

**Graduate Board**

**13 May 2020**

**MINUTES**

<b>Venue:</b>	Online via Zoom
<b>Author:</b>	Samantha Arrowsmith
<b>Present:</b>	Professor Nigel King (Chair); Dr Rowan Bailey; Dr Rachel Birds; Ms Lydia Blundell (part); Dr Dougie Clarke; Dr Lisa Colton; Mrs Judith Davidson; Mr Martin Gill; Mr Emmanuel Haruna (SU); Dr Jonathan Hinks; Dr Helen Jones; Dr Dawn Leeming; Dr Julia Meaton; Mrs Cathie Raw; Ms Annette Rhodes (part); Mrs Joanne Ryan; Dr Anna Seabourne; Professor Liz Towns-Andrews; Ms Amanda Westwell; Ms Tracy Wood
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs Kirsty Taylor
<b>Apologies:</b>	Professor Andrew Ball; Ms Charlotte Bartley; Mr Matt Mills; Ms Chinyere Sam-Okerenta; Professor Dave Taylor

		Action
1.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  There were no declarations of interest.	
2.	<b>Minutes</b>  <b>Resolved:</b> the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2020 were accepted as a correct record. Members asked that a differentiation was made when they shared the same initials.  <a href="#">GB-2020-28-02-M</a>	
3.	<b>Matters Arising</b>  <b>3a. UK quality code gap analysis:</b> JD confirmed that the new Admissions Working group had met and that a further meeting was scheduled for next week.  <b>3b. PGR student fees and finance:</b> the PGR lifecycle group had met with JC to look at changing the support mechanisms to PGRs (for instance, how fees could be written off). CR would meet with JC to discuss this further and would report back.  <b>3c. Progression Board reports:</b> Members noted the tabled report covering the last board period (October 2019 - January 2020). Members were asked to contact CR outside of the meeting if they had any questions.  <b>3d. Admissions related policies for research degree students:</b> JD reported that the comments received at a previous Graduation Board had been integrated into the policy. Members approved the changes.  <a href="#">GB 2020 13 05 p3d Admissions-Policy (Research Degrees)</a>	CR

[GB 2020 13 05 p3d Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy \(Research Degrees\)](#)

[GB 2020 13 05 p3d Interview Policy \(Research Degrees\)](#)

**3e. PRES plans:** DC confirmed that an email providing further information on the School's PGR society had been sent to members that morning.

**3f. Membership and TORs:** it was confirmed that expressions of interest had been received for the new early careers researcher.

**3g. Brightspace:** CR confirmed that providing access to AS was ongoing.

4.

#### Chair's Business

**4a. Update – Dean's Tenure:** NK confirmed that he would be in post until the end of the academic year but that the recruitment process would need to begin shortly. Should there be any delays, NK would be happy to remain available to ensure a smooth handover with his successor.

NK

**4b. VC fee waiver:** this had now been approved and was due to go onto the website and Schools were in the process of advertising it. The Chair invited suggestions from members on how the alumni community could be approached as potential students:

- RBi suggested that the Careers and Employability team could help;
- The PG and international marketing team would begin to approach previous graduates once the information had been published on the website. JD believed that this would be available today.

AR

**4c. Self-Plagiarism – guidance and regulations:** NK confirmed to members that the intention of the new guidelines would be to give discretion to the internal examiner to ensure that a PGR who had a good work ethic and who may have unintentionally erred in their referencing, did not have to endure a caution meeting which had the potential to destroy confidence and damage motivation. NK would create a new template (with input from AS and CR) before disseminating it to the DoGEs for their suggestions. A finalised copy would be circulated to Graduate Board for information. It was stressed that this would not be compulsory but would hopefully help PGRs to avoid referencing pitfalls.

NK

**4d. PRES – research culture focus groups:** it was noted that the staff group had been disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak but that it would be revisited over the summer. NK reported that the further statistical analysis had now been completed and that an executive summary would be shared with Graduate Board at a future meeting.

NK

**4e. Bursaries and COVID-19 extensions:** RCUK are providing a 6 month blanket bursary extension for those due to submit between March 20 and March 21. The University had discussed developing a similar model but felt that a case-by-case approach should be adopted. NK would devise a form of words for the Deans to use when considering

NK

requests. PGRs should be encouraged to avoid interruption whenever possible.

**4f. Remote learning:** CR updated members on the efforts of the Schools to form contingency plans for how research awards would be delivered in September if access to the campus was still restricted. It was emphasised that there was a need to ensure that PGRs could continue with their education in a way that did not exclude anyone. The PGR framework had been issued that morning for comments and members consented that it could be approved by Chairs Action and brought to the Graduate Board in September for information.

**4g. Provision of Independent Chairs:** the Chair confirmed that most remote vivas had taken place successfully but that there was a need for more Independent Chairs than normal in order to address any concerns PGRs might have about online examination. Calculations had shown that if Professors and Readers were put onto a rota to act as an Independent Chair, then this would remove pressure from the current small pool of volunteers without causing any great increase in their workload. NK had contacted the Deans and, as no negative responses had been received, Registry would henceforth be able to approach all Professors and Readers with a request to act as an Independent Chair. NK would be available to assist where resistance was met.

Registry

## TO CONSIDER:

### 5. **Regulations for Awards - Proposed Changes** **Student Regulations - Proposed Changes** **Quality Assurance Regulations - Proposed Changes**

CR presented an overview on the following items:

- 5a. [Regulations for Awards – Research Degrees \(Tracked Changes\)](#)
- 5b. [Regulations for Awards – Proposed Changes](#)
- 5c. [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students \(Tracked Changes\)](#)
- 5d. [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students – Proposed Changes](#)
- 5e. [Quality Assurance Procedures – Proposed Changes](#)

She reported that the regulations had been updated and circulated to members for their consideration. Emergency regulations and measures for COVID-19 had been added and were tabled at this meeting.

[Additional change to regulations](#)

Comments were invited from members and one issue was raised:

- Commutable distance for international students – the wording was still considered ambiguous and there was a desire for a more specific perimeter to be included in the regulations to avoid issues that often arose when a PGR lived a considerable distance away (ie London). This would need to be approved by the legal team.

	It was agreed that the new regulations would be sent to URC for approval and then to Senate. They would be published online in time for the new academic year.													
6.	<p><b>PGR Representation</b></p> <p>LB reported that the Students' Union's project had been successful in looking at how PGR students engage with the University. The Chair commented that the project had produced some interesting results and that he would recommend a continuation of the funding to the project. This would be discussed further outside of the meeting.</p> <p><a href="#">GB 2020 13 05 p5 PGR Engagement proposal</a></p>	NK/LB												
7.	<p><b>PGR Welcome</b></p> <p>Members were pleased to note that a new PGR Welcome service tailored towards PGRs would be available to students, either in printed form or digitally, from the new academic year. Members welcomed the opportunity to see the document so that it could be cross referenced with the University's central induction.</p>	LB												
8.	<p><b>Proposed New PGR Course Start Dates</b></p> <p>Application deadline dates were confirmed as:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Intake date</th> <th>Overseas and VC fee waivers</th> <th>All others</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>January 2021</td> <td>23 October 2020</td> <td>20 November 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2021</td> <td>29 January 2021</td> <td>26 February 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September 2021</td> <td>4 June 2021</td> <td>2 July 2021</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Term start dates were confirmed as:  18 January 2021  19 April 2021  20 September 2021 or 1 October depending on the outcome of further discussions with the Schools.</p>	Intake date	Overseas and VC fee waivers	All others	January 2021	23 October 2020	20 November 2020	April 2021	29 January 2021	26 February 2021	September 2021	4 June 2021	2 July 2021	
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<b>TO NOTE:</b>														
9.	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>Minutes from the school meetings held between October 2019 and April 2020 were noted by members.</p> <p>MINUTES FROM ADA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">PGR Forum 23 October 2019</a></li> <li><a href="#">PGR Forum 29 January 2020</a></li> </ul> <p>MINUTES FROM AS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">PGR Forum 25 February 2020</a></li> <li><a href="#">R&amp;E Committee 13 March 2020</a></li> </ul>													

	<p>MINUTES FROM HBS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">R&amp;E Committee 12 February 2020</a></li> </ul> <p>MINUTES FROM HHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">R&amp;E Committee 18 December 2019</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">PGR Committee 20 January 2020</a></li> </ul> <p>MINUTES FROM SCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">R&amp;E Committee 12 February 2020</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Extended SMT Meeting 19 February 2020</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Extended SMT Meeting 22 April 2020</a></li> </ul>	
<b>OTHER BUSINESS:</b>		
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>10a. Guidelines for alternative format research degrees:</b> to meet the need for guidance for PGRs, supervisors and examination teams who produce an alternative piece of work to the 80,000 word thesis, LC and RBo had created a good practice document. Members agreed that this would act as a formal mechanism for supporting students through submissions and would solidify normal working practices. Whilst this was predominantly aimed at MHM and ADA, it was hoped that other schools might also adapt it. It was confirmed that it would be available on the Registry webpage with links from the Graduate School, staff and school pages.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">GB 2020 13 05 10a Guidelines for alternative format</a></p> <p><b>10b. Digital preservation of theses:</b> MG raised the need for the University to investigate the durability of the media used to store theses and that they do not become obsolete. LC will investigate further.</p> <p><b>10c. Deadline for reporting final year students:</b> KT informed members that she was currently looking into the clarification of 6 month extensions for EPSRC DTP students in their final year which includes the potential of extension to their funding from UKRI. The deadline for submitting information to UKRI is on 9 June 2020.</p>	LC
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Availability of Agenda, Papers and Minutes</b></p> <p>No papers will be excluded from the public record.</p>	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <p>Members noted that the date of the next meeting was to be confirmed.</p>	