



Research Strategy Group

Note of meeting on 31 August 2022

- Present:** Christina Boswell, (Convener), Catherine Burns, Chris Cox, Jarmo Eskelinen, Stuart Forbes, Jane Hillston, Susan Bodie, Laura Jeffery, Susan McNeill, Antony Maciocia, Andy Mount, Fiona Philippi, James Smith, Dominic Tate
- In attendance:** Susan Cooper (secretary), Jen Cusiter, Jacq McMahan, Katherine Quinn
- Apologies:** David Brown, George Baxter, Laura Cockram, Edd McCracken, Michael Rovatsos, Sara Shinton, Lorna Thomson
- Invited** Anne-Sofie Laegran, Cathy Lord

1. Note of Last Meeting (8 June 2022)

Paper A

Approved

2. Matter Arising

Paper B

All actions noted.

3. Convener's Update

The Convener briefed RSG on the following subjects:

- The plans to develop the University Research and Innovation Strategy 2030.
- The UKRI corporate plan, Innovate UK funding, operational launch of ARIA
- Horizon Europe and Plan B
- Using the SFC REG allocation

4. CMVM REF2021 UoA Level Benchmarking Exercise

Paper C

The strongest learning points were that the HEIs in the devolved nations faced a significant disadvantage as there were funding streams available to English HEIs that could not be accessed by HEIs in the rest of the UK. For example, Scotland has no equivalent to the funding from the National Institute of Health Research and Scottish HEIs have less access to funding for clinical trials. This disparity in access to funding was an issue that warrants greater attention. CMVM have set up a project to consider how to generate more impact from its discovery science: this type of research took long to translate into impact.

5. CSE REF2021 UoA Level Benchmarking Exercise

Paper D

In their learning exercise that CSE had noticed that Panel B had suggested in their report that 2* research could have a place in REF submissions. Such outputs could be used to show those at the start of their careers were valued.

6. CAHSS REF2021 UoA Level Benchmarking Exercise

Paper E

CAHSS were aware that Panel C and D reports stated that the double-weighting facility had not been fully used but were also mindful that compliance with the rules on REF2s meant that this facility couldn't be used in all relevant cases. Experience of the REF2021 submission preparations and the outcome of the CAHSS benchmarking exercise had reinforced their view that a mechanism to be found so that there could be regular checks of data quality of the staff data relevant to REF as well as the REF4B and, if possible, the REF4A data. CAHSS would be considering whether their sabbatical policy could be used give staff in relevant disciplines the opportunity to develop outputs into monographs.

7. Learning from the REF5As of other Universities

Paper F

For the REF2021 cycle the assessed quality of REF5As didn't contribute each UoA's score. HEIs had received confidential feedback from the panel that had assessed all the REF5As. The University's REF5A was deemed excellent. Nevertheless, there was always room for improvement and members were asked to consider whether the range of disciplines featured in the REF5A could have been broader as well as noting we need to improve the quality of EDI data. It was clear from the report from the panel that assessed the REF5As that EDI data quality was a common issue for many HEIs. Improving EDI data quality would mean encouraging more staff to self-disclose their EDI characteristics. This task would require sustained effort across all the Colleges and Support Groups.

Action: On the RSG secretary to invite Sara Cunningham -Burley to a future meeting to discuss how the University plans to improve its EDI data quality and how RSG could contribute.

8. Planning Edinburgh Innovations REF2021 Learning

EI would provide a report to the next meeting of RSG

9. Planning Communications and Marketing REF2021 Learning

CAM would provide a report to the next meeting of RSG

10 Moving from REF2021 to REF202X

Paper G

There were a number of strategic decisions relevant to REF that warrant careful consideration.

- Action
- RSG secretary and Deputy Director of ERO to set up short-life group to prepare a paper outlining REF strategy to be considered at one of University Research and Innovation Strategy 2030 meetings and a follow-up in January when the FRAP report is published
 - RSG secretary to ensure there was an item to enable further discussion based on this paper and the Impact review at the February meeting

Paper to inform discussion

11 Learning from the UKREF Panel

Paper H

Noted

12 UoE review of the REF2021 submission stage –recommendations

Paper I

Noted

UoA Unit of Assessment

REF1 Eligible staff with outputs included in the University's REF2021 submission

REF2 Research outputs included in the University's REF2021 submission

REF3 Impact case studies included in the University's REF2021 submission

REF4A Doctoral degrees awarded and reported to HESA during the REF2021 period

REF4B Research income (actually expenditure) reported to HESA during the REF2021 period

REF5A University level Environment template

REF5B UoA level Environment Template