Present: 

**Doctoral School**
Professor John Turner [JT] (PGR Dean, Chair), Dr Penny Dowdney [PD], Aashu Jayadeep

**College Directors of PGR**
Dr Helena Miguelez-Carballeira[HM-C] [CoAHB], Prof Debbie Mills[DM] [CoHS]

**Heads of DTPs/DTCs and other centres**
Professor John Healey[JH] [Envision]

**School PGR Leads/ Representatives**
Dr Gwion Williams (BBS), Dr Wei Shi (Law), Pwyl Ap Sion (MM), Dr Robin Mann [RM] (H,P&SoS), Dr Line Cordes (OS), Dr William J Teahan (CS & EE), Dr Sion Williams [SW] (HS), Dr Jane Wakeman [JW][MS]

**PGR Administrators**
Gwenda Pritchard, Julie Boulton

**Students’ Union Representatives**
Mark Barrow

**PGR Student Reps**
Elizabeth Woodcock[EW] (H,P&SoS), Rebecca Ward (LLL), Richard Dallison (NS), Eluned Hudson[EH] (NS), Ashleigh Johnstone (Psychology), Laurie Mortimore (Psychology)

**Apologies:**
Dr James McDonald[JM] (CoESE), Prof Robert Rogers (ESRC DTP), Dr Manon Jones (ESRC DTP), Dr Eirini Sanoudaki (LLL), Dr Aled Llion Jones (Welsh), Dr Neal Hockley (Natural Sciences), Dr Nathalie Fenner (Biology), Dr Martina Lahmann (Chemistry), Dr Richard Ramsey (Psychology), Dr Ross Roberts (SHES), Christine Parry, Everil McQuarie , Janet Thomas, Anwen Williams

**ACTION**

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

   The Board members introduced themselves and the Chair welcomed members to the second meeting of the Doctoral School Board for the new Academic year.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS/ACTIONS**

   1. With reference to minute 2.1 (PGRS & Review meetings), the chair thanked all PGR Leads for encouraging the timely completion. More details will be discussed as part of agenda.

   2. With reference to minute 3.d.2-page 4 (CDT/DTP applications), the topic will be discussed as part of the agenda.

   3. With reference to minute 4.6-page 5 (PRES reporting), more Schools are yet to submit their PRES Action Plans.

   4. The minutes of the meeting held on 27th September were confirmed as a correct record with a minor correction requested by GP on nomination forms (3.a.2), correction from ‘nomination forms can be submitted’ to ‘nomination forms are being submitted’.

3. **BRIEF REPORTS**

   a. **PGR Dean’s Report**
JT informed the Board that the Doctoral School has moved offices to 1st Floor, Main Arts Building.

1. Financial situation & PGR concerns

The Dean reminded the Board that the consultation exercise for the financial situation at the BU is ongoing until February 2019. He mentioned that he is aware of the rising concerns from the PGR community regarding Supervisor displacements, compromises in resources, supervisory committee revisions etc. He informed the Board that no decisions have been made yet regarding the business plans under consultation. Doctoral School members are being invited to ongoing discussions on PGR related matters with concerned groups.

JT reiterated that the Doctoral School will be supporting PGRs facing any difficulties. JW enquired about the kind of support that would be offered. JT mentioned that support will be provided based on individual cases and situations such as the following:

- Work with Colleges/ Schools in providing co-supervisors to step up and possible changes in supervisory committees as required
- External supervision to be sought if applicable, depending on the PGR’s requirement and any funding limitations
- Supporting the School with transfer arrangements (only for 1st & 2nd year PGRs), if there are no other options available
- Arrange Doctoral School drop-in sessions to direct PGRs to relevant needs and requirements

He mentioned that PGRs should not be expected to cover teaching/demonstration to share the workload which may arise due to these changes. There is no obligation on their part to take up any workload (it should be voluntarily, if any) and this should be communicated across the Schools. PGRs who are known to be facing any difficulty are requested to be directed to PGR Directors/ the Doctoral School.

PGR Leads
/ PGR
Admins

2. PGR Monitoring 2018

The Chair thanked the Schools for completing the PGRS Monitoring forms and commented that the overall process went very well.

He noted that 66 forms were awaiting Chair sign off, and 3 were awaiting postgraduate researcher agreement. 9 reviews reported Unsatisfactory outcome, 3 recommended transfer to alternative programmes/

The following Schools still had some outstanding forms:

| Education & HD | 24 |
| SNS: | 48 |
| Law: | 12 |
| IMSCAR: | 3 |
| History/Phil/SS | 23 |
| Psychology: | 19 |
| BBS: | 10 |
| LLL: | 22 |
| Health | 35 |

He requested that PGR Leads check and verify completions.

PGR Leads
3. Matters from Research Degree Committee
The chair highlighted the following sections from the RDC meeting (minutes circulated) held on 29th November 2018.

a. Reference to minute 4 b (Lessons from DTP panels)
b. Reference to minute 5 a.1 (Recruitment)
   JT remarked that recruitment is monitored regularly and currently we stand at 196 international and 15 home applications. We should be hoping to achieve a stable, top quality PGR recruitment. JH enquired if this data includes funded PGRs. JT responded that not in the recruitment data.
c. Reference to minute 5 a.2 (Research Degree Result Report)
   The Chair reiterated that PGR Leads should convey that supervisors ensure that the candidates submit their thesis with minimal errors, rather than treating submissions as a draft. Supervisors must check theses prior to submission.
d. Reference to minute 5 a.3.d (Risks)
   JT indicated that risks associated with PGRs researching abroad on sensitive topics will be reviewed in light of current events (case in UAE). He reiterated that PGR Leads must be proactive in understanding the nature and risks associated with the proposed research fields during the direct application process, before making offers.
e. Reference to minute 6 (PGR Registration period)
   The Chair informed the Board that RDC discussed the current PGR registration period and a proposal has been made to extend it with a nominal fee. WT enquired about the visa implications that could result from the extension. JT remarked that the visa situation will not change as a result of this, and will as now, be reviewed case by case.

4. Internal training
JT reminded the Board that Supervisor training for staff (Effective Supervision & Examining candidates) organised by the Doctoral School will be held at the end of the month.
DS is also looking into organising additional sessions on Chairing review committees and examinations. He informed the group that where a member of staff is currently a PGR candidate, two external examiners are advised in place of internal examiners. He also noted that the fee waiver for staff in these cases will only stand until their contract with the University concludes.

5. Suspensions/withdrawals
JT reminded Schools that outcomes of review meetings could be suspension / termination or withdrawal, if necessary. Schools, via the review committee, could make this recommendation to the Doctoral School (pgr@bangor.ac.uk) and this will then be forwarded to the termination panel, as appropriate.

b. Doctoral School [DS] Report
PD gave the Board an update on the work and developments within the Doctoral School:

1. Training & Development –
i. The second Induction for the academic year was organised for the 16th January. 14 PGR candidates attended the event. PD informed the group that some of the candidates had just missed the first Induction but had not been pointed to any resources available to them. She reminded members that all Doctoral School
resources including the Panopto recordings for these Inductions are available on the DS Blackboard site and on the DS website. Candidates should be encouraged to refer to them.

ii. PURE training has been a success amongst PGRs and additional sessions are being organised for February.

iii. A session on GDPR for PGRs has also been organised for next week.

iv. The DS is also organising procurement training as requested from PGRs. EH extended her support in conducting this session.

2. KESS 2/KESS 2 East/ CDTs-

KESS2: PD reported that a KESS 2 call to recruit new Masters by Research projects is now closed. KESS 2 runs until March 2023 and there are 30+ opportunities available for Masters by Research. Another call will open in 6 weeks. Currently the January claim is being processed, but numbers indicate that we are ahead with spend and within 5% profile.

KESS 2 East: The funding agreement has now been approved. We’ve been awarded £16 million for the project: £9.3 million ESF grant. This is to deliver 260 collaborative projects across Wales: 140 PhDs and 120 Research Masters. KESS 2 East also runs until March 2023.

CDT’s: CDT applications are still awaiting an outcome which is now due.

c. College Directors Reports

1. HM-C (CoAHB) reported the following:
   - Training & Support - The PGR travel bursary scheme has now been extended to all Colleges. Applicants will have to show evidence of acceptance to conferences.
   - Skills workshops such as ‘how to keep an online presence as a researcher/academic’, and ‘how to apply for an academic position’ etc. have been arranged.

2. DM(CoHS) reported the following:
   - PRES Action Plan meeting was organised on Dec 12th to discuss outcomes. A document will be compiled.
   - A College Induction is being discussed.
   - Workshops are being planned from the Library at College level.

3. PD reported the following representing JM(CoESE):
   - A College PRES Action Plan event was held in Sept 2018. All Schools within the College have now completed and are implementing their action plans.
   - As discussed in previous meetings, progress reviews for MScRes candidates will be set up in January, to be completed by the end of March.
   - A College induction meeting for new PGRs starting in January will be held on 17.01.19.
   - KESS 2 task and end group: we are finalising an FAQ document.
   - The PGR conference now involves Computing & EE.
JT and JH remarked that this is a good example and College level events/conferences as such should be encouraged more. The PGRS monitoring system will also be capturing data on such events in the future.

d. SU Report
MB updated the Board on the work and developments within the SU:
1. The Students' Union is making every effort to reach out to PGRs who are anxious about the financial situation of the University. Focus groups have been organised to meet students, especially in the field of Medical Sciences and Chemistry. Talks (Q&A) have also been organised in February with the interim VC. The SU is also collating student concerns to be submitted during the consultation period.
2. The SU is hoping to set up a Course Representative council for PGRs, similar to last year.
3. The PhTea sessions, held on Thursdays between 12:00 and 14:00, are increasingly popular and is a great opportunity for Postgraduate researchers to meet each other.

Regarding teaching opportunities for PHDs (Reference: RDC minutes 5.b), JT informed the Board that allowing PGRs to teach without training or pay does not comply with COP 17 and Regulation 03. However, shadowing opportunities with qualified teachers could be allowed.

e. DTP Reports
JH- a further 5 years of funding has been awarded by NERC, Envision. The annual recruitment and selection process is ongoing

4. PRES action plans- implementation progress
1. JT reminded all that Colleges/ Schools were requested to hold School or College meetings with PGRs or the PGR representatives to drill down further into the issues underpinning the PRES scores and comments. He thanked the Schools who have already submitted and started implementing the plans. He urged members to share best practice or any lessons learned. RM reported that the School has introduced some new plans for PGRs as a result of PRES. SW commented that Health Sciences would be introducing Summer Schools for PGRs. EW remarked that it is also important that Action Plans should indicate that we continuously work towards maintaining the standards of our best practices.
2. JT mentioned that Doctoral School Inductions, which now run three times a year, cover all relevant information for PGRs in response to PRES.
3. He reiterated that there is some urgency to implement actions because PRES is now annual, and the 2019 PRES will open in April.

5. PURE PhD profiles/ E thesis submission
1. JT reiterated that it is important that PGR candidates create their own profile in PURE highlighting their research. It is necessary for PGRs to give their permission for these details to be displayed on School websites.
2. The Doctoral School has organised workshops to help PGRs create PURE profiles.
3. He again encouraged PGR Leads to advise PGRs to update their PURE profile at the earliest opportunity, prior to their first Review meeting. JH commented that it would be good to have an update on the number of PGRs who have completed this.
4. JT reminded all that after the viva has taken place and any corrections made, a final thesis should be submitted to the Library in e-version only. The library will no longer be accepting printed theses. PhD theses will become available through the British Library EThOS (electronic thesis online system) and will be available internationally.

6. Publication and Bar on Access
   1. JT explained that Embargo requests for a thesis publication can be made based on:
      - Commercial grounds
      - Pending patent requirements
      - Sensitive information content
      - Restriction by publication
   2. A request can be made to Doctoral School (pgr@bangor.ac.uk) which can allow up to 6 months bar on access. If a request is for longer than six months it will be forwarded to Senate.
   3. He noted that the DS has been receiving some requests recently but noticed that some of them did not have the required grounds for an Embargo. Hence supervisors should be made aware of the policy.

7. Progress Reviews 2019
   1. The Chair mentioned that, going forward the PGRS monitoring system will have tick boxes to indicate PURE profile completion, proposal completion, literature review completion etc. In future, the system will also incorporate seminar and conference attendance data.
   2. The system will be ready for Masters by Research candidates by February. PGR admins are requested to schedule these before the PhD schedule, which is March-Sept.

8. Athena Swan PGR representation
   The Athena SWAN Charter recognises advancement of gender equality; representation, progression and success for all. The University has an Athena Swan Task Group. JT requested the PGR leads to nominate a PGR rep to the Doctoral School for the Athena Swan Task Group.

9. Open Discussion on PGR matters
   1. EW mentioned that PGRs are in need of quiet space in the Library. JT remarked that Beth Hall, Academic Support Librarian is seeking feedback on Library facilities and could be informed about this.
   2. RM enquired about conference support available for PGRs. JT remarked that unfortunately the Doctoral School do not have a budget to support this and Schools should be addressing this through RSTG.

10. PGR Event
    JT informed all that the Doctoral School is in ongoing discussions with the SU to arrange a PGR event to showcase research across different areas. He requested members to forward us any thoughts on the type of Event and the best time to organise it.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
    The next meeting of the Doctoral School Board will be held on 9th May at 10.00 a.m., in the Main University Building, Cledwyn Conference Room 3.