

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2014

Present: The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) (Chair)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Business and Community) (M13-14/67 onwards)
Professor Stuart Bell (M13-14/69 onwards)
Professor Brian Fulton
Professor Michael Beaney
Professor Karl Claxton
Dr Jon Finch
Professor Timo Gans
Professor Paul Kaye
Professor Jennifer Potts
Professor Martin Smith (MM13-14/68-74 only)
Professor Jo Swaffield
The Director of Research and Enterprise
The Research Strategy and Policy Manager

In attendance: Dr Nicola Meenan
Dr Eszter Papp
Ms Christine Ellwood (MM13-14/69-70 only)
Dr Rachel Curwen (MM13-14/69-70 only)
Ms Liz Waller (M13-14/71 only)
Ms Elizabeth Garcha (MM13-14/72-73 only)
Dr James Walsh (M13-14/76 only)
Dr Alice Wakely (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Professor Ormrod and the Research Grants and Contracts Manager.

13-14/63 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2014 were **approved** (RC.13-14/48), subject to the following amendments:

- (a) Adjustment of the record of attendance to reflect the Committee's new constituency;

- (b) Reference to the 'Athena Swan working group' rather than the 'Athena Swan committee';
- (c) Reference to the response from the Department of Biology in M13-14/60: Report on the review of YESI.

13-14/64 EPSRC mailing list

Arising from M13-14/40 and M13-14/56, it was **agreed** that queries relating to the EPSRC mailing list would be pursued separately by the RSPO.

13-14/65 REF Equality Audit report (Strictly Confidential and FOIA exempt)

13-14/66 Report on the review of YESI (Sensitive Information)

13-14/67 Oral report from the Chair

The Committee **received** an oral report from the Chair regarding recent developments. The following points were **noted**:

- (a) Development of a new University Research Strategy:
 - i. 22 out of the 28 departmental visits had taken place, and discussions had taken place with chairs of DRCs at the April Research Forum.
 - ii. The timeline for the next stages of development was as follows:
 - 16 May: digest notes of meetings with departments by RSPO
 - 3 June: digest discussed with Academic Co-Ordinators
 - 11 June Research Committee: review of input to Strategy to date. (This meeting would also include a substantial package of items relating to research integrity).
 - 25 June Research Forum: further discussion of Research Strategy and update on other relevant issues.
 - Mid-July: publication of first draft, followed by a seven week consultation period. The draft would be circulated to HoDs (copied to the Committee) who would be asked to disseminate within their departments, and at least one 'town hall' meeting would be held to gather feedback.
 - 19 September Research Committee: consideration of revised first draft.
 - 15 October Research Committee: consideration of a second draft. (This meeting would also focus on departmental annual research reports).

- Late October – mid November: penultimate draft to be considered by Senate, SMG and Council.
 - December: final version confirmed.
 - January 2015: launch of new Research Strategy.
- iii. The above timeline was consistent with that for the new University Strategy currently under development.
- iv. It was further **noted** that details of forthcoming meetings of the Committee were available on the web and would be listed in the next set of agenda papers.
- (b) In the interests of continuity to support the development of the Research Strategy, Professor Kaye and Dr Rees Jones had agreed to continue to attend the Committee beyond their formal terms of office, until the end of the calendar year. Two new members – from the Arts and Humanities and the Sciences respectively – would be appointed by Senate in July via its nomination procedures, which were expected to open following the Senate meeting on 13 May. Committee members were asked to encourage nominations bearing in mind the criteria laid out on the Committee’s webpages.

ACTION: ALL

- (c) Information regarding the next round of the Research Priming Fund would be circulated shortly; additional help for considering bids would be sought as necessary from Committee members outside the core RPF committee in order to ensure breadth of expertise and avoid conflicts of interest.

13-14/68 HEFCE Policy for Open Access in the Post-2014 Research Excellence Framework

The Committee **considered** the HEFCE Policy for Open Access in the Post-2014 Research Excellence Framework (RC.13-14/49). The Research Strategy and Policy Manager spoke to the item.

The Committee **noted**:

- (a) That the scope of the policy was as expected, mandating Green Open Access for all journal articles and conference proceedings submitted to the Post-2014 REF which had been accepted for publication after 1 April 2016. Such outputs would need to be deposited at the point of acceptance of the final copy-edited draft, as a full PDF in a repository,

with embargo periods as required. It was **noted** that the White Rose repository, together with the procedure proposed under the Policy on Research Publication, would be able to facilitate compliance with embargo periods.

- (b) HEFCE had specified a number of areas for dispensation, including staff working overseas at the time of submission for publication. HEFCE was inviting queries on the Policy, including other generic areas for dispensation e.g. expectations regarding those authors who are not the lead PI on a project. Members were invited to feed in other areas for consideration and/or clarification to the Research Strategy and Policy Manager.

ACTION: ALL

It was also **noted** that the University would not be required to check compliance for staff employed at a different HEI at the point of acceptance.

- (c) A significant amount of training would be needed to promote staff understanding of the requirements, particularly Green Open Access.
- (d) HEFCE's requirements for REF were separate from funders' requirements: some, such as RCUK, were choosing to promote Gold rather than Green Open Access, and had therefore made funding available to enable this.

The Committee **noted** that concerns had already been raised across the sector over the logistical implications of mandating the date of acceptance, as opposed to date of publication, for the point at which an output must be deposited. The Russell Group in particular was active in discussing this area. The outcome of this lobbying activity was not yet known and it was possible that HEFCE policy might be altered prior to the compliance date in 2016. During discussion, the following points were **noted**:

- Problems with using the acceptance date included the lack of metadata at this stage, the need for manual logging, and how date of acceptance would be recorded. Date of acceptance was particularly problematic for co-authors who might not receive notification, and also raised implications for academics who might be without email access for a period e.g. through field work.

- However, for some journals, corresponding authors were not notified of the date of publication, whereas they were notified of the date of acceptance. For other journals, the date of acceptance was not clear either. Current variation in journals' practice was problematic.

It was **agreed** that these points would need to be addressed by HEFCE.

The Committee further **agreed** that it would be helpful for academics to have details of journals' arrangements regarding Open Access held centrally for consultation, particularly in relation to journals which were not compliant with the HEFCE Policy, to enable defensible and informed decision-making about where to publish. It was **noted** that this was already addressed at national level via the Nottingham Sherpa Romeo database which also drew together funders' requirements, and which linked into Pure.

The importance of compliance with HEFCE policy as a condition of being submitted to the REF was **noted**; however, the Committee **agreed** that the REF should be focusing on research quality rather than compliance.

13-14/69 Policy on the Publication of Research

The Committee **considered** a proposed policy on the Publication of Research (RC.13-14/50). Dr Curwen and Ms Ellwood attended the meeting to speak to the item on behalf of the working group responsible for the draft.

The Committee **noted** that the policy would be subject to adjustments in the light of finalised policy from HEFCE on Open Access and the REF (M13-14/68 refers). Given the uncertainties over HEFCE's stance, the University policy proposed deposit of outputs triggered by the date of publication rather than the date of acceptance, which was considered to be the more workable route in current circumstances. However, it was important that the University aligned with HEFCE's final stance on the matter.

The Committee discussed the implications of this uncertainty for implementation of the University's policy. The view was expressed that the University's policy should not be launched until HEFCE requirements had been finalised and the two aligned: making changes to 'live' policy would undermine the process of habituating colleagues to new requirements. However, it was also **noted** that the policy responded to existing requirements of other funders, and it was important to get implementation under way soon. It was **decided** that the policy should be circulated with a note that the point at

which deposit was required could be subject to change, following the resolution of current discussions within the sector.

The Committee also **noted** the following:

- (a) Further detail was needed regarding embargo periods for theses sponsored by industry and subject to contractual requirements, and also in relation to funders' requirements. It was also **noted** that thesis embargo periods would be influenced by the publication strategy of a research group. It was **agreed** that current University policy on deposition of theses as well as the wording of this draft should be revisited in the light of these issues. Once finalised, there was a need to raise awareness among supervisors of University requirements.

ACTION: Publication of Research working group to work with ASO and Registry Services

- (b) It would be helpful to define in the glossary what was meant by 'metadata'.
- (c) The importance of sharing responsibility for implementation between individuals and central support in order to reduce opportunity cost, subject to the available resource. It was **noted** that researchers would need to take responsibility for depositing outputs, but that checking of metadata and open access status could be performed centrally. The Committee **noted** that further supporting guidance would be developed for researchers by the Information Directorate, and **agreed** that it would be helpful to have an upfront checklist for staff, taking them through the necessary steps.
- (d) A view was expressed that it would be helpful to highlight and separate REF requirements as opposed to funder requirements within the policy. However, it was noted that there was a risk that this might encourage pre-emptive decision making over what was returnable in REF.

The Chair thanked the working group which had drafted the policy. The Committee **decided** that the policy should be revised in the light of its comments and any subsequent developments in the lobbying of HEFCE in this area; and that a final version, accompanied by the proposed checklist for staff, should be submitted for approval to its next meeting.

ACTION: Publication of Research working group

13-14/70 Policy on Research Data Management

The Committee **considered** a proposed policy on Research Data Management (RC.13-14/51). Ms Waller attended the meeting to speak to the item.

The Committee **noted** the following points:

- (a) A significant amount of work was still required on the detail of how the policy would operate in practice, in order to inform implementation. Further guidance was needed on retention periods and on methods of curation in particular. The Committee **noted** the current intention to reconfigure the RDM working group with greater academic representation and Professor Julian Richards as Chair. It expressed concern at the potential burden placed by the policy on researchers and the resultant opportunity cost to research itself. The Committee **agreed** that a 'minimum compliance' approach should be adopted (e.g. in relation to EPSRC requirements and the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity) in the first instance. It was acknowledged that this approach would still raise resourcing issues, and the Committee **decided** that it would be helpful to look at the approaches being taken by other institutions.

ACTION: Chair to discuss with Russell Group and other appropriate bodies

- (b) Concern was also expressed over the proposed role for Chairs of departmental research committees, in terms of the extent to which they were in a position to ensure departmental compliance.
- (c) Further clarification was needed in relation to:
- Specifying that the policy only applied to research data as defined in paragraph 4.2 of the Appendix
 - What was understood by the term 'metadata'.

The Chair thanked the RDM working group for their work in drafting the policy. The Committee **decided** that the policy should be revised in the light of its comments and a final version submitted for approval to its next meeting. It further **agreed** that it was appropriate for the RDM group to begin raising awareness of the forthcoming policy with Chairs of departmental research committees.

ACTION: LW

13-14/71 Annual departmental research reports

The Committee **considered** a report on the process for annual departmental research reports (RC.13-14/52). Ms Garcha attended the meeting to speak to the item.

The Committee **noted** that a light touch approach was proposed, streamlining the draft template considered by the Committee at its November meeting. In particular, fewer data were to be included, focusing on research grants, publications and PhD students. The Committee further **noted** the responsibilities of individual members in reviewing reports. It **noted** and **agreed** that in order to ensure an equitable workload for members, Health Sciences would be considered within the Sciences rather than the Social Sciences grouping for the purposes of this process.

The Committee **approved** the process, subject to:

- A more explicit invitation to comment on constraints on research performance under question 5;
- Inclusion of a reminder that comparator data in relation to grants were available via the Management Information Gateway, and flagging up that further data relating to publication metrics would be available via SciVal in future years;
- A more explicit invitation to comment on potential impact case studies under question 3; and inclusion of a reminder that impact data would be included in subsequent years, in order to encourage focus in this area and increased use of Pure to record activity;
- Explicit mention of HYMS as a separate department (although HYMS staff would be captured by their embedded departments).

It was **noted** that data from the HEBCIS return could be included in future years.

The Committee further **agreed** that it would be decided within the sub-groups of Committee members led by the Academic Co-Ordinators what information should be forwarded to the Research Development Managers, once the groups had met to review the reports.

13-14/72 York Impact Statement (Sensitive Information)

- 13-14/73 Update from the Director of Research and Enterprise (Sensitive Information and FOIA exempt)
- 13-14/74 Priorities and resourcing for research support (Sensitive Information and FOIA exempt)
- 13-14/75 Research Equipment Database (Sensitive Information)
- 13-14/76 Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (Confidential and FOIA exempt)
- 13-14/77 Report on Research Income and Contribution (Sensitive Information and FOIA exempt)
- 13-14/78 Oral reports from the Academic Co-Ordinators (Sensitive Information and FOIA exempt)
- 13-14/79 Date of next meeting

The Committee **noted** details of its next meeting: Wednesday 11 June 2014 at 2.15pm in **HG09**. *[Secretary's note: please note change of venue]*

May 2014
Alice Wakely
Research Integrity Strategy and Policy Officer