



Department of Governance

<b>RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>Minutes of the meeting held 29 November 2017</b>		
<b>Present:</b>	Professor A. Boateng, Dr L. Gray (Chair), Professor J. Harris, Professor B. Kumar, Dr A. O'Hagan, Professor O. Pahl, Dr B. Stansfield,	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mr P. Woods (Secretary)	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr C. Daisley, Ms D. Dickie, Professor D. Harrison, Professor B. Steves, Professor J. Woodburn	
<b>MINUTES</b>		
<b>017.043</b>	<b>Considered</b>	Minutes of the meeting of the Research Degrees Committee held on 4 October 2017 <b>(RDC17/10/01)</b> .
<b>017.044</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the minutes be approved as correct record.
<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>		
<b>Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy (Arising on RDCM 017.023)</b>		
<b>017.045</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Chair that there was no paid maternity leave for PGR students at the moment as employment contracts for students were casual hours contracts.
<b>Fees Benchmarking (Arising on RDCM 017.027)</b>		
<b>017.046</b>	<b>Reported</b>	That Professor Steves had provided fees data for information which would be circulated <b>(Action: RDC Secretary)</b> .
<b>REFRESH OF EXAMINATION PROCESS AND REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES</b>		
<b>017.047</b>	<b>Considered</b>	A draft refresh of Research Degree Examination Process and regulations <b>(RDC17/03/02)</b> .
<b>017.048</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Chair that a number of amendments had been incorporated and there were a few remaining questions which were outlined.

017.049	Discussion	<p><b>Mechanism for nominating Chairs of viva examinations</b></p> <p>Opinion was divided amongst members and current practice varied in Schools. Depending on the School, some HoDs were involved, whereas others deferred to the ADR. The rationale for involving HoDs was that was that they were closer to individual staff and had line management responsibility. The counter argument was that they were not always research active or involved in supervising research degrees.</p> <p>Members discussed allowing flexibility to allow for appropriate local solutions emphasising that the nomination should be from “senior” staff with appropriate experience.</p> <p>Members also discussed options for training Chairs, such as shadowing.</p>
017.050	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the section on Chairing examinations is updated to emphasise that the experience of senior staff should be used in nominating chairs.</li> <li>2. That options for training are discussed with Director of Graduate School.</li> </ol>
017.051	Discussion	<p><b>Electronic Format of Submission</b></p> <p>It was suggested that there was potential for confusion between “hard” and “soft” copy and that there may be an argument for electronic submission only. Members generally thought not at the moment however the aim of this regulation was, in part, to allow for Turnitin submission and electronic submission was important.</p> <p>The University had a Policy and Procedure for use of Turnitin but the requirement to use it was decided at a local (e.g. programme/module) level.</p>
017.052	Discussion	<p><b>External examiners</b></p> <p>One member suggested applying stricter criteria regarding time allowed between examinations for externals, but in general members were content with the text as it stood.</p> <p>It was felt that 3 years for former members of staff and 2 years between external examining duties was reasonable, with small degree of flexibility where the field is particularly specialised.</p>
017.053	Resolved	That a note is added to allow for flexibility in specialised fields.
017.054	Discussion	<p><b>Declaration of Originality</b></p> <p>The Chair stated that this was intended to be a declaration of originality by the candidate and was intended to place responsibility firmly on the candidate regarding the avoidance of plagiarism. It recognised that the candidate could submit the thesis without the agreement of the Director of Studies.</p> <p>Members were supportive of adding the Director of Studies statement where they do not agree with submission.</p>
017.055	Discussion	<p><b>Date of Viva</b></p> <p>Members discussed an appropriate time between submission and examination. 8 weeks was thought to be reasonable.</p>

<b>017.056</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Re-examinations</b> Members felt that should only be one re-examination attempt, and that only minor amendments should be allowed as the outcome
<b>017.057</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That a revised version of the document be brought back to the next meeting.
<b>AOCB</b>		
<b>External examiners fees</b>		
<b>017.058</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By Professor Boateng that the external examiners fees were below the average for the sector. He proposed that this should be reviewed with a view to bringing GCU into line with other HEIs.
<b>017.059</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	Some members felt that the rate was normally unimportant to examiners and were more concerned about their hospitality budgets.
<b>017.060</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That sector norms are reviewed before further discussion with Registry.
<b>RESEARCH DEGREE EXAM APPROVALS &amp; AWARDS</b>		
<b>017.061</b>	<b>Received</b>	A record of examinations and awards ratified since the previous meeting of RDC ( <b>RDC17/06/01</b> ). The Chair asked senior PGFRTs and PGRTs to review the norm within their cognate areas and report back to RDC
<b>RESEARCH PROGRESSION AND AWARDS BOARDS</b>		
<b>017.062</b>	<b>Received:</b>	The confirmed minutes of: 1. SEBE RPAB 2 March 2017 ( <b>RPAB/SEBE/16/75</b> ). 2. SEBE RPAB 24 May 2017 3. SEBE RPAB 5 July 2017 4. GSBS RPAB 1 March 2017 ( <b>RPAB/GSBS/16/58</b> ).