



Senate

Paper Title	Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board Executive Summary October to November 2014.
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to note the RDPEB executive summary and to approve the changes to its terms of reference.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	This paper summarises business considered by RDPEB at meetings held in October and November 2014.
Questions for Senate to consider	Senate is asked to approve the changes to its terms of reference.
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	
Authors	Mary Childs, Research Degrees Office On behalf of Professor Jon May, Chair of the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board and Director of the Doctoral College
Sponsor	Professor Bill Spence, Vice-Principal (Research)

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 from each Faculty

The secretariat is provided by the Research Degrees Office.

Appointment of Examiners

2. The Board considers nominations for internal and external examiners for research degrees. From October to November 2014 the Board considered examiner nominations for 61 candidates for research degrees. 8 nominations (13%) were rejected or deferred pending receipt of further information.

Consideration of outcomes of research degree examinations

3. The Board considers outcomes of research degree examinations and views all examiners' reports. From October to November 2014 the Board considered the outcomes of 61 examinations:

Outcome	No.	%
Pass	9	15
Pass with minor amendments	41	67
Pass with major amendments	8	13
Re-enter for the examination	3	5
Recommend for MPhil (PhD entries)	0	0
Re-enter for MPhil (PhD entries)	0	0
Fail	0	0

Approval of awards for research degrees

4. The Board approves awards for research degrees on behalf of Senate. From October to November 2014 the Board approved 55 awards:

Award	N
PhD	55
MPhil	0
MD(Res)	0

Policy and other matters

5. Terms of Reference and Membership

For approval by Senate

The Board has approved an addition to its terms of reference to include specific reference to its role in the quality assurance of research degree programmes. It has also agreed that the Doctoral College Manager should be invited to attend the Board to enhance communication between the Board and the Doctoral College Management Group. (The Assistant Academic Registrar (Research Degrees) already attends the Doctoral College Management Group.) The revised terms of reference are annexed to this report for approval by Senate.

6. Points based immigration / data quality: KPMG Internal Audit Report August 2014

The Board was asked to contribute to the management response to recommendation 1 concerning monitoring the engagement with their studies of students on Tier 4 visas. The KPMG report recommended monthly contact between supervisor and student to be recorded on the new online Student-Supervisor Interaction System (working title). The QMUL Academic Regulations for Research Degrees require six formally recorded supervisions per annum. This is being reviewed and will probably be increased as part of the review of the Academic Regulations.

7. Approach to collaborative PhD arrangements

The Board is aware of several potential PhD funding applications and other proposals that may involve collaboration with external academic partners, such as under the European Joint Doctorate scheme, part of the EU Horizon 2020 programme. Pending the review of the policy on collaborative PhD partnerships, the Board has confirmed its commitment to pursuing single degrees jointly awarded whenever possible and as interim guidance is recommending that:

- proposers should explore all opportunities for joint awards with partner organisations;
- if that is not possible, the Board would consider proposals for dual awards in exceptional circumstances;
- proposers should discuss their potential collaboration with the appropriate Faculty Deputy Dean for Research (PGR).

Concerning PhD collaborations, the Board considered:

(a) *Student Collaboration with Guiyang Medical University China (GMU)*

The Board noted the agreement under which QMUL would recruit PhD students from GMU. Successful students would be funded under the China Scholarship Council scheme or by GMU. QMUL would waive the PhD tuition

fee for these students. Students would register for the QMUL PhD degree only.

- (b) *EU Marie Curie European Joint Doctorate: EIPIN Innovation Society*
CCLS, is collaborating with several other European universities to develop a proposal for an EU Marie Curie European Joint Doctorate (EJD). The EJD consortium will be led by Maastricht University and CCLS will be a partner. The Board discussed the terms of a provisional consortium agreement. The final agreement will need to be approved by the Board prior to the application submission on 13 Jan 2015. The partner organisations who are not already working with QMUL will also need to be considered by the Partnership Board.

Mary Childs
November 2014

Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board

The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board considers matters relating to the quality and standards of research degree programmes. It has delegated authority from Senate to approve nominations of examiners for research degree examinations, and awards of research degrees.

The additions to the terms of reference are highlighted.

Terms of reference

- To consider and approve proposals for all new research degree programmes, including all proposals for collaborative research degree programmes;
- To consider amendments to the Regulations for research degree programmes, and associated policies **and guidance**;
- To consider nominations of internal and external examiners for all research degrees examinations;
- To monitor outcomes of research degree examinations and review examiners' reports;
- To approve awards of research degrees to individual candidates;
- To consider requests for interruptions of study and extensions to the maximum registration period/writing-up period;
- To monitor compliance with the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes within Schools and Institutes;
- **To consider action to be taken following the publication of national guidance relating to research degrees, and the quality assurance and monitoring activity of external agencies such as QAA, HEFCE and research funders**;
- To have oversight of the admission of students to research degree programmes.

Membership

- Director of the Doctoral College [Chair]
Professor Jon May (HSS Deputy Dean (PGR))
- Deputy Deans (PGR)
Professor Mike Watkinson (S&E)
Professor Tim Warner (SMD)
- One further representative from each Faculty [to be appointed for a fixed term of three years]
Dr Paul Allen (SMD)
Dr Rainer Klages (S&E)

Professor Joad Raymond (HSS)

In attendance

- Assistant Academic Registrar (Research Degrees)
- Members of the Research Degrees Office
- The Doctoral College Manager