

CRS Forum 18
April 20th, 2005

Present: Shona Agarwal (Division of Health in the Community, Medical School), Ruth Ayres (CAP), Chris Coe (SHSS) minutes, Mairi-Ann Cullen (CEDAR), Sarah Dahl (Institute of Education), Michelle Ellefson (Psychology), Marie Garnett (CAP), Phillip Gould (Biological Sciences), Jenny O'Leary (Careers) Mark Potter (Physics)

Nikki Muckle (RSS) & Larry Atwood (RSS) for items 1-4.

Apologies: Emily Clewes (HRI), Dawn Hindle (CELTE).

1. Minutes from the last Meeting

It was agreed that the notes represented an accurate record of discussion at the last meeting.

2. Matters arising

There was a request for further clarification from the Job Evaluation Team about the constitution of the panel which makes the grading decisions in the Job Evaluation Scheme and whether researchers would be graded under the new scheme: Academic or Academic-related.

Action: Marie Garnett to pursue this query with Claire Smith from the Job Evaluation team.

3. Support available through Research Support Services (RSS)

Larry Atwood and Nikki Muckle outlined the support available to researchers through RSS and presented a leaflet to the group which summarised their key roles within the University. These areas of support included help with funding opportunities, putting together research applications, support pre- and post-award and promotion of cross-disciplinary links for bids.

Attention was drawn to the possible streams of funding available to CRS, such as funding for specific training, funding for travel to conferences and mobility funding to allow people to move around the EU Community (*Marie Curie Stream*). Larry encouraged interested CRS to consult the RSS WebPages for further details and contact him to explore these opportunities.

4. Study Leave for Research Staff

Marie Garnett reported that the CRS Forum has been successful in its efforts to secure improved accessibility of the Research Staff Study Leave Scheme for fixed-term researchers.

The University has now agreed that researchers with three years' continuous service (rather than the previous five years) should be eligible to apply for the fund. Additionally, there will now be two application deadlines, one in November (for researchers wishing to take study leave in the Spring or Summer terms) and one in March (for researchers wishing to take study leave in the Autumn Term). This should help fixed term researchers, who inevitably have to plan according to shorter time frames than academic lecturers.

The Study Leave fund currently stands at £40,000 and application is on a competitive basis. The University is keen to increase high quality applications to the fund. Details of the fund application process and an application form will be placed on the CRS website at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/cap/skills/crs/leave/>

Action: Marie Garnett & Ruth Ayres to circulate this information amongst CRS reps and put details of the fund application process and an application form on the CRS website at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/cap/skills/crs/leave/>.

CRS reps to circulate and publicise this information amongst all CRS in their departments. Chris Coe to produce a proforma poster to help in this process.

5. Updates

i) Research Skills training

Marie Garnett & Ruth Ayres reported that they had each received a copy of the Summary of Responses to the Survey of CRS in Biological Sciences on Skills Training circulated by Philip Gould and Helen Bird. This report reiterated the findings of the Focus groups, in that the training needs to be as specific and flexible as possible in order to meet individuals' needs.

They also informed the group that the date for the ASDAC Extraordinary meeting to discuss this Skills Training had been set for 17th May 2005 at 10.00. A request was made for some volunteer CRS reps and supervisors to attend this meeting to represent the interests of staff from the different faculties across the University.

Ruth Ayres told the group that a summary of the findings from the focus groups was now available on the CRS website. The intention is to keep updating this information as the Skills Training Programme develops.

ii) CROS 2005

Marie Garnett thanked CRS reps for their help in publicising the CROS 2005 survey and for encouraging CRS to participate in the scheme. Unfortunately, there was a lower response rate (14%) than last year.

Some CRS reps reported that the format of the survey was not good. They found it difficult to fill in some of the sections online, and felt that this may have deterred some people from completing the survey.

iii) Changes to the CRS website

Ruth Ayres updated the group on the recent changes made to the website:

- There is now a link from the CAP homepage to the CRS website
- There is a link from the CRS front page to the list of CRS Reps and CRS contacts.

Action: CRS reps to check the details are correct for the CRS rep and CRS contact in their departments.

- The latest progress on the Skills Training Programme is now on the CRS website. The intention is to keep updating this site with the latest information as the Skills Training Programme develops.
- The Career Development web pages available on the CRS website are being updated, such that there will be a direct link to the designated CRS web pages provided by the Careers Service.

Action: CRS reps to email Jenny O’Leary (Careers Service) with any ideas/suggestions for this part of the website.

- Details of the Study Leave fund application process and an application form will be placed on the CRS website.

Action: Marie Garnett & Ruth Ayres to put details of the Study Leave fund application process and an application form on the CRS website at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/cap/skills/crs/leave/>

iv) Forthcoming events

Ruth Ayres told the group that the next “Welcome to Warwick” CRS Induction was planned for Wednesday 25th May from 12.00-14.00 in Ramphal 1.13. She thanked Mark Potter for his help in the last event and requested a volunteer/volunteers to come to support the next event.

Action: CRS reps interested in supporting this event to contact Ruth Ayres & all CRS reps to check their A4 progress posters are up-to-date and circulated to Ruth by 20th May 2005.

The feedback from this event suggests that the new, more informal structure with input from a number of the central support services had proved more popular with CRS than the former approach adopted to induction.

The next “Open House” event had been planned for 19th July from 12-2pm. There was some discussion around the value of continuing to hold this event. A proposal was made from CRS reps to combine this event with the “Welcome to Warwick” event.

Action: CRS Forum 19 to decide whether to hold the “Open House” event on 19th July, or whether to combine this with the next “Welcome to Warwick” event, which would be January/February 2006.

6. Social Events for CRS

Philip Gould announced the possibility of CRS joining the Biological Sciences Quiz night on 26th May 2005 at 6-7pm.

Action: Philip Gould to confirm that this would be possible with his Chair of Department & then email details of the event to CRS reps who would publicise the event in their respective departments and give Philip an idea of numbers attending from each department.

7. AOB

Philip Gould discussed a specific issue regarding redundancy terms and conditions and there was a general request from CRS reps to invite an AUT representative to Forum 19 to update the group on latest developments for CRS at both local and national levels.

8. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 31st May, 12-2pm, @ CAP, University House.
Michelle Ellefson & Mark Potter to Chair/Minute.