

Graduate Board

11 August 2020

MINUTES

Venue:	Online via Zoom
Author:	Miss Lindsay McLoughlin
Present:	Professor Nigel King (Chair); Professor Monty Adkins (part); Dr Rowan Bailey (part); Ms Lydia Blundell; Dr Dougie Clarke; Mrs Judith Davison (part); Dr Glyn Hallam; Dr Jonathan Hinks; Dr Helen Jones; Adetayo Opakunle (SU); Mrs Cathie Raw; Ms Annette Rhodes (part); Mrs Joanne Ryan; Ms Chinyere Sam-Okerenta; Dr Anna Seabourne; Dr Abhijit Sharma; Miss Kirsty Taylor; Professor Liz Towns-Andrews (part).
In attendance:	Dr Christopher Bale.
Apologies:	Professor Andrew Ball; Ms Charlotte Bartley; Dr Rachel Birds; Mrs Emi Chiu, Dr Lisa Colton; Mr Martin Gill; Ms Tanya Horon; Mrs Heather Kerrick; Dr Dawn Leeming; Dr Julia Meaton; Mr Matt Mills; Professor Jane Owen-Lynch; Professor Dave Taylor; Dr Tracy Turner; Ms Tracy Wood.

PRELIMINARY ITEMS		Action
1.	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.	
2.	Membership and Terms of Reference AS highlighted that an early career researcher needs to be added to the membership, after which the Membership and Terms of Reference can be submitted to University Research Committee for approval. A call for expressions of interest should be circulated to all early career researchers.	AS
3.	Minutes Resolved: Ms Chinyere Sam-Okerenta is now correctly listed under apologies given. The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2020 were accepted as a correct record. GB-2020-05-13-M	
4.	Matters Arising 4a. PGR Student Fees and Finance: CR met with Jonathan Croall from Student Finance to discuss publicising a write-off procedure for students who interrupt their studies midway through a term but are charged the fee for the full term. The draft procedure is still pending, once complete it will be incorporated into the interruptions procedure and outcome letters to improve transparency of	CR

	<p>the process. The write-off procedure is also applicable to taught students.</p> <p>4b. VC Fee Waiver update: The VC Fee Waiver eligibility criteria was recently updated to require that candidates must have graduated from the University within the last three years. AR reported that the scheme is being promoted to alumni via LinkedIn. In addition, a current PhD student has written a blog post about their experience of receiving the scholarship. This has been one of the best performing posts on the Student Blog and has been promoted through Social Media.</p> <p>4c. Self-Plagiarism – Guidance and Regulations update: A Task and Finish group was established to produce guidance on how students should correctly cite their own published material. The completed guidance is expected to be presented to the Board in November. The remit of the Task and Finish group is to be expanded to review Research Misconduct procedures and training materials. LB agreed that she would participate in this area of the group’s work.</p> <p>CR to send NK the most recent draft of the self-plagiarism guidance to review before he hands over to new DoGS.</p> <p>4d. PRES – Research Culture Focus Groups:</p> <p>NK was undertaking a piece of work to consider how we can strengthen research culture from a central perspective, but this has been delayed because of Covid. NK will hand this piece of work over to MA to lead. AS highlighted that she can extract qualitative and quantitative data from PGR staff in the Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research (CEDARS) survey that may help to provide some ideas for enhancing research culture.</p> <p>AS to send survey data to NK.</p> <p>4e. Digital Preservation of Thesis: As LC was absent, this item will be discussed at the next Graduate Board.</p>	<p>CR</p> <p>NK/AS</p> <p>LC</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Chair’s Business</p> <p>5a. Chair’s Action: Regulations for Awards and Student Regulations: Following the changes to regulations required in response to Covid-19, new permanent sections have been incorporated into the regulations for awards and student regulations relating to the application of emergency regulations due to major disruptions.</p> <p>5b. Update – Dean’s Tenure: NK confirmed that his tenure ends on 31 August and that Monty Adkins is the incoming DoGS. NK will be meeting with MA to provide a handover, including some guidance documents which he has collated. MA asked colleagues to copy him into any emails that are sent to NK between now and the end of the month so that he is aware of current issues and priorities.</p>	<p>NK</p>

NK thanked colleagues for their support and encouragement over recent years and for giving him such a positive experience as DoGS.

5c. Bursaries and COVID-19:

Wording has been produced to clarify whether final year students who have extended their studies owing to Covid-19 are able to request to have their Huddersfield-based bursaries extended also. This wording has been circulated to all DoGEs. It was also confirmed that all tuition fee waivers are automatically being extended where a student has been granted an extension.

5d. Internal examiner and supervisor training:

Training for internal examiners has transitioned to be delivered online. The refresher course took place last week. Delegates were sent a PowerPoint presentation that they had to view before they could book the live session via People and Organisational Development. The live session took place on Zoom and attendance was logged as evidence that colleagues have completed the course. The full course for new examiners will run later this week and NK has booked a few more sessions to take place in early September. Supervisor training has not yet taken place but will follow the same format of having online material that has to be read first, followed by a live Zoom session. NK confirmed that transferring the Fundamentals for Supervisors course into an online environment is a bit more complicated owing to its structure, but he will produce the supporting PowerPoint materials for MA to utilise as a holding resource before the training can take place.

NK

AS noted that the internal examiner training exposed that not all relevant staff have access to Researcher Environment Module on Brightspace. She is aware that this is an ongoing issue and is in discussions with the Web Team and IT to see how they can automate the correct access to the module. In the meantime, if anybody does not have access to this module on Brightspace then they should contact AS or email the PGRSkills inbox.

AS

5e. PGR Interruptions and statistics:

NK thanked AW for producing statistics on how many interruptions and extensions have been granted under the Covid scheme.

Amongst staff candidates, five extensions and 23 interruptions have been granted. The student figures also incorporate staff candidates, and show that 109 interruptions have been approved across all Schools, with 54 extensions granted.

Any students (including staff candidates) who are due to have their interruptions end in September will automatically have them rolled over until January 2021. If they wish to return from interruption before this then they can request to do so. NK recommended that DoGEs should contact their interrupted staff candidates and check whether their circumstances warrant the extended period of interruption, or if they should return early.

Anybody who has received an extension will need to reapply if they require an additional extension. Rather than have students continuously applying for extensions it might be appropriate for them to interrupt their

studies if they are struggling to make progress. NK encouraged DoGEs to have these conversations with students and council them on which process is most appropriate for their circumstances.

TO CONSIDER:

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6a. New procedures:

CR noted that a lot of work has been undertaken in the last 6 months to review different Registry procedures – either as a result of learning from reoccurring complaints/appeals in a certain area or because staff and students have identified that they struggle to find information online. One of the key drivers is to increase transparency and ensure that everybody can see how certain situations should be managed.

Change of supervisor – A lot of Schools already had forms for supervisory changes, but everybody was doing it slightly differently. This new form brings together all of the criteria that should be considered when new supervisors are being appointed to a student (i.e. owing to one leaving the University), or when a student wishes to request a new supervisor. This will be added to the Registry webpages in the supervision area. We can build on this guidance if needed in future.

CSO noted that some students have problems with supervisors who aren't engaged in their research. CR highlighted that the Students' Union has published a PGR Charter which clearly outlines the expectations of both the student and the supervisor. The Change of Supervisor process will also help to make supervisory arrangements more transparent. CSO raised the issue of some students experiencing difficulties with supervisors or assessors as part of progression monitoring, such as not receiving response to emails or not receiving feedback. CR highlighted that progression procedures will be reviewed next year with a view to making timelines more clear and address issues such as what students should do if they don't receive their progression feedback in a timely manner. CR reminded everyone that DoGEs oversee progression monitoring and students should escalate any matters to them.

AO queried whether there are any reasons why a student's request to change supervisor would be declined. CR stated that we would always try to ensure appropriate supervision of a student but there could be rare cases where there are no other members of staff with the appropriate expertise to take over supervision; though this has never occurred in practise. AO requested that this be clarified for students in the guidance.

GH requested that the guidance should encourage students to talk to their DoGE or Deputy DoGE in the first instance, to see if issues with supervision can be resolved more informally before it needs to get to the formal stage of requesting a change in supervisors.

Major change in research area – CR noted that appeals and complaints often cite poor examination results as a consequence of a change in direction of topic which resulted in not having enough time to complete the research - be this as a result of supervisory changes, a change in the demands of employers etc. This process is designed to support students and staff to think about whether a student may need additional time to complete their studies to reflect changes in their research.

CR

Recognition of prior learning – This regulation is in direct response to issues that Schools have experienced with students who transfer into their second or third year of studies with us. For example, students would be permitted direct entry into year two but it would be discovered that they hadn't made the expected progress for a second year student, which would result in poor progression or examination outcomes. It was agreed that the regulations would be updated, so that in addition to the usual admissions processes for a transfer, students would be required to undertake something similar to a progression viva. This would assess the appropriate entry point for them, allow an offer to be made on this basis and enable the student to make an informed decision about whether or not they want to come and study with us at the proposed point of entry. This regulation and guidance supports assessors with these progression review vivas as part of the transfer process. CR will discuss with Admissions where the appropriate place is for this information to be housed so that it is accessible to potential applicants so they can understand the type of assessment they will need to undertake. CR confirmed that this process is applicable to all PGR applicants with prior learning, not just those seeking a direct transfer.

CR

Virtual viva protocol – This guidance provides staff and students with a clear protocol to be followed in undertaking remote vivas to ensure better practise across the institution.

6b. Remote Learning (PGR Student Support Framework)

Moving into 2020/21, it wasn't clear how we would deliver provision in light of Covid restrictions. To this end, a good practise framework was developed to specify how provision would be delivered online if the campus has to close, and how we will continue to support students. Each School has been required to outline what their contingency measures are. These School plans are due to be approved at the next University Research Committee, after which the plans will be saved on SharePoint alongside the contingency plans for taught students.

NK/CR

CR highlighted that since going into lockdown students have been well supported through adequate supervision; DoGEs have been delivering online drop-in sessions; the Researcher Environment Team have produced a lot of resources on Brightspace that students can access. The new induction module will help new PGRs with their integration into the University, but is also accessible to returning students. As part of plans to re-open campus, new PGR students and those nearing their thesis submission will be prioritised for face-to-face supervision, but this will not be compulsory (i.e. if staff or students are not comfortable with this or they are shielding). However, face-to-face supervision will be prioritised for those for whom it is most valuable. AS requested some text to this effect to be incorporated into the induction module to clarify supervision expectations for supervision in the coming year. NK highlighted that he will firstly need to check with Tim Thornton whether this information can be used in the induction material.

AO queried what would happen to students who need to travel abroad to collect data. CR noted that as part of the framework all Schools are required to consider, at Admissions stage, the resources required to help a student succeed in their studies. If it was identified that a student's proposed research would require them to travel abroad then discussions need to focus upon whether this research is viable if travel for data collection would likely not be possible within the first year of their

programme. It may be appropriate to either change their research or defer their entry. These individual cases need to be discussed and decided by the potential supervisors and relevant DoGE.

JR asked if international students who are due to start their studies in September but cannot travel to the UK will be permitted to undertake the whole academic year remotely. CR confirmed that this would be possible, as the contingency measures agreed are for the full academic year. The aim is to have students on campus as quickly as is safely possible: we need to be mindful that permitting students to study online is a contingency measure and will constitute the creation of a distance learning course. JR highlighted that international students arriving throughout the year would have implications for the International Office and the staffing of their reception, which is not intended to be open with usual service in the academic year but will instead operate an appointment system. It was noted that DoGEs will need to liaise with the International Office to inform them of when their students are expected to come onto campus so that they can plan accordingly.

CSO queried whether students who will need to start their studies online will be expected to pay the same fees, and how student engagement will be monitored when card swiping will not be possible. CR reiterated that the programme is not being offered as a distance learning course and therefore the fees will remain the same; the online provision is a contingency during a difficult period but we intend to return to normal provision as soon as is possible. Student expectations around this are being managed, with Schools sharing their contingency plans with prospective students so that they know what their experience will be and how this differs to the norm. It's encouraged that these plans are also shared with current students. CR confirmed that a new online engagement measuring system is in development in lieu of the usual attendance monitoring techniques. This will likely sit within Brightspace, for example, students may be required to visit a Brightspace module every few weeks and tick a box to confirm that they are engaging which would act as a virtual swipe.

AO asked if PGR students are being equipped to deliver teaching online. AS noted that an online iteration of TAPP is expected to run before the end of September. NK highlighted that it is up to individual Schools to create support for PGRs who are delivering teaching online, as different disciplines and courses will have different requirements. If students have any queries they should contact the module leader or course leader; whichever protocol is followed in their School.

AS reminded colleagues of the online induction module that is being developed in Bright Space. If there is anything that DoGEs would like to have added to the module – either for new students or continuing PGRS – then they must submit it to her by the end of this week.

6c. PGR Validation Checklist – procedure for new Doctoral courses

A PGR validation checklist has been developed which will align PGR with the good practise of validation required of taught courses. If a School wants to launch a new PhD programme or professional doctorate then the checklist supports them to get the right information and procedures in place to be validated by the University, so that they can start recruiting students. NK highlighted that the process is less onerous

	<p>than that followed for taught courses, but reiterated that it covers key quality concerns that a student would have when considering this kind of course. It was confirmed that a PhD by prospective publication/portfolio would still need to go through the validation process, by utilising the PGR Validation Checklist.</p> <p>The Board agreed to the implementation of these new procedures.</p> <p>6d. Dean of Graduate School Handover This item was already discussed as part of item 5b.</p> <p>6e. PGR Welcome LB shared a draft of the new Welcome Guide that the SU is creating for new PGR students. It was originally designed to be a physical guide to be handed out at induction, but it will now be online only. This has the bonus of allowing direct hyperlinks to be inserted to point students to lots of other information. The brochure opens with a welcome from the SU and emphasises that the SU is there to support <i>all</i> students, not just taught students. It also references a range of SU activity that PGRs can get involved in: Campaigns, Sports Clubs, Societies, Academic Societies. There is an indicative PGR Timeline which needs more work to ensure it covers everything – NK suggested that CR and AS be asked to review this section to ensure that it is accurate. In addition to providing an overview of the SU, it will also provide an introduction to University life more broadly and includes information about finance and where students can access academic advice and wellbeing support. . AS highlighted that there is some information on the Graduate School website regarding grants and alternative funding sources for PGRs and it would be a good idea for the finance section of the brochure to include a link to this.</p>	LB/AS/CR
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TO NOTE:

7.	<p>Minutes</p> <p>Recent minutes from the school meetings held between were noted by members.</p> <p>MINUTES FROM ADA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGR Forum 10 June 2020 • Progress Review Board 25 June 2020 • R&E Committee 1 July 2020 <p>MINUTES FROM AS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&E Committee 13 March 2020 • PGR Forum 30 June 2020 <p>MINUTES FROM BS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGR Forum 29 June 2020 <p>MINUTES FROM EPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&E Committee 3 October 2019 • R&E Committee 30 January 2020 <p>MINUTES FROM HHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGR Committee 23 March 2020 • R&E Committee 7 April 2020 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGR Committee 11 May 2020 	
OTHER BUSINESS:		
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>8a. CSO congratulated NK for his work as DoGS, particularly the handover framework that he has created for his successor.</p> <p>8b. CSO also asked the Board to review thesis word limits, noting that some Universities permit 100,000 words in contrast to the 80,000 word limit at the University of Huddersfield. CR confirmed that this question of wordcount will be investigated, but other priorities have required focus this year.</p> <p>8c. On behalf of DoGEs, DC thanked NK for leading everybody through a huge raft of improvements and transformation of both the Graduate School and the PGR experience over the last four years. NK has been a great support to everyone, with endless patience and wisdom.</p> <p>8d. LB echoed the comments of others, thanking NK for the work he has undertaken with the Graduate School which has come on leaps and bounds. In particular, she praised NK for helping to establish a good working relationship between the Graduate School and the SU.</p>	CR
9.	<p>Availability of Agenda, Papers and Minutes</p> <p>No papers will be excluded from the public record.</p>	

10.	<p>Dates of Next Meetings</p> <p>Graduate Board meeting dates for 2020/21 were noted:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="264 309 1220 521"> <tr> <td>Graduate Board 9.00am – 12.00am</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tuesday 11 August 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday 11 November 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tuesday 2 February 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday 31 March 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tuesday 18 May 2021</td> </tr> </table>	Graduate Board 9.00am – 12.00am	Tuesday 11 August 2020	Wednesday 11 November 2020	Tuesday 2 February 2021	Wednesday 31 March 2021	Tuesday 18 May 2021	
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