

**UNIVERSITY OF YORK**

**Senate**

**RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2022**

- Present:** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor M Ruth (Chair)  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Partnerships & Engagement), Professor K Trehan  
Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Social Sciences,  
Professor Y Birks  
Dean, York Graduate Research School, Professor K Arnold  
Professor K Bloor  
Professor L Carpenter  
Professor S Carroll  
Professor M Fairclough  
Professor J Richards  
Professor S Smith  
Professor J Thijssen  
Professor M Toerien (M21-22/112 onwards)  
Director of Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange, Dr A Jackson  
(M.21-22/108-116 only)  
Associate Director of Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange, Ms  
J Gilmartin  
Policy, Integrity and Performance Manager, Mr A Taylor (M.21-22/114  
onwards)
- In attendance:** Ms Z Clarke (Secretary)  
Ms J Mayne  
Mr Phil Wiles (M.21-22/120 only)  
Ms S Thompson (M.21-22/117 only)  
Ms Ali McManus (m.21-22/122 & 123 only)

Apologies for absence were received from Professor S Thompson, Professor R Ogden, and Professor P Ketikidis.

**21-22/108 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.

**21-22/109 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2022**

The Committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on **4 May 2022** (RC.21-22/69).

## 21-22/110 Research Committee action log

The Committee **received** a progress report against its action log for 2021/22 (RC.21-22/70). Further to the information provided, the Committee **noted** the following:

- (a) The action log would be reviewed over summer in order to ensure that actions listed remained relevant to the business of the Committee.
- (b) A number of items would be picked up and progress reported to the Committee early in 2022/23.

## 21-22/111 Report from the Chair

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

- Thanks were extended to Professor Stuart Carroll, Professor Stephen Smith and Professor J Thijssen for their work as members of URC.
- The REF results achieved by the University were a testament to the collaborative spirit of the institution. The University had received strong results and feedback across the board, and the value of such consistency was **recognised**. This would be built upon when preparing for the next assessment exercise, and the Committee would be included in such conversations.
- A recent visit to the University from colleagues at CITY College, Thessaloniki had been successful, and had initiated a series of conversations around research and teaching collaboration. It was **noted** that the collaboration was an important opportunity to engage further with the south of Europe.
- The Committee **noted** the £1.5M UKRPIF grant received by the Institute for Safe Authority, and **recognised** the value 'living lab' opportunity this opened. Similarly, the Guildhall in the centre of York was a vital opportunity for the University due to its status as a prime entrepreneurial space.

## 21-22/112 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**:

- Conversation with CITY College, Thessaloniki continued to be productive. Recruitment had finished for 2022/23, and collaboration between the Electronics and Psychology departments was under discussion. Applications for Marie Curie and Horizon Europe grant applications continued, with a diversity of collaborators aided by the involvement of CITY College.
- Concerns from PGRs regarding the cost of living and inflation would be passed on to UKRI; the Graduate School requested that example cases be referred to the School in order to build an evidence base.
- The YGRS had submitted a response to the UKRI Consultation on the New Deal for Postgraduate Researchers, and had included in the response a number of comments regarding the sustainability of the funding model for PGR training, as well as pushing back on proposals to categorise PGRs as staff.

- The YCEDE had launched at the end of May, and a series of internships for both taught students and external candidates were to follow. The first workshop, on the topic of equity in doctoral assessment, would take place in July. It was **clarified** that work in this space was collaborative in terms of relationships with other institutions. Further data would be collected on a range of factors affecting inequality, for example socio-economic status - in order to justify positive action on other categories.
- YGRS continued to work on increasing engagement with industry via placements, and to this end was arranging an information-sharing session with graduate chairs and developing a wiki. Case studies of successful PGR engagement with industry were sought, and the proposed resources would be shared for comment in due course.  
**ACTION: Members to share case studies as relevant**  
**ACTION: KA to share resources for comment**
- The White Rose ESRC DTP was up for recommissioning, with the most recent round of funding launched on 16 June. The submission would continue to be led by the University of Sheffield. A NERC CTP call would be launched shortly, however the topic of this was not yet known.

### 21-22/113 Reports from the Associate Deans (Research)

The Committee **received an** oral report from the Associate Dean for Research (Social Sciences), as follows:

- (a) The Faculty was engaged in a series of discussions concerning REF results and ESRC priorities, all of which would be valuable going forwards.
- (b) The new Dean of Social Sciences had recently started in post, and would bring new and interesting perspectives to the Faculty. Productive conversation was expected as a result.

### 21-22/114 Report from the Director of Research & Enterprise (*FoI Exempt*)

The Committee **received** a report on recent activity in the Research & Enterprise Directorate (*FoI Exempt*). The following was noted:

- The first meeting of the Research Culture Working Group had been held earlier in the week, and a co-ordinator had recently been appointed.
- A review of the PIP Office and an internal audit of University support for due diligence would inform decision-making in the Directorate. The ongoing KE funding review would potentially involve significant changes to funding allocation methods.
- An operational plan was in development for the Directorate as a whole, which URC would feed into in due course. It was intended that the plan be in place for the 2022/23 academic year. Regarding the analysis of funder strategies, which would inform the development of the plan, it was **requested** that a list of colleagues across the institution sitting on funder panels be collated, in order to ensure that the existing knowledge base within the University was used effectively. It was **clarified** that regional and local partners would be included in the development process, as would departments across the University.

## 21-22/115 Update on the Professional Services Delivery Workstream

The Committee **considered** an update on the Professional Services Delivery Workstream. The following points were **noted**:

- (a) A number of key issues had emerged as part of the workstream, for example the importance of process clarity, efficient systems and training opportunities. Currently the implementation group were working to assess the current structure and support offered at York, and this work would be supported by a process-mapping workshop and a series of end-user focus groups. The Committee **emphasised** the importance of involving academics in these groups.
- (b) The next steps for this area were to extract the key points thus far and publicise these on the PSD Google Site, as well as to finish the assessment of the current situation. Following this a baseline proposal would be developed for a new Professional Services Delivery model (determined via an options analysis). Task and Finish groups would be established to focus on specific aspects.
- (c) The Design Phase would take place from approximately June - August 2022, with an intended overall end date of January 2023. Review would be undertaken following this.
- (d) The importance of maintaining consistency alongside the streamlining of processes was **noted**, as was the role of funder expectations in service provision. It was clarified that Faculty- and Department-level differentiation would be maintained as appropriate, suitable to the needs of researchers and the requirements of funding bodies, whilst efficient and consistent systems were put in place. Colleagues were invited to share examples of processes or areas that would benefit from streamlining with the implementation group.

**ACTION: Members as relevant**

## 21-22/116 Payments process for membership of learned societies

The Committee **considered** a report on the payments process for membership of learned societies (RC.21-22/71), and **noted** the following:

- (a) Progress had been made since the issue had first been raised, and it was recognised that this was a complex area in need of nuanced consideration. It was reported that membership with the sole aim of attending a conference was looked upon more favourably in terms of the HMRC regulations than membership with associated benefits. More organisations had been added to the HMRC list of approved groups.
- (b) An update on this area would be presented to the Research Operations Contingency Group (ROCG) in early-July. The Committee expressed appreciation for the incremental progress being made, however it was acknowledged that operational requirements were a consistent obstacle at the University, and a more widespread consideration of solutions would be necessary in the future.

**ACTION: JG to present to ROCG**

## 21-22/117 Rights Retention Proposals from the N8

The Committee **considered** proposals concerning rights retention work ongoing within the N8, and endorsed a draft Statement outlining the position of the N8 (RC.21-22/72). The Head of Content and Open Research attended to speak to this item. The following points were noted:

- (a) The Committee **endorsed** the draft Statement prepared by the N8 on this issue. It was clarified that the Statement was intended for an internal audience, as well as publishers, and that the focus on staff (as opposed to PGRs) was due to a need for consistency across all N8 institutions; further work would take place internally to support PGRs in this space.

**ACTION: Head of Content and Open Research to ensure internal communication involves clarification regarding PGRs**

- (b) Work continued at York to support rights retention, both in partnership with the N8 and individually. The University of Manchester had sought legal advice which had confirmed that the approach taken by the University of Edinburgh did not conflict with English law; this had been passed onto the Legal team at York. A Policy Officer was to be appointed to support continued work in this area. The aim was to produce a robust and supportive approach which could effectively resolve the tension between funder and publisher policies.
- (c) The Policy on the Publication of Research would need to be updated to ensure alignment with sector norms and regulations.

**ACTION: Head of Content and Open Research**

## 21-22/118 Annual Statement on Research Integrity for 2021/22

The Committee **approved** the Annual Statement on Research Integrity for 2021/22 (RC.21-22/73). The Statement would be presented to Senate and Council for approval before being made available on the University webpages.

In the course of discussion, it was requested that further guidance be developed on fieldwork. This would need to recognise the broad nature of the area, in terms of location and type of engagement, in order to capture all types of fieldwork.

**ACTION: PIP**

The reference to the School of Digital Creativity and Performing Arts under 2(t) would be amended to reflect the new name of the School: The School of Arts and Creative Technologies.

**ACTION: ZC**

## 21-22/119 Proposals for the Review and Management of the Research Integrity Tutorial

The Committee **approved** proposals for the review and management of the Research Integrity Tutorial (RIT) (RC.21-22/74). Suggested revisions to the training offered by the University would be brought to the Committee in due course.

## 21-22/120 Implementation of the Policy on the Payment of Individuals for Involvement with and Contribution to Research

The Committee **considered** an update on implementation of the Policy on the Payment of Individuals for Involvement with and Contribution to Research. The Research Integrity and Compliance Manager attended to speak to this item. The following points were noted:

- (a) The PIP team continued to receive queries regarding the policy, however these were mainly concerning particulars of payment rates and matters relating to the process.
- (b) Initial consultation had taken place with lay members of Involvement@York concerning the development of the public-facing website outlining the payments policy. It was intended that the webpage would be complete and presented for endorsement in September 2022.

## 21-22/121 Results of the REF 2021 for the University of York

The Committee **considered** a paper on results of the REF 2021 for the University of York (RC.21-22/75). The following points were noted:

- (a) The University had achieved great success in the results of the REF 2021 across the board. National level data would be analysed in more depth in order to better situate the performance of York in a sector context. Further time within URC for detailed discussion of the results would be appreciated.

**ACTION: AT to coordinate further analysis of sector-level results**

**ACTION: ZC/MR to consider ways to facilitate discussion of REF results amongst URC members**

- (b) An internal reflection process was under development in conjunction with the Associate Deans (Research); it was requested that such reflection included a broad range of staff, as well as Faculty-level discussion. It was **requested** that the EDI team be included in such an exercise.

**ACTION: AT**

- (c) Conversation continued within the sector concerning the Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP), with decisions to be made public at the end of 2022. The outcomes would be discussed with the Committee when available. It was **reported** that the Russell Group favoured an exercise similar to the REF 2021.

**ACTION: AT**

- (d) An error in Table 2 would be amended and the paper recirculated.

**ACTION: AT**

- (e) It was **recognised** that REF feedback had commented positively on an increase in numbers of PGRs, but that the University did not currently have a strategy in place to cover this area. The Committee **suggested** that this be looked into for future REF submissions. Further information would be collated regarding the contributions of PGRs to the REF submission.

**ACTION: AT**

The Committee **thanked** the Head of PIP for his work pulling together the data, and **requested** that further analysis be brought to the Committee as relevant.

**21-22/122 Research Grant Income, Applications and Awards for Q3 2021/22** (*Confidential & FoI Exempt*)

The Committee **considered** a report on research grant income, applications and awards for Q3 2021/22 (RC.21-22/76) (*Confidential & FoI Exempt*). The Policy, Integrity and Performance Officer for Management Information attended to speak to this item. *[Two sentences redacted due to commercial sensitivity]*

**21-22/123 Oral update on EU Funding and Horizon Europe**

The Committee **received** an oral update on EU Funding and the Horizon Europe programme. The University had agreed to underwrite current Horizon Europe grants, but would not do so for grants awarded beyond 2022. The internal process for doing so had settled down, however questions remained surrounding funding calls for 2023. It was noted that EU funding affected disciplines unequally, and that some areas would lose out more than others. Replacements for such funding were under discussion nationally.

**CATEGORY II BUSINESS**

**20-21/124 Minutes of the Faculty Research Group for the Sciences meeting held on 21 April 2022.**

The Committee **received for information** the minutes of the meeting of Faculty Research Group for the Sciences held on 21 April 2022 (RC.17-18/77).

**20-21/125 Minutes of the York Graduate Research School Board (YGRSB) meeting held on 13 June 2022.**

The Committee **received for information** the minutes of the meeting of York Graduate Research School Board (YGRSB) held on 13 June 2022 (RC.19-20/178).

**20-21/126 Next meeting**

The Committee noted details of the meetings for the next academic year:

- (a) Thursday 29 September 2022 at 9.30am, to be held in person (room to be confirmed)
- (b) Thursday 24 November 2022 at 2.00pm, via Zoom
- (c) Wednesday 1 February 2023 at 2.00pm, via Zoom
- (d) Wednesday 15th March 2023 at 9.30am, to be held in person (room to be confirmed)
- (e) Wednesday 3 May 2023 at 9.30am, via Zoom
- (f) Wednesday 21 June 2023 at 2.00pm, via Zoom

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