

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

Academic Policy & Regulations Committee

3 February 2009

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Members present:	Professor S C Shute, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic Quality & Students (in the Chair) Professor K Dowden, College of Arts and Law Professor J Heath, College of Life and Environmental Sciences Mr T Marley, Vice-President (Education and Access), Guild of Students Ms C M Pike, Director of Legal Services Mr N Ross, College of Medical and Dental Sciences Professor C Ryan, College of Social Sciences
In attendance	Ms C L McCauley, Academic and Student Administration (Secretary) Ms J Russell, Library Services Mr P A Fantom, Academic and Student Administration (minute secretary)
Papers	The Minute Book contains copies of all written papers or reports referred to below. Agenda and papers are also available via <a href="http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/APRC.shtml">http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/APRC.shtml</a> .

09/01 **Minutes**

*Resolved:*

That the minutes (APRC.09.02.01) of the meeting held on 9 October 2008 be approved.

09/02 **Matters arising**

**(a) Student Complaints Procedure (Minute 08/50 (b) refers)**

*Noted:*

That the revised Students Complaints procedure had been approved, following circulation by correspondence to members, and had been in place from January 2009.

**(b) Request for Exemption from the Regulations governing the classification of degrees from the intercalated BMedSc programmes in Clinical Science and Medicine in Society (Minute 08/52 refers)**

*Noted:*

That Chair's Action had now been taken to approve this exemption for one year.

**(c) The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) (Minute 08/57 refers)**

*Noted:*

That further work on this matter was being carried out and would be reported to APRC in due course.

09/03 **Terms of Reference of the Research Progress and Awards Sub-Panel**

*Considered:*

Proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Research Progress and Awards Sub-Panel (a sub-panel of the Progress and Awards Board) (APRC.09.02.02).

*Resolved:*

- (a) That in terms of the proposed amendments, a revised Terms of Reference be presented to a future meeting of APRC in order for approval to given to the following changes:
  - (i) That clause 1.11 be deleted and that clause 2 be amended to ensure that the generic power to approve a request to waiver the maximum number of words in a thesis or report is retained within the Terms of reference.
  - (ii) That the procedure for dealing with more complex cases, cases notwithstanding Regulations and cases where the member is unable to confirm the recommendation of the examiners, or is unable to approve a request under Section 1 of the Terms of Reference, be amended so that the proposed clauses (i) and (iii) read (insertions underlined, deletions struck-through):
    - (i) *The case to be referred to two members of the Sub-Panel, who will normally consult via email, and who will communicate their ~~decisions~~ recommendations to the Assistant Student Records Manager (Research Programmes), Academic and Student Administration.*
    - (iii) *~~In the event of a failure to reach a decision, a~~ A meeting of the Chair and two Sub-Panel members ~~to~~ may be convened by the Assistant Student Records Manager (Research Programmes), Academic and Student Administration.*
- (b) That the proposed new clause 1.14, to ensure consistency with clause 7.4.7 (e) of the Regulations, be rejected and that an appropriate amendment be made to clause 7.4.7 (e) of the Regulations, to be reported back to APRC in due course.

09/04 **Proposed amendment to Regulations to require an Electronic copy of Postgraduate Research Theses to be held by the University's Library**

*Considered:*

A report on the proposed amendment to Regulation 7.4.2 (b) to require postgraduate research students to deposit a copy of their thesis in a format that meets modern standards, for effect in 2009/10 (APRC.09.02.03).

*Resolved:*

- (a) That Regulation 7.4.2 (b) be amended to read:

*The final, corrected version of the thesis or report must be deposited with the University before the degree may be awarded, presented in an appropriate printed and electronic format in accordance with current University requirements.*

- (b) That these requirements be reviewed in 2009/10.

09/05 **Changes to Regulations to clarify requirements for aegrotat degrees and posthumous awards**

*Considered:*

A report on the proposed changes to the Regulations to enable qualifications to be awarded posthumously if specific criteria are met, to come into effect in 2009/10 (APRC.09.02.04).

Resolved:

- (a) That Regulation 7.2.5 (h) be amended to read (insertions underlined, deletions struck-through):

*In exceptional circumstances, where a Board of Examiners considers that a Registered Student is unable to complete the requirements of his or her programme due to serious illness, death or other significant cause, the Board may recommend the award of an aegrotat degree, diploma or certificate. This recommendation replaces any decision to award a lower alternative qualification for which the student may have obtained sufficient credit. Such recommendations must be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on the Assessment of Taught Modules ~~Assessment Protocols~~ and shall be subject to the approval of the Progress and Awards Board ~~Senate or a delegated authority~~. An aegrotat degree should be unclassified. Degrees which ~~entail qualification to practise in the field of medicine~~ are subject to Fitness to Practise requirements shall not be awarded as aegrotat degrees. ~~in this manner.~~*

- (b) That an additional clause be inserted as Regulation 7.2.5 (i), with the other clauses in the Regulations being renumbered to follow in sequence, to read (insertions underlined, deletions struck-through):

*In exceptional circumstances, where a Registered Student has died having fully completed the requirements of their programme of study but has not graduated or been formally awarded the qualification, Boards of Examiners may recommend the posthumous award of the qualification, subject to the approval of the Progress and Awards Board.*

#### 09/06 **Changes to the Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses and Regulations**

Considered:

A report on the proposed changes to the Regulations and the Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses, to come into effect in 2009/10 (APRC.09.02.05).

Resolved:

- (a) That Regulation 7.4.6 (a) be amended to read (insertions underlined, deletions struck-through):

*The examiner shall prepare reports and make progress and award decisions in accordance with the Assessment of Research Degree Theses.*

- (b) That Regulation 7.4.7 (i) be deleted from Regulations and moved to the Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses and Regulations.
- (c) That the following changes be made to the Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses and Regulations (insertions underlined, deletions struck-through):

##### 6.5 *Examiners' recommendations: MMus, MRes and one-year MPhil (Mode B)*

*Following the initial submission and examination of the Registered Student's work for the degree of MMus, MRes and one-year MPhil (Mode B) and where the student has satisfied the requirements of the degree as set out in Regulations Assessment, Progression and Award Chapter 4-17.4, and passed the taught modules as set out in the programme requirements, the examiners of the thesis or required reports shall decide on behalf of Senate either:*

- 6.5.1 *That the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or one-year MPhil (Mode B) ~~with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD.~~*

- 6.5.2 Where the thesis is a qualifying thesis, that the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or one-year MPhil (Mode B) with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD. If the student chooses the former and is subsequently awarded the degree of PhD, then the degree of MMus, MRes or MPhil will not be awarded.
- ~~6.5.3 That, where the student's performance shows clear potential for further research, the student should have the option either of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD or of being awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or MPhil as appropriate. If the student chooses the former and is subsequently awarded the degree of PhD, then the degree of MMus, MRes or MPhil will not be awarded.~~
- 6.5.3 That the student be awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or MPhil as appropriate after the Registered Student has made minor corrections to the thesis or one or more reports to the satisfaction of the internal examiner.
- 6.5.4 Where thesis is a qualifying thesis, that the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or one-year MPhil (Mode B) as appropriate after minor corrections to the thesis with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD.
- 6.5.5 That the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or MPhil (Mode B) as appropriate after the student has made major corrections to the thesis or one or more reports to the satisfaction of the ~~internal~~ examiners.
- 6.5.6 Where thesis is a qualifying thesis, that the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MMus, MRes or one-year MPhil (Mode B) as appropriate after major corrections to the thesis with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD.
- 6.6 Following the initial submission and examination of the student's work for the degree of MMus, MRes or one-year MPhil (Mode B), where the Registered Student has failed to satisfy the requirements for the report(s) or thesis ~~degree~~ as set out in Regulations Assessment, Progression and Award Chapter 4.17.4, the examiners shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senate or delegated authority, either:
- ~~6.6.1 That the student undertake such further tests as may be prescribed.~~
- ~~6.6.2 That one or more of the student's reports be referred to the student for major revision and re-assessment.~~
- ~~6.6.3 That the student complete a new research project and report upon it.~~
- ~~6.6.4 That, provided that the student has previously presented at least one satisfactory report on the research project, the student be permitted to re-sit part or the whole of the set of written examinations.~~
- ~~6.6.5 That the student undertake a combination of requirements (a) to (d) as appropriate.~~
- ~~6.6.6 That the student repeat the entire year of study.~~
- ~~6.6.7 That the student be not awarded the degree and be debarred from further examination.~~
- 6.6.1 That one or more reports or the thesis be referred to the student for major revision and resubmission.
- 6.6.2 That the thesis or one or more reports be rejected without opportunity for resubmission and the student not be awarded the degree for which the thesis was submitted.

6.7 Examiners' recommendations: One-year MPhil (Mode A) and two-year MPhil

Following the initial submission and examination of the students' work for the degree of MPhil (one-year (Mode A) or two-year) and where the student has satisfied the requirements for the relevant degree as set out in Regulations Assessment, Progression and Award Chapter 4.1, the examiners shall decide on behalf of Senate either:

- 6.7.1 ~~That, where the student's performance shows clear potential for further research, the student should have the option of either proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD or of being awarded the degree of MPhil. If the student chooses the former and is subsequently awarded the degree of PhD, then the degree of MPhil will not be awarded the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MPhil (Mode A) or two-year MPhil.~~
- 6.7.2 ~~That the student be awarded the degree of MPhil without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD. Where the thesis is a qualifying thesis, that the student be awarded the degree of MPhil (Mode A) or two-year MPhil with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD. If the student chooses the former and is subsequently awarded the degree of PhD, then the degree of MPhil will not be awarded.~~
- 6.7.3 That the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MPhil (Mode A) or two-year MPhil as appropriate after the student has made minor corrections to the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal examiner.
- 6.7.4 Where the thesis is a qualifying thesis, that the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MPhil (Mode A) or two-year MPhil as appropriate after minor corrections to the thesis with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD.
- 6.7.5 That the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MPhil (Mode A) or two-year MPhil as appropriate after the student has made major corrections to the thesis to the satisfaction of the ~~internal~~ examiners.
- 6.7.6 Where thesis is a qualifying thesis, that the Registered Student be awarded the degree of MPhil (Mode A) or two-year MPhil as appropriate after major corrections to the thesis with or without the option of proceeding to further work for the degree of PhD.

6.13 Following the examination of a thesis resubmitted for a research degree, the examiners shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senate or delegated authority, as appropriate, either:

- (i) That the Registered Student be awarded the degree for which the thesis or other work was submitted; or
- (ii) That the Registered Student be awarded the degree for which the thesis or other work was submitted, where appropriate, after completion of minor corrections to the satisfaction of the internal examiner;
- (iii) That the Registered Student, having resubmitted a thesis for the award of a doctoral degree, be awarded the lower alternative research masters or taught masters degree, as appropriate after completion of minor corrections to the satisfaction of the internal examiner; or
- (iv) That the thesis or other reports be rejected without opportunity for resubmission and the Registered Student not be awarded the degree for which the thesis was submitted.

09/07 **Proposed Code of Practice on the Assessment of Taught Modules**

*Received:*

The proposed Code of Practice (CoP), a supporting paper outlining the reasons for the creation of a new CoP, which will replace the current two sets of Assessment Protocols for undergraduate and postgraduate taught modules, together with a tabled paper providing comments on the proposed CoP received from members of the Progress and Awards Board (APRC.08.02.06 and APRC.08.02.06a).

*Resolved:*

That an extraordinary meeting of APRC be convened in order to consider the proposed Code of Practice on the Assessment of Taught Modules.

09/08 **Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech on Campus**

*Noted:*

That it was confirmed by the Director of Hospitality and Accommodation Services that the Code of Practice was working effectively following twelve month's operation.

*Resolved:*

That having regard to the proposed creation of a Code of Practice on Demonstrations, a paper be presented to a future meeting of APRC identifying those issues not already addressed by this existing Code of Practice and which might be more appropriately incorporated therein, rather than in a new Code of Practice on Demonstrations.

09/09 **Chair's Action**

*Reported:*

That Chair's Action was taken between October 2008 and January 2009 to approve an amendment to the Assessment Protocols in respect of the constitution of Boards of Examiners.

09/10 **Dates of meetings for the Academic Year 2008/09**

*Noted:*

That future meetings would be held in Committee Room 1 (G32, Aston Webb) on:

- An extraordinary meeting of APRC (Date and time to be confirmed).
- Thursday 21 May 2009 at 2.30 pm