

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2019

Present: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor D Smith (Chair)
Dean, York Graduate Research School, Professor T Stoneham
Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Professor S Bell
Dean, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Professor A Field
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Sciences, Professor C Brown
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Social Sciences,
Professor M Festenstein
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts & Humanities,
Professor R Ogden
Professor S Carroll
Professor M Evans
Professor M Goddard
Professor J Steele
Professor J Thijssen
Professor E Tyler
Professor P White
Acting Director of Research & Enterprise, Ms J Gilmartin
Research Strategy and Policy Manager, Ms A Grey

In attendance: Dr A Wakely (Secretary)
Ms Z Clarke
Dr R Abeysekera (M18-19/72 only)
Mr M Khokhar (M18-19/72 - 75 only)
Dr K Clegg (M18-19/76 only)
Mr E Kirby (M18-19/78 – 80 only)
Ms E Brown (M18-19/82 only)
Dr R Curwen (M18-19/82 only)

Apologies for absence were received from Professor D Barnett, Professor S Smith and Professor J Timmis.

18-19/63 Chair's introduction

The Chair **noted** that the gender balance of the Committee's current membership was weighted more towards men than had been the case in previous years. This would be brought to the attention of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, in order to

consider appropriate adjustments which could be recommended for the Senate nominations process in future years.

ACTION: Chair

The Chair welcomed Ms Zoe Clarke to the meeting, who would be acting as the Committee's Secretary from the March 2019 meeting onwards, while Dr Wakely was on secondment.

18-19/64 Declaration of conflicts of interest

Members of the Committee were reminded of the procedure for declaring potential conflicts of interest relating to the business of the meeting.

18-19/65 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 (RC.18-19/50).

18-19/66 Research Committee action log

The Committee **received** a progress report against its action log for 2018/19 (RC.18-19/51). Further to the information provided, the Committee **noted** the following:

- (a) M16-17/96 Lighter touch check for smaller scale applications: proposals had been considered by the Social Sciences FRG and would go to the Sciences FRG in February. The A&H FRG would not be meeting until May, but input from the Associate Dean (Research) would be sought prior to that.
- (b) M17-18/128 Review of ethics governance: Responsibility for oversight of ethics governance had passed to the Deputy Registrar. Council had agreed to disband University Ethics Committee and establish two committees to take its place; however, these would take time to establish. Current ethics issues were being handled by the Chair in conjunction with the Deputy Registrar and the new Director of Research & Enterprise. The Committee **noted** concerns regarding the absence of formal structures for a significant period.
- (c) M18-19/13 Analysis of current research studentship support: the YGRS Dean and the Chair were due to meet Valerie Cotter (Deputy Academic Registrar and Director of Student Services) the following day to access data on spend by department, and would report further to the Committee's next meeting.
- (d) M18-19/15 Knowledge Exchange Strategy: the Chair was continuing to keep a watching brief on Knowledge Exchange developments.
- (e) M18-19/39 Budget to support Open Access: the Chair tabled comments from the Research Support Librarian for Open Access regarding current levels of supporting

funding. The Committee **noted** that sufficient UKRI funding remained for the rest of the academic year. However, the COAF budget was likely to run out in February or March. Although Wellcome was likely to provide top up funds to cover the rest of the year, this could present problems for research funded by other contributing charities. It was further **noted** that the Research Support Librarian for Open Access was due to meet with the Associate Dean (Research) for the Sciences and CDRCs in Biology and Chemistry to discuss the situation and appropriate messaging for colleagues.

- (f) M18-19/47 Policy on staff acting as PI on a research grant: UEB had approved the policy's key principles, and had requested further clarification of the criteria for when T&S staff might be permitted to engage with research under the University's auspices. The RSP Manager would draft a document in discussion with HR for Chair's approval, which would be circulated to departments as soon as possible. Further progress would be reported to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Committee further **noted** that the Faculty of Sciences had carried out an audit of research which might fall under the Nagoya Protocol. A University-level process was needed to file declarations on the BEIS DECLARE system. The Associate Dean (Sciences) and the Acting Director of Research & Enterprise would report further on this to the Chair.

18-19/67 Report from the Chair

The Committee **received** an oral report on recent developments from the Chair, noting the following:

- (a) The Committee **noted** a number of recent large scale grant successes across Faculties, (some of which were still to be formally announced).
- (b) The Parliamentary Science and Technology Committee had been reviewing clinical trials reporting: the University had been listed as one of a number of institutions currently not reporting trials on the EU database. In the University's case, three clinical trials were involved. Measures were being taken to ensure the University's compliance as soon as possible, and to put processes in place to ensure the situation did not arise in future. A further report would be provided at the Committee's next meeting in March.
- (c) The UUK consultation on proposed revisions to the 2012 Concordat to Support Research Integrity was due at the end of January. Dr Wakely was the University's named first point of contact and would co-ordinate the University's response.
- (d) The Information Commissioner's Office report to Parliament on the use of data analytics in political campaigns had been published in November 2018, and had flagged concerns relating to:
- The boundaries between academic studies and commercial enterprises;
 - Academics working in a private research capacity;
 - Increased use of data from social media and third parties.

The report had also emphasised the need for granular institutional Records of Processing Activity (ROPA) relating to research (as required under GDPR). The Committee further **noted** that UUK had been nominated to provide the sector lead and guidance in this area, and that any findings would feed into the University guidance on using social media data in research currently under development by the RSPO and RETT. The University's ROPA working group would report to URC in March.

18-19/68 Reports from the Associate Deans (Research)

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

Social Sciences

- (a) The proposed policy-focused partnership with the Cabinet Office Open Innovation Team was being taken forward and was currently at pre-contract stage.
- (b) A cross-departmental group had been set up to take forward the establishment of a Policy Unit.
- (c) Further updates on both activities, including proposed reporting routes, would be provided at the Committee's March meeting.

Arts & Humanities

- (a) Professor Richard Ogden had taken up the post of Associate Dean (Research) for the Arts and Humanities from 1 January 2019.
- (b) Recent award successes from within the Faculty were noted, including the WEAVR consortium (TFTV with Computer Science), Professor Rees Jones' AHRC award (History), and a Leverhulme Fellowship (History).

Sciences

The IGGI CDT programme (led from Computer Science and TFTV) had been renewed by the EPSRC. A renewal bid for the Quantum Hub (£24m) had recently been submitted.

The Committee further **noted** that the majority of the large awards reported to the current meeting had been supported by match-funding from the University's Research Development Fund, which was overseen by the PVCRC.

18-19/69 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) Two first stage applications for Wellcome Trust PhD Programmes in Science had been submitted, one led by York and the other by Nottingham, with York as a partner;
- (b) The BBSRC DTP3 call had been launched: the format was similar to previous rounds. Submissions were due in by 1 May;
- (c) The shared parental leave policy for PhD students had been supported by all three FEGs. There was a need to find resource in support of its implementation.

- (d) A series of FoI requests had been made across the UK relating to EPSRC CDTs. The University had released redacted information relating to mid-term reviews and outline bids.
- (e) A case had recently been considered under the University's revised misconduct policy relating to assessment, and the student in question had left the University.

18-19/70 Annual report from the York Graduate Research School (FOI EXEMPT)

18-19/71 Report from the Acting Director of Research & Enterprise (FOI EXEMPT)

18-19/72 Industrial Strategy

The Committee **received** an update on work in relation to the Industrial Strategy (RC.18-19/54) (*Confidential & FOI Exempt*). Dr Abeysekera attended the meeting to speak to this item.

Further to the information in the report, the Committee **noted** the following:

- (a) The data gathering and analytics proposed as part of the WEAVR project were covered by the University's Information and Governance frameworks, including preventative measures required under GDPR. Support for compliance was available from the Information Directorate.
- (b) It was important that the WEAVR project was supported by a robust data management plan, and had gained the appropriate ethical approvals before the research in question commenced.

ACTION: RA to check

The Committee **decided** that since Industrial Strategy funding had been rolled into other UKRI funding, developments in relation to the former could now be reported through the main R&E report. Dr Abeysekera was thanked for her contribution.

18-19/73 Research grant applications and awards

The Committee **considered** a report on research grant applications and awards: year to date November 2018 and previous four year comparisons (RC.18-19/55) (*FOI Exempt*).

The Committee thanked Ms Gilmartin and Mr Broadley for the report. It further **noted** the large grants reported earlier in the meeting: these data had not been available at the time of the report's compilation. Given fluctuations mid-year, the aggregate picture available at the end of the year would be the most important report of the series.

The Committee **agreed** that it would be helpful for interdisciplinarity to be flagged up in the analysis.

ACTION: JG to investigate further

18-19/74 Open Access policy update

The Committee **considered** a paper on policy changes in the field of Open Access (OA) and the possible implications for the University of York (RC.18-19/57). The Committee welcomed the Director of Library and Archives, Mr Khokhar, to the meeting to speak to this item.

It was **noted** that the OA policy landscape was complex, burdensome and subject to constant change: the Library was committed to supporting academics so that compliance could be easily achieved. Further to the information provided in the paper, the Committee **noted** the following:

- (a) Article Processing Charges (APCs) were expected to continue going forward, with funders and universities shouldering the burden. The University would need to keep a watching brief on this area.
- (b) Currently most journals followed the hybrid model, but some already had transformative agreements in place.
- (c) Further guidance would be made available regarding the Wellcome requirement to share preprints on an approved platform under a CC-BY licence where there is a significant public health benefit.
- (d) It was expected that subscription costs would gradually decrease as journals moved to an Open Access paid model; however, the University would need to keep a watching brief on the potential for increasing costs. The Library was currently analysing the University's publication cycle over the past five years and modelling how a move from subscriptions to APCs would work for the University.
- (e) The Committee **noted** concerns within the Arts and Humanities regarding the implications for academic freedom regarding where to publish. Further comments had been submitted by Professor Barnett: these would be sent to the Director of Library and Archives for further consideration outside the meeting.
ACTION: Secretary
- (f) A mechanism was needed to capture PhD students' publications with staff as co-author. It was further **noted** that RCUK policy applied to RCUK-funded PhD students as well as staff. The Committee **noted** that the implications for PhD students were not captured in current guidance or consultations.
ACTION: MK to speak further with TS
- (g) It was clarified that the 'Green' route was still supported under Plan S, but without embargoes.
- (h) Plan S was expected to apply for REF2027/8. In addition, Wellcome and UKRI were looking into whether monographs funded by their grants should be required to be OA.

18-19/75 Open Research at the University of York

The Committee **considered** a paper on Open Research at the University of York (RC.18-19/56). Mr Khokhar attended the meeting to speak to this item.

In the course of discussion, the Committee **noted** the following:

- (a) There was a need for the relevant central professional support staff to develop their understanding of the problems facing certain disciplinary areas in achieving Open Research e.g. data volume, data formats, and what was understood by 'reproduceability'.
- (b) The Committee endorsed the establishment of a community of practice for Open Research, which would be an agent for cultural change.
- (c) It would be helpful for the Associate Deans (Research) to be involved in the development of a Code of Practice on supporting best practice in Open Research, in order to join up with preparations for REF.

ACTION: MK to liaise with AD(R)s

- (d) The Committee had previously endorsed the establishment of an institutional OA fund in principle (March & November 2017); however, funding had not been forthcoming via MTP. The Committee continued to support the need for investment in this area.

The Committee strongly supported the paper's approach, and **approved** the recommendations for further action.

18-19/76 Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

The Committee **received** the University's response to the Vitae consultation on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (RC.18-19/58). Dr Clegg attended the meeting to speak to this item.

Further to the information provided in the paper, the Committee **noted** the following:

- i. This was the second consultation exercise in relation to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, in response to a revised draft produced following the first exercise;
- ii. It was clarified that the 'PI Principle' referred to the expectations of PIs regarding their relationship with post docs.
- iii. Dr Clegg had also contributed towards the Researchers14 group's response to the consultation. Whereas the majority of Researchers14 group members had agreed that

the Concordat should not apply to PGRs, York had suggested that the inclusion of PGRs should be considered.

- iv. The final version of the Concordat was expected to be available at the end of March, following which the University would need to consider implementation. This would include revisiting the University's Statement on Research Performance Expectations, and looking at how PDPs arising from performance review were captured.

The Committee further **noted** the expectation that an institutional response to a national consultation concerning research would usually be discussed and approved by URC prior to submission, rather than being reported in retrospect for information. However, consultation had taken place with CDRCs, Chairs of Graduate Boards, the RET Steering Group (chaired by the PVCR), and research staff associations, in order to inform the University's response.

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

- (a) To date, the University had not attempted to capture and formalise time dedicated to development activity for researchers. Calculating and costing researchers' time was a complex issue, particularly for research-only departments. It was further **noted** that the proposed allocation of 10 days' p.a. for development activities would take a month's worth of time out of a three-year research contract.
- (b) It would be necessary to define what was covered by the term 'development activity'. The Committee **noted** that the focus was on skills development, including outreach and mentoring.
- (c) It was proposed that opportunities to teach should be made transparent, rather than that all researchers should undertake teaching. In some cases, this would be contrary to researchers' contractual obligations, and not all researchers aspired to securing an ART contract.
- (d) It was not possible to treat researchers as a single homogenous group, and the Concordat seemed to be focused on the needs of ECRs.
- (e) The Concordat was not designed to be a mandatory requirement subject to audit, but to set out a series of principles to promote good practice and opportunities for all.

The Committee **noted** that it would be updated on developments once the final version of Concordat had been released.

ACTION: KVC

18-19/77 Wellcome policy on bullying and harassment

The Committee **considered** the Wellcome Policy on bullying and harassment (RC.18-19/59). It **noted** that this was an important area to be tackled nationally, and that UKRI were

expected to follow Wellcome's lead by introducing a similar policy. Although the University already had a code of practice in place in relation to handling allegations of bullying and harassment, there was a need to check that it complied with Wellcome's requirements, and in particular to ensure that reporting requirements could be fulfilled where allegations had been upheld.

The Committee **noted** that clarification was needed in the following areas:

- (a) The extent to which the University was expected to ensure compliance in relation to sub-contractors;
- (b) The extent to which the University could be expected to comply in relation to employment prior to York.

The Committee further **noted** that it might be necessary to prompt ineligible researchers to self-exclude themselves from Wellcome-supported activity, in order to avoid prolonged checks. The University should also consider the need to keep a register of all researchers involved in Wellcome-supported activity.

The Committee **decided** to request an implementation plan from HR on the action required in order to comply with the policy.

ACTION: AG to work with HR

18-19/78 REF Strategy Group (CONFIDENTIAL AND FOI EXEMPT)

18-19/79 Code of Practice for the Mock REF exercise (CONFIDENTIAL AND FOI EXEMPT)

18-19/80 Proposals for the Mock REF exercise and ADRR 2019 (CONFIDENTIAL AND FOI EXEMPT)

18-19/81 Review of Governance Model 3 research entities (CONFIDENTIAL)

18-19/82 Managing, allocating and reporting on priming funds

The Committee **considered** a report from the working group reviewing the model for managing, allocating and reporting on priming funds (RC.18-19/64). Ms E Brown and Dr R Curwen attended the meeting for this item.

The Committee welcomed the proposals. In the course of discussion, the following points were **noted**:

- (a) The Committee supported the introduction of a peer review pool, which would offer valuable experience to ECRs. It **noted** that it would be possible to include externals in the process where this was a funder requirement.
- (b) Interdisciplinarity was a specific criterion for some calls. In such cases, appropriate reviewers could be co-opted to attend panels (which were otherwise discipline-based). It was further **noted** that the panels would include Research Champions, who had an

interdisciplinary remit. The Committee **noted** that reviewers on a multi-disciplinary panel would need clear guidelines for assessment.

- (c) Further consideration was needed regarding whether to restrict the number of applications per individual.
- (d) Proposed membership of the main panel was based on the current RPF Committee.
- (e) There was a need to revisit the timings of the proposed subcommittee meetings, which were currently scheduled in a single week, with consideration for the chairs' workloads.
- (f) The Committee **noted** comments from the PVC (Partnerships & Knowledge Exchange), regarding whether proposals were appropriate for the management of HEIF. It was **agreed** that this issue required further discussion.

ACTION: ADRs, RC & EB to meet with JT

The Committee **approved** the following:

- (i) The proposed general principles for fund distribution;
- (ii) The new method of fund distribution, subject to the above comments.

The Committee further **approved** in principle the creation of a rapid response priming fund scheme for applications submitted at any time. Further discussion was needed regarding whether upper limit should be £2k or £5k. In addition, supporting messaging was needed regarding the appropriate level of pump priming to be made available within departments. The application process for the rapid response priming fund would require clear criteria, and would need to request adequate information to enable robust review, in order to avoid the scheme being treated as an easy option.

Regarding the prioritisation of technical improvements and tools to aid fund distribution, the Committee **noted** the University's commitment to efficiency and effectiveness; however, there were broader issues regarding competition for resources. Further work was needed to scope out what was required and how this might be achieved.

ACTION: AG, JG, EB, RC to develop a one page proposal

The Committee **noted** that more detailed proposals would be brought to the next meeting, with the aim of implementing the new system for the beginning of August. Consultation with FRGs would need to take place in the interim.

ACTION: RC & EB

CATEGORY II BUSINESS

18-19/83 Minutes of the GCRF Steering Group

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the GCRF Steering Group held on 16 January 2019 (RC.17-18/65).

18-19/84 Minutes of the Research Communications Strategy Group

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Research Communications Strategy Group held on 7 January 2019 (RC.18-19/66).

18-19/85 Minutes of the Faculty Research Group for the Social Sciences

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Social Sciences held on 10 January 2019 (RC.18-19/67).

18-19/86 Minutes of the Faculty Research Group for the Arts & Humanities

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Arts & Humanities held on 8 January 2019 (RC.18-19/68).

18-19/87 Minutes of the Research Excellence Training Steering Group

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Research Excellence Training Steering Group held on 9 November 2018 (RC.18-19/69).

18-19/88 Minutes of the York Graduate Research School Board

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the York Graduate Research School Board held on 26 November 2018 (RC.18-19/70).

18-19/89 HEFCE Open Access requirements for REF: rates of deposit in PURE

The Committee **received** for information a quarterly report on rates of deposit in PURE (RC.18-19/71).

18-19/90 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.18-19/72).

18-19/91 Next meeting

The Committee **noted** details of the next meeting: Wednesday 13 March 2019 at **9:30am** in H/G17, Heslington Hall.

aw/aw
January 2019