

Minutes, Board meeting of 26-27 February 2018

Present: Andrée Sursock, Chair (AS), Robert Henthorn (RH), Ellen Hazelkorn (EH), Frank Quinault (FQ), Norman Sharp (NS), Erna Sigurðardóttir (ES), Philip Winn (PW), and Sigurður Óli Sigurðsson (SÓS). Áslaug Helgadóttir (ÁH) on 26 February.

Excused: Barbara Brittingham (who provided comments on the documents in advance)

1. The minutes of the November 2017 Board meeting were adopted with modifications.
2. SÓS provided an update on government policy, higher education funding, and relevant higher education news since the last meeting.
3. SÓS provided an update on the BORE2 project, an EU-funded project awarded to Rannís that includes work packages related to training of students in internal and external QA in Iceland. The Board is ready to support LÍS; ES and RH will relay that message. SÓS will also extend the Board's support on this project to the Quality Council, if needed.
4. The Board discussed a possible commissioned review from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and agreed to bring this up with Una Strand Viðarsdóttir, when she joins the board the next day.
5. The Board discussed the May QEF conference on undergraduate participation in research and was informed that the Quality Council received six applications to discuss examples of how Icelandic universities have involved students in research. The Board discussed how this particular session will be organised.
6. PW presented the agenda for the upcoming first meeting of the Research Evaluation Advisory Committee (REAC). PW noted that the goal of the meeting is to clarify what REAC is about and agree on the key challenges for including research evaluation in QEF2 and on the nature of the Committee's work, mission and general orientation. The Board agreed to co-opt Ólöf Gerður Sigfúsdóttir, the Quality Director of the Icelandic Academy of the Arts, in the Committee as a full member. She was originally listed as an alternate member representing the Quality Council on the Committee, with Skúli Skúlason from Hólar University College as the regular member. SÓS will contact Ólöf to ask if she will accept the appointment.
7. The Board discussed the draft *Handbook for Quality Board Members (Handbook)* and agreed:
 - To specify that all Board and QEF2 operations are designed to be consistent with latest ESG and ENQA guidelines, and other good practice.
 - That the duration of appointment of Board members should be specified in a constitution to be developed for the Board.

- To include a general statement about when members are to leave meetings, which would be applicable to both members and observers.
- To describe the Board Secretariat as the liaison to the Quality Council (rather than the Council's Secretariat) to avoid any conflict of interest. The Board Secretariat works with Council members to clarify findings and understand the institutions' plans for follow-up in relation to Institution-Wide Reviews.
- To add a statement about the link between Rannís and the Board, and to note that the Board is housed within Rannís, which is independent of the government.
- To insert a glossary of abbreviations, including those of the universities.
- To add to Annex 1 a statement about the legal framework concerning accreditations.

8. The Board's application for ENQA Affiliate membership status is discussed.

9. The Board discussed the QEF website and suggested that the Rannís-specific border on the right side of the home page should be deleted from the Board website because it gives a misleading view of the staffing of the Board. SÓS will follow up with the Rannís webmaster.

10. The Board discussed the mission statement draft, which was changed following electronic input from Board members. A new draft was agreed upon and adopted.

11. Una Stand Viðarsdóttir from the Ministry joined the Board for a discussion on the application of the Board to ENQA and the planned May annual conference.

12. The Board discussed a proposed strategic plan. Barbara Brittingham urged caution in listing too many goals in the strategic plan. NS reformulated the objectives as consolidating, implementing QEF2, developing the research evaluation strand, and looking outwards, to ENQA for example. SÓS will send the new draft strategy to all Board members for electronic review. Once this document is finalised, an action plan will be developed, and input will be sought from the Ministry, the Quality Council, and LÍS. LÍS will pass comments through ES. ÁH will feed back responses from QC. Una will receive the document as Ministry representative. SÓS will do this formally via email. Comments will be requested within a four-week period.

13. The Board discussed the draft Guide for Team Chairs and Members. The Guide departs from the Handbook in relation to the writing process of Institution-Wide Review Reports. AS pointed out that to the extent that the change does not impact the universities it is possible to be flexible about that aspect of the process. Specifically, the Handbook states that the Board Chair and Secretariat oversee the writing, and that the review team members individually write sections of the report. The Board agreed that it is more advisable for the team chairs to be responsible for writing the reports based on bullet points written by the team members. The Secretary would be responsible for collecting the bullet points and transmitting them to the chair. In general, the Board agreed that the Handbook should include fewer sections that come straight from the Handbook. These should be replaced by references to paragraphs in the Handbook.

14. Representatives of LÍS joined the meeting: Aldís Mjöll Geirsdóttir, Chairperson, and David Mollberg, Quality Assurance Officer. They briefly recounted the history of the organisation, which represents the seven student unions of the Icelandic universities, as well as students abroad. A general assembly is held each year: equal access to education is the theme this year while last year's theme was quality assurance. The Executive Committee consists of two members from each member organisations, the chair, the international officer and the quality officer.

One of the most pressing item on LÍS's current agenda is working on changes to the student loan fund. Two recent bills to change it have not gone through. One of those had no input from students, and the other one had only token input from students. Now LÍS will have two seats on a committee to put together a new bill. LÍS has developed a position paper on the fund that is endorsed by all students.

The Ministry is now supporting LÍS financially, in addition to the funding it receives from the student unions. LÍS is active in meeting MPs and has already met with the new Education Minister twice, and one meeting is scheduled this same day. Topics in these meetings include student loans, data on the composition of the student body (social dimension). LÍS also observed the lack of a policy on higher education, and the importance of good data as a prerequisite for informed policy making. Specifically, LÍS noted that proposed changes to the funding model of the universities should be informed by data and a clear policy, both of which are absent to a large degree. LÍS also has a position letter that went to the Ministry about internships in Icelandic universities. The letter pointed out the lack of national rules concerning internships and put forth a request for these rules to be formulated.

The quality policy of LÍS will be shared with the Quality Board when it is ready. It includes sections on structural reforms, connections with the Ministry, and ESG as a basis for the evaluation of teaching and learning. At present, there is no reference to the Quality Board in the policy. Student representation within the universities is variable and could be strengthened; it is hoped that the new policy will help students in their involvement in the governance of universities.

LÍS is the only body in Icelandic higher education to have adopted an internationalisation policy, which is at this point only in Icelandic. It will be revised at this year's General Assembly, and LÍS's goal is for all policies to be reviewed every three years. The internationalisation policy addresses: the provision of courses in English, financial support for mobility, lack of information in English, lack of courses to learn Icelandic and the goal of reaching 40% for student mobility by 2020. LÍS has urged MESC to have an internationalisation policy.

The Board updated the LÍS representatives on the Board's wish to undergo ENQA review for full membership in the near future. Students will be interviewed by the ENQA review team. The Board noted that it would be useful to mention in LÍS's Quality Policy that ENQA membership will help with recognition of qualifications internationally.

Aldís and David stressed the need to develop training for students participating in Subject-Level Reviews. The Board offered support, if needed, in developing this training and mentioned that the Quality Council would be a good venue for discussions on how to reach students that are participating in internal QA.

Aldís and David left the meeting at 17:00.

15. The Board agreed that SÓS will create a one-page overview document on the ENQA review process to explain why the Board wishes to become full member. Included will be a Q&A to present ENQA, explain why the Board seeks full membership, what is required, and how it will involve its stakeholders. This document will be distributed to HEIs, students, etc.

16. The Board agreed that SÓS will create a one-page overview document of the Institution-Wide Review process. FQ will share a note that he wrote for Reviews in QEF1, and AS will share a similar note from her files.

17. The Board agreed that the annual meetings should include a discussion about preparing for an IWR with the institutions that are about to undertake an Institution-Wide Review. This discussion would emphasise that a variety of stakeholders need to be involved in the whole process of Institution-Wide Review, and not just stakeholders from the immediate university environment.

18. The Board discussed training for Institution-Wide Review team members and how to ensure that the team members and the chair understand the process fully. The Board agreed that it will be problematic to host group training events for team chairs, since some of the trainees would have a gap of two to three years between their training and the actual review.

PW noted that chairs need to be notified that a lot of work happens electronically before the visit. AS stressed the need for the training materials to be clear on expectations leading up to the Just-in-Time training of the whole team immediately preceding the visit. Before arrival to that training, the whole team needs to understand the QEF philosophy, the approach to the review, etc. This could be done via video conference before the visit and email afterwards, and the Board agreed to explore the possibility of developing parts of the training as e-modules. Finally, the Board agreed that, ideally, the review chair would visit the relevant institution approximately six weeks before the review visit. This could be synchronised with a Board meeting. SÓS will invite the Chair of the RU team to come around the September Board meeting to get an introduction to QEF2 and to visit the University.

As for the development of training materials, SÓS will prepare some extracts from previous Subject-Level Reviews that illuminate the contrast between SLRs that are both robust and illuminating, and ones that are perfunctory. SÓS will attempt to locate the transcript of an actual IWR session from QEF1 (if any are still available) as the basis for an exercise in extracting bullet points. AS will find an interview transcript in her collection and anonymise, for the same purpose. SÓS will extract materials from previous Reflective Analyses that would be the basis for an exercise in deploying the ESG frame of reference. FQ will develop a set of Headlines as the basis for an exercise in reaching confidence judgements. This could be a fictitious example.

19. The Board discussed the student member of the Reykjavik University Review Team.

20. May 14 at 15:00-16:30 is agreed for stakeholder focus group meetings. SÓS will invite all the external University Council members whose names were provided by the universities. Two parallel

sessions will be held if everybody can come. The invitation will explain the rationale and format of the meetings.

21. The schedule of the 2018 annual meetings was revised as follows:

Date	Time	Institution	Board Representative(s)
May 14	10-12	IAA	PW & AS & ES
	10-12 ¹	RU	NS
	10-12	AUI	EH & RH
Sep 24	10-12	BU	EH & RH
	10-12	UI	PW
	10-12	UNAK	NS & ES
	11-13	HUC	BB

On September 26, FQ will accompany the Chair of the RU Review Team to a meeting at the RU to prepare the Review Team visit in November.

¹ This was later changed to 12-14 pm.