



RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

Monday 17 June 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Dr Dave Spratt (Acting Chair); Mr David Ashton; Dr Stephanie Bird; Dr Steven Bloch;
Dr Donna Brown; Mr Ben Colvill; Professor Alison Diduck; Dr Caroline Essex;
Mr Marco Federighi ; Professor Mike Ewing; Dr Sally Leever; Ms Bella Malins;
Dr Stephen Marshall; Dr Joy Sleeman; Professor Kaila Srail; Professor Ijeoma Uchegbu.

In attendance: Mr Gary Hawes (Secretary); Ms Helen Notter

Apologies were received from: Professor David Bogle; Dr Tom Gretton; Professor Anthony Harker; Mr Dante Micheaux; Professor David Muller; Dr Ruth Siddall.

Key to abbreviations

DGT	Departmental Graduate Tutor
FGT	Faculty Graduate Tutor
FGTC	Faculty Graduate Teaching Committee
OIA	Office of the Independent Adjudicator
RDC	Research Degrees Committee
SAS	Study Assistance Scheme
SRS	Student and Registry Services

31 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 6 MARCH 2013

Confirmed:

31.1 The Minutes of the meeting of RDC held on 6 March 2013 [RDC Mins.18-30, 6.3.13].

32 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

32A **Amendment of the offer letter for PGR students** [RDC Min.19A, 6.3.13]

Reported:

32A.1 The Director of Student Administration reported that a single offer letter covering both the MRes and PhD awards had been devised by SRS officers for 2014-15 for PhD programmes that included an integrated MRes. Further discussions around student progression for these programmes were also taking place within the Faculty of Engineering Sciences, where the majority of these types of programmes were currently based.

33 GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISING VISITING RESEARCH STUDENTS

Received:

- 33.1 Proposed guidelines for the supervision of visiting research students, at RDC 3-01 (12-13), introduced by the Graduate School Administrator.

Reported:

- 33.2 Students enrolled on a PhD programme of study overseas were able to apply to come to UCL as a visiting research student for a period of between three and 12 months to undertake research that was complementary to the PhD project they were undertaking. Although these students would for the most part be subject to UCL Regulations and the Code of Practice for Research Degrees during their time at UCL, there were certain areas where it was felt that different guidance should necessarily apply. For example, the guidelines at RDC 3-01 (12-13) proposed that visiting research students should only be required to have one supervisor allocated to oversee their work.

Discussion:

- 33.3 Some members of RDC queried whether the guidance on the minimum level of engagement between research students and their supervisors (which was the same for UCL research students and visiting research students) needed to be reviewed. However, it was noted that the level of engagement that was considered necessary between research students and their supervisors would vary across the disciplines. In light of this, it was agreed that the current guidance that was set out in the UCL Regulations and the proposed guidelines at RDC 3-01 (12-13) of a minimum of a meeting every two months should be retained. However, it was agreed that, as acknowledged in the proposed guidelines at RDC 3-01 (12-13), more regular meetings with their supervisors might be appropriate in the case of visiting research students who were only based at UCL for three months.

RESOLVED:

The pass list, issued each month for confirmation of awards by the Chair of RDC;

The statement of award, issued to students with the letter confirming their award

38 DOCTORATE EXTENSION SCHEME FOR TIER 4 VISA HOLDERS

Received:

- 38.1 A note at RDC 3-06 (12-13), introduced by Helen Notter, Student Records Manager.

Reported:

- 38.2 The information at RDC 3-06 (12-13) had been circulated to UCL departments and FGTs.

39 REPORT ON RESEARCH STUDENT GRIEVANCES

Received:

- 39.1 An oral report by David Ashton, Director of Student Administration.

Reported:

- 39.2 Of the 52 student grievance cases that had been initiated during 2011-12, two had related to research degree students.
- 39.3 Since UCL was required to submit an annual report to the OIA for each calendar year rather than academic year, the SRS officers had proposed that it would make sense for future reports to RDC on student grievances to synchronise with this reporting cycle. The next such report would therefore be submitted to RDC's Spring Term meeting in 2014.
- 39.4 In the meantime, it was noted that the UCL student grievance procure was in the process of being revised by SRS officers with a view to this incorporating the student complaints procedure. A draft would be submitted to RDC in due course.

40 ANNUAL REPORT ON MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF FACULTY GRADUATE TEACHING COMMITTEES

Received:

- 40.1 A report at RDC 3-08 (12-13)

- 41.1 The following working groups of RDC were currently established and would be submitting reports to future meetings of RDC:

RDC PhD Marketing and Admissions Working Group – chaired by Professor David Bogle
RDC Working Group on Permissible and Non-Permissible forms of supervision for PhD students - chaired by Professor Alison Diduck

- 41.2 Minutes of meetings of these working groups were available on the RDC SharePoint

CONFIDENTIAL (RESERVED) BUSINESS

45 CONFIDENTIAL (RESERVED) MINUTES OF 15 NOVEMBER 2012 MEETING

Confirmed:

- 45.1 The Confidential (Reserved) Minutes of the RDC meeting held on 6 March 2013, issued previously