Research Policy Group  
Note of Meeting  
7 July 2014

Present: J Seckl (Chair), R Fisher, M Frame, H Macandrew, J Shaw, T Slaven

In attendance: P McGuire, J McMahon, E Vander Meer

By invitation: J Scally, D Tate (Item 2); J Toon (Item 3)

1. Note of Last Meeting

The Group agreed the note of the previous meeting.

2. Open Access Requirements in the Post-2014 REF

John Scally and Dominic Tate presented their paper.

D Tate highlighted the importance of the new HEFCE open access requirements for the next REF, specifically the new requirement to ensure that all journal articles and conference proceedings are made open access within 30 days of acceptance for publication if they are to be included in the next REF return.

H Macandrew asked whether the library were comfortable with the ‘date of acceptance’ as opposed to ‘date of publication’ ruling, as other Russell Group universities believed that HEFCE had made the wrong decision. D Tate advised that he was concerned at this, and that ‘date of publication’ would be preferable. He added that he was awaiting a clear definition of ‘date of acceptance’ from HEFCE.

J Scally impressed the importance of all researchers being made aware that they must ensure that they make their publications OA within 30 days of acceptance for publication. It was recommended that this be included in induction processes and annual reviews.

J Seckl reminded RPG that ‘Green OA’ via our repository in PURE was the preferred route at Edinburgh. He strongly recommended that Colleges continue to provide technical assistance with populating PURE.

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<td>It was agreed that a clear message needed to be issued to all academics, informing them of the necessity of registering publications on PURE timeously. Deans of Research were asked to ensure that local support in the Colleges continues to facilitate this. <strong>Action:</strong> Deans of Research</td>
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<td>It was agreed that the PDR process needed to include clear expectations as regards uploading papers onto PURE. <strong>Action:</strong> T Slaven to confer with HR to ensure that this is written in to PDRs</td>
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<td>Clear statement explaining the need to upload documents to PURE requires to be written, emphasising that academics should seek assistance from Scholarly Communications. It was emphasised that this message should be as simple as possible and not get lost in the pro’s and con’s of Gold vs Green. <strong>Action:</strong> H Macandrew to confer with D Tate to issue an appropriate notice.</td>
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There was support for the Library extending local OA publishing provision (journals and monographs) to support local authors.
3. **PURE: Concerns over Researchfish Outcomes Reporting System**

James Toon presented his paper.

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<td>J Seckl re-emphasised the importance of continuing local support for population of PURE until the issue is addressed, but it looked as if PIs would have to populate both systems until the upload issue was addressed. Pro tem, he confirmed that he would continue to lobby for system integration. <strong>Action: J Seckl</strong></td>
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4. **Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarship: latest position from the Global Academy team**

R Fisher reported that progress on this application was slow, but that they were working as a team.

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<td>R Fisher to liaise with Project Team to ensure that a draft proposal is submitted by w/e 25th July.</td>
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5. **University of Edinburgh Research Plans – a discussion paper for RPG**

J Seckl tabled his paper.

The stretch targets were discussed. It was agreed that they were probably achievable but clearly would need to be underpinned by School-level detail in order to ensure some sense of ownership at grass roots.

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<td>Stretch targets to be created at the level of School/ Research Centre. <strong>Action: H Macandrew and J Seckl.</strong></td>
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<td>Deans of Research and Research Directors to focus their support on Schools, Centres, institutes, groups where there is most need. <strong>Action: Deans of Research</strong></td>
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6. **Support Structures for Research at Edinburgh**

J Seckl advised that E vander Meer had carried out some research looking at how other Russell Group universities organise themselves to optimise support for, and governance of, research support.

The report essentially would present three options:

- do nothing (continuing business as usual);
- optimise central services by some merger activity, better connectivity, a higher profile and more central Research Office working to, and promoting, a common direction of travel set by the VP-R and RPG, reaching out to, but not line-managing, Colleges and Schools;
- connect this optimised central Research Office to College and School Research Offices such that there is complete complementarity and optimisation of staff, no overlap of activity, working to a single system and to common quality standards.
R Fisher considered that the ‘researcher journey’ could be simplified and expressed support for the direction of travel. J Shaw added that the University needs to be better at explaining who does what. She considered that there were probably too many separate offices involved in research and that policies, governance and communications needed improving, preferably all available in the same place. She considered that centralisation was unnecessary, however; the above could be achieved through better connectors.

T Slaven endorsed this, stating that creating new structures were often unnecessary when all that might be needed was improvement to ‘softer’ structures such as communication, shared systems, documentation all logged in a single place.

R Fisher noted that embedded BDEs in CSE Schools worked well. He conjectured who might be best to line-manage these individuals – ERI or the Schools themselves? He considered that the current set-up in CSE worked quite well, with all BDEs engaged and productive.

| Action         | J Seckl concluded by stating that further iteration would be made to the paper reflecting some of the points made and that this would be tabled in full at the next RPG meeting. Action: J Seckl with E vander Meer and H Macandrew. |

7. Changing PhD thesis default to one-year embargo

R Fisher tabled his paper.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the current practice probably works for most and a change in policy not required. However, Heads of Schools should discuss the matter with supervisory teams before deciding which course of action to take.

8. RPG Ethics Committee

It was agreed that the issue of ethics oversight by RPG needed some consideration, although it was noted that the quality of reports from the Colleges had vastly improved since last year.

| Action         | H Macandrew to confer with T Slaven and J Seckl with a view to tabling a paper on the future of ethics oversight at the next RPG. |

9. AOB

9.i Paper E Research Performance 10-month update was included in the papers for information.

9.ii Paper F RMAS Project Update was included in the papers for information.

9.iii As this was Bob Fisher’s last RPG, the Chair thanked him warmly for his contributions.

9.iv Universities Scotland’s request for impact case studies: it was agreed that extractions from the REF Impact Case Studies could be submitted to US, but not the Case Study documents themselves.

9.v It was asked whether a process for circulating the outcomes of the REF had been agreed as yet. T Slaven advised that this had not been worked up as yet, but she thought that immediate past Deans of Research should be included in communications. She added that all those involved in the Panels should be convened and debriefed after the outcome is known.
9.vi The next RPG meeting will be on 8th September, 3pm, Carstares Room, Old College.

Hamish Macandrew
Edinburgh Research and Innovation
24 July 2014