

Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (PRQC)

**Minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2019 at 14:00 in
Room G01, Royal School of Mines, South Kensington Campus**

Present

Professor Sue Gibson (Director of the Graduate S

In Attendance

Professor Marek Sergot (Emeritus Professor in Computing) [Paper 2018.28]
Michelle Galloway (Quality Assurance Administrator, Registry) [Observing]

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1 The Chair welcomed new members of the committee (see Item 4), colleagues in place of existing members and non-members in attendance.

1.2 The following apologies for absence were received:

- David Ashton (Academic Registrar)
- Professor Simone Buitendijk (Vice-Provost, Education)
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- (iii) Academic Regulations and policy - College guidance for the approval of Partner Research Institutions (PRIs) and Split PhDs (May 2018, 9.3.2)

2.3 The Committee noted the action list and received updates on the following action due for completion by May 2019 **[PRQC.2018.22b]**:

(i) PhD Thesis Submission – Procedures (October 2018, 18.1.2)

- 5.2.2 The current ESA deadline of 9 months was discussed. Although this is in line with sector norms, ESA clashes with undergraduate assessment and, as a result, workload can be an issue.

PRQC recommended a change to the ESA deadline - that students should be assessed by 10 months, with an additional 2 months for re-assessment. Should a student withdraw after 12 months, UKRI had previously confirmed that, subject to the terms and conditions, training grant funds may be used, without reference to the Research Council, in such a manner as to best undertake the provision of training leading to the award of a postgraduate degree, which must fall within the remit of the Council concerned.

- 5.2.3 PRQC also recommended that the current LSR completion window of 18-24 months should be revised to a deadline of 24 months. Students will be guided by departments as to an appropriate timeframe to complete the LSR (should this be earlier 24 months) but, if LSR is considered a point at which a student might be transferred to MPhil or withdrawn, then a 'hard' deadline must be prescribed within the regulations to ensure fairness and consistency. Further discussion will take place at PRQC around LSR timings and requirements.

It was agreed that the recommendations will feed into the broader review of Postgraduate Research Regulations and wider consultation. Any proposed revisions will be formally considered at PRQC, QAEC and Senate.

5.3 Postgraduate research appeals regulations [PRQC.2018.26]

- 5.3.1 Over the past 3 years, a task and finish group has been considering the student

7.1.5 The Panel recommended that the College addresses the following to further enhance its postgraduate research degree provision:

- Investigate why departments are finding it problematic to meet ESA deadlines and provide solutions or guidance as to how departments can ensure ESAs are completed within an appropriate timeline

The College recommendation will form part of the wider review of postgraduate research regulations (see Item 5).

7.1.6 PRQC agreed that a formal follow-up to the periodic review, including actions taken to address any concerns, will be carried out in three years in line with the College's Precept Review cycle.

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9 PGR Entry Requirements 2020-21 [PRQC.2018.31]

9.1 The College's postgraduate research admission policy confirms the general entry requirements for Research study at the College as;



majority English speaking countries, where the full degree has been studied in that country, not just 1 year including the final year. This is in line with the Business School and Department of Mathematics.

10 PhD Plagiarism Awareness Course [PRQC.2018.32]

- 10.1 PRQC received a paper setting out the updates that have been made to the College's Plagiarism Awareness course. The course aims to introduce Doctoral students to the concept of plagiarism. The course does not cover College regulations, although it does refer to these as part of the feedback provided to students completing the mandatory quiz on self-plagiarism, scenario 'Peng'.
- 10.2 Following PRQC's feedback on 24 October 2018, the importance of the College's regulation on self-Plagiarism has been strengthened within the course content. The course advises students to discuss this regulation with their supervisor and to ensure that any previously published research work or adapted papers included in the main body of the thesis are properly referenced. It also reminds students that they may also need to check whether they need to obtain permission from the publisher. The course also shows students how to re-use their published research in other work (not only their thesis) without committing self-plagiarism or copyright infringement. PRQC welcomed the updates.

11 Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education [PRQC.2018.33]

- 11.1 PRQC noted the revised [UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance - Research Degrees](#).
- 11.2 The theme 'Research Degrees' relates to higher education research in the specific context of research degrees and particular requirements for doctorates

13. Any other business

- 13.1 The GSU President is exploring the possibility of a cross-faculty fund for GSU events. Members supported this initiative but proposed that the item is put forward to Vice-Provost's Advisory Group for Education (VPAGE) and/or Provost's Board as it falls outside the remit of PRQC

14. Date of next meeting

- 14.1 Wednesday 15 May 2019, 2pm – 4:30pm, Gabor Room, 611, Electrical and Electronic Engineering Building, South Kensington campus.

15. Special cases reports

PRQC received report-2 (pu)(ev)8.pc 0301Tpor