A meeting of the Board of Graduate Research was held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 26 August 2015 at 2.00pm in N54_2.06 and video-conferenced to G34_1.04.

Loree Joyce
Secretary

MINUTES

PRESENT:
Chair - Professor Sue Berners-Price
Professor Gerard Docherty
Professor Graham Cuskelley
Professor David Shum
Professor Wendy Loughlin
Professor Nigel McMillan
Associate Professor Sarah Baker
Associate Professor Helen Blanchard
Professor Greer Johnson
Professor Christine Smith
Dr Jahangir Hossein
Ms Courtney Wright

APOLOGIES:
Professor David Lambert
Professor Liz Conlon

Persons with Rights of Audience and Debate:
Professor Sarah Todd
Ms Louise Howard
Mr Adam Jones and Ms Rebecca Seymour (on behalf of Ms Alyson McGrath)
Professor Andrea Bishop
Ms Loree Joyce (Secretary)

Invitees:
Mr Andrew Quek

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

2.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES
2.1 The minutes of the 5/2015 meeting of the Board of Graduate Research were taken as read and confirmed.

3.0 MEMBERSHIP
3.1 The Board were advised that Professor Liz Conlon will be unable to attend meetings for the remainder of 2015 whilst on study leave.

4.0 PRESENTATION – HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STRATEGY
4.1 The Marketing Communications and Events Officer, GGRS, Mr Andrew Quek, presented the Higher Degree Research Strategy: Enhancing the prospective HDR candidate experience (refer attachment 4.1).
4.2 GGRS engaged the services of an external consulting firm in May 2015 to conduct website usability testing in order to gauge user behaviour. We now have a better understanding of the needs and behaviours of potential HDR candidates and have used this information to develop a coordinated approach to the promotion of Griffith to potential HDRs, and improved the format of the future students website as well as the information provided.

Users were also asked a series of questions including - What does HDR mean to you? What are important factors when choosing a University? This led to the creation of four personas (2 domestic and 2 international) that includes a customer journey map identifying their decision making process, what they are looking for (i.e. university world ranking), challenges identified etc.

Critical issues were identified, for example many students are going to the undergraduate/postgraduate scholarship website which does not provide information on HDR scholarships. Also found that students are searching School or Research Centre sites in order to find specific research areas, projects, and/or supervisors (via staff profile pages), however this type of information is not consistent across the School and Research Centre pages. It was also identified that the Research Hub has usability issues.

All of this information has informed development of the new HDR future students website which was launched this week (soft launch). This is the first iteration and any feedback provided will be used to inform amendment to the site.

4.3 Members provided feedback on the future students’ website as follows:

- Griffith International (GI) has significantly enhanced their campus and lifestyle website information. We should not be replicating this information and instead should link to the GI site. Need to ensure information regarding the location of campuses is clear so as not to mislead potential candidates (look at wording used on GI site). Recommend that the site is less focussed on lifestyle and instead has a focus on employability (i.e. fastest growing region in Australia), as this is a motivating factor for international candidates.
- Mr Quek advised that two videos have been taken from the GI site to promote Griffith to potential HDR candidates and links to the GI site have been included throughout the application guide for information regarding study cost, accommodation etc. The content of the lifestyle and campus information will be reviewed, and further links to the GI site provided if needed.
- Linking to the new website from the Griffith home page is currently being discussed with the Office of Marketing and Communications. The plan is that all pathways to HDR throughout the Griffith website should link to this new site, however this is difficult to coordinate across the University.
- The ‘research keywords’ on the site need to be amended as they do not sufficiently represent all research areas at the University. The research keywords are the four digit FoR’s, however it was noted that this is not sufficient and is currently being reviewed with the research data team. Due to limitations with the Research Hub (to be renamed Griffith Experts) it is anticipated that the research keywords that are used to search for a supervisor may be an ongoing issue.
- When using the Research Hub, if you look at projects it’s actually research grants. Griffith Experts needs to be able to list PhD student projects. A solution needs to be developed for the new Griffith Experts as students get lost once they come into the Research Hub. Mr Quek advised that advice at the moment is that there is no priority within the scope of the Griffith Experts project for improvements that will assist in the recruitment of HDRs.
- It was noted that the site does works equally well on an iPad.
- Rather than going straight to ‘apply now’, the site needs to have an ‘enquire now’ button.
- Need to ensure that the site is set up so that a separate tab opens up when you click on a link to another page.
4.4 Members were advised that the presentation, customer journey map and the four persona profiles will be distributed post meeting (refer attachments 4.1-4.3). Any further feedback, including recommended terms or strategies for the ‘research areas’, is to be provided to Mr Andrew Quek. Members were also advised that this is the first step in addressing HDR marketing needs, and a HDR Marketing Strategy is currently being developed and will be considered at a future meeting of the Board.

Resolution

4.5 The Board resolved to provide further feedback on the HDR future students website to Mr Andrew Quek.

4.6 The HDR Marketing Strategy that is being developed is to be considered at a future meeting of the Board.

Attachments 4.1-4.3

SECTION A: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

5.0 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY – HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STUDENTS

5.1 At the 6/2014 (November) meeting, Academic Committee recommended that amendments to the Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students be approved by Council, following consideration by BGR. The Board subsequently recommended that the Policy be further amended following consideration at the 1/2015 (4 February) and 5/2015 (29 July) BGR meetings.

5.2 Members were asked to consider the Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students which has been amended to:

- Link closely with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, including the standards of research conduct that HDR candidates are subject to, and the definition of misconduct.
- Include referral to complaint/allegation and investigation procedures in accordance with the GU human research ethics and the animal research ethics manuals.
- Include educational responses and penalties appropriate to HDR candidature.
- Align with the Institutional Framework for Promoting Academic Integrity among Students, where relevant.
- Align with the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, where relevant.

5.3 Members endorsed the proposed amendments, subject to:

- Section 1 –Scope, last paragraph to be amended to ‘This policy does not apply to the behaviour and conduct of HDR candidates that can be construed as misconduct, as defined in the Student Misconduct Policy.’
- Definitions section to include ‘Educational Response’ and ‘Penalty’.

5.4 The Board noted that following the planned amendment to the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research to align with Part B of the Australian Code, the Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students will need to be reviewed and further amended as required.

Resolution

5.5 The Board resolved to recommend to University Council that the amended Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students be approved for immediate implementation, following endorsement by Academic Committee.
SECTION B: ACTION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

6.0 AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED ACADEMIES (ACOLA) CONSULTATION

6.1 Members were asked to consider and provide feedback on the draft response to the ACOLA consultation questions for the review of Australia’s research training system. Members were advised that following BGR feedback, the institutional response to ACOLA will be finalised for submission, due by 31 August 2015.

6.2 Members discussed the draft response and provided feedback as follows:

- The Terms of Reference and discussion paper are silent around international HDRs. The PVC (International) advised that comment around attracting and retaining international candidates will be provided post meeting for insertion in the response.
- An oral thesis examination process was discussed. Whilst there are valid reasons for moving toward oral examination, there are practical issues with an oral process that would make implementation difficult. Members commented that oral examinations should not be too difficult to organise if conducted via video conference. The ACGR Good Practice Principles and the proposed Higher Education Standards Framework are also not conducive to oral examination with the inclusion of examiners of international standing, which is interpreted at Griffith (as it is at most other institutions) as a requirement for at least one of the examiners to be international. These issues have been addressed in the GU response, as well as by ACGR in their response, advising that the thesis examination process should remain unchanged with institutions having the ability to ask for an oral defence if required.
- Skills could be developed as part of an integrated PhD program. The Chair advised that the response has focused on the Vitae model so that we can maintain multiple training and pathway models.
- The PhD program duration was discussed. The response advises that the PhD is 3-4 years duration, however in reality it takes 4 years to complete a PhD. We should make this clear in the response with advice that there needs to be funding for a four year period. It was noted that Q8 of the response includes advice that we will need an extension to the PhD program duration and funding to accommodate industry placements/training. Concern was raised that if we were to state that the PhD is 4 years this could affect international competitiveness as normally internationally sponsorship is for 3 years only. i.e. DIKTI, CSC, MOET, Science without Borders, and the Australian Endeavour program. It was queried as to whether sponsorships dictate that candidates must return home upon completion of their program, and as such sponsored international candidates may not be able stay on and work and contribute to the prosperity of the country. However members commented that even if international candidates are required to go home upon completion of their program, there is still export of knowledge and Australian experience, potential future research collaborations etc. As such, these candidates do still have a positive effect and benefit the strategic interest of the University and Australia.
- Q3 of the response needs to emphasise that for those candidates who come through a pathway of high school, bachelor degree, and then higher degree research, it is vital that they obtain industry experience/skills during their research degree.
- Can the separation between ARC and HDR research activity be addressed as they are intimately connected in many ways? This may be picked up in the Watt review; however ARC does not include HDR training in its agenda, even though many projects do support HDRs.
- The emphasis in the response on the need for multiple pathways and training needs due to diverse backgrounds and industry experience of candidates was supported.
- The emphasis in the response on the need to maintain an overall financial support model i.e. RTS, in addition to scholarship funding to support top students, was supported.

Resolution

6.3 Institutional response to the ACOLA consultation questions for the review of Australia’s research training system to be finalised, taking into account feedback received, for submission by 31 August 2015.
7.0 SCHOLARSHIP ALLOCATION WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Board (2/2014) recommended that a working party be established to review the HDR Scholarship Application, Assessment and Award Policy and inform changes to the HDR scholarship allocation system. The Scholarship Allocation Working Party was established and convened three times in 2014 (August, September, October) and three times in 2015 (March, May, July).

7.2 Members were asked to note the interim outcomes of the Scholarship Allocation Working Party as detailed in the report provided, including amendment to the HDR Scholarship Application, Assessment and Award Policy. Members were advised that due to the complexity of developing and implementing a scholarship scoring scheme, the recommendation of the working party is for a pilot to be conducted as part of the 2016 annual scholarship round. Members were advised that the university invests a significant amount of money for award of strategic scholarships to HDRs, due to the allocation of APAs to the University being insufficient. As such, the inclusion of a process to assess the quality of the research training environment, including strategic fit, is required as a component in the scoring scheme and the models will be amended to reflect this. Currently the Groups have varied models for assessing the research training environment and as such we need to be working towards one model. The outcomes of the pilot will be used to assess the effectiveness of the scoring scheme, and to identify any issues and/or changes required in order to work to words a final model for implementation. The proposed separation of domestic and international applications will also be reviewed following the pilot.

7.3 Members discussed the HDR scholarship scoring scheme pilot, as well as the Group scoring models that were provided for noting. It was noted that two Groups have more clearly defined the requirements for ‘research income’. It was queried how much emphasis should be put on the supervisory team vs the Element environment/research culture that the candidate is coming into. Some of the KPIs for research areas could be used to assess research training environment also. We need to be careful not to create an overly complex scoring scheme, noting that there will still be an element of academic judgement applied when ranking applications. The need for minor amendments to the Group scoring models was raised and the Deans (Research) were advised to provide any further feedback on the Group models to the Secretary, Scholarship Allocation Working Party by no later than 2 September 2015.

Resolution

7.4 The Board resolved to endorse the recommendations of the Scholarship Allocation Working Party.

7.5 Deans (Research) to provide final feedback on the Group scholarship scoring models to the Secretary, Scholarship Allocation Working Party by no later than 2 September 2015.

8.0 HDR CONFERRALS

Resolution

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

SECTION C: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO OTHER COMMITTEES

Nil

SECTION D: MATTERS NOTED, CONSIDERED OR REMAINING UNDER DISCUSSION

9.0 THESIS AS A SERIES OF PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

9.1 The information on the HDR website ‘Thesis as a series of published and unpublished papers’ requires review in order to include more explicit requirements. Members were
asked to provide feedback on the current requirements in order to inform amendment. Members were also asked to note the discipline specific guidelines at Monash University.

9.2 Members provided feedback as follows:

- This is a more acceptable thesis format for science and health, but less so in social sciences, and as such feedback received and/or issues identified have been from the social sciences area.
- Perhaps we should adopt Group/discipline specific guidelines as per the Monash model, however there is still scope to provide further guidance within the overarching guidelines i.e. authorship requirements. Members agreed that there should be a framework to operate within with discipline specific differences.
- The supervisors, and then ultimately the examiners are required to judge the thesis and determine what is acceptable so we should not need stricter guidelines. This may just be a supervisor training issue. It was noted that whilst supervisor training is a concern, as issues are being identified it is better to strengthen the guidelines in order to minimise confusion for candidates, supervisors, and/or thesis examiners.
- Examiners need to be given better instruction regarding this thesis format. The new on-line thesis examination system should also alert examiners when the thesis is in this format.
- Perhaps we need to amend the language used in the guidelines to reiterate that this is not one set format i.e. can just have one publication inserted in a traditional thesis. Recommend that the website title be changed to ‘Inclusion of papers within the thesis’, or ‘Thesis including published works’.

Resolution

9.3 The Board resolved for the HDR website ‘Thesis as a series of published and unpublished papers’ to be amended based on feedback provided, for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

10.0 CHAIR’S REPORT

10.1 Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) Review of Australia’s Research Training System, and the Dr Ian Watt Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements

There are currently two Government reviews related to research training occurring, the ACOLA Review of Australia’s Research Training System, and the Dr Ian Watt Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements. Consultation questions have been released for both the ACOLA and Watt reviews, with responses due by 31 August and 18 September, respectively. The Chair advised that she (as an IRU Dean representative) had a teleconference with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the ACOLA review, as part of ACOLAs consultation process. ACOLA are seeking genuine input from institutions to identify what is needed, and what are the impediments, to improving research training in Australia in order to produce a highly skilled research workforce that will contribute to Australia’s future prosperity. The Chair advised that feedback on the ACOLA response will be sought as per item 10.0 of the Agenda, for finalisation and submission by 31 August. Mr Tony Sheil, Deputy Director, Office for Research is coordinating the response for the Watt review.

10.2 Griffith English Language Enhancement Strategy (GELES) – Proposed HDR Academic Language and Learning Strategy

The proposed HDR Academic Language and Learning Strategy has previously been discussed at BGR, where members were advised that the Graduate Education Officer, GGRS has been working with the Deputy Director, GELI on the development of a program to improve the language and writing skills of all HDR candidates. HDR candidates from non-English speaking backgrounds can currently access English language support via EnglishHELP, however access to this support and the associated
funding has been patchy and a better service could be provided to HDRs as part of an overall program.

A Griffith English Language Enhancement Strategy (GELES) paper will be considered at a future meeting of Executive Group. This paper will propose a strategy and funding model going forward, and will include the proposed HDR Academic Language and Learning strategy. Members confirmed in principle support for this strategy, noting that this has also been included in the ‘Achieving HDR Completion Targets Action Plan’, which was endorsed at the 3/2015 (May 2015) BGR meeting.

10.3 Griffith Graduate Research School and HDR Student Centre Workplace Change

A proposal, based on the Fiona Zammit review, to amalgamate GGRS and the HDR Student Centre has been considered and endorsed by Executive Group. Members were advised to be aware that workplace change will be occurring across each of these units in the coming months, noting that the timeframe for implementation is yet to be confirmed.

10.4 Electronic Infrastructure Capital Planning (EICP) funding proposal

A proposal for further EICP funding to support HDR has been put forward in the first stage of the 2016-2018 EICP process, and includes: enhancements to current systems (i.e. on-line admissions, HDR student lifecycle project, on-line thesis examinations), a scholarship ranking system, and e-portfolio.

10.5 HDR Conference (postponed)

Due to the Graduate Education Officer’s current period of leave, the HDR Conference has been postponed. As this is a co-initiative with the Griffith Social and Behavioural Research College, the College will still be going ahead with some of its planned events and GGRS will be running the 3MT final which had been scheduled as part of the Conference.

10.6 Plagiarism Detection Software

The use of plagiarism detection software was discussed at the 2/2015 (March 2015) meeting of the Board. As per prior advice provided by the Director, Library and Learning Services at the 2/2015 meeting the best options are either iThenticate or Turnitin. iThenticate can cope with a thesis file size, however there is a significant license cost. It is an option for candidates to use iThenticate themselves at a cost of only $50 which we could then reimburse. Turnitin on the other hand is free but this product does not support the file size of HDR theses. Members advised that detection software should be used throughout candidature to identify any issues early, rather than just using on completion of the thesis. As such Turnitin will cope with the file size if, as each chapter is completed, it is assessed. Members advised that as a misconduct prevention strategy, we need to introduce the use of plagiarism detection software as a requirement. We should also benchmark what other institutions are doing in this space e.g. University of Otago is using Turnitin for HDRs. The Director, Library and Learning Services advised that work is also being done to upgrade the referencing tool, as well as the academic integrity tutorial. The Director, Library and Learning Services, in conjunction with the Secretary, BGR will investigate HDR candidates’ access to Turnitin and develop a process for its use, for consideration at a future meeting of the Board.

10.7 Ethics Application System

Advice has been sent out to researchers from the Director, Office for Research regarding a new ethics application system that will be launching soon. This advice needs to be communicated to HDRs. The Health Group and GBS have already forwarded this information onto their HDRs. An email will also be sent by the Marketing Communications and Events Officer, GGRS to all candidates.
10.8 HDR Publications

Griffith HERDC eligible output data shows that in 2014, 23.01% of HERDC eligible outputs listed a HDR candidate as an author. This has increased from 15.47% in 2013. Members were advised that publication data, with a breakdown by Group, will be presented at the next meeting of the Board.

Resolution

10.9 The Board resolved that the Director, Library and Learning Services, in conjunction with the Secretary, BGR investigate HDR candidates’ access to Turnitin and develop a process for its use, for consideration at a future meeting of the Board.

10.10 The Board resolved that HDR Publication data, with a breakdown by Group, be presented at the next meeting of the Board.

11.0 HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STUDENT CENTRE REPORT

11.1 The Acting Manager, HDR Student Centre presented the HDR Student Centre report. Members were advised that applications for the annual scholarship round close on 6 October. Round 3 of the PAS and CAPRS selection meeting was held on 20 August 2015. The CAPRS success rate is very high (all eligible applicants awarded), however PAS is more competitive, with an increase in applications received from last year. The pattern for receipt of applications for each round will be analysed in order to plan for the year. Elements will now be required to rank applications if more than one is received from an Element.

Members were asked to note the number of candidates in each Group who are currently overdue for their confirmation of candidature, as well as the comparative thesis examination status.

Members were reminded of the go live date for the HDR Student Lifecycle project of 21 September, and the myGriffith (Student Portal) project of 29th September, and asked members to note that any unforeseen impacts following go live will be mitigated as much as possible. Members were also advised that the process for the scholarship round will require amendment due to the new online admissions system. It is vital that HDR Convenors provide comprehensive information in the scholarship panel in the format provided in the guide for Convenors, as this information will be provided in the scholarship ranking sheet.

Members queried whether there would be further consultation on the on-line thesis examination system given the feedback that was provided at the last session. The Acting Manager, HDRSC advised that this will be followed up with the Project Manager.

12.0 CAPRS & PAS SELECTION MEETING

12.1 Members noted the minutes of the Round 3, 2015 CAPRS and PAS Scholarship Selection Meeting.

13.0 HDR CONVENOR MEETINGS

13.1 Members noted the minutes of the AEL and Health HDR Convenor Committee meetings held in May and July 2015 respectively.

14.0 HDR LOAD REPORT

14.1 Members noted the HDR Load Report as at 24 August 2015.
15.0 OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 Nil.

16.0 NEXT MEETING

16.1 Members noted that the next meeting of the Board of Graduate Research will be held on Wednesday 23rd September 2015 at 2.00pm in N54_2.06 and video-conferenced to G34_1.04.

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*No Meeting Scheduled for November*

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
23 September 2015
DISTRIBUTION LIST

Committee Members

Name                                             Appointment Type  Term of Office

Professor Sue Berners-Price                      Chair

Deputy Chair and Dean (Research), GBS

Professor Graham Cuskelley                       Ex Officio (GBS)

Deans, Research

Professor Gerard Docherty                        Ex Officio (AEL)

Professor David Shum                             Ex Officio (HTH)

Professor David Lambert                          Ex Officio (GSC)

HDR Convenors

Associate Professor Sarah Baker                   Appointed (AEL)  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

Professor Christine Smith                        Appointed (BUS)  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

Professor Liz Conlon                             Appointed (HTH)  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

Associate Professor Helen Blanchard              Appointed (GSC)  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

Deputy Chair, Academic Committee

Professor Wendy Loughlin                         Ex Officio

Research Centre Directors

Professor Nigel McMillan                         Appointed  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

Professor Greer Johnson                          Appointed  Two years, up to 31 December 2016

Early Career Researcher

Dr Jahangir Hossain                              Appointed  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

HDR Student Representative

Ms Courtney Wright                               Elected  Two years, up to 31 December 2015

Persons with rights of audience and debate

Name                                             Position

Ms Kathy Grigic                                  Academic Registrar (or nominee)

Professor Sarah Todd                             Pro Vice Chancellor (International)

Ms Julene Finnigan                               Resource Manager, PFS

Ms Loree Joyce                                   Secretary to the Board of Graduate Research

Ms Alyson McGrath                                Manager, HDR Student Centre

Prof Andrea Bishop                                Director, Office for Research (or nominee)

Ms Louise Howard                                 Pro Vice Chancellor (Information Services) (or nominee)

Dr Eliza Howard                                  Graduate Education Officer, GGRS

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 Grgic

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