

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK BOARD OF GRADUATE STUDIES OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 12 NOVEMBER 2020, VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS			
Present	Professor Colin Sparrow	CS	Chair
	Alex Baker	AB	Co-opted student member
	Ant Brewerton	AB2	Representative from Library
	Christopher Bisping	CB	Deputy Chair Chair, Social Science Faculty Education Committee
	Professor Jennifer Burns	JB	Chair, Arts Faculty Education Committee
	Professor Jon Coaffee	JC	CDT representative, Social Science and Arts
	Dr Kurt Debattista	KD	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Dr Peter Gammon	PG	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Professor Jo Garde-Hansen	JGH	Representative of Board of Faculty of Arts
	Sara Hattersley	SH	Representative from Academic Development Centre
	Professor Davide Nicolini	DN	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Professor Jose Rodrigo	JR	CDT representative, Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Dr Jennifer Smith	JS	Representative of Board of Faculty of Social Science
	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	Researcher 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
Attending	Nicola Attridge	NA	Finance Manager (PGR Funding)
	Nicola Ellis-Thomas	NET	Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships)
	Laura Larard	LL	Assistant Secretary, Administrative Officer, Doctoral College
	Rhiannon Martyn	RM	Secretary, Head of Doctoral College
	Dr Rebecca Vipond	RV	CDT & PG Scholarships Coordination Manager, Doctoral College
Ref	Item		
001	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Shingai Dzumbira, Dr Emma Francis, Dr Rebecca Freeman, Dr Pietari Kaapa, Dr James Lloyd-Hughes, Dr Debbi Marais and Dr Chris Twine.		
002	Declarations of Interest No new declarations were made.		
003	Terms of reference The terms of reference (003-BGS121120) were received and approved, subject to minor amendments.		
004	Membership of the Board		

	The membership of the Board (004-BGS121120) was received and approved, subject to minor amendments
005	<p>Freedom of Information Act: Publication Scheme</p> <p>It was noted that minutes of meetings of the Board are published on the University website, as part of its Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</p>
006	<p>Nomination of student member on the University Research Governance and Ethics Committee</p> <p>The Board approved the nomination of Alex Baker as student member on the University Research Governance and Ethics Committee.</p>
007	<p>Minutes of last meeting on 6 February 2020</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 were received and approved.</p>
008	<p>Matters arising from meeting held on 6 February 2020</p> <p>The matters arising were as follows:</p> <p>(a) Reasonable adjustments for PGR examinations (minute 034b-BGS060220)</p> <p>The Chair would discuss with Disability Services and report back to a future meeting of the Board.</p> <p>(b) Proposed amendments for guidelines to supervision (minute 043-BGS060220)</p> <p>Deferred to next meeting.</p>
Chair's Update	
009	<p>Chair's business and actions</p> <p>The Committee received and noted an update from the Chair.</p> <p>(a) Process for requesting English language waivers</p> <p>Chair's action approval had been granted to amend the sections of the process relating to EU students. The Deputy Chair would be looking at the policy more widely and asked departments to advise of any issues with the existing policy.</p> <p>(b) Surveys</p> <p>The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) would be running later this academic year. The University would not be participating in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) this year, but would be conducting two surveys for all taught students in Terms 1 and 2.</p>
010	<p>Deputy Chair's business and actions:</p> <p>The Deputy Chair reported that the PGT Strategy Group would be meeting later in the term and encouraged departments to engage with the first Postgraduate Virtual Open Day on 2 December 2020 and publicise upcoming surveys to students. Data on graduate outcomes will be brought to the next meeting of the Board.</p>
011	<p>Secretary's business</p> <p>The Secretary reported:</p> <p>(a) Doctoral College team</p> <p>That there had been several departures from the Doctoral College Team, and that the PGR Funding team would be moving from Student Finance to the Doctoral College in early 2021.</p> <p>(b) Annual Course Review</p> <p>Details of the PGR Annual Course Review process have been sent to departments; the deadline is 15 January 2021.</p> <p>(c) OfS – Reducing inequalities in PGR study</p>

	<p>A group has been set up to explore a potential bid for funding in response to a call from the Office for Students (OfS) and Research England: 'To improve access and participation for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in postgraduate research study'. The deadline for bids is 28 January 2021.</p> <p>(d) Visa sponsorship for final year PGRs</p> <p>The Academic Registrar had approved a proposal from Immigration and Compliance to increase the flexibility for Tier 4 sponsorship duration for final year PhD students. Further information will be circulated to members.</p> <p>(e) PGR Wellness Week</p> <p>The Doctoral College is working with colleagues in the Library, Wellbeing Support Services, supervisors and students for this event starting on 7 December.</p>
Students' Union Update	
012	<p>Students' Union update</p> <p>The PG Sabbatical Officer was not in attendance so no update provided.</p>
Chairs of the Faculty Education Committees Updates	
013	<p>Science, Engineering & Medicine</p> <p>The Chair of the Faculty Education Committee for Science, Engineering and Medicine reported that the Committee had discussed graduate attainment outcomes and would provide further details to the Board</p>
014	<p>Social Sciences</p> <p>The Chair of the Faculty Education Committee for Social Sciences reported that the Committee had discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student response to blended learning; • Impact on staff and PGR students of increased workload due to blended learning and expectations of PGR students in relation to face to face teaching; • Education Strategy priorities.
015	<p>Arts</p> <p>The Chair of the Faculty Education Committee for Arts reported that the Committee had discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online learning, teaching and curriculum changes; • Student support and wellbeing; • Status of EU students in relation to fees, visas; • Potential two year extension to the Midlands 4 Cities DTP; • New Faculty of Arts building.
Items for approval/discussion	
016	<p>BGS priorities</p> <p>The Board approved the priorities for the 2020/21 academic year (016-BGS121120), subject to increasing the priority level of PGRs who teach noting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GTA contract is in its first year and will need to be reviewed; • The impact of the COVID crisis on PGR teaching opportunities and its link to employability; and • The lack of recognition in departments of the PGR teacher voice noting that they are now members of staff on the same terms as other categories of staff.
017	<p>Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) update</p> <p>The CDT & PG Scholarships Coordination Manager reported (017-BGS121120) that:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While PGRs have coped well with the COVID pandemic, the level of disruption cannot be understated. Communication specifically to PGRs could also be improved. • Up to 30% of any UKRI funded cohort can be international (EU and OS) from 2021 entry onwards, affecting about 60 studentships. UKRI will fund stipend and Home fees only. • The four internally funded CDTs will retain the same studentship and RTSG allocation for 2021 as 2020 entry. • CDTs are making more coordinated efforts, in particular in EDI reporting and marketing. <p>The Board supported a proposal to ARC for a University policy to grant a fee waiver for UKRI funded EU and OS students.</p>
018	<p>Funded PGR extensions due to Covid-19</p> <p>The CDT & PG Scholarships Coordination Manager reported (018-BGS121120) that 195 UKRI funded and 73 Warwick funded PGR students with a funding end date of 1 March 2020 – 31 March 2021 requested a funded extensions due to disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic.</p> <p>The Board supported a proposed policy for funding extensions for UKRI and Warwick funded PGR students with a funding end date of 1 April 2021 onwards. The proposal was to offer students up to three months of funded extension if they are unable to complete their doctoral thesis within the original funded period, despite any mitigating changes to the project design. PGR students would have to have been registered and actively studying to the University on or before 1 March 2020 in order to be eligible. There are 890 students in this group.</p> <p>The Board also supported a proposal going to ARC requesting additional financial support to fund COVID extensions in order to protect recruitment of future cohorts of PGR students, maintaining Warwick’s reputation as a centre for excellence in PGR training in Europe and to meet the University’s strategic aims.</p>
019	<p>Scholarships update</p> <p>The Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) reported that (019-BGS121120):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned updates to the Scholarship Application System had been postponed due to the focus of the IT team on the implementation of online teaching and learning; • The following scholarships competitions had been launched for 2021/22 entry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chancellor’s International Scholarships (incorporating EU and WMS Scholarships) – departmental nomination quotas will be confirmed before Christmas ○ Monash-Warwick Alliance Scholarships ○ China Scholarship Council • Sanctuary and WCPRS scholarships would be launching later in the month; <p>The Board thanked the Scholarships team for their hard work in ensuring that the scholarships budget had been maintained.</p>
020	<p>PGR Hardship and REF PhD Completion Funds data for 2019/2020</p> <p>The Board received the report (020-BGS121120), noting that although REF dates had changed, there had been no change to the census date as stated in the paper.</p>
021	<p>Admissions data</p> <p>The Board received the report (021-BGS121120).</p>
022	<p>Brexit update</p> <p>The Academic Registrar was not in attendance so no update was provided.</p>
023	<p>(a) Course approval for research degrees</p>

	<p>The Board approved the proposal that the responsibility for approval of new research degrees should rest with the Board and the Doctoral College, noting that this had been supported by the Education Policy and Quality (EPQ) Course Approval Panel (023a-BGS121120). The Doctoral College will work with EPQ to develop a research degree course approval process.</p> <p>(b) Request for establishment of a new MPhil/PhD route: PhD in Global Sustainable Development</p> <p>The Board supported the proposal for the establishment of a new MPhil/PhD route: PhD in Global Sustainable Development (023b-BGS121120).</p>
024	<p>Covid impact statement – research theses</p> <p>The Board approved the proposed guidance in relation to the ability to include a Covid impact statement in research theses (024-BGS121120), noting that clear guidance should be given to students to advise that it is not compulsory to submit such a statement. The guidance will be sent to AQSC for information.</p>
Other	
025	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
Next meeting: 09:30, THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2021, TBC	