



Department of Governance

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| <b>RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE</b>  |   |   |
| <b>Minutes of the meeting held 17 April 2019</b>                                       |   |   |
| <b>Present:</b>  | Dr B. Ahmed, Ms H. Akalu, Professor D. Edgar. Professor J. Harris, Professor D. Harrison, Dr L. Gray (Chair), Dr K. Halcro, Professor A. Klemm, Ms F. Morrow, Ms Y. Ogedengbe, Professor O. Pahl, Dr B. Stansfield, Professor B. Steves |   |
| <b>In attendance:</b>  | Ms D. Dickie, Mr D. Moore, Dr G Poulter, Mr P. Woods (Secretary)  |   |
| <b>Apologies:</b>  | Dr S. Hagan, Dr M-A. Houston, Dr N. Lombard,  |   |
| <b>MINUTES</b>   |   |   |
| <b>018.057</b>   | <b>Considered</b>   | Minutes of the meeting of the Research Degrees Committee 6 February 2019 ( <b>RDC18/17/01</b> ).  |
| <b>018.058</b>   | <b>Resolved</b>   | That the minutes be approved as correct record subject to the following amendments:<br>At 018.056 it should be noted that induction is <i>not</i> compulsory but it is compulsory for induction to be offered to student. |
| <b>MATTERS ARISING</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Working Group on streamlining reporting processes</b> ( <i>Arising on 018.046</i> ) |   |   |
| <b>018.059</b>   | <b>Reported</b>   | By Professor Steves that she proposed combining the work of this working group with that of the group considering the transition to writing up.   |
| <b>Research Degrees Code of Practice Refresh</b> ( <i>Arising on 018.048</i> )         |   |   |
| <b>018.060</b>   | <b>Reported</b>   | By Professor Steves that some of the wording had caused concern for students and she would revise the text in order to clarify and allay concerns.  |
| <b>018.061</b>   | <b>Discussion</b>   | Members discussed campus spaces available to PGR students. Professor Steves stated that there was a developing estates plan and students were part of that ongoing discussion.  |

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| <b>SENIOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH TUTOR/ POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH TUTOR</b>   |                   |   |
| <b>018.062</b>   | <b>Considered</b> | A revised draft of the SPGRT/PGRT role profiles including professional doctorate role ( <b>RDC15/08/03</b> ).   |
| <b>018.063</b>   | <b>Resolved</b>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That subject to minor changes, the profiles be approved.</li> <li>2. That the GCU London Lead draft a GCU London specific profile (<b>Action: GCU London Lead</b>).</li> </ol>  |
| <b>POST GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT EXPERIENCE (PGRSE) THEMATIC REVIEW</b> |                   |   |
| <b>018.064</b>   | <b>Considered</b> | The PGRSE Thematic Review Action Plan ( <b>RDC18/19/01</b> )  |
| <b>018.065</b>   | <b>Reported</b>   | By Professor Steves that the Action Plan had now been reviewed by APPC and following some revisions, a final version would go back to APPC on 1 May 2019 and thereafter to Senate. All actions should be completed by September 2019.   |
| <b>018.066</b>   | <b>Resolved</b>   | That the revised action plan be noted.  |
| <b>PGR DEGREES FEES</b>  |                   |   |
| <b>018.067</b>   | <b>Considered</b> | A discussion of required actions relating to the PGR degree fees 2019-20 and 2020-2021 ( <b>RDC18/21/01</b> ).  |
| <b>018.068</b>   | <b>Reported</b>   | <p>By Professor Steves that the fees for 2020-21 were being developed at Executive level. The Executive Board make the decision on fees but the Board had asked for a steer from research colleagues resulting in this benchmarking summary and recommendations. Due to a limited timescale to provide this for EB, there had not been time to do the same for the professional doctorate and it would require further scrutiny.</p> <p>The timescales were a key recommendation i.e. to bring the University in line with RCUK.</p>  |
| <b>018.069</b>   | <b>Discussion</b> | <p>A member asked if the alumni discount would apply regardless of ability to pay. Professor Steves replied that the discount would apply to all alumni.</p> <p>Another member asked if there was clarity on whether a candidate could have both an alumni discount and a studentship. Professor Steves replied that this was not clear in policy terms although custom and practice suggested that it was not the case in practice. There was a need to clarify this as well as other matters relating to research degree fees, such as writing up/final year fees.</p> <p>Members were uneasy about charging full fees for students taking longer than expected and who may be currently designated as writing up. Professor Steves agreed that it was the role of the working group to define where students transition to writing up and avoid disadvantaging students in this category. The aim would be to provide clarity on current policy.</p> <p>It was clarified that “non standard” meant professional doctorate.</p> |
| <b>018.070</b>   | <b>Resolved</b>   | That the update be noted.   |

| <b>GCU LONDON RESEARCH TRAINING</b>                                      |                   |   |
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| <b>018.071</b>   | <b>Considered</b> | Items raised by GCU London student representative ( <b>RDC18/20/01</b> ).   |
| <b>018.072</b>   | <b>Reported</b>   | By Ms Akala that she was raising what appeared to be a disparity between provision for GCU London and provision for Glasgow-based students. She cited a number of examples of workshops run in Glasgow which did not run in London and noted the breadth of provision was also lesser in London. Finally she cited a lack of engagement between the research communities in London and Glasgow.   |
| <b>018.073</b>   | <b>Discussion</b> | <p>Members agreed there were a number of factors that would explain the differences highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all workshops are suitable for remote delivery</li> <li>• Differing requirements for the cohorts in London and Glasgow</li> <li>• Possible funding constraints</li> </ul> <p>Funding was discussed but members were satisfied that it was not just a matter of funding and, for example, it was unreasonable to ask GCU London students to travel regularly to Glasgow for training opportunities, regardless of the cost.</p> <p>It was highlighted that engagement with a wider research community could mean more than engaging with Glasgow-based cohorts alone i.e. there were opportunities to engage with local researchers in the London area.</p> <p>Professor Steves agreed this was part of a wider discussion to be had with the GCU London student representative and GCU London staff. Not everything required at the Glasgow campus is required at London and these needs change as students arrive and leave. Gaps now need to be identified but an annual conversation about requirements was necessary.</p> |
| <b>018.074</b>   | <b>Resolved</b>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the dialogue continues (<b>Action: GCU London Student Representative/Director Graduate School</b>).</li> <li>2. That an update is brought back to the next meeting (<b>Action: GCU London Lead</b>).</li> </ol>  |
| <b>RPAB TERMS OF REFERENCE AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE: REFRESH</b> |                   |   |
| <b>018.075</b>   | <b>Considered</b> | The final draft of the terms of reference, membership and SOP ( <b>RDC18/07/02</b> ).   |
| <b>018.076</b>   | <b>Reported</b>   | By the Secretary that the changes recommended by RDC had now been incorporated.   |
| <b>018.077</b>   | <b>Resolved</b>   | That the Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedure be approved.   |
| <b>RDC TERMS OF REFERENCE REFRESH</b>                                    |                   |   |
| <b>018.078</b>   | <b>Considered</b> | A minor refresh of the Terms of Reference to respond to the Thematic Review Action Plan ( <b>RDC18/22/01</b> ).   |

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| <b>018.079</b>                                     | <b>Reported</b> | By the Secretary that a rearrangement of the order of the terms of reference had been made to reflect the concerns of the Thematic Review Action plan.   |
| <b>018.080</b>                                     | <b>Resolved</b> | That the revision be approved.   |
| <b>AOB</b>   |                 |  |
| <b>018.081</b>                                     | <b>Reported</b> | By Professor Pahl that there was an issue with students on a stipend who appeal examination decisions whereby the timescales allowed for the process can mean the stipend continues to be paid during what is effectively a suspension period.                     |
| <b>018.082</b>                                     | <b>Resolved</b> | That sector norms in this area are investigated ( <b>Action: RDC Secretary</b> ).  |
| <b>RESEARCH DEGREE EXAM APPROVALS &amp; AWARDS</b> |                 |  |
| <b>018.083</b>                                     | <b>Received</b> | A record of examinations and awards ratified since the previous meeting of RDC ( <b>RDC18/18/01</b> )  |
| <b>RPAB MINUTES</b>                                |                 |  |
| <b>018.084</b>                                     | <b>Received</b> | The confirmed minutes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. GSBSE RPAB 4 December 2018 (<b>RPAB/GSBS/18/48</b>)</li> <li>ii. SHLS RPAB 30 January 2019 (<b>SHLSRPB/18/58</b>)</li> <li>iii. SCEBE RPAB 22 January 2019 (<b>RPAB/SEBE/18.68</b>)</li> </ul> |