

## **17 May**

**In attendance:** Andrée Sursock (Chair), Norman Sharp (Vice-Chair), Barbara Brittingham, Oisín Hassan, Ellen Hazelkorn, Riitta Pyykkö, Philip Winn, Aldís Mjöll Geirsdóttir as observer (from 15:00), Áslaug Helgadóttir as observer (from 15:00), and Sigurður Óli Sigurðsson (Minutes).

The meeting was held via video conference call and convened at 12:00 noon, Icelandic time.

### **(1) Agenda, Minutes and matters arising**

The agenda of this meeting and the minutes of the previous Board meetings (24 February 2021, 2-3 March and 20 April 2021) were adopted.

### **(2) QEF2 Update**

- i. Meetings for the UI IWR were conducted online 3-7 May 2021. According to the proposed timeline for delivery of the report, it should be available for the 13-14 September meeting of the Board.
- ii. The IUA IWR will be conducted on 20-24 September 2021. All international team members have been confirmed. The Secretariat received nominations from LÍS for a student member of the team and will work quickly to secure that appointment.
- iii. The UNAK IWR will be conducted in November 2021. The Board discussed candidates for the review team. The Secretariat will request nominations from LÍS for a student member of the team.
- iv. A list of members for potential Stage 2 Appeals Panels was finalised. The following experts (in alphabetical order) have agreed to be considered for membership of Stage 2 Appeals Panels (in line with Paragraphs 118-121 in the QEF2) Handbook if needed in QEF2: Kathryn (Jan) Bebbington (England), Jeremy Bradshaw (England), Tove Bull (Norway), Alan Davidson (Scotland), Rita McAllister (Scotland) and Arja Rautio (Finland). All have previous experience of working in Iceland.
- v. A matter arising from the QEF2 Update concerned the issue of international joint degrees awarded by Icelandic universities. It was agreed that QEF3 should include more detailed requirements for reporting on collaboration on joint degrees in both SLRs and Reflective Analyses for IWR.
- vi. A matter arising from the QEF2 Update concerned the use of sessional staff in Iceland. Icelandic universities use sessional staff to a considerable degree and quality assurance of teaching by sessional staff is an issue of national importance. The Board will consider making more specific

requirements around reporting on sessional staff in both SLRs and Reflective Analyses for IWR in QEF3.

### **(3) Update on commissioned work**

- i. Katrín Frímannsdóttir, Project Manager of the impact assessment of the Icelandic Research Fund has developed a data analysis plan and has been meeting with research administrators of the Icelandic universities to receive feedback on that plan. She has also met with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and RANNÍS staff. PW, SOS and Katrín will meet regularly (at least bi-weekly) for the duration of the project.
- ii. The accreditation review of doctoral studies in Sport and Exercise Science at RU was conducted online on March 22-24. Rita McAllister will be asked to proofread the report. The report should be ready for approval in the upcoming June meeting of the Board. The Secretariat will review the accreditation guidelines to ensure that the report structure is optimal.
- iii. Draft Terms of Reference for a project to support capacity building for internal QA in Greenlandic Higher Education Institutions were discussed. The Terms of Reference have been provisionally accepted by the Greenlandic Ministry of Education. NS will meet with Carl from the Ministry to discuss the importance of participants discussing what the goals of internal QA should be to support development of fit-for-purpose approaches, rather than using only the ESGs as a starting point. The ESGs will still be incorporated into the project, along with other international frameworks for QA. A second document will be prepared for the steering committee that will flesh out different approaches to capacity building but there should be room for the project's steering committee to shape the project's implementation. NS will chair the steering committee and Áslaug Helgadóttir and Skúli Skúlason will be approached for their availability and interest in joining the steering committee. If possible, Crichton Lang will contribute in some fashion.

### **(4) Action Plan arising from commissioned review of Police Studies at UNAK**

- i. An action plan received from UNAK in advance of the meeting was discussed. The action plan detailed UNAK's proposed measures to address the issues raised in the review, along with a proposed timescale. A letter to the Board from the National Police Commissioner of Iceland endorsed the plan. The Chair of the review team for Police Studies also provided comments in advance of the meeting on the adequacy of the action plan to address issues raised in the report.
- ii. The Board will send UNAK a letter to acknowledge the considerable work that went into the action plan and share the Board's initial reactions to the plan and timeline in advance of the annual meeting.
- iii. The action plan and its timeline will be discussed in the upcoming annual meeting with UNAK on June 7. Any arrangements discussed in that meeting will need subsequent approval of the

full Board. The timeline will be discussed in light of QEF2 commitments of UNAK relating to SLRs and the IWR in November 2021.

**(5) Action Plan arising from the QEF2 IWR of BU**

- i. An action plan received from BU in advance of the meeting was discussed. The action plan detailed BU's proposed measures to address the issues raised in the review, along with a proposed timescale. The Chair of the review team for Police Studies also provided comments in advance of the meeting on the adequacy of the action plan to address issues raised in the report
- ii. The Board will send BU a letter to acknowledge the considerable work that went into the action plan and share the Board's initial reactions to the plan and timeline in advance of the annual meeting.
- iii. The action plan and its timeline will be discussed in the upcoming annual meeting with BU on June 8. Any arrangements discussed in that meeting will need subsequent approval of the full Board.

Aldís Mjöll Geirsdóttir and Áslaug Helgadóttir joined the meeting.

**(6) Icelandic and European update**

- i. An update was provided on the COVID-19 situation in Iceland and a webinar hosted by LÍS to support students participating in internal and external QA. LÍS has been advocating for unemployment benefits for working students but this effort has not been successful so far. The Government will, however, make funding available for 2 500 summer jobs for students in the public sector.
- ii. The Quality Council has met regularly and has followed up on the Board March webinar on learnings from COVID-19, in particular the need to connect with teaching developers and others in the university community to build a "community of practice", as suggested by NS in his closing remarks. QC has been in contact with an informal group of teaching developers from all the Icelandic universities with an eye to collaborate in the future.
- iii. An update was provided on the new ENQA president and a new and more targeted approach to ENQA reviews with an enhancement-led component.

**(7) REAC update**

- i. PURE roll-out for Iceland is in a pilot phase at selected universities and is going well. It is expected that the system will be fully operational with reliable up-to-date data in two to three years.

- ii. REAC is organising a webinar for Iceland on research assessment, to be held in early Autumn of this year. A sub-committee of four Icelandic REAC members is progressing the planning in weekly meetings. The webinar will focus on key questions of relevance to Iceland, but at the same time taking into account international developments in research assessment. A possible follow-up seminar or workshop with a smaller number of key players from Iceland is a possible follow-up event.
- iii. The Board was updated on a proposed revision to the evaluation system of the public universities, which is led by Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir from UI, who is also a REAC member.

#### **(8) Board Trajectory and Structure Document**

The Board discussed a revised draft of the Board Trajectory and Structure Document, which provides a justification for greater resource allocations to the Board. Before the document is finalised and sent to the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the organisational chart will be deleted and the job descriptions for Deputy Director and Administrative Assistant will indicate that flexible work arrangements may be offered. The organisational chart for QEF3 will have to be revised so that the key national stakeholders (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, LÍS, RC and the universities) will appear on the top line and international partners and new strategic partners will appear on the bottom line.

#### **(9) Preparation for annual conference and planning next seminar**

- i. The topic of the 2022 annual conference will be master's studies, with a possible link to management of postgraduate studies in general. Among the topics to be explored is the extent to which Iceland can pool resources in this area and if there are good practice examples from other small/island nations. The conference will be held around the May 2022 Board meeting.
- ii. The next Board seminar will be on the topic of integrating internal QA into high-level university governance and ensuring follow-through of QA action plans, which is of high relevance to the development of QEF3. This seminar will be held around the March 2022 meeting of the Board and will be open to Rectors and senior staff only, with a special emphasis on securing attendance of Rectors.

#### **(10) Planning the year of reflection**

- i. The QEF3 Handbook will be launched in May 2024, preceded by a year of reflection. During this reflection period, which will be 12-18 months depending on the progress of QEF2, the Board will evaluate QEF2 and develop QEF3. A plan for the year of reflection was circulated in advance of the meeting that contained a proposal for the establishment of a steering committee for the evaluation of QEF2, a mechanism for selecting an external expert to evaluate QEF2, a proposal for key themes to guide the evaluation and a data collection plan. The plan will be sent to QC for comments.

- ii. Katrín Frímannsdóttir will be approached for her interest in and availability to lead the data collection for the evaluation of QEF2. Annual meetings with QC and LÍS will be held in September to discuss ideas for conferences and seminars, as well as the evaluation of QEF2, and in particular if and how LÍS can participate in conducting surveys or focus groups on the student experiences with QA processes (both IWR and SLR). At its next meeting with LÍS, the Board will discuss if LÍS could incorporate the topic of the students' contribution to teaching and learning during its next major assembly.
- iii. A draft of a survey on QEF2 will be presented at the September meeting of the Board. The draft will be developed based on the survey that was used for QEF1, with an eye to retain questions if possible to observe trends over time.

Meeting adjourned at 16:00.

## **18 May**

The meeting was held via video conference call and convened at 12:00 noon.

**In attendance:** Andrée Sursock (Chair), Norman Sharp (Vice-Chair), Barbara Brittingham, Oisín Hassan, Riitta Pyykkö, Philip Winn and Sigurður Óli Sigurðsson (Minutes).

**Apologies received:** Ellen Hazelkorn.

### **(11) Planning annual meetings**

Annual meetings are scheduled between 7 - 16 June for all universities with the exception of AUI and UI, whose annual meetings will be in September. SOS will send a template draft agenda to Quality Managers for feedback and agree on agendas with input from individual Board representatives to the universities. OH and Aldís Mjöll Geirsdóttir will choose which annual meetings to attend. The Board will schedule a two-hour meeting towards the end of June to discuss observations and conclusions from annual meetings.

### **(12) Budget update**

Expenses to date in 2021 are within the projected budget.

### **(13) Succession planning**

Discussion of succession planning was postponed until the upcoming September Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 13:00.