



## **HEADS OF UNIVERSITY CENTRES OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

Minutes of meeting of the Executive Committee held on 6 February 2019 at IBMS, Coldbath Square, London.

Present: Professor Yvonne Barnett (Past-President, and chair), Dr Craig Donaldson (Plymouth), Dr Claire Wynn (Dublin Technological University), Dr Linda Walsh (Glasgow Caledonian), Dr Claire Pike (Anglia Ruskin), Professor Julie McLeod (Buckinghamshire New), Professor Jacqueline McCormack (Sligo IT), Mr Merfyn Williams (Bangor), Professor Hilary MacQueen (HUBS, Open), Dr Ian Locke (Honorary Treasurer, Westminster), Professor P Gerry McKenna (Hon Executive Secretary).

In Attendance: Ms Jill Rodney (IBMS), Mr Alan Wainwright (IBMS).

Apologies: Professor Kevan Gartland (President, Glasgow Caledonian), Dr Selwa Alsam (Essex), Dr Sue Jones (York St John), Professor Valerie Randall (Bradford), Mr Andrew Usher (IBMS).

1. It was agreed that due to the absence through illness of the President (Professor Kevan Gartland), the Past President (Professor Yvonne Barnett), should chair the meeting.
2. A moment's silence was observed in respect of the passing of former HUCBMS President, Professor David Rogers. It was noted that the Hon Executive Secretary, Professor Gerry McKenna, had written to Professor Rogers' widow, Margaret, to express sympathy on behalf of HUCBMS and the biomedical sciences community. Dr Ian Locke and Mr Alan Wainwright would represent HUCBMS and the IBMS, respectively, at the funeral.
3. The previously approved minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 15 November 2018 were noted.
4. Professor Julie McLeod updated the Committee on TEF developments. TEF subject pilots are currently underway. It is envisaged that each subject area in each English university will have to make a submission in the finalised TEF. It was noted that Wales is participating in the current pilot exercise, Northern Ireland retains the option (by institution) of participating and Scotland is maintaining a watching brief.
5. Professors McKenna and Yvonne Barnett updated the Committee on REF 2021. It was noted that Main Panel A had confirmed, following the consultation process, that the previous facility for multiple submissions within Unit of Assessment 3 will be discontinued.

Committee members reiterated their concern at the forced amalgamation within a single submission of all of nursing and allied health subjects for institutions with organisationally unrelated biomedical sciences and other experimental and laboratory-based health disciplines. This restriction would make it difficult for some institutions to construct a coherent narrative, particularly that related to research environment. Also, it would be difficult to interpret meaningfully the final results. It was agreed that in such

circumstances, and subject to appropriate sub-panel representation, it may be more appropriate for some institutions to submit biomedical sciences within UoA 5 (Biological Sciences), which includes the major biomedical sciences sub-areas within its published remit. Professors McKenna and Barnett agreed to investigate this matter further and to inform HUCBMS members accordingly.

6. Professor Barnett informed members of the proposed Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF). After discussion it was agreed that HUCBMS should respond to the current consultation exercise. Professor Barnett agreed to collate the Executive Committee's response.
7. Professor McKenna updated the Committee on Brexit matters including ongoing concerns about future participation in EU framework programmes and ERASMUS, the potential replacement of EU Structural funds with a UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and future recruitment of staff and students.
8. Merfyn Williams reported on a number of new developments in Wales where recruitment to biomedical sciences programmes remains healthy. Dr Linda Walsh also reported healthy demand for programmes in Scotland. Placements beyond the NHS are growing in Scotland. In common with the rest of the UK there is concern about degree classification inflation. Professor McCormack updated the Committee on the ongoing issue concerning the inability or unwillingness of the Republic of Ireland's regulatory body, CORU, to give institutional-level approval to biomedical sciences programmes awarded by institutions outside the RoI jurisdiction. It was agreed to investigate this apparent anomaly further.
9. Dr Craig Donaldson reported that there had been no meetings of the Council of Healthcare Science Special Interest Group since the last meeting of the Executive Committee. Dr Graeme O'Boyle, University of Sunderland is the new Chair of the SPG.

10. Alan Wainwright reported on activities related to the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee (notes were also supplied by Professor Val Randall). These include:

- a. New accreditations include Leeds Beckett University (already a member of HUCBMS).
- b. The new guidelines for Good Professional Practice and Communication of Pathology Results are now on the IBMS web-site.
- c. There are still large numbers of applicants (c. 400 in 2018) from non-accredited degrees applying for Certificate of Competence (they must complete the Registration Training Portfolio). Most do not complete. This is high compared to numbers of accredited degree portfolios issued (985 in 2018).
- d. There will be a review of IBMS degree accreditation led by Mr Wainwright and reporting in 2019.

Also there had been confusion during some accreditations in 2018 where University internal processes and IBMS ones were carried out simultaneously. This has resulted in a paper clarifying the IBMS procedures which will be shared with Universities at the beginning of the accreditation/re-accreditation process.

11. Jill Rodney reported on other IBMS matters including:

- a. IBMS involvement in the development of level 7 apprenticeships.
- b. The impending closing date for IBMS Council nominations.
- c. The forthcoming IBMS Congress, and
- d. The schedule for refurbishment of the IBMS front building in Coldbath Square.

12. Dr Claire Pike reported upon the activities of the RSB Education Policy Advisory Committee including:

- a. Response to consultation on T-levels (vocational equivalents to A-levels) leading to apprenticeships. The development of a T-level in

Health and Science was noted as being potentially relevant to biomedical sciences programmes.

- b. The implications of a no-deal Brexit for the education system.
- c. Consultation on TEF.
- d. Proposed revisions to GCSE/A-level curricula.
- e. The role of professional bodies in apprenticeship programmes.

13. Professor Hilary MacQueen updated the Committee on HUBS activities including:

- a. The Early Career Lecturers' Forum.
- b. Continuing HUBS Workshops programme including the forthcoming joint programme with HUCBMS at Bradford.
- c. The annual HUBS conference to be held at the Sanger Institute, Cambridge in April (the 2020 conference will be held at the Crick Institute, London).

14. The financial out-turn for HUCBMS 2018 was noted. The Committee congratulated the organizers and, in particular, Dr Selwa Alsam, for a very successful conference.

15. The Committee noted that discussions had taken place between Dr Sue Jones and Professor Randall regarding the Equality and Diversity questionnaire which is now ready for circulation to HUCBMS members.

16. Dr Claire Wynne outlined the proposed arrangements for HUCBMS 2019 to be held on 3-4 September at the Technological University Dublin including:

- Accommodation
- Sponsorship/Displays
- Social programme, and
- Conference fee packages.

The Committee approved the proposals and thanked Dr Wynne and her colleagues for their efforts to-date.

Discussion took place on the academic programme. A number of speakers have already been confirmed. It was agreed that the final programme should be in place by the end of March.

17. Future HUCBMS conferences are scheduled for: York St John University (2020), and Coventry University (2021).
18. The Hon Treasurer, Dr Ian Locke, reported on the financial position of HUCBMS which is healthy and in accordance with projections.
19. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place at 11.00 on 8 May 2019 at IBMS.