



Department of Governance

RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE		
Minutes of the meeting held 7 February 2018		
Present:	Professor A. Boateng, Mr C. Daisley, Ms M. Daly, Dr L. Gray (Chair), Professor J. Harris, Professor D. Harrison, Professor A. Klemm, Dr B. Stansfield, Professor B. Steves	
In attendance:	Ms D. Dickie, Dr K. Halcro, Mr D. Moore, Mr P. Woods (Secretary)	
Apologies:	Dr S. Hagan, Dr A. O'Hagan, Professor O. Pahl, Professor J. Woodburn	
MINUTES		
017.063	Considered	Minutes of the meeting of the Research Degrees Committee held on 29 November 2017 (RDC17/12/01) .
017.064	Resolved	That the minutes be approved as correct record.
MATTERS ARISING		
Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy (Arising on RDCM 017.045)		
017.065	Reported	By Professor Steves that if on eligible employment contract students will be under People Services policy but NOT if employed on casual hours. PGRS should know this.
Fees Benchmarking (Arising on RDCM 017.046)		
017.066	Reported	By RDC Secretary that the information would be circulated (Action: RDC Secretary) .
External examiners fees		
017.067	Reported	By the Chair that members should give an indication of sector norms.
017.068	Discussion	Members discussed the rates they had knowledge of and estimated that sector norms were in the range of £120-250.
017.069	Resolved	That the Chair would write to the Academic Registrar seeking an appropriate increase within sector norms (Action: Chair RDC) .

UPDATE ON RESEARCH ADMINISTRATOR ARRANGEMENTS		
017.070	Considered	A verbal update on the new Professional Services arrangements for research administrators.
017.071	Reported	<p>By Mr Moore that a cross school directorate had been created co-locating staff with administrative responsibilities for TNE/Doctoral/Bespoke programmes on the 7th floor of the Hamish Wood building. The aim behind the creation of this directorate was greater efficiency and a hope to streamline processes.</p> <p>There was ongoing dialogue with ADRs and there would be a launch of the directorate in due course.</p> <p>He did not expect that the changes would impact on students.</p>
017.072	Discussion	<p>Members commented upon the lack of communication and made the following specific points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the security keypad on door to improve access • Academic staff now easier to find than administrators, so are dealing with more administrative work. • The aim for efficiency was acknowledged but effectiveness of arrangements questioned. • That the ProfD administrator has a different role to others and requires private space for interviews. • A space for privacy would be a useful resource in general • That the information about the administrative arrangements and co-location needs to be communicated to students. • That GCU London was <i>not</i> part of the centralized arrangements.
017.073	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the above points are taken into account (Action: D Moore); 2. That there are communications to students and staff (Action: D. Moore; B. Steves).
REFRESH OF EXAMINATION PROCESS AND REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES		
017.075	Considered	A revised refresh of Research Degree Examination Process and regulations incorporating changes and comments (RDC17/03/03).
017.076	Discussion	<p>Members were not able to agree a format for USB/Electronic submission for now so it was decided to defer this for the moment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word count range: it was suggested 40000-80000 was appropriate with a maximum of 40000 for an MPhil thesis. PhDs by Previous Published Works will maintain separate regulations. <i>Secretary's note: ProfD would have the thesis will have a 60,000 word limit, comprising a 55,000 word thesis and 5,000 word self-reflective report.</i> • At 7.36: state that exams on must take place on a campus of University • At 7.40: take out ADR and add Dean GCU London. • At 7.44 clarify that <i>adviser</i> refers to cases where a student may

		<p>have additional needs as notified to the University.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That throughout <i>matriculation number</i> is changed to <i>student ID</i>.
017.077	Resolved	That the draft is updated in accordance with the above bullet points (Action: RDC Secretary).
REVISION OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURES IN RESEARCH DEGREES		
017.078	Considered	A revised draft revision of Academic Misconduct (Cheating and Plagiarism) procedure (RDC17/04/02).
017.079	Discussion	Members felt that the revised draft was appropriate but would prefer notification to ADRs/SPGRTs also in School investigative phase.
017.080	Resolved	Approved subject to the additional notifications being added. (Action: RDC Secretary).
REFRESH OF RDC FORMS		
017.081	Considered	The current RDC forms (i.e. those not considered under the Examination Process item) with a view to updating where required (RDC17/13/01).
017.082	Discussion	<p>Professor Steves informed members that the series of workshops held at the start of this session had generated feedback on the forms which would be factored into the revision process.</p> <p>Changes – all “student ID” RDC5 cross refer “examining Chair”</p>
017.083	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate the forms to SPGRTs for their feedback. as well That throughout matriculation number is changed to student ID. (Action: RDC Secretary/Director Graduate School).
SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES: Online Similarity Checking of PhD Theses		
017.084	Considered	A verbal report on the implementation of similarity checking using Turnitin in the School of Health and Life Sciences.
017.085	Reported	By Dr Stansfield that the GCU Learn site for <i>Turnitin</i> had gone live. It was being used as an educational tool at the moment allowing students to check their own work. It was important to note in considering embedding use of <i>Turnitin</i> that interpretation of similarity reports was a key part of the process and not as simple as converting a high similarity score into high probability of plagiarism. Members agreed that academic judgement was an important element of this interpretation and felt that this role should be undertaken by Directors of Studies.
017.086	Discussion	Members suggested that the RDC8 could incorporate a check box to say where there has been a similarity check in the thesis submitted for examination. This would require verification by the Director of Studies.
017.087	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> SPGRTs and GCU London Research Lead contact Dr Stansfield for advice on set up of similarity checking schemes (Action: GSBS/SEBE SPGRTs and GCU London Research Lead). That a working group is established to oversee implementation issues

		(Action: SPGRts/GCUL Research Lead/Director Graduate School).
RESEARCH DEGREE EXAM APPROVALS & AWARDS		
017.088	Received	A record of examinations and awards ratified since the previous meeting of RDC (RDC17/06/01).
RESEARCH PROGRESSION AND AWARDS BOARDS		
017.089	Received:	The confirmed minutes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GSBS RPAB 7 June 2017 (RPAB/GSBS/16/58). 2. GSBS RPAB 7 June 2017 (RPAB/GSBS/16/78).

Common/Senate/RDC/minutes/7February2018