

Imperial College London

Graduate School Postgraduate Research Quality Committee

26 October 2012

Minutes

Present

Professor Andrew George (Chairman)
Dr David McPhail (Deputy Chair)
Dr Tim Albrecht (Chemistry)
Dr Simon Archer (College Tutor)
Mr James Charlesworth [for Ms Natalie Kempston] (AWO Medicine)
Professor Chris Cheeseman (Civil and Environmental Engineering)
Professor Sergei Chernyshenko [for Professor Ferri Aliabadi] (Aeronautics)
Dr John Gibbons (Mathematics)
Ms Maryam Habibzay (GSA President)
Dr Stuart Haslam [for Dr Niki Gounaris] (Department of Life Sciences)
Professor Kate Hardy [for Professor Michael Seckl] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)
Professor Andrew Holmes (Electrical and Electronic Engineering)
Professor Debra Humphis (Pro Rector, Education)
Professor Marjo-Riitta Jarvelin (School of Public Health)
Professor Peter Lindstedt (Mechanical Engineering)
Dr Felicity Mellor [for Dr Jorge Diaz-Cintas] (School of Professional Development)
Dr Kevin Murphy (Department of Medicine)
Mr Nicholas Ng (AWO Physical Sciences)
Ms Helen Pennington (AWO Life Sciences)
Professor Morris Sloman (Dean of Engineering and Business School)
Ms Natasha Strydom (GSA Vice president)
Dr Mike Tennant (Centre for Environmental Policy)
Professor Robert Zimmerman (Earth Science and Engineering)
Mr Ross Webster (AWO Engineering)
Mr Nigel Wheatley (Academic Registrar)

In Attendance

Ms Sally Baker (Senior Assistant Registrar)
Ms Laura McConnell (Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance))
Ms Rebecca Penny (Senior Assistant Registrar (QA and Data))

Observing

Ms Julie Paranics (Imperial College Business School)

Invited

Professor Nigel Gooderham (for item 7.1)
Professor Izzuddin (for item 7.3)
Mr Alistair Litterick (for item 7.2)
Ms Judith Litwig (for item 7.2)
Dr Emma McCoy (for item 7.2)
Ms Marilyn Nika (for item 7.3)
Dr Bill Proud (for item 10)
Mr Jeremiah Smith (for item 7.3)

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the newly constituted Committee and explained that the membership had been broadened to include a representative from each Department. Members were reminded that the constitution of the Committee, when it was established following the merger of GSEPS and GSLSM, was that there should be two representatives from the Faculty of Engineering, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Natural Sciences and one representative from the (then) Department of Humanities and the Business School. The Chair reported that this had made it difficult to keep in touch with individual Directors of Postgraduate Studies, to keep them involved in discussions concerning new procedures and developments, and informed of decisions. The decision to widen the membership would address this situation.

The Chairman welcomed in particular the student representatives and stressed how essential their contribution to the work of the Committee would be.

2. Apologies for absence

Professor Erkkö Autio (Imperial College Business School)
Dr Bernadette Byrne (Chair of the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee)
Professor Simon Buckle (Pro Rector International)
Professor Lesley Cohen (Physics)
Mr Doug Hunt (ICU Deputy President (Education))
Professor Tony Magee (NHLL)
Dr Alessandra Russo (Computing)
Dr Simon Schultz (Bioengineering)
Professor Anne Soutar (Institute of Clinical Sciences)
Professor Denis Wright (Dean of Students)
Professor Xiao Yun Xu (Chemical Engineering)

3. Terms of Reference and Membership

Members received the terms of reference and membership of the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee 2012.

PRQC/2012/01

It was noted that the Management and Strategy Committee had been disbanded and that the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee would now advise the Senate and the Strategic Education Committee on policy and strategy relating to postgraduate education at research level, whilst the Master's Quality Committees would have that role in relation to postgraduate Master's level education.

It was noted that the revised Committee structure was expected to be approved by Senate on 31 October 2012.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2012 were approved.

PRQC/2012/02

5. Matters arising

5.1 Minute 4 - PRES Results 2011 – follow up: it was noted that the response from Ms Elaine Walsh had been circulated to all Committee members after the meeting (on 11.06.2012).

5.2 There were no matters arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. Review of Departmental Research Degree Provision: Precept Reviews

6.1 Department of Surgery and Cancer

The Committee received the self assessment and precept review for the Department of Surgery and Cancer.

PRQC/2012/03

6.2 The Committee considered the precept review information in respect of the Department of Surgery and Cancer and noted that the Department's research degree procedures had been assessed as being fully compliant in seven of the eleven precepts by the reviewer.

6.3 The reviewer highlighted that the student handbook was excellent and commented that the combined induction third year student poster workshop was a well thought out.

6.4 Precepts 7, 9 and 10

The reviewer reported that the Department was not fully compliant in these three precepts which cover the assessment milestones (initial plan of study (Precept 7), early stage assessment (Precept 9) and late stage review (Precept 10) respectively). It was noted that although no students had yet reached the (new) late stage review milestone, comparative rates of students who had transferred to PhD within 18 months were low and that this indicated that the Department may have difficulty in reaching compliance with this precept in future. The reviewer noted the overall PhD completion rates were also lower than the College target. The reviewer noted that the Department had put in place all the required procedures to be compliant, and that monitoring procedures and reporting mechanisms for ensuring compliance had been introduced. The Committee agreed that the Department should be considered to be working towards compliance with these precepts.

6.5 Precept 11

The reviewer reported that the Department was not compliant with Precept 11 as no student representatives attend the Postgraduate Education Committee. The Department had subsequently confirmed that a student representative would be invited to attend meetings with effect from 2012-2013. The Committee agreed that the Department should be considered to be compliant with this precept.

6.6 The Committee endorsed the overall assessment of the reviewer that the Department was working towards compliance. The Committee asked that the Department should provide a report of completion statistics and evidence of compliance with interim milestones in October 2013. It was agreed that the next precept review should be conducted in three years' time.

7. Review of Departmental Research Degree Provision: Periodic Reviews

7.1 Centre for Environmental Policy – Follow Up

The Committee considered a report by the internal review panel on progress made since the periodic review for the Centre for Environmental Policy in May 2011. The review was presented by Professor Nigel Gooderham, the internal Chair for the review.

PRQC/2012/04

7.1.1 It was reported that the Department were committed to improving the Research Degree provision and that significant progress had been made since the original review. The Committee noted that the accommodation issues that had previously been very disruptive were now being resolved with the planned move to dedicated space.

7.1.2 Precept 3 (Induction) – the Committee was pleased to note that this precept, previously judged partially compliant, was moving towards compliance and was informed that the Department had shown a commitment to improve their provision for late starters, which will confirm compliance.

7.1.3 Precept 6 (PG Committee) - the Committee was pleased to note that this precept, previously judged non-compliant, was moving towards compliance and was informed that a PG Committee had now been constituted. However, the on-going terms of reference of the Committee were unclear and the Department was urged to consider how best to constitute the Committee to oversee their research degree provision in the longer term.

7.1.4 Precept 8 (Confidential reports) – the Committee was pleased to note that this precept, previously judged non-compliant, was now moving towards compliance and was informed that students have the opportunity to complete a confidential report that can be submitted to the DPS.

7.1.5 Precept 9 (transfer from MPhil to PhD within 15 months) – previously judged non-compliant, this is no longer a requirement under the new PhD progression scheme. The Department is working towards compliance with the new procedures.

7.1.6 Precept 10 (Staff-Student Forum) - the Committee was pleased to note that this precept, previously judged non-compliant, was now compliant. However, there appeared to be some confusion between the business that needed to be considered by the PG committee (as required under precept 6) and the PG Staff-Student Forum, and the Department was urged to consider the operational working of these two committees. The Department was also urged to address the need to ensure efficient communication within the Department and between the Department and other College entities.

7.1.7 The Committee endorsed the overall report submitted by the internal review panel and commended the Department for the progress which had been made. The Committee agreed that

the Department was now moving towards compliance overall and asked that the Department should provide a report in October 2013 which should show progress on achieving compliance with precepts 3, 6 and 8 above. The report should also include statistics to evidence compliance with achieving PhD milestones, and a comment on progress towards ensuring the efficient working of the PG Committee and the Staff-Student forum.

7.2 Review of Research Degree Training in the Department of Mathematics

7.2.1 The Committee considered the periodic review of research degree training in the Department of Mathematics, including the reports of the assessors, the internal Chairman's completed Reviewer's Comments Form and the Department's response to the assessors' comments.

PRQC/2012/05

7.2.2 The review was presented by the Chairman on behalf of Professor Richard Vinter, the internal Chair for the review. Dr John Gibbons, the Director of Postgraduate Studies, together with Mr Alastair Litterick and Ms Judith Ludwig, the student representatives from the Department, attended to present their responses to the review. Apologies for absence were received from Professor Richard Craster, the Head of Department, who was represented on this occasion by Dr Emma McCoy.

7.2.3 The Committee noted that the reviewers had rated the Department "compliant" in each of the precepts and "compliant" overall. The Committee was pleased with the positive review and noted that the panel reported that students were enthusiastic about their programmes and that the Department has a vibrant research environment.

7.2.4 The review panel had commented that the Department maintains a culture that accords a great deal of importance to the quality of supervision, academic availability and the induction of students into their research communities. The panel cited staff commitment to students as an example of good practice. The panel also reported that the student handbook was well written and informative and praised the range of seminars and reading groups available to students. The students present at the review reported that they enjoyed the poster competition which provided an opportunity to share their research interests with peers.

7.2.5 The review panel had commended the creation of mini DTCs in active and emerging research areas and the formulation of research programmes around these new areas. The Committee agreed that mini DTCs potentially have a valuable role as a template for creating future EPSRC funded Doctoral Training Centres in the Department. However, the panel cautioned that the creation of such DTCs carries a danger of creating a two tier student system, with those outside the DTC feeling isolated and not so well supported.

7.2.6 The panel had reported that Dr Gibbons currently carries out the duties of both DPS and PG Tutor, although some research sections have their own PG Tutor. Combining these roles is currently viable and the panel praised Dr Gibbons for the high level of dedication to his work but recommended that it would not be reasonable to expect one person to continue with such a demanding role in the future, especially given the projected increases in research student numbers. In light of these comments, the Committee agreed that the Department should appoint separate members of staff to each role when Dr Gibbons steps down. In addition to this, the Committee proposed that the Department may wish to consider making an immediate appointment to take on part of Dr Gibbon's current role for succession planning.

7.2.7 The panel reported that the Department did not assign separate academic mentors to its students instead each student is appointed a second supervisor. Students present at the review confirmed that they were happy that these arrangements worked well and that they knew where to go should they have a problem. The panel was satisfied that this arrangement works well for the Department and did not make a recommendation for change.

7.2.8 The review panel considered the material covered by the PG Committee and whilst it was able to confirm that this Committee met regularly and was properly constituted, it recommended that other matters such as admissions, induction, registration, transfers, external examiners, assessment, complaints, training, proposals and completion rates etc. were also discussed at PG Committee meetings. The panel suggested that one way to achieve this might be to ask the DPS to present an overview of these matters to the Committee as a standing agenda item. The panel also recommended that PG Student Representatives should be invited to attend these meetings to ensure student opinion on these matters is given due consideration and that issues which

students feel unable to raise directly with the DPS/PG Tutor can be discussed. In this case, agenda items involving named students must be considered as reserved business. The Department responded to these recommendations by confirming that they hope to ensure that suggested changes are implemented before Christmas 2012.

7.2.9 The review panel found a good deal of scepticism amongst academic staff about the merits of Precept 9 on the grounds that 9 months was far too early to make the assessment of research potential. However, in discussion with the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee, the Department accepted that the 9 month assessment was now becoming more embedded.

7.2.10 In the light of discussions with students present at the review, the panel also recommended that the Department give consideration to preparing better careers advice for its students and to developing better alumni networking opportunities.

7.2.11 The ICU student representative on the panel reported that he had found participation in this review difficult given that he was an undergraduate medic who had stepped in at the last moment when no other sabbatical officers were able to attend. In light of this comment, the Committee expressed support for the establishment of a PG sabbatical position.

7.2.12 It was noted that the report would be presented to Senate with the recommendation that the Department of Mathematics be invited to report to the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee on developments since the periodic review as part of the next Precept Review in three years' time.

7.3 Review of Research Degree Training in the Department of Computing

7.3.1 The Committee considered the periodic review of research degree training in the Department of Computing, including the reports of the assessors, the internal Chairman's completed Reviewer's Comments Form and the Department's response to the assessors' comments.

PRQC/2012/06

7.3.2 The review was presented by Professor Izzuddin, on behalf of Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson, the internal Chair for the review. Dr Kysia Broda, the (then) Director of Postgraduate Studies, together with Mr Jeremiah Smith and Ms Marily Nika, the student representatives from the Department, attended to present their responses to the review. Apologies for absence were received from Professor Susan Eisenbach, the Head of Department, who was represented on this occasion by Professor Morris Sloman.

7.3.3 The Committee noted that the reviewers had rated the Department "compliant" in each of the precepts and "compliant" overall and congratulated the Department on its excellent review and noted that all minor points raised by the review panel had already been satisfactorily addressed by the Department.

7.3.4 The review panel had been impressed with the Department's extensive links with industry and its small research groups which enabled students to collaborate widely on a range of innovative research areas. Students undertaking interdisciplinary cross-Faculty research were appointed a Computing supervisor as well as a co-supervisor from the other Faculty concerned. The panel cited this as an example of good practice. It was also reported to the panel that all cohorts have a cohort mentor, to ensure that cohort-specific issues are raised and addressed by the Department.

7.3.5 The review panel found there to be an excellent research community within the Department. Students cited the regular Friday afternoon discussion forum as an example of good practice because it provided opportunity to make connections with other students and staff in the Department and to think beyond the boundaries of their own research. The 60 Second Theses Presentation event was also praised by students present at the review for the same reasons. The Committee agreed that other Departments in the College should consider developing a similar event to promote interdisciplinary collaboration.

7.3.6 The Department reported that they had recently introduced a requirement for students to submit a short monthly log of activities. Exploration of the purpose and success of this new process by the panel revealed inconsistencies in its application. The Department reported that they were working to resolve these issues and the Committee asked for feedback in due course. **[ACTION]** However, this had not given the panel cause for concern because students present at

the review confirmed that they had good relationships with their supervisors and received good feedback from them. The panel was satisfied that the Department had other mechanisms in place for checking the progress of its students, all of which were working well.

7.3.7 The panel explored the reasons why the Department's completion rates were lower than the College average. London provides a wealth of opportunity for computer scientists and often good candidates are made offers of excellent job opportunities early on in their career. The panel found that many students were tempted by this and did not complete their studies as a result. The panel concluded that the completion rate for the Department was more than satisfactory given the circumstances explained above and noted that it was in line with, if not better than, completion rates for similar courses at other Russell Group institutions.

7.3.8 The role of the Graduate School professional skills courses and their compulsory nature was discussed by the panel and the Department. Whilst agreeing that the workshops provided a good opportunity to meet students from other disciplines, students at the review reported that some courses were too generic to be applicable to students in the Department of Computing. The Committee noted that the Graduate School is continually reviewing its programme of professional skills training, but that discipline specific training should be delivered at departmental level.

7.3.9 Students present at the review reported that they would welcome the opportunity to attend PhD discussion forums in other Departments of the College but that they did not know of any mechanism to find out when these were taking place. Students would welcome a regular email of activities taking place within the College, which they could attend, to further encourage research collaboration with other Departments. It should be noted that the Graduate School does now host a listing of symposia from across the College at the following web address:
<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/graduateschool/events/researchseminars>

7.3.10 The Committee discussed the College Scholarships process and the time-lines for informing candidates of the outcome of their application. The Committee heard that the different College deadlines complicated the process and that where students were not informed promptly about whether or not they had been successful in their applications for scholarships they quite often went elsewhere.

7.3.11 It was noted that the report would be presented to Senate with the recommendation that the Department of Mathematics be invited to report to the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee on developments since the periodic review as part of the next Precept Review in three years' time.

8. Department of Computing Doctoral Teaching Scholar Programme (DTS)

The Committee received a progress report on Year 1 [2011-2012] of the Doctoral Teaching Scholar Programme, presented by Dr Krysia Broda, the Scheme Coordinator.

PRQC/2012/07

Members were reminded that the DTS scheme was introduced in the Department of Computing in the October 2011 session. The scheme had been designed to give PhD scholars the opportunity to study for a PG Certificate at Imperial and to gain wider teaching experience than is possible through tutorial help. The scheme is funded by the Department, and pays fees and maintenance for 4.5 years. The scheme includes approximately one year teaching experience gained within the Department and four months study time for the PG Certificate.

Dr Broda reported that one student had joined the scheme in October 2011 and, in his first year, had undertaken two weeks of training and nine weeks of teaching activities, alongside his PhD studies. Dr Broda reported that the Department had derived great benefit from the teaching contribution and that the student had progressed equally well with PhD and teaching studies. The Committee were very interested to hear of the initial success of the programme which was a model which could well be adapted for other departments.

9. Good Practice from Periodic Reviews

The Committee received a report from the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) on good practice highlighted by periodic reviews panels in reviews which were reported to Senate during the academic session 2011-2012.

PRQC/2012/08

Members were encouraged to disseminate the report within their departments. Representatives from departments who had undergone periodic reviews offered to share experiences with those scheduled for review.

10. Renewal of Student Exchange Partners

10.1 University of Pardubice, Czech Republic

The Committee considered a request to renew the exchange partnership with the University of Pardubice. The request was presented by Dr Bill Proud.

PRQC/2012/09

Dr Proud explained that the partnership involved the MSc Shock Physics and PhDs undertaken within the Institute of Shock Physics at Imperial and the MSc and PhDs undertaken within the Institute of Energetic Materials at Pardubice. The Committee approved the continuation of the exchange partnership with the University of Pardubice for a further five years.

10.2 Military Technical Academy in Romania

The Committee considered a request to renew the exchange partnership with the Military Technical Academy. The request was presented by Dr Bill Proud.

PRQC/2012/10

Dr Proud explained that the partnership involved the MSc Shock Physics and PhDs undertaken within the Institute of Shock Physics or the Centre for Blast Injury Studies at Imperial and short courses and PhDs undertaken in Mechanical Engineering [Ammunitions, Missiles, Explosives and Propellants] at MTA. The Committee approved the continuation of the exchange partnership with the Military Technical Academy for a further five years.

10.3 Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in Spain

The Committee considered a request to renew the exchange partnership with the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The request was presented by Dr Felicity Mellor.

PRQC/2012/11

Dr Mellor explained that partnership involved the PhDs undertaken within the Translation Studies Unit at Imperial and PhDs undertaken within the Translation & Interpreting, Intercultural Studies and East Asian Studies programme in Barcelona. The Committee approved the continuation of the exchange partnership with the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona for a further five years.

11. UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B11: Research Degrees & Proposed Amendments to the College's Research Degree Precepts

Members noted that the QAA had recently published Chapter B11 of the UK Quality Code: Research Degrees. The Committee considered a report on the implications of this Chapter for the College, together with revisions to the College's research degree precepts.

PRQC/2012/12

The Committee noted that in the new chapter the "precepts" had been replaced with "indicators" and that many of the original precepts had been combined into single indicators. It was reported that there were no substantial changes to the content of the indicators over the precepts, and that the College precepts had been revised to ensure compliance with the code in the light of the new Chapter.

Members noted that the College's research degree precepts related to doctoral awards (PhD, EngD, MD(Res) and the research Master's award of MPhil). It was confirmed that Master's awards would have their own set of precepts which were being developed but that, where relevant and practical, the indicators of Chapter B11 would be adhered to for the research elements of the College's Master's level awards.

In discussion, it was clarified that, in respect of Precept E [Continuing Professional Development for Supervisors] this referred to supporting supervisors to equip them to supervise research students, providing advice on how to supervise research students effectively in different circumstances, and enabling sharing of good practice. Members were reminded that the Educational Development Unit offered courses to support supervisors and was developing training at departmental level.

The Committee agreed that the revised precepts should be adopted.

In further discussion, it was highlighted that the QAA expects HEIs who do not appoint an independent, non-examining chair for the final thesis viva examination to find alternative ways of

assuring fairness and consistency and ensuring that the viva is being conducted in an appropriate manner. At Imperial the internal examiner assumes this role.

The Committee debated the issue, considering the merits of the College's current regulations versus a system which appoints an independent chair, in terms of the student experience and the ease of appointing external examiners. Members also suggested the possibility of considering holding a longer, public presentation and a shorter viva.

Members described instances where an independent, non-examining chair would be preferable to the role played by the internal examiner, and the Committee was divided as to which arrangement was the more appropriate. It was agreed that a small group should meet to discuss the issues and present a report to the next meeting of the PRQC. The group was asked also to explore the option of conducting a public viva.

12. Discussion Paper on Special Cases

The Committee considered a paper from the working party set up to review the special cases procedure. The paper was presented by Dr David McPhail.

PRQC/2012/13

12.1 Members were reminded that a small working group had been convened to look into the relatively high number of special cases involving late submissions of theses, the reasons underlying the requests and the sanctions available to the special cases panel.

12.2 The analysis undertaken by the working party, together with their assumptions and recommendations, was presented to the Committee. The working party had identified the most common causes of late submission and agreed that in most cases these could have been avoided if detected earlier and appropriate action put in place. In cases of genuine problems likely to affect the submission deadline, the College Interruption of Studies (IOS) procedure should be used.

12.3 In further discussion, the Committee considered other implications of late submission and IOS such as funding and visa restrictions, and suggested that guidelines on these matters would be useful. Some members felt that ready access to guidance on dealing with cases of unsatisfactory academic progress or dealing with issues of a non-academic nature was lacking. It was suggested that the Registry was well able to give advice in such cases.

12.4 Some members highlighted a change in mode of attendance due to a change in contract, such as transfer from an RA contract to full-time student, may have unforeseen consequences for submission deadlines.

12.5 It was noted that the overall College 4-year submission rate was high, and that special cases in certain circumstances were to be expected. However, the Committee agreed that it was important to try to reduce late submissions, and that, where necessary, action needed to be taken at departmental level to uphold the 4 year submission deadline.

12.6 It was agreed that the paper should be further refined for final consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

13. Proposed Change to the Academic Regulations for the MPhil Award

The Committee considered revisions to the maximum MPhil registration period.

PRQC/2012/14

13.1 Members noted that, following the introduction of direct PhD registration, it had become necessary to revise the regulation concerning maximum MPhil registration to allow students who transfer from PhD to MPhil following their Late Stage Review time to write up their work for the MPhil degree.

13.2 At present, the College's Academic Regulations require all full-time MPhil students to submit their thesis for examination within 24 months of the date of their initial registration. This does not allow sufficient time for students who are transferred following the Late Stage Review (at either their first or second attempt) to write up their work for the MPhil award.

13.3 The Committee agreed to recommend to Senate that regulation 4.11 should be amended to read:

“Full-time MPhil students must normally submit their thesis for examination within 24 months of the date of the initial degree registration. Where a student has had their registration transferred from PhD to MPhil following a late stage review they should normally complete the MPhil within three to six months of the date of that late stage review.”

14. Revisions to Procedure for Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees (MPhil, PhD, MD(Res) & EngD)

The Committee considered revisions to the Procedure for Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees.

PRQC/2012/15

14.1 Members noted that, following the introduction of direct PhD registration, it had become necessary to revise the Procedure for Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees (MPhil, PhD, MD(Res) & EngD).

14.2 The revisions included mention of the early stage assessment and late stage review and additionally incorporated the changes to the training for new staff post-CASLAT.

14.3 In discussion, the Committee suggested that paragraph 4, bullet point 3, should be revised to read - *All staff must: “ideally have experience of examining research degrees at Imperial College London.”*

In further discussion of paragraph 4, the Committee considered whether the reference to CASLAT and the PG Certificate in University Learning and Teaching was necessary, and it was concluded that having the qualification would be beneficial and agreed that the reference should remain.

14.4 The Committee agreed to recommend to Senate that the revisions to the Procedure for Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees (MPhil, PhD, MD(Res) & EngD) should be amended as described.

15. Postgraduate Professional Development Committee: update

The Committee received a verbal report on the Professional Skills Development Programme for Doctoral Students.

15.1 It was reported that the programme had been re-designed and re-launched in October 2012 as a staged programme with workshops grouped into “domains”. The website had been re-designed so that workshops were more clearly signposted and new, more focussed templates giving course descriptions had been added.

15.2 It was reported that members of the Postgraduate Development Unit had attended PGR departmental induction sessions to give information on the programme and advice on selecting courses. It was reported that the current demand for courses was very high as last year’s students who were approaching their Late Stage Review attempted to complete their attendance requirement and new students were taking courses in order to complete within the first nine months.

ITEMS FOR REPORT

16. Senate:

Members noted that the latest executive summaries from Senate were available at:

R:\10.Committees\Graduate School\GS PRQC\2011-12\Senate Executive Summaries 2011-12

17. Quality Assurance Advisory Committee:

Members noted that the latest the latest executive summaries from the QAAC meetings were available at:

R:\10.Committees\Graduate School\GS PRQC\2011-12\QAAC Executive Summaries 2011-12

18. ESA / LSR forms and guidance notes

Members noted that that the ESA & LSR guidance notes and forms had been updated to reflect changes effective from the 2012-3 Academic session.

19. Any Other Business

There was no other business to be discussed.

20. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 14 February 2013, in the Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate, South Kensington Campus. The meeting will start at 14:00. The deadline for papers is Thursday 31 January 2013.

21. Date of following meetings

Thursday 14th Feb 2013 starting at 2pm

Friday 19th April 2013 starting at 2pm

22. Reserved Business (not circulated to student members)

22.1 Special Cases Panel – Doctoral Programmes 2012-3

Membership of the special cases panel for doctoral programmes was confirmed.

PRQC/2012/16

Members were reminded that special case requests were processed via the Registry and were sent to two members of the panel for consideration. Members were at liberty to discuss the case with each other, rather than consider independently, should they wish.

22.2 Special Cases Reports

The Committee received reports on special cases considered by the special cases panel for doctoral programmes.

Special Cases for Admissions - PRQC/2012/17

Special Cases for Examiners - PRQC/2012/18

Special Cases for Late Entry - PRQC/2012/19