions remained surrounding funding calls for 2023. It was noted that EU funding affected disciplines unequally, and that some areas would lose out more than others. Replacements for such funding were under discussion nationally.

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24/06/2022

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