

LTC11D070

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### **Report of the meeting of the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group**

The Policy Group met on Monday 6 February 2012. The notes that follow summarise the position reached by the Policy Group.

#### **1. Quality Assurance Agency: Institutional Audit (2009) – mid-term report**

The Policy Group considered an extract from the audit report (2009), with regard to advisable and desirable recommendations concerning PGR provision. It was noted that there was one desirable and one advisable recommendation, relating to how the University monitors and trains PGR students who teach other (typically undergraduate) students and clarity of admissions procedures, with specific regard to English language requirements for international students.

The Group endorsed the draft entries proposed for inclusion in the University response to the QAA.

With regard to **Admissions** it was noted that:

- There is an annual update and review of the UEA Code of Practice for Research Degrees, which includes Admissions procedures;
- A review of admissions processes is under way following two key decisions of the University in 2010: a) the reorganisation of Faculty support into University-wide services, including for PGR provision with intended outcomes of streamlining to reduce inappropriate variance across Faculties and b) the introduction of 'Hobson's', an admissions system which facilitates the management of applications in a transparent and standardised manner;
- Admissions processes are being rewritten and tested in the light of the new system.
- The PGR Prospectus clarifies the University's minimum English language requirement and directs prospective applicants to ascertain individual Schools' requirements as the minimum may be higher where there is a sound academic rationale for so doing. The PGR Programmes Policy Group is now responsible for considering the schedule of minimum requirements, thus providing University oversight. The admissions website now links to this schedule.

With regard to the **monitoring of PGR students who teach** it was noted that:

- An annual report about academic development programmes is made to the Learning and Teaching Committee by the Director of CSED. The reports were considered by the LTC on 21 April, 2010 (regarding 2008-09) and on 2 February, 2011 (regarding 2009-10);

- A section of the report specifically addresses PGR training, including teaching. In line with University quality assurance procedures, student evaluation of the relevant CSED module is sought, and was considered by the Policy Group.
- Attendance lists for the Teaching Skills module are being cross-compared with information from Schools about PGR students holding Associate Tutor contracts. A review of the information set suggested that there is a gap between the numbers trained in teaching skills and those undertaking teaching. However, it was noted that further investigation was required since some students had undertaken School-based training, particularly students in HUM and those students who undertake laboratory demonstrations.

## **2. Quality Assurance Agency: recent publications**

It was noted that the QAA had recently published a revised Section B11 of the Code of Practice concerning PGR programmes and had invited responses to the consultation by 23 March 2012. Policy Group members were asked to forward comments to the Secretary.

## **3. ISD Strategy and PGR**

The Policy Group considered IT support/provision for research students. Jonathan Colam-French attended for this item and the Group's attention was also drawn to the 2011 PRES responses regarding resources and technical support. It was noted that as part of the Library refurbishment that the PGR Reading Room would be relocated to a quieter, new space on Floor 2 or 3.

## **5. Supervisor training**

The Policy Group agreed a framework for the provision of supervisor training and discussed Faculty plans for supervisor training in 2011-12. As noted previously supervisor training is now organised at Faculty level and in order to continue supervising research students all supervisors will be required to attend on-going reflective practice sessions (refresher training) every 3 years. Sessions will continue be organised for those staff new to supervision and/or to UEA.

## **6. Doctor of Medicine**

The Policy Group considered revised regulations (Appendix A) and entry requirements for the Doctor of Medicine. It was noted that the MD programme was reviewed during the 2010-11 academic year. Current student progress (including annual reviews), completion rates and supervisory team membership for the MD were reviewed at a meeting between the Head of School MED, Faculty Associate Dean (PGR), MED PGR Director and MD programme lead. The revisions proposed were as follows:

- i. Course information for applicants including entry requirements.

Changes were proposed to strengthen the entry requirements and to address issues raised in the review of the programme. Applicants to the programme will also need to meet the selection criteria for all FMH PGR programmes as agreed by the FMH Executive on 21 June 2011.

- ii. Regulations for the MD

There is one minor change to the Regulations, proposing that all the research work is completed during candidates' employment in an appropriate clinical or scientific setting. This proposal is in response to candidates finding it hard to complete the research necessary for the degree if they had left that employment.

The Policy Group **endorsed** the changes to the entry requirements for the degree.

## **Recommendation**

The Policy Group recommended that the proposals for changes to the Regulations for the MD be approved.

### **7. ClinPsyD revalidation**

It was reported that at the re-accreditation/review of the ClinPsyD programme, the University, the Health Professions Council and the British Psychological Society had re-accredited the programme subject to a number of conditions and recommendations. The Review Panel also identified a number of features of good practice.

One of the UEA Panel's conditions was to review the positioning of the programme within the research degree regulatory framework. A sub-group of the Policy Group met on 28 February 2012 to consider how the taught elements of the ClinPsyD programme met with the Code of Practice for Assuring Teaching Quality. The programme would be asked to ensure that the taught elements of the ClinPsyD complied with the New Academic Model by September 2013. This would also apply to the other professional doctorates at UEA e.g. the Doctor of Education and the relevant Course Directors have been advised of this requirement.

### **8. Research Councils**

The Policy Group received an oral progress report on the AHRC: BGP2 bid, of which the first phase had been submitted, and an update on NRP Doctoral Training Partnership. The Group were very pleased to hear that the BBSRC NRP Doctoral Training Partnership bid had been successful and would fund 39 PhD students. The funding would be supplemented by additional funding from the partner institutions and the Norwich Research Park Board, thereby supporting 59 studentships in total. The first meeting of the new NRP DTP Management Board took place on 13 March 2012.

### **9. PGR Showcase**

It was noted that plans for the 2012 PGR Showcase at the Forum were well advanced and that this year there would be a daytime event on Wednesday 20 June 2012. The closing date for student applications for posters and presentations was Friday 23 March 2012 and there had been a good response from all Faculties.

## **Appendix A**

### **Extract from the Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine**

#### **NORWICH MEDICAL SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA**

1 The degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD) may be awarded by the Senate on the recommendation of the Board of the Norwich Medical School at the University of East Anglia to a graduate who:

- (1) Has held, for at least three years at the time of submission of thesis, a qualification which is recognised for registration by the General Medical Council for the United Kingdom.
- (2) Has been employed for at least two years in appropriate clinical or scientific work, and has completed ~~all the majority of~~ the work for the degree during that employment.
- (3) Has fulfilled any other University requirements.