

**SENATE**

**UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (UREC)**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 6 MARCH 2013**

Present: Dr R Chapman (Chair); Mr S Beer; Dr J Cobb; Mr D Gobbett; Dr M Hind; Dr D Lilleker; Dr G Roushan.

In Attendance: Mrs Julia Hastings Taylor (Secretary); Mrs J Sargeant (Committee Clerk)

Apologies: Mr I Carter; Prof H Schutkowski

**OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

**1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (3 October 2012)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

**1.1 Matters Arising**

**1.1.1 Social Media Policy**

Following discussion at the previous meeting on the use of Social Media within research, it was agreed that two members of the Committee would bring a proposal to the table at this meeting.

Dr Roushan confirmed that the use and potential misuse of social media had been considered by the University approximately 4 years ago and a decision had been taken that the responsibility for this should lie within Marketing & Communications as the use of the University's name and brand could be at risk. However, following issue of the guidelines, the Legal and IT departments also requested involvement.

In the light of this delay, and due to the range of e-learning programmes on offer, the Business School formed a set of rules which, should a student fail to adhere to, access to social media would immediately cease for that student and further relevant action would be taken if necessary.

Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that HR and Legal Services are currently putting together a Social Media Policy which would include guidelines on the use of the University's name, brand and other relevant issues. Mrs Hastings Taylor tabled an extract of a report from Vitae concerning the use of social media within research which confirmed that "ethical challenges existed when researchers employed the Web and social media in research projects". The paper posed questions to be considered but suggested no answers. The Chair confirmed that probable answers were also not covered by the University's Ethics Code of Practice.

Dr Hind confirmed that Dr Carol Bond of HSC was currently conducting a study on ethical issues and would be available should the Committee consider her work relevant.

Following detailed discussion on the complexity of consent rules, privacy settings and people's understanding of anonymity, it was agreed that Mrs Hastings Taylor should include the wording "intended for public consumption" within the online ethics checklist definition of 'literature'.

The Committee agreed the need for a set of strong guidelines which could be administered by each School as necessary.

**ACTION:** The wording "intended for public consumption" to be included within the online ethics checklist.

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY:** Mrs Hastings Taylor

1.1.2 All other Matters Arising were covered under Agenda items.

## 2. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP & STRUCTURE

Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that Dr Elizabeth Craig had left the University and that Prof Holger Schutkowksi would be her interim replacement. Following a question on any other changes, Dr Hind confirmed that he had recruited two further Ethics Representatives from within HSC who would assist with the workload rather than replace him on the Committee. Mr Beer confirmed that he would consult with the School of Tourism on his membership and revert to the next meeting of the Committee.

Following confirmation at the last meeting that he was reviewing his position, the Chair confirmed that a replacement was being sought and it was hoped a suitable candidate would be introduced at the June meeting when the Chair would formally step down. The Chair suggested that the independence of the Chair's position may be tested and that any candidate would require a strong knowledge of ethics alongside experience of the non-academic world. The Chair confirmed that the formal appointment of someone new to the position lay with the Chair of Senate.

Dr Cobb requested clarification on the suggested 3 year maximum tenure for Committee Members. The Chair confirmed that both the Ethics Review and the Committee's Terms of Reference recommended a 3 year maximum tenure but that consideration should also be given to the stability of a Committee with relevant valuable experience. Should Committee members wish to resign, consideration should be given to a staggered approach to avoid the loss of experienced members at the same time.

3. **UPDATE REPORT [confidential]**  
[minutes redacted]

4. **INFORMATION REPORT [confidential]**  
[minutes redacted]

## SCHOOL SPECIFIC MATTERS

### 5. RESEARCH ETHICAL APPROVAL: SCHOOL OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that [confidential], had recommended that the project be considered by this Committee due to its complexity and the involvement of students who may be at risk.

The Chair confirmed that the project's supervisor, [confidential] was a well-respected researcher in his field and that it was anticipated he would have carried out a peer review. The Chair therefore considered whether it was necessary for the Committee to consider the methodology and provide an ethical decision.

Following discussion it was agreed that there was concern about the scientific aspects of the project, as well as doubt as to whether a methodology review had taken place and lack of knowledge that a risk assessment had been carried out. It was therefore agreed that the Chair would write to [confidential] at the School of Applied Sciences expressing these concerns and recommending that a second peer review should take place.

**ACTION:** A letter to be drafted for the Chair to send to the School of Applied Sciences indicating concerns about the project raised by the Committee and recommending a second peer review.

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY:** Chair/Mrs Hastings Taylor

## 6. SCHOOLS' COMPLIANCE & AUDIT REPORTS

Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that as the online ethics checklist had not been long in existence, there was nothing of note to report. Although minor glitches had been encountered, the form was now proceeding smoothly. A further verbal report would be given at the June committee meeting.

In connection with an audit, Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that data going back to 1 January 2013 concerning grants, (projects where an academic had received funding), was being reviewed.

Following concern expressed by Dr Lilleker that he had been unable to access certain data on the site, Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that it was available and that she would speak with him outside of the meeting.

## 7. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY SCHOOL ETHICS REPRESENTATIVES

### 7.1 Journalism and Research (D Lilleker, Media School)

Dr Lilleker confirmed that this agenda item had been covered and discussed under Item 3. (Update Report – Trevor Hearing)

Dr Hind confirmed that he would speak with Mrs Hastings Taylor post meeting on any relevant issues specific to HSC and the Chair requested that any actions be taken accordingly.

## 8. REPORTS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEES

None to report.

## TRAINING

### 9. CPD TRAINING

Mrs Hastings Taylor confirmed that no training had yet been organised but indicated that relevant training was being considered for the Committee's Autumn meeting.

### 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 Mr D Gobbett confirmed that he had recently taken on responsibility for the consultation activities of Dorset County Council. The Council has a contract with Bournemouth University to assist it with the organisation of the Citizens Panel and the analysis of Panel consultations. Following Mr Gobbett's concern that there could therefore be a conflict of interest with his duties as a member of the University's Research Ethics Committee, the Chair thanked him for his declaration and confirmed that there would be no conflict.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

Wednesday 12 June 2013      12.30 – 14.30      Room P409

Jill Sargeant  
Committee Clerk  
UREC-1213-Minutes 6 March 2013