



**GRADUATE SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING no 13  
9 October 2015  
Room AG01, College Building  
UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Meeting 12 22/09/15</b>	<b>Meeting 13 09/10/15</b>	<b>Meeting 14 08/02/15</b>	<b>Meeting 15 20/04/15</b>	<b>Meeting 16 22/06/15</b>
Professor Ken Grattan (Chair)	√	√			
Professor John Fothergill	√	Apols			
Professor Eugene McLaughlin	√	Apols			
Dr Mauro Barelli	*	√			
Professor Charles Baden-Fuller (Senate representative)	A	Apols			
Professor Christine McCourt	√	√			
Professor Ian Marsh	√	Apols			
Professor Chris Hull (Senate representative)	√	Apols			
Professor Davide Ravasi	√	Apols			
Stephanie Wilson	√	√			
Dr Youyou Yan	√	√			
Dr Pam Parker	√	√			
Umar Chaudhery (SU, Vice-President, Education)	A	*			
Student representative	vacant	vacant			
Dr Karen Shaw Director of Research and Enterprise Office	A				Item 14.2, Paper B Education and Student Committee, 11 February 2016
International Office	A	vacant			
Diane Bell (Library and Information Services)	√	√			

\* Indicates a substitute attended: Yusuf Ahmad (SU, VP Activities for Umar Chaudrey (SU, VP Education).  
In attendance: Dr Naomi Hammond (Secretary)

- √ indicates attendance;
- indicates a period when the member is on extended leave/when the person was not a member;
- A indicates apologies have been provided

### **Part One: Preliminary Items**

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Members of the Committee were **welcomed** and apologies **received** and **noted**.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the City Graduate School Committee held on 22 September 2015 were **approved**.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes**

The Committee **noted** the Matters Arising.

4. **Chair's Business**

The Chair had no additional business on which to report.

### **Part Two: Report from Students**

5. **Report from the VP Education, Students' Union**

The VP Activities **advised** the Committee that Welcome Week had been a success, with many City PGT students attending the event targeted at new research students too. The Committee was further **advised** that the SU was planning a variety of targeted activities for research students during 2015/16 and was liaising with colleagues in the City Graduate School to organise complimentary activity. The VP Activities reminded the Committee that the role of SU Graduate School representative was still vacant and asked members to encourage their research students to consider volunteering to act as the University research student representative.

### **Part Three: Report from Pro-Vice Chancellor, Research and Enterprise**

6. The Chair **advised** the Committee that the Research and Enterprise Committee (of which the Chair was a member) had recently considered the research and enterprise priorities of each academic School. The Research and Enterprise Committee had also asked the City Graduate School to provide a brief report outlining its needs, plans and achievements in relation to research and enterprise, with particular regard to measurable aims, for note at its meeting on 28 October 2015. The Graduate School Office had **agreed** its annual plan in association with the Departmental Plan for Student and Academic Services and would provide a summary of its objectives to the Research and Enterprise Committee based on this annual plan. The objectives would be forwarded to the next meeting of the Graduate School Committee for note.

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7. **2015 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)**

The Committee **considered** a draft report on the outcome of the 2015 PRES (including commentary on headline data, School data and student comments) and recommendations arising. The Committee **noted** the following strengths:

- ongoing satisfaction with research supervision
- increased satisfaction with dedicated library provision for researchers
- increasing awareness of students of their responsibilities as doctoral researchers.

The Committee **noted** the following areas where further work was required:

- clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the second supervisor
- further enhancement of University and School inductions for new research students
- increased networking opportunities, especially for part-time students, and strengthening the University's research culture
- improvements to the working environment including access to suitable space and up-to-date computing facilities
- increasing research student awareness of where, and from whom, to seek advice if things went wrong.

The Committee discussed the outcome of the survey at length. Research skills/methods training, and access to appropriate space, was discussed in particular. There was some uncertainty as to which Department across the University was responsible for the funding and organization of research skills/methods training for staff in addition to the funding and organisation of training for research students. There was additional further discussion about the way in which research students were able to record their skills training, and therefore, provide evidence for future career and professional development purposes. Members were **advised** that colleagues in the Research Office were currently responsible for research skills development for staff. It was **agreed** that the Head of the Graduate School Office would meet with colleagues in the Research Office to discuss funding and organization of research skills training for staff alongside training for research students. The Committee additionally **agreed** that the academic CV could be helpfully adapted for use by research students; the acting director of LEaD would revisit the academic CV and present it to a future meeting of the Committee for further consideration.

**Action:** Head of Graduate School Office to meet with colleagues in Research Office to discuss organization and funding of research skills training for staff alongside organization of training for research students

**Action:** Acting Director of LEaD to draft CV, and guidance, for doctoral students to record skills acquisition for further consideration by the Committee

There was also some uncertainty as to whether research students were entitled to use the new staff common room in the Tait Building. It was **agreed** that the Dean of the City Graduate School would raise this question with colleagues in Property and Facilities and advise members accordingly subsequently.

**Action:** Dean of City Graduate School to liaise with Property and Facilities to clarify whether research students were permitted to use the staff common room in the Tait Building

Members of the Committee were **advised** that a revised report on the outcome of the survey would be considered by Senate at its meeting in December and were asked to consider the results at the appropriate committee in their Schools. It was **agreed** that the Graduate School Committee would receive a report from each School on proposed actions at a future meeting as part of the feed-back process to the University's research student community.

**Action:** Associate Deans (Research Students) or equivalent to consider the the 2015 PRES results within their Schools and to report to a future meeting of the Graduate School Committee on proposed actions

## 8. **Research students who teach: access to University teacher training opportunities**

The Committee **received** a paper from LEaD on access to teacher training opportunities through the MA in Academic Practice. The Committee **noted** the University Policy that research students complete the Learning, Teaching and Assessment module on the MA in Academic Practice prior to undertaking any teaching duties. The Committee further **noted**, however, that some research students (with approval from their supervisors) were additionally enrolling to complete the PG Cert in Academic Practice in one year. The PG Cert amounts to 600 hours of study (4 level 7 modules at 15 credits each); a significant investment of study time. LEaD found that students who attempted to complete the PG Cert in one year struggled to keep up with the requisite work; missed deadlines; failed assessments; and withdrew because of the impact on their doctoral study.

While the Committee supported research student access to this training opportunity it also wished to ensure that the progress of their research study was not jeopardised. Upon consideration, the Committee **agreed** the recommendation that research students who wished to undertake the PG Cert in Academic Practice did so over two years rather than over one year. Associate Deans (Research Students) or equivalent would advise their research students accordingly.

**Action:** Associate Deans (Research Students) or equivalent to notify research supervisors and research students of change in access to the PG Cert in Academic Practice

#### 9. **Advanced research skills/methods training**

The Committee **noted** that Schools had provided information on the availability of research skills/methods training to research students over the summer but also **noted** the need to provide advanced training to research students. The Committee asked members to provide information on any advanced research skills/methods training that could be made available to research students in other Schools but **agreed** in the meantime that a module in Moodle should be created in order to share existing information on research skills/methods training available across the University.

**Action:** Associate Deans (Research Students) or equivalent to provide information on any advanced research skills/methods training that could be made available to research students in other Schools

**Action:** Head of Graduate School Office to create a module in Moodle to share existing information on research skills/methods training

#### 10. **Postgraduate Research Learning Outcomes (research degree completion rates)**

The Committee **received** the updated paper on “Improving University Research Degree Completion Rates” which had been additionally considered by ExCo and Senate; the Committee had first considered the paper at its meeting on 22 September 2015. The Committee was **advised** that Senate/ExCo had reminded Schools that they were required to promote available research projects/areas on the web to help improve student selection and admission as one of the actions to help improve research degree completion rates.

The Committee additionally **received** the data specification for undertaking the research degree completion rate data collection and analysis by cohort that had been agreed would be undertaken. The Committee **noted** the request from ExCo that the data be disaggregated between funded and self-funded students. The Committee was **advised** that the completion rate of those students who changed mode of attendance would be based on the mode in which they had spent the majority of their research study as it was not possible to calculate the rate of completion by month. Members were **advised** that a report on completion rates by cohort on the basis of the data specification received would be undertaken and reported to a future meeting of the Graduate School Committee and to Senate thereafter.

**Action:** Head of Graduate School Office to arrange report on completion rate by cohort and to report to future meeting of Graduate School Committee and Senate

The Graduate School Committee additionally **agreed** the need to revisit the length of time research students were given to undertake amendments after examination to help improve completion rates; currently, examiners can recommend up to 6 months for minor amendments and 12 months for major amendments and members of the Committee were of the view that some students were taking longer than necessary to complete because of the amount of time they were given to resubmit. The Head of the Graduate School Office would revisit the Senate Regulations and present amendments for further consideration by the Committee, and Boards of Studies, or delegated sub-Committee, and approval by Senate, at a future meeting of the Committee.

**Action:** Head of Graduate School Office to propose amendments to the Senate doctoral/research regulations for consideration at a future meeting of Committee

**11. City Graduate School Welcome Event**

Members were advised that the City Graduate School was planning a welcome event in November and were invited to suggest ideas for this event and for any future event of the City Graduate School for research students.

**Action:** Associate Deans (Research Students) or equivalent to email Head of Graduate School Office on ideas for welcome event in November and future Graduate School events

**Part Five: Items for information**

**12. Graduate School library opening times**

The Committee **noted** the change to the opening hours of the Graduate School library and welcomed the extension and the opportunities it provided for further quiet study for the University's research students.

**13. RCUK Training Grant Terms and Conditions**

The Committee **noted** the 2015/16 RCUK Training Grant Terms and Conditions and in particular the RCUK expectations on displaying RCUK funded doctoral projects in the RCUK Gateway to Research. Research students on a RCUK funded doctoral project would be advised of the 2015/16 Terms and Conditions.

**14. Research degrees awarded**

The Committee **noted** research degrees awarded since May 2015.

**15. Research degree examiner appointments**

The Committee **noted** examiner appointments since May 2015.

There were no other items of business. The Committee noted the timing and frequency of meetings during 2015/16.

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