Queen Mary
UNIVERSITY of London

Senate

Paper Title	Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board Executive Summary March - May 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 March – May 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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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.

Academic Regulations

Revisions to the Academic Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes

3. The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board is reviewing the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees. Substantive changes are being made to the Code of Practice, and there are associated changes to the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes. Schools and Institutes are being consulted on the changes in a final request for comments following earlier discussions. Their comments will be incorporated into the final text for approval by Senate.

    As part of the consultation process the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board has put forward to Senate for comment a summary of the

major changes to the Regulations and Code of Practice.

Programmes and collaborations

4. **Horizon 2020 European Joint Doctorate**

   Four applications were submitted in January 2015 for European Joint Doctorate / ITN schemes with QMUL as a partner under the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020, call H2020-MSCA-ITN-2016. One application was successful:

   - Guido Westkamp CCLS – European Intellectual Property Institutes' Network (EIPIN) "EIPIN Innovation Society" with Maastricht University and other partners.

   Candidates registered with QMUL will be awarded a joint doctoral degree with the partner university providing joint supervision.

5. **Research degree collaboration between the School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science and the University of Genova**

   The existing agreement for a research degree collaboration between EECS and the University of Genova has been renewed. Students are registered at both QMUL and Genova, and will receive a single PhD degree jointly awarded by both universities. Each year the partners agree a new contract for the cohort of students starting in the following academic year. This contract was for 4 PhD studentships starting in 2016-17.

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. Electronic workflows on MySIS are being developed for these processes:

   a. applications from students to transfer to writing-up status;
   b. recording annual reviews of student progress in the second and third years of study (currently only academic progression in the first year of study is recorded on MySIS);
   c. nomination of research degree examiners and examination entry. A 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 paper copies) is being explored through the SITS PGR project.

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