



Department of Governance

<b>RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>Minutes of the meeting held 18 April 2018</b>		
<b>Present:</b>		Ms M. Daly, Dr L. Gray (Chair), Professor J. Harris, Professor A. Klemm, Dr A. O'Hagan, Professor O. Pahl, Dr B. Stansfield, Professor B. Steves
<b>In attendance:</b>		Ms D. Dickie, Mr P. Woods (Secretary)
<b>Apologies:</b>		Professor A. Boateng, Mr C. Daisley, Dr S. Hagan, Professor D. Harrison, Professor J. Woodburn, Dr K. Halcro, Mr D. Moore,
<b>MINUTES</b>		
<b>017.090</b>	<b>Considered</b>	Minutes of the meeting of the Research Degrees Committee held on 29 November 2017 <b>(RDC17/14/01)</b> .
<b>017.091</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the minutes be approved as correct record.
<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>		
<b>Fees Benchmarking (Arising on RDCM 017.066)</b>		
<b>017.092</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By RDC Secretary that the information required to be redacted of personal data but would be circulated when that was completed.
<b>External examiners fees(Arising on RDCM 017.069)</b>		
<b>017.093</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Chair that he would write to the Academic Registrar on this matter.
<b>Update On Research Administrator Arrangements (Arising on RDCM 017.073)</b>		
<b>017.094</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Director of the Graduate School that communications of the new arrangements would be undertaken via the normal Graduate School channels: email; twitter; the Graduate School blog.
<b>Online Similarity Checking of PhD Theses (Arising on RDCM 017.087)</b>		
<b>017.095</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By RDC Secretary that the subgroup would be convened to consider this issue.

<b>RESEARCH DEGREES REGULATIONS REFRESH</b>		
<b>017.096</b>	<b>Considered</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An update on revised Research Degree Regulations (<b>RDC17/15/01</b>)</li> <li>2. A review of regulations for PhD by previous published works (<b>RDC17/16/01</b>).</li> </ol>
<b>017.097</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Secretary that the revised regulations presented were the latest version incorporating amendments by RDC at the 7 February meeting. The previous published works regulations were presented for review for the first time since 2015.
<b>017.098</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<p><b>Research Degree Regulations</b></p> <p>Members proposed some minor changes and discussed the appropriate level of experience of viva examination Chairs. Members agreed that whilst it was important to ensure that Chairs were appropriately experienced it was also important not to inadvertently limit the pool of Chairs. It was agreed that an appropriately experienced Chair would have examined at least once and have undertaken the Graduate School training for Chairs.</p> <p><b>A review of regulations for PhD by previous published works</b></p> <p>The regulations for previous published works required a review given the University's governance and structural changes since 2015 when the document was originally approved.</p> <p>Members pointed out that the process used to appoint an internal assessor could be streamlined and made more specific e.g. the SPGRT (or nominee) could appoint the assessor.</p> <p>Members felt that, in general, enhanced guidance surrounding the kind of publications that could be used for PhD by previous published works would be useful.</p> <p>There was also some discussion about the role of the "examining Chair" and whether or not this role was required.</p>
<b>017.099</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Research Degrees Regulations be approved and recommended to University Research Committee subject to the above amendments. (<b>Action: RDC Secretary</b>).</li> <li>2. That a working group be convened to look at the regulations for PhD by previous published works (<b>Action: Director Graduate School</b>).</li> <li>3. That members send any further comments to the Secretary.</li> </ol>
<b>REFRESH OF RDC FORMS</b>		
<b>017.100</b>	<b>Considered</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The updated RDC forms (<b>RDC17/17/01</b>).</li> <li>2. Yet to be updated RDC forms.</li> </ol>
<b>017.101</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Secretary that forms attached to the first paper had been updated

		following the last RDC and forms in the second had not been considered by RDC or updated as yet.
<b>017.102</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<p><b>RDC5</b> The purpose of the RDC5 signatures was discussed. It was agreed that the sign off was intended to make signatories think about the process and that the purpose of ADR sign off was to ensure the previous sections had been completed appropriately. This could be completed by the SPGRT. It was suggested that RPABs should have the scrutiny.</p> <p><b>RDC8</b> The form had been updated to allow Director of Studies to indicate where they did <u>not</u> support candidate going forward for examination and give their reason.</p> <p><b>RDC9</b> The form was now requested 2 weeks before examination to allow for issues to be raised within an appropriate timescale and prevent last minute cancellations.</p> <p><b>RDC10</b> This was unchanged.</p>
<b>017.103</b>	<b>Reported</b>	<p><b>Other Forms</b> By the Director Graduate School that there had been extensive consultation on the RDC forms with research degree stakeholders earlier in the session and feedback was collected. These would be factored into updates along with comments from members. The majority of the changes were straightforward refresh changes but she highlighted areas for discussion</p>
<b>017.104</b>		<p><b>RDC1</b> There was discussion around signatories but it was agreed that PGRT sign off (as a reviewer) and ADR sign off (as overseer of School resources) was appropriate.</p> <p><b>RDC2</b> There was discussion around the option to withdraw students at this stage. The regulations did not prevent this but it was questioned as to whether it was in the spirit of the regulations. Members discussed whether this was a mechanism which could affect Hesa statistics. The Director of Graduate School stated that the Hesa return was not time-bound so this was not applicable. Completion rates were separate and collected by RCUK.</p> <p>Members considered 4 weeks for resubmission to be appropriate.</p>
<b>017.105</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the updates agreed be made and the forms be revisited at the next meeting.</li> <li>2. Any further comments can be sent to the Secretary.</li> </ol>

<b>PGR STUDENT POLICIES</b>		
<b>017.106</b>	<b>Considered</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Baseline data for update to PGR Student Maternity Policy (<b>RDC17/19/01</b>).</li> <li>2. Review of PGR Students' Admissions Policy (<b>RDC17/20/01</b>).</li> <li>3. Review of PGR Students' Attendance Policy (<b>RDC17/21/01</b>).</li> </ol>
<b>017.107</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By the Director of the Graduate School that the Maternity Stipend recommendations were being brought to RDC to seek its endorsement.
<b>017.108</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Members were supportive of the principles and the paper was considered to provide clear recommendations and an outline of best practice.</p> <p>Members sought to clarify that this would apply to all students whose income was related to their studies. The Director of the Graduate School stated this was the case and explained that exceptions would be where external funders provided maternity cover. There would be top up provision by the University if this provision was less than that of the University.</p> <p>Members asked for clarification about the funding for putting this into practice. The Director of the Graduate School clarified that the proposal was that this would be centrally funded.</p>
<b>017.109</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the recommendations be endorsed.</li> <li>2. That members forward any comments on the PGRS Admissions and Attendance Policies to the Secretary.</li> </ol>
<b>AOB – Unsatisfactory progress cases</b>		
<b>017.110</b>	<b>Reported</b>	By Director of the Graduate School that she been made aware of a number of cases where students were reporting a breakdown of relationships with supervisors contributing to progress reviews and potential withdrawal.
<b>017.111</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	That the cases be reviewed for wider implications ( <b>Action: Chair RDC, Director Graduate School, RDC Secretary</b> ).
<b>PRES UPDATE</b>		
<b>017.112</b>	<b>Received</b>	An update on PRES by the Director of the Graduate School ( <b>REC17/27/01</b> ).
<b>ARRANGEMENTS FOR IDENTIFYING RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS</b>		
<b>017.113</b>	<b>Received</b>	Clarification of the arrangements established by the Research Ethics Subcommittee for identifying research project participants from student cohorts ( <b>RESC17/03/01</b> ).
<b>RESEARCH DEGREE EXAM APPROVALS &amp; AWARDS</b>		
<b>017.114</b>	<b>Received</b>	A record of examinations and awards ratified since the previous meeting of RDC ( <b>RDC17/21/01</b> ).
<b>RESEARCH PROGRESSION AND AWARDS BOARDS</b>		
<b>017.115</b>	<b>Received:</b>	<p>The confirmed minutes of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SHLS PGR PAB 24th May 2017 (SHLSRPAB/16/90).</li> </ol>

		<b>2. SHLS PGR PAB 22nd November 2017 (SHLSRPAB/17/27).</b>
--	--	---

Common/Senate/RDC/minutes/18April2018