

Graduate Board

12 September 2023

MINUTES

Venue:	Online via Teams
Author:	Ms Amanda Westwell, Registry Officer, PGR Provision and Graduation
Present:	Professor Monty Adkins (Chair); Ms Claire Aydogan; Ms Claire Barber; Dr Rachel Birds; Dr Dougie Clarke; (SU Education Officer); (SU PGR Representation); Ms Becky Green; Ms Gabriella Holt (Researcher); Dr Kate Lavender; Dr Dawn Leeming; Dr Mohammad Jafari; Mrs Anju Ramesh; Professor Abhijit Sharma; Ms Tracy Wood;
In attendance:	Mrs Sarah Elstub; Mrs Fran Hinewright; Mr Jason Smith;
Apologies:	Professor Andrew Ball; Miss Lydia Blundell; Mrs Emi Chui; Mr Jonathan Croall; Professor Jonathan Hinks; Mrs Heather Kerrick; Mr Matt Mills; Professor Jane Owen-Lynch; Mrs Joanne Ryan; Professor Alistair Sambell; Mrs Hannah Spencer-Cheung; Ms Clare Taylor; Dr Daniel White

PRELIMINARY ITEMS		Action
1.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2.	<p>MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE, ANNUAL CYCLE OF BUSINESS</p> <p>2.1 The Chair welcomed new members to the meeting, noted where there had been changes to staffing, and where vacancies currently existed.</p> <p>2.2 The Committee received and approved the Membership, Terms of Reference and Annual Cycle of Business for the next academic year subject to the following amendments:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">I. Membership List – the committee noted the merger of the Business School, and the School of Education and Professional Development would be formally recognised at the meeting in November.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">II. Annual Cycle of Business – it was agreed that the school PRES reports would be presented at November’s meeting going forward, and only the PRES summary report would be presented at September’s meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 40px;">GB_2023_09_12_P1 GB_2023_09_12_P1a GB_2023_09_12_P2</p>	<p style="margin-left: 40px;">AW</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">AW</p>
3.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2023 were accepted as a true record.</p> <p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 40px;">GB_2023_03_14_M</p> <p>Resolved: The minutes of the extra-ordinary Graduate Board meeting held on 7 June 2023 were accepted as a true record.</p> <p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 40px;">GB_2023_06_17_M</p>	

<p>4.</p>	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>4.1 Chair's Action</p> <p>4.1.1 Amendments to the Regulations governing Research Degrees for the 23/24 academic year It was noted under 5.23 (remove corrected typo error); the text in brackets should be removed from the log. It was also noted that the change to the registration period from 4 to 3 weeks was to reflect changes made by Data Futures. Issues around dual enrolment were also mentioned and the process from Masters to PhD was being addressed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">GB_2023_09_12_P3</p> <p>4.1.2 Aegrotat Award It was reported that it had been agreed that a member of staff on the staff doctoral scheme, due to extenuating circumstances, would be examined on their thesis submission alone and had been awarded an aegrotat award.</p> <p>4.2 Extra-ordinary Validation Events (minute 4.2) It was noted that all programmes had been validated including the distance learning programmes.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>CHAIR'S BUSINESS</p> <p>5.1 Professional English for PGRs It was reported by the Chair that the Academic English Centre had closed and a video to support students with their English had been made by Merrick Burrow. It was noted that the School of Arts and Humanities will now offer English modules at a cost of £650 per module.</p> <p>It was noted that the Graduate School would agree a process for supervisors to refer their PGRs. It was noted that the cost of the module would come from RDP funding within the schools, or elsewhere, if the school deemed it otherwise.</p> <p>5.2 Update on Turing Scheme 23/24 It was noted that the Turing Scheme would allow a PGR to apply to work and research abroad for up to three months during the later part of their studies, and the number of places had increased from twelve to eighteen.</p> <p>It was noted that a call for applications would go out this month with placements starting as early as February. A decision on the applications would be made in December, thereby allowing PGRs enough time to apply for a visa.</p> <p>5.3 Careers Tool It was noted for this academic year there would be a new careers tool, and this would be made available on the new PGR hub and would form part of the skills audit process. It will be launched throughout this academic year and the Chair wished to thank the team for developing it.</p>	<p>GS</p>
<p>TO CONSIDER:</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p>6.1 PRES Reports</p> <p>6.1.1 The committee received a summary report of the PRES. It was noted that the University had not moved out of the bottom quartile which was disappointing. It was noted that engagement post Covid was not as it had been before the pandemic, and this had been noted amongst other institutions. It was noted that the PG Cert would be put forward for validation this academic term.</p>	

	<p>6.1.2 It was reported that the Graduate School would be working with Directors of Graduate Education (DoGE) to create an action plan and the detailed feedback would be shared with them in due course.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">GB_2023_09_12 P4</p> <p>6.2 PGR Start Dates and Deadlines – Next 5 Years</p> <p>6.2.1 The committee received and approved the PGR start dates and deadlines for the next five years. It was noted that the dates for the 23/24 and 24/25 academic years had been previously agreed, however, there was one amendment which was brought to the committee’s attention.</p> <p>6.2.2 It was noted by the Chair that for 2022/23 a July start date had been advertised, however, it was not anticipated that July would be a regular start date going forward. Members were reminded that if they are organising open days, especially if scholarships were being offered, to work within these dates.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">GB_2023_09_12 P5</p> <p>6.3 Regulations Governing Admission to Research Degrees for the 2023/24 Academic Year</p> <p>The committee received and approved the following regulations governing Admission to Research Degrees for the 2023/24 academic year. It was noted that updates to links and changes to wording were in line with the taught polices.</p> <p>6.3.1 Changes to PGR Admissions Policies - Paper 6.3.2 Admissions Policy (Research Degrees) 6.3.3 Summary of changes 6.3.4 Interview Policy (Research Degrees) 6.3.5 Summary of changes 6.2.6 Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy (Research Degrees) 6.3.7 Summary of change</p> <p style="text-align: right;">GB_2023_09_12_P6 GB_2023_09_12_P7 GB_2023_09_12_P7a GB_2023_09_12_P8 GB_2023_09_12_P8a GB_2023_09_12_P9 GB_2023_09_12_P9a</p>	GS
TO NOTE:		
7.	<p>7.1 Amendments to the Regulations Governing Research Degrees for the 2023/24 academic year</p> <p>7.1.1 It was noted that the revised regulations had been approved by URC and Senate for implementation for the current academic year and were now available on the website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">GB_2023_09_12 P10 GB_2023_09_12 P11</p> <p>7.2 Employment for FT PGRs</p> <p>7.2.1 It was noted that as a direct response to issues raised at Graduate Council, it had been requested and approved that the number of working hours for FT PGRs be increased from fifteen to sixteen hours per week to allow a FT PGR to apply for Universal Credit.</p> <p>7.3 Mental Health Charter Update</p>	

The following updates were provided in advance of the meeting.

7.3.1 It was noted that the UMHC Award Assessment Team came for a two-day assessment visit at the end of May and their report was received in July. The outcome is under embargo until the Student Minds ratification panel meets, currently scheduled for February 2024. A response to the report is being finalised/approved by the steering group and will be submitted to Student Minds by 15 September 2023. In the meantime, it was noted that the focus was on continuous improvement activities identified in the Health and Wellbeing action plan.

7.4 PGR Culture and Development Update

The following updates were noted:

- The Turing Scheme – see minute 5.2.
- Themed months as per last year
- [New PGR hub](#) – this has replaced information on the Graduate School website and is the first part of building a set of resources on a digital platform to help PGRs with their studies. The Chair wished to formally thank Bethany Ridley-Duff who had put it together.

7.6 School Research and Enterprise and PGR Forum Minutes

The following Schools' minutes were received and noted.

7.6.1 MINUTES FROM AS

- Research & Enterprise Committee – 31 January 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P12

- PGR Forum – 20 February 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P13

7.6.2 MINUTES FROM AH

- School Research Ethics and Integrity Committee – 15 March 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P14

7.6.3 MINUTES FROM BS

- No minutes to present

7.6.4 MINUTES FROM CE

- Research & Enterprise Committee – 15 February 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P15

7.6.5 MINUTES FROM EPD

- No minutes to present

7.6.6 MINUTES FROM HHS

- Research Ethics & Integrity Committee – 19 January 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P16

- Research & Enterprise Committee – 2 February 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P17

- Research Ethics & Integrity Committee – 19 May 2023

GB_2023_09_12 P18

7.7 GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

- No minutes to present

7.8 UNIVERSITY EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSIVITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

It was noted that no minutes were available to the committee at present.

OTHER BUSINESS:

8. Any Other Business

	<p>8.1 A request was made by a representative from the school of Computing and Engineering on behalf of the DoGE, to increase the bench fee ceiling above which Graduate School approval is required from £5k to £10k, as these are normally only charged when there is an external sponsor for a project requiring expensive materials. It was noted that these are seen by the HoD when they approve the RAAF, signed off by DoGE and pose little downside risk to the University.</p> <p>8.1.1 It was noted that bench fees had remained at 5k for some time and that there was a need to bring the fees in line with the actual costs incurred by the school. Currently anything over 5k is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School, however, it was agreed the upper limit would move from 5k to 10k.</p> <p>8.2 The Chair wished to thank the Directors of Graduate Education and the PGR administrators in each of the schools for dealing sensitively with the changes that had taken place over the summer with regards to PGRs supervisors, especially as it had interfered with some peoples plans.</p> <p>8.3 It was noted that Dr Dawn Leeming, DoGE for HHS, would be retiring in the coming weeks and was therefore attending her last Graduate Board. The Chair wished to formally thank her for contribution.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Availability of Agenda, Papers, and Minutes</p> <p>It was noted that no papers will be excluded from the public record.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Dates of Next Meetings</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 15 November 2023 on Teams.</p>	