



REAC Meeting, Wednesday 08 February 2023, 9:30-12:00, Borgartún 30

In attendance: Philip Winn (chair), Christian Schulze, Sara Stef. Hildardóttir (online), Anna Guðrún Edvardsdóttir, Elín Díanna Gunnarsdóttir, Kristján Kristjánsson, Hulda Stefánsdóttir, Halldór Jónsson (replacing Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir), Piergiorgio Consagra, Sigrún Lilja Einarsdóttir, Margrét Helga Ögmundsdóttir, Skúli Skúlason

QB Secretariat: Ólöf Gerður Sigfúsdóttir, Þorgerður Edda Hall (minutes)

Observers from the QB: Liv Teresa Muth, Crichton Lang

Apologies received: Finnborg Salóme Steinþórsdóttir

(1) Minutes of the last meeting (16 November 2022) and Matters Arising

Minutes adopted without modification.

(2) For information

- i. Update on PURE – verbal. (Change to Update on IRIS in the future)

IRIS received a 28 million grant from the collaboration fund of the Ministry. The implementation process of IRIS is going according to plan, but there is still lack of Governmental policy.

- ii. Update on revision of Evaluation System of the Public Universities – verbal.

No update

- iii. Update on work of Ministerial committee charged with proposing changes to the funding model of the universities (chaired by Sigríður Logadóttir) – verbal.

No update

- iv. News for the Science and Innovation Council – verbal.

A new law was accepted in December to change the structure of the council. Changes will take effect on 1 April. Focus in the last months has been assessing the last strategy of the council. The council has raised concerns that there are only 2 months until the change happens and that preparations are going slowly within the relevant Ministries.

The major changes will result in a smaller council with two separate committees, one for the Ministers and another for the experts. Now, all 16 committee members and the Ministers form the council together.

The Ministerial committee sets the strategy and the council discusses the proposals of the Ministerial committee, preparing a discussion package for the parliament every year. The hope is that the change will enable better analysis and more data driven strategies and that the new structure will lead to more transparency by directly bringing issues into parliament for discussion.

Brief discussion about challenges with open access in the context of the evaluation system of the public universities, followed by a brief discussion about predatory journals.

(3) Research Assessment webinar and workshop

i. Planning for 2022 webinar – verbal.

Two of four speakers are confirmed. SSH and KK will follow up on those not confirmed. SSH is reaching out to users of the system in Iceland who could share experiences and KK has suggested Nils Thiedemann, who could talk about how PURE has helped the universities, what the challenges are, what the status is now. Nils Thiedemann (<https://vbn.aau.dk/en/persons/102658>), works at Aalborg University and is a member of a so-called VBN Team at the University (<https://www.en.team.vbn.aau.dk/>). VBN is Aalborg University's research portal, based on PURE. The Secretariat will follow up by email invitation to Thiedemann.

The webinar sub-committee should decide on questions that the speakers will be sent in advance and how the panel discussions can happen.

It is important to have a follow-up event which provides people with the opportunity to discuss the webinar theme and outcomes in Icelandic.

It is anticipated that the event will happen between May 22-31. Exact date TBC, depending on the availability of the speakers.

(4) Items for discussion

i. Discussion paper: Collection and evaluation of the impact of research in the UK Research Excellence Framework. (Annex 3 & Annex 4)

Presentation by PW and discussion on the UK approach on capturing impact of research. The discussion was limited to *the impact of research on society*: that is, impact as demonstrable change outside the university as a result of research This is not the same as *public engagement*.

Main discussion points:

In the UK, the impact of research is about the impact specifically of research done within the University; that is, we did this research and it led to a demonstrable change on society. Iceland need not limit impact like this but could include the impact a university has had based on its

understanding of research in general; that is, our understanding of specific research enabled us to make a demonstrable change on society.

It is important to have a common understanding across the sector, looking to common principles in how to approach this.

An example of impact can be reduction of harm or changes in public policy (a lot of the UK impact related projects aim to affect public policy). Impact of research is *not* impact of teaching, unless it is something like a whole new way of teaching your discipline (pedagogic research, research in education).

Likewise, public engagement can be captured and described but in these cases there is no demonstrable change on society captured or evaluated. Rather, public engagement represents the civic good a university might do through, for example, public lectures on campus. Public engagement can lead to impacts if a demonstrable change can be captured.

The UK has adopted a case study approach. Cases are written up in no more than five pages of text to include details of the people involved within the University; a high level summary of the impact; references to the research being used; and a detailed account of the impact being claimed: what has happened, what is the impact, who/what changed. Sources to corroborate are important. Someone (i.e. end user) needs to confirm/corroborate that the effect took place.

Why is it important to have a consistent approach? We want to show what we have done and its impact to the public, funding agencies and governments. It is also important for researchers themselves and teams to know what they have done to contribute to society. The approach has to work across disciplines. The impact might be different but the process is the same and the approach to the narrative is similar.

Examples of case studies from the UK:

2014. <https://impact.ref.ac.uk/casestudies/>

2021. <https://results2021.ref.ac.uk/impact>

Brief discussion about the importance of the connection to career advancement and how these activities are evaluated. At the same time it is important not to retain the discussion to how this fits into *point systems* as this will minimise the discussion. First step could be to look at this at university or faculty level. QEF3 will allow the universities to experiment with this on university level. The next meeting of REAC will continue this discussion, with focus on the management of the impact of research within QEF3

(5) Update from the Quality Board

- i. Verbal report from QB members.

QEF3 is underdevelopment. Management of impact will be an emerging theme. The QEF will not look at the impact itself but how the IQA systems manage how universities capture their impact and support their researchers to do so. This will be an enhancement area. The process will take into account different situations of institutions.

(6) Dates for Future Meetings (provisional – AM unless specified)

Monday 15 May 2023

Wednesday 6 September 2023

Wednesday 15 November 2023