



Meeting **FACULTY RESEARCH STUDENTS' COMMITTEE**  
Place **Wessex House 3.36**  
Date and Time **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2014, 12.30 pm**

Present	Professor S Wonnacott (Chair) Dr L Caggiano Dr J Doughty Dr A Hill Dr R James Dr J Laird Dr S Lewis	Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology Department of Biology and Biochemistry Department of Mathematical Sciences Department of Physics Department of Computer Science Department of Chemistry
In attendance	Mr S Gane Dr C Yeomans Mr J Kenny	Graduate School Manager Deputy Graduate School Manager Students' Union Officer

**Action**

891 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr Jordan Kenny was welcomed to the meeting as a Students' Union representative.

892 **MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee membership and terms of reference were noted. The Committee was informed that membership details may need updating after proposed changes to QA48 (Student Engagement with Quality Assurance and Enhancement ) are considered by Senate later this month.

893 **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

894 **MATTERS ARISING (NOT CONSIDERED ELSEWHERE)**

*M867: 'What needs to be done better'*

Dr Yeomans reported that SAMIS could send a copy of standard emails to all second supervisors, as well as lead supervisors, but this would need to be done globally, not just for specific departments. Professor Wonnacott discussed this with Professor Jane Millar at the meeting of Associate Deans and Catrin Yeomans will forward a summary of correspondence on this matter to Professor Millar so that she can raise it with the SAMIS team.

CY

895 **RECRUITMENT UPDATE**

The Committee noted the number of new postgraduate research students starting at the beginning of the 14/15 academic year. Mr Simon Gane reported that the Faculty of Science was the only Faculty to have exceeded overall admissions targets and that 56% of the PGR intake was Faculty of Science students.

Professor Wonnacott informed the Committee that Mr Richard Griffith, Senior Policy & Planning Officer, had confirmed the 2014/15 funding allocations. This year Faculties/Schools are each being allocated an annual University Research Studentships Account (URSA) to finance a cohort of new PGR students for the agreed full duration of their funded studies. The funding can be used to provide a range of awards from partial or full fee

reductions to partial or fully funded studentships for 3 years, 3.5 years or 4 years. This funding arrangement means that the Graduate School has some flexibility into how the money is allocated and Simon Gane is looking at different funding scenarios, which will be discussed with Heads of Departments at a Faculty Executive meeting. The Dean is keen for some of the funds to be used to help support new members of academic staff in the Faculty and Professor Millar has confirmed that funding overseas studentships is not a priority area. However, fee waivers could still be offered to overseas students to help with recruitment. Simon Gane reminded the Committee that CDTs do have the option to fully fund some overseas students. The Committee acknowledged the benefits of new members of academic staff being awarded a studentship and suggested that a separate funding pot should be established to support this type of studentship. The Graduate School aims to confirm funding arrangements and start promoting studentships by the end of October.

GS

Professor Wonnacott reminded the Committee that academics should contact Andrew Monk in the Alumni Office and Grant Buchanan and Denis Cooke in RDSO to discuss matched funding possibilities.

Professor Wonnacott informed the Committee that the Faculty of Engineering is proposing to introduce new quality thresholds (i.e. applicants holding a first class or masters degree). The Committee has reservations about this model as research experience, as well as other factors, may not be taken into account when considering applications.

896 **CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

*Visiting Students.*

Simon Gane informed the Committee that both he and Natalie Bartram from the Graduate School are in the process of visiting departments to disseminate information about the visiting postgraduate scholars (VPS) scheme and application procedures. Thirty six students visited the Faculty of Science through this scheme in the last academic year and Natalie Bartram oversees this process. Visiting due to CDT/DTP collaborations do not need to be processed through this scheme and the flow chart needs to be updated to accurately reflect this.

SG/NB

*Confirmation process*

Simon Gane reported on the Graduate School involvement in submission of confirmation reports and that the mechanism for granting an extension to the date of submission of a confirmation report needs further clarification. Professor Wonnacott had already raised this issue with Professor Jane Millar and it will be taken to LTEO for discussion. Directors of Studies requested that different timelines and procedures are put in place by the Graduate School to accommodate the different procedures in the departments (e.g. timing of confirmation vivas, PBE membership, paper and electronic submission). Catrin Yeomans will provide information on late submissions.

CY

*Update on overseas fees*

Simon Gane reported that the changes in overseas fees are currently being discussed, but the proposal is for a rise in PGR fees from £17,400 to £18,100. The proposed rise in PGT fees is from £18,600 to £19,600 but the Faculty of Science has proposed keeping it at the current rate.

897 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Professor Wonnacott informed the Committee that the Graduate School now has a Moodle site as a resource for PGR students. New students were told about the Moodle site during induction and have been automatically enrolled. Directors of Studies requested that they are also enrolled.

CY

Professor Wonnacott also informed the Committee that Graduate School lunches during induction week were successful and that the PGR Central Induction event was well attended.