THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

GRADUATE BOARD

21 April 2008

Minutes

Present: Professor M J Wilson (in the Chair), Dr T F C Batten, Dr G N Chambers, Dr R F Cochrane, Dr R E Cowgill, Professor M Hewitt, Professor M G McQuillan, Dr A M Mullis, Professor G S F Pollock, Professor P W Seakins, Dr N E Shaw, Professor J E Smith, Dr J Spindler

In attendance: Dr A P Bromley, Mrs J Y Findlay, Mr R B Gilworth, Ms A Randall, Dr D L Salinger, Ms S Throp, Mr D Wardle (for MM07/316-320), Professor B M Wilson

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 04 February 2008 were confirmed. 07/275

Matters Arising on the Minutes

M 07/195 QAA Institutional Audit 2008

RECEIVED: the “key findings” letter from the QAA following the Institutional Audit of the University in March 2008 (GB/07/66) 07/276

It was noted that the initial findings of the audit indicated a number of areas of good practice together with several areas for the University to consider. The only specific reference to research student matters made in the letter was that Leeds may wish to enhance opportunities for research students to meet other research students through greater provision of study space and facilitation of shared training across faculties.

The draft report of the audit would be available by 9 May 2008. The Board would return to further discussions at its next meeting when the more detailed report would be available. 07/277

M 07/232 PGA Report on Facilities for PGR Students at Leeds

RECEIVED: details of recent discussions held by FGSCs on the PGA Report on Facilities for PGR Students at Leeds (GB/07/67). 07/278

A summary of the main issues emerging from discussions held by individual Faculties was included in paper GB/07/67 and it was noted that Faculties were addressing specific matters highlighted in the PGA report.

The Board noted that the provision of facilities for pgr students was now a recurring theme that required discussion. Leeds compared less favorably to some other universities in that it had no central provision for pgr
students. The cost of providing such facilities for a large institution like Leeds would be substantial and a significant call upon resources.

The Board agreed to return to discussions when the full QAA Report was available.

NATIONAL ISSUES

Bologna Issues


The Board noted the significant achievements of Leeds within the context of European developments, which were set out in GB/07/68. More could be done to extend the University’s influence in Europe and it was felt that the attention of the University’s new Dean for International Affairs and Director of International Development might be drawn to the European and Bologna agendas. It was noted that all marketing for applications and, where appropriate, other advertising, should state that the University is fully Bologna compliant.

The Board endorsed the Group’s recommendation that the University join the newly formed European University Association: Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE). The Council intended to replicate across Europe a body like the UK Council for Graduate Education. The University would have the opportunity to participate in shaping graduate training in Europe.

Qualification Rates

RECEIVED: Provisional “Qualifications Rates” data prepared by the Academic Planning and Performance Office for full-time entrants to doctoral study commencing study in 2000/01 (GB/07/69).

The Board noted that the preliminary data had been collected internally at Leeds using the same methodology that had been used by HEFCE in the previous exercise for calculating the 7 year qualification rates. HEFCE is expected to officially publish the qualification rates for all universities for the second time in October. A league table in the THES is expected.

The Board noted that there appeared to be an improvement in the position at Leeds with an estimated completion rate for UK/EU students commencing study in 2000/01 of 86% compared with 78% for the previous year. For overseas students the rate had improved slightly from 78% to 80.8%.

The Directors of Faculty Graduate Schools were asked to make Faculty Graduate School Committees aware of the latest data, bearing in mind that confirmation from HEFCE would not be available until the Autumn.
STRATEGIC ISSUES

Recruitment and Retention of Postgraduate Research Students (GRIP Project)

RECEIVED: the report prepared by the project group established by the GRIP Executive Group to consider recruitment and retention of postgraduate research students (GB/07/70) 07/290

Professor Marjorie Wilson, Chair of the Project Group, presented the report to the Group. 07/291

The Working Group was established in October 2007 under the Chairmanship of the Pro-Dean for Research in Environment, Professor Marjorie Wilson to explore issues relating to the recruitment and retention of pgr students. It was recognised that the University significantly underperforms its peers in a number of measures of pgr performance. Whilst the underperformance is recognised the reasons behind it are not obvious. 07/292

The University’s strategy with regard to pgr students is not particularly well articulated. Responsibility for direction setting is devolved to individual Faculties via their respective Graduate Schools. At the level of the Strategy Map a key performance indicator is the number of pgr students per academic fte. Our ambition is to achieve a world-class bench mark of 1.7 pgr/academic FTE by 2011. Currently the University has around 1700 pgr FTEs within the standard period of study. Using the RAE 2008 research active staff numbers (approximately 1250) as the denominator, the University would need to increase the number of pgr students by around 400 FTEs to achieve the target ratio of 1.7. There are however additional academic staff who were not returned in the RAE but who could potentially supervise research students. Using a higher staff number (1400 FTE) suggests the University needs to increase the numbers of pgr students to 2400 by 2011. This simple calculation demonstrates the scale of the problem the University is facing. The University would need to recruit an additional 700 pgr students (with the majority of the increase in STEM subjects) and this number needed to be sustainable. 07/293

Professor Wilson spoke of the “transformation” that would be required in order to achieve the target and how, if it were to be achieved, every member of academic staff would need to be engaged. However, increased numbers must not be achieved at the expense of quality. There were significant cost implications and it was estimated that to support an additional 700 FTEs (to include space, stipends, fees, supervision) would cost approximately £65-70M. It had been made clear that the additional costs could not be found from within central funds. 07/294
The report recommended a number of key strategic actions which included:

- developing a pgr “capacity building” programme throughout the University via the Graduate Schools;
- requiring each Graduate School to calculate the full economic cost of typical PhD studentships in its area to improve awareness of this issue;
- considering setting up a University endowment fund to provide scholarships and bursaries for the very best pgr students internationally (including Europe);
- developing an effective marketing strategy for pgr recruitment specifically targeted at Europe;
- conducting a strategic review of current spending on scholarships, bursaries and fee waivers;
- ensuring the workload models and promotion criteria appropriately incentivise PhD supervision;
- establishing a Directors of Graduate Schools Forum (DOGES).

Professor Wilson intended to work with DOGES to approach each Faculty to discuss and encourage the development of the capacity building programme. It was important that the University did not continue to drift within its comfort zone as traditional sources of funding were diminishing. She had also arranged to meet with the Head of the Alumni Office, Ms Michelle Calvert and the Head of Marketing, Mr Martin Holmes.

The Board welcomed the findings of the report and during a lengthy discussion made the following observations:

- careful consideration would need to be given on how best to engage staff across the University in the proposals as no central funding was on offer to support developments. Schools already made a “loss” on each pgr student and the University was now encouraging them to increase numbers;
- finding additional sources of funding was critical;
- it was important to identify barriers to recruitment and for the centre to consider ways to lower those barriers;
- the importance of marketing and investment in this area to ensure the University offered a more visible and well defined pgr presence, highlighting areas of excellence in order to attract students;
- the value of the website and the importance of profiling academic staff;
- opportunities for pgrs to teach and professional development;
- it was essential the supervision of pgr students was fully recognised in work load models.

The Chair thanked Professor Wilson and the members of the Group for their work. She would keep the Board fully informed about the progress of discussions.
Forecast Postgraduate Research Student Numbers

RECEIVED: forecast postgraduate research student numbers for the period 2008/09 to 2012/13 (GB/07/71).

The Board noted that forecast pgr numbers had been considered as part of this year’s annual research reviews and detailed discussions had taken place at recruitment planning meetings. The forecasts shown were for actual head counts rather than FTEs and had been set with the target of 1.7 pgr/academic FTE by 2011 in mind. It was clear that without a more proactive approach to maximising the opportunities for pgr recruitment the forecast growth would be difficult to achieve.

The Deputy Chair of the Board encouraged relevant Faculties to develop bids for EPSRC Training Centres. It was essential that the University achieve at least 3 such funded Centres under the current bidding process.

MATTERS FOR REPORT FROM OTHER BOARDS

Learning and Teaching Board

RECEIVED: the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Board held on 20 February 2008 (GB/07/72).

It was noted that the Minutes of the meeting held on 09 April 2008 would be available at the next meeting.

Research Board

RECEIVED: the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of the Research Board held on 11 February 2008 (GB/07/73).

RECRUITMENT

PGR Recruitment Marketing Material

RECEIVED: information from the Student Communications Team regarding the future development of the Postgraduate Prospectus (GB/07/74).

The Board noted that preparation of the Postgraduate Prospectus for entry in 2009 had already started but it was recognised that there was a need to think strategically with regard to future development for subsequent years.

Consideration was being given to producing a Postgraduate Prospectus for PGT students only and to developing distinct marketing material aimed at pgr students. This would include both web and printed material.
A process for determining the nature and content of pgr recruitment material will be developed by the Marketing Team in association with the PGR Review Working Group and the new Directors of Graduate Schools Forum (DOGES) (see MM07/295-296 above). It would include consultation with stakeholders across the University together with a review of our competitor institutions’ postgraduate marketing material and market research with pgrs. The Marketing Team would initiate discussions in the coming weeks.

RESEARCH POSTGRADUATES

Report from the Postgraduate Assembly/Education Secretary

There was no written report from the Postgraduate Assembly/ Education Secretary presented to the meeting. However, the Board was informed that Ms Mina Said had been re-elected as Chair of the Postgraduate Assembly for a further period of 12 months.

Postgraduate Research Student Survey (PRES)

Dr Tony Bromley reminded the Board that the survey had been launched on 3 March with a closing date of 30 April 2008. The current response rate for the University was 22% which was above the national average. Efforts would be made to encourage pgr students to respond to the survey. A paper was laid on the table indicating the numbers of responses received so far.

It was anticipated that the results of the survey would be presented to the Graduate Board in either June or October 2008.

Student Mental Health Policy

RECEIVED: a copy of the Student Mental Health Policy which had recently been revised to include specific reference to postgraduate research students (GB/07/75).

The Board noted that the aims of the policy are to provide:

- a clear, transparent and practical policy framework relating to student mental health issues for students, potential students and staff
- a basis for a consistent approach throughout the University to the way that these students’ needs are responded to.

The Board noted that the definition of “disabled” under the DDA covers people whose mental health is such that there is a long term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It was agreed that the policy be forwarded to FGSCs for information.
The Chair of the Examinations Group, Dr Cochrane, informed the Board that the Group had held discussions on how it might introduce a mechanism, which safeguarded all parties, to allow examiners to be notified of a candidate’s disability. Discussions had arisen from cases involving candidates with dyslexia but it was recognised that such a mechanism should apply to all students with a recognised disability. Further advice would be sought from the Disability Service.

**Student Complaints Procedure: Annual Report 2006/07**

**RECEIVED:** a report which gave an overview of those student complaints received centrally by the University Secretariat during 2006/07 and dealt with under the Student Complaints Procedure (GB/07/76)

Mr David Wardle, University Complaint’s Officer, attended the meeting to introduce the report. The Board noted that the paper related to complaints from all types of students and not just from research degree candidates. Of the 32 complaints considered by the Complaints Officer and his team, 3 were received from Postgraduate Research students.

It was noted that complaints from postgraduate research students tended to be more detailed than those from other categories of student and were often complicated by a variety of issues. Such complaints regularly took more time to resolve.

The Complaints Officer informed the Board that from the small sample of pgr student complaints the issues included poor record keeping within the School, failure to make hard academic decisions at an early stage in the candidature and a tendency to let concerns drift.

It was noted that the Independent Adjudicator, Baroness Ruth Deech, had in a recent article expressed the importance of the rigorous assessment of pgr students at an early stage in the candidature.

**Procedure for the consideration of appeals from research degree candidates following adverse academic decisions**

**RECEIVED:** a short paper concerning matters relating to the procedure for the consideration of appeals from research degree candidates following adverse academic decisions (GB/07/77).

The Board noted that the Chair of the Panel of Potential Chairs for Research Student Appeal Groups in consultation with the Research Degrees Office had considered whether the University’s procedure for the consideration of research student appeals was in need of revision following the publication of the QAA Code of Practice: Section 5: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints on Academic Matters – October 2007.

The Chair of the Panel had indicated that in his view the University’s procedures were consistent with the precepts set out in the QAA Code.
However, the Chair recommended that the Graduate Board, in future, arrange to review the appeals procedures in alternate years. The last review was conducted in session 2006/07 making a review in 2008/09 desirable. The Board agreed to consider membership of the Group at its next meeting.

The Board also considered some minor amendments to section A.28 of the procedures which explain the procedure an appellant may choose to engage if he or she is dissatisfied by the outcome of the appeal.

**RESOLVED:** that, with effect from session 2008/09 section A28 of the Appeals Procedure for Research Degree Candidates be revised to read as follows:

A.28 If dissatisfied by the outcome of the appeal, the appellant may, within a period of two months following notification of the decision of the Appeal Group, ask for the matter to be referred for final review by the University. This review, which will be conducted by the Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor’s delegate), will normally be concerned only with:

- any procedural irregularity which has materially disadvantaged the appellant;
- the emergence of new and relevant material that was not available at the time the appeal was first submitted;
- evidence that the judgement of the Group established to consider the appeal was perverse.

The Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor’s delegate) may take such action as he/she deems appropriate, and his or her judgement will represent the University’s final decision on the appeal.

**Review of the Code of Practice for Students Engaged in Teaching**

It was reported that a meeting of the Group established to review the Code of Practice for Students Engaged in Teaching would be held in May.

**TRAINING SKILLS MATTERS**

**Researcher Training and Career Development Steering Group (RTCDSG)**

**RECEIVED:** the Minutes of the meeting of the RTCDSG held on 01 April 2008 (GB/07/78).

**Postgraduate Research Student Training and Development Strategy – update**

The Board noted that difficulties were still encountered in booking space for pgr training and development activity. This issue had first been raised at the Graduate Board meeting in December 2006 and it now appeared that the issue of facilities for postgraduate research students would be raised in the forthcoming QAA institutional audit report (see M 07/277 above). The Board was concerned that overcrowding at training sessions, particularly those undertaken at the induction stage, reflected badly on the University.
It was of the view that there was a limit to what improvements could be made without a significant increase in funding. Reference was made to the facilities at some other universities, including Newcastle and Sheffield, which were perceived to be significantly better than those at Leeds by members of the Board. The current position was not consistent with the University's vision of world class status by 2015.

In the short term it might be possible to secure priority booking status for some rooms or perhaps to arrange for a number of prestigious seminar rooms to be taken out of central teaching space and allocated solely for graduate skills training.

The Chair of the Group had agreed to write to the PVC for Research, Professor Atack, regarding this issue and in addition Professor Marjorie Wilson, Chair of the PGR Review Group agreed to help to take the matter forward.

Allocation of Roberts Monies and Sustainability of Skills Training

The Group had agreed an allocation model for Roberts funding for 2007/08. Consideration was also being given to the sustainability of skills training from 2011 when it was possible that Roberts funding would come to an end.

The Quality Assurance of Researcher Training and Development Activity

The Board noted that the Group had agreed a combined quality assurance process for researcher training and development activity.

Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers 2008

The Board noted that the Concordat would be launched officially on 25 June 2008 in Westminster.

Careers in Research Online Survey 2008

It was noted that the Group had agreed to participate in the CROS 2008 survey in December.

GROUPS OF THE BOARD

Faculty Graduate School Committees

RECEIVED: the Minutes from meetings of FGSCs (GB/07/79 (a) – (i)) as follows:

Arts (07/04/08)
Business (31/03/08)
ESSL (02/04/08)
Engineering (13/03/08)
Presentation of Publications in the final thesis submission

The Chair of the Examinations Group, Dr Cochrane, drew attention to the guidance produced by Biological Sciences for students on the presentation of publications in the final thesis submission. This was an on-going issue and had been raised at the last Board meeting. Dr Cochrane indicated that some sections of the guidance may not be compliant with the Examinations Group’s position in respect of the inclusion of published material within the thesis.

It was agreed that the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Examinations Group for further consideration and that the Director of Faculty Graduate School, Professor Judith Smith, be invited to attend.

PGRT Workload Model

The FGSC was currently considering the appropriate FTE allocation for the role of a Postgraduate Research Tutor. The Faculty did not, currently prescribe an FTE allocation for roles other than the Director of the Graduate School and Director of Research Training. The FGSC had agreed that on average the role of PGRT consumed 0.1% FTE but the commitment was variable. For example time spent on progression issues can vary as a few problematic cases can consume a large amount of a tutor’s time.

Members of the Board recognised that this was an issue of importance across the University and that workload models were not consistent. One member proposed that the model used in the School of Chemistry might be used as an example of good practice. It was also recognised that the role of the Postgraduate Research Tutor was not just an administrative role but included significant matters of an academic nature.

The Board agreed to return to further discussion of the role of the PGR Tutor and the impact on workload at its next meeting.

Programmes of Study and Audit Group

RECEIVED the Minutes of the meeting held on 07 April 2008 (GB/07/80)

Template of the University Code of Practice and Faculty Protocols

The possibility of introducing a template, for completion by Faculties, to explain how the University Code of Practice for Research Degree
Candidatures is implemented at local level had been discussed by Programmes of Study and Audit Group and the Graduate Board on a number of occasions previously. Consultation had also taken place with FGSCs, the University Union and accredited institutions. In all cases Faculties would be required to meet the minimum standards set out in the University Code of Practice.

A draft of the template was attached to the Minutes of the meeting of the Programmes of Study and Audit Group as Annex B. Members of the Board were advised that this was the final draft and that it was intended to release the template to Faculties after the meeting for completion before the next meeting of the Graduate Board (16/06/08). Final comments on the draft were invited.

Members were advised that the completed template would be known as the Faculty Protocol on the implementation of the University Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures. Faculties would be expected to make a copy of the Faculty Protocol available to their students and it was suggested that it should be mounted on the Faculty Graduate School website.

It was acknowledged that the language used in the template was formal but this was necessarily so given the official standing of the document. Faculties were encouraged to provide students with more user friendly summaries of the document in a Faculty PGR Handbooks. The University Code of Practice, which set out minimum requirements, would continue to be included in the Research Student Handbook but reference would be made to the presence of the Faculty Protocol with directions to relevant websites.

RESOLVED: that Faculties will be required to complete a template which will form the Faculty Protocol on the implementation of the University Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures with effect from session 2008/09. Responses from Faculties are required by 16 June 2008.

It was noted that the Group had agreed that accredited institutions be asked to draft their own template using the Leeds template as a guideline with a view to submitting this for approval by 16 June 2008. This was in recognition of concerns expressed by the accredited institutions that some sections of the University Code did not reflect the organisation/management structure of the accredited institutions.

It was also acknowledged that some minor amendments may be required to the template in respect of the Faculty of Biological Sciences where the Faculty rather than individual Schools was the unit of registration.

Submission of a research degree thesis in a language other than English

The Group had, after consultation with the Examinations Group, agreed amendments to the policy and procedure for the submission of a research
degree thesis in a language other than English within the School of Modern Languages and Cultures. The revised arrangements were set out in Annex A of the Group's Minutes.

It was agreed that that the Group would carry out a review of the arrangements during session 2011-2012. 07/350

Integrated degree of PhD and Master (MA, MSc, LLM)

The Board was informed that the Group proposed an amendment to the programme of study leading to the degree of Integrated PhD and Master. A new section relating to the award of the degree of M Phil had been included to clarify the lower level of qualification which may be awarded if a candidate fails to meet the examination requirements for the degree of PhD, but meets the requirements for the M Phil. It was noted, however, that the candidate would not be awarded an integrated degree of M Phil and Master, but rather two separate degree awards.

RESOLVED: that with effect from session 2008/09 an amendment to the programme of study entry for the Integrated degree of PhD and Master (MA, LLM or MSc) be approved as set out below:

Ordinance and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees 2007-2008
Programme of Study Entry for the Integrated Degrees of PhD and Master
Page 33 - Insert new Section 18

18. Award of M Phil

Candidates for the Integrated Degrees of PhD and Master, who have fulfilled the requirements for the award of the degree of Master and then proceed to examination for the award of the degree of PhD, but who are not successful in the PhD examination are eligible for the award of the degree of M Phil if they satisfy the requirements for examination set out in Article 13 of Ordinance X. If successful in the examination for the M Phil degree such candidates will receive two separate degree awards, namely the relevant degree of Master (MA, LLM or MSc) and the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.

Renumber existing Section 18 onwards.

Integrated PhD and MA in Educational Studies

The Board noted that a proposal for amendment to the Integrated PhD and MA degree in Education which included a change in title to Educational Studies had been considered. It was now possible to take different routes through the programme including particular specialisms.

RESOLVED: (i) that with effect from session 2008-2009, and subject to the approval of the Learning and Teaching Board to any taught components, approval be given to amendments to the existing programme for the award of the degree of Integrated PhD and MA in Education and a change of title to Educational Studies as set out in Annex One to these Minutes; 07/354
(ii) that, subject to the approval of (i) above, approval be given, with effect from session 2008-2009 to the revised entry for the programme of study leading to the Integrated PhD and MA degree in Educational Studies as set out in Annex Two to these Minutes;

(iii) that the amendment to the title “Educational Studies” be made in the Programme of study entry for the Integrated degrees of PhD and Master (MA, LLM or MSc) (Page 30 of the publication Ordinance and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees 2007-08).

Master by Research

An amendment to the programme of study leading to the degree of Master by Research relating to situations where a thesis may be presented in a language other than English was considered.

RESOLVED: that with effect from session 2008/09 amendments to the MA programme of study entry be approved as follows:

Ordinance and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees 2007-2008

Programme of Study Entry for the Degree of Master by Research

Page 71

Section 9

Additions shown in bold type

9. In the case of the degrees of Master of Education, Master of Science and Master of Science (Engineering) the language of the thesis shall be English. In the case of the degree of Master of Arts, in the area of modern languages, the language of the thesis shall normally be English, although, if the particular subject so demands, the relevant committee may be prepared to give its prior permission at the time of the applicant’s acceptance as a candidate for the MA degree by research for a thesis to be submitted in a language other than English.

Doctoral Training Centre in Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine

Following the decision taken by the Programmes of Study and Audit Group, at its last meeting, to give in principle approval to the introduction of an EPSRC-funded 4 year Interdisciplinary (White Rose) PhD programme of study in Tissue Engineering the Board

RESOLVED: (i) that approval be given, with effect from session 2008-2009 and subject to the approval from the Learning and Teaching Board for any taught components within the programme, to the programme of study leading to the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the area of Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine, as set out in Annex Three to these Minutes.
(ii) that approval be given, with effect from session 2008-2009, to the amendments to the Programme of Study entry for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy that are designed to accommodate the arrangements for the programme indicated in (i) above, as set out in Annex Four to these Minutes.

Submission Rate Statistics

RECEIVED: (a) the submission rate statistics for full-time PhD candidates commencing in the period November 2002 to October 2003 which had been produced as follows:

(i) by Faculty for those candidates who entered Year Two;
(ii) detailed information on those Schools with more than 10 students entering Year Two.

(b) information on the submission rate statistics for full-time PhD candidates commencing study between November 1998 and November 2002. The data had been compiled by Faculty/Year for the last five years (GB/07/81).

The Board agreed to send the submission rate statistics to Faculty Graduate School Committees together with the relevant extract from the Programmes of Study and Audit Group’s Minutes. Any comments, after analysis, were invited from the Faculty Graduate School Committees.

Examinations Group

RECEIVED: Part I of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March and a report of the meeting held on 14 April 2008 (GB/07/82 and GB/07/83)

Eligibility Criteria for the Appointment of Internal and External Examiners

The Board noted that the Group had made some minor modifications to the eligibility criteria for the appointment of examiners in relation to the following:

- appointment of honorary members of staff as sole internal examiner for the degrees of MD and DClinPsychol;
- appointment of part-time staff as internal examiners;
- to clarify the position so that it is clear that any independent assessors at the transfer stage may not subsequently act as External Examiners.

Full details of the above are given outlined in the Minutes of the meeting of the Examinations Group. The relevant information on the Research Degrees Office website would be updated.
On-Line Training Courses for Examiners

The Examinations Group had given its strong support to a proposal from the Chair for the development of an on-line training course to replace the current half day briefing session for experienced supervisors/examiners. The benefits of on-line delivery included:

- the availability of the course at any point in the year
- potential to increase take up and expand the pool of internal examiners to schools
- examiners could undergo training immediately before the examination which would ensure that the benefits of the course were fresh in their minds

The Group had agreed that the on-line format should only apply to the briefing session for experienced examiners; the course for those new to the role of the Internal Examiner should continue to be delivered in the traditional format. It was also proposed that similar on-line module might be extended to External Examiners from overseas to allow the opportunity for training prior to the oral examination.

The Board welcomed the proposal but noted that development of the proposal would require significant resources. SDDU had initially indicated that it may be possible to introduce on-line training with effect from session 2009/10.

Appointment of External Examiners for research students employed as members of staff

The Board noted that following the University’s move to a single-pay spine the current criteria was no longer applicable. The Group agreed that the current principle should be maintained whereby academic appointments (and academic-related staff of equivalent grading) should require two external examiners. The advice received from HR was that academic appointments are now made at Grade 7 and above. It was therefore agreed that any research student appointed to Grade 7 or above would require two external examiners.

It was noted that the relevant criteria statements issued by the Board would require amendment.

Mandatory Second Oral Examination Before Failure on Resubmission

Feedback was received from FGSCs. Of those FGSCs which had discussed the issue most had agreed that the current regulation was appropriate and did not wish to see this removed. It was therefore agreed by the Group that this requirement should remain in place.
Practice-Led PhD

The Board noted that the Examinations Group wished to refer issues raised by examiners on two separate occasions relating to the length of the written submission for a Practice-Led PhD to the Programmes of Study and Audit Group for consideration.

Meeting between the Chairs of the Examinations Group and the Programmes of Study and Audit Group and Representatives from the Accredited Institutions

RECEIVED: the notes of the meeting between the Chairs of the Graduate Board's Examinations Group and the Programmes of Study and Audit Group and representatives from Trinity and All Saints and York St John University held on 04 February 2008 (GB/07/84).

Rolling Agenda

RECEIVED: the rolling agenda (GB/07/85).

Academic Fees for Research Students for Session 2008/09 (GB/07/87)

Information on academic fees for research students for session 2008/09 was circulated for information.

RESERVED BUSINESS

Examinations Group

RECEIVED: Part II of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2008 (GB/07/86(R)).

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