

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
SCHOOL OF LAW

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Thursday 6th October 2016

Present: Professor Yenkong Ngangjoh Hodu (Chair), Dr Carolyn Abbot, Ms Jackie Boardman, Ms Margaret Cunningham, Ms Helen Davenport, Dr Ian Fishwick, Dr Francesco Giglio, Ms Caroline Henaghan, Ms Laura Littlewood, Dr Alex Mullock, Ms Maria Tatsiou

Apologies: Mr Bill Hebenton, Ms Edita Pymm, Ms Hannah Wishart

Unreserved Business

1. Minutes

Confirmed Minutes of the Committee's previous meeting were received and approved.

2. Matters Arising

Reported In respect of PGR Admissions, the engagement with offer holders and supervisors was queried.

For action Laura and Edita to follow this up.

3. Chair's Report

Reported

1. That completions rates for Law were 50% lower than the rest of the Faculty. Possible reasons why and how to improve the rates were discussed.
2. The 1+3 MRes is only run as Criminology programmes, and not offered for Law or CSEP. It was proposed to run it on 2 non-Criminology programmes as a trial.
3. A student mentoring scheme for PGR students was being introduced.

Action

1. Yenkong to organise methods seminars, including literature review, structuring chapters. Yenkong to contact the School of Social Sciences to find out how they improve their completion rates
2. Yenkong to consider which programmes to use as trials for the 1+3 MRes.

4. Athena Swan

Reported Carolyn reported that the School was in the process of applying for the bronze Athena Swan award. A discussion took place on how to increase the female PGR numbers, which were 50:50 (male to female) at present. The suggestions noted were: to look at the materials on the website to make more visible the links to maternity policies; to target the best UG and PGT student to apply for the PhD, possibly identifying them at exam boards; employability sessions for academics; to promote the 1+3 degrees, possibly targeting female applicants; to ask the research hubs to bear in mind gender and ethnicity when considering applications; to compare completion rates by gender; to ask students to complete an exit questionnaire, asking about any problems they had; to offer support for career progression.

Noted Good practise on the BMJ programme – including sessions on post-doc applications, CV preparation. The Library is in the process of introducing a resource – My Research Essentials – which is generic but could possibly be subject specific.

5. Admissions Report

Reported For the September 2016, 18 students had registered – 7 Law, 3 Bioethics and Medical Jurisprudence, 5 Criminology, 1 Mphil, 1 PhD by published work and 1 Visiting Student. There were 9 offers for January 2017 entry. A PGR Open Day would be taking place on Wednesday 2 November.

Noted The quality of applications should be considered rather than the quantity.

6. Student Business

Reported The students reported that there had been on-going IT problems since the start of the academic year. They also queried about whether there were plans to update the computers in the PGR Rooms.

Noted Helen had put in a request to IT to update the computers in June 2016 but had not received a reply

Action Helen would contact IT about the update.

7. PGR Conference

Reported The draft schedule had been prepared, with chairs of the sessions identified.

Action Students and staff to be encouraged to attend.

8. TA Recruitment and Academic Appointments

Reported For September 2016 11 new Teaching Assistants had been appointed, along with 34 existing Teaching Assistant posts. Training for the TAs had started. This has formal HEA accreditation.

9. Training in Research Hubs

Reported The possibility of research hubs offering training was discussed. It was felt that this would be possible for bigger hubs. CSEP already runs a seminar series.

Action Yenkong to liaise with research hub leaders.

10. Any Other Unreserved Business

Reported The interviewing of applicants was due to start from September 2016. Two members of staff would be required for the interview process, one should be the proposed supervisor, and another member of staff. Francesco proposed that research hub leaders could be the other staff member. If the hub leader is the proposed supervisor, the hub leader would find another member of staff. The interviews would only be of applicants to whom an offer is going to be made.