



Senate

Paper Title	Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board Executive Summary December-February 2016
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 December-February 2016.
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.

3. The Board is liaising with the Disability and Dyslexia Service about reasonable adjustments that might be made to thesis submission deadlines due to specific learning difficulties. Applications for an extension to the thesis submission deadline on these grounds will be considered on a case by case basis with advice from the Disability and Dyslexia Service.

Programmes and collaborations

4. The Board noted the submission of applications for four consortium applications for European Joint Doctorate schemes with QMUL as a partner under the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020, call H2020-MSCA-ITN-2016. These will involve joint doctoral degree programmes with the partner universities. The applications are:
 - European Intellectual Property Institutes' Network (EIPIN) "EIPIN Innovation Society", CCLS with Maastricht University and other partners;

- Materials and technologies for extreme operating conditions (NEXTmat)' SEMS with Politecnico di Torino and other partners;
- River landscape signatures and envelopes, Geography with University of Trento and other partners;
- Development of a Fast, action-mode based Informative scREening tool for pollutants – the water FLEA Daphnia as aquatic biosensor for endocrine disruptors (FIREFLEA), SBCS with KU Leuven and other partners.

The application deadline was 12 January 2016. Decisions will be announced in the summer.

5. The Board noted the publication of the Quality Assurance Agency's new Characteristics Statement on qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body, in particular the section on research degrees. This guidance will be referred to in reviewing agreements for joint doctoral degrees and in considering the criteria for approving proposals.

PGR SITS project

6. The Board receives reports on the progress of the SITS project to develop workflows on MySIS to support processes operated by the Research Degrees Office and schools/institutes, replacing paper forms, and to improve access to data for students and staff. Changes to policy on research degree programmes and examinations raised by project developments are brought to the Board for discussion and decision.
7. The proposal that all students should be able to submit their thesis electronically and that this submission should be taken as the formal examination entry (rather than the submission of the two bound copies) is being explored through the SITS PGR project.

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