

RESEARCH COMMITTEE:
12th May 2021

PRESENT: Professor A. Nagar (in the Chair), Dr M. Brennan, Dr G. Cuthbertson, Professor N. Donnelly, Dr S. Harrop, Dr N. Hodgson, Dr Z. Kinsley, Professor O. Khaiyat, Dr D. Reid

By Invitation: Ms C. Bramwell (PA to the PVC), Mr C. Cooper, Ms S. Murray.

Secretariat: Mr M. Jones.

Apologies: Professor D. Jeyaraj

1. Terms of Reference

Members had received the Terms of Reference (RE 1015) for review. The Chair requested that the composition of the committee be listed by role (i.e. representations for 5 broad areas in the University: Humanities, Arts, Education, Social Sciences, and Sciences and Engineering) rather than name of members, and requested that 'school' be updated to 'schools/departments'. He reminded that the membership of this committee of Senate is approved by the VC.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of Research Committee held on 10th February 2021 (RE 1016), which were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

REF Presentation/slides on preparations for Impact and Environment

Ms Bramwell confirmed that she had distributed this to members.

Annual Monitoring Reports from research centres

The Chair informed members that this would be covered later in the agenda.

Library items

The Chair informed members that these would be covered later in the agenda.

Electronic and hard copy submission of PhD theses

The Chair confirmed that guidance in relation to this have been clarified, adding that Ms Bramwell is maintaining a log of hard bound thesis submissions as they arrive.

4. Update on REF2021

- a. Minutes of REF Steering Group: Members had received draft minutes of the meeting of REF Steering Group which took place on 3rd February 2021 (REF 1017).
- b. REF Submission Statement: Members had received the REF Submission Statement (REF 1018). The Chair informed members that the University submission had been successfully completed in advance of the deadline. We have submitted 13 Units of Assessment, comprising 177 staff, 28 impact case studies, 13 Unit-level environment statements and 423 outputs. For the first time we are also required to submit an

institutional level environment statement as a preamble to the Unit's environment. The Chair confirmed that the audit process in relation to staff contracts is now under way and at the beginning of the new academic year panel instigated audit queries will be raised. The Chair added that REF2021 results are due in Spring 2022. Dr Hodgson asked whether REF Steering Group would continue to meet and suggested that, if so, a replacement Education representative would be needed. The Chair undertook to look into this and mentioned that now that the submission has taken place the frequency of the REFSG meetings will be reduced to save everybody time.

5. Reports from Research Centres

Research groups are reviewed annually and recommendation for their continuation is made to the Senate at the end of the academic year. The committee had received annual monitoring reports from the centres and a summary with recommendation of continuation of these research centres is included below.

a. CCDS

Members had received an update from CCDS (RE 1019). Members noted Prof Bolt, Dr Penketh, Dr Barden, and Dr Cheyne's contribution to Hope's REF 2021 submission on behalf of CCDS in the form of the impact cast study 'Changing Attitudes Towards Disability'. The Chair asked members whether the Committee would recommend the Centre for re-approval. **Members RECOMMENDED CCDS for re-approval.**

b. CEPA

Members had received an update from the Centre for Education and Policy Analysis (RE 1020). Dr Hodgson drew members' attention to the way in which the centre's online event formats during the pandemic have increased opportunities for engagement with international colleagues and broader communities. The Chair asked members whether the Committee would recommend the Centre for re-approval. **Members RECOMMENDED CEPA for re-approval.**

c. Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies

Members had received an update from the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies (RE 1021). Members noted the centre's collaboration with colleagues in Education in the field of decolonising the curriculum. The Chair asked members whether the Committee would recommend the Centre for re-approval. **Members RECOMMENDED the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies for re-approval.**

d. Andrew Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity

Members had received an update from the Andrew F Walls Centre of the Study of African and Asian Christianity (RE 1022). Dr Cuthbertson drew members' attention to the centre's collaboration with Spurgeon's College, which will be joining the Network of Hope as of the 2021/22 academic year. The Chair asked members whether the Committee would recommend the Centre for re-approval. **Members RECOMMENDED the Andrew Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity for re-approval.**

e. SEARCH

Members had received the update on SEARCH (RE 1023). Members noted the centre's appointment of a new Director (Revd Dr Tony Bradley) and revised focus on social science and economic action research. The Chair asked members whether the Committee would recommend the Centre for re-approval. **Members RECOMMENDED SEARCH for re-approval.**

6. Library Resources Update

a. Library Update

Members had received the Library Update (RE 1024a). Ms Murray informed members that the library research budget currently has an underspend of £9.5k due to a number of factors including a change in VAT rules, the pandemic and a change of JISC band. Ms Murray informed members that she and the Chair are in discussions as to the best way to use the budget, adding that one possible use could be the acquisition of bibliographic referencing software. Ms Murray also drew members' attention to the Library Development Action Plan. The Chair asked that any comments on the plan be sent to Ms Murray by the end of the week.

b. Minutes of the Library Steering Group

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of Library Steering Group which took place on 28th April 2021 (RE 1024b).

7. Research Funding

a. Report on progress on research and grant income activity

Members had received the update on research and grant income activity (RE 1025 & 1026). Mr Cooper informed members that to date the total potential income of funding applications submitted is £700k. Mr Cooper added that he predicted the income achieved by the end of the academic year to be in line with that achieved in the previous year.

b. University Research Funding

Members had received the update on University Research Funding (RE 1027). Mr Bibby informed members that due to the pandemic c.£4k of an available total £49k funding has been spent. Mr Bibby emphasised the importance of chairs of School & Department Research Committees maintaining records in relation to this and undertook to contact relevant colleagues. Dr Kinsley asked whether the data would be best expressed in numbers or as a proportion of available funds. Mr Bibby responded that the latter would be better.

The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact School & Department Research Committee Chairs for data on how much Consolidated Research Leave has been awarded during the 2020/21 academic year, for consideration at the first Research Committee meeting of the 2021/22 academic year.

8. Research Degrees Sub-Committee

Members had received minutes from the meeting of Research Degrees Sub-Committee which took place on 28th April 2021 (RE 1028). The Chair drew members' attention to the news that St Mary's University has attained RDAP, adding that students who have reached the Intention To Submit phase will carry on under Liverpool Hope regulations, while all other students are being transferred to St Mary's, with an opt-out. The Chair added that to date two students have opted to remain with Liverpool Hope.

9. Research Ethics Sub-Committee

Members had received minutes from the Research Ethics Sub-Committees of 9th December 2020 and 12th March 2021 (RE 1029 & 1030). Re the minutes of 9th December 2020 Professor Donnelly challenged the sub-committee's assertion that '...it was not appropriate for an undergraduate researcher to undertake research into...illegal activities'. The Chair agreed that

this area needed further discussion and referred the matter back to Research Ethics Sub-Committee.

10. Items for Note from School Research Committees

Members had received minutes from School Research Committees (RE1031-39). The Chair requested that in future School Research Committee chairs collate noteworthy items from minutes for submission to Research Committee.

11. Monitoring Strategic Goals:

a. Undergraduate Summer Research Scholarships

Members had received the paper on summer research scholarships (RE 1040). The Chair informed members that the deadline for applications is being extended by one week and undertook to notify heads of schools & departments about this. He also noted that these scholarship holders will be guided by a University academic. Precise skills to be enhanced will be determined by academic area, but may include: data collection, data analysis, experimentation, bibliographical research, archival retrieval setting up an experimentation, draft report writing. The scholarship of £1000 is intended to enable Level I students to spend approx. 100 hours on research activities over the summer without the need to undertake paid employment. These projects will start from the week of 28th June 2021 (soon after Level I assessments are over) and an on campus accommodation will be made available to students, to work on these research projects, should they require one. In terms of organising these projects, the Chair emphasised that colleagues can organise these 100-hour projects at their convenience taking into consideration their annual leave period and other responsibilities plus availability of student researchers.

b. Common Research Methods

Members had received the paper on common research methods (RE 1041). Professor Donnelly informed members that following discussion with the Chair it is suggested that schools and departments consider establishing a PGT/PGR research methods champion. Professor Donnelly added that over the course of 2021/22 the champions would meet to identify challenges, propose solutions and deliver the vision for shared research methods, statistics and technical skills. The Chair noted that this is an important initiative to enhance research skills and practices for our students and in particular PGT students. It was agreed that Professor Donnelly will work with the chair in embedding the proposed model in our wider research environment in the University.

c. Updating Research & Scholarship Development Plans

The Chair asked Mr Jones to circulate the current Research & Scholarship Development Plan to members, and to include an item on the plan in the agenda for the first meeting of the 2021/22 academic year. The Plan, which runs out with the completion of the current REF2021 cycle, will be updated as soon as the outcome of the REF2021 is published.

12. AOB

The Chair noted Mr Cooper's imminent retirement and thanked him for his work with the committee and its members. The Chair informed members that in recognition of his distinguished career Mr Cooper would continue to be involved in the University's work in an honorary role as Emeritus Research Facilitator and help with the handover process when the post (which has been advertised) has been filled.

ACTION LOG FOR NEXT RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Issue	Action	Responsibility	Progress
Terms of Reference	Update constitution to show job titles. Update 'schools' to 'schools/departments'.	Mr Jones	
Library Development Action Plan	Members to send any comments to Ms Murray	All members	
University Research Funding	School/Department Research Committee Chairs to maintain records of funding allocated.	Mr Bibby to email chairs.	
Consolidated Research Leave	School/Department Research Committee Chairs to supply info of CRL granted during 2020/21 academic year.	Mr Jones to email chairs.	
Research activities and ethics approval	RESC to re-consider stance on permissibility of UG researchers undertaking research into certain activity requiring ethical approval.	Professor Jeyaraj	
Research & Scholarship Development Plans	Members to consider plans and discuss at next meeting.	Mr Jones to distribute current plan and include on agenda for next meeting.	