



York Graduate Research School Board

Tuesday 30 May 2017, 14:00 – 16:00

H/G/17

MINUTES

Present: Professor Tom Stoneham (Chair; TS), Professor Judith Buchanan, Mr Nigel Dandy, Professor Brian Fulton, Professor John Robinson, Professor Deborah Smith, Ms Kate Stephenson, Dr Marjan van der Woude

Apologies: Professor Stuart Bell, Ms Kate Dodd, Professor Marilyn Vihman, Ms Rasha Ibrahim, Ms Susanna Broom

In attendance: Ms Josie Bramhall (minutes)

Category I Business

M16-17/31 Apologies were received as above. TS welcomed Judith Buchanan who joins as interim Dean for Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

M16-17/32 The minutes of the meeting of 23 February 2017 (YGRSB/1617/23) were approved as they stand. The Chair reported back on the SkillsForge roll-out and it was noted that the previous Deputy Academic Registrar had suggested a revision of the document was required before circulation. It was agreed that a revised report would come to this group in November 2017 following additional data on the progression panels. An issue was noted that SkillsForge currently used the supervisor's Departmental affiliation to determine the information presented to the supervisor, but that this was inappropriate for staff supervising students registered in other Departments.

(Action – SB to contact SkillsForge about cross-department supervision)

The Chair noted three lessons that had been learnt from the process:

- Don't underestimate departmental variations.
- Compliance projects can be given lower priority in resource allocation compared to income-generating projects, e.g. project managers and developers prioritised IPC over SkillsForge.
- If any issues are encountered along the way, it is important to increase the level of communication with those involved.

M16-17/33 TS reported the following:

- The National Productivity Investment Fund Studentships are coming through from Research Councils and have nearly all been allocated ; unfortunately none from AHRC. Overall we expect

between 15-20 of the 1000 to be secured at York.

- The China Scholarship Council had reported that seven of York's nominees had been funded; History, Chemistry, Economics, English, Philosophy, Psychology and Politics. TS and others were looking at the five unsuccessful ones to determine what the weaknesses were and feed back to departments.
- The Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarships bid will be submitted on 18 July with Julian Richards (Archaeology) as PI and Helen Petrie (Computer Science) as CI. The bid will build on the existing Centre for Digital Heritage.
- The AHRC bid was making progress. There are three developments on WRoCAH: bringing select European universities into the partnership (though they will not receive funding); a limited number of joint or dual doctorates with European partners; implementation of an ESRC-style PG Certificate of Advanced Research Skills with additional funding for students taking it.
- The British Council bid, SPHEIR had been submitted and a response would come back in July with regards to the second phase.
- There is some confusion around the Academic Misconduct Policy and so a new proposal had been formulated that separates general Research Misconduct by a student from Academic Misconduct in an assessment (progression or examination). The proposal will go to URC and SCA respectively in June and Senate in July.

M16-17/34 It was reported that GSA were in the midst of elections with six candidates running for two sabbatical positions. The current GSA representatives would hand over in September 2017. A number of events and initiatives continue to take place across campus and several events are being organized as part of welcome week.

M16-17/35 (YGRSB/16-17/24) **Supervision Charter.** The GSA had consulted widely with RETT, RSAT and Departmental Chairs to produce a set of key Principles of Supervision drawing on existing policies. The document presented to the group was in draft form and open to discussion and feedback. The following suggestions were made:

- Rephrase 'hazardous activities' following a request from University H&S Committee;
- Add an introductory paragraph to clarify the purpose of the document and who it represents;
- Clarify the requirement to discuss absences in order to make clear the supervisor doesn't need the student's agreement;
- Change from a six week to a four week period for feedback, as previously agreed, and add 'normally' to allow for situations where the turnaround is unreasonable;
- Remove 'treat the management of the student as part of their own career development' as this could be seen as contentious and the language is quite alien for the purpose of this document.

(Action – KS to implement these changes).

It was agreed that the final document should be circulated for approval by the Board, with PPSC taking responsibility for the upkeep alongside the Policy on Research Degrees.

(Action – KS to update document and recirculate to the group for approval).

M16-17/36 (YGRSB/16-17/25) **PGRs in PURE.** The Board discussed the report from the Pure User Group. It was noted that PGR outputs which didn't have a staff member co-author were not recorded on PURE, that those which were recorded did not identify the PGR author as such, and that no other PGR activity was captured. Thus we are losing the reputational benefit of a large quantity of high-quality research conducted by the University. It was agreed that PGRs should be visible in PURE as researchers but not have full access, and that requiring PGRs to have an ORCID would be the best method of capturing their research and importing to PURE. However, it was noted that UEB had prioritised the inclusion of T&S staff in Pure, so this needed to be implemented first.

(Action – TS to discuss with Anna Grey in Research Strategy and Policy Office and to feed back to the PURE User Group).

M16-17/37 (YGRSB/16-17/26) **Right to Work for external examiners.** The current HR ruling on Right to Work checks for PGR examiners was presented for information. Across the Russell Group institutions there was variation in Right to Work checks for examiners. UoY's current HR Policy states that we must check all passports prior to any work at UoY, but HR had accepted that PGR examiners were self-employed and thus we were not required to make the check ourselves. However, different messages had been given to members of the group with respect to other categories of self-employed consultant (e.g. REF readers) and this needed clarification.

(Action – JB to speak with HR).

M16-17/38 (YGRSB/16-17/27) **Thesis presentation.** The current process whereby members of staff in the Research Student Admin team have to check the presentation of each final-version thesis submitted thesis was causing issues for students, especially those close to graduation deadlines. It also takes up a considerable time for RSA and is based on the British Library standard that no longer exists. The Board accepted the proposal to restrict the absolute requirements to title page, abstract, declaration and font size, with other aspects becoming recommendations and thus not in need of checking by RSA. One change was proposed: the paragraph describing the declaration needed the sentence about collaboration and prior publication to come before the example declaration.

M16-17/39 (YGRSB/16-17/28) **On-time submission report.** The group discussed the report and it was noted that the demographic information requested last year was not included. It was also noted that the most recent data is anomalous with respect to late submissions and further investigation was needed to check the reliability of the data. A revised version would go to Senate in October 2017.

(Action – TS to request that the demographic figures are included and to check the discrepancies).

M16-17/40 (YGRSB/16-17/19) **DLHE data.** The Board looked at the initial 2017 DLHE figures for PGRs by Department. It was reported that the overall figures were positive with ten departments coming in at 100% positive outcomes; those below 90% would be looked at in more detail. It was noted that a full report would be brought to the next meeting by Careers.

(Action – SB to notify Careers of change in reporting schedule)

M1617/41 **A.O.B.** TS discussed confusion around the Workload Modelling message that had been cascaded from UEB by Planning. It was confirmed that URC had decided PGR is a research activity because it meets the Frascati definition for research and is fundamental to departmental research strategies.

However, this did not preclude Departments reducing teaching loads for individuals with particularly high PGR supervision loads. This was agreed by the PVC for Learning, Teaching and Students and the Chair would be the advocate for spreading this message.

(Action – TS to attend Faculty Executive Groups to pass this message on).

M1617/42 Tea and coffee to be ordered for future meetings.

(Action – SB)

Category II Business

The group thanked KS for the work she had done on re-writing the Mind Your Head report (YGRSB/16-17/30) in the light of comments from the Board. It was noted that Mind Your Head would not do a repeat of the survey due to lack of time and resource, but GSA are discussing the possibility of having their own survey and will consult with TS.

No further business was discussed.