

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK  
BOARD OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 09:30, THURSDAY 28 APRIL 2022, ONLINE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

<b>Present</b>	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	RFor	Representative of Board of Faculty of Arts
	Dr Rebecca Freeman	RFre	Dean of Students
	Dr Peter Gammon	PG	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Dr Lee Griffin	LG	Deputy Chair
	Sara Hattersley	SH	Representative from Academic Development Centre
	Dr Emily Henderson	EFH	Member of academic staff appointed by Senate
	Dr Xiaodong (Wes) Lin	WL	Representative of Board of Faculty of Arts
	Professor Graeme MacDonald	GM	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Professor Davide Nicolini	DN	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Santiago Oyarzabal	SO	Representative from Library
	Nathan Parsons	NP	Co-opted student member, PG Sabbatical Officer
	Professor Jose Rodrigo	JR	CDT representative, Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Dr John Snape	JS2	Representative of Board of Faculty of Social Science
	Professor Mark Steel	MS	Representative of Board of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Michele Underwood	MU	Research Development Manager
	Dr Naomi Waltham-Smith	NWS	Chair, Social Science Faculty Education Committee
	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	
<b>Attending</b>	Nicola Attridge	NA	Finance Manager, PGR Funding
	Katharine Broderick	KB	Representative of PGR SSLC, Classics
	Andrea Guerrieri D'Amati	AG	Representative of PGR SSLC, Economics
	Laura Larard	LL	Assistant Secretary, Administrative Officer (Doctoral College)
	Professor Jason Madan	JM	Director of PGR Programmes, Warwick Medical School
	Rhiannon Martyn	RM	Secretary, Head of Doctoral College
	Louise Sutcliffe	LS	Postgraduate Student Development Officer
	Dr Rebecca Vipond	RV	CDT & PG Scholarships Coordination Manager
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Item</b>		
059	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received from Dr Kurt Debattista, Dr James Lloyd-Hughes, Dr Debbi Marais, Gemma Marakas and Dr Jennifer Smith.		
060	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No new declarations were made.		
061	<b>Minutes of last meeting on 10 February 2022</b>		

	The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2022 were received and approved, subject to minor amendments.
062	<p><b>Matters arising from last meeting on 10 February 2022</b></p> <p>The matters arising were as follows:</p> <p><b>(a) ‘Fellowship’ status for graduated PGRs (minute 042(a)-BGS100222)</b></p> <p>The Board received a draft proposal from WBS to create a post-doctoral associate fellow position to allow PGRs to continue to engage with the department post-completion (paper 062-BGS280422). The model is based on the existing visiting researcher position. The Board supported pursuing this on an institution-wide basis, noting that the following issues should be clarified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment with current Institute of Advanced Study (IAS) post-doc status;</li> <li>• The point at which PGRs can be considered eligible to apply;</li> <li>• Eligibility for visa-sponsored PGRs;</li> <li>• Eligibility to access unspent UKRI funding.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair will report back at the next meeting of the Board with the aim to introduce the scheme by September.</p> <p><b>(b) Enhancing Research Culture bid outcomes (minute 043(c)-BGS100222)</b></p> <p>The Chair reported on two research projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating and supporting a diverse and inclusive research culture – external consultants have been hired to carry out research across the University.</li> <li>• EFH reported on a Pre-Admissions Doctoral Communications project with Dr J Burford looking at informal contact between departments and academics which is currently recruiting participants. Preliminary outcomes will be presented to the Board at the start of the next academic year.</li> </ul>
<b>Chair and Secretary’s Update</b>	
063	<p><b>Chair’s Business</b></p> <p><b>(a) Update to membership</b></p> <p>The Board noted the revision to the membership as set out in paper 063a-BGS280422.</p> <p><b>(b) Light touch review of academic governance</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that the Senate had recently approved a light-tough review of academic governance, further updates would be provided in due course.</p> <p><b>(c) Ukraine support</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that the Sanctuary scholarship scheme is remaining open on a rolling basis for all eligible applicants, including those affected by the war in Ukraine. There are also other options available to departments wishing to host particular students such as co-tutelles and visiting student schemes; departments can contact the Doctoral College for advice.</p>
064	<p><b>Deputy Chair’s Business</b></p> <p><b>(a) PTES reminder</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chair reported that the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) was running for first time since 2019, and asked Board members to encourage participation within their departments.</p> <p><b>(b) Taught Masters scholarships</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chair reported that the Taught Masters Scholarships were currently administered by the Doctoral College but that discussions were taking place with to identify where responsibility should sit.</p>
065	<p><b>Secretary’s Business</b></p> <p><b>(a) Scholarships update</b></p> <p>The central PGR scholarships internal awarding process had been completed, although the final outcome of the China Scholarship Council process is yet to be notified by the CSC. The Doctoral College is aware of</p>

	<p>significant IT issues in relation to sending results to applicants. The team is working with IT Services to ensure that the issue is resolved and not repeated. The EUTOPIA programme was open for applications and the <a href="#">Monash Warwick Alliance PhD Travel Grant</a> scheme was re-opening shortly for the first time since the start of the pandemic.</p> <p><b>(b) Doctoral College update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An additional post in the PGR Funding team will be recruited to shortly;</li> <li>• The team is currently looking ahead to the start of the next academic year, with in person as well as online events planned for new starters; more information will be provided at the next meeting;</li> <li>• The <a href="#">3 Minute Thesis</a> competition will take place on 15 June.</li> </ul>
<b>Students' Union Update</b>	
066	<p><b>Students' Union Update</b></p> <p>The PG Sabbatical Officer reported that SU elections had taken place and that Hamza Rehman had been elected Sabbatical Officer for 2022/23.</p>
<b>PGR SSLC Update</b>	
067	<p><b>PGR SSLC business</b></p> <p>AG and KB noted that although their SSLCs seemed to be working effectively, it would be useful to raise awareness and increase engagement amongst PGRs. The Chair reported that the Doctoral College had previously met with SSLC chairs; a follow up meeting would be arranged for this term. The Deputy Chair reported that he had met with the Welcome team to discuss raising awareness and improving messaging.</p>
<b>Faculty Updates</b>	
068	<p><b>Faculty of Arts</b></p> <p>JB reported that the Faculty Assembly would be taking place next month, and that the Faculty had been exceptionally successful in Midlands 4 Cities scholarship competition.</p>
069	<p><b>Faculty of Social Sciences</b></p> <p>NWS reported that there would be a Faculty Grand Challenge taking place; NWS would be leading on the education element and JC would lead the research scheme. A meeting will be arranged with the Doctoral College to discuss what the Grand Challenge means for PGRs.</p>
070	<p><b>Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine</b></p> <p>MW reported that he would be updating the Education Committee on the status of the Sanctuary scheme. The Chair noted that it would be useful to meet with JS, NWS and MW to discuss PGR representation in light of the review of academic governance.</p>
<b>Items for Approval/Discussion</b>	
071	<p><b>Supporting neurodiverse PGRs</b></p> <p>JM reported that he had been asked to raise the issues noted in paper 071-BGS280422 by the WMS PGR SSLC and several supervisors. Although guidance is published for taught students, there seems to be a gap at PGR level, specifically advice for supervisors supporting neurodiverse PGRs.</p> <p>It was noted that there were a number of initiatives taking place across the University (including WIHEA, inclusive supervision, Library and Students' Union), although not necessarily with a PGR focus, and that it would be useful to consolidate the work in this area. The Chair resolved to take this forward and update the Board and WMS in due course.</p> <p>Departments with queries relating to specific students should contact the Doctoral College.</p>
072	<p><b>UKRI consultation – A New Deal for PGR</b></p>

	<p>The Chair reported that the Doctoral College is currently preparing a response to the UKRI's consultation document on the future of doctoral training in the UK (paper 072-BGS280422). The Board welcomed the opportunity to discuss the University's response, agreeing that this should focus on the central issues of funding of research and the development of the next generation of researchers. The Board also noted that it would be timely to further discuss the purpose of PGR study and a future strategy at the next meeting.</p>
073	<p><b>Covid mitigation – process going forward</b></p> <p>The CDT &amp; PG Scholarships Coordination Manager reported that the final deadline for the centralised programme of funded extensions was at the end of January. Over 300 applications were received, all of which have been processed and outcomes communicated. There is appeal form available on the <a href="#">Doctoral College website</a>.</p> <p>There is very limited provision for PGRs who were unable to apply to earlier rounds. Otherwise, the management of funded extensions will be largely devolved to DTPs and CDTs in line with current UKRI policy. Further information is available <a href="#">online</a>. Funded PGRs can also access sick pay where relevant and the PGR Hardship Fund provides funding to students experiencing unforeseen exceptional hardship.</p> <p>A detailed report will be shared with the Board in the autumn.</p>
074	<p><b>Review of Regulation 38 Research Degrees</b></p> <p>The Secretary noted that the Education Policy and Quality team would be reviewing all regulations, starting with Regulation 11 Academic Integrity (completed) and Regulation 36 Student Registration Attendance and Progress (in progress). Independently of that review, the Doctoral College had considered that Regulation 38 required updating in response to numerous queries from departments.</p> <p>The majority of the proposed amendments (set out in paper 074-BGS280422) would remove procedural information from the regulation and instead direct to the relevant guidance. Other proposed amendments reflect areas of existing practice. The following issues were discussed:</p> <p><b>(a) Permanent withdrawal on the grounds of non-submission of research thesis by the end of period of study</b></p> <p>The Board agreed that it would be timely to re-affirm the pre-pandemic policy of permitting students to request an extension of up to 12 months (to be approved by Academic Director), noting that additional periods of extension can be requested under exceptional circumstances.</p> <p><b>(b) Failure to engage in examination process</b></p> <p>The Board agreed to introduce a process to withdraw PGRs who had submitted their thesis and failed to engage in the examination process following liaison with academic departments to understand the individual situation. Following withdrawal, a PGR may be permitted to resume the examination process with the support of their academic department, subject to the approval of the Academic Director.</p> <p><b>(c) Progress review requirements</b></p> <p>The Board agreed to formalise the requirement for academic departments to review progress on an annual basis and six months before the end of registration, as set out in the <a href="#">Guidelines on Supervision and Monitoring of Research Degree Students</a>.</p> <p>A formal request for approval of the revised policy will be presented to the next meeting of the Board.</p>
075	<p><b>PGR feedback</b></p> <p>The Postgraduate Student Development Officer provided an update on the work carried out by the Doctoral College following the completion of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2021, with a focus on supervision, research culture, careers and the impact of the pandemic as set out in paper 075-BGS280422.</p> <p>The Board had previously agreed to run a follow-up survey of PGRs as a 'temperature check'. A short survey will be open for a two-week period in June to identify the main issues affecting PGRs and provide the opportunity to raise any concerns. Results will be shared with academic departments for information purposes</p>

	only; no departmental action will be required. The Doctoral College plans to hold focus groups with PGRs in July to continue dialogue.
076	<p><b>PGR programme review summary</b></p> <p>The Assistant Secretary reported that the paper outlining emerging themes and examples of good practice in departments (076-BGS280422) would also be circulated to Faculty Education Committees.</p> <p>As expected, many areas were affected by the pandemic for example research culture (due to increased feelings of isolation and interruption to face to face events, although some departments also noted that online/hybrid opportunities did increase engagement in some cases), wellbeing and practical issues such as access to IT equipment. Many departments reported that progression monitoring processes were returning to normal following the pandemic. A number of departments reported student-led initiatives, particularly in the areas of employability and Equality Diversity and Inclusion.</p> <p>As previously agreed by the Board, the programme review process will next take place in 2023/24 to coincide with PRES.</p>
077	<p><b>EDI working group update</b></p> <p>The Secretary noted that a successful event had recently been held jointly with Coventry University.</p> <p>The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the PGR Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group dated 1 December 2021 (077a-BGS280422) and 26 January 2022 (077b-BGS280422).</p>
078	<p><b>PGR course amendment process</b></p> <p>The Board approved the process for approval or modification to existing research degree programmes as set out in paper 078-BGS280422. A process for approval of proposals for new research degree programmes would be developed in due course.</p>
<b>Other</b>	
079	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>The following business was raised:</p> <p><b>(a) Researcher Development update</b></p> <p>The Research Development Manager reported that the Researcher Development Online (RDO) programme would continue to offer online workshops, noting that approximately 300 PGRs per week were engaging with the content. An <a href="#">RDO podcast</a> is also available. The Research Development Manager has recruited two PGRs to carry out an evaluation of the RDO.</p> <p>A new programme, a blend of in person and online events, would start at the end of May.</p> <p><b>(b) Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE) 2022 Shortlist</b></p> <p>The Representative from the Academic Development Centre noted the usual selection of excellent PGR teachers in their own category, as well as being well represented in the collaborative (team) awards.</p> <p><b>(c) Next meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting will take place in the Senate House Council Chamber, with the opportunity to join virtually for those unable to attend in person</p>
<b>Next meeting: Thursday 9 June 2022, 1.30pm-3.30pm, Senate House Council Chamber (online attendance also available)</b>	