

**UNIVERSITY RESEARCH & INNOVATION COMMITTEE**  
**17 February 2026**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Tim Cheek (TC) – Dean of Postgraduate Research, FMS  
 Eve Cosgrave (EC) – Head of Faculty Research, FMS  
 Rich Dawson (RD) – Dean of Research and Innovation, SAgE  
 Matthew Grenby (MOG) – Pro Vice Chancellor, Research and Innovation (Chair)  
 David Hill (DH) – Director of Research Strategy & Development  
 Pauline Howie (PH) – Director of Service Delivery, NUIT  
 Phil Lord (PL) – Dean of Postgraduate Research, SAgE  
 Hannah Lynch (HL) – Research Strategy Manager  
 Kate McGill (KM) - Head of Faculty Research, SAgE  
 Lindsay Pennington (LP) – Deputy Dean of Research & Innovation, FMS  
 Candy Rowe (CR) – Dean of Culture and Inclusion  
 Nicola Simcock (NS) – Research Culture Manager  
 Lorna Taylor (LT) - Head of Faculty Research, HaSS  
 John Williams (JW) - Head of Collections, Research & Digital Futures

**Apologies:**

Estelle Blanks (EB) – Director of Business Development & Enterprise  
 Justin Durham (JD)- Dean of Research & Innovation, FMS (Lindsay Pennington deputising)  
 Johanna Gascoigne-Owens (JG-O) – Head of Research Funding Development  
 Abigail Marks (AM) Dean of Research & Innovation, HaSS  
 Mallikarjuna Rao Pichika (MRP) -Director of Research, NUMed  
 Jemima Repo (JR) - Senate Representative  
 Cheng Siong Chin (CSC) – Director of Research, NUIS  
 Jill Taylor-Roe (JTR) – Director of Academic Services & University Librarian (John Williams deputising)  
 Gina Tindale (GT) – NUSU Academic Officer  
 Alison Williams (AW) - Dean of PGR Studies, HaSS

**In attendance:**

Sarah Carey (SC) - Executive Assistant (Minutes)  
 Hannah Owens (HO) – Head of Sustainability, item 7

**1. Welcome and Chair's Update**

Discussed:

- a. Research Funding Sustainability working group is working on two packages: grant costings led by JD, and seeking to exert more control over appropriate funding schemes for application led by RD.
- b. Following Council's request to reduce and clarify Institutional KPIs these have been confirmed. Those in the Research space are research income per FTE and field weighted citations, with targets for each to be at or above the Russell Group median.
- c. Update on UKRI 'buckets'; Funding Councils (MRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, STFC) pausing some grants; Ian Chapman's statement on a strong commitment to communicate better and reassurance that the 'applicant-led' budget will increase annually (no detail provided). Impact on ECRs. Institutional actions are to work out how best we can contribute to the Industrial Strategy priorities, align with the specialisation agenda and work out what the impact of UKRI's decisions will be on colleagues not working in 'priority' areas and how their research can be supported.

- d. NUAge launched last week with presentations from across the University demonstrating World leading strength in ageing.

## **2. Notes and Actions**

Received:

- a. Doc Ai: Draft Minutes of URIC 13 January 2026, and
- b. Doc Aii, Actions Log, circulated with the agenda.

Noted:

- c. Minutes of URIC 13 January 2026 accepted as a correct record.

## **3. Research Strategy/Culture Update**

Received:

- a. Doc B, Culture QR Budget update, circulated with the agenda.

Discussed:

- b. **Human Nutrition and Exercise Research NUCoRE:** following renewal approval at January's URIC further detail on alignment with FMS HNER strategy was received from Bernard Corfe, NUCoRE lead and approved by the Chair.
- c. **Enhancing Research Culture QR Budget Update:**
- d. CR outlined the draft budget request, subject to approval at BSG in March and explained the motivation behind the requests for new and extended posts in order to maintain the momentum from the PCE pilot into SPRE, develop Research practice and integrity, provide training on Open Research and continue work on Behaviour Matters, Reimagining Leadership and the Maturity Framework. Project funding is requested for activity on Developing Excellent Researchers, UKRN, RFDMS, Maturity Framework, Leadership, Mid-Career Researchers and the People Fund.
- e. There will be increased scrutiny on new posts in the budget setting process.
- f. Training and research retreats praised.
- g. General lack of operational resource across the University and the impact on colleagues and students discussed.
- h. REF-related posts and the work done by other colleagues on REF clarified. Previously these have been requested from other budgets. Resource needed for evidence gathering and supporting the writing of impact case studies flagged by Faculties as a priority, perhaps over SPRE given the weighting.

Agreed:

- i. CR to meet with Faculty colleagues to further understand priorities.

## **4. URIC Budget**

Received:

- a. Doc C URIC Budget, circulated with the agenda.

Discussed:

- b. Budget outlined. N8 HPC Bede commitments will end in July 2026, funds previously allocated to this will be requested for REF preparation.
- c. Transformative initiative pump priming funding supported by RFDMS team explained.

## **5. Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure**

Received:

- a. Doc Di: Policy for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct, and
- b. Doc Dii: Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct, circulated with the agenda.

Discussed:

- c. DH outlined changes to the Policy and Procedure largely arising as a result of changes to the Concordat to support Research Integrity: clarification on questionable research practice, updated

job titles and an additional appendix clarifying the need to comply with specific funder requirements.

- d. Issues around concurrently employed and PGR colleagues, supervisor issues, addressing issues at proposal stage and AI discussed.
- e. Lessons learned and data are included in the Annual Statement on Research Integrity. Previous cases have led to changes in policy.

Agreed:

- f. DH to feed back discussion points to Stacey Wagstaff, further consultation with RD and PL as needed, can be approved by Chair's action.

## **6. Rankings Improvement Group Update**

Received:

- a. Doc E Rankings Improvement Group Update, circulated with the agenda.

Discussed:

- b. The working group focusing on citations per Faculty (absolute rather than field weighted) have been addressing increasing use of ORCID and appropriate attribution of outputs to Newcastle University through Scopus.
- c. ORCID uptake has increased from 42% in April 2024 to 92% and the aim continues to be 100%. A Webinar on improving research visibility has been delivered and Scopus profile accuracy has been improved
- d. The next QS ranking outcomes are due in May.

## **7. Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research & Innovation Practice update**

Received:

- a. Presentation, circulated with the agenda.

Discussed:

- b. MOG sits on the National Oversight Group which includes colleagues from Universities and other research organisations.
- c. The concordat provides an opportunity to engage with the community. Looking at current mechanisms to assess environmental impact of research. Importance of sharing good practice across the sector.
- d. Next steps include implementation of a toolkit and steps to cover funder requirements and align to the Maturity Framework.
- e. Formalised reporting on compliance in Integrated Annual Report.
- f. Environmental Initiatives by other institutions including a research proposal environmental impact analysis tool (Exeter) and a travel policy actively excluding the use of flights except in certain circumstances (Kings College London). NU has its own areas of excellence in this work; the potential for Newcastle to develop its own discussed.
- g. Internal communications will be shared this week on the new travel booking partner. It is hoped we can work with the new provider to promote environmentally sustainable options.

## **8. Digital Research Sub-Group (DRSG) Update**

Received:

- a. Doc Fi: DRSG kick off pack, and
- b. Doc Fii: DRSG Terms of Reference, circulated with the agenda.

Discussed:

- c. PH outlined issues being addressed by DRSG including data governance, data management, legacy research equipment, technology strategy, enterprise managed IT and hidden IT costs in grant applications and enterprise storage. Two working groups have been set up to address data storage and the impact of cyber on legacy equipment.

- d. The group serves as a channel for communicating and reporting digital research needs to URIC and also links in to University Education Committee.
- e. Computational issues outside of HPC (software, cloud, desktops, adoption of Application Lifecycle Management).

Agreed:

- f. PH and PL to further discuss computational issues.

## **9. Future meetings**

- a. 10-12 in Keeton Lomas Room, Armstrong Building:
  - 17 March
  - 14 April
  - 12 May
  - 23 June