

## OPEN RESEARCH STEERING COMMITTEE

Minutes for Thursday 26 January 2023, 14:00–15:30  
MS Teams

**Present:** Steve Russell (Chair), Emma Gilby, Sara Hennessy, Mandy Hill, Amy Orben, David Owen (until 15:00), Liz Simmonds, Siddharth Soni, Ben Steventon, Niamh Tumelty, Debbie Hansen (Secretary).

**In attendance:** Meg Westbury.

**Apologies:** Holger Babinsky, Marta Costa, Stephen Eglen, Alastair Flett, Jess Gardner, Peter Hedges, Ian Leslie.

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Steve Russell welcomed the group, including Meg Westbury who was attending to present Item 6. Mandy Hill noted technical issues that prevented her accessing the papers for this meeting and apologised for therefore not being able to read the papers before the meeting.

### 1 Declaration of interests

It was noted that an update on the Springer negotiations would be covered under Item 12 (Any Other Business) and that Mandy Hill would leave the meeting for this update. Steve Russell invited the group to make any declarations at the start of relevant agenda items as appropriate.

### 2 Minutes of previous meeting (29 September 2022) — ORSC-95

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

### 3 Matters arising: Report on actions from previous meetings — ORSC-96

Matters arising that were not complete or discussed during the remainder of the meeting:

1. **DORA (item 5 of 29 Sep 2022 meeting):** Steve Russell summarised the outcome of the communication with Sarah Botcherby regarding the guidance being provided to Academic Career Pathway applicants. Promotions committees have been provided with DORA guidance. There are still questions regarding narrative CVs and citation indices when an application is evidence-based, and committees are precluded from seeking additional evidence. The process should be transparent and candidates aware in advance of the guidance. Steve Russell noted that metrics could be collected as long as this was explicitly stated in guidance to candidates.

### 4 ORSC Membership — ORSC-97

Debbie Hansen introduced this item. Around half of this committee are non-ex officio. These are the school and postdoctoral representatives and are serving terms of two years, renewable. This means that every two years we are at risk of a large loss of membership - and hence valuable knowledge and experience - and this paper was a step to address this. The full list of recommendations is in the paper, and drawing out the key ones here, it is proposed that:

- A rotation process for school and postdoctoral representatives is started this year to help manage risk of significant loss of expertise at any one time.
- Two or three members would stand down from the committee this year and at the end

of each two-year term cycle.

- School and postdoctoral members would aim to serve one, two or three terms of two years on the committee.

Steve Russell mentioned that approval from RPC would be needed, but that the approach, which was written following discussion and advice from Rhys Morgan, seems sensible. All committee attendees were happy with the approach.

**Action:** Debbie Hansen to forward the paper to Rhys Morgan for RPC approval.

**Action:** School and postdoctoral representatives to email Debbie Hansen to express whether they would like to remain on the committee for a further two years.

## 5 DORA Update

— ORSC-98

Steve Russell gave an update on progress and mentioned the difficulty with engaging some schools. The School of Arts and Humanities has developed their research assessment policy. He recommended that this be approved by RPC and invited comments from the committee; this recommendation was agreed. Following an email to heads of schools from PVC-R, a paper was received from the School of Technology. Rather than a research assessment policy, this was the response to the earlier consultation on DORA implementation. School of Technology have put this paper on their website as their DORA policy. Steve Russell expressed his concerns over this approach and invited comment from the committee. Various concerns were also expressed by the committee, both over the approach adopted and related to specific points in the document. There was also a query about what ORSC can do if there is no redress to breaking a University policy.

The committee discussed what the next steps should be, both regarding the School of Technology paper and the schools that have not yet developed a policy. It was agreed that the School of Technology paper should be sent to RPC with a cover note from Steve Russell. It was also felt that other committees should also be drawn into the conversation around implementing DORA (such as HR and the Research Culture Committee) and perhaps the issues should be addressed at several levels within the University. It was noted that alongside being University policy, implementing DORA is required by various funders and there is a reputational risk to the whole University if schools are not developing their policies in accordance with DORA. It was noted that DORA was approved by RPC and heads of schools are on that committee. Liz Simmonds confirmed that the Research Culture Committee now has a Chair (Professor Julian Rayner).

**Action:** Steve Russell to draft a cover note to go with the School of Technology paper for RPC.

**Action:** Steve Russell to approach HR and Research Culture committee chairs over the issues related to the development of school research assessment policies in line with DORA.

The CoARA paper (European Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment) was discussed next. Introduced by Steve Russell, the paper had been written with input from Steve, Niamh Tumelty and Liz Simmonds; it gives an outline of the CoARA agreement principles and considers the positive and negative aspects for the University should it become a signatory. Steve commented that there is overlap between the CoARA principles and work the University is already doing, or has done, in the research culture space (e.g. in relation to DORA). His feeling is that it is a bit too early to engage with this; it may be better to watch and wait. Liz Simmonds mentioned that there are other institutions in the sector already following this approach and the sector is generally moving away from the approach of signing up to charters. She added that there are some good principles in the agreement, many of which the University will do anyway without the additional obligations and audits associated with becoming a signatory. Niamh Tumelty mentioned that UKRI is a signatory and so there may come an expectation to sign. Whilst she agreed that we already have pressing priorities without adding

more, she wanted to mention the benefits of having access to the signatory groups and the chance to influence direction of travel in the space. The outcome of the discussion was that we would not pursue this initiative now but would monitor it.

## **6 Report of the Open Qualitative Research Working Group — ORSC-99**

Steve Russell thanked Meg for the tremendous work that the working group has achieved. Meg introduced the report, a copy of which is in Apollo (<https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/344820>). She gave some background about the group (e.g., who was involved in the working group, why it was formed, and what its remit was). She explained about qualitative research and its quality markers before running through the group's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. She also thanked the Open Research in the Humanities Working Group, which Emma Gilby chaired, as it was a source of inspiration for this group. Steve Russell thanked both groups for their fabulous pieces of work (similar positive comments were also offered by other committee members during this item), mentioning that clear themes were emerging from these reports. They will provide a good backdrop to modernising our university's open research statement, through the forthcoming open research community, and ensuring the statement is fully inclusive of all disciplines. Ben Steventon asked a question in relation to the challenges around making qualitative research data openly available (one of the findings was that the data cannot easily be shared for ethical and practical reasons): whether making significantly more qualitative research data openly available would help better understanding of what does work from an open data point of view in this field. Meg thought that this would differ across disciplines. Studies like this would be instructive to new researchers but others would find it too difficult and time consuming. Siddharth Soni asked about open research practices and copyright law and whether a conversation on this was needed. Mandy Hill thought this would be useful and suggested that one of her colleagues who specialise in copyright law would be happy to come and speak to the committee about how it is changing or intersects with OA. Emma Gilby wondered whether the group should engage with the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH); this was thought to be a good idea.

The next step will be for the report to go to RPC with a recommendation that the pair of reports from the two Open Qualitative Research and Open Research in the Humanities Working Groups are a foundation for the Open Research Community being established. Niamh gave an update on the recruitment for the Open Research Community Manager post: interviews have now taken place; the next stage of the recruitment process is under way, and it is hoped that the successful candidate will start around the end of March. She also commented that recruitment for two Research Data Coordinator posts, one of which will have a focus on humanities and social science data, is in progress. Niamh mentioned the Open Research Programme work that came out of the Open Research Operational Group and was paused, can proceed now that these two reports are available. David Owen raised the issue of cost of the University's data storage and will provide details to Steve Russell.

David Owen left the meeting.

## **7 Proposed Self-Archiving Policy — ORSC-100**

Niamh Tumelty thanked the committee for feedback already provided about this proposed policy. Recapping, an earlier paper, following comments from this group, was sent to RPC with options for the proposed way ahead. RPC endorsed the development of a full policy which would apply across the University, with an opt-out for researchers who do not want to be part of it (subject to their funder requirements). The consultation was launched in December with the draft policy paper (which had no major changes to the lawyer's draft) going to School Councils. There has been engagement from every school and a very useful meeting with Cambridge University Press. From the consultations so far, there have been positive reactions and questions. Questions have included: What to do when there are co-authors on the paper? What about college-based Junior Research Fellows? Niamh will be seeking advice on the

questions received for which there is not yet a clear answer.

Steve Russell thanked Niamh and emphasised that this self-archiving policy is for journal manuscripts. Mandy Hill commented on the usefulness of the conversation between Niamh and Cambridge University Press, especially for the confirmation that this policy enables open access but is not intended as the primary route - but provides researchers with an alternative if publishing with immediate open access is not possible. Niamh, in return, mentioned that she has been learning so much by having insight into the publisher's perspective.

Siddharth Soni asked further about the question raised concerning college Junior Research Fellows, in relation to funder and REF requirements. Niamh confirmed that the draft policy did not currently cover them because their contracts are with the Colleges rather than the University, and more conversations to explore this are happening. On a practical level, when manuscripts are processed by the Open Access Service, the team would not necessarily be able to identify which authors are employed by the Colleges rather than the University.

Finally, it was mentioned that around 25 institutions in the UK have or are working on similar rights retention policies.

## **8 \*Apollo-Octopus collaboration** **— ORSC-101**

This was a starred item not for discussion during the meeting.

**Action:** All to send any questions or comments about this proposal to Agustina Martinez-Garcia.

## **9 \*ORSC Annual Report** **— ORSC-102**

This was a starred item not for discussion during the meeting. Steve Russell thanked Niamh and everyone who has contributed. He noted that this comprehensive report shows what a lot was achieved in last year. If any committee member has suggestions for changes (such as the one about data mentioned by Amy Orben), he recommended they add these to the Word document in MS Teams.

**Action:** All to add any review comments to the Word version stored in MS Teams.

## **10 \*Unapproved OROG minutes** **— ORSC-103**

This was a starred item not for discussion during the meeting. Steve Russell thanked Niamh Tumelty for chairing this Open Research Operational Group.

## **11 Items to be referred to the Research Policy Committee**

The following papers will be forwarded to the RPC:

1. The approved minutes from the last meeting.
2. ORSC membership paper.
3. The School of Arts and Humanities policy on research assessment, the School of Technologies response to the consultation with a cover note.
4. The Open Qualitative Research Working Group paper.
5. ORSC Annual report 2022.
6. A copy of these minutes once approved.

## **12 Any Other Business**

Coalition S have confirmed that financial support for transformative arrangements will cease at the end of 2024. Many were hoping for a longer transition period than this. Mandy Hill informed the group that Cambridge University Press hit their target for 50% of papers from 2022 being open. They are hoping to be able to make an announcement next year about the number of journals flipping to fully open access in line with the pace of change that Coalition

S are expecting.

Mandy Hill left the meeting.

Niamh Tumelty gave a brief update on the Springer negotiations.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, 25 May 2023, 15:00–16:30, MS Teams.

*Open Research Steering Committee Secretary:*

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