University of St Andrews
Research and Teaching Staff Forum

Report on the meeting of the Research and Teaching Staff Forum held on
Friday 15 April 2016

Attendance: Professor Derek Woollins, Ms Louise Milne, Dr Jon Issberner, Dr Chiara Giuliani; Dr Francesco Binaghi; Dr Kirill Dimitriev; Dr Ruth Bowness; Ms Michelle Paterson; Dr Iain Smellie; Dr Jason Bruck; Dr Len Thomas; Dr Tracey Gloster; Dr Bela Bode; Dr Tom Jones; Dr Graham Smith

Apologies: Mr Sukhi Bains; Dr Rob Schick; Dr Charles Lovatt; Dr Heidi Mehrkens

1 Approval of previous minutes
The minutes were approved.

2 Matters arising
The matter regarding the drop in gender positive results that showed up in the CROS 2015 survey was raised and it was explained that it had been brought to Sukhi’s attention but it would be part and parcel of the work being done on Athena Swan.

3 Update on open-ended contracts and length of service profile for Teaching Fellows.
There are currently 82 research staff on standard contracts and 302 on fixed term contracts. Those on standard contracts make up 21% of the research staff complement.

With regards to Teaching Fellows, there are currently 51 on standard contracts and 39 on fixed term contracts. Those on standard contracts make up 56% of the teaching staff complement.

Professor Woollins asked if LM could find out what the profiles of research staff in other Scottish universities look like.

4 Update on Athena Swan and diversity awards
The new Online Unconscious Bias Training Module became live on 4 April 2016. An ambitious target of 80% completion rate by end of 2016 for academic/research staff within each School/Unit has been encouraged as part of their Athena SWAN and equality related activities – the University is submitting its renewal for Athena SWAN at the end of this month.

The module takes between 30-40 minutes to complete and relates to higher education in the context of the workplace and student environment. All are invited to complete the module logging onto the HR Equality webpage: http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/training/unconsciousbias

Discussion took place around the timing of breaks in the semester and Fife School holidays and the fact they do not usually coincide. This has been noted by the Principal’s Office and steps are being taken to try and rectify it but may take a while to come about.

NB – the October 2016 school holidays and semester 1 independent learning week coincided. This was a positive action taken by the University.
There was also discussion about the variations between Schools regarding information being cascaded throughout the Schools on the equality initiatives/schemes. Some Schools are better than others at letting all staff know what is going on.

5 **Update from CAPOD**
Attached at Appendix 1 is the update from CAPOD.

6 **PIRLS 2015 – draft report**
The draft report was discussed. Some key areas highlighted are already being actioned but issues identified will be included in the HR Excellence Action Plan.

7 **Payment for teaching (research staff)**
Final draft with UCU feedback submitted to the Forum for confirmation.

   **NB** – was sent to all DoTs and Senior Secretaries for the start of semester. Will review at the end of the academic year.

8 **Update on University Teaching Track**
LM explained that there is now a group headed by the Proctor and the Master that is looking at creating a teaching only career track and revamping the promotions criteria. The group will also look at job titles and the creation of a grade 9 teaching only post.

9 **General Teaching and Research Matters**
The issue of flexible working for Teaching Fellows was raised. One individual had been told that, in their School, flexible working did not apply to Teaching Fellows. LM confirmed that this was not correct and that the University’s Flexible Working Policy applied to all groups of staff.

   [http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/hr/flexibleworkingpolicy/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/hr/flexibleworkingpolicy/)

10 **General Update from Vice Principal (Research)**
Professor Woollins informed the Forum that he had met the new Principal several times and he got a really good impression of her.

The University has signed up to the Research Integrity Concordat and the Openness in Animal Research Concordat.

The University is putting in a bid to HEFCE for building and refurbishment money for our Special Collections.

He also explained that it is important for the University to get more grant income in and there had been discussion about creating individual KPIs as a result, but the University has decided against this.

11 **AOCB**
There was no further business.

12 **Date and Time of Next Meeting**
Wednesday 9 November at 2.30 pm in the Gateway Boardroom

Professor Derek Woollins
Convener