A meeting of the Board of Graduate Research was held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 9th December 2015 at 2.00pm in N54_2.06 and video-conferenced to G34_1.04.

MINUTES

PRESENT:
Chair - Professor Sue Berners-Price
Professor David Shum
Professor David Lambert
Professor Liz Conlon
Professor Christine Smith
Ms Courtney Wright

APOLOGIES:
Prof Graham Cuskelly
Prof Gerard Docherty
Associate Professor Sarah Baker
Associate Professor Helen Blanchard
Professor Wendy Loughlin
Professor Nigel McMillan
Professor Greer Johnson
Dr Jahangir Hossein

Persons with Rights of Audience and Debate:
Ms Rebecca Seymour
Dr Rachael Pitt
Ms Sue Hickson (on behalf of Ms Louise Howard)
Ms Megan Hoffmann (Acting Secretary)

Ms Kathy Grgic
Professor Sarah Todd
Ms Julene Finnigan
Prof Andrea Bishop
Mrs Louise Howard
Ms Loree Joyce

Invitees:
Ms Michelle Wano
Mr Blayne Arnold

1.0 COMMITTEE QUORUM

1.1 At the scheduled meeting time, a quorum of the committee was not present. In accordance with the Committee Meeting Procedures, the Vice Chancellor (via prior approval) determined that matters before the committee required immediate attention and as such approval was granted for the meeting to proceed inquorate.

2.0 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

3.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 The minutes of the 8/2015 meeting of the Board of Graduate Research were taken as read and confirmed.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

Appointments

4.1 The Board noted the following appointments:

- Mr Blayne Arnold was elected as the new HDR candidate representative to the Board for a two year term from 1/01/2016 to 31/12/2017.
• Reappointment of Professor Christine Smith as the HDR Convenor Griffith Business School representative for a further two year term from 1/01/2016 to 31/12/2017.
• Reappointment of A/Professor Helen Blanchard as the HDR Convenor Griffith Sciences representative for a further two year term from 1/01/2016 to 31/12/2017.

4.2 The Board welcomed Dr Rachel Pitt, Graduate Education Manager, GGRS to the Board as a person with rights of audience and debate.

Thank you

4.3 The Board thanked the following members:
• Professor David Lambert for his valuable contribution to the work of the Board as Dean (Research) for the Griffith Sciences Group. Professor Nigel Stork will be acting in the position of Dean (Research) for the Sciences Group until June 2016.
• Professor Nigel McMillan for his valuable contribution to the work of the Board as a Research Centre Director representative.
• Ms Courtney Wright for her valuable contribution to the work of the Board as the HDR candidate representative.
• Dr Janangir Hossain for his valuable contribution to the work of the Board as the Early Career Researcher representative.

5.0 PRESENTATION – EICP PROJECT: SUPPORTING RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM

5.1 Ms Michelle Wano provided an update on the HDR Lifecycle Project. Members were asked to note the Project Highlight Report that documents enhancements that have been undertaken since the project go live date. The project team has been responding to and providing support to Group and administrative staff and resolving user issues. Data quality checks have also been performed. For the next session (the next week) the project team will be working on further fixes/enhancements, including HDR induction enhancements, and will also start to prepare the scoping for 2016 enhancements.

Enhancements so far identified for planned completion next year include amendment to the workflow approval processes for maximum submission date extension requests and nomination of examiner requests, and the publication requirement completion verification process. It is envisaged that further enhancements will include workflow of the early and mid-candidature milestone reports. Members advised that optimally, all HDR forms should be incorporated into the online workflow.

Ms Wano advised that a report is currently being compiled regarding the web analytics associated with the online system. The web analytics are assisting the team to provide enhancements to the thesis examination system in particular, for example it appears that thesis examiners are frequently viewing the FAQs page. Further analytics will be undertaken and the report will then progress for consideration at the next meeting of BGR.

The Chair requested information on how many examiners have so far requested a hard copy of the thesis. Subsequent to the meeting the Chair was informed that one examiner out of 16 requested a hard copy of the thesis.

The Chair thanked Ms Wano and her project team for their work undertaken on the HDR Lifecycle project, noting that the product is excellent.

Resolution

5.2 HDR Lifecycle Project web analytics report to be presented at the next meeting of the Board.
SECTION A: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

6.0 HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH POLICY

6.1 Members considered proposed changes to the Higher Degree Research Policy. The policy has been amended to:

- Align approving authorities with amendments to the ‘Schedule of Responsibilities and Authorisation for Research Training Matters’ as approved at the 8/2015 (October 2015) BGR Meeting.
- Include additional requirements for remote candidates.

6.2 The Chair advised members that there is risk involved in managing the progress of remote candidates, particularly where issues arise. The greatest risk lies with ‘one off’ remote candidature arrangements, as opposed to cohort arrangements such as the QCM and Melbourne based Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) arrangement. As such the requirements for remote candidature need to be more carefully considered at admission to ensure that candidates have a high likelihood of success, as reflected in the proposed amendments to policy. Amendments to the policy also include the requirement for remote candidates to complete the on-campus induction program. The Chair also advised that feedback received from candidates during the remote candidate webinars (as detailed in the Chair’s report) further highlighted the need to review remote candidature requirements. Candidates advised that they are missing out on attending training programs and are not being incorporated into the research culture of the University.

Resolution

6.3 The Board resolved to recommend to Academic Committee that the amended Higher Degree Research Policy be approved for immediate implementation.

7.0 BOARD OF GRADUATE RESEARCH 2015 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2016 WORKPLAN

7.1 All sub committees of Academic Committee are required to submit an annual report as well as a work plan for the following year. Members were asked to note the 2015 BGR Annual Report and to discuss the tentative work plan for 2016.

7.2 The Chair asked members to note the HDR commencing and completion targets detailed in Appendix A. It is unlikely that the commencing candidate targets will be met; however the Chair advised that the key concern is completions and as such a focus must be on ensuring progression measures are in place to retain candidates and ensure timely completions.

7.3 Members discussed the Annual Report. It was recommended that the development of a coordinated marketing plan to attract high quality HDR applicants, as detailed in the GGRS 2016 Operation Plan, should also be included in the 2016 BGR work plan. It was also noted that the ongoing tasks section of the report needs to include amendment to the thesis as a series of published and unpublished papers requirements.

Resolution

7.4 The Board resolved to approve the 2015 BGR Annual Report and 2016 work plan, subject to amendment, for consideration by Academic Committee.

SECTION B: ACTION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

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 REVIEW OF PHD ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

9.1 A sector scan of the PhD admission requirements was considered by members. Members were asked to discuss the variation in the PhD admission requirements across the sector and provide feedback as to whether the Griffith University requirements require amendment.

9.2 Members discussed the PhD admission requirements and provided the following feedback:

- The Go8 appear to have lower admission requirements in terms of the size of the research component.
- The sector comparison document must be considered in the context that it is hard to ascertain in some instances if there is an element of formal taught research training in the PhD occurring at the institution.
- Discussion at the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) review of research training forum around the research masters as a pathway to a PhD is relevant to this item. Discussion at the ACOLA forum suggested that applicants are better served having the skills upon entry into the PhD rather than having to develop them. The Masters pathway was being promoted as offering choice to students, but it seemed to be narrowing choice by funnelling applicants into masters programs.
- A PhD program that includes a coursework component may be less attractive to applicants. Six months experience as an RA would provide better HDR preparedness than coursework.
- A review of admission requirements at this stage may be premature as any such amendments will need to be informed by the ACOLA review.
- Our admission standards are appropriate, it would be concerning to lower them across the board. The US model of coursework seems to anecdotally produce researchers who are overly conservative, with an over reliance of teaching in the program rather than learning through independent research.
- Further discussion on admission requirements should also be informed by data on how candidates who have less research background progress in their candidature. A decision to lower admission standards would need to be supported by evidence.
- It is interesting to note that James Cook University has more rigorous admission requirements than Griffith.
- The inclusion of coursework is very disciplinary specific across the Go8. Griffith may need to look at Masters pathways for disciplines in which this becomes the acceptable standard, but not adopt coursework across the board.
- Members agreed that the admission requirements should be revisited following the outcomes of the ACOLA review in 2016. Further discussion should also be informed by the findings of Dr Margaret Kiley’s review of coursework in Australian PhD programs.

Resolution

9.3 The Board resolved for the PhD admission requirements to be reviewed for consideration at a future meeting of the Board, following the findings of the ACOLA review.

10.0 2017 HDR CANDIDATE INTAKE DATES

10.1 With the implementation of the Griffith University trimester model commencing from 2017, the HDR candidate intake dates will need to align with the trimester dates, as well as the
The Deputy Director, Student Administration advised that load will normally be attached to Trimester 1 and 2 for each program, with Trimester 3 being optional. Further information will be sought on load implications for HDR candidates, given the time-based nature of HDR programs and RTS funding. Members agreed that the intake dates warrant discussion at the Group level to consider issues raised (i.e. the timing of local HDR inductions), following clarification of load implications.

Resolution

The Board resolved to consider the 2017 HDR candidate intake dates at the next meeting of the Board, following consideration by each of the Groups and following clarification of load implications.

11.0 CHAIR’S REPORT

11.1 End of Year Scholarship Round Selection Meeting

The Chair noted the particular challenges for the end of year scholarship round due to the implementation of the new online admission system, as well as the piloting of the HDR Scholarship Scoring Scheme. The Chair thanked the Science Group for trialling the scoring scheme across the entire Group. Feedback from the pilot will be considered at the next meeting of the Scholarship Allocation Working Party, which will inform the planned implementation of the scoring scheme with effect from the 2016 mid-year scholarship round.

The scholarship allocations, as detailed in the HDR Student Centre Report, show that a total of 224 applicants were awarded a scholarship(s). 51% of scholarships were awarded to domestic applicants and 49% to international applicants, however members were advised to note the significant variation in this breakdown across the Groups. For example 90% of awardees in the Health Group were domestic applicants, whereas only 20% of awardees in the Science Group were domestic applicants. Domestic awardee numbers may reflect areas where there are high quality undergraduate programs. It was noted that an increase in the number of domestic applications is required, and the balance of international and domestic applicants in each Group needs to be addressed.

The Chair informed members that an item for consideration at the 9/2015 (December) meeting of Academic Committee relating to proposed changes to the cut-off grades for Honours classifications has been removed from the agenda following discussion with the Senior DVC. This item proposed an increase to the minimum dissertation grade for Honours 1 classification from 80% to 85% which, if implemented, would have a substantial impact on the HDR scholarship eligibility of Griffith students, further eroding the number of potential domestic applications.

11.2 Watt Review Recommendations

The Dr Ian Watt Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements has released a report of recommendations to the Minister, with changes proposed for commencement in 2017. Recommendations relating to graduate research include: the consolidation of the three research training funding programs (RTS, APA and IPRS) into one scheme with greater flexibility; funding formula changed to 50% completions and 50% research income; funding for 700 x 6 month PhD business placements each year; discontinuing JRE Cadetships.

The removal of publications from the funding formula will have an impact on Griffith’s funding. It is noted that Mr Conor King, Executive Director of the Innovative Research Universities Group is a working group member for the Watt Review and this is visible in the recommendations.
11.3 ACOLA’s Review of Australia’s Research Training System Public Forum (Brisbane, 11 November 2015)
Attendees at the forum discussed and provided feedback on the ACOLA consultation questions. Attendees from Griffith University included the Chair, the BGR HDR Student Representative, and the Dean (Research) AEL. The HDR Student Representative was particularly thanked for her attendance, with her feedback and input as a candidate highly valued. The forum discussion didn’t seem to raise any new findings; however the ACOLA consultation that occurred at the ACGR conference was productive (refer 11.4).

11.4 Australian Council of Graduate Research (ACGR) Conference
The Chair attended the ACGR conference in Canberra, on 19-20 November 2015. Agenda items discussed included:

- The ACOLA Review of Research Training. The draft key findings from the ACGR response to the consultation questions were presented and discussed. The seven draft key findings are based on the themes of: (1) Responsibility to HDR Candidates and Career Outcomes; (2) Pathways to HDR Training; (3) Content of HDR Training; (4) University Research and Industry Engagement; (5) Quantifying National Benefits; (6) Professionalising Supervision; and (7) Attributes of Quality Research Training.

It is evident that further data underpinning each of the recommendations is required as it is difficult to know what is occurring at the broader level. ACGR proposed commissioning two projects to source the applicable data, specifically in regard to graduate outcomes and industry involvement. The ACOLA review is scheduled to provide a report to the Minister in March 2016.

- Publishing in the PhD. This was a very relevant session given our current review of the thesis as a series of papers requirements. A presentation on the University of Western Australia (UWA) perspective indicated that approximately 70% of their candidates are including published material in their thesis, including 50% of candidates from the Arts Faculty. The UWA model will be reviewed to further inform amendment to Griffith’s requirements.

- Managing student concerns, grievances, and difficult situations. The management of difficult circumstances in HDR candidature were discussed. Griffith University appears to be dealing with such issues well in terms of our policies and procedures.

11.5 Principles to Promote Excellence in HDR Supervision
The Chair advised that she has been working with the HDR Manager, Strategy and Projects, to progress the strategy to imbed the ‘Principles to Promote Excellence in HDR Supervision’ into performance review documentation and processes.

11.6 Remote HDR Candidate Webinars
The Graduate Education Officer, GGRS has been providing one on one induction sessions to remote candidates, however this has not occurred over the last few months. As such webinars were arranged for remote candidates and were held on 17 and 19 November. 21 candidates participated in the webinars with 12 from AEL, 5 from Health, and 4 candidates from Science. Discussion during the webinars highlighted that remote candidature can be problematic, with candidates feeling isolated and not feeling part of the university research community. Acceptance of remote candidates needs to be considered in the context of how were are able to support them. A change to the policy for remote candidature is included in the agenda for consideration.

11.7 GGRS 2015 Operational Plan and 2015 Report on Outcomes
Members were asked to note the GGRS 2015 Operation Plan and 2015 Report on Outcomes.

11.8 PhD Industry Experience Program
This PhD Industry Experience Program is a worthwhile, workable scheme that is designed to demonstrate that PhD candidates have useful, transferable skills.
For the first round of the program 38 projects were offered across QLD to domestic PhD candidates. 19 candidates applied and 3 have been shortlisted from Griffith University. The number of applications received was less than anticipated so the Chair is hopeful that this program will be made available to international candidates in future rounds.

11.9  **GGRS and HDR Student Centre Workplace Change**

Dr Sharon Saunders has been appointed to the new position of Director of the restructured Griffith Graduate Research School, commencing 29 February 2016. Dr Saunders gained her PhD through the Griffith Business School in 2008 and has since held a number of academic, consultancy and administrative roles in the higher education sector in both Australia and the UK. Dr Saunders is joining Griffith from the University of Cambridge, UK. She has been a UK representative on Vitae’s researcher development advisory group and has been involved in the Roberts’ review of research assessment, and is currently a European Union peer reviewer for the UK’s HR Excellence in Research quality assurance process.

In anticipation of the amalgamation of GGRS and HDR Student Centre, refurbishment is occurring in the Bray Centre (N54) to accommodate staff at the Nathan campus, and space is currently being discussed on the Gold Coast campus, with a space in G01 proposed that can be badged as GGRS and will also accommodate the Griffith Student Ombudsman role.

12.0  **HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STUDENT CENTRE REPORT**

12.1 The Deputy Director, Student Administration presented the HDR Student Centre report. Members were advised that the HDR Student Centre will be extending the acting roles and business will continue as normal pending the commencement of the Director, GGRS.

Members were advised that HDR completions are on track to meet the 2015 target, with 242 candidates estimated to complete this year. In 2016, focus will be placed on continuing to increase completion numbers. The system changes implemented support a timely examination process which will also assist in achieving an increase in HDR completions.

13.0  **NEXT MEETING**

13.1 Members noted that the next meeting of the Board of Graduate Research will be held on **Wednesday 3rd February 2016 at 2.00pm in N54_2.06 and video-conferenced to G40_8.29**

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<td>N54_2.06</td>
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<td>9 March 2016</td>
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<td>13 April 2016</td>
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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
3 February 2016

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Committee Members

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Appointment Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Sue Berners-Price</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td><em>Deputy Chair and Dean (Research), GBS</em></td>
<td>Ex Officio (GBS)</td>
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<td>Professor Graham Cuskelley</td>
<td>Ex Officio (AEL)</td>
<td>Two years, up to 31 December 2015</td>
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<td>Professor Gerard Docherty</td>
<td>Ex Officio (HTH)</td>
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<td>Professor David Shum</td>
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<td>Professor David Lambert</td>
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<td>HDR Convenors</td>
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<td>Associate Professor Sarah Baker</td>
<td>Appointed (BUS)</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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<tr>
<td>Ms Kathy Grigic</td>
<td>Academic Registrar (or nominee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Sarah Todd</td>
<td>Pro Vice Chancellor (International)</td>
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<td>Ms Julene Finnigan</td>
<td>Resource Manager, PFS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Loree Joyce</td>
<td>Secretary to the Board of Graduate Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Alyson McGrath</td>
<td>Manager, HDR Student Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Andrea Bishop</td>
<td>Director, Office for Research (or nominee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Louise Howard</td>
<td>Pro Vice Chancellor (Information Services) (or nominee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Eliza Howard</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

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