



**Confirmed**

## **Research Degrees Committee**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021

1pm – 3pm

Minutes

Present Members: Professor David Bogle (Chair); Dr Helen Matthews; Ms Elizabeth Halton; Dr Sam Smidt; Prof David Spratt; Ms Helen Notter; Dr Simon Banks; Dr Efrosyni Konstantinou; Dr Benet Salway; Mr Naheem Yaqub, Professor Jasmina Jovanovic; Dr Ruth Siddall; Dr Alan Ingram; Professor Jill Norman; Dr Andrew Stoker; Professor Alex Mills; Dr Mark Newman; Professor Tania Monteiro; Dr Jane Perryman; Dr Richard Bucknall; Dr Josephine Barnes; Dr Yasminah Beebeejaun; and Dr Kathryn Walsh.

Attendees: Mr Kevin Brice (for items 6 and 7; Ms Anniina Wikman (for item 10); Mr Dan Derricott (observer); Mr Punit Modi (observer); and Mr Darren Payne (secretary).

### **Part I: Preliminary Business**

#### **29. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

29.1. **Approved** - the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

#### **30. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

30.1. There were no matters arising from the minutes held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

#### **31. Chair's Business**

31.1. The Chair highlighted some membership changes which were already in effect or would come into effect at the start of the 2021-22 Academic session.

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These were as follows: Arts and Humanities – Dr Benet Salway would be replaced by Dr Andrew Flinn; Brain Sciences – Dr Patti Adank would be replaced by Dr Josephine Barnes; Built Environment – Dr Stephen Marshall would be replaced by Dr Yasminah Beebeejaun; RDC Secretary – Mr Darren Payne would be replaced by Ms Anniina Wikman.

- 31.2. The Chair thanked all for their work and contribution to RDC over the years.
- 31.3. RDC was informed of some tentative changes at the top of UCL's committee structuring with the introduction of a new 'University Management Committee' which RDC may report to, however this change was still tentative. The Chair would provide RDC with further details at a subsequent meeting of RDC once confirmed.
- 31.4. The Doctoral School noted that SMT had approved a further year of stipend support for non-UKRI student extensions. Additionally, student visa extension support had also been secured (£150k to cover ~150 students). In addition, the CRS extensions were still being applied (18 months for FT; 3 years for PT); these show in Portico records at the point when students are moved to CRS;

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31.15. The sixth change was in relation to Remote Vivas and making this a permanent option going forwards. Where an agreement cannot be reached on the configuration, the default configuration should be in-person. This had originally been introduced as a Covid amendment; however, it has been agreed to make this a permanent update to the regulations. This had previously been discussed and agreed in principle at the November 2020 RDC - paper 1-07 (20-21).

31.16. **Approved** – the paper at RDC 3-01 (20-21) subject to minor amendments to the second change for inclusion in the Academic Manual 2021-22.

## **32. MPhil Stud Regulations**

32.1. Received - the paper at RDC 3-02 (20-21). The Faculty Graduate Tutor for Arts and Humanities introduced the item which was a final reading of the new MPhil Stud Regulations.

32.2. **Approved** – the paper at RDC 3-02 (20-21) for inclusion in the Academic Manual 2021-22.

32.3. The Chair thanks the Faculty Graduate Tutor for Arts and Humanities for all of their work in putting the new regulations together.

## **32.4. Student Appeals Procedure**

32.5. Received - the paper at RDC 3-03 (20-21). The Casework Manager introduced the paper which outlined a new approach to the Appeals procedures at UCL.

32.6. It was noted that historically UCL has had a broad complaints procedure covering both complaints and appeals. Good practice across the sector and

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32.7. The aim of the new approach was to make minimal changes to the current procedures other than to split them into two distinct procedures. Other appeals procedures spread across different areas of regulations have also been identified to bring them into this new single appeals procedure.

32.8. It was noted that this could potentially be introduced from January 2022;

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feasibility of project before a student has spent considerable time on it when there is still ample time to change course. There were concerns that an early upgrade would not be able to sufficiently assess the potential success of a project or student; however, it was noted that substantive data was not necessary at this point of assessment, and that this timeline would also bring us into line with the rest of the sector.

**35. Policy for parental leave for research students**

- 35.1. Received - the paper at RDC 3-06 (20-21). The Deputy Director (Doctoral School) introduced the item which outlined a new parental leave policy.
- 35.2. The main principles were agreed; however, the main issue in question was the source of funding to cover the parental leave. It was agreed that central support could be looked into as an option in the future; however, for the current version of the policy, it was agreed that the policy should state that 'it would be strongly recommended that the Department would cover it', with no obligation to.
- 35.3. It was noted that the Deputy Director (Doctoral School) would work with the Research Studentships team to ensure this policy is updated on their website as well as the Doctoral School website.

Action: The Deputy Director (Doctoral School)

**36. Academic Partnerships Framework Update 10 (h)2(pl)6 (eD( )E**



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36.3. **Approved** – the paper at at RDC 3-07 (20-21).

**Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information**

36.4. **Student Attendance Policy 2021-22**

36.5. Received - the paper at RDC 3-08 (20-21).

36.6. The Chair noted that members of RDC should contact Academic Services with any queries related to this paper.

**37. MRes-MPhil-PhD Application and Admissions Update**

37.1. Received - the paper at RDC 3-09 (20-21)

**38. Anonymised Suspension of Regulations Report (since November 2020)**

38.1. Received - the paper at RDC 3-10 (20-21)

**39. New and Amended Programmes and Qualifications Approved by RDC  
Chair's Action**

39.1. Received - the paper at RDC 3-11 (20-21)

Darren Payne  
Secretary to RDC

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19<sup>th</sup> July 2021