Present: Professor M J Wilson (Deputy Chair) (in the Chair), Dr T F C Batten, Professor M Chipperfield, Dr J Donnelly, Mr M Gladstone (Education Officer elect) Professor I Kirkpatrick, Professor P W Seakins, Professor D R Westhead, Ms D Westmoreland (representing Dr G Chambers).

In attendance: Dr A P Bromley, Ms E Caulfield (MM08/384 – 391), Mrs J Y Findlay, Ms C Jones (for MM08/365-447), Ms J Jurica (for MM08/369 – 373 and MM08/406-408), Dr J Lamie (MM08/365-447), Mr J Lillywhite (MM08/365-447), Ms S Throp, Mr B Williams (MM08/415 – 417).

Minutes 08/365

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2009 were confirmed subject to the following amendments:

M 08/358 delete “Trinity and All Saints” and replace with “Leeds Trinity and All Saints”

Annex III (Professional Doctorate in Clinical Dentistry)

Pages 1 and 2

delete http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sddu/Forresch.htm replace with www.leeds.ac.uk/sddu/gts

Page 2

delete “Thesis Presentation” replace with “The Final Stages of your Research and Thesis Presentation”

delete “White rose School” replace with ‘White Rose Inter Personal Skills School”

Annex V (Integrated degree of PhD and MSc in Oral Sciences)

Pages 4 and 5

delete http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sddu/Forresch.htm replace with www.leeds.ac.uk/sddu/gts

Page 5

delete “Thesis presentation” replace with “The Final Stages of your Research and Thesis Presentation”

delete “White rose School” replace with ‘White Rose Inter Personal Skills School”

delete “The final stages of your research degree” replace with “The Final Stages of your Research and Thesis Presentation”.

after “The Final Stages of your Research and Thesis Presentation” insert footnote to read as follows “To be taken in either Year 3 or Year 4”
Matters Arising on the Minutes

M 08/276 University English Language Test

REPORTED: that discussions will take place with the new Director of the Language Centre about the Board’s suggestions regarding the University’s English Language Test (UELT). A report will be forwarded to the Board next session.

International Director

The Chair introduced Dr Judith Lamie, International Director, to her first Graduate Board meeting.

Dr Lamie explained to the Board that her role involved taking forward the University’s internationalisation agenda and to develop, through consultation and discussion, an international strategy. This would include Europe. She hoped that a consultation document would be available for consideration by the Board at its next meeting.

NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN ISSUES

Bologna Issues

RECEIVED: (i) the Annual Report 2009 from the Group established to consider developments under the Bologna Process and (ii) further information on Bologna issues prepared by the Chair of the Bologna Group (GB/08/97 (i) and (ii)).

The Board discussed the report and noted that the expectation was that the arrangements under which the Bologna Process has operated will continue until at least 2020.

The report summarised the future opportunities and threats identified by the Group, and where possible, actions the University should consider taking. These included the following recommendations in respect of research degree arrangements:

- the University continue with full membership of the EUA Doctoral Development Project;
- the University’s own internal quality assurance arrangements (SAERs) should include a review of the extent to which individual school arrangements are compliant with, or can be further developed, in accordance with Bologna principles.

It was noted that European Ministers have indicated priorities in the areas of greater international openness and the development of multidimensional transparency tools (i.e. league tables). This was an area which would require particularly close monitoring. In addition the targets for ensuring 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area undertook study or training abroad were ambitious.

Dr David Salinger was thanked for his valuable work as Chair of the Group.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

Refreshing the University Strategy Map

RECEIVED: the refreshed University Strategy Map (GB/08/98)

The Board received a copy of the refreshed University Strategy Map which had recently been approved by Senate. It noted that one of the key themes, at the centre of the
map, was to “deliver a postgraduate research experience that attracts the world’s best students”. The previous Strategy Map had contained no specific reference to postgraduate research student issues and this recognition of the valuable contribution of research students to the overall research activity of the University was welcomed by the Board.

**Integrated Planning Exercise: Postgraduate Research Student Number Forecasts**

**RECEIVED:** a paper, prepared by APPO, providing a summary of the postgraduate research student numbers considered during the Integrated Planning Exercise (GB/08/99).

The Board noted that Faculties had submitted postgraduate research student number forecasts for the planning period 2009/10 to 2013/14. The forecast numbers were considered as part of this year’s Annual Research and EKT Review meetings.

Submitted plans revealed ambitious plans for growth in PGR numbers in some Faculties, particularly towards the end of the period.

It was agreed that Research Student Administration would write, to the Directors of the Faculty Graduate Schools, to ask what plans were in place within their Faculty to realise the forecast numbers. Good practice and innovative ideas might then be shared across the Faculties.

The Board noted that should the forecast growth in postgraduate research student numbers be realised this would, inevitably, have implications for other areas of the University (eg training activities - SDDU and Research Student Administration).

**Performance Indicators (GB/08/100)**

**RECEIVED:** a summary of the discussions held recently by Faculty Graduate School Committees on data relating to the following:

- Research Degree Qualification Rates
- Submission Rate Statistics
- Award, Referral and Failure Rates for Research Degree Examinations

The discussions had identified that the geographical location of a student appeared to have a significant impact on the successful and timely completion of a research degree. Those students who did not live locally appeared to be at a significant disadvantage when it came to completing their studies and Faculty Graduate School Committees had indicated that these issues required review.

Examples of good practice which had led to a reduction in referral rates over the past three years were identified as follows:

- good supervision supported by training and guidance from the university
- more emphasis being placed on submission rates and awareness of consequences
- greater awareness of admissions criteria and the need to recruit good quality candidates who are more likely to successfully complete
- good administrative support in ensuring that monitoring of progress is adhered to and recorded
Ms Esme Caulfield attended the meeting to introduce this item. Ms Caulfield laid a revised paper on the table (GB/08/101(a)).

She reminded the Board that the project had extended over a period of two years. Key priorities had now been set by VCEG and the Project Sponsor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, Professor Margaret Atack, to move forward into phase III of the PGR Project Plan. These priorities fell under three key areas (workstreams):

(a) changing the academic culture to inspire academics to value and want to supervise pgr students;
(b) external funding for pgr students;
(c) providing a world-class research experience and environment for all pgr students.

Each workstream would be led by one of the Directors of the Faculty Graduate Schools.

A fourth key area, relating to pgr information and data management systems, which had been included on the original paper submitted to the Board (GB/08/100) had now been withdrawn.

A Project Steering Group, which would be chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, had now been established and would hold its first meeting in early July. The Chairs of the 3 Project Workstreams would report regular to the Project Steering Group.

There was some discussion about how SRDS might be used to encourage staff to engage with supervision of research students and how transparent work load models in all Faculties were required.

The Chair thanked Professor B M Wilson (Chair of the Project Group) and Ms Caulfield (Project Officer) for their work on the project.

MATTERS FOR REPORT FROM OTHER BOARDS/COMMITTEES

Learning and Teaching Board

RECEIVED: the Minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Board held on 13 May 2009 (unconfirmed) (GB/08/102).

Research Board

RECEIVED: the Minutes of the meeting of the Research Board held on 11 May 2009 (unconfirmed) (GB/08/103).

University Research Ethics Committee (UREC)

RECEIVED: the Minutes of the meeting of the UREC held on 20 April 2009 (GB/08/104)

The Board noted that UREC had expressed concern that, despite a gradual upward trend, it appeared that a relatively low proportion of research projects were being submitted for ethical review. This raised the question of whether some projects were not being put forward.
The Board suggested that an appropriate time to consider ethical issues was as part of the training needs analysis, and development of the training plan, to be conducted by the supervisor with the student within one month of the commencement of studies.

RESEARCH POSTGRADUATES

Report from the PGA/Education Officer

There was no report from the Postgraduate Assembly. The Education Officer, elect, Mr Mike Gladstone was attending his first meeting of the Graduate Board. The Board welcomed him to the meeting.

Role of the Postgraduate Research Tutor (GB/08/105)

The Board considered the latest draft statement outlining the generic duties and responsibilities of a Postgraduate Research Tutor at the University.

It was agreed that the draft statement be forwarded to Faculty Graduate School Committees with a request that they check that the list is comprehensive. Once agreement on the generic list of responsibilities has been confirmed a strategic document on the nature of the Postgraduate Research Tutor’s role will be prepared for consideration by the Board.

Points Based System (GB/08/106)

The Board received an update, prepared by Research Student Administration, on (a) discussions about attendance monitoring systems for postgraduate research students within the University of Leeds and (b) an update about the UKBA current performance in issuing visas.

Attendance Monitoring System for PGR Students

The Board was informed that the development of a system for the attendance monitoring of taught students was now well advanced.

General discussions had taken place, since the last meeting of the Board, with representatives of DOGES regarding the possibility of immediately putting in place an attendance monitoring system for postgraduate research students. It was agreed that it should be possible, bearing in mind the different processes in Schools and Faculties across the University, to immediately put in place a simple system from September 2009 based on academic and some “administrative” events. It was recognised that any initial process would be limited. The representatives of DOGES, however, supported the development of a University system, in the longer term, that would support Faculty and School academic and administrative arrangements in a comparable way to one that had been developed by Biological Sciences. The opportunity for further discussions to “shape” any development would be necessary.

UKBA current progress in issuing visas

The Board was informed that the UKBA had introduced a new “Hub and Spoke” model for processing visa applications. Reports of large increases in application duration were now emerging. Anecdotal evidence showed that there was a significant variation in practice in different countries with certain “Hubs” taking up to 3 months to process visa applications. The peak period for visa processing starts in June and there are increasing concerns about the UKBA’s ability to cope. The position at Leeds already
showed that the numbers of students attending pre-sessional English language courses were already down.

Start dates for pgr students were by nature flexible and delays in processing visa applications could be addressed by deferring the start date for those candidates who were adversely affected by delays in the application process. However, for pgt students, where there was little or no flexibility in the start date, potential delays were a considerable concern.

Concern was growing that the introduction of PBS generally appeared to be creating negative PR for the UK which could potentially lead to a future downturn in applications. Lobbying by universities of the UKBA for more flexibility in the system had, so far, been largely unsuccessful.

Copyright Issues and E-theses (GB/08/107)

Miss Janet Jurica, University Copyright Officer, attended the meeting for this agenda item. She presented to the Board the current draft of the guidance being developed for PhD candidates wishing to have their theses published in electronic form through the University’s on-line repository (White Rose Etheses Online) with subsequent addition to the British Library Ethos service. Submission of an electronic version of a final, successful doctoral thesis would be mandatory for all new students commencing study from September 2009, with all current doctoral students being strongly encouraged to submit an electronic version.

The draft guidance, which would be web-based, had been formatted in the style of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Miss Jurica described how copyright was a complex area with developments and interpretation of the legal position moving quickly and at times controversially in response to the development of the www and digital forms of publication and communication. She understood that in some disciplines copyright issues were particularly difficult to address but that this was not the case in all areas. A risk assessment approach would be required. It was noted that in a digital thesis web links might be used to refer to copyright information where appropriate. An embargo on access to the thesis in both hard copy and digital forms could be stipulated by the School and candidate where commercial or publication interests needed to be protected e.g. where publication was planned in commercial referred scholarly journals. The approach of publishers however, varied according to discipline and there was no uniform policy. The use of an ISBN with copyright shared between the University and the student assisted with the protection of intellectual property.

Further issues might need clarification and comments and suggestions on the draft guidance were invited and should be sent directly to Miss Jurica in the Legal Advisor’s Office.

Procedure for the consideration of appeals from research degree students following adverse academic decisions (GB/08/108)

The Board gave further consideration to proposed minor amendments to the existing procedure for the consideration of appeals from research degree students. Advice sought from the University’s Legal Adviser and Secretary’s Office about the current arrangements indicated that these remained appropriate and were consistent with similar procedures, eg the Student Complaints Procedure, at the University.

It was agreed that the minor amendments, which were summarised in the paper, were appropriate. These included the introduction of a pro forma for completion by research degree students wishing to submit an appeal.
RESOLVED: that, with effect from session 2009/10, approval be given to amendments to the procedure governing the consideration of appeals from research degree candidates following adverse academic decisions, as set out in Annex I.

RESEARCH COUNCIL MATTERS

AHRC

Professor Spiers was unable to attend the meeting. The Board did not, therefore, receive an update on the selection of AHRC Block Grant Studentships or the University of Leeds Arts and Humanities Scholarships as indicated on the agenda.

MRC Doctoral Training Grant (DTG) Scheme (GB/08/109)

The Board noted that the Medical Research Council (MRC) was changing its method of allocating Doctoral Training Grants for the student intake of Autumn 2010 onwards. Based on calculations by the MRC Leeds will fall below the new DTG threshold but will be eligible to apply for up to 3 studentships per annum for up to two years intake through the new biennial competition.

MRC intended to launch the competition shortly. The Faculties of Biological Sciences and Medicine and Health would be jointly leading the University’s bid.

GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP MATTERS

Marie Curie Initial Training Network (ITN) Update (GB/08/110)

The Board received an update, prepared by the European Office, on the Marie Curie ITN scheme for PhD students in FP7. Mr Ben Williamson, European Manager, attended the meeting for this agenda item.

Mr Williamson explained that there was one scheme in FP7 that would specifically fund PhD fellowships – Initial Training Networks (ITN). Dr W Rea, Academic Director of the Faculty of PVAC Graduate School had expressed an interest in putting a bid together. Bids must include partner institutions and representation from industry. In addition there was the possibility of recruiting PhD students to an FP7 Collaborative Project. Within Collaborative Projects PhD student stipends could be requested but academic fees were not regarded as eligible costs.

One page Fact Sheets was attached to the paper with details of the two schemes. The European Office could provide non technical support to Faculties contemplating putting bids together.

University Collaboration with the Chinese Scholarships Council

It was reported that 8 out of a possible 10 PhD research scholarships had currently been offered under the scheme for 2009/10 entry. The Board noted that this was the first year the University had participated in the scheme and that the University’s entry to the scheme had been at a late stage in the process. It was hoped that feedback from other universities together with this year’s experience would help to inform collaboration in the future.
TRAINING SKILLS MATTERS

Researcher Training and Development Strategy Map

RECEIVED: Researcher Training and Development Strategy Map (GB/08/111). 08/419

The Board noted that the Researcher Training and Development Strategy Map had been developed in consultation with the University’s Research Training and Career Development Steering Group (RTCDSG). The views of the Research Board and Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer Board had been sought. The map which referred to academic and research staff as “researchers” was intended to build on the development of a strategy map for postgraduate research student training and development which had been introduced two years ago.

The Board noted that uncertainty and a lack of clarity remained regarding the future of Roberts funding nationally. There was some possibility that the “ring fencing” of funds for training under the Roberts agenda might be removed. This continued to be an issue for the University and Faculties to consider.

Training Programmes for Research Student Supervisors and Internal Examiners

RECEIVED: a report from the Staff and Departmental Development Unit on the training programmes offered for research student supervisors and internal examiners (GB/08/112) 08/422

The Board wished to record its thanks to the tutors for their support of the courses and to acknowledge the time committed to the development and delivery of the courses. 08/423

GROUPS OF THE BOARD

Faculty Graduate School Committees (GB/08/113 (a) – (i))

RECEIVED: the Minutes from meetings of FGSCs as follows: 08/424

(a) Environment (20/04/09)
(b) Arts (09/06/09)
(c) Engineering (28/05/09)
(d) ESSL (20/05/09)
(e) Business (11/05/09)
(f) MAPS (11/05/09)
(g) Medicine and Health (09/06/09)
(h) PVAC (06/05/09)
(i) Biological Sciences (02/06/09)

Recognising outstanding research degree submissions

The Board noted comments made by FGSCs on a draft proposal, from the Examinations Group, for recognising outstanding research degree submissions. Whilst FGSCs were broadly supportive of the idea a number concerns had been identified regarding its implementation. It was agreed that the comments received should be passed to the Examinations Group together with a recommendation that the Group give further consideration to the proposal. A revised proposal would, in due course, then be made available to the Board. 08/425
Criteria for appointing external examiners

The Chair of the Faculty of Engineering Graduate School Committee drew attention to recent discussions held by the Committee regarding the University’s criteria for the appointment of external examiners. It was suggested that the existing arrangements for ensuring the quality of potential external examiners might be reviewed. It was agreed that the comments made in Engineering FGSC Minutes (28/05/09) be forwarded to the Examinations Group for consideration.

Faculty Representation on Groups of the Graduate Board

RECEIVED: details of vacancies for Faculty Representatives on the Examinations Group, Programmes of Study and Audit Group and Group on Scholarships, Studentships and Prizes for session 2009/10 (GB/08/114).

Directors of Faculty Graduate Schools were asked to identify Faculty representatives for the Groups where vacancies occurred within their particular Faculty. Notification of new Faculty representatives should be sent to Sarah Throp in Research Student Administration by no later than 1 August 2009. It was particularly important that vacancies on the Examinations Group were filled without delay as the first meeting of the Group next session was scheduled for 07 September 2009.

Steering Committee on Doctoral Training Grants (DTGs)

RECEIVED: the Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee on DTGs held on 07 May 2009 (GB/08/115).

It was noted that the steps taken to “top slice” DTA funds for strategic allocation had attracted very high quality applications for funds to support research studentships.

Programmes of Study and Audit Group (GB/08/116)

Since the last meeting of the Programmes of Study and Audit Group action had been taken on behalf of the Group to send forward a number of recommendations for consideration by the Board in respect of programmes of study leading to the award of research degrees. The Board considered each of these recommendations.

(a) Integrated Degree of PhD and MA (Language Studies) be withdrawn with effect from session 2009/10

The Board noted that the School of Modern Languages and Cultures had confirmed that the Integrated degree of PhD and MA had never recruited and, therefore, had agreed that the programme should be withdrawn.

RESOLVED: (i) that the programme of study leading to the Integrated Degree of PhD and MA (Language Studies) be withdrawn with effect from session 2009/10.

(ii) that consequential amendments be made to the contents list and relevant programme of study in the Ordinance and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research degrees booklet as set out in Annex II.

(b) Amendment to the programme of study leading to the degree of Doctor of Clinical Dentistry

The Board noted that in the recently approved programme of study for the degree of DClinDent the TOEFL scores for the English level entry requirements did not equate
with the corresponding IELTs scores. The School of Dentistry had agreed, following consultation with the University’s Language Centre, to propose amended entry level scores to ensure consistency across the tests.

RESOLVED: that approval be given with effect from 2009-2010 to the amendment of the programme of study leading to degree of the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry as set out in Annex III. (NB amendments are shown using strikethrough and bold text).

(c) Programme of study entry leading to the Integrated Degree of PhD and MSc (Low Carbon Technologies)

Following approval of the new Integrated PhD and MSc in Low Carbon Technologies, at the last meeting of the Board, a programme of study entry had been prepared for the programme.

RESOLVED: that the programme of study entry for the Integrated degree of PhD and MSc (Low Carbon Technologies) be approved with effect from 2009/10 (with other consequential amendments as set out in Annex IV).

Examinations Group

RECEIVED: the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2009 (for information) and (ii) a report arising from the meeting held on 08 June 2009 (GB/08/117(i) and (ii)).

The Board was reminded that it had received a report arising from the Examinations Group meeting on 20 April 2009 at its previous meeting.

At the meeting on 8 June 2009 the Group had discussed concerns relating to copyright and publication issues in relation to the publication of E-theses. It had noted that the University’s Copyright Officer would be attending the Board’s meeting to discuss information on copyright (see M08/406-408 above).

Rolling Agenda

RECEIVED: the rolling agenda for session 2008/09 (GB/08/118).

Postgraduate Research Tutors Forum

The Chair reminded members of the Board that Postgraduate Research Tutors Forum would be held on Monday, 29 June 2009. Members of the Board were invited to attend.

Additional Agendum

Update on Actions Taken in Response to QAA Institutional Audit (2008) – the Academic Infrastructure (GB/08/121)

RECEIVED: a paper setting out the various policies and procedures in place to ensure that the University satisfies the 27 precepts set out in Section One of the QAA Code of Practice relating to postgraduate research degree programmes.

The Board noted that one of the recommendations arising from the QAA Institutional Audit (2008) was that “it would be desirable for the University to consider its methods for ensuring that it has a clear, comprehensive overview of the current status of practice with regard to changes in the academic infrastructure”. Paper 121 took as its reference part of the QAA Code of Practice for the assurance of academic standards and quality in higher education.
Expression of Thanks

The Board noted that the periods of appointment of a number of its members would come to an end at the close of this session. It wished to thank the following individuals for their valuable contributions to the work of the Board:

Mr Danial Adilypour
Dr Rachel Cowgill
Dr David Salinger
Professor Marjorie Wilson
Professor Mike Wilson

In addition the Board expressed its particular thanks to Professor Margaret Atack who would be stepping down from her role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, and Chair or the Graduate Board, at the end of the session.

Dates of Graduate Board meetings for session 2009/10

Members were advised that some of the previously advertised dates for meetings of the Graduate Board for session 2009/10 would be amended to accommodate the diary commitments of the new Chair of the Graduate Board, Professor Andrew Thompson. Research Student Administration would notify members of the revised dates as soon as they became available.

RESERVED BUSINESS

Examinations Group

RECEIVED: Part II of the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2009 (for information) (GB/08/119)(R)).

Report from an Appeal Group

RECEIVED: for information the decision of a Group established to consider an appeal from a research degree candidate in the Faculty of PVAC (GB/08/120).

The Board noted that the appellant had been registered on a split-site candidature. One of the issues arising from consideration of the appeal related to difficulties experienced with arrangements for the appellant to attend supervision meetings in Leeds with the co-supervisors. The appellant, who was a member of staff at a University overseas, insisted he had only been able to attend the University for supervision at relatively short notice and at times which coincided with holiday periods (Christmas and the summer vacation). Whilst this had not proved to a difficulty for the main supervisor, who was retired, it had presented logistical problems for the co-supervisors.

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<tr>
<td>08/379</td>
<td>Academic Directors of FGSCs to provide information about the plans in place within their Faculty to achieve forecast pgr numbers</td>
<td>Academic Directors of FGSCs</td>
<td>End September 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/399</td>
<td>FGSCs to consider whether the draft list of responsibilities of PGR Tutors is complete</td>
<td>FGSCs</td>
<td>End September 2009</td>
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<td>08/425</td>
<td>Exams Group to consider the comments from FGSCs on the proposal for recognising outstanding research degree submissions</td>
<td>Exams Group</td>
<td>6 September 2009</td>
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<td>08/426</td>
<td>Exams Group to consider existing arrangements for the appointment of External Examiners in the light of comments from the FGSC (Engineering)</td>
<td>Exams Group</td>
<td>6 September 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/428</td>
<td>Academic Directors of FGSCs to nominate representatives on the Groups of the Graduate Board where vacancies occur</td>
<td>Academic Directors of FGSCs</td>
<td>1 August 2009</td>
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