

UNIVERSITY *of York*

York Graduate Research School Board

Monday 28 November, 2016, 9-11 am

H/G/15

MINUTES

Present: Professor T Stoneham (Chair; TS)
Professor Stuart Bell (SB)
Nigel Dandy (ND)
Kate Dodd (KD)
Professor John Robinson (JR)
Professor Debbie Smith (DS)

In attendance: Mr J Stokoe (Secretary; JS)

Category I Business

16-17/1 Apologies

Dr David Duncan; Professor Brian Fulton; Ms Rasha Ibrahim; Dr Alun Kirby; Professor Mark Ormrod; Dr Beatrice Szczepek Reed; Dr Marjan van der Woude; Professor Marilyn Vihman

16-17/2 Presentation of 'Mind Your Head' report by representatives of York Mind (Jelena Horvatic and Eleanor Cole)

Questions about the methodology, findings, benchmarking and recommendations of this report were asked and answered. The representatives were also asked about the relation of this report to other work going on at the University on student mental health. Further discussion was had under 16-17/11.

16-17/3 To approve the minutes of 23 May 2016 (YGRSB/16-17/01)

The minutes of the May meeting were approved.
TS noted that the White Rose ESRC DTP bid was successful.

16-17/4 Matters arising from the Minutes:

i. Updates to the PPSC membership (YGRSB/16-17/02)

An additional representative of academic staff from each faculty has been added to the group.

The newly created role of Vice-President of the GSA has also been added to PPSC membership, with the Chief Executive of GSA to attend YGRS Operations Group.

ii. YGRS key objectives (YGRS/16-17/03)

TS had updated these in line with discussion at the last meeting, and the changes were accepted.

iii. Update on submissions outcomes from BIU. Circulated as requested.

These had been circulated. There were no further comments on this item.

16-17/5 To review the ToR for the YGRS Board (YGRSB/16-17/04)

These were discussed. Approval process of new programmes had been raised by TS with the Director of Corporate Planning and may be subject to discussion at UEB when the Annual Report is presented on the 29th November.

Post meeting note: this was not discussed at UEB, so will be pursued elsewhere.

ACTION

AK to update ToR as agreed:

- 1. In (4.), the list of central support services should be removed, and should instead state “relevant support services”.**
- 2. In (4.), replace “academic clusters” with “Faculties”.**
- 3. In (17.), replace “the PGR Operations Sub-group”, with “relevant sub-committees”.**
- 4. Membership of the Board is to be included with the Terms of Reference.**

16-17/6 Annual Cycle of Reports

This was agreed, with the addition of a report on leaving destinations (provided by Careers) in May:

- November: PG Awards Report (RSAT)
- February: PGR Admissions Report (SRA)
- February: Supervision Compliance Report (RSAT)
- May: PGR Outcomes Report (RSAT/BIU)
- May: PGR DLHE Report (Careers)

ACTION

AK to notify SRA and Careers of the reports required, and deadlines for these.

16-17/7 To receive an oral report from the Chair

TS reported that:

1. PRES survey was taking place in 2016/7. At least two Russell Group

- universities are no longer taking part (Sheffield and Cardiff).
2. AHRC have not formally announced the call for bids to DTP2. The University is running to an expected timetable, with an initial meeting in December. The University is expecting to be the lead partner. It was noted that any new partner or change in lead will need to be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research.
 3. The Leverhulme Trust will open for applications to the Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarships in January 2017. These are awards worth £1m for 15 students over three intakes. TS is leading a meeting to provide further information, and will triage applications with REO.

16-17/8 To receive an oral report from the Graduate Student Association representatives.

No representative of the GSA was present to deliver the report.

Post-meeting note: A report from the GSA was provided by the GSA President and is below:

1. *The GSA new structure of having two full-time officers instead of one full time officer and 3 part-time officers is currently in place.*
2. *The Course reps elections have finished. Most of the elections have taken place via the YUSU system. Few departments had it in house.*
3. *The GSA is currently working with The Office of Philanthropic Partnerships and Alumni (OPPA) to ensure that 'Email for life' is working properly and well communicated to students.*
4. *We had our Council elections in October. Seven students have been elected of 6 members and a chair.*
5. *The GSA is currently in discussions with the University for having a Postgraduate Social space.*
6. *The GSA has been working with the University so that PGWT receive Mental Health First Aid training. This is currently available for them.*
7. *We had a highly attended welcome week this year.*

16-17/9 To consider the YGRS Annual Report (YGRSB/16-17/05)

The report was discussed. TS drew the committee's attention to two main issues:

1. **The lack of a physical space for YGRS.**
Comparator institutions have small spaces for PGR specific workspace, support services, and social space. The merits of a space like this was discussed, and was to be considered when further information was known about the Campus Masterplan.
2. **The workload of the Dean of YGRS.**
TS noted that the role was taking 75% of his time (the role is meant to be

50%). A role description for a YGRS Manager had been produced to assist in making the Dean's role sustainable. The pros and cons of supporting the Dean in this way was discussed. The general view was that such a role would need to be directly line-managed by the Dean of YGRS.

The Board discussed alternatives to a YGRS Manager. The main alternative would be better defining the requirements of the embedded support roles with whom the Dean works. The comparison was made with the support for the Associate Deans for Research, who do not have individual support, but rely on embedded support teams. It was noted that Associate Deans work on behalf of faculties and with just one support directorate, whereas the Dean of YGRS works on behalf of all departments.

KD questioned the extent of the Quality Assurance problem mentioned in section 3. In correspondence BF mentioned that the promotion of PGR research had to be to external as well as internal audiences. In response to KD, TS noted that future reports would relate progress to the now agreed Key Objectives.

16-17/10 To consider a PGR Submissions Report from RSAT (YGRSB/16-17/06)

TS noted that the majority of withdrawals were due to DNS (Did Not Start). ND raised the question of whether 'Health' could be split into 'mental' and 'physical' given recent increase.

16-17/11 To consider PGR Aspects of a 'Mind Your Head' report (YGRSB/16-17/07)

The Board considered the 'Mind Your Head' report, and appreciated the candour of the representatives in recognising the limitations of the report and the difficulty in drawing conclusions about the student body as whole. Responding to the three recommendations about PGRs the Board noted:

1. Tailoring services to PGR students is an ongoing objective of YGRS and specific suggestions are welcome.
2. The University does offer Mental Health First Aid training for all front line staff who work directly with students, including a shorter version which many supervisors have now undertaken. We will be encouraging more supervisors to take this up once we have an additional trainer and more training capacity in the New Year. Further steps will be taken to advise members of faculty on how to respond to students who disclose mental health problems and ill-health. The positive impact of Colleges in this respect continues to be considered by the Colleges Board.
3. Disability support is available to PGR students who declare a disability, in the same way as it is for UG and PGT students.

The meeting concluded after this item due to time constraints. Remaining Category 1 Business items were covered post-meeting.

16-17/12 To receive an oral report on Skillsforge rollout from RSAT

ACTION

AK to circulate report of Skillsforge rollout.

16-17/13 To consider the BEIS consultation document on PGR Loans (YGRSB/16-17/08)

This will also be discussed at Awards and Funding Sub-Committee on 9th December.

ACTION

TS to circulate draft response.

Category II Business

No Category II Business was discussed at the meeting.

16-17/14 To receive the Minutes of the Policies and Programmes Subcommittee held on 21 June 2016 (YGRSB/16-17/09)

16-17/15 To receive the Minutes of the Policies and Programmes Subcommittee held on 14 October 2016 (YGRSB/16-17/10)

16-17/16 To receive the Minutes of the Awards and Funding Subcommittee held on 13 June 2016 (YGRSB/16-17/11)

16-17/17 To receive the YGRS Handbook 2016/17 (YGRSB/16-17/12)

16-17/18 To receive the Departmental Handbook template (YGRSB/16-17/13)

16-17/19 AOB

16-17/20 To note the dates of the remaining meetings for this academic year

23 February 2017, 10am – 12 noon in H/G/17

30 May 2017, 2pm – 4pm, H/G/17