minutes

Meeting:	Postgraduate Committee
Date:	22nd January 2019
Paper:	Postgraduate Committee Spring 19 – 1 (PGCS449)
Author:	Alexandros Efstratiou
Purpose:	Record of Decision Making

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Minutes of the Postgraduate Committee 22nd January 2019

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Committee members present: Martin Marko (Postgraduate Education Officer), Oli Gray (Activities and Opportunities Officer), Sophie Atherton (Campaigns and Democracy Officer), Charlotte Hallahan (LDC), James McLean (AMA), Saket Jalan (NBS), Anush Rajagopal (LAW)

Chair: Andrea James (AMA)

Apologies: Georgina Burchell (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer), Rob Klim (Ethical Issues Officer)

In attendance: Josh Melling (Student Engagement Coordinator – PG), Alexandros Efstratiou (Advocacy Assistant)

PGCS449   **Statement from the Chair**

-AJ states that items will be timed due to the agenda's length.

PGCS450   **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

-MM states that they requested a section of the minutes to be removed for reasons of confidentiality.
-Committee concurs. Minutes are approved unanimously.

PGCS451   **Action Log**

-Chair goes over the actions that arose from the previous meeting.
-AE states that they have now amended the minutes.
-The FTOs have produced their questions and posted these on Teams.
-AR states that their action point was nullified as the assembly member in question was not present at the last assembly. The action will be followed on at the next assembly.

PGCS452   **PGR Engagement Research**

-JML explains the progress made towards the PGR research. They state that they discussed employing focus groups, which will be funded from the campaigns budget. JML outlines the specifics around how the focus groups would be conducted, including their timeline.
-JML asks the committee whether the £600 required for the focus groups is a sum that the committee is willing to allocate. The committee concurs.
-Follow a question from OG, JM clarifies that these actions are in response to the PGR Engagement Policy.
-OG asks whether there is a feeling amongst postgraduate students that they would like the GSA back. JML clarifies that this is something that the research will attempt to answer, and that the general observation was that engagement decreased following the dissolution of the GSA.
-JM goes through the structure of how the focus groups would be conducted, including how this structure relates to the policy mandates. They ask for the committee's input.
-The committee expresses support for the proposed structure.
-MM commends the idea of letting the participants lead the focus groups, and asks whether any historical data on PGR engagement exists.
-JM explains that some historical data on PGRs in SU leadership positions has been collected, however GSA data is difficult to attain.
-AR questions whether it is necessary to compensate participants, and adds that PGRs' time may be worth more than what is being paid. They suggest introducing more socially oriented motives.

-SA states that people do not tend to give up their time for focus groups unless they are being compensated.
-The committee concurs to introducing things like biscuits, tea and coffee in addition to the £10 compensation.
-AJ opens voting on approving a £600 spending from the campaigns budget for the focus groups:

Approve: 8
Reject: 0
Abstain: 0

-The £600 spending for the focus groups is approved unanimously.
-MM suggests also looking for any existing data on PGTs to compare to the data that will be collected over the course of the PGR Engagement research.

PGCS453   **Budget update**

-MM goes over the spending of the year 2017-18, including budgets that showed an underspending and where there was late spending. They note that activities had the highest spending.
-They draw some suggestions from this data, particularly around money spent on training.
-SA and OG state that the university currently provides no mental health first aid training.
-MM suggests working with the PGR service to examine mental health first aid training provisions for PGRs.

ACTION: MM to liaise with the PGR service to discuss mental health first aid training provisions for PGR students.

-SA asks whether MM's recommendations mean increasing the Campaigns budget. MM states that they are suggesting revisiting budget allocation altogether.
-Following a question by SA, JM clarifies that the £400 left in Campaigns is taking the £600 that will be spent on the PGR research into account.
-MM suggests revisiting this budget to project how it will be spent, comparing the Social Grant and Conference Fund spending to that of last year, and examining the Activities budget, particularly with Postgraduate Yoga in mind.
-AJ suggests introducing a budget discussion as an agenda item for the next committee meeting.

ACTION: JM to include 'Budget discussion' as an agenda item for the next committee meeting.

PGCS454   **Social Grant/Conference Fund Terms Update**

-MM explains that they have passed the creation of some new terms for funding to staff.
-JM explains the proposed changes to administrative procedures.
-AJ suggests introducing measures in the form to check whether applicants have other funding sources, and to check for disparities between the people who request funding.
-Committee concurs for the new administrative procedures to go forward.

ACTION: AE to post the revamped funding application forms in Teams.

PGCS455   **DTS Update**

-MM states that a working group will be established by the university for the DTS transfer and suggests securing SU representation on this working group.
-JM explains that MM is part of the PGR Executive and has a vote in the body.
-The committee concurs to MM's suggestion to attempt to secure representation in the working group for direct input.

PGCS456   **NUS Sections**

-AJ goes through each NUS Sections conference motion so that committee can vote on the Lead Delegate's (MM) vote on each motion's resolves.

Motion 101: Support for a National Education Service

For: 8 (Unanimous)

ACTION: MM to vote FOR Motion 101: Support for a National Education Service at the NUS Sections Conference.

Motion 102: Mature Students are 'Students' Too

-The committee debates whether the mature student label draws on some boundaries that allow for more explicit rights for mature students.
-AJ believes that the motion is not specific, and would probably not work in practice, as the mature student classification sometimes allows for better mature student representation. In the case of pg(su), they add, this comes in the form of granting mature students access to the Scholars Bar, which would not be possible without the mature label.
-There is a discussion around whether this should fall with the mature students' officer rather than the postgraduate committee. JML states that all postgraduate students are automatically classed as mature students. The committee

suggests holding a discussion for the mature student classification under the Any Other Business item.

-AJ opens voting on this motion.

For: 0
Against: 4
Abstain: 4

-As chair, AJ breaks the tie vote by voting against the motion.

ACTION: MM to vote AGAINST Motion 102: Mature Students are 'Students' Too at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Motion 101: A fair deal for Postgraduates Who Teach

For: 8 (Unanimous)

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Motion 101: A fair deal for Postgraduates Who Teach at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Amendment 101a: PhD studentships that require teaching

For: 7
Against: 0
Abstain: 1

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Amendment 101a: PhD studentships that require teaching at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Motion 102: LGBT+ students as co-researchers, not subjects

For: 7
Against: 0
Abstain: 1

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Motion 102: LGBT+ students as co-researchers, not subjects at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Motion 201: Building on National Conference 2018 'UD105 – National Postgraduate Representation': A Practical Implementation

For: 7
Against: 0
Abstain: 1

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Motion 201: Building on National Conference 2018 'UD105 – National Postgraduate Representation': A Practical Implementation at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Motion 301: Hardship Funding for Postgraduate Students

For: 8
Against: 0
Abstain: 0

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Motion 301: Hardship Funding for Postgraduate Students at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Motion 302: Developing Staff-Student Sexual Misconduct Policy

For: 8
Against: 0
Abstain: 0

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Motion 302: Developing Staff-Student Sexual Misconduct Policy at the NUS Sections Conference.

PG Motion 303: Fair pay and contracts for postgraduate students employed by universities

For: 8
Against: 0
Abstain: 0

ACTION: MM to vote FOR PG Motion 303: Fair pay and contracts for postgraduate students employed by universities at the NUS Sections Conference.

-AJ asks whether any work is being done towards the protection of resourcing allocated to postgraduates. MM states that they have checked the Turnaround papers and no reference was made to this.
-AJ suggests discussing this at the next committee.
-SA provides some clarifications around the NUS situation and the redundancies taking place. MM encourages the committee to ask any questions they like for them to take forward.

PGCS457   SU Accommodation Research

-SA states that they will be conducting focus groups with GB to examine whether students would like specific types of accommodation, such as green or alcohol-free accommodation. They add that they would like some postgraduate input into the focus groups, and invite committee members to take part or advertise this to other postgraduate students.

PGCS458   **Integrated Master's Representation by PGSU**

-MM notes that Integrated Master's (IM) students are financially classed as undergraduates, however they are technically doing a Master's degree. They pose the question of whether these students should have access to pg(su) provisions.
-JML asks whether IM students identify as postgraduates. MM believes that this is the case, and that they would like to be treated as PGs.
-JML suggests examining the situation with their campus cards, as IM students are still classed as undergraduates into their fourth year. SA and JM explain that this is an IT issue, as they are also classed in this way in their e-mails and generally all university databases.
-AJ suggests doing some more research into how many students are affected by this, whether any specific schools are affected in particular, and how this classification impacts upon IM students.

ACTION: MM to examine how IM students are affected by the way they are classed, how many of them are affected, and whether any schools in particular are affected the most.

PGCS459   **Absence of Chair from SOC**

-MM raises the possibility of sending a postgraduate committee delegate to SOC to ensure some postgraduate representation on the body.
-SA asks AJ if they have been invited to SOC.
-AJ states that they have, however the body is not accessible.
-JML states that most of SOC members are being paid for their time, while committee members are volunteers and their time is already stretched thin.
-SA suggests an alternative possibility of reading the SOC papers before every meeting and sending thoughts on them, rather than sending a delegate.
-JM states that the committee has the right to adopt a NUS format and put the SOC agenda on Teams to then send thoughts on it.
-OG asks if this agenda item would be put on Teams by FTOs or staff.

ACTION: JM to put the SOC agenda on Teams prior to SOC meetings for the committee to provide thoughts on it.

PGCS460   **Postgraduate Education Officer Union Council Report**

-AJ suggests that MM goes over the highlights of their report.
-MM explains some work they have been doing on accommodation and also state that they worked on a campus kitchen policy. They add that they would like some input from the committee on postgraduate yoga.

-OG reminds the committee that they would like some data exemplifying PG need for sport to take to UEA.
-MM raises the policies around DTS and books, and states that they need to follow up on the progress made towards these.
-MM adds that they will be visiting other SUs across the UK to gather ideas about student engagement and representation.

PGCS461   **SU Employment**

-MM asks for any thoughts on making SU job adverts more accessible to postgraduate students.
-AJ states that this would fit better with assembly as a discussion item.

ACTION: JM to make SU Employment an agenda item for the next assembly.

ACTION: AR to circulate something that signals that SU Employment will be discussed at the next assembly ahead of the meeting.

PGCS462   **Committee Picture in the Graduate Centre**

-MM suggests placing a picture of the Postgraduate Committee in the Graduate Centre, similar to the FTO picture in the Hive.
-AJ asks whether this has been done before.
-JM explains that this was previously done for caucuses, however these pictures were later replaced by a community board.
-JML states that they would not like their picture to be displayed in the Graduate Bar, and they add that, if this were to be implemented, it would be more suitable to implement next year as it is already quite late in the year.
-Committee concurs on having a community board/contact hub along with an idea box in the Graduate Centre, instead of a committee picture.
-MM states that they will raise this in the GCMC.

ACTION: MM to raise a potential installation of a community board/contact hub and an idea box in the Graduate Centre at the next GCMC meeting.

PGCS463   **Any Other Business**

-AR raises discussion around utilising the Scholars Bar to advertise social grants and other opportunities.
-JM states that this is now done through a screen in Scholars Bar every day except for weekends, and they have extended communications to other venues to advertise this on their screens as well. JM adds that scheduling platforms are now being utilised to advertise funding opportunities on Facebook and Twitter every fortnight.

-AR asks for the outcome and feedback of the events that have been held up to now. JM states that this can be placed as an agenda item for the next meeting.
-AJ requests that an events report is put on Teams for committee to see before the next meeting.

ACTION: JM and AE to produce and upload an events report on Teams prior to the next committee meeting.

-AJ redirects the discussion to how mature students are represented by pg(su).

ACTION: JM to put 'Mature Student Representation by PGSU' as an agenda item for the next committee meeting.

-SA states that the next committee meeting will clash with SOC for the FTOs.
-Committee concurs to move the next committee meeting from February 12th to February 13th.

PGCS464   **Time, date and place of next meeting**

February 13th 2019, 5.15-7.15pm, Bookable Rooms 7 & 8

Appendix

PGCA437 Action Log 22nd January 2019

Date Commissioned	Action Required	Assigned To:	Date to be actioned by:
22/01/19	Liaise with the PGR service to discuss mental health first aid training provisions for PGR students.	**MM**	13/02/19
22/01/19	Include 'Budget discussion' as an agenda item for the next committee meeting.	**JM**	13/02/19
22/01/19	Post the revamped funding application forms in Teams.	**AE**	13/02/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR Motion 101: Support for a National Education Service at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote AGAINST Motion 102: Mature Students are 'Students' Too at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Motion 101: A fair deal for Postgraduates Who Teach at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Amendment 101a: PhD studentships that require teaching at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Motion 102: LGBT+ students as co-researchers, not subjects at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Motion 201: Building on National Conference 2018 'UD105 – National Postgraduate Representation': A Practical Implementation at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Motion 301: Hardship Funding for Postgraduate Students at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Motion 302: Developing Staff-Student Sexual Misconduct Policy at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Vote FOR PG Motion 303: Fair pay and contracts for postgraduate students employed by universities at the NUS Sections Conference.	**MM**	29/01/19
22/01/19	Examine how IM students are affected by the way they are classed, how many of them are affected, and whether any schools in particular are affected the most.	**MM**	13/02/19

22/01/19	Put the SOC agenda on Teams prior to SOC meetings for the committee to provide thoughts on it.	**JM**	Recurring
22/01/19	Make SU Employment an agenda item for the next assembly.	**JM**	28/01/19
22/01/19	Circulate something that signals that SU Employment will be discussed at the next assembly ahead of the meeting.	**AR**	28/01/19
22/01/19	Raise a potential installation of a community board/contact hub and an idea box in the Graduate Centre at the next GCMC meeting.	**MM**	13/02/19
22/01/19	Produce and upload an events report on Teams prior to the next committee meeting.	**JM, AE**	13/02/19
22/01/19	Put 'Mature Student Representation by PGSU' as an agenda item for the next committee meeting.	**JM**	13/02/19