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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

Research Degrees Sub-Committee: 28th January 2025

PRESENT: Professor A. Nagar (Chair), Mr M. Adams, Professor P. Bamber, Ms S. Benson, Ms D. Hesketh, Dr D Kurek-Chomycz, Ms Z. Marshall, Professor S. Marwood, Associate Professor S. Podmore, Dr T. Sykes, Dr C. Walsh

Apologies: Dr B. Briliute, Ms G. Radzeviciute

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Members had received minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2024. The minutes were **APPROVED** as a correct record subject to minor corrections.

2. Matters Arising

- (i) AMR guidance (actum 3): Dr Walsh confirmed that this had taken place.
- (ii) Data for ARE reports (actum 4): Dr Walsh confirmed that this had been distributed.
- (iii) PRES survey results (actum 5): Ms Benson informed members that Associate Deans have met to discuss this.
- (iv) AMR timeline (actum 6): The Chair informed members that this would come up later in the agenda.

3. Appeals and Complaints/Training Requirements/Data Schedule

Dr Walsh informed members that since the last meeting there had been one appeal, related to a failed AMR. Dr Walsh informed members that the appeal had been upheld, although for logistical rather than academic reasons. The Chair requested that this agenda item remain as a standing item.

ACTION: Mr Jones to add standing item to agenda, as above.

4. Global PhDs

The Chair informed members that the University is looking to establish a global PhD partnership with BSU in the Philippines. The Chair informed members that the qualification will be split-site, with two years in the Philippines and one year at Liverpool Hope. The Chair undertook to forward full details to members for comment.

ACTION: Chair to forward details to members.

5. PhD by Publication

Members had received the proposal re PhD by Publication, along with proposed eligibility criteria. Dr Sykes asked whether work such as music or creative writing would be included among the eligible outputs. The Chair undertook to look into this. Professor Marwood asked whether the stipulation of 8-12 pieces of work was too high. Dr Walsh informed members that

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the sector norm is 4-8 pieces of work. The Chair responded that he was willing to change the stipulation to 4-8 pieces. Professor Bamber raised the issue of authorship of eligible pieces of work, ie whether the person submitting the piece of work was sole author, co-author etc. The Chair asked Dr Walsh to draft regulations for this qualification.

ACTION: Dr Walsh to draft regulations, as above.

6. Moving MRes/MA Res to PGR

Members had received the proposal re Moving MRes/MA Res to PGR. Members noted the proposal that all MA by Research programmes be moved under PGR, as they are elsewhere in the sector. Dr Walsh advised that this move would entail changing PGT regulations in order to remove MA by Research programmes, followed by a change to PGR regulations to include those programmes. Dr Walsh undertook to look into this.

ACTION: Dr Walsh to draft updates to regulations, as above.

7. Open Access/Research

The Chair informed members that this item had been added to the agenda in error.

8. Regulations/Code of Practice

Members had received the updated regulations and code of practice. General housekeeping in terms of removing outdated references to Departments /Director of Studies has taken place.

MPhil/PhD: Dr Walsh informed members that the regulations had been amended to update role of the pastoral tutor on supervisory teams.

Professional Doctorate regulations amendment to section 5.2.3 ('Part Time students must complete Part 1 within 48 months of initial registration, and complete Part 2 no later than 36 months following successful completion of Part 1'). This now aligns the regulation with the maximum duration for a part time professional doctorate (7 years).

Code of Practice: Dr Walsh drew members' attention to changes in relation to Section I (AMR). The Code of Practice has been updated to reflect custom and practice in faculties. The current guidance in the Code was out of step with changes that have taken place over time.

Section M on Supervisors and Examiners has been revised in order to update. In particular Ms Benson informed members that the role of Pastoral Tutor has been clarified. The Chair drew members' attention to the reference to 'pastoral support' at 9.1.3, updated from 'pastoral tutor'. Ms Benson drew members' attention to Section N of the Code relating to Turnitin ('The student is required to submit their thesis electronically normally via the Turnitin link on Moodle.')

Dr Walsh raised a query on this, in relation to theses whose contents are subject to an embargo. Ms Benson undertook to contact Ms Murray to see whether she has any proposed wording in relation to this.

ACTION: Ms Benson to contact Ms Murray, as above.

Members **RECOMMENDED** the changes for approval by Research Committee.

9. PGR ARE

Members had received ARE reports for Liverpool Hope, Newman University and Maryvale. The Chair informed members that in future Liverpool Hope's ARE would be devolved to the faculties, each of which would produce their own ARE. Ms Hesketh noted the number of

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students recorded as withdrawing from their studies (five) and asked whether this was high, in terms of the sector. Ms Marshall confirmed that this number was anomalously high and undertook to look into this. Members approved the AREs, providing assurance to Senate via Research Committee regarding the quality of Postgraduate Research (PGR) provision at Liverpool Hope University and its partner institutions.

ACTION: Ms Marshall to look into withdrawal numbers, as above.

10. INSPIRE Survey

Members had received the draft survey questions. Ms Hesketh commended the survey's use of open-ended questions and asked whether a question could be added to ask whether the responder was a full-time or part-time student. The Chair undertook to add this and asked Ms Benson to liaise with Mr Webster re survey format.

ACTION: Ms Benson to liaise with Mr Webster, as above.

11. AOB

Professor Marwood relayed a request from PGR students in relation to free parking and printing. The Chair responded that no other section of the University has free parking, and undertook to look into possibilities re printing.

ACTION: Chair to look into possibilities re printing, as above.

The Chair noted Ms Radzeviciute's query re a PGR hardship fund. Dr Walsh undertook to contact Mr Pringle in relation to this.

ACTION: Dr Walsh to contact Mr Pringle, as above.

The Chair asked whether members thought the Associate Deans for Research should be invited to join the sub-committee. Members responded that as Associate Deans for Research sit on Research Committee, to which Research Degrees Sub-Committee reports, this would not be necessary.

The Chair informed members that he has launched a series of sessions called *Tomorrow's Professor Today*, with the aim of giving PGR students insight about careers in academia. The Chair invited any members interested in contributing to the series to contact him.