



Research Policy Group

Note of meeting
04 July 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, Lynn Forsyth, Paul McGuire, Jacq McMahon, Angela Noble

Apologies: Jeremy Bradshaw, Stuart Lewis, Tracey Slaven

Stuart Lewis will be taking up a senior position at the National Libraries of Scotland. He was thanked for his excellent support of the University's research communities and wished well in his new post.

1 Note of Last Meeting

Paper A

Subject to the need to revise minute 12.1 to state that RPG were less positive about the proposal, the note of the meeting held on 4 April 2016 was approved.

2 Matters Arising

The actions arising from the meeting of RPG on 4 April 2016 were incorporated into items on the agenda.

3 Convener's Update

The Convener reported on:

- The EU referendum vote and implications for UK research;
- The Higher Education and Research Bill;
- The BIS Review of REF, chaired by Lord Stern;
- Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF) and the opportunities it presents;
- Ongoing JISC negotiations with academic publishers on behalf of UK HEIs

4 New style of Edinburgh PhD Scholarship

Paper B

The Principal's Strategy Group had agreed that the proposal for a new style of PhD Scholarship could be worked up into a prototype to which students would be recruited for admission in 2017/18. The proposal had several objectives, including attracting the best PhD students by offering them the security of a UoE funding package that, it was hoped, would give them enough confidence to seek other financial support. Discussions with schools would determine the scope of the prototype. For prototype only teaching as a training and work opportunity would be included.

The following points were made:

- Deans of Research should be part of College level discussions about the prototype
- For the prototype to evolve into full scholarship offering across the University, other training and employment opportunities would have to be available
- Employment and training opportunities could come from Support Groups as well as Academic units
- The proposal resembled traditional STEM PhD offerings especially in USA

Action:	Jeremy Bradshaw to engage with Deans of Research and PGR Deans in each College
---------	--

5 Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Paper C

RPG agreed it would be beneficial to make more KTP applications. Being 'close to the market,' KTPs were a good means of generating easily quantifiable impact. The East of Scotland (EoS) KTP centre's success rate exceeds 90%. KTPs are already being used by CSE for research - industry engagement. There is scope for cross College industry/academic collaborations.

Action:	Andy Mount to invite members of RPG to the next CSE Impact Forum at which staff from the EoS KTP centre would be speaking.
---------	--

6 Research Strategy**Paper D**

The Research Strategy is being developed in concert with the next Strategic Plan. It will address a twofold challenge: to state the benefits of Edinburgh to potential recruits and funders and to provide a high level positive message to staff that articulates with College and School research strategies. Further engagement from Colleges is vital to promote ownership and cohesion.

There was a place for research targets, however it was not felt that these should be stated in the Research Strategy for several reasons, include the need to avoid creating hostages to fortune at a time of great change.

Action:	Deans of Research to share their College Research Strategies before a further meeting to review of the draft Research Strategy with Charlotte Brady.
---------	--

7 REF 2021 Strategy**Paper E**

REF readiness exercise: The Deans felt that an academic REF readiness exercise would be of great value. The exercise should take place in early 2017. By that the Stern Review have been published and the technical consultation on the REF2021 rules would have begun.

Joint Submissions: The Deans reported how each REF joint submission partnership was viewed by the relevant UoE School.

8 College Reports**Paper F**

The Convener thanked the Deans for their reports, particularly information about new funding opportunities.

9 Open Access Update**Paper G**

The level of Open Access compliance was continuing to improve. More engagement with individual PIs was needed so that all staff appreciate that all their outputs that are within the scope of the OA REF policy must be compliant to maximise the pool of 'REF-able' outputs.

Agreed	Biological Science and Engineering would not have to ensure all published conference proceedings were compliant with the Open Access policy. The consequence is that neither school can submit outputs of this type to REF2021.
---------------	---

10 Research Income Update**Paper H**

Overall University's research income and application success rate was lower than last year. The increase in funding from industry was encouraging.

While recognising that the consequences of EU referendum vote were likely to be profound for the University in general and research in particular it was important to increase activity to secure EU funding.

11 Research Support Office Update**Paper I**

Hamish MacAndrew will be meeting Deans of Research to explore their views of the recently established Research Support Office so that next steps could be decided.

FOR INFORMATION OR APPROVAL**12 Draft programme for Research Ethics and Integrity Group****Paper O****13 Research Ethics and Integrity Review Group Update****Paper P****14 WorkTribe Update****Paper Q**