



Senate

Paper Title	Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board Executive Summary October - November 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 October - November 2017.
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

Meetings and membership

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.

Process to end a thesis embargo

3. The Board was invited by Library Services to comment on the process for managing the expiry of the period of restricted access to a PhD thesis once the requested duration of the embargo had expired. The practice was to contact authors (for whom contact details could be found) to confirm the lifting of the embargo. However, this is a very time consuming process and raises difficulties if the author cannot be contacted.
4. The Board's view is that an embargo should be lifted automatically after the approved period has expired without seeking the approval of the author. It considers that it is the responsibility of the author to request an extension to the embargo period if appropriate. The question of whether this approach would raise any IP issues is being followed up with Queen Mary Innovation.

Consultation on the review of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education

5. The Board discussed the consultation and has provided comments for the QMUL

response. A general observation was that the text of the consultation seemed geared towards the requirements of taught programmes, understandable given the numbers of taught students compared to research students. However, the Board considered that it should be recognised in the new Code that not all elements applied equally or in the same way to taught students and research students.

Academic Regulations for writing-up status

6. The Board is reviewing the Academic Regulations concerning writing-up status. For example to clarify the maximum duration of writing-up status and to indicate more clearly that a school / institute may charge a fee to a student who does not submit their thesis by the deadline agreed in the application to transfer to writing-up status.
7. Changes to regulations will be put to Senate for approval in due course.