



**GRADUATE SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING no 9  
18 June 2015  
Room AG01, College Building  
UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Meeting 8 4/11/2014</b>	<b>Meeting 9 05/02/15</b>	<b>Meeting 10 26/05/15</b>	<b>Meeting 11 18/06/15</b>
Professor Ken Grattan (Chair)	√	√	√	√
Professor John Fothergill	A	√	A	A
Professor Eugene McLaughlin	√	√		√
Dr Mauro Barelli	√	√	√	√
Professor Charles Baden-Fuller (Senate representative)	√	√	√	√
Professor Christine McCourt	*	√	√	√
Professor Ian Marsh	A	√	A	A
Professor Vangelis Souitaris	A		A	
Stephanie Wilson	√	√	√	√
Dr Youyou Yan	√	√	√	√
Dr Pam Parker	√	√	√	√
Issy Cooke (SU, Vice-President, Education)	A	√	A	√
Student representative	vacant	vacant	vacant	vacant
Director of Research Office	vacant	vacant	vacant	Karen Shaw
Dr Sue O'Hare	*	A	vacant	Karen Shaw
Izabela Hutchins (International Office)	A	A	A	vacant
Diane Bell (Library and Information Services)	√	√	√	√
Chris Hull (Senate representative)	vacant	√	A	√

\* *Indicates a substitute attended.* Claire Bensusan from the Research and Enterprise Office and Greg Wellington from Student and Academic Services (Academic Operations) attended the meeting to advise on Items 7 and 8 respectively.

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 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were **approved**.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes**  
The Committee **noted** the Matters Arising.
4. **Chair's Business**  
The Chair **advised** the Committee that the proposal-in-principle from Kaplan International to offer a pre-doctoral programme from which students may progress on to a doctoral programme at City (or at another partner HEI) was pending approval by ExCo. The Committee was further **advised** that the decision to accept students continued to rest with the School/Department. The Memorandum of Agreement would be revised as appropriate by the Validation and Partnerships Manager and colleagues in Schools would be informed in due course.

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

5. **Report from the VP Education, Students' Union**  
Issy Cooke, the outgoing VP Education, introduced members of the Committee to the new VP Education, Umar Chaudhery. The Committee was **advised** that the SU was developing a video for new students and was planning a variety of events during City's Welcome Week (21st to 25th September 2015), including events for doctoral students. The Committee was further **advised** that new research students were made aware of the events before they registered but agreed that the distribution list of School research student administration contacts would be sent to the VP Education in order that Schools could be advised of upcoming events in advance.

**Action:** Head of Graduate School Office to provide VP Education with distribution list of School research student administration contacts.

The Committee thanked Issy Cooke for her contribution to the work of the Committee during her term as SU VP Education and looked forward to working with Umar Chaudhery in 2015/16.

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

6. Apologies from the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) were **received**; the Director of Research and Enterprise updated the Committee in the absence of the PVC (Research and Enterprise). The Committee was **advised** that the Research and Enterprise Offices were undergoing re-organisation and that there was a need for discussion with colleagues in the Graduate School to identify areas in which Research and Enterprise could support specific activities of the Graduate School and the University's doctoral students, in particular support around research ethics, funding opportunities, insurance, IPR and student enterprise. The Committee **agreed** that members of the Graduate School would

meet with the Director of Research and Enterprise to discuss the provision of bespoke support for doctoral students in due course.

#### **Part Four: Items for discussion**

##### **7. Research degree subject-specific and transferable skills training**

The Committee was **advised** that at the recent meeting of the Senior Tutor for Research Forum it had been **agreed** that Schools would be asked to provide the following information:

1. modules/parts of modules and/or other research methods/skills training that could be made available to research students registered in other Schools across the University;
2. whether provision was at Master's or Advanced level (i.e. FHEQ level 7 or 8 respectively);
3. the approximate number of additional students who could access the provision;
4. details of research skills expertise colleagues could offer as part of an institutional-wide research skills programme.

Members **agreed** that a sub-group of the Graduate School Committee would meet towards the end of July to discuss the availability of research methods/skills training in more depth once responses from Schools had been received. Members of the Committee also **agreed** that the representative from the School of Arts and Social Sciences would give a presentation to the sub-group on the proposed MSc programme on Research Methods that was being developed to support the proposed application to the ESRC for a DTP. A copy of the outcome of the meeting would be circulated to members once the sub-group had met.

The Committee **noted** that during the consultation on the Doctoral Researcher Development Framework colleagues had **agreed** that students who wished to access research skills/methods training provision available in other Schools would not incur additional fees; the Committee **agreed** that confirmation from ExCo/Senate should be sought in order for the position to be formalised.

**Action:** Agreement on access to research skills training provision by research students across the University with no additional cost to be sought from University ExCo/Senate

The Committee further **agreed** that there was a need to increase the visibility of existing training provision (as well as new provision) across the University through the Graduate School website. The Committee was **advised** that the Head of the Graduate School Office was meeting with Marketing & Communications to discuss improvements to the Graduate School website alongside the project to market potential projects (discussed at the May meeting of the Graduate School Committee). The Head of the Graduate School Office would update the Committee on progress on the redesign of the Graduate School website at the next appropriate meeting.

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

The Committee **received** a paper which outlined some of the measures that had been taken since October 2010 to improve the University's research degree completion rates and which suggested further measures for consideration by the Committee to drive continuous improvement for discussion at the July meeting of Senate.

Additionally, the Committee **received** a summary of the average mean time in years for research students to complete within each School following data analysis undertaken by colleagues in Academic Operations (Student and Academic Services). The Committee

**noted** that the average mean time to complete across the University between 2007/8 and 2013/14 was 5.7 years but asked that the data be updated to differentiate between full and part-time students and that the number of students in each year also be provided. The Committee also requested the following:

1. information on periods of suspension and students who switch mode of attendance.
2. cohort analysis along the lines of historic reports to Senate with additional data on numbers dropping out in first 2 years and the completion rate in each of years 4,5,6,7 and longer than 7
3. provision of raw data in excel format, from 2002/3, including names of students and supervisors, as well as date of entry and award, for Schools to check.

The Committee **agreed** that the proposed measures to improve completion rates would be discussed at the first meeting of the Graduate School Committee in 2015/16 when the data had been updated; the representative from Academic Operations (Student and Academic Services) **advised** that the cohort analysis would require additional time to undertake but that the existing data would be updated as requested before the start of the next academic year. The Committee further **agreed** that Senate would be provided with a verbal update on the University's completion rates at its meeting in July; that colleagues in the Graduate School would meet with Academic Operations to agree a timescale for the cohort analysis; and that Schools would be asked to identify steps to improve research degree completion rates as part of the annual research degree programme evaluation exercise to feed into the proposed action plan for consideration by Senate in October 2015.

**Action:** Academic Operations to update existing data to differentiate between full and part time students and to provide information on number of students

**Action:** Colleagues in Graduate School and Academic Operations to agree a timescale for the cohort analysis

**Action:** Schools to identify steps to improve research degree completion rates to feed into proposed action plan for consideration by Senate in October 2015

#### **Part Five: Items for information**

#### **9. Any other business and dates of future meetings**

There were no other items of business. Members of the Committee were **advised** that dates for future meetings in 2015/16 would be agreed by email circulation.

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