



Research Policy Group

Note of meeting Friday 9 December 2016

Present: Jonathan Seckl (Convener), Jeremy Bradshaw, Pauline Jones, Hamish MacAndrew, Gavin McLaughlin, Andy Mount, Lydia Plowman, Brian Walker

In attendance: Susan Cooper (Secretary), Charlotte Brady, Catherine Burns, Paul McGuire, Jacq McMahon, Helen Sang, Dominic Tate, Jeremy Upton

Helen Sang and Catherine Burns were thanked for attending the meeting in respect of item 4. Members congratulated Dominic Tate who just been confirmed as the new Head of Library Research Support.

1 Note of Last Meeting

Paper A

Approved

2 Matters Arising

All matters arising were addressed in the substantive items on the agenda.

3 Convener's Update

The Convener reported on:

- The Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement and the opportunities for research therein;
- Initial impressions of the REF2021 consultation published on 8 December 2016;
- The parliamentary progress of the Higher Education and Research Bill;

4 Global Challenges Research Fund

Paper B

Helen Sang had been invited by RCUK to be a member of its cross disciplinary GCRF Strategic Advisory Group. Member of the GCRF Strategic Advisory Group are expected to 'use their own networks to gather intelligence that can be brought to bear in policy developments and to disseminate RCUK policies and strategies'. Helen outlined how the RCUK GCRF strategy was evolving and encouraged members to seek her advice and provide her with information for use in RCUK discussions. It was essential that the SAG was fully engaged with the communities it represented so it could swiftly provide evidence based guidance. Members considered possible mechanisms for internal distribution of the SFC's recent allocation of funding from to support activity to be delivered with GCRF awards.

Agreed: The University's GCRF group, that RPG had agreed should be established, would be the best vehicle for disbursement of the SFC funding so that it was in line with GCRF guidelines.

Agreed: University GCRF group's membership should include the College Deans of Research, RSO, representation from the Global Academies. Other staff from thematic areas would be invited as relevant. The Group would report to RPG and would be supported by RSO.

5 REF2021 Consultation

In essence the consultation showed that the four Funding bodies accepted the Stern Review of REF2014 and recommendations therein.

Many of the proposals in the consultation had merit but some should be challenged because they could create new problems in the wake of a drive to lessen 'game-playing'. Members had a general discussion about the consultation centred on the issues of output portability and the partial decoupling of the link between the number of staff to be submitted and the number of outputs.

Action	On Pauline Jones to draft an initial consultation response to send to RPG members and attendees
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6 REF Readiness Exercise

Paper C

The plans and processes for the REF Readiness Exercise were confirmed. The report will be considered at the April RPG meeting.

7 Research Information Management & Support

Paper D

Jeremy Upton outlined the plans of the Research Information Systems Team for the next six months at the end of which the new team should all be in place. Thanks to the University participating in an UK interoperability pilot for the forthcoming ResearchFish exercise, staff would only have to engage with PURE which would save time. It was in the University's interests for the pilot to be a success.

Action	Gavin McLaughlin to report on new developments.
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8 Open Access & Scholarly Communications Licence

Paper E

Members **agreed** that it would be in the University's interests to adopt the UK Scholarly Communications Licence. The benefits of an SCL were recognised by members of LERU as well as across the HE sector in the USA. Widespread adoption of the SCL in UK would strengthen the negotiating position with academic publishers.

Action	Dominic Tate to lead in drafting a paper for PSG recommending that the University adopts the Scholarly Communications Licence.
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9 College Reports

Paper F

The Convener thanked the Deans for their reports, which led to a discussion about effective support for large interdisciplinary grant applications

10 Research Income Updates

Paper G & H

Early signs of performance in 2016/17 were good. As Worktribe reporting improved and Snowball metrics became available more nuanced analysis would be available. Metrics on research commercialisation would be available at the next meeting.

11 Leverhulme Early Careers Scholarships

Deans confirmed the activity in the College to encourage applications.

12 COIMBRA¹ Review of Horizon 2020

Jeremy Bradshaw invited comments that could feed into the Coimbra Group's Review of Horizon 2020.

13 Research Support Office Update

Paper I

In a discussion about the RSO organogram, it was agreed that, without limiting the flexibility of the new Director of the Research Support Office, the Strategic Development posts could have some linkage to specific Colleges.

14 Research Ethics and Integrity Review Group Update

Paper J

Noted

¹ [Coimbra](#) is an association of long established world leading European multidisciplinary universities.