



Research Strategy Group

Note of meeting on 18 April 2022

- Present:** Jonathan Seckl (Convener), Laura Cockram, Chris Cox, Jarmo Eskelinen, Jane Hillston, Antony Maciocia, Andy Mount, Fiona Phillippi, Lorna Thomson,
- In attendance:** Charlotte Brady (minute taker), Jen Cusiter, Jacq McMahon, Katherine Quinn
- Invited:** Stephen Ingledew, Natalie Homer, Jen Middleton, Anne Sofie Laegran, Cathy Lord, Chris Cox, Kevin Collins,
- Apologies:** Susan Cooper, George Baxter, John Lonsdale, Michael Rovastos, Stuart Forbes, Susan McNeill, Sara Shinton, James Smith, Christina Boswell, Dominic Tate, Ailsa Niven, David Brown, Ed McCracken,

1. Note of Last Meeting (9 February 2022) **Paper A**
 Approved

2. Matter Arising **Paper B**
 All actions noted.

3. Convener's Update
 The Convener briefed members on the following topics:

- REF results and approaches
- Office of national statistics gap between full economic costing of research
- The spring statement
- PhD funders

4. Fintech Scotland Research & Innovation Roadmap **Paper C**

Stephen introduced Fintech Scotland, and highlighted the opportunity to the university around leveraging the roadmap themes. The roadmap covers 10 years, starting with industry-led priority areas e.g. quantum, with future emergent leads. There was general support and enthusiasm.

While it was highlighted the Smart Data Foundry branding appears to have lost the Fintech link here is belief that we are ahead of the curve, and although the work is grounded in finance, we will be well positioned to tackle the next challenges. We still have a global open finance programme. It was stated that this was one of the most significant drivers/resources in the DDI programme, and can lead to more strategic data integration in the university as a whole beyond the timescale of the Smart Data Foundry.

On asked about the scale of research there was agreement that the academic alignment is not there yet. There is a Chair in the Business School forthcoming, which will accelerate that further.

This group does not have the authority to complete one of the requested action points. And a suggested rewrite of the relevant area was agreed to.

Action	Stephen to correct the second action point in the paper
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5. UoE Technician Commitment – Update and Next Steps **Paper D**

Natalie presented on the technicians' commitment. The discussion section raises several areas where there remains room for action. The research cultures action plan will align strongly with the technicians' steering committee (TSC) priorities. Jonathan happy to sponsor the paper through to UE, looking to the colleges to pay a third each of the requested funds.

Action	Natalie to reiterate the paper for UE
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6. SHAPE and Innovation Tool and Themes **Paper E**

Anne Sofie presented the paper, and the intention of creating a tool/resource. This tool will enhance understanding of STEM colleagues about SHAPE, and connecting these colleagues. Better connections will position us better for future challenge-led opportunities that might arise. This tool should expose a breadth of people to opportunity, so that certain (popular) people are not at maximum bandwidth. It was also pointed out that our social scientists can be in other colleges, this should be an inclusive policy, and not just for social scientists in CAHSS. It was also suggested that the tool should be designed for longevity, to ensure it is up to date after this year.

7 Plans for REF Results Week & Making Use of REF Case Studies

Paper F

Jen M spoke to the paper, highlighting the requests. Comments should be sent to Susan. There is a request to schools that they should not 'pick and choose' the metrics at a local level and that agreement on metrics to be used should be agreed in advance. There should be consideration of joint submission partners, when discussing. Consistency of messaging is very important. The possibility of a communication to Heads of Schools to prepare them was raised. Jonathan praised the approach and work done.

8. College updates

8.1 CAHSS

It was noted from February to March, CAHSS had an application boost. This is a positive move.

8.2 CMVM

Speaking to EI about industrial and translation KPIs. This is a Covid-19 effect, and they're hoping the trend to turn around soon.

8.2 CSE

Andy and Antony are working on a CDT call, with other strategic calls in the pipeline.

9. Proposals for Research Cultures Action Plan Structure

Paper G

Jane presented the research cultures structure paper. There will be a fuller document at the next RSG meeting. RCWG have settled on a structure. The five themes have been selected. A review with external representatives after three years is also suggested. Objectives will be SMART. RSG agrees that this is an excellent approach.

10. UKRI Strategy and UK Public RDI Funding for 2022-27

Paper H

Andy presented the paper, highlighting the need to be aware of the thematic areas, and positioning ourselves to access funding effectively. We need to access departments, using our levers to shape and not just respond to calls. UKRI thinking of itself as a connector is a new positioning, and we need to support them to do it, to better access Innovate funding. In these specific areas we should nail down our USPs. We need to get staff tooled up and intellectually ready.

11. University Research Ethics Policy

Paper I

Ailsa spoke to the paper and asked RSG to approve and recommend to the University Executive. It was highlighted that the student discipline process also includes research misconduct as one of the misdemeanours that it can investigate and this is quite separate with different rules to the Ethics Policy. While they can be reconciled, there is no mention of the other policy (or vice versa). Jonathan stated that the document is thorough however queried certain areas that should be considered more fully such as the wording on planetary health and workload allocations. He highlights that while confidence in the process is important duplication of ethics process (e.g. with NHS) is unnecessary and there must be trust within collaborative projects. Jonathan raised that maybe more viewpoints from disciplines might be a good step.

Action
REIRG to address the concerns raised in the meeting

11. Any Other Business

FOR INFORMATION OR APPROVAL

12. Annual University Research Ethics report

Paper J

Approved

13. Library Research Support update

Paper K

Noted

14. Research Grants and Applications update

Paper L

Noted

15. REIRG Report

Paper M

Noted

16. Research Concordat progress report

Paper N

Noted

17. Edinburgh Research Office update

Paper O

Noted