York Graduate Research School
Awards and Funding Sub-Committee

Monday 19 February 2018, 09.00am
H/G/19, Heslington Hall

MINUTES

Present:  Professor T Stoneham (Chair, TS)
          Professor D Smith (DS)
          Dr K Allen (attending on behalf of Dr K Giles)
          Ms S Broom (SB)
          Professor C Brown (CB)
          Professor M Festenstein (MF)

In attendance:  G Kirk (Secretary, GK)

Category I

17-18/16. Apologies

Apologies were received from Dr K Giles, Mrs A Grey and Mr D Lean.

17-18/17. Review Terms of Reference [Encl. 1]

This did not take place at the previous meeting, however, as this is now the third year of operation, it is a pertinent time to reflect on these.

It was agreed that academic outcomes, completion rates and DELHE data reports could be received for information at AFSC.
Web updates:
Under 1), amend ‘determine University Strategy’ to ‘advise on University Strategy’.
Under 3), remove reference to offers and acceptance rates.

ACTION: GK

SB & TS to devise a benchmarking report of key figures for circulation.

ACTION: SB & TS

Report on completion rates that goes to the YGRS Board to be circulated at AFSC.

ACTION: GK

Membership:

This was formally agreed as:
Dean of YGRS
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research
Associate Deans for Research
Head of Research Strategy and Policy

To attend as required:
Representative of Student Recruitment and Admissions
Planning Officer
Management Accountant
Head of Research Student Administration
Representative from Global Engagement

GK to contact Hilary Layton re. Global Engagement attendee.

ACTION: GK

17-18/18. Minutes from last meeting [Encl. 2]

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

17-18/19. Matters arising:

a) Update on AHRC DTP2

TS noted that the peer reviews took place last month and were graded as 6, 6, 5, 4, 3 and our formal response has recently been submitted. The Panel meets in April then the University will be informed of the outcome in July.

b) Overseas Research Scholarships update

GK noted that 260 applications were received of which 237 were eligible. Departments are currently selecting one preferred and one reserve nominee for the combined ORS and SOS competition and can submit as many
nominations as they wish to the OCS competition as the eligible pool of candidates is much smaller. Departments must write and submit supporting statements for each candidate ahead of the submission deadline in the coming week. The Selection Panel is being arranged, and will consist of the Associate Provosts and a member of Global Engagement, chaired by TS.

c) Wellcome Trust Masters scholarships process [Encl. 3]

TS included the email detailing the new process, for information. There will be no demand management applied as the number of applicants is expected to be quite small.

d) Marshall scholarship 2018 update [Encl. 4]

A report from Andrew Brown (AB) in Global Engagement was included for information. As has been noted as a previous meeting, very few candidates are going outside of the golden triangle. York remains one of the higher endorsed institutions and Nick Skeavington from Global Engagement sent a comment about the importance of continuing to build awareness of York as a destination. Last year there were two recommendations from him which were accepted by the committee: to join NAFA and to provide a 25% fee waiver for candidates who reach the interview stage but it is unclear if progress has been made with these.

**To liaise with Global Engagement regarding NAFA affiliation.**

**ACTION: GK**

**To follow up with AB regarding the 25% fee waiver for candidates reaching interview stage and ensure this is publicised, both externally and to departments, for the next recruitment round.**

**ACTION: GK**

**To review the Marshall budget line again in a year and decide whether we wish to continue with this or use the funds in a different way.**

**ACTION: TS**

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17-18/20. Chair’s actions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Staff member / department</th>
<th>Application details / project title</th>
<th>Support agreed</th>
<th>Expected start</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFSC17-18/20/1</td>
<td>11/12/17 (bid)</td>
<td>Penny Spikins / Archaeology, but for Health Sciences studentship</td>
<td>Meaningful Objects and their role in health and wellbeing</td>
<td>RDF: 1 x Wellcome Trust rate studentship: = £86,393</td>
<td>Oct 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFSC17-18/20/2</td>
<td>08/01/18 (bid)</td>
<td>Tamar Keren-Portnoy / Language and Linguistic</td>
<td>Overcoming social disadvantages through</td>
<td>RDF: 1 x ESRC rate studentship: home rate fees, RCUK rate stipend, plus</td>
<td>Oct 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was noted that overviews of decisions made between meetings would be presented as Chair’s Actions from this meeting onwards. This was well-received and committee members also suggested an annual summary of all bids.

To provide an annual summary in September of all bids accepted and whether they are ultimately successful or not to circulate to Faculty Research group.

**ACTION: GK**

17-18/21. Summary of schemes running under YGRS decision making [Encl. 5]

An overview of these schemes was included for information. These have accumulated over last few years and TS has put together an ad hoc panel to advise on each one. TS asked whether there should be a formalised studentships committee arranged for such decision making, however it was agreed that the current processes are working well and should remain in place.

TS noted the YuFund line in the budget and confirmed that while the finances sit with AFSC, the responsibility for managing the administration and selection process has been passed to Tracy Lightfoot in her role as Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning.

To follow up with Tracy Lightfoot on the handling of the YuFund awards.

**ACTION: GK**

17-18/22. YGRS Conference Fund update

The committee awarded £3,500 in round one. Ten applications were received from students across eight departments and all bar one were approved, with the unsuccessful bid being more of a research mobility project. A reminder has gone out to departments regarding the next round’s deadline of 1 March, along with an overview report of the previous year’s funding allocation and the recipients’ summaries of their experience.
York funded studentships and paid parental leave [Encl. 6]

SB noted that this is an issue that has been gathering momentum across the sector, with Exeter and Southampton already having implemented policies. Exeter have shared the methodology they used to calculate what support they would need to put aside for this. SB has used this to do a very broad calculation for York, with a number of caveats.

This is very much a progress report at the moment and it is anticipated that a full proposal will be put through the YGRS Board in due course. However, SB invited the committee to consider some broad principles about how we define a York-funded scholarship. SB noted careful consideration needs to be taken in the case of students receiving money from York but not from York resources, for example, in cases where departments receive money annually to support a PhD student, though this is not explicitly arranged as a studentship.

Discussion ensued and all agreed York has to do it and make a very good case for it, with the default position aiming for the most generous possible outcome, including any funded students who do not have that safety net from their funder; the question of where money the comes from is a later consideration. SB invited any further thoughts to be sent to her by email.

Any further feedback to be sent to susanna.broom@york.ac.uk.

Full proposal to be drafted and sent to the YGRS Board.

RGC to be notified about this for when they are negotiating new contracts.

Template PGR studentship offer letter and acceptance form [Encl. 7]

SB introduced the work that Helen Poyer has done, following the scholarships administration paper SB submitted to the YGRS Board. HP pulled together examples of good practice and drafted a standard studentship offer letter template and a response form. These were received very positively by the committee and all agreed the use of these templates should be mandated as a minimum standard, with departments free to add to the letter content as required. SB reiterated the need for a mechanism for RSA to collect and store the information thereafter.

RSA to circulate documents to departments, confirming them as mandatory to use when offering studentships, going forward.

Funding issues raised via APRs [Encl. 8]
TS confirmed that funding should be reported through ADRR but a few departments blurred the line a little so excerpts were sent to AFSC in case of any specific comments.

History was specifically requesting support. TS has arranged to meet the Chair of BoS in April to see what support can be offered.

**TS to discuss funding issues from APRs with Judith and take forward.**

**ACTION:** TS

17-18/26. Faculties update

**Sciences:**

CB noted they are working on EPSRC CDT submissions, six as lead and one as partner for mid-March. Discussion has also started on NERC DTP2s for mid-May. TS has been attempting to standardise EPSRC. DS noted it was very easy to see the split for a non-specialist in what is a very complex funding model. The importance of having a measure which shows comparability across CDTs and DTPs was reiterated.

17-18/27. Scholarship Budget update [Encl. 9]

**2017/18:**

No change from the previous meeting’s update.

**2018/19:**

The four core WR Networks have been removed further to notification from Dr Craig Walker of the White Rose University Consortium that there will be no call this year. James Chong’s IKC bid was unsuccessful thus the budget line has been removed. The AHRC GCRF line as noted under Chair’s Actions has been added.

**2019/20:**

No change from the previous meeting’s update.

**2020/21:**

No change from the previous meeting’s update.

DS noted that the RenewChem bid was unsuccessful.

**To check the status of RenewChem bid ahead of budget removal.**

**ACTION:** GK
17-18/28. Any other business

No other business.

17-18/29. Date of next meeting:

- April and June’s meetings are currently being rescheduled for May and September.