

Minutes of the REAC meeting on 20 November 2019, 09:30-12:00

In attendance: Philip Winn, chair (PW), Hulda Stefánsdóttir (HS), Kristján Kristjánsson (KK), Tove Bull (TB), Sæmundur Rögnvaldsson (SR), Ragnhildur Helgadóttir (RH), Ingibjörg Steinunn Sverrisdóttir (ISS), Jóhannes Steingrímsson (JS) and Dóra Stefánsdóttir (DS), who took the minutes.

Apologies received: Skúli Skúlason, Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir, Andrée Sursock and Sigurður Óli Sigurðsson

(1) Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 16 September were accepted with one proviso: HS has comments which she will send; she also informed REAC about a meeting she attended of the COST project, a Europe-wide cooperation about research on the arts.

(2) Data Definitions

PW introduced the paper that was previously circulated and commented on. HS has worked with the Research Committee at IUA to improve the sections related to research in arts. REAC members were content with the definitions *per se*.

ISS confirmed that the paper was of value to the CRIS project and that the definitions described were viable. ISS also noted that the purchase of PURE was a standard package with little room for adaptation.

RH had comments both from herself and from Linda, who had sent questions in advance:

- **The purpose is unclear: what is the data going to be used for?** The Ministry has emphasised the need for mapping and nothing else but there is a worry that some other use may be intended, even though it has not been discussed. KK pointed out that it is impossible to know now how the system will be used but that it will make Icelandic research visible. ISS pointed out that the decision to support a CRIS had been made by the Science and Technology Council. TB said that there is a lot of criticism on how the system has been used in Norway. HS added that the utilisation was especially sensitive in arts. SR asked whether the QB could submit a memo to the Ministry, stating its concern.

RH suggested that the preface to the data definitions paper could make it clear that PURE itself is only a mapping tool. TB thought that this concern should be brought to the QB. PW pointed out that the REAC is under the QB, for whose work PURE will be very helpful. PURE is also a useful tool for individuals who are looking for information about research, whether to point out their own research or looking for the research of others. How things will develop is impossible to

tell. While RH agreed, she still wanted some sort of a disclaimer. ISS was not worried about misuse of the system.

PW added that the desire to add research to the remit of the QB had come from the Rectors not the QB. Moreover, while QEF2 is focused on research management, the QEF2 Handbook (paragraph 39 page 14) states that ...

*In addition, the Board is aware that there is also a need in the Icelandic system for **an approach to research that evaluates more specifically the quality of research output and enables international benchmarking**. To meet this aspiration, during the second cycle of the QEF, the Board will pilot such an approach on a very small scale. This pilot will be limited to only a very small number of units/departments who would wish to volunteer to participate in such an exercise. These pilots will not be funded within the core budget of the Quality Board, and additional funding will be sought.*

ACTION: REAC to discuss at subsequent meetings.

- **If the system is only for mapping, why discuss impact?** PW said that worldwide there is an increasing interest in the impact of research outside academia and that it offers an opportunity for researchers and universities to gain credit for the use to which they put their research.

On page 10, *Pathways to Impact*, there is a reference to the end-date of impact which is difficult to understand. PW explained that in some cases, such a date might not exist whereas in other it does. Some of the other information which is listed may not exist (e.g. the sub-title of a book) and there will always be gaps – completion of every data field is not a requirement. ISS pointed out that there is an expert at the library who checks the entries.

RH asked about the status of data definition the document and whether it could be circulated. PW said that the data definitions themselves should be left for now, but the header would need some editing, in light of the comments from this meeting and the paper should not be circulated before that had been done.

ACTION: PW to edit and circulate to REAC for comment

(3) CRIS – next steps: preparing for roll out and training

There is a much work to do linking PURE to the universities. ISS added that good cooperation of everyone involved is essential and everyone must be patient. There is an Implementation Committee on which SÓS is an observer. The Ministry has paid for the system and will pay for the running of it for the first year. After that, the universities will have to pay. Phase 0 is preparing the data and phase 1 is putting it into 10 institutes: all the universities, the Landspítali hospital, the agricultural research centre at Keldur and the Arna Magnæna institute. The process will be run by the National Library. JS added that each institute will decide exactly how they do this, e.g. whether they put in old data or start from now. A working group manned by 3 people will be set up with each institute.

PW asked what kind of training was required and what kind of a “marketing strategy” they would need to promote the system to academic staff. The system will be operational by December 2020 or January 2021. He asked whether the REAC could assist with the process. ISS thanked for the offer and was sure that this would be very useful. KK pointed out that the University of Iceland was the biggest player in the field, and there, everyone relevant was aware of the upcoming system. 90% of the information is already open on the internet and can be automatically entered. PW was more worried about the smaller institutes. RH thought that they would think about this as an opportunity for better visibility.

(4) Any other Business

PW added that the QB had discussed the idea about a national graduate school which was regarded as an interesting potential development.

RH added that a new strategy for the Research and Technology Council was in preparation. The sore point is the low funding of Icelandic research, which is only 80% of the OECD average.

(5) Dates for Future Meetings (provisional)

Wednesday 06 May 2020

Wednesday 09 September 2020

Wednesday 11 November 2020