GRiffith University

Board of Graduate Research Minutes 2/2015
Wednesday 11 March 2015

A meeting of the Board of Graduate Research was held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 11 March 2015 in N54_2.06 and video-conferenced to G34_1.04.

Loree Joyce
Secretary

MINUTES

PRESENT:
Chair - Professor Sue Berners-Price
Professor David Lambert
Professor Gerard Docherty
Professor Graham Cuskey
Associate Professor Helen Blanchard
Professor Kate Hutchings
Professor Liz Conlon
Dr Jahangir Hossain
Ms Courtney Wright

APOLOGIES:
Professor David Shum
Professor Wendy Loughlin
Professor Nigel McMillan
Professor Greer Johnson

Persons with Rights of Audience and Debate:
Ms Julene Finnigan
Dr Vicki Pattemore
Ms Louise Howard
Ms Alyson McGrath
Dr Eliza Howard
Ms Loree Joyce (secretary)

InvitEES:
Ms Barbara Buckley
Ms Merril Rogers
Associate Professor Sarah Baker

1.0 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
1.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

2.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES
2.1 The minutes of the 1/2015 meeting of the Board of Graduate Research were taken as read and confirmed.

3.0 MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The Board thanked Dr Vicki Pattemore for her valuable contribution to the Board as the Director, Office for Research.

3.2 The Board were advised of the appointment of Professor Greer Johnson to the Board as a Research Centre Director representative for a two year term, ending 31 December 2016. The Board noted Prof Johnson’s apologies for today’s meeting.
4.0 PRESENTATION – EICP PROJECT: SUPPORTING RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM

4.1 Ms Barbara Buckley and Ms Merrill Rogers provided an update on the Online Admissions system, including the ‘Online Admissions for Higher Degree Research Communication Strategy and Plan’. Information sessions, one-on-one training and hands on group sessions will be held during April and May. HDR Convenors were requested to keep HDR supervisors informed of the project and planned implementation and to refer them to the project website for further information at www.griffith.edu.au/supporting-research-training.

5.0 PRESENTATION – QCM HDR COLLOQUIUM PROGRAM

5.1 Dr Dan Bendrups, Deputy Director (Research) QCM, gave a presentation on the QCM HDR Colloquium Program. He advised that whilst this is not particularly unique as a weekly colloquium that involves regular meetings, presentations and guest speakers, there is significant involvement by the HDR cohort in deciding the format and topics covered. There is a call for topics from the HDR cohort and from this the program for the year is developed. A typical session is either the business of being an HDR candidate (i.e. candidature requirements), discussing opportunities following completion (with a focus on professional development/career opportunities), or other requested topics/speakers.

As candidates undertake their research in multiple locations at the QCM, the colloquium is held in a designated space (as well as a virtual space) for the HDR cohort which creates a sense of ‘workplace’ for the candidates. The colloquium includes both videoconference as well as live streaming sessions so that candidates can be engaged. It enables connections to be developed between HDR candidates and for a supportive research culture to form where candidates feel like they belong and are part of the QCM research community. They become more aware of services available and are less isolated (The QCM HDR cohort is approximately 100 candidates – 11% of the QCM population). Dr Bendrups encouraged members to contact him if they would like any further information regarding the program.

SECTION A: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Nil

SECTION B: ACTION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

6.0 HDR CONFERRALS

Resolution

6.1 The Board ratified the list of HDR Conferrals included with the agenda.

7.0 HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION ASSESSMENT AND AWARD POLICY

7.1 Members were asked to consider proposed changes to the Higher Degree Research Scholarship Application Assessment and Award Policy (2015/0000054). The policy has been amended as follows:

- Section 9 (Awarding scholarships out-of-round) and section 16 (Element Funded Scholarships) amended to allow requests to package a GUIPRS with an Element/other funded stipend to be considered for both H2A and H1 or equivalent applicants. The selection committee requirements have also been amended.
• Section 9 (Awarding scholarships out-of-round) amendment to the responsibility for paying the OSHC component of a GUIPRS when awarded out-of-round.

Resolution

7.2 The Board resolved to approve amendments to the *Higher Degree Research Scholarship Application Assessment and Award Policy* (2015/0000054), for immediate implementation.

8.0 COMPLETION ASSISTANCE POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP (CAPRS)

8.1 At the 1/2015 (February 2015) CAPRS selection meeting the panel recommended that the conditions of award be amended to reduce the maximum scholarship tenure. The panel also recommended amendments to the conditions for awarding an extension to the CAPRS tenure. Members considered the proposed amendments.

8.2 The Chair advised that a substantial proportion of the 2015 GGRS CAPRS budget was allocated during round 1, 2015 and that based on recent rates of success for this scheme there is no longer a recycling of funds back into the budget. Reducing the scholarship tenure will reduce the GGRS cost for each scholarship and thus will assist to increase the number of scholarships that can be allocated within budget. Members discussed the proposed amendments and queried why non-scholarship holders were entitled to up to 20 weeks tenure, whereas all other applicants were able to apply for the maximum 12 week tenure. Members were concerned that this would convey the message that it is expected that non-scholarship holders will take longer to complete their program. Members agreed that the conditions should be amended to a maximum tenure of 12 weeks for all candidates. Members were advised that with the remaining budget for 2015, up to 23 CAPRS of 12 weeks duration can be awarded for the remainder of the year.

Resolution

8.3 The Board resolved to approve amendments to the Completion Assistance Postgraduate Research Scholarship Conditions of Award, subject to amendment as noted in 8.2 above.

9.0 PUBLICATION ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIP (PAS)

9.1 At the 1/2015 (February 2015) PAS selection meeting the panel recommended that the conditions of award be amended to include the eligibility requirement that applicants must not have been in receipt of a CAPRS. Members were asked to consider proposed amendments to the PAS conditions of award as follows:

3. Eligibility

Scholarships will be available only to those who:

3.1 were enrolled in a higher degree research program at Griffith University;
3.2 have submitted (within the last month prior to the application closing date), or are about submit (within two months of the application closing date), their thesis for examination and
3.3 are able to devote sufficient time to writing up the publication for the duration of the scholarship (equivalent to full-time enrolment).

Candidates who submit their thesis under the lapsed candidature regulations, or have previously been in receipt of a Completion Assistance Postgraduate Research Scholarship (CAPRS), are ineligible.

Resolution

9.2 The Board resolved to approve amendments to the Publication Assistance Scholarship Conditions of Award.
SECTION C: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO OTHER COMMITTEES
Nil

SECTION D: MATTERS NOTED, CONSIDERED OR REMAINING UNDER DISCUSSION

10.0 ACHIEVING HDR COMPLETION TARGETS

10.1 At the Senior Leadership Forum, held 10-11 February 2015, the Chair presented the proposal ‘Increasing the rate of HDR Completions’. The Chair also presented this proposal to the Board. She advised members that the paper ‘Achieving HDR Completion Targets’ has been developed from this proposal. Members were asked to consider this paper and to provide feedback with the aim of developing an action plan to implement strategies that will assist to increase the rate of completions.

10.2 Members discussed the paper and provided feedback as follows:

- There should be a maximum number of times candidates can take leave as frequent interruptions affect progress and completion times. Members agreed that whilst numerous leave periods do affect progress, it is better for candidates to take leave when required rather than consuming candidature during periods when they are not devoting sufficient time to their research. It was also suggested that a program similar to a return to work program could be implemented for HDR candidates.
- Frequent changes in supervision teams are not conducive to timely completions. There needs to be some assessment as to why there are numerous supervision changes for particular candidates so that any issues can be adequately addressed and managed.
- If we are going to start concentrating on maintaining a steady state load, this will relieve resource pressure and the focus can shift to supporting timely completions and ensuring quality measures are in place.
- If we are providing a high level of financial support to candidates via a scholarship, the scholarship should be suspended where candidates are not meeting candidature milestones by the due date i.e. resources are to be conditional on progress. Members noted that there is a danger in suspending resources as this will compound the reasons for insufficient progress being made.
- The candidature milestones, particularly confirmation of candidature, should be stricter and candidates should not be permitted to continue if they are not likely to complete or complete on time. If a viva voce were to be introduced the supervisor(s) may take candidature milestones more seriously knowing that the candidate will be required to defend their thesis.
- There are diverse opinions on how long is needed to train a candidate. For example at a recent discussion at the GSC Research Committee meeting it was suggested that the time needed may vary based on discipline, for example physics candidates would not be expected to complete prior to four years. However it was also suggested that three years is sufficient and the three year scholarship duration should be enforced, with extensions being the exception rather than the rule. Members noted that most requests for an extension are beyond the control of the candidate, being predominantly due to personal reasons, or due to resource issues. There is also an issue with supervisors not providing clear advice on what is required for a PhD project and for the project scope to enable on-time completion.
- If qualified candidates are selected for admission, it is reasonable to expect completion within 3 years, noting that there will always be instances where exceptional circumstances need to be taken into account.
- Top up scholarships could be offered to attract the highest quality applicants, who are more likely to complete on time.
- If a 3 year milestone is introduced, annual progress reports should no longer be needed (for full-time candidates).
• The workload of supervisors needs to be taken into account and managed as this impacts on their ability to support timely completion.
• Candidates should be provided with incentives to progress and complete on time, for example awards or medals could be given to the highest achieving candidates for each candidature milestone.
• Candidates who are trying to increase their competitiveness for positions following completion of their program may take on other responsibilities/work etc. that can also affect their progress.
• Supervisors could be provided with incentives for timely completions. For example, providing funds to a supervisor for each on-time completion that can then be used to support other candidates i.e. fund a CAPRS.
• The University needs to set KPIs for completion times for Elements/Groups, this would then flow through to supervisors and could then be a performance measure that may affect promotion etc.
• There needs to be an analysis of the completion times for those candidates who were and who were not on a scholarship to find out if this is the determining factor influencing completion times.
• Award of scholarships in the rounds could be tied to completion time performance i.e. Elements/research teams will not be awarded scholarships unless the average completion time is X.
• Members indicated their support for the strategies proposed in the ‘Achieving HDR Completion Targets’ paper.
• It was noted that whilst all of the proposed strategies are great initiatives, effective implementation is reliant on responsibilities. It will require Heads of Element, Deans and PVCs to make this a priority. Focus needs to be placed on those people who can make a difference on the ground and change the culture.
• An action plan needs to developed from the ‘Achieving HDR Completion Targets’ paper that will include responsibilities and incorporates feedback provided by members. The plan will be developed for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

Resolution

10.3 The Board resolved to endorse the strategies proposed in the ‘Achieving HDR Completion Targets’ paper.

10.4 The Board resolved to recommend that the Achieving HDR Completion Targets Action Plan be developed for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

11.0 CHAIR’S REPORT

11.1 HDR Training – Promoting Best Practice

The Chair requested that this be a standing item on the agenda in order to use BGR as an avenue to promote best practice that is occurring in research training across the University. Members were asked to recommend presenters for future meetings.

11.2 Senior Leadership Forum

The Chair attended the Senior Leadership Forum, 10-11 February 2015. The forum provided a welcome opportunity to raise awareness and issues associated with HDR Training. The forum was discussed further as part of item 9 of the agenda – Achieving HDR Completion Targets.

11.3 Thesis Examination Form – Attainment of Thesis Learning Outcomes

At the 5/2014 meeting of BGR members considered the learning outcomes developed by the HDR Learning Outcomes Working Party which are specifically around the knowledge attained by a candidate that an examiner could be expected to consider and assess. The Board recommended that they be renamed the Thesis Learning Outcomes and, along
with a rubric, be incorporated into the thesis examination form. However, it has become too difficult to incorporate the Learning Outcomes into the examination form, particularly given the stage of the new on-line examination system, and as such the learning outcomes rubric will only be implemented for GBS (as is required for accreditation purposes) as a separate document to the examination form. This will be reviewed at a future meeting of the Board to determine if attainment of learning outcomes should be assessed for all candidates.

11.4 Plagiarism Software

The document 'Detecting Plagiarism – Resources for Supervisors and HDR Candidates’ was tabled at the meeting. The Director, Library and Learning Services advised that there is a cost associated with iThenticate. Members queried the use of turnitin which would be free for candidates. As this product does not support the file size of HDR theses, candidates would need to use this product for each thesis chapter as it is completed and provide the output to their supervisor(s) along with the chapter. The Director, Library and Learning Services will investigate HDR candidates’ access to turnitin and will report back to the Board regarding this option.

Resolution

11.5 The Board resolved that the Director, Library and Learning Services will investigate turnitin as a plagiarism detection product for use by HDR candidates, with an update to be provided at a future meeting of the Board.

12.0 HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STUDENT CENTRE REPORT

12.1 The Manager, HDR Student Centre presented the HDR Student Centre report. Members were asked to note that the percentage conversion from application to acceptance is higher than this time last year. Due to the intake dates, milestones are now due and are being undertaken by cohorts of candidates, as such there may be peak periods where confirmation, for example, is overdue.

13.0 2015 GGRS OPERATIONAL PLAN

13.1 Members noted the 2015 GGRS Operational Plan.

14.0 OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 The Chair advised that the Nomination of Examiners form will be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

15.0 NEXT MEETING

15.1 Members noted that the next meeting of the Board of Graduate Research will be held on Wednesday 15 April 2015 at 2.00pm in N54_2.06 and video-conferenced to G34_1.04.
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<th>Location 2</th>
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<td>23 September 2015</td>
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<td>28 October 2015</td>
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No Meeting Scheduled for November

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Meetings are held from 2.00pm - 4.00pm and are video-conferenced at the Gold Coast and Nathan campuses.

Minutes confirmed by:

Professor Sue Berners-Price, Chair
15 April 2015
DISTRIBUTION LIST

Committee Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Appointment Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Sue Berners-Price</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td><em>Deputy Chair and Dean (Research), GBS</em></td>
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<td>Professor Graham Cuskelley</td>
<td>Ex Officio (GBS)</td>
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<td><em>Deans, Research</em></td>
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<td>Professor Gerard Docherty</td>
<td>Ex Officio (AEL)</td>
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<td>Professor David Shum</td>
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<td>Professor David Lambert</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>HDR Convenors</em></td>
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<td>Professor Kate Hutchings</td>
<td>Appointed (BUS)</td>
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<td>Professor Liz Conlon</td>
<td>Appointed (HTH)</td>
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<td>Associate Professor Helen Blanchard</td>
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<td><em>Deputy Chair, Academic Committee</em></td>
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<td>Professor Wendy Loughlin</td>
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<td><em>Research Centre Directors</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Nigel McMillan</td>
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<td>Two years, up to 31 December 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Greer Johnson</td>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Two years, up to 31 December 2016</td>
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<td><em>Early Career Researcher</em></td>
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<td>Dr Jahangir Hossain</td>
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<td><em>HDR Student Representative</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Courtney Wright</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>Two years, up to 31 December 2015</td>
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Persons with rights of audience and debate

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<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms Kathy Grigic (or nominee)</td>
<td>Academic Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Sarah Todd</td>
<td>Pro Vice Chancellor (International)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Julene Finnigan</td>
<td>Resource Manager, PFS</td>
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<td>Ms Loree Joyce</td>
<td>Secretary to the Board of Graduate Research</td>
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<td>Ms Louise Howard</td>
<td>Pro Vice Chancellor (Information Services)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Eliza Mathews</td>
<td>Graduate Education Officer, GGRS</td>
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Information Copies (with attachments)

Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Ned Pankhurst
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Information Services) – Linda O’Brien
Director, Griffith Enterprise – Nicholas Mathiou
Manager, Research Data, Office for Research – Stewart Whiteside
Academic Registrar – Kathy Grigic
Secretary Academic Committee – Tasha Langham
Academic Services Officer – Science – Kim Hillier
Academic Services Officer – Health – Rebecca Voisey
Academic Services Officer – Arts – Jillian Misson
Academic Services Officer – Business – Kate Rees
Heads of Schools
Marketing & Communications Coordinator, GGRS – Andrew Quek
Research Methodologist, GGRS – Bill Metcalf
Thesis Examinations Coordinator, HDR Student Centre – Minerva Capati
Senior Academic Fellow (Griffith Institute for Educational Research) – Parlo Singh

Other Copies
Corporate Archives & Records Management