

Research Degrees Committee

Tuesday 5 March 2024, 10:00am

Confirmed Minutes

Present Members:

Professor David Bogle (Chair); Dr Josephine Barnes; Professor Andrew Bevan; David Blundred; Professor Annie Britton; Professor Paul Dodds; Dr Andrew Flinn; Yasmin Garcia Sterling, Dr Nicholas Grindle; Elizabeth Halton; Professor Jane Holder; Professor Jasmina Jonanovic; Professor Jill Norman; Professor Jane Perryman; Issy Smith; Paula Speller; Professor David Spratt; Dr Andrew Stoker; Professor Stan Zochowski.

- 14.2. The action for the Digital Education team to provide a paper on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Postgraduate Research (PGR) awards remained in progress. The Committee acknowledged this was an area that was rapidly evolving, therefore broader feedback from the PGR community was required ahead of a report being presented to RDC.
- 14.3. Arising from Minute 3.2, 31 October 2023, concerning RDC's request to receive an update on the outcomes of the 2022-23 Student complaints, the Committee was updated that two complaints were found to be unjustified, one case remained ongoing.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

15. Chair's Business

- 15.1. The Chair updated the Committee on the development of support for doctoral training. The Committee noted that steps were being taken to access the funding opportunities for doctoral focal awards from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).
- 15.2. The Chair shared with the Committee that he would be retiring in September 2024, therefore the next meeting of RDC would be his final meeting as Chair of the Committee.

16. Student Union – Student Academic Representation Annual Report (2-02)

- 16.1. Simon To, Director of Policy, Governance & Advocacy, Students' Union UCL, introduced the report that provided the Committee with a review of the work undertaken in the 2022/23 academic year with Academic Representatives and the plans to develop this work moving forwards. While overall the number of Academic Representatives had increased, the spread of representatives across the faculties was uneven, with some faculties holding significantly lower numbers. In response to this, work was being undertaken to reach out to specific faculties. Academic Representatives were keen to have further opportunities to increase their impact and connect across the institution.
- 16.2. The Committee positively received the report and were particularly pleased to see the increased number of Academic Representatives, and subsequently queried what else tutors could do to support their development and increase their sense of belonging within their academic community. The Committee was advised that there were specific challenges in relation to research representatives and it would be positive to see increased opportunities for

achieving a more streamlined process and reducing the administrative burden

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