Queen Mary
University of London

**Senate**

| Paper Title | Vice-Principal's (Research) Advisory Group<br><br>**Executive Summary of the meeting held on 9 November 2015** |
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| **Outcome requested** | Senate is asked to **note** the paper. |
| **Points for Senate members to note and further information** | • The purpose of the Advisory Group is to develop and monitor strategies and policies for research and research support in QMUL.<br>• The members of the Group are the VP (Research) (Chair), the Faculty Deans and Deputy Deans for Research (one of the Deputy Deans is the Director of the Doctoral College), and the Director of Research Services and Business Development. Heads and representatives of relevant Professional Services departments are invited to attend the meetings as appropriate. |
| **Questions for Senate to consider** | The paper is **provided for information**.<br><br>This report provides an update on:<br>• recommendations from the annual Research and Innovation Review meetings (section 2);<br>• annual review of clinical trials (section 3);<br>• review of Joint Clinical Research Policies (section 4);<br>• approval procedures for research funding under £20k (section 5);<br>• IP Committee (section 6);<br>• Research Risk Register (section 7);<br>• HR Excellence in Research Award (section 8);<br>• research student matters (section 9). |
| **Regulatory/statutory reference points** | Under the QMUL Delegation Framework, the VP (Research) has responsibility for the leadership of cross-QMUL research and research degree matters, including academic standards and the development and delivery of the QMUL Research Strategy. |
| **Strategy and risk** | n/a |
| **Reporting/ consideration route for the paper** | **For report** to Senate. |
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| **Sponsor** | Professor Bill Spence, Vice-Principal (Research) |

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An update from the Vice-Principal (Research) on current projects is also available on the agenda.

1. **Summary**

    This report summarises the main areas of discussion of the Research Advisory Group to the Vice-Principal (Research) at the meeting held on 9 November 2015.

2. **Annual Research and Innovation Review meetings with schools/institutes**

    The Group received a report on the 2015 annual Research and Innovation Review meetings. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss School/Institute research strategy, its relationship with the broader Faculty and QMUL strategies, and to consider ideas for future development of QMUL strategy or practice and other opportunities. Meetings are attended by the VP for Research (Chair), the Faculty VP, the Faculty Dean and Deputy Dean for Research, the Head of School or Director of SMD Institute, the School Director of Research or Institute nominee for second representative, and the Director of Research Services and Business Development. The agenda includes discussion of :
    - the research environment;
    - research impact plans and support structures in place;
    - grant applications, success rates and peer review;
    - research student numbers, recruitment, completions;
    - equality and diversity issues.

    Recommendations arising from the meetings include:
    1. Good practice on grant application support to be shared with all Schools, including internal peer review processes.
    2. Consider ideas for encouraging networking to seed collaboration.
    3. Encourage all Schools/Institutes to take advantage of the opportunity to feed into the Estates Masterplan by meeting with the team.
    4. Ask all Schools/Institutes to submit more data on impact case studies for the next round of research review meetings. QMUL is joining the pilot of a new impact database element to be added to Symplectics, and an Impact Officer is soon to be appointed.
    5. Share good practice with regards to mentoring and enhancing the research environment with Schools/Institutes. Encourage Schools/Institutes to engage with Early Career Researcher training opportunities.
    6. Matters relating to research student provision will be referred to the Doctoral College for discussion.
    7. Schools/Institutes asked about plans for initial or increased Athena Swan status

with requests for update reports and plans to address any issues raised in the review meetings.

From 2016, the Research and Innovation Reviews will take place in conjunction with meetings focussing on REF preparations.

**3.    Review of Clinical Trials**

The Group received the report of the Task and Finish Group set up to review the effectiveness of existing systems and procedures for the oversight of clinical trials and internal governance. The Task and Finish Group considered the findings made in the 2014 Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)  statutory good clinical practice (GCP) Inspection.

The Task and Finish Group's recommendations have been considered by the Queen Mary Senior Executive Group, SMD Executive Group and Barts Health Trust Quality and Audit Committee. Action will be taken forward by the Director of Research Services and Business Development.

**4.    Joint Clinical Research Policies**

The Group received an update from the Director of Research Services and Business Development on the review of QMUL and Barts Health Trust Joint Clinical Research Policies. Revised drafts have been prepared and are being consulted on with appropriate bodies. The revised policies will be brought to Senate for approval at a future meeting.

**5.    Costing and sign-off procedures for research funding under £20,000 with no staff element**

The Group approved a revised costing and sign off process for research applications and contracts under the value of £20,000 where there are no staff costs or overheads involved. A process review was conducted by staff independent to the Joint Research Management Office with recommendations that FEC costing was not required for non-staff projects valued under £20k and that the internal authorisations required should be simplified.

**6.    IP Committee**

The IP Policy, approved by Senate on 9 October 2014, proposed the formation of an IP committee. The membership of this committee is to be approved by Senate, as is the appeal process against any decisions. The Group received information on the draft remit and membership of the committee and the proposed appeal process.  The final proposal is on this agenda for Senate to approve.

**7.    Research Risk Register**

The Research Risk Register is reviewed by the Advisory Group twice a year. This is a web-based app.  Members of the Group review the register and provide updates to the VP-Research.

**8.    HR Excellence in Research Award**

The HR Excellence in Research Award is a measure of a research institution's

alignment with the UK Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, promoted by RCUK and other research funding organisations. The Concordat maps to the European Charter for Researchers.

VPRAG received a report and action plan in preparation for the four-year external review of QMUL's alignment with the Concordat, due in early 2016.  A task and finish group composed of Researcher Developers, HR representatives, senior academic staff and postdoctoral researchers at varying stages of career (representing all three QMUL faculties) was put together. The group reviewed the previous action plans, helped in collecting data and the examples of good practice and drafted the strategy moving forward from 2016. Good progress has been made in preparing for the review.

9.    **Research students**

Updates were noted on:
- PhD induction in early October organised by the Doctoral College, which was very well attended;
- the research student recruitment evening to be held in late November (305 registrations to date);
- the project to improve the use made of SITS to support research degree programmes and to automate many of the paper-based processes operated by the Research Degrees Office;
- the inter-faculty working group reviewing terms and conditions and payment rates for students who teach, and which includes representation from the Student Union and Doctoral College;
- discussions in hand on the arrangements for the oversight of research student admissions strategy and applications data involving the Marketing and Recruitment Advisory Group and the Doctoral College Management Group.

10.    **Reports**

The Advisory Group receives oral reports at each meeting from the Faculty Deans for Research and the Director of the Doctoral College.

Oral and written updates were  received from the following other groups:
- Professional Services Research Advisory Group
- Doctoral College Management Group
- EU Unit Advisory Group
- Impact Group
- VP Public Engagement and Student Enterprise Advisory Group.

11.    **Date of next meeting**
11 January 2015