

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
BOARD OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 09:30, THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021, ONLINE VIA TEAMS

	Professor Dan Branch	DB	Chair
	Professor Jennifer Burns	JB	Chair, Arts Faculty Education Committee
	Professor Jon Coaffee	JC	CDT representative, Social Science and Arts
	Dr Ross Forman	RF	Representative of Board of Faculty of Arts
	Dr Rebecca Freeman	RF	Dean of Students
	Dr Peter Gammon	PG	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Lee Griffin	LG	Deputy Chair
	Sara Hattersley	SH	Representative from Academic Development Centre
	Dr James Lloyd-Hughes	JLH	Representative of Board of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Professor Graeme MacDonald	GM	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Dr Debbi Marais	DM	Representative of Board of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Professor Davide Nicolini	DN	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Nathan Parsons	NP	Co-opted student member, PG Sabbatical Officer
	Professor Jose Rodrigo	JR	CDT representative, Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Michele Underwood	MU	Research Development Manager
	Professor Martin Wills	MW	Chair, Science, Engineering and Medicine Faculty Education Committee
	Roberta Wooldridge Smith	RWS	Representative of Student Opportunity
	Dr David Wright	DW	Member of academic staff appointed by Senate
Attending	Dr Lory Barile	LB	Attending on behalf of Dr Jennifer Smith, Representative of Board of Faculty of Social Science
	Pierre Botcherby	PB	PGR Development Officer
	Nicola Ellis-Thomas	NET	PG Scholarships Project Officer
	Ian Hamilton	IH	Chair, PGR SSLC (Statistics)
	Elizabeth Hough	EH	Assistant Director (Head of Admissions Services)
	Laura Larard	LL	Assistant Secretary, Administrative Officer (Doctoral College)
	Rhiannon Martyn	RM	Secretary, Head of Doctoral College
	Louise Sutcliffe	LS	Postgraduate Student Development Officer
	Dr Chris Twine	CT	Academic Registrar
	Dr Rebecca Vipond	RV	CDT & PG Scholarships Coordination Manager
	Priscilla Vitoh	PV	Chair, PGR SSLC (Law)
Ref	Item		
019	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Nicola Attridge, Ant Brewerton, Kurt Debattista, Xiaodong (Wes) Lin, Jennifer Smith, John Snape, Mark Steel, Naomi Waltham-Smith		
020	Declarations of Interest No new declarations were made.		
021	Minutes of last meeting on 16 September 2021 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021 were received and approved.		

022	<p>Matters arising from meeting held on 16 September 2021</p> <p>The matters arising were as follows:</p> <p>(a) Nomination of student member on the University Research Governance and Ethics Committee (minute 006-BGS160921) The Chair reported that the nomination of a student member was still outstanding and would be pursued outside of the meeting.</p> <p>(b) Minor corrections (minute 008(c)-BGS160921) The change to the definition of minor corrections, previously recommended for approval by the Board, had been communicated to academic departments.</p>
Chair and Secretary's Update	
023	<p>Chair's Business</p> <p>(a) 'Fellowship' status for graduated PGRs The Chair reported that the Provost and Head of HR would be meeting to discuss the possibility of allowing graduated PGRs a mechanism for remaining part of the University community. The Chair noted the Board's support and committed to pursuing this via other means if the outcome of this meeting was not favourable. An update will be provided at the next meeting</p> <p>(b) EPSRC DTP studentships Departments will receive information on their quotas for EPSRC DTP studentships shortly; the Chair noted his thanks to Research and Impact Services for their assistance with this.</p>
024	<p>Deputy Chair's Business</p> <p>(a) PTES The Deputy Chair reported that the PTES survey would be taking place this year and invited suggestions for the institutional questions that could be added to the generic survey.</p> <p>(b) HEAR for PGT Work is currently taking place to introduce the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) for PGT students; some input from academic departments may be required.</p>
025	<p>Secretary's Business</p> <p>(a) Scholarships update NET reported that the 2022/23 scholarships competition (for Chancellor's International, China Scholarship Council and Monash-Warwick Alliance scholarships) had recently opened. The deadline for Chancellor's International and Monash-Warwick Alliance scholarships applications is 18 January 2022. The deadline for applications for China Scholarship Council is 1 February 2022. Departments will be notified of quotas in December. The Doctoral College will be contacting Faculty Secretaries shortly to ask for nominations for Faculty assessors. The Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme (PGT) has also need launched. A total of 9 awards are available for entry in 2022/23. The deadline is earlier than usual – 20 December, so the relevant departments are encouraged to be proactive in promoting these opportunities.</p> <p>(b) Outcome of BAME bids RM reported that the three bids had been unsuccessful. However, the Doctoral College had committed to working with colleagues at Coventry University to fund a small number of PhD studentships and a postdoctoral appointment in this area. If funding is approved, this will result in a research group across both universities with a focus on BAME PGR access and participation. Further details will be provided in future meetings.</p> <p>(c) Childcare funding for PGRs</p>

	<p>RM reported that the Chair of PGR SSLC in Psychology had contacted the Doctoral College about childcare funding for PGRs. As PGRs are not usually taxpayers they are not eligible for the government scheme. Full-time UG and PGT students are eligible for a childcare grant, but this is not available to PGRs. The Doctoral College is looking into ways in which it might be able to support.</p> <p>(d) 'Personal tutoring' survey</p> <p>PB provided a brief overview of preliminary results of a survey of departments in relation to 'personal tutoring' provision, noting the issue with the terminology in relation to PGRs (paper 025d-BGS111121). The full results will be presented to BGS in the Spring. It was noted that there is a wider question around the supervisory role and pastoral support. The Chair reported that the Doctoral College would be looking into this shortly in response to PRES results.</p>
Students' Union Update	
026	<p>Students' Union Update</p> <p>No update</p>
Faculty Updates	
027	<p>Faculty of Arts</p> <p>JB reported that the main focus of discussion at the latest Faculty Education Committee meeting was the future shape of the academic year and blended learning from 2022 onwards. The outcomes of the OfS BAME PGR Access bids were also reported. LG attended the meeting to discuss PGT priorities for coming year and reported receiving useful feedback in relation to interdisciplinarity / cross-faculty working. LG also reported on academic integrity - highlighting the new process and consistency of sanctions across the University.</p>
028	<p>Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine</p> <p>MW reported on the Faculty Education Committee's discussion on the shape of the academic year and the implications for PG students as this is developed. LG also attended the meeting to report of PGT priorities and academic integrity. MW gave the Committee an update on scholarship competitions and advised that the Faculty would be nominating assessors shortly.</p>
029	<p>Faculty of Social Sciences</p> <p>JC reported that the Faculty Education Committee also discussed the shape of the academic year, noting that discussions are focused primarily on UG study. The Committee considered that it was important to ensure that the needs of PGT and PGR are considered. The Committee received a report commissioned by ESRC on the future of the PhD, noting the indication that data skills/advanced quantitative methods will form a greater part of PhD training in the future.</p> <p>The Chair noted the comments about the future of the academic year and highlighted the importance of the Board ensuring that PG needs are given appropriate consideration.</p>
PGR SSLC Business	
030	<p>PGR SSLC Business</p> <p>IH reported that there is a misunderstanding in terms of what SSLCs can achieve – academic departments can have a tendency to expect more than the SSLC can influence, whereas in other cases SSLCs are not involved in discussions where they could have a useful contribution.</p> <p>IH noted that the PRES response rate of 47% reported at the last meeting, although higher than previous years, represented a missed opportunity to understand the views of the PGR community and departments (and the Doctoral College) should do more to increase the response rate. IH supported the idea of an interim survey before the next PRES is due.</p> <p>PV raised the issue of PGR research funding and difficulties within her department about the timing of access to funds. It was noted that there is an issue of lack of equity of access to funding across departments. The Doctoral College will add this to the agenda for departmental meetings in early 2022.</p>

Items for Approval/Discussion	
031	<p>BGS Priorities 2021/22 – update</p> <p>RM reported that the priorities had been updated to include a statement of strategic intent following discussion at the last meeting. The Board approved the amended document (paper 031-BGS111121).</p>
032	<p>Researcher Development update</p> <p>MU provided an overview of the Researcher Development Online programme (paper 032-BGS111121). MU also asked the Board to consider other ways in which the online training space can be utilised, for example hosting interdisciplinary opportunities across departments; how the programme can support supervision and ensure that PGRs are aware of the RDO. IH noted that it would be useful to harmonise induction procedures across the University and include details of the RDO.</p>
033	<p>Warwick Postgraduate Teaching Community</p> <p>SH provided an overview of the Warwick PTC and the project outputs to date (paper 033-BGS111121), including the new Journal of PGR Pedagogic Practice. It was noted that initial results of the survey demonstrated several areas for further work, including the desire for more teaching opportunities, current lack of consistent support, adequate compensation for teaching and EDI concerns.</p> <p>ACTION: SH will discuss further with the Chair (and others) and provide further details at the next meeting of the Board.</p>
034	<p>Provision for PhD students to complete additional postgraduate study with the Academic Development Centre</p> <p>The proposal to allow PGRs to be enrolled on courses offered by ADC alongside their standard course registration (as set out in paper 034-BGS111121) was approved. It was noted that similar arrangements were already in place for PGRs enrolled on the Postgraduate Certificate in Transferable Skills in Science (PGCTSS).</p>
035	<p>EDI working group meeting</p> <p>The Board received the minutes of the first EDI Working Group meeting (paper 035-BGS111121). It was noted that the Working Group was looking to increase the diversity of its membership. The Working Group will be bringing more substantive items to the Board in due course.</p>
036	<p>Funded PGR update</p> <p>(a) Funded PGR policy</p> <p>RV reported that the draft policy set out in paper 036-BGS111121 did not represent any change to current practice but instead brought together all existing policy relating to funded PGRs in one place. The Board approved the policy, noting that it would be useful to provide links to further information for visa holders, where relevant.</p> <p>(b) Funded Covid extensions</p> <p>In order to maximise the use of the UKRI COVID Extension block grant (costs deadline 30 March 2022), RV proposed that the Doctoral College set a final deadline for applications to the central scheme. This does not suggest that the Doctoral College considers disruptions that postgraduate researchers are experiencing due to the pandemic have ended. Support will continue to be available to those who need it through their training programme and/or grant holder (for UKRI funded students), or the Doctoral College (for Warwick or Wolfson funded students). The Board approved the proposal.</p>
037	<p>End of stipend upon thesis submission</p> <p>MW highlighted the issue of stipend ending at the point of thesis submission, even when a student submits before the end of their funded period and asked if funding could be continued while the student prepares for the viva. It was noted that although the UKRI allows some flexibility, this needs to be proactively agreed with the funding body rather than continuing as a matter of course. There are also practical issues to consider such as tax implications for the student dependent upon the type of work they do following thesis submission. It was noted that this was also an issue being considered by Midlands4Cities.</p>

	The Board noted that the implications of submitting early were not always clear to students and supervisors. ACTION: DB to take forward discussion
Other	
	Any other business None
Next meeting: 09:30, THURSDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2022, ONLINE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS	