UNIVERSITY OF YORK
Board for Graduate Studies
GRADUATE AWARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held in Heslington Hall H/G09 at 1500 pm on 25 February 2008

Present: Professor A Fitter (Chair)
         Professor A Tyrrell
         Professor P Sloper
         Professor J Local

In attendance: Dr T Driffield (Secretary)
               Ms G Lindsey (Assistant Registrar: Student Administrative Services)
               Mr Simon Willis (International Office)
               Ms Andrea Bourne (Admissions and Schools Liaison)
               Mr James Butler (Development and Alumni Relations)

08/01 Minutes
The committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2007.

08/02 Matters Arising – Secretary
The Committee received details of the Chair’s and Secretary’s actions.

08/03 Advertising of Scholarship Opportunities
The Committee welcomed Mr Simon Willis and Ms Andrea Bourne. The Committee received information on the current advertising of studentships including information on advertising through the central scholarship web pages and Departmental web pages and the prospectus. The Committee discussed the commonality between advertising for programmes and advertising for studentships and noted that the University’s Better Management processes are underpinning better advertising practices. The Committee noted that information and advice is currently from Andrea Bourne and the Graduate Schools Office Staff only web pages.

The Committee considered the potential merits of: news flashes of deadlines on the International Office web pages and the Central University web pages; improved advertising by high level University Staff when on overseas missions; promoting more departmental
engagement through better advice to departmental representatives; the possibility of incorporating scholarship information on programme offer letters; the creation of a central scholarships database to feed an improved scholarships website.

The Committee decided to commission a review of studentship advertising to be carried out by Andrea Bourne and Tarn Driffield. The review should explore current practice, best practice and the quality of advice offered to staff on best practice, and should involve consultation with all Departments. The above ideas should also be further explored.

(ACTION: TD, AB)

The Committee noted that statistical information on studentships and the number of applicants for the associated programmes might prove useful in assessing the impact of offering studentships and the efficacy of advertising. The Committee decided to commission an Annual Scholarships Report which summarises such data.

(ACTION: TD)

++08/04 China Scholarship Council studentships

The Committee received a proposal for fee waivers in support of China Scholarship Council (CSC) studentships for one-year visiting PhD studentship. The Committee considered that such an agreement would send a message of support for the CSC and build our profile with the three participating organisation.

The anticipated cost of 6 studentship for 1 year each would be approximately £77,500 (£12,900 x 6). The Committee requested clarification with regards to who would pay any additional consumable costs/bench fees where these were relevant.

(ACTION: SW)

The Committee decided to recommend to the Board for Graduate Studies and Senior Management Committee the approval of 6 scholarships per year over a three year period starting for 2009 entrants.

(ACTION: AHF)

The Committee decided that the applications should be administered by the International Office and that an Annual Report should monitor the number of applications from each of the participating Universities.

The Committee noted that as the scholarship takes the form of a fee waiver, the Departments hosting these students would be required to forego their fee.
08/05 Marshall Partnership
The Committee welcomed Mr James Butler. The Committee received a proposal to develop a partnership with the Marshall commission. The Committee noted that the Marshall Commission usually notify the University of the names of any successful Marshall Fellows in January each year in preparation for entry the following October. The Committee agreed that this allowed sufficient time for the money to be reallocated if a Marshall Fellow was not forthcoming.

The Committee agreed to propose to the Marshall Commission that a University of York Marshall Scholarship could comprise a fee waiver at the home rate with the Marshall Commission financing the difference between the home and overseas rate as well as a stipend and that the University of York would fully fund the final year of a student’s three-year PhD, if such funding was required.

The Committee decided to offer one studentship for one year for entry in October 2009 and to review in January 2009 whether the partnership had been successful in attracting a student.

(ACTION: TD)

08/06 Holbeck studentship application
The Committee received one application for a Holbeck studentship and made the following decision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Bid</th>
<th>Studentships</th>
<th>Offer</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archaeology</td>
<td>£4,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>£4,000</td>
<td>Following concerns over whether the Department planned to award the studentship through an open competition, the Committee decided to approve the studentship in principle and to reiterate the importance of offering the award through an open competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>£4,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>£4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

08/07 Partner studentship Applications
The Committee received four applications for Partner studentships and made the following decisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry (Karen Wilson)</td>
<td>Syngenta (£30,000 secured)</td>
<td>Approved 1 fee waiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry (Richard Taylor)</td>
<td>Elsevier (at least £5,000 secured)</td>
<td>Approved 1 fee waiver if the Partner agree to provide at least 50% of the value of the stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Invasive Animals CRC &amp; New south Wales</td>
<td>Approved 1 fee waiver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Committee approved five fee waivers under this scheme. The Committee requested that details of the Partners and their contributions are specifically recorded in order to monitor external partnerships over time.

(ACTION: TD)

The Committee decided that where Partner studentship has been awarded in association with a given partner on a previous occasion, the application for the Partner studentship should explain how the current request represents a development in the Partner relationship.

The Committee reiterated that a partner should be expected to contribute at least 50% of the value of the stipend to be considered eligible for a Partner studentship.

++08/08 Future Process for bidding for Masters studentships

The Committee received a proposal that set out possible guidance to Departments bidding for Masters studentships under the new process that Departments bid for Masters studentship when developing their initial Business Plan (M07/07).

Following discussion of the viable alternatives the Committee decided to recommend to the Board for Graduate Studies and with the approval of Planning Committee that Planning Committee are awarded a budget equivalent to 2 fee waivers per programme per year for the first three years of each programme’s existence. The studentships should be applied for when the Department first submit their application for programme approval and should be approved for all three years at the time when the programme is approved, to facilitate budgetary planning.

The Committee agreed that the Chair should discuss this proposal with Planning Committee

(ACTION: AHF)
**++08/09 Scholarship Strategy**

The Committee discussed scholarship strategy at the University of York in light of the Strategy Briefing circulated. The Committee decided that members of the Committee should offer written feedback to ensure that all potential strategic reasons for scholarships are identified. The Committee reiterated the need for Departmental consultation and agreed that a paper should be presented to the Board for Graduate Studies reiterating the need for a scholarship strategy review and setting out actions that have been taken so far.

*(ACTION: TD)*

Professor Alastair Fitter  
Pro-Vice Chancellor: Research  
May 2008  
*td/6 May 2008*