Present:  Professor T Stoneham (Chair; TS)  
          Professor C Brown (CB)  
          Professor M Festenstein (MF)  
          Dr K Giles (KG)  
          Mrs A Grey (AG)  
          Dr A Kirby (AK)  
          Professor D Smith (DS)  

In attendance:  Mrs S Broom (Secretary; SB)  
                Mr J Holliday (JH)  
                Mr D Lean (DL)  
                Mr S Willis (SW)  

15-16/19  Apologies

None received.

15-16/20  Minutes from last meeting [Encl. 1]

The Committee approved the minutes of the November 2015 meeting.

15-16/21  Matters arising:

i.  Bench fees for deferred offer holders (15-16/11(c)) [Encl. 2]

TS reported that it will not be possible to impose bench fees on deferred offer holders because it would involve changing offer letters, which would be counter to consumer protection law.

The Committee considered the wording added to the admissions pages for new starters [Encl. 2], which had been reviewed and approved the Marketing and Admissions teams, and by Matthew Just (Legal Manager). The Committee approved the wording, pending two minor editorial corrections.

KG thanked SW for providing clarification to the Arts and Humanities following the
circulation of information about the application of bench fees, which had caused some confusion.

Action: SB to confer with web office to action editorial changes

ii. Notifying departments about the fee issue relating to AHRC and ESRC-funded MA students (15-16/11(d))

It was noted that the associated action point at the previous meeting had not been communicated to MF and KG, who had not been present. TS noted that departments should already be aware, and so MF and KG need only remind them of the situation in order to maximise awareness.

Action: MF and KG to remind departments of the issue at Faculty meetings

iii. Reminding departments about the Marshall programme (15-16/11(e))

TS confirmed that the programme was highlighted to research student administrators at a recent Graduate Administrators Forum.

iv. The funding strategy for PGT students in light of the PGT loans scheme (15-16/13)

SW reported that the scheme has now been confirmed, and that Admissions are moving forward with marketing it to applicants and prospective students. The Student Loans Company (SLC) are producing resources, and more information will be circulated by the SLC in April.

SW highlighted the need to consider how best to utilise the funds previously budgeted to support PSS, and in particular whether the funds should be used to support those who are not eligible for funding, or to top up the funding of those who are. DS noted that the PGT Working Group had still to report to Planning Committee on this and related issues.

The Committee went on to discuss various strategies for the application of YuFund funds in light of the PGT loans scheme. It was agreed that the funds should not be spread too thinly, because smaller awards are unlikely to secure undecided candidates. The Committee concluded by agreeing that each Faculty will have two £5,000 scholarships to offer for 2016-17 entry (funded on a 50:50 basis by YuFund and the YGRS AFSC budget). These will be advertised via the YGRS. Applications will be open to full- and part-time students (the latter funded on a pro rata basis per year of registration) and departments will triage applications and nominate and rank these and feed them in to the YuFund process.

Action: TS to advertise YuFund scholarships via YGRS

v. Conference funding update (15-16/15)

TS reported that no applications were received for the YGRS conference fund for self-funded research students (which had been advertised after its approval at the previous
Committee meeting) by the original deadline of 20 January 2016. The deadline has therefore been extended to 19 February 2016, and the fund has, and will continue to be, advertised via the YGRS newsletter, until the current round closes. Some applications have been received since the deadline was extended.

The Committee considered how the fund might be promoted. Suggestions included advertising the awards as CV development opportunities (MF), reminding Department Research Chairs of the funding at an upcoming meeting (KG), and adding the fund as an item to the upcoming Research Forum (DS). It was agreed that all these suggestions should be followed up.

Action: Suggestions re: promotion of funds to be taken forward by proposers

vi. Merger and supplementation of budget information (15-16/16)

JH reported that the budgets have been moved and merged for future years. However, JH and GS have agreed not to move the 2015/16 budget in-year, because this would confuse in-year budgets and reporting. The 2015/16 figures tabled at the current meeting [Encl. 3] have, however, been merged for the purposes of reporting to the Committee.

vii. Successful funding bid: Wellcome Trust

The Committee was informed that Jim McCambridge in Health Sciences has been successful in securing funding from the Wellcome Trust. The bid included a commitment that the university will match-fund one of three doctoral studentships associated with the award. The Committee noted that it will need to be determined where the responsibility for fulfilling this commitment will sit.

TS highlighted that the bid had been submitted before the new guidelines requiring that all bids including PhD studentships be run by TS and AK were put in place, and so such commitments should be known about in good time in the future.

Action: DS to forward letter of support to JH

15-16/22 Scholarship Budget Update [Encl. 3]

The Committee considered the updated budgets. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the projections to be extended to 2019/20 to keep the timeframe the same as for MTP.

i. Wolfson 2016: TS confirmed that the Wolfson scheme has been extended for a further year, and that the costs have been incorporated in to the figures tabled [Encl. 3].

KG reported that the Faculty of Arts and Humanities is working to promote the success and importance of the funding to the Wolfson Foundation, in order to try to attract further funding in the future. The Foundation has indicated that 2016 will be the final year of funding.
ii. **ESRC DTP [Encl. 4 & 5]:** TS invited the Committee to consider a paper submitted by Craig Walker [Encl. 4] concerning the ESRC DTP bid which is currently being drafted, including a proposal to change the way in which scholarships are funded. A summary of the funds currently paid in to the DTP by the three members (York, Sheffield, and Leeds) was also tabled [Encl. 5].

It was noted that York contributes significantly less than the other two partners at present but recoups significantly more per pound invested. The proposal is that each member will fund the equivalent of three studentships per intake, commencing October 2017, over six intakes. It is expected that this would take the form of the DTP funding all studentships at a rate of 0.7, with the universities making up the difference for each of the studentships they are allocated.

The Committee considered how the 0.3 might be funded at York. A proposal to form a central pot to supplement existing departmental contributions was rejected. Instead, the Committee agreed that the match-funding for this and other RCUK bids should be supported from central funds, and that a case will need to be made to SMG.

The Committee went on to discuss capturing data regarding departmental and institutional support for scholarships, which would be useful for marketing purposes. JH indicated that it would be possible to extract raw financial data from MTP submissions at the end of the current planning round.

**Actions:** SB to project budget figures through to 2019/20; DS to inform Craig Walker that he may proceed with the Committee’s support; DL to draft paper to SMG re: match-funding for scholarship bids; JH to bring departmental scholarship support figures to the next meeting.

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**15-16/23 Associate Deans’ Updates**

There were no updates from the Art and Humanities or Social Sciences.

For the Sciences, CB reported that he will be attending a meeting the following week to start looking at the renewal bid for EPSRC funding, which is due in 2017.

The Committee went on to discuss the upcoming AHRC funding bid. The AHRC have not provided information since the consultation which took place before Christmas. The consultation suggested that there may be an expectation that the membership of consortia should be increased, but this is yet to be confirmed.

**15-16/24 Any Other Business**

TS reported that YorNight would not be running as part of the European Researchers’ Night this year, but that the YGRS will run an event at Kings Manor on the same evening.

**15-16/25 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 7 March 2016, 10 am – 12 noon (H/G17)