

**RESEARCH STAFF FORUM (RSF)**  
**MONDAY 14 OCTOBER 2019, 12 NOON – 2PM (WITH LUNCH PROVIDED)**  
**WOLFSON 1 AND 2, THE RESEARCH EXCHANGE, THE LIBRARY**  
**CHAIR: SANDY SPARKS**  
**DRAFT MEETING NOTES**

1. Present

Elisabeth Arweck (EA, CES) Helen Ascroft (HA, WMG), Asmaa El-Banna (AE, WMS), Sam Cole (SC, R&IS, speaker), Jane Cooper (JC, OD, notes), Jane Cummins (JCu, R&IS), Samantha Flynn (SF, CEDAR), Aruni Fonseka (AF, Physics), Ian Hancox (IH, Research Technology, speaker), Elizabeth Harrison (EH, Research Technology, speaker), Lucy Horrocks (LH, Engagement Group), Cinzia Imberti (CI, Chemistry), Chen Ji (CJ, WMS), Gareth Johnson (GJ, IAS, speaker), Reza Kashtiban (RK, Physics), Emma Langley (EL, CEDAR), Justine Pearson (JP, HR), Deepak Parashar (DP, WMS), Alison Phillips (AP, Engagement Group, speaker), Julie Robinson (JR, Library, speaker), Jessica Savage (JS, Cross Faculty Studies), Sandy Sparks (SS, OD, Chair), Sharifah Sekalala (SSe, Law), Rebecca Vipond (RV, IAS), Sarah Wilson (SW, WMG), Kathryn Woods (KW, Faculty of Arts), Stephanie Whitehead (SW, Inst. Global Sustainable Development).

Apologies

Carol Bryce (WMS), Mairi Ann Cullen (CEDAR), Nicholas Hopcroft (WMS), Sophie Rees (WMS), Catherine Stanford (CEDAR), Jodie Westhead (WMS).

SS welcomed everybody to this RSF and announced that there are a number of speakers attending today to ensure attendees are aware of a combination of things, namely, the Learning and Development initiatives and opportunities for Research Active Staff (RAS) and also of happenings within both the University and Organisational Development (OD) eg, Technicians Commitment, REF2021.

SS then introduced herself to the forum, explained that she works in OD (formerly the Learning and Development Centre). SS leads on Research Active Staff (RAS) – staff on Research-focussed, Teaching-focussed and Research & Teaching contracts. The RSF meets once a term, it's an open forum – all new staff, RAS and recipients of RAS Network funding are welcome to attend. The notes resulting from this RSF are open and available on the RAS website for all to see. SS explained that her focus is about building capability and capacity of researchers. SS told the forum she had been at Warwick for 20 years, 10 years of which leading on researcher development. She started in 2009 looking after 300 early career researchers (under Roberts Funding) with a healthy budget. Then she received a EPSRC Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Transferable skills development funding. The main two focusses of the RSF is (1) to share knowledge/information into departments, a two way communication process (we have a representative from the RSF who sits on the University's Researcher Committee) and (2) learning and development opportunities. SS then highlighted that Mairi Ann Cullen is the only person that superseded herself and explained that M-AC could not be with us today and sends her apologies.

SS also announced that she resigned from the University on 1 October 2019 and leaves on 11 December 2019. SS told the RSF that she loves what she does but time for a change. SS will continue to take on work with the British Council and Vitae – she has also been approached by various departments within the University so watch this space. Knowing I am leaving it is important for people be aware of OD (and what it does) and also the learning and development initiatives that

happen within the University – hence my request for the Public Engagement Team and IAS to update us today. SS mentioned that notes are taken as opposed to minutes as this is not a formal university committee. Attendees have the opportunity to amend/change the notes before they are made public via the RAS website. SS noted that as per agenda we will start by looking at the actions from the previous meeting (22 May) and have an update from OD and HR. We will then look at the areas of focus.

Attendees introduced themselves detailing their role and department. SS noted the attendees are a combination of staff from departments, recipients of RAS Network funding, new starters or people who are interested and/or support learning and development of RAS

## 2. Actions and Amendments from previous meeting – 22 May 2019

Action 1: Full Economic Costings

Update: SS is still struggling to get response, she has approached Research and Impact Services (R&IS) about case studies and is still awaiting a response. What are the guidelines are there any case studies? This is still outstanding.

Action 2: Turing Fellowship

Update: DP is one of the recipients, a number of people are Turing Fellows and that there is one person in the institution who is seen as the PI (Principal Investigator), other people are not able in the matrix or data include themselves or be represented.

DR commented the RSF had raised an issue last year that awardees of prestigious fellowships such as the Turing Fellowship were classed as Co-I instead of PI on the central university system. Over the past summer, these have been devolved to the respective departments with academics being assigned the status of PI against their fellowship, or other similar grants. The forum has been instrumental in pursuing this issue.

ACTION: Completed

Action 3: Warwick Monash Alliance

Mathew Evans from Strategy and Policy attended the RSF on 22 May and spoke about the Warwick Alliance and the process, SS reported she appreciated the feedback. This action is now completed.

ACTION: Completed

All attendees confirmed the notes are an accurate record of the meeting.

## 3. Support Feedback

### Organisational Development (OD) – Sandy Sparks

SS circulated to the forum the RAS [one-pager](#) document, SS highlighted that the first two items are retrospective, looking at last year, the annual statistics -200 attended bespoke sessions, a 50% increase in 1-1 support of individuals. A lot of departments use this information for their Athena Swan submission – a RAS 1-1 support [Impact Report 18/19](#) has been put together by SS. The second is around the Leadership programme, for the last 5 years SS has run the Vitae based Leadership programmes ([Leadership in Action](#) and [Preparing for Leadership](#)). This academic year Preparing for Leadership has been replaced with a new leadership programme [Effective Collaboration for RAS](#) which is running on the 21 and 28 November (places are still available).

The next RSF will take place on 04 February 2020 (term 2) and 13 May 2020 (term 3) – JC will be looking for Chairs. Upcoming events include [Academic Writing: Being a Prolific Writer](#) – 24 October 2019 (useful to attend before Retreat ‘Bootcamp’ – covers Murray’s and Brown’s prompt). New for 2019/20 [Academic Writing: Unlock your Creativity – Creativity and Ideas Generation for Writing](#) – 25

November 2019. In response to fantastic feedback from RAS we will continue to run in terms 2 and 3 the 2 day [Academic Writing: Retreat 'Bootcamp'](#) - 5/6 March and 2/3 July 2020. Again, in response to demand/feedback we are running 2 additional one-day [Retreat 'Bootcamps'](#) in term 1. At these 'Retreats' there will be an Academic Writing Specialist available to offer advice, and give feedback. [Career Development: Managing your Research and Academic Career](#) - 19 November (places still available), the workshop is vitae based and is the last time SS will be running the workshop – topics include CVs, work/life balance and how do you articulate and evidence what you do. SS delivered her final [Introduction to Unconscious Bias workshop](#) on 15 October, however, colleagues from within OD will continue to run the workshop in 2019/20.

### **Collaborations:**

The Library will be running workshops on Data Management, Open Access and Communicate your Research (formerly Planning your Publication Strategy), for further details see [RAS website](#). The Public Engagement team are also running various initiatives, for further details see [RAS website](#).

SS outlined her bespoke work: for the second year SS presented for Warwick Medical School (WMS) to doctors also doing PhDs on 'Effective Networking', and recently SS has presented a workshop on Building Resilience again to WMS. Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) have asked SS to present in November, as part of their Athena Swan submission, on On-line Presence/Profiling. For the fourth time WMS have asked SS to present on Emotional Intelligence in Teaching. WMS have also asked SS to present on Career Stories for Women on 4 November as part of their Athena Swan submission – SS highlighted this event is not just exclusive to women everybody is welcome.

Having been at Warwick for 10 years SS undertook an exercise 'A reflection of a decade at Warwick', SS commented it was lovely to see what has been implemented at Warwick, the initiatives etc – this is available for all to read in the [September RAS e-newsletter](#) (page 5) and [October RAS e-newsletter](#) (page 3).

SS drew to the attention of the forum the University's [Values](#) document – based on the unhelpful press and awful situation the University found itself in – it includes the University's Five Guided Principles, namely (1) We treat with Respect, (2) We do not tolerate discrimination, (3) We do not tolerate Sexual Misconduct, Violence or Abuse, (4) We keep our Campus safe and (5) 'We' means all of us, students and staff alike.

[Global Research Priorities \(GRP\)](#) - formerly Research Priorities then became Global Priority Programme (GPP). GRP has recently had a big re-vamp. GRP was started by Professor Koen Lamberts when he was PVC for Research. There are 7 Global Research Priorities – SS encouraged RAS to familiarise themselves and be mindful of these.

SS acknowledged that Mairi-Ann Cullen wasn't present, however in her absence wanted to thank her for, and acknowledge, all her hard work and fantastic contribution and input to the RSF, particularly when the focus was related to contract researchers, their fixed-term contracts etc. Mairi-Ann was the RSF representative on both the University's Research Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee. Mairi-Ann is the only person left in Warwick who has the intelligence of the RSF. Together with SS and Sandra Beaufoy she also helped with HR Excellence in Research by evidencing our achievements.

SS then highlighted the revised [Concordat](#) to Support the Career Development of researchers which was launched on 11 September, it talks about 10 days of development (not 10 days of courses) it highlights different ways that individuals can develop.

When submitting bids/grants it is important that you are aware of the concordat. SS drew to the RSFs attention her [one-pager](#) document around bids and grants which is available on the RAS website.

EA told the RSF that she feels she speaks for everybody when she expresses a massive 'thank-you' to Sandy for all her hard work for the research staff across the university by offering a programme and support structure which has been so very closely tailored to the situation and work of researchers – her support is immeasurable and invaluable. Sandy will be a sheer impossible act to follow.

### **Human Resources (HR) - Justine Pearson**

JP updated the forum on the following topics

- Success Factors is now live and all queries go through AskHR
- There is no longer HR reception, please be mindful of this when arranging to meet any colleagues in HR. Staff University cards are now managed by reception.
- Some HR staffing updates; Karen Weymouth starts 8 January 2020 in the post Director of HR Strategy. Michelle Stuteley starts 21 October 2019 in the post Interim HR Shared Services Director
- Brexit – there is a working group looking at this. Webpages are continually updated to advise on impact and guide colleagues, particularly those who hold visas.
- Potential strike action might take place over pension and pay. Further details will be communicated as appropriate.
- Pulse survey is expected to be out December 2019/January 2020.

### **Researcher Committee**

SS reported that this committee has not met yet this term and that there has been a transition from Sharifah Sekalala (SSe) to Elisabeth Arweck EA) being the RSFs representative. SS thank SSe for representing the RSF for a number of years.

### **Learning and Development Centre/OD**

SS reported over 10 years ago the plan was for a one-stop shop where staff could go – although it wasn't responsible for all of their training. As a result different teams and initiatives exist around learning and development. It's about making it easier, helping new staff on fixed term contracts to be aware of the Library, OD, IAS etc.

## **4. Focus on**

### **Public Engagement Team – Alison Phillips**

AP spoke to the RSF about the PE Team, what's happening within it, and what it offers. She highlighted:

Public Engagement Fund, apply for up to £1000 to support a public engagement activity, closing date 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2019: <https://warwick.ac.uk/about/publicengagement/support/funding/pe-fund-2019-20>

Public Engagement Training: All our courses for 2019/20 are now live:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/about/publicengagement/support/training/current/>

Contact us, get in touch via the PE email resource account at [public-engagement@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:public-engagement@warwick.ac.uk).

We also run a weekly drop in, every Wednesday 1-3pm in University House Café/Atrium.

For further information view her [presentation](#) or the PE [website](#).

### **Technicians Commitments - Ian Hancox and Elizabeth Harrison**

SS commented that some of this may not be related to what you do, however, it may be relevant to colleagues or people you supervise who are interacting or working with the technicians.

IH and EH outlined what's happening with Technicians commitment. For further details see the [Technicians Commitment brochure](#) and the [presentation](#) given to the forum.

### **Interdisciplinary Journals – Gareth Johnson**

GJ spoke about the Exchanges Interdisciplinary Journal, of which he's the Managing Editor-in-Chief. The journal is managed and published by the Institute of Advanced Study (IAS), and was founded in 2013 by members of the institute's early career fellows scheme. The journal has been, and remains, a title by and for early career and post-graduate researchers. It is explicitly (diamond) open access and doesn't levy any fees on authors or readers. Additionally, authors retain copyright in their publications, and licence them to appear in Exchanges. Normally published twice a year, in 2020 Exchanges will be publishing two additional special issues (climate fiction and utopian/dystopian perceptions, and cannibalism), developed in collaboration with Warwick and Monash PGRs. The journal accepts both peer review and non-peer reviewed submissions, which while originally largely came from Warwick, now increasingly are international in origin. Gareth noted this continued internationalisation of the journal's content, and collaborators, was a key goal for the title.

The journal has two key ambitions. Firstly to foster and enable an interdisciplinary discourse among emerging scholars, and secondly to provide a developmental platform for authors, editors and reviewers; in line with the IAS' ideology and mission. The developmental role means Exchanges' editors work with authors who submit weaker, but credible, manuscripts to produce articles worthy of publication, developing stronger authorial voices. Editors too learn from the experience of guiding authors and assisting reviewers, alongside deepening their understanding of publishing processes, ethics and policy. Additionally, thanks to Gareth's strong scholarly publishing research background alongside his practical expertise, he contributes insight, training and expertise to summer schools, researcher training and conferences on topics including: peer review, academic writing, effective communications and editorial practice.

The editorial board (editors) of the journal are all early career researchers, drawn from Warwick and the IAS/Warwick's global research partners, and guided by Gareth conduct much of the editorial labour and contribute to shaping Exchanges' direction. The journal has also this year introduced an associate editor role, linked to the special issues and drawn from Monash and Warwick's PGR community. Alongside this, some IAS fellows act as brand ambassadors for the title. Practically, the Library maintains the journal's platform. Gareth noted he warmly welcomes approaches from across the institution to discuss publishing, explore potential collaborations or exchange scholarly publishing experiences. Further information on Exchanges including its calls for publication, social media presence and contact details can all be found on its website ([exchanges.warwick.ac.uk](http://exchanges.warwick.ac.uk)). GJ circulated the [Exchanges](#) leaflet

### **Julie Robinson – The Library**

#### [Presentation](#)

JR introduced some of the key areas in which the Library supports the research community at Warwick.

**Academic Support Librarians:** The Library's [Academic Support \(Teaching & Learning\) Team](#) provides information and guidance on using Library resources for research and are also happy to discuss requirements around resources not currently available via the Library.

**Research Data Management:** The Library has a dedicated Research Data Officer who can provide support and guidance with all aspects of [managing your research data](#), including creating data management plans and how to organise, preserve and share your data.

**WRAP & Open Access:** The Library hosts [WRAP](#), the University's institutional repository and also [administers grant funding](#) for UKRI and the Charities Open Access Fund (COAF) to enable researchers funded by these bodies to make their work available by the 'gold' route to Open Access.

Scholarly Communications: JR supports researchers with all aspects of communicating their research, including planning a publication strategy, [dissemination](#) and the responsible use of citation and alternative metrics to evaluate impact. The Library also offers advice on [copyright](#).

The Library contributes sessions on Communicating Your Research and Research Data Management to the Researcher Development programme, which are also open to Research Active Staff. These can be booked via the [RAS events page](#)

### **Warwick in Africa – Sandy Sparks**

Post the Leadership in Action (LiA) where SS talked about development opportunities two RAS staff successfully applied for Warwick in Africa and found it amazing. They went to Tanzania and South Africa. Helped with connections/collaborations. If you considering applying for Warwick in Africa do contact [Holly Heshmati](#) or [Miriam Schwiening](#) The majority of Warwick in Africa is for staff, Holly and Miriam are staff and they went out as mentors/advisors building capability and capacity with teachers in Africa/Tanzania. Ideal for staff keen to work in developing areas.

### **REF2021 – Sandy Sparks and Sam Cole**

SS noted that the University's REF 2021 code of practice (COP) was accepted by Research England on 19 August 2019. OD has run sessions for HoDs, members of decision-making bodies and those involved in REF preparations to provide training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. For the REF2021 there are different rules. SS shared a [REF handout](#). Declaration of staff circumstances is voluntary. Applicable circumstances are set out in the University's REF 2021 Code of Practice and the REF 2021 Guidance on Submissions. SS stressed it's extremely important people have the correct information. Sam Cole confirmed he is here today talk about staff circumstances for REF2021 and answer any questions people may have on staff circumstances including the definition of early career researcher. The key difference between REF 2014 and REF 2021 is that all eligible staff will be submitted – in REF 2014 staff were selected. People ask what is the REF criteria/code of practice – this is available on the [R&IS website](#). In REF 2021, individuals must be submitted with a minimum of one output and can be submitted with up to a maximum of five outputs. The number per individual can be flexed within that range as long as there is an average of 2.5 outputs per FTE in the unit of submission. SS commented that people are concerned if they disclose special circumstances where does that information go? Staff circumstance disclosures are reviewed by the REF Staff Circumstances Group as set out in the University's Code of Practice and also in a memo sent to research staff on 16 October 2019. Information pertaining to staff circumstances is destroyed upon completion of the REF. The University's website [REF Planning](#) is also very useful.

### **IAS Associate Fellowships – Becky Vipond**

As the result of an administrative error BV was unable to speak to the RSF. BV would have detailed the various funding opportunities that IAS currently have available for academic colleagues, including the new IAS Associate Fellowship, which gives current members of postdoctoral staff access to IAS training and other opportunities. Full details of all IAS schemes can be found by using the links below

[IAS Website](#)

[IAS Associate Fellowships](#)

[Advanced Study Schemes 2019](#)

## 5. Miscellaneous

SS drew the forum to a close stressing that this is not the usual format of the meeting, emphasising she wanted to make everybody aware of all the different learning and development opportunities. What we normally do is start as we did today namely the purpose of the RSF, support staff update (HR, OD) and then have one 'focus on' topic. We normally (but didn't today) give everybody the chance to update the RSF on what's happening in their area, RAS Network, or department highlighting their concerns and successes etc. Therefore when you receive the draft notes please can you add this information including dates of any events happening within the RAS networks you're involved with. Please send this information to Jane at [researcherqueries@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:researcherqueries@warwick.ac.uk)

### **Elisabeth Arweck**

CES

EA had no news to report from CES

### **Helen Ascroft**

WMG

RAS Network Lead: WMG Researcher Forum

### **Asmaa EL-Banna**

WMS

RAS Network Lead: Research Active Staff Network or Imitative: Chew Seminar Series

This year the seminar series is being run by Asmaa El-Banna and Felicity Langer, Asmaa is leading the series and Felicity is acting a supporting role. The leading role will be passed onto Felicity next year with a new member of staff supporting. We have adopted this model since the start of the activity as it gives everyone the opportunity to become involved in the organisation of the seminar series.

Our network was previously known as the Health Economics Journal Club, reflecting the initial format. The activity has in recent years developed into more of a seminar series, for this reason we felt it was appropriate to reflect this in our name which has this year been updated to the Centre for Health Economics at Warwick (CHEW) seminar series.

There are eight seminars planned, two will be delivered by internal speakers and six by external speakers from academic institutions across the country, including UCL, Bristol University and the University of Birmingham. The first seminar is on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November with one scheduled every month up to June 2020. The seminars will be an opportunity for health economists to present and discuss recent work and acts as a platform for the initiation of collaboration across universities

### **Jane Cummins**

Research & Impact Services (R&IS)

### **Samantha Flynn**

CEDAR

RAS Network Lead: Education and Psychology Research Active Network (EPRAN)

### **Aruni Fonseka**

Physics

RAS Network Lead: Physics Post-doctoral Research Active Staff (inc. those on fixed term contract).

The Physics Post-doctoral and Research Active Staff Network seeks to introduce and expose research staff on fixed term contracts to services that are available within the university in terms of career progression in academia and industry. This is aimed to be done in a form that is specially catered for the focus group. Three events with one focusing on academic careers and another on industrial careers will be held over lunch. The third event aims to showcase the research carried out by the

early career researchers in the department and facilitate collaboration within the group. As a secondary objective, with ample networking time allocated during each event, this RAS Networks hopes to facilitate collegiality and networking within the group, so that a common forum is built to discuss and resolve matters related to this group of staff members.

**Cinzia Imberti**

Chemistry

Representative from PSoC (Postdoctoral Society of Chemistry)

**Reza Kashtiban**

Physics

**Emma Langley**

CEDAR

RAS Network Lead: Education and Psychology Research Active Network (EPRAN)

**Deepak Parashar**

WMS

RAS Network Lead: WMS Medical Statistics Book and Journal Club

**Jessica Savage**

Cross Faculty Studies

**Sharifah Sekalala**

Law

SSE had nothing to report from Law

**Sarah Wilson**

WMG

RAS Network Lead: WMG Researcher Forum

SW outlined the events the WMG Researcher Forum are planning – for further information visit this [link](#)

**Kathryn Woods**

Faculty of Arts

RAS Network Lead: The Early Career Writers Group:

The Faculty of Arts Early Career Writers' Group provides support for early career research active staff in the Faculty of Arts through a mixture of regular writing retreat 'bootcamps', career development sessions, and social events and opportunities. The group aims to bring together researchers at similar career stages from across departments in the Faculty of Arts to promote collaboration, interdisciplinary activity, and a sense of learning community. Although seen to be of particular benefit for early career academics, the group aims to be as inclusive as possible and also welcomes more established staff, visiting scholars, and PhD students.

From the **14th October**, the group will meet **every Monday** (except in week 6) in the **Wolfson Research Exchange 4-6.30** for an **academic writing bootcamp**. Attendees can use this time to work on writing projects, such as articles, grant and funding applications, book proposals, lectures and conference papers.

## **Stephanie Whitehead**

Institute of Global Sustainable Development

The Institute for Global Sustainable Development is Warwick's hub for transdisciplinary research on global sustainable development. We co-create research that crosses disciplinary borders and collaborate with stakeholder communities to achieve effective and equitable long-term impact.

We emphasise the need for robust monitoring and evaluation as a means for delivering change.

We will be holding events, developing training in collaboration with R&IS and building the GSD community in Warwick and externally with stakeholders. The best way to keep in touch with our activity is to [subscribe to our monthly newsletter](#). We are keen to engage with departments and would be happy to come and talk at staff meetings.

SS stated, finally, I would just like to thank everybody for their enthusiasm, support and involvement in the RSF, I wish you all the best with your careers as you move forward.

### **6. Any other Business**

Due to time constraints no further business was discussed.

### **7. Next Meeting**

Date: Tuesday 4 February 2020

Time: 12.00 – 14.00 (lunch available from 11.30)

Venue: Wolfson 2, The Research Exchange, Floor 3, The Library

Chair: To be confirmed.