

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2013

Present: The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) (in the Chair)
Professor M Beaney
Professor Karl Claxton
Professor M Collins
Professor Brian Fulton
Professor E Hancock
Professor F Hardman
Professor P Kaye
Professor M Ormrod
Professor S Rees-Jones
Professor M Smith
Dr A Sowden
Professor A Webster

In attendance: Director of the Research and Enterprise Office
Research Grants and Contracts Manager
Research Strategy and Policy Manager
Research Strategy and Policy Officer
REF Impact Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Professor J Potts. Professor Smith was welcomed to his first meeting.

12-13/32 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2012.

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2012 were **approved**.

12-13/33 Development of the Research Committee Working Groups

Arising from M12-13/14 the Committee **noted** that the Working Groups on PGR students and Impact had now agreed membership and would begin meeting shortly. In relation to the Impact Working Group, it was planning to report to the June meeting of Research Committee.

12-13/34 Research Committee members reports on activities undertaken in relation to the support given to their nominated departments

The Committee **noted** that Research Committee members had not undertaken any activities in relation to the support given to their nominated departments, other than the work related to the REF preparations, as expected.

12-13/35 Departmental submissions in relation to REF Impact Case Studies (FOI Exempt)

12-13/36 HEFCE Consultation on the implementation of the Concordat on Research Integrity

The Committee **considered** the recently published HEFCE Consultation on the proposed implementation of the Concordat on Research Integrity and the proposed implications for the institution. It was **agreed** the Concordat provided a good description of the minimum standards that should be expected and that the University should aspire to the highest levels of research, in terms of process as well as outputs.

The Committee also **noted** that the Policy of Research Misconduct was currently being revised by HR, but that ensuring a culture of research integrity was important. Whilst there was no suggestion that there was a significant problem with research at the institution, there was some evidence that research quality assurance was not as strongly embedded as would have been expected, given the University's emphasis on research performance. However, there was concern that the definitions of what constituted research and research data were very broad and hence implementing the concordat might prove onerous. For example, it was unclear how undergraduate project work related to the concordat.

It was **agreed** that the institution should aspire to the highest level of research integrity and that the culture of the institution should reflect this. However, there was a need to ensure that this aspiration did not result in an onerous and burdensome auditing culture merely to ensure compliance. It was **agreed** that one of the first objectives would be to look at the training of staff, to ensure that they were all fully conversant with the principles of research integrity and ensuring there was a culture where poor practices were quickly identified and improved.

12-13/37 Research income by department and units, for the period from August 2012 to December 2012

The Committee **received** a report on research income by department and units, for the period from August 2012 to December 2012 and **noted** that the figure was behind budget. However, there were some positive improvements in research income performance but unfortunately not in all areas.

12-13/38 Academic Coordinators update

The Committee **received** an update from the Academic Coordinator for the Sciences on the development of the various research council postgraduate training centre bids. In relation to NERC, it was **noted** that it was likely that there would be a joint bid involving York and Sheffield, and possibly other institutions, but that Leeds were not minded to be involved. In relation to EPSRC, a number of potential new centres had been identified, pending the call for bids to be advertised.

The University had hosted a number of Research Council visits, including BBSRC, EPSRC and a NERC visit was pending. In addition, it was expected that Wellcome would visit during the summer.

A sandpit event was being co-ordinated to focus on one of the research council grand challenges, with a view to stimulate activities.

It was **reported** that the Research Centre for the Social Sciences was due to be opened in April and would house up to 80 PGR students, training suites and space for one research centre. A Director for the Centre, equivalent to the HRC Director was currently being sought.

12-13/39 Date of next meeting

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting on Wednesday 13 March 2013 at **9.15am**

January 2013
Anna Grey
Research Strategy and Policy Manager