

Bangor University
Research Degrees Committee (RDC)
Minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2018

Present: Doctoral School

Professor John Turner [JT] (PGR Dean, Chair), Dr Penny Dowdney (Doctoral School Manager) [PD], Aashu Jayadeep (Secretary)

College Directors

Dr James McDonald [JM] (CNS), Dr Martina Lahmann [ML] (COPAS), Dr Helena Miguelez-Carballeira [HM-C] (CAH), Dr Gwion Williams (COBLESS), Dr Richard Ramsey (COHABS)

Heads of DTPs/DTCs and other centres

Professor John Healey [JH], Professor Robert Rogers [RR]

Students' Union Representatives

Ruth Plant [RP]

Academic Registry

Dr Sarah Jackson [SJ]

Apologies: QA & Validation

Dr Osian Rees

ACTION

1. PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

1. With reference to Minute **20.1, Section B (Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes)** the Chair informed that the regulations are now approved and will be available on the University website. The former PhD by published work has been reviewed.
2. With reference to Minute 20.6, (**ESRC DTP**), RR informed the Board that discussions took place with staff regarding the proposals. Matters regarding missing information for the University's Collaborative Partnership database has been resolved. RR will remain as the first point of contact for all matters regarding the ESRC DTP.
3. With reference to Minute 21 (**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**), the Chair informed that this will be discussed further as part of the agenda. SJ reported that there are no issues to report regarding the external examiner appointment forms. Home address should be indicated in cases of retired examiners for contact purposes.
4. The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2017 were accepted as a correct record.

2. BRIEF REPORTS

a. Dean's Report

Matters covered in Doctoral School Board and as below.

b. Doctoral School Board

The Committee received the minutes of the Doctoral School Board which met on 1st February. The Dean reported that the PGR admissions data as reported to the DSB are as follows:

The number of PGR candidates across the University currently stands at 533– with a breakdown between Colleges as follows:

possibility of expansion of KESS 2 to KESS 2 East is undergoing discussion with WEFO. This would generate a further 120 PhDs.

2. JT informed that a Task and End Group is set up to investigate concerns regarding KESS 2 processing of contracts raised during the DSB meeting.
3. JH commented that it is important that supervisors communicate that students can register only after contracts are in place with the company.

g. ESRC DTP

1. RR reported that missing information regarding the ESRC DTP has been sent to SJ and the matter has been resolved with Education and Social Sciences as well.
2. The Annual Collaboration Competition is continuing and a selection meeting will follow.
3. Each DTP centre is working towards aligning with University wide Impact Training.

h. NERC DTP

1. Selection panel meetings are ongoing for the ENVISION NERC DTP. Bangor has got 5/12 students.
2. Collaboration discussions are ongoing with other institutions.

i. EPSRC application

1. PD reported that work is progressing on the EPSRC DTC Submission for March 13th led by Bangor.
2. SJ reminded the Committee that the Academic Strategic group needs to approve all collaborative provision. The Doctoral School will discuss this with the Head of Partnership and report back to the Committee.

**DOCTORAL
SCHOOL**

3. NEW COLLEGE STRUCTURES & PGR

The Chair informed that the College Director posts for PGRs within each college will be advertised as soon as the new structure is in place.

The number of PGR Leads per School is still under discussion. It will be recommended that each School has at least one PGR Lead. The PGR Leads will represent PGR at College/School level Committees.

Details regarding this and Personal Tutors are available in the new regulations.

4. PURE FOR PGR

JT informed the Committee that PURE now feeds into Academic Profiles on the website. It is important that **academic staff update their profiles in PURE to highlight their relevant research interests and areas of research degree supervision, and PGR Leads are encouraged to inform staff in their department to do the same.** PhD candidates could also be encouraged to update their profile in a similar way. They will have to give permission to make their profile visible through the website. This would help in attracting potential research candidates and help them understand the areas available in which proposals can be developed.

5. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PREPARATION

The Chair updated the Committee on the Institutional Review matters discussed during Doctoral School Board. The date for the Institutional Review would be the week beginning 21st May. A long and short version of the self-evaluation document is been prepared and circulated. SJ informed that the panel will be visiting in April to give the list of attendees expected for the meetings in May. Mock Interviews will be arranged prior to the formal meetings in May.

2. JT encouraged staff and students to read the self-evaluation documents which would help us understand our robust mechanisms and display parity across the University.
RP suggested that it is important that these discussions are happening with the students.

6. PGR REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee was informed that the current Regulation 03 and Regulation 05, along with Code of Practice 03, are now consolidated to form the new regulations for PGRs. The new document has been approved by Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee (SRSC) and the document will soon be made available through the Registry website. SJ pointed out that options for outcome has now changed and it is important that the PGR admins are made aware of this and changes are to be updated in the report forms.

7. PRES 2018

1. PD informed the Committee that 2018 PRES is expected to be open from April 16th – May 18th. The previous year's PRES Action plans of all the Schools who had submitted to the Doctoral School are now available on the Doctoral School website for reference.
2. JT reminded that there were some still outstanding and it is important to complete this exercise to make improvements. It is equally important to communicate this to the students and encourage them to take part in PRES.
3. Colleges/Schools are also encouraged to send 4-5 additional open-ended questions ASAP which could be included in PRES 2018.

**COLLEGE
DIRECTOR
S/SCHOOL
LEADS**

8. PGRS IMPLEMENTATION 2018

The Chair informed that meetings are ongoing regarding the changes required for the PGRS online monitoring system. He reiterated that it is important to encourage discussions with staff and students about the use of common terminologies of the system. School handbooks needs to be updated with relevant information reflecting this.

9. COMPLETION RATES KPIS

The Committee looked at the completion rates documents forwarded by the Chair indicating comparisons across years. The members noted that even though the data gives an overview of withdrawal rates and how many non-achievers, it does not consider the month of entry for the candidates. JH remarked that it would be more useful if we can have similar data broken down to College level.

10. PGR ADMINISTRATION ARRANGEMENTS/PRIORITIES

JT informed that discussions are still ongoing regarding the PGR administration arrangements. It is recommended that at least 2 PGR admin are allocated per college.

11. PGR RECRUITMENT

JT pointed out that as discussed in the Doctoral School Board, recruitment is a priority, and that PGR Leads should make every effort to improve recruitment.

12. INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH & TRAINING PROMPT

The Chair informed that suggestions are welcome from Schools and Colleges regarding any additional generic training to the PGR candidates to be offered through the Doctoral School.

13. AOB

PD informed that the annual Cumberland Lodge Scholarship is open for receiving applications.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 10.00am, Thursday 7th June at Cledwyn Conference Room 3.