

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2017

Present: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) (Chair)
Dean, York Graduate Research School
Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Sciences
Acting Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Social Sciences
Professor Jason Edwards
Professor Mat Evans
Professor Maria Goddard
Dr Mary Leng
Professor William McGuire
Professor Jenny Steele
Professor Elizabeth Tyler
Professor Piran White
Director of Research & Enterprise
Associate Director and Head of Research Services
Research Strategy and Policy Manager

In attendance: Dr Nicola Meenan (M16-17/147 & 148 only)
Ms Janette Colclough (M16-17/149 only)
Dr Jessica Hendon (M16-17/150 only)
Ms Kirsty Dillingham (M16-17/154 & 155 only)
Dr Alice Wakely (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Professors N Brown, Buchanan and Fulton.

16-17/134 Declarations of interest

Members were invited to declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to the business of the meeting. None were identified.

16-17/135 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2017

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2017 (RC.16-17/102).

16-17/136 Research Committee action log

The Committee **received** for information a progress report against its action log for 2016/17, including a list of all actions completed in 2016/17 (RC.16-17/103).

16-17/137 URC Membership

The Committee **considered** a paper on University Research Committee membership (RC.16-17/104). It **decided to recommend to Senate** that the PVC (Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange) role should be included *ex officio* in URC's membership from August 2017 onwards. It was **noted** that this was in line with the revised URC Terms of Reference and Membership approved by Senate in January 2014, which included the role of PVC (Business and Community) *ex officio*, discontinued later that year.

URC further **noted** that of its nine elected academic members, five were due to step down when their terms of office expired in September 2019. This had implications for the continuity of the Committee's oversight of the University's REF2021 submission, due to be submitted in autumn 2020. The Committee **agreed** that it would not be desirable to extend all five members' terms of office for a second full term, and that this would only postpone a significant turnover in membership. It **decided to recommend to Senate** in principle that the terms of office of the majority of these members should be extended on a staggered basis in support of the REF2021 submission. Specific arrangements would be agreed with individual members, and details brought to the next meeting of URC.

ACTION: Chair

16-17/138 Report from the Chair - FOI EXEMPT

16-17/139 Reports from the Associate Deans (Research)

The Committee **received** oral reports on recent developments from the Associate Deans (Research) as follows:

Sciences:

- (a) It was **reported** that the University had retained its Strategic Partner status with the EPSRC.
- (b) An EPSRC expert group was being convened to advise on EPSRC strategy and institutional activities in this area.
- (c) Ms Mandy Kenyon had been appointed as Faculty Research Manager for the Sciences from 1 October 2017.
- (d) The FRG for the Sciences had requested that URC take a view on the Promotions Review regarding change of job titles for Readers. It was **noted** that Senate had recommended that broader consultation should take place in relation to the proposals.

Arts & Humanities: a replacement appointment for the HRC Research Development Manager would be recruited over the summer.

16-17/140 Report from the Dean of the York Graduate Research School

The Committee **received** an oral report on recent developments from the Dean of the York Graduate Research School, noting the following:

- (a) **Paragraph redacted – SENSITIVE INFORMATION**
- (b) **Paragraph redacted – SENSITIVE INFORMATION**
- (c) The YGRS had produced a statement on key principles of supervision, which PGR students and their supervisors would be required to sign as a key milestone in the PGR programme. The procedure addressed RCUK requirements regarding training of supervisors.
- (d) The YGRS Conference Travel Fund was to be extended to cover travel to and registration costs for training courses and summer schools.
- (e) Three of the winners from the York PGR Three Minute Thesis competition had gone on to compete in the Falling Walls Lab York. The latter was won by Psychology PGR student Jet Sanders, who would go on to the international Falling Walls final in Berlin.

16-17/141 Report from the Director of Research & Enterprise – FOI EXEMPT

16-17/142 Review of the governance structures for research

The Committee **considered** a report on the implementation of the review of governance structures for research (RC.16-17/106). It **noted** that the review had been led by the Associate Deans (Research) and had involved broad consultation, including with Faculty Research Groups and Heads of Department. The proposals would introduce smoother processes for the conduct of business between groups, and invite stronger engagement from these groups with URC business.

In the course of discussion, the following points were **noted**:

- (a) In relation to the diagram of the passage of business between research groupings, it was clarified that the inputting arrow between YRAF and URC referred to the development of initiatives as opposed to policies. However, it was further suggested that it might be useful to seek input from YRAF where appropriate in relation to the development of policy. YRAF's statement of purpose should therefore be reviewed to ensure that its role in this area was

clear, and that the statement of purpose aligned with the information in the diagram.

ACTION: AW with KD

- (b) In relation to Faculty Research Groups, the Committee **decided** that it was more appropriate for representatives from the Planning Office to attend by invitation rather than being permanently in attendance, in order to allow flexibility and take account of different approaches between Faculties.

ACTION: CB & AW to inform Acting Head of Planning of URC's decision

- (c) The Committee **agreed** the following addition to the DRC model terms of reference (indicated in italics): The Departmental Research Committee is responsible for maintaining an overview of research carried out in the department, *by staff, research students, visiting or emeritus staff, associates, honorary or clinical contract holders, contractors and consultants.*

ACTION: AW

The Committee **approved** the following, subject to the above amendments:

- Revised/newly introduced terms of reference/statements of purpose for FRGs, DRCs, Research Forum, YRAF, SciRAF and SocSciRAF;
- A diagram and supporting statement to set out the passage of business between research governance and support groupings;
- A co-ordinated calendar of meetings for 2017/18, to serve as a template for future years;
- A revised role description for Associate Dean (Research);
- A standard process for managing the information flow in relation to external developments.

It **noted** that the above information would be made available on the University webpages as soon as possible.

ACTION: AW

The Committee **decided** that a finalised version of the report should be sent to the Registrar and Secretary for information in the first instance, with reference to the proposed University review of governance, and seeking a steer on whether the report should be considered in full by UEB and Senate.

ACTION: Chair

The Committee further **decided to recommend to Senate** that the University Research Committee terms of reference should be amended as follows (amendment indicated in italics):

'5. To support the University in its engagement with key external stakeholders relating to research, including business, industry, the government, *cultural institutions* and funding agencies.'

ACTION: AW

The Committee thanked Dr Wakely for her work on the project.

16-17/143 Implementation plan for the research entities review

The Committee **considered** an implementation plan for the research entities review (RC.16-17/107). It **noted** the following:

- (a) Following consideration of the review itself at the URC meeting on 26 April, the review and its recommendations had been approved by UEB.
- (b) The proposed framework would be fully in place by the 2018 ADRR round, when entities would be required to report for the first time.
- (c) Actions relating to communications and the University webpages would be addressed first by the Marketing Department.
- (d) URC would need to approve a process for the setting up of new entities, and maintain a master list of agreed research entities, supported by the RSPO.

The Committee **approved** the implementation plan for the research entities review.

The Committee further **noted** that UEB had agreed that, following the extensive consultation process, there should be no immediate challenges to the proposed mapping of research entities, except in the case of those previously designated as IDCs. There would be an opportunity for review in due course via ADRR 2018.

16-17/144 Amendments to the *Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance*

The Committee **considered** proposed amendments to the University's *Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance* (RC.16-17/108). It endorsed the proposed amendments, which clarified where internal ethical review was required in addition to ethical review carried out by an external body. It **noted** that Chairs of departmental/subject level ethics committees had been consulted in relation to the changes, including detailed input from Biology and Health Sciences. It further **noted** that the proposed changes would also be subject to consideration by University Ethics Committee, which would then submit a recommendation for approval to Council.

16-17/145 *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure: procedures relating to PGR students*

The Committee **considered** proposed amendments to the *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* regarding the handling of allegations relating to PGR students (RC.16-17/109). It **noted** that PGR students had previously been covered by the University's *Academic Misconduct* policy, but that the latter was not designed to deal with research misconduct outwith the assessment process. It was therefore proposed that PGRs should be brought under the investigatory procedure set out in the *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* for research misconduct outwith the assessment process, with a separate *Assessment Misconduct Policy for PGRs* within

the *Policy on Research Degrees*, to be approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment.

The Committee **noted** key changes to the *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* as follows:

- (a) Clarification of the above procedures for handling allegations relating to PGR students both within and outwith the assessment process (cf section headed 'Scope'). The Committee further **noted** that for cases which were not clear cut, the *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* would take precedence. It was specified within the *Policy on Research Degrees* that if a student was subject to a research misconduct investigation under the *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure*, any decisions regarding progression or award would be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.
- (b) The reporting line for such cases would be primarily to the Dean of the YGRS rather than the PVC(R), and support for the investigation would be provided by Research Student Administration rather than HR.
- (c) If the allegation were to be upheld, the Investigating Officer would report to the Dean of YGRS and the PVC(R), who would make a recommendation to Special Cases Committee. The Committee further **noted** that misconduct occurring as part of formal assessments would be handled by a panel consisting of the Dean of YGRS (Chair) and two GSB chairs, with discipline-specific advice from the supervisor: this panel would make a recommendation to the examiners as appropriate.

The Committee **noted** that an amendment to Regulation 2.6(e) would also be required to reflect the above changes.

The Committee **noted** that the proposed changes had been endorsed by the YGRSB. It **recommended for approval by Senate** the proposed amendments to the *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure*.

16-17/146 Annual Statement to Council on Research Integrity

The Committee **approved** the Annual Statement to Council on Research Integrity for 2016/17 (RC.16-17/110), subject to the following amendment to section 3(b) (*amendment indicated in italics*):

'The University has not received any *formal* allegations of research misconduct against staff in 2016/17'.

ACTION: AW

In relation to section 2 (b) of the Statement, it was clarified that 'acceptable research practices' referred to differences in opinion regarding research methodology. The new procedure to address such cases would cover both internal and external academic disputes.

The Committee **noted** that the University's *Code of Practice on Research Integrity* and its *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* were both due to undergo full review in 2017/18.

16-17/147 Strategic Review of Biomedical Research at York - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL & FOI EXEMPT

16-17/148 Draft principles for research evaluation

The Committee **considered** a draft set of principles for research evaluation at the University of York (RC.16-17/112). Dr Meenan attended the meeting for this item.

In the course of discussion, the Committee **agreed** that the following:

- (a) The document should emphasise peer review more strongly up front as the default mechanism for research evaluation, with a separate section on use of quantitative data;
- (b) The wording of Principle 6 needed further work to ensure that the focus was on evaluation at departmental rather than individual level;
- (c) The document needed to acknowledge that measures based on accumulated data would be retrospective, as compared to the relative immediacy of peer review.

It was clarified that departments would be required to apply the principles to their own practice once the final statement had been approved by URC. In particular, quantitative approaches would need to be clear and consistent for those departments which made use of them. The Committee **noted** that further guidance would be needed in relation to recommended quantitative measures (as well as identifying those which were unreliable), and that a draft would be brought to URC for consideration in due course. **Sentence redacted – SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

The Committee **decided** that the draft principles should be amended in the light of its comments and brought back to URC in September for provisional approval. This would be followed by consultation with departments via FRGs, informed by the outcomes of the ADRR 2017 and the REF check exercises. A final version would come to URC for approval at its November meeting.

ACTION: NM

16-17/149 UK Scholarly Communications Licence

The Committee **received** an update in relation to the UK Scholarly Communications Licence (RC.16-17/113). Ms Colclough attended the meeting for this item.

The Committee **noted** that a number of changes had been made to the Licence since it was last considered by URC in January 2016, including a new clause relating to co-authored papers. However, a number of challenges remained, including the

response of publishers to the UK-SCL. Further work would be needed in relation to implementation by the University, including revisions to the *Policy on the Publication of Research* and IP policy.

In the course of discussion, the following points were **noted**:

(a) It was clarified that monographs and book chapters were not currently included under the terms of the Licence, since the latter was driven by funder requirements focusing on journal articles. However, it was **noted** that inclusion of monographs and book chapter might be of benefit in relation to REF.

ACTION: JC to take the issue to the forthcoming UK-SCL early adopters meeting

(b) Committee members from the Arts & Humanities reiterated issues regarding the copyright of images as a barrier to open access. The Committee **noted** that these issues had been raised by a number of institutions.

The Committee **agreed** that further discussion was needed in relation to a number of areas prior to confirming early adoption of the UK-SCL by the University. As such, a target date for adoption which was later than the first quarter of 2018 was probably more realistic. However, the Committee was supportive of ongoing work in this area. It **decided** that further consultation should take place with FRGs, prior to a final decision being made by URC in relation to adoption of the Licence. URC should be updated in relation to developments in the interim.

ACTION: JC

16-17/150 Support for Early Career Researchers via Fellowships at York - FOI EXEMPT

16-17/151 Annual report on Research & Enterprise resources – FOI EXEMPT

16-17/152 Vision for research support at the University of York – CONFIDENTIAL

16-17/153 Comparative review of HESA 2015/16 data relating to research grant income – FOI EXEMPT

16-17/154 MTP research grant income forecasts – FOI EXEMPT

16-17/155 Applications and awards to end April 2017 – FOI EXEMPT

CATEGORY II BUSINESS

16-17/156 Support model for research data management

The Committee **received** for information a progress report on implementation of a full support model for research data management (RC.16-17/120).

16-17/157 Minutes of the meetings of the Global Challenges Research Fund Steering Group held on 20 April and 15 May 2017

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meetings of the Global Challenges Research Fund Steering Group held on 20 April and 15 May 2017 (RC.16-17/121).

16-17/158 Minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Sciences held on 17 May 2017

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Sciences held on 17 May 2017 (RC.16-17/122).

16-17/159 Minutes of the meeting of the York Graduate Research School Board held on 30 May 2017

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the York Graduate Research School Board held on 30 May 2017 (RC.16-17/123).

16-17/160 Minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Arts and Humanities held on 31 May 2017

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Arts and Humanities held on 31 May 2017 (RC.16-17/124).

16-17/161 Minutes of the meeting of the RET Steering Group held on 13 June 2017

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Research Excellence Training Steering Group held on 13 June 2017 (RC.16-17/125).

16-17/162 Next meeting

The Committee **noted** details of meetings for 2017/18 as follows:

- Wednesday 27 September 2017 at 2.15pm in Room HG17, Heslington Hall
- Wednesday 15 November 2017 at 2.15pm in Room HG17, Heslington Hall
- Tuesday 30 January 2018 at 10am in Room HG17, Heslington Hall
- Wednesday 14 March 2018 at 9.30am in Room HG17, Heslington Hall
- Wednesday 2 May 2018 at 2.15pm in Room HG17, Heslington Hall
- Wednesday **20** June 2018 at 2.15pm in Room HG17, Heslington Hall.

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July 2017