UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Biology Department Research Committee

Terms of Reference

Remit:
To facilitate and promote basic, strategic and applied research of the highest international quality within the Biology Department.

Committee Membership:

Ex officio members
- Head of Department
- Chair of the Biology Graduate School Board
- Technology Facility Director
- Departmental Finance Advisor
- Director of CNAP or delegated representative
- Director of CII or delegated representative

Representative members
- 3-4 Additional members to be selected to ensure an appropriate balance on the committee of the following factors
    (i)   Representation from each of the Department's broad-based research areas (Biomedicine, Plant Science and Ecology&Evolution)
    (ii) Representation from both senior and junior academic staff
- An Independent Research Fellow
- A Post-doctoral Researcher

Chair
- A senior non-ex officio member of the committee

Secretariat
- The Research Administration Officer

Terms of Office:
Normally expected to be three years

Schedule of Meetings:
Normally January, March, May, September and November

Reporting Structure:
Reports to: Departmental Strategy Group
Considers: Biology Enterprise Group Minutes
              Biological Services Facilities User Group Minutes

Specific Functions

1. Research Strategy and Culture

- To develop Departmental research strategy, with due consideration to interdepartmental units, other departments, and University research strategy

- To appoint members of a Scientific Advisory Board from outside the University and consult them as appropriate

- To ensure that research in the Department is conducted in accordance with University Policy on Research Performance and that staff are aware of appropriate information pertaining to Academic Misconduct: Policy on Allegations, Investigations and Reporting

- To ensure that the Department complies with the University Code of Good Practice for Research and contemporary standards of good practice to ensure research quality. [NB Ethical and Safety issues are the remit of separate committees, but the minutes of these committees are available to the Research Committee].

2. Research Environment

- To foster and support an interactive research environment both within and beyond the department, including supporting seminar series and symposia, provision of travel grants, encouraging external visitors, and liaison with relevant Departments and Institutions.

- To monitor, prioritise and support the provision of high quality research infrastructure, including oversight of the Technology Facility, provision of equipment funds and support for applications to extra-departmental equipment funds.

- To oversee effective cost-recovery for use of Departmental research facilities

- To oversee a distribution of a portion of research overhead income to PIs

3. Researcher Career Development

- To ensure, along with the Head of Department and Departmental HR Committee that management of staff is in line with the best practice and policies of the University, including those specifically aimed at early-career researchers.

- To support and mentor early career researchers in the planning and development of their careers, including those outside academic research, for example through the provision of bridging funds to support researchers in funding gaps.

- To support and mentor PIs in the development of their research programmes and wider research-related activities, including through the conduct of biennial research reviews.

- To encourage the effective use of research leave among PIs.

4. Research funding

- To support the generation of research income by PIs, including through research pump priming grants, the Departmental Peer Review College, and the activities of the Departmental Research Administration Office, and support for internal and external collaborative activities.

- To monitor grant application patterns and success rates and adjust support mechanisms accordingly.

5. Research Outputs and Impact

- To support the publication of high quality research papers by PIs

- To monitor publication success and adjust support mechanisms accordingly

- To encourage research commercialisation as appropriate, in conjunction with the Biology Enterprise Group and the University RIO

- To publicise the Department's research achievements and encourage the promotion of public understanding and impact of research

- To support staff in contributing to national and international science-related policy

- To provide a high quality research training environment, for example by ensuring that mentoring expectations and responsibilities are clear to all staff, especially with reference to post-graduate researchers and early-career researchers

6. Communication

- To ensure that research information is appropriately and accurately captured on a timely basis, including within the Research and Innovation Information System (RIIS)

- To ensure that the Department is prepared for external reporting requirements, including the development of a clear framework designating the roles and responsibilities of departmental staff in communication of such requirements, data capture and decision-making

- To make available research information for internal and external purposes as appropriate

- To ensure that clear channels of communication exist between the Departmental Strategy Group, the Research Committee and all members of staff

- To ensure that matters of concern are reported to the PVC (Research), REO or Central Research Committee as appropriate

- To consider equality of opportunity in all its work

7. Funds

Funds are available to the Committee within specific budgets allocated by Departmental Finance Committee for the following categories of expenditure:

> Research equipment
> Pump-priming projects
> Paper completion projects
> Travel, academic visitors and small symposia
> RA bridging
> Science Advisory Board
> Research Overheads Allocation for PIs
> Research Away Day
> Seminar Series
> Contingency