

UNIVERSITY OF ABEREEN
POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING 25 MARCH 2013

Present: Prof. B. Naphy (Convenor), Dr. B. Connolly, Dr. P. Fernandes, Prof. P. Hannaford, Mr. J Kenter, Mr. T Majchrowski, Dr. J. Masthoff, Dr. E. Pavlovskaja, Prof. C. Wallace and with Mrs K. Allan, Ms A. Clark, Ms C. Croydon, Dr L. Leiper, Mrs K. Slessor, and Mr R. Findlay (Clerk) and Mrs D. McDonald in attendance.

Apologies: Dr. H. Battu, Dr. M. Pinard, Mr D. Milne, Ms K. Strangward.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING ON 10 DECEMBER 2012

- 25.1 It was noted that Karen Strangward was present during the Committee dated 10 December 2012 and that her name should be moved from the list of apologies and added to the list of those who were present.
- 25.2 Regarding minute 23, a typing error was noted in the heading 'Resits for Taught Postgraduate Programmes'.
- 25.3 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting on 10 December 2012.

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MATTERS ARISING

Minute 14.3

- 26.1 The Committee noted that Academic Services had confirmed that all required data on feedback timings had been collected and that no further exercises were planned.

Minute 14.4

- 26.2 The Committee noted that monitoring forms had been circulated and Colleges had amended their forms to include a question on whether students have discussed career opportunities with supervisors.

POSTGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

- 27.1 The Committee noted the admission figures for taught and research postgraduate programmes starting between 1 August and 30 December 2013.
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- 27.2. The Committee noted there was a positive increase in applicants, approximately 20%. The Student Association raised concerns over accommodation and office space with an increase in applicants. However, the Committee noted that the lower number of undergraduate applicants should balance out the increase in postgraduate numbers.

RECRUITMENT

28. The Committee noted an update on recruitment activities for 2013.

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RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT UNIT

29. The Committee was given an update on recent activities regarding the Researcher Development Unit by L. Leiper.

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ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

30. The Committee noted an update on Enhancement Led Institutional Review.

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OFF CAMPUS FEES FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS

- 31.1 The Committee discussed a paper concerning the appropriateness of reducing tuition fees for off campus study.
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- 31.2 The Committee noted that, due to greater access of online University resources, students who studied off campus were not disadvantaged. It was noted that advances in technology enable higher levels of supervisory contact to be maintained whilst students study off campus.
- 31.3 The Committee noted that in certain instances, i.e. when there was a formal agreement in place for a student to study elsewhere under external supervision, or when a student was on fieldwork and was not able to maintain contact with their supervisors, it may be appropriate to reduce student's tuition fees.
- 31.4 It was agreed that tighter measures should be put in place and studying off campus should not automatically mean reduced fees. A two step process, involving applying for off campus study and also applying for a reduction in fees was recommended.

ACTION: CLERK

SUBMISSION FEES FOR STUDENTS SUBMITTING WITHOUT APPROVED EXTENSION OR OUTSIDE MAXIMUM PERIOD STUDY

- 32.1 The Committee discussed a paper concerning changing the amount of fees charged for students submitting without approved extension and submitting outside of the maximum period of study.
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- 32.2 It was agreed that due to the significant cost to the University, for students who fail to submit within the agreed period of study, that a higher fee should be charged. This fee would cover both scenarios of students submitting outside maximum study and also students submitting without approved extension. The fee will therefore be for all students who have been refused an extension. The fee will amount will be 1/3 of Home Fees.
- 32.3 It was also noted that the wording in section 6.10 of the Code of Practice should read as 'the recommendation of the relevant Graduate School' rather the 'relevant School'.

ACTION: CLERK

PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF THESIS FOR EXAMINATION

- 33.1 The Committee discussed the two proposals made concerning the procedure for submission of thesis for examination.
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- 33.2 There were concerns that the supervisors would be seen to approve the thesis as being of degree standard and students may complain if the thesis does not pass.
- 33.3 It was recommended that the Submission of Thesis form be unchanged but the Nomination form could be amended which would indicate to the supervisor that submission will take place within 30 days.

ACTION: CLERK

STRUCTURED MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR 42 AND 48 MONTH PhDs

34.1 The Committee discussed the framework proposed for 42 and 48 month PhDs.

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34.2 The Committee recommended that for 48 month PhDs research should be completed by month 42 giving a 6 month period of writing up. The Committee also recommended that for 42 month PhDs research should be completed by month 36 giving a 6 month period of writing up.

34.3 The Committee noted that the wording of 'job application' should be changed to 'career advice'.

ACTION: CLERK

CLASS REPRESENTATION

35.1 The Committee noted the proposal to introduce academic representatives rather than class representatives

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35.2 It was suggested that one academic representative per postgraduate taught programme rather than per course or per discipline would generally be beneficial for PGT programmes.

35.3 It was agreed that there would be one representative per September programme and no additional representatives for January start programmes.

EXAM HALL DISCIPLINE

36.1 The Committee considered the issue of students cheating during toilet breaks in examinations.

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36.2 The Committee noted that though there had been a few cases recently of cheating the current procedures were appropriate.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37.1 A discussion took place regarding resits for postgraduate taught students. It was noted that a paper on postgraduate taught resits would be put to the committee for approval at the next meeting. It was therefore agreed that the discussion should be deferred to the following meeting.