

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2022

- Present:** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor M Ruth (Chair)
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Sciences, Professor S Thompson
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts & Humanities,
Professor R Ogden
Dean, York Graduate Research School, Professor K Arnold
Professor K Bloor (M.21-22/91 – 98 only)
Professor L Carpenter
Professor M Fairclough
Professor J Richards
Professor S Smith
Professor J Thijssen (M.21-22/91 - 98 only)
Dr M Toerien
Director of Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange, Dr A Jackson
Associate Director of Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange, Ms J
Gilmartin
Policy, Integrity and Performance Manager, Mr A Taylor
- In attendance:** Ms Z Clarke (Secretary)
Ms J Mayne (PIP)
Professor P Ketikidis (Vice-President for Research and Innovation, CITY
College)
Mr P Wiles (M.21-22/101 only)
Ms A McManus (M.21-22/102 and 103 only)

Apologies for absence were received from Professor A Manca and Professor S Carroll.

21-22/91 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. Professor Panayiotis Ketikidis would excuse himself from M.21-22/101 onwards due to the confidential nature of such items.

21-22/92 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2022

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on **16 March 2022** (RC.21-22/62).

21-22/93 Research Committee action log

The Committee **received** a progress report against its action log for 2021/22 (RC.21-22/63). Further to the information provided, the Committee **noted** the following:

(a) M.20-21/107: Work was underway within the PIP team to collate information on research entities, including funding source and cost centre, to better aid decision-making in this area.

(b) M.21-22/55: The team responsible for the development of the research-related payments policy continued to work on a series of public-facing webpages outlining the key aspects of the policy. An update would be presented to the Committee in June.

ACTION: ZC

(c) M.21-22/58: The inclusion of PGR students as members of ethics committees had been picked up outside the meeting, and was under discussion by the AECC.

(d) M.21-22/15: The issue of the payment of expenses for the membership of learned societies was **recognised**. At the most recent Research Operations Contingency Group (ROCG), an updated list of eligible groups was presented, and it was **noted** that a funding source was required before charging. Such costs disproportionately affected certain areas of the community, such as ECRs. The benefit for the REF Environment statement was **noted**.

ACTION: JG to take forward

21-22/94 Report from the Chair

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

(a) The Spring call for internally-distributed funding applications had launched. The available funding cut across disciplines at the University. A paper was under development for consideration by the University in June.

ACTION: Chair

(b) The University had been ranked in the Top 10 in the world for progress meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the Times Higher. This highlighted and reaffirmed the University commitment to public good, and work would continue in this space to build upon strengths and improve across the area.

21-22/95 Oral 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, in which the following points were **noted**:

- The official launch of the York Centre for Equity Doctoral Education (YCEDE) was scheduled for 26 May. A number of key individuals from external and internal stakeholders would be present.
- Work continued with the Emerging Talent initiative, with a particular focus on recruitment and admissions. This was aligned with HR and associated work on recruitment and retention values. A paper on this would be presented to URC in the near future.

ACTION: KA

- The institutional response to the UKRI Consultation on the New Deal for PGRs would be finalised shortly.

ACTION: KA

- The Graduate School was working to strengthen the training and support available for PGR supervisors, including a consideration of how supervisors can be best rewarded for their efforts. Although some rewards took place at department- or faculty-level (such as fellowship schemes, poster competitions and awards), it was **acknowledged** that some centrally-coordinated provision would be appreciated. This would be further considered in the context of wider work underway concerning rewards and recognition.

ACTION: KA, Chair

21-22/96 Reports from the Associate Deans (Research)

The Committee **received** oral reports from the Associate Deans for Research, as follows:

Social Sciences

- (a) The recent success of CHE and CRD in achieving grants was **acknowledged**, as well as excellence shown by individual team members.
- (b) *[Redacted due to commercial sensitivity]*
- (c) Work had taken place within the Faculty to develop the Five-Year Plan, and as a result of this, three major themes had been identified: (i) global health economics, (ii) policing and vulnerability, and (iii) social care. Regarding the ESRC Centre for Vulnerability and Policing Futures, it was **reported** that Professor Adam Crawford would join the University from Leeds (0.75FTE) from 1 May.

Arts & Humanities

- (a) The University had been awarded an ESRC Consolidator Grant of €2M for research into rats from pre-history to the 19th-century.
- (b) The HRC had received funding from the Research Culture project taking place across the University. This would focus on three main areas: (i) training future researchers, (ii) facilitating serendipitous meetings and events, and (iii) working with the public and external partners. The importance of learning from events over the last few years was **noted**.
- (c) TFTI and Music had been working to lay the groundwork of their joint Research Committee as part of the new School for Digital Creativity and Performing Arts.
- (d) Discussion had taken place at the Faculty Executive Group concerning research leave with reference to upcoming changes in modularisation and semesterisation.

Sciences

- (a) Professor Simon Duckett (Department of Chemistry) had been successful in winning an ERC Advanced Grant ('Magnify'), however some anxiety remained regarding EU grant association for all the successful ERC bids. The Institute for Safe Autonomy (ISA) had been awarded an RPIF bid to support work on self-sufficient net energy, including the

construction of a solar farm on campus. A number of Royal Society Industry Fellowships had also been awarded.

- (b) Dr David Kent (Biology) had been named as the recipient of the International Society for Experimental Haematology Janet Rowley award.
- (c) New Directorships within the Faculty were announced; Professor Vlado Lazarov for the JEOL Nanocentre, and Professor Jeremy Mottram for YBRI (term extended until 2025).
- (d) It was **noted** that in-person events were beginning to re-emerge, including a variety of conferences across the Faculty and a celebration of the renewal of the partnership with SEI. Planning was underway for a Faculty away-day in July. An increasing number of visits to the University were taking place from external partners, including a visit from CITY College colleagues in June.

21-22/97 Report from the Director of Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange (Fol Exempt)

The Committee **received** a report on recent activity in the Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange (RI&KE) Directorate. Further to the information reported in the slides, the following was **noted**:

- (a) Final approval would be sought from Planning Committee and UEB for proposals concerning industry income, including changes to policies and processes and recommendations for investment. It was **clarified** that PGR activity was not specifically included in the paper, but was within the scope of changes and recommendations identified. The driving force behind the paper was surplus generating income streams in the University, such as CPD. Further discussion as to the role of PGRs in this would be picked up outside the meeting.

ACTION: KA

- (b) A review of University partnerships was underway, and discussion was ongoing alongside this regarding a new system for managing partnerships, however the scope of any such system needed further consideration. Further to this, the Directorate had brought in an external consultancy firm to conduct a review in order to ensure alignment with the external research policy environment. This would focus on areas such as export control, national security and research integrity. Recommendations arising from this were likely to focus on effective prioritisation rather than increased resource.
- (c) Recruitment to the RKEC team remained an issue, mirroring the situation across the sector. The value in mitigating risks within the project itself – rather than over-negotiating contracts - was **recognised**. There was scope to consider standard agreements between institutions, such as the Brunswick agreements.
- (d) Work continued on the PSD Workstream, with a broad implementation goal of summer 2023 in place. The importance of receiving feedback from all involved was **noted**. It was **clarified** that the aim of the reorganisation was to resolve points of fragmentation within the system and ensure processes to support research were as consistent as possible. Such work would strengthen research at York; it was **suggested** that communications around the PSD changes should emphasise this outcome.

ACTION: AJ

(e) Guidance would shortly be made available regarding collaborations with researchers based in Russia – it was **clarified** that this included Belarus. Details of a particular case involving a PGR would be discussed outside the meeting.

ACTION: AJ, JR

Further information regarding long term plans for the Directorate would be brought to the Committee in June.

ACTION: AJ

The slides would be circulated following the meeting.

ACTION: ZC

21-22/98 Preparations for the release of REF results

The Committee **received** an oral report on the proposed plans for the release and analysis of the REF 2021 results. It was noted that results would be published online on Thursday 12 May, alongside those prepared by Times Higher and Research Professional. The PIP team was working with the communications team to produce messaging to accompany the release of results. Work was underway to enable departments to understand results compared with other institutions, to enable external benchmarking.

Following the release of results, consideration of next steps and post-REF activity would take place.

Secretary's Note: It was clarified following the meeting that the ADRR would not take place for 2021/22, and instead a post-REF reflective exercise would be developed.

Slides would be circulated to colleagues following the meeting.

ACTION: ZC

21-22/99 Update from CITY College

The Committee **noted** an update from CITY College, Thessaloniki. The Vice-President for Research and Innovation at CITY College attended to speak to this item. The following points were **noted**:

- (a) Thanks were extended to the University for the valuable collaboration work undertaken, including the launch of the joint PhD programme and associated fee-waive scholarships. CITY College would hold its annual PGR conference at the end of June, alongside the University of York, and the Department of Politics would collaborate with CITY College on their Migration Summer School. A joint paper from researchers in Management from both institutions had recently been published.
- (b) A number of research project successes were **reported**, including two in receipt of Horizon 2020 funding and one receiving Horizon Europe funding. CITY College was currently preparing new Horizon submissions in line with the research strengths of the institution, for example gender equality, sustainability and Responsible Research and Innovation.

- (c) CITY College was in the process of developing its research strategy for 2022-2027; focus areas would be (i) sustainability, (ii) digital inclusivity and (iii) wellbeing and inclusion. A draft would be completed in early-July.

21-22/100 Update on Sustainability proposals for the University.

Sustainability work covered a range of activity at the University, and work had taken place to de-centralise the processes involved and ensure greater accountability. A Steering Group had been established, reporting to UEB, which had oversight of a range of sub-groups. Key areas of sustainability activity (namely Environmental Sustainability Academy York, YESI, SEI-Y and DTEF) were **noted**. A number of smaller action areas were also included, including communications, supply chain management and wellbeing. It was **recognised** that the demarcation between activity under the listed areas was not fully laid out, and that such delineation would take time to establish. More specific proposals would be presented to the Committee in due course.

ACTION: Chair

21-22/101 Payments made to research participants and contributors from August 2021-March 2022 *(Confidential)*

The Committee **noted** the content of a summary report on payments made to participants and contributors from August 2021-March 2022 (RC.21-22/64). The Research Integrity and Compliance Manager attended to speak to this item. Further to the information included in the paper, the following was **discussed**:

- (a) The report was presented in line with the requirements of the Policy on the Payment of Individuals for Involvement with or Contribution to Research, and would be calibrated in response to Committee feedback and other requirements. It was **agreed** that the level of detail currently included was appropriate to the needs of the Committee.
- (b) It was **suggested** that a further breakdown of payments – for example, by type of participation – would be useful if possible, however it was **recognised** that such information was not available on Aggresso at this stage. The provision of further information as to the breakdown of payments between PPI and Involvement@York was possible and would be appreciated. This would be considered going forwards.

ACTION: ZC, PW

- (c) The ownership of the report would be considered; whereas the current paper had been presented by PIP, Finance was well-placed to conduct such an analysis.

ACTION: ZC, PW

21-22/102 Research Income, Applications and Awards: Year to Date March 2022 *(Confidential & FoI Exempt)*

The Committee **received for information** an oral report on Research Income, Applications and Awards: Year to Date March 2022, following the withdrawal of the paper. The Policy, Integrity and Performance Officer (Management Information) attended for this item. Further to the information provided in the paper, the following points were **noted**:

- (a) *[Redacted due to commercial sensitivity]*

(b) Further guidance was **presented** regarding changes to Horizon Europe. It was **clarified** that further information on how to submit an EC award to the UK underwrite would not be available until proximity to the EC grant agreement deadline triggered the release of guidance. The importance of robust communication on this front was **recognised**, and it was **requested** that questions be directed to RGO. Instances of PIs considering the transfer of projects to an EU country should be escalated to the relevant Associate Dean (Research) immediately. Further information will be shared as it emerges.

ACTION: JG

(c) It was **clarified** that Worktribe was able to incorporate inflation into calculations, however price that could be requested was dictated by funder requirements, for example surrounding capped inflation rates.

The Committee **commended** colleagues across the University for their hard work.

21-22/103 Sharing of data from Tableau (Confidential & FoI Exempt)

The Committee **received** for information an oral report on the sharing of data from Tableau. The Policy, Integrity and Performance Officer (Management Information) attended to speak to this item. It was **reported** that conversations in this space had been positive thus far, and that URC reporting was in alignment with Finance. More information would be shared as relevant, most likely over summer.

ACTION: AMc

CATEGORY II BUSINESS

21-22/104 Minutes of the Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee meeting held on 15 March 2022.

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee held on 15 March 2022 (RC.21-22/66).

21-22/105 Minutes of the Clinical Trials Sponsorship Committee meeting held on 21 March 2022.

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Clinical Trials Sponsorship Committee held on 21 March 2022 (RC.21-22/67).

21-22/106 Minutes of the Faculty Research Group for the Social Sciences meeting held on 8 March 2022.

The Committee **received** for information the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research Group for the Social Sciences held on 8 March 2022 (RC.21-22/68).

21-22/107 Next meeting

The Committee noted details of the next meeting: Wednesday 22 June at 2.00pm, via Zoom.

zc/zc
May 2022