



**Senate**

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board Executive Summary December 2014 to May 2015.</b>
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked to <b>note</b> the RDPEB executive summary.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	This paper summarises business considered by RDPEB at meetings held in December 2014 to May 2015.
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	Senate is asked to <b>note</b> the report.
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	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.
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	
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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 from each Faculty

The secretariat is provided by the Research Degrees Office.

#### Examinations Business

2. The Board:
  - considers nominations for internal and external examiners for research degrees;
  - considers outcomes of research degree examinations and views all examiners' reports;
  - considers applications to interrupt studies and to extend the writing-up period;
  - approves awards for research degrees on behalf of Senate.

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

#### Suspension of Regulations

3. The Board approved requests to suspend regulations to allow:
  - (i) the early submission of a thesis for examination for two students, one each in HSS and SMD;
  - (ii) a student to interrupt their studies for longer than the 24 months permitted in the Academic Regulations

#### Policy and other matters

4. **Review of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees for 2015-16**

The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board is reviewing the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees. A small working group comprising the Faculty Deputy Deans for Research and the Assistant Academic Registrar (Research Degrees) is

developing new drafts. There will be a consultation on the changes with schools and institutes in the summer. The proposals will be discussed at RDPEB, the Doctoral College Management Group, and the VP Research Advisory Group. Drafts will be circulated to Senate for comment in advance of the commencement of the new academic year.

#### **5. Joint and Double awards**

The Board considered a discussion paper in May relating to the potential for QMUL to offer joint awards, noting that Senate had approved the principle of joint research degrees at its meeting in June 2014. The paper was also discussed at Partnerships Board and the Taught Programmes Board. The Board considers that it would be desirable to keep open the possibility of offering dual awards at research degree level for those opportunities where a single joint degree is not a possibility. The circumstances in which dual awards and joint degrees might be considered, and the requirements for such partnerships, will be set out in revisions to the guidance in the Collaborative Provision Framework for 2015-16.

#### **6. EU Marie Curie European Joint Doctorate proposal from SEMS**

The School of Engineering and Materials Science is collaborating with several other universities, mainly the University of Birmingham and the Politecnico di Torino (POLITO), to develop a proposal for an EU Marie Curie European Joint Doctorate (EJD) under the EU Innovative Training Networks (ITN) programme. The EJD consortium will be led by POLITO and SEMS will be a partner. In December 2014 the Board approved in principle the proposal to award a joint degree with Birmingham and POLITO subject to the successful outcome of the funding application and approval of the partner agreements for the degree by RDPEB.

#### **7. New PhD programme title in Finance**

The Board has approved a proposal from the School of Economics and Finance for a new PhD programme in Finance. The school had previously registered all students on the PhD in Economics.

#### **8. Associate Student maximum registration period**

The Board has noted that there are an increasing number of requests for exceptions to be made to the two year associate student maximum registration period. These mainly arise from externally funded doctoral training collaborations for which QMUL is the secondary institution for student supervision, such as RCUK funded Doctoral Training Centres, Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates, and strategic research partnerships for which a QMUL staff member might act as a second supervisor for the duration of a student's degree. Some of these programmes are of four years' duration. The Board agreed that the standard maximum registration period for associate students should be retained as two years, and a new regulation drafted to provide for four-year registration for students on funded schemes or strategic partnerships. This change will be made as part of the review of the Academic Regulations for 2015-16.

#### **9. QAA Consultation on Doctoral Degree Characteristics**

The Board discussed the draft consultation paper from the Quality Assurance Agency at its meeting in March. The Board observed that the statement on the emergence of a two-tier system for research student training could be broadened to include reference to an emerging two-tier funding system where access to public funds for research degrees was becoming increasingly limited to the small number of institutions holding RCUK doctoral training partnership awards. Comments were submitted to the consultation on the Board's behalf.

#### **10. QMUL Studentship Terms and Conditions for 2015/16**

The studentship terms and conditions for funding being offered for 2015-16 entry were updated in March. The main changes are:

- (i) to require that awards must be accepted within seven days of the date of the offer (reduced from 14 days);
- (ii) to make clear that payments are subject to satisfactory annual progress reviews (in addition to the nine month progress review).

#### **11. PhD entry requirements School of Business and Management**

The Board approved proposals from SBM to change its PhD entry criteria to require normally a first degree with first class honours or equivalent and a masters' degree at distinction level in business management or a discipline related to the candidate's research area.

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May 2015