Queen Mary
University of London

Senate

Paper Title	**Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board Executive Summary March – May 2017**
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to **note** the executive summary of business considered by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board (RDPEB).
Points for Senate members to note and further information	This paper summarises business considered by RDPEB at meetings held in March – May 2017 concerning: • proposals for changes to the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees in 2017-18. The details are in a separate paper on the Senate agenda; • RCUK training grant guidelines; and • PGR SITS development project.
Questions for Senate to consider	Senate is asked **to note** the report.
Regulatory/statutory reference points	RDPEB has oversight of quality and standards issues relating to research degree programmes. The quality assurance framework is key to the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.
Strategy and risk	
Reporting/ consideration route for the paper	
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RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES AND EXAMINATIONS BOARD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board meets monthly. The membership comprises:
   - Director of the Doctoral College [Chair]
   - Faculty Deputy Deans for Research (PGR)
   - One additional representative (a School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies) from each Faculty

   The secretariat is provided by the Research Degrees Office. The Doctoral College Manager is in attendance.

Examinations Business

2. The Board:
   - considers and approves nominations for internal and external examiners for research degrees;
   - considers and approves outcomes of research degree examinations and views all examiners' reports;
   - considers and makes decisions on applications to interrupt studies and extensions to the thesis submission deadline;
   - approves awards for research degrees on behalf of Senate.

   Decisions are recorded in the minutes of the monthly meetings of the Board.

Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes for 2017-18

3. The Board's recommendations on changes to the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes for 2017-18 are set out in a separate paper for Senate to consider.

RCUK Training Grant guidelines

4. Research Councils UK (RCUK) has updated its Doctoral Training Grant Guides twice so far this year. The Board has considered changes that may have implications for QMUL policy and studentships, such as maternity/carer's leave payments, and is taking these forward.

SITS development

5. The Board receives updates on the PGR SITS development project supported by the SITS development team in ITS. In May Schools and Institutes and the Research Degrees Office tested the new MySIS task for students to enter for

research degree examinations. This will replace the research degrees examination entry and nomination of examiners paper form (RD01).

6. The new online process divides the process into two separate workflows.

7. In examination workflow 1 a student who is ready to indicate that they wish to enter for examination will log into MySIS and select the examination entry form to complete online. Once submitted the form will move onto the supervisor to approve. This then initiates the creation of examination workflow 2 for nomination of examiners.

8. In examination workflow 2 the supervisor completes the information about nomination of examiners as currently required in the paper form. After submission of the MySIS e-form, it moves through the approvals hierarchy – to the School/Institute PGR administrator to check the nominees meet the criteria for examiners, to the School Director of Graduate Studies for approval, then to the Research Degrees Office to review and to refer to the next available meeting of the Research Degrees Programmes and Examination Board. The Board members will be able to review the nominations online through their own MySIS view.

9. Examiner nominations, the Board's decisions on these, and the acceptance of the invitation to examine will be recorded on SITS. Schools and institutes will be able to view the Board's decisions on nominations through MySIS a few days after the meeting. The new process in expected to go-live in late summer, date to be confirmed.

10. The next phase of the project will explore the possibility of electronic submission of the thesis for examination, the recording of the details of examination outcomes on SITS and uploading examiner reports to SITS. There will also be a development to support reporting on thesis submission deadlines.

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