

Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on March 12 at 2pm via video-conference

Meeting Attendance

Members present: Prof Keith Allen, Philosophy, (Chair)
Dr Angela de Bruin, Psychology
Dr Anna Einarsdottir, School for Business and Society
Prof Bryony Beresford, Social Policy Research Unit
Prof Dawn Coverley, Biology
Richard Fuller, IT infrastructure
Dr Duncan Jackson, Academic Quality and Development
Prof Jonathan Finch, Archaeology
Dr Siamak Shahandashti, Computer Science
Pauline Painter, Lay Member
Samir Belgacem, Student Representative

In attendance: Jen Mayne, Policy, Integrity & Performance (Secretary)

Apologies: Dr Anna Bramwell-Dicks, School of Arts and Creative Technologies
Prof Tony Royle, School for Business and Society
Dr Justine Daniels, Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange
Dr Nino Grillo, Language and Linguistic Science

Section 1: Standing Items

Declarations of interest in items on the agenda (oral report)

23-24/15 Members were invited to declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to the business of the meeting. None were declared.

Unreserved minutes of the last meeting held on 12 December 2023

23-24/16 The Committee **confirmed** the unreserved minutes of the meeting held on December 12, 2023 (AEC 23-24/14) as an accurate record.

Action tracking and matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

23-24/17 The Committee **noted** progress in relation to the action log as follows:

1. M23-24/13a: The Data Protection Officer, Durham Burt, advised the Chair of this Committee that a change to the Privacy Statement regarding Student Data is unlikely, and any proposed changes to the use of Student Data should be subject to a Data Protection Impact Assessment. Support is available from the Data Protection Office.
2. M23-24/13b(ii): The HYMS ethics committee Chair advised the AECC Secretary that all HYMS academics should use that committee, and not the Biology Ethics Committee, and HYMS staff would be reminded of this. A follow up conversation will be held with the Chair of the Biology Ethics Committee.

ACTION: JM to arrange a meeting for Keith Allen and the Chair of the Biology Ethics Committee.

Section 2: Strategic Development, Planning and Performance Monitoring – items for consideration and/or decision

Research Data Management Infrastructure Project (AEC 23-24/16)

- 23-24/18 The Committee **noted** that an invitation to complete the survey had now been sent to all research staff and postgraduate students, so a Committee Level return was no longer required. There was a short discussion about the survey, it was **noted** that:
- In terms of IT infrastructure, there were some concerns about capacity,
 - In relation to Access and Publishing, Pure is not ideal, and many departments use subject specific external repositories,
 - An example was raised where the Worktribe Contracts Module did not operate as required, generating a Collaboration Agreement when a Data Sharing Agreement was required. There is a need to maintain oversight of systems.
- ACTION:** KA to provide feedback to the Research Data Management Team

To consider and approve internal review completed by the Health Sciences Ethics Committee (AEC 23-24/17)

- 23-24/19 The Committee **considered** and **approved** the internal reflective review completed by the Health Sciences ethics committee. The Committee noted that:
- This was a thorough and thoughtful review,
 - A good level of challenge was given to the applicant, for example about recruitment of participants on campus.
 - There was a good level of detail both in the initial review process and the reflection that had been undertaken, giving this Committee confidence in the quality of the research.
- ACTION:** JM to share these comments with the Chair of the Health Sciences Ethics Committee.

To consider the proposed wording for the Involvement@York welcome booklet (AEC 23-24/18)

- 23-24/20 The Committee **considered** the draft text of the Involvement@York welcome booklet. There was a full discussion and the following comments regarding both the proposed wording around ethics, and the booklet as a whole were **noted**:
- Recommendation that there is also a captioned audiovisual version,
 - Recommendation that there is a different version written specifically for young people,
 - Some terms are not widely used in the real world and may benefit from a definition or a use of more accessible language e.g. Safeguarding.
 - Compared with the rest of the booklet, the ethics page is quite text-heavy and as a result the font is quite small. Both of these factors will affect its accessibility,
 - It would be useful to have an explanation of what activities this may apply to,
 - Researchers need clarity about when ethical approval is and isn't appropriate, and it is important not to suggest to those reading the booklet that ethical approval is in place for all activities when that might not be a requirement,
 - It must be made clear (both internally by provision of training and guidance, and to the public by way of this booklet) of the ethical principles and processes that are followed and when.
- ACTION:** JM to share these comments with Involvement@York,
JM to invite a representative of Involvement@York to the summer 2024 meeting of Research Ethics Committee Chairs.

Section 3: Sub-committee Summaries and Meeting-related information

Committee reports

None were received.

Jen Mayne, Secretary
March 22, 2024