



## **REAC Meeting, Monday 15 May 2023, 9:30-12:00, Hótel Kríunes**

**In attendance:** Philip Winn (chair), Christian Schulze, Sara Stef. Hildardóttir, Anna Guðrún Edvardsdóttir, Elín Díanna Gunnarsdóttir, Finnborg Salóme Steinþórsdóttir, Kristján Kristjánsson, Hulda Stefánsdóttir, Halldór Jónsson, Piergiorgio Consagra, Sigrún Lilja Einarsdóttir (online)

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

**Observer from the QB:** Crichton Lang

**Apologies received:** Skúli Skúlason, Margrét Helga Ögmundsdóttir

**Location:** Hótel Kríunes

### **(1) Minutes of the last meeting (15 May 2023) and Matters Arising**

Minutes adopted without modification.

### **(2) For information**

i. Update on IRIS – verbal (SSH)

The Ministerial Collaborative Fund has allocated 28 million ISK to continue the implementation of IRIS into all the seven Icelandic universities.

The implementation process will be delayed due to technical issues that are being dealt with by the steering group and the provider (Elsevier).

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

The steering committee is reclassifying Icelandic journals in the evaluation framework, with a first draft of individual evaluations for 2022 to be sent out soon.

iii. Update on work of Ministerial committee charged with proposing changes to the funding model of the universities – verbal.

The new funding model is still in development, with regular consultation with stakeholders. The Ministry is considering a variable on research output as a new criteria in the funding model. This will be directly linked to IRIS, where data will feed into the funding formula according to set standards. How research outputs other than journal articles would be incorporated is unclear. The REAC members find it important to differentiate between HEIs as some of them are research intensive while others focus more on the societal impact of research.

iv. News from the Science & Innovation Council – verbal.

No update.

v. QEF3 update – verbal

CL gave an update on the handbook drafting, along with a proposed timeline of IWRs in the next cycle (2024-2029). The QEF3 will focus on contextual sensitivity and diversity of the HEIs, particularly in research to their second and third missions (size, resources, infrastructures, different communities, different disciplinary specialisation, research focus and scope etc.). Of main interest to REAC in the new framework is the management of societal impact of research. CL emphasised the need to maintain a clear distinction between societal impact of research and societal engagement in general as areas for evaluation. He also stressed how IWRs will consider the quality of the *management* of output instead of the quality of the research output itself.

**(3) Research Assessment webinar and workshop**

i. Planning for 2023 webinar – verbal.

Because of the unavailability of a key speaker the decision was taken to postpone the webinar until Wednesday September 20 at 13-16.30 (GMT). The UI will host the webinar. Confirmed speakers are:

Cassidy Sugimoto (Georgia Tech)  
Ane van der Leij (University of Groningen)  
Helga Kristjánsdóttir (University of Akureyri)  
Sara Stef. Hildardóttir (National Library)

**(4) For decision**

None.

**(5) Items for discussion**

i. Discussion paper: Management of the impact of research in QEF3. (Annex 2)

PW presented the paper as part of a continuing open consultation from REAC to QB in the development of QEF3. Again, contextual sensitivity was highlighted throughout the discussion and that the IWR teams would be carefully briefed on those in relation to each institution.

The discussion paper presents five elements of an evaluation framework for societal impact of research:

*Understanding* - how does a university ensure a common understanding of what is meant by the societal impact of research amongst all staff?

*Support* – how does a university support societal impact?

*Discovery* – how does a university know what societal impact it has?

*Inclusion* – QEF3 will focus on the management of societal impact or research rather than evaluate quality of research.

*Appraisal* – Again, QEF3 will focus on the management of societal impact rather than evaluate quality. Nevertheless, some consideration of evaluation at this stage has practical value in that it allows universities to consider case studies of existing societal impact and prioritize development of new pathways.

The *understanding* part was highlighted as a key point and one of the most important in the implementation of research as an evaluation area in QEF3. Also that the universities will have to take time to adapt as they will have to increase support services in order to capture the societal impact of research and identify it as *demonstrable change*. This could be done i.e., by using the template as the one presented in the discussion paper. HJ at UI volunteered to test the template in his organisation and report back to the committee in the next meeting, which will discuss in more depth *how* to capture the impact.

**(6) Update from the Quality Board**

- i. Verbal report from QB members

CL informed the meeting on upcoming QB membership transition, particularly Professor Andrea Nolan taking the REAC chair in February 2024.

**(7) Any other business**

- i. Papers for information only – disruptive science.

The papers were briefly discussed in relation to innovative “high risk” innovative science and “safe” incremental research.

**(8) Dates for Future Meetings (provisional – AM unless specified)**

06 September 2023 ; 15 November 2023