Unreserved Business

minutes

Board Meeting on 7 October, 2014

Present: Professor Cardwell (Chair), Professor Babinsky, Dr Bampos, Dr Cook, Professor Forsyth, Professor Gelsthorpe, Dr Grounds, Dr Hiley, Dr McLarty, Dr Quinn, Dr Padman, with Dr Maxwell as Secretary and with Ms Barlow, Mr Bennett, Ms Fage and Ms Green in attendance.

Apologies: Professor Dixon

4217 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2014 were approved.

4218 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4219 Requests to be exempt from interviewing applicants

4219.1 Faculty of Modern & Medieval Languages
(Re-circulated paper 5192, paper 5232)

The Board noted that the Faculty had robust processes in place to assess the suitability of applicants, including extensive written work. On this basis, the Board accepted the request for their MPhil courses to be exempted from the requirement to interview, subject to a statistical report and review in three years.

4219.2 Faculty of Philosophy
(Paper 5233)
The Board were satisfied that the Faculty had adequate assessment processes in place and approved the request, subject to a statistical report and review in three years.

4220 Code of Practice for research degrees: Approval of PhD registration examination

The Board considered requests for approval from four Degree Committees:

4220.1 Business & Management
(Paper 5235)

The Board noted that students must (i) write a first year report or, for finance students, pass the Comprehensive Exam; (ii) take a number of research assignments or self-study assignments and (iii) attend all seminars/PhD conferences and reading clubs as required by the subject group.

The Board approved the form of the registration examination.

4220.2 Classics
(Paper 5236)

The Board noted that the examination consists of (i) a short progress report and a prospectus of work to be undertaken; (ii) a Personal Development Plan; (iii) a substantial piece of written work (iv) a meeting with two assessors

The Board approved the form of the registration examination subject to confirmation of the process that would be invoked if the student failed the exercise.

4220.3 Computer Science & Technology
(Paper 5237)

The Board noted that students are required to pass the examination for the CPGS and perform satisfactorily in a course or courses of study.

The Board approved the form of the registration examination subject to confirmation that it was possible for a student to be approved for the CPGS but whose work was adjudged as being not sufficient to be permitted to continue to the PhD and that this eventuality was made clear to both students and Examiners at the outset. The Board also agreed that would be good practice to make clear the mark(s) that were considered satisfactory in the course, or courses of study.
4220.4 **Philosophy**  
(Paper 5238)

The Board noted that the examination consists of a statement of the student’s plan of research, a substantial piece of written work, an account of research already completed and a registration interview.

The Board approved the form of the registration examination.

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4221 **Studentship agreement: Cambridge-CARES**  
(Paper 5239)

The Board considered a request to approve the Cambridge-CARES studentship scheme between the University of Cambridge and the Government of Singapore.

The Board approved the request, subject to the implementation of a review procedure after an appropriate time period and noted that the Degree Committee(s) concerned must ensure the appointment of suitable Supervisors in Cambridge and Singapore.

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4222 **Application to renew University Partner Institute status: British Antarctic Survey**  
(Paper 5234)

The Board noted that the Degree Committee for the Faculty of Biology had confirmed its support.

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4223 **Clinical Medicine**  
(Paper 5241)

The Board had recently considered representations under the review regulations submitted by a probationary student on the PhD ‘programme’ in Mathematics, Genomics and Medicine, following the student’s failure in the progress examination for progression to PhD, which had been undertaken after six terms; the student had then been registered alternatively as a candidate for the MPhil degree.

The Board’s decision in the case was that the complaint was unjustified. The Board had noted that the Degree Committee’s statement in response to the representations included some ‘lessons to be learned’ and other recommendations, for instance with regard to difficulties in the processes adopted in determining registration issues, for the programme and the Committee. The Board received a report from the Degree Committee on their subsequent review into these matters.
During the course of discussion, the Board noted in particular (i) the possibility that a student might fail the PhD registration exercise after two years of study and leave the University without any qualification or certificate, and (ii) that the Committee were contemplating utilising the offer of re-registration as a candidate for the Certificate of Postgraduate Study, under a different Degree Committee, to students whose studies were to be terminated after one year.

It was agreed that the issues raised by the Degree Committee might more appropriately be considered at this point within the review of four year PhD programmes currently being undertaken by the General Board’s Education Committee. The Board decided that their approval for an alternative form of progress examination proposed by the Degree Committee should therefore be deferred to a later meeting, following any further proposal from the Degree Committee.