

Minutes, Board meeting of 17 May 2022

In attendance: Andrée Sursock (Chair), Norman Sharp (Vice Chair), Oisín Hassan, Ellen Hazelkorn, Crichton Lang, Riitta Pyykkö, Philip Winn, and Sigurður Óli Sigurðsson (Minutes).

Observers: Aldís Mjöll Geirsdóttir and Áslaug Helgadóttir, from 11:00-12:00.

The meeting convened at 8:30, Icelandic time.

(1) Agenda, minutes and matters arising

The agenda of the meeting was adopted with no modification. The minutes of the previous Board meeting (21-22 February 2022) were adopted with no modification.

(2) Update on 2022 annual meetings

On 16 May 2022, annual meetings were held with all universities except RU. The RU annual meeting will take place in September 2022.

- i. AUI
 - a. EH provided an update on annual meeting with AUI. The Horticultural College, which is non-tertiary, is no longer part of AUI and is now linked with a secondary school in the South of Iceland. AUI bought a horse farm near Hvanneyri to breed and train horses that students will be working with.
 - b. Two ministries (Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation and the Ministry of Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries) have asked AUI to develop a 15-year plan for the University, as well as a research plan for the next five years. These plans should be focused on food security, green issues, etc. There are plans to offer more programmes at the tertiary level.
- ii. BU
 - a. CL provided an update on the annual meeting with BU. BU prepared a presentation on changes made since the publication of the BU IWR report.
- iii. IUA: PW provided an update on the annual meeting with IUA. The meeting was very positive. The IWR report was discussed.
- iv. UI: PW provided an update on the annual meeting with UI. UI noted that in QEF3, it may be more appropriate to have SLRs at the School level (as is done now for research management).
- v. UNAK: NS provided an update on the hour-long annual meeting with UNAK. The main discussion was around IWR, namely the process and resulting report. Overall, UNAK was pleased with the IWR and noted some big issues identified in the report.

- vi. Hólar: RP provided an update on the annual meeting with HU, which took place over a full day as it was her first annual meeting with HU. RP met all the department heads and visited all facilities. The incoming Rector (starting 1 June) was present for the whole meeting. The Year-on report was discussed.
- vii. The Board discussed whether it was wise to have the same QB member for UI and AUI, because UI is so big and includes so many SLRs. PW responded that for now he did not feel overwhelmed by that arrangement.
- viii. As ÁH is retiring, the Board will write a letter to her to thank her for chairing the QC and for the fruitful collaboration.

(3) QEF2 Update

- i. Because of COVID-19, a number of QEF2 reviews and associated deadlines were changed. As a result, the due dates of some follow-up reports will need to be changed. The Board agreed to the following revised deadlines:
 - a. UI will submit a Year-on Report in Autumn 2022 (one year after publication of IWR) and Mid-term Progress Report in Autumn 2024 (originally scheduled for Spring 2023)
 - b. UNAK will submit a Year-on Report in early Autumn 2023 (16 months after publication of IWR)
 - c. HU will submit a Mid-Term Progress Report in Spring 2024 (originally scheduled for Spring 2023)
 - d. RU will submit a Mid-Term Progress Report in Autumn 2023.

(4) Update on commissioned work

- i. Arrangements for a review of possible alleviation of limited confidence of Police Studies at UNAK were discussed.
- ii. SOS provided an update on the commissioned review of the Árni Magnússon Institute (AMI). The review team visited Iceland in April and a draft report is forthcoming in the next days. The report will go to AMI for fact checking. Once the team has amended the report in light of AMI comments, it will be sent to the Board for approval.
- iii. NS provided an update on work with Greenlandic institutions to support the development of internal QA processes. The Board hosted two workshops in April and May on annual monitoring and three institutions have plans in place to pilot annual monitoring in the coming academic year. These were very well received. If and how any future work will be funded is a matter of further discussion with Greenlandic authorities. NS will leave the Board in September, and CL will then lead the project. NS indicated that he would possibly be available for participation in further activities with Greenland after his retirement from the Board.

(5) Icelandic update

- i. Since February 2022, there have been no restrictions in effect inside Iceland or at its border for incoming passengers. There are no mask requirements.
- ii. On March 31, Hólmfríður Sveinsdóttir was appointed incoming Rector of HU, starting 1 July 2022. Hólmfríður has a Master's degree in nutrition from Justus Liebig University in Giessen, Germany, and a doctorate in food science from the University of Iceland. Hólmfríður led Research and Development at Fisk Seafood for several years.
- iii. AMG reported on updates from Icelandic students.
- iv. The QC will have a half-day retreat at BU for its final meeting of academic year 2021-2022. This will also be the last meeting of ÁH as QC Chair, as she is retiring in June.

(6) Evaluation of QEF2

- i. A draft of an online survey for QEF2 evaluation was discussed. This survey was based on a consultation note that was used to evaluate QEF1 with good results. Respondents will note their involvement in QEF2 at the outset, and their responses to that question determine what questions are asked. There will be a lot of questions for quality managers to respond to, but it is clear that respondents can skip questions if they have nothing to say. The survey will be changed so that questions on SLR come before questions on annual monitoring, and annual monitoring will be presented as a developing/emerging theme.
- ii. A cover letter and a link to the survey will be sent to Rectors and Quality Managers of all universities except AUI, as AUI has not yet gone through IWR. SOS will also contact LÍS and the individual student associations, as well as the Ministry. Focus groups with selected stakeholder groups will be run later, including Rectors, QC, LÍS/students and REAC. IWR chairs will be interviewed either as team or 1-on-1. There will be a bespoke survey to SLR externals.

(7) REAC update

- i. Minutes of last REAC meeting and agenda for the meeting on 18 May 2022 were discussed.
- ii. The roll-out of PURE in Iceland is going well, and stakeholders are positive about the National Library's hiring of a new staff member to run PURE in the Library. There is a sub-group of stakeholders to help with the roll-out.
- iii. The next REAC webinar will likely be in the fall and focus on IRIS or societal impact. IRIS is probably more valuable for Iceland now. A REAC sub-group will be identified in the next REAC meeting to take this forward.
- iv. PW urged REAC members to think about capture and evaluation of societal impact and bring thoughts to the meeting.
- v. REAC will get Board updates as a standing item.

- vi. EH noted that UI is organising a conference on societal impact of research. EH has been invited. EH will make sure to say that she is speaking in her personal capacity and will mention that the Board is discussing societal impact for possible inclusion in QEF3.

Meeting adjourned and ÁH and AMG left at 12:00.

Meeting re-convened at 18:30.

(8) Updates on meetings with stakeholders on 16 May

AS updated the Board on the following meetings: (i) between AS, CL and NS representing the Board and the Minister, a political advisor to the Minister, and Jón Vilberg Guðjónsson; (ii) with UI Rector Jón Atli Benediktsson in his capacity as Chair of the Rectors' Conference; (iii) with IUA Rector Fríða Björk Ingvarsdóttir; and (iv) with Ágúst Hjörtur Ingþórsson, the new Director of Rannís.

(9) Identifying candidates for Board membership

The Board discussed candidates to replace NS, whose last Board meeting will be September 2022.

(10) AOB

Feedback will be gathered on proposals for reviews on online provision and masters-level provision in Iceland via email.

Meeting adjourned at 21:15