

Minutes, Board meeting of 13-14 September 2021

13 September

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

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

(1) Agenda, Minutes and matters arising

The agenda of this meeting and the minutes of the previous Board meeting (June 30, 2021) were adopted with modifications.

(2) QEF2 Update

- i. The IWR of IUA will take place September 21-23 on site. The review team will be composed as follows: Lois Fitch (Chair), Assistant Principal, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Kurt Steinberg, President, Montserrat College of Art, USA. Michèle Graf Morgenthaler, Head of Accreditation and Quality Development, Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland. Helka-Liisa Hentilä, Vice-Rector of Education, University of Oulu, Finland. Nhung Hong Thi Ngo (student member), MA in Marketing, RU 2020. Currently a diploma student at UI in Icelandic as a second language. The visit will take place on site at the request of the whole team and IUA, with some sessions online.
- ii. The IWR of UNAK is scheduled for the week of 22-26 November. The review team will be composed as follows: Kimberly Bogle Jubinville (Chair), Chief Academic Officer and Senior Vice President of Academic Quality, Accreditation and Support, Southern New Hampshire University, USA (served on QEF2 RU IWR Team). Oliver Vettori, Dean, Accreditation and Quality Management and Director, Programme Management & Teaching and Learning Support, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria (served on QEF2 BU IWR Team). Alan Davidson, International higher education quality assurance consultant (served on QEF2 RU IWR Team). Taina Pihlajaniemi, Vice Rector/Vice President (Research), University of Oulu, Finland. Student member will be appointed by LÍS.
- iii. AUI will have its IWR in Fall 2022.

(3) Discussion of QEF2 IWR report of University of Iceland

- i. The review report concluded with confidence judgement on management of standards of degrees and awards, as well as on the quality of the student learning experience. The Board accepted the report's judgments.

Meeting adjourned at 16:00

14 September

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

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

(4) Icelandic Update

RU Rector Ari Kristinn Jónsson has resigned from his post. Ragnhildur Helgadóttir, former Dean of RU's School of Social Sciences, will replace him as Rector.

(5) REAC update

- i. The impact assessment of the Icelandic Research Fund is ongoing, and the Project Manager believes that the report will be ready around March or April of next year. The data for the project received from Rannís needed considerable clean-up, which delayed the process. The original plan was to have the review cover 2011-2015, but the data for 2011 cannot be used. Surveys to grant applicants and recipients will go out in the next days. An assistant has been hired for the project, Fróði Jónsson, who has a BS in psychology and an MA in animal behaviour.
- ii. The review of the Evaluation System of the Public Universities is progressing, and there is ongoing discussion in the government about a revised funding model for the universities. REAC has emphasized the value of enhancement-led evaluation in this sphere to a working group from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.
- iii. Iceland continues the roll-out of its CRIS system, named IRIS (PURE from Elsevier). UNAK is the pilot institution. The quality of the training provided by Elsevier is in question. Over the next several years, getting people to use it properly will be a challenge and REAC hopes to contribute to that work.
- iv. REAC hosted a webinar on research assessment on 10 September. Three international speakers presented excellent talks on varied types of research assessment across all fields, including the arts. Rectors Jón Atli from UI and Ragnhildur from RU joined the presenters in a panel afterwards. Seventy-three signed up for attendance and at any given point there were approximately 45 attendees. A follow-up workshop on site and in Icelandic is scheduled for 1 October. If resources allow, an annual REAC seminar could be beneficial to further the national conversation on research evaluation and management of research. Possible topics include a session on PURE, on open data/open science and research ethics.

(6) Planning the Year of Reflection.

- i. A seven-person steering committee will guide the Year of Reflection. It will include three members from the Board: Crichton Lang (Committee chair), Andrée Sursock and Riitta Pyykkö. Other members will be Philip Winn as REAC Chair, two nominees of the Quality Council and one nominee from LÍS.
- ii. To ensure externality in the reflection process, an international expert will come to Iceland to interview all stakeholders and observe a Board meeting, and possibly annual meetings and an Annual Conference as well. The Board prepared a shortlist with names of three international experts who could fill that role and the Quality Council will be asked to rank-order them. Board members will send additional suggestions for candidates this role to Siggi.
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- iii. A list of possible questions for focus group with the Chairs of IWR teams in QEF2 was discussed. Siggi will finalise the list of questions.
- iv. Katrín Frímansdóttir, Project Manager of the Impact Assessment of the Icelandic Research Fund, will be asked to organise the data collection for the year of reflection.

Áslaug Helgadóttir left the meeting

(7) Update on commissioned work.

- i. Árni Magnússon Institute
 - a. A handbook for the commissioned review of the Árni Magnússon Institute, drafted by former Board member Tove Bull, was discussed.
 - b. The review team will comprise three international experts, a student nominated by LÍS and a team secretary. One of the international experts will be chair and one member will be selected based on a list of peer institutes identified by the Árni Magnússon Institute.
 - c. The Board will attempt to identify senior members of staff who have review experience from peer institutes.
 - d. A list of possible international experts to comprise the review team was drawn up.
- ii. QA in Greenland
 - a. The Board approved in a previous meeting providing support for the development of internal quality assurance procedures in Greenlandic higher education institutions. This work involves a number of activities, including webinars, online workshops and a site visit to Greenland. A steering committee with representatives from the Board, Quality Council and LÍS, as well as

representatives of Greenlandic university staff and students, met on 7 September and the first webinar will be hosted on 17 September. Presenters and contributors will mostly be Icelandic but some international experts will also contribute with webinar presentations or other support.

(8) Meeting with LÍS President Derek Allen.

- i. A meeting was held with LÍS President Derek Allen. The Board and Derek Allen restated their commitment to maintain the excellent relationship between Board and LÍS and the open communications that has prevailed so far.

(9) Discussion of Action Plan submitted by Bifröst University.

The Board discussed an action plan submitted by Bifröst University to address recommendations in its QEF2 Institution-Wide Review Report.

Meeting adjourned at 16:00