A MEETING of the Postgraduate Research Committee will be held in Parliament Hall on Tuesday 2 May 2017 at 2pm. Coffee and tea will be provided from 1.30pm.

AGENDA

1. Meeting Minutes & Matters Arising
   I. Minute of the Meeting held on 12 April 2017 PGRC/16/10
   II. Matters arising Verbal

2. Discussion Items
   I. University Employability Strategy PGRC/16/11
   II. Issues for next year Verbal

3. For formal approval: Policies and Regulations
   I. Co-tutelle policy PGRC/16/12
   II. Second Supervisors PGRC/16/13

4. Papers for Information
   I. Examining Committee Outcomes – Senate Regulation PGRC/16/14
      Updates
   II. PGT Marking and Classification PGRC/16/15
   III. GRADskills Brochures PGRC/16/16
   IV. UUKi Report on PhD Student Mobility PGRC/16/17

5. Presentation
   I. Sustainability in the Curriculum: Dr Katherine Ellsworth-Krebs (Research Facilitator) PGRC/16/18

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 11 October 2017, 2-4 pm in Parliament Hall
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN PARLIAMENT HALL ON 12 APRIL 2017

Present: The Proctor, Convenor; the Dean of Arts & Divinity; Dr J Palmer, Pro Dean; Professor T Meagher; Dr M Lavan; Dr M Nacenta; Dr D Moffitt; Professor M Costa-Gomes; Dr P MacKay; Dr N Finney; Dr T Raub; Dr R Bavaj; Dr F McCallum; Dr P Roscoe; Dr J Mitchell; Professor M Orr; Dr J Keeling; Dr I Jentzsch, Directors of Postgraduate Studies; Mr E Grant, Student Members; Dr B Rao; Ms J Brooks; Mr K Donachie; Ms H McNae; Ms M Earley; Dr L Meischke, Unit Representatives; Ms E Feamster, Clerk

In attendance: Dr S Pitt (for Dr P Reynolds); Dr H McKiggan-Fee (for Mrs C Morris), Ms K Schubert.

Apologies: The Vice-Principal (Research) & Provost of St Leonard’s College; the Dean of Science; the Dean of Medicine; Dr L Goddard; Dr P Reynolds; Dr P Greenough; Mrs C Morris

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
   i) Apologies for absence

   Apologies were noted and the Proctor welcomed those attending for the first time.

2. MEETING MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING
   i) Postgraduate Research Committee meeting of 8 February 2017

   The minute of the meeting (on file, PGRC/16/1) was agreed as a correct record.

   ii) Matters Arising

   PGRC members were asked to note the window for the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) which will run from 27 April to 18 May 2017.

   Mr Kevin Donachie provided an update on the University’s plagiarism detection software. After a thorough review of the services provided by Urkund and Turnitin the decision was taken to return to Turnitin. The target date for this change is September 2017.

   The Proctor informed PGRC members that the Open Forum for the 2017/18 academic year will be on the theme of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, which may be of particular interest for postgraduate research students. More details will be provided in due course.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS
   i) Examination regulations for MSt(Res)/MSc(Res)
The Pro Dean (Postgraduate Research) presented a proposed set of examination regulations for the MSt(Res)/MSc(Res) one year research degrees (on file, PGRC/16/2). The regulations closely resemble those for the MPhil. Concerns were raised that the exam requirements are too demanding for a one year degree. It was agreed that an oral examination should be the exception rather than the norm.

Some Schools stated that they expected the new degrees to be attractive to students and expressed a concern that providing a separate external examiner for each student would be both costly and time consuming. The Dean of Arts and Divinity suggested that the degrees could be managed as cohorts, with one external examiner per cohort.

Professor Thomas Meagher shared that the School of Biology has instituted a mid-year review to ensure that MSc(Res) students are making appropriate progress. The Proctor encouraged all Schools to consider adopting similar good practice.

**Actions:**
- PGR Pro Dean to update document in light of feedback.
- Clerk to submit to May Academic Council for final approval.
- Clerk to notify PGRC members once final approval is received.
- Proctor’s Office to confirm whether examination forms have been created for the new degrees.
- DoPGs to consider implementing mid-year progress reviews for MSt(Res)/MSc(Res) students.

ii) PGR Termination of Studies

The PGR Pro Dean informed PGRC members that information regarding termination of studies for postgraduate research students can currently be found in several locations, and the policy statements vary to some extent. The paper submitted to PGRC (on file, PGRC/16/3) formalises current practice and proposes to incorporate termination of studies in the existing Progress Reviews for Postgraduate Research Students policy. Following discussion, it was agreed that a clause will be added to allow a student to be terminated for failing to adequately engage with feedback. The policy was approved subject to this change.

**Actions:**
- PGR Pro Dean/Clerk to amend the policy based on feedback.
- Clerk to submit to May Academic Council for final approval.

5. FOR FORMAL APPROVAL: POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

i) Update to the Parental Leave Policy for Postgraduate Research Students

The update (on file, PGRC/16/4) allows for 2 weeks of paid paternal or
supporting partner leave for postgraduate research students in receipt of a maintenance grant from the university. The proposal was approved.

**Action:**
- Clerk to submit to May Academic Council for final approval.
- Registry to consider any additional actions needed to implement the policy.

ii) **Policy and Guidance on Vivas using Videoconferencing**

PGRC discussed an update (on file, PGRC/16/5) to the policy and guidance on the use of videoconferencing for PGR vivas. The policy update clarifies when a request to use videoconferencing software in a viva can be made. Updates to the guidance include information on the approval process, training, preparation and set-up, and waivers. A clause regarding appeals has also been added. Following discussion, the paper was approved subject to minor amendments.

**Action:**
- Clerk to make amendments and progress to May Academic Council for final approval.

6. **Sharing of Best Practice**

i) **PGR Engagement**

Colleagues were asked to discuss planned activities to increase PGR engagement and improve response rates on the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The Proctor invited the Postgraduate Academic Convenor to start by speaking about some of the obstacles to getting postgraduate research students involved in representation and feedback. He reported there is often a larger disconnect between PGR students and the administrative processes of the university. He also felt that the Students Association, which organises student representation, is viewed as an organization for undergraduate students, making postgraduate students less likely to engage. Engagement and requests for feedback from postgraduate students is most effective when it is done at the School level, through normal supervisory arrangements, postgraduate seminars or other events specifically for PGR students.

Dr Heather McKiggan-Fee reported on a recent CAPOD event for PGR students starting outside the normal registration period of August and September. None of the students attending had received a School-level induction. Colleagues were reminded that PGR students starting at unusual times should still receive and induction, or at least meet with the DoPG and be introduced to key School staff.

DoPGs then shared examples of good practice in their Schools to encourage PGR engagement, including:
• International Relations is holding an Open Forum lunch to talk about PRES and other PGR initiatives (eg PURE). The Head of School, Director of Teaching, and DoPG will attend to answer questions, respond to verbal feedback and discuss improvements made based on past student feedback.
• Physics will replace a regular colloquium with a feedback session. Coffee and pastries will be provided and staff will be on hand to answer questions.
• Classics holds a town hall each semester to gather feedback.
• History has a postgraduate committee which meets twice a year. Students are also asked in the annual progress review if they would like any additional support.
• Geography has an annual postgraduate conference run by the PGR students which helps to build community and empower students. Participating in this conference is a requirement and is discussed at the annual progress review.
• Modern Languages requires PGR students to report on four training or development activities they have attended each year at their annual progress review.

The Proctor stressed the importance of reporting back to students so they are aware when improvements are made based on their feedback.

**Action:**
• DoPGs to provide some induction for PGR students starting outwith the normal registration period.
• DoPGs to encourage high PRES response rate in their School.
  o Inform students about PRES and its importance, including how the feedback will be used.
  o Educate supervisors about PRES and ask for their help in encouraging participation.
• PGRC members to consider adopting areas of good practice in their units.
• Proctor’s Office to provide DoPGs with the subject line from the email sent to students including their personalised PRES link, as well as additional information about what the students will be asked to do.

7. **Papers for Information**

   i) **Proctor’s Update** (on file, PGRC/16/6)

   The update on progress review improvements in MMS was highlighted, and DoPGs were reminded that all forms are now available in MMS and any problems arising should be reported directly to the IT Helpdesk.

   Dr Lara Meischke spoke regarding the guidance for students reporting sexual assault to School staff. PGRC members were advised to direct any such cases to Student Services immediately, and to avoid collecting more information from the student.

   ii) All other papers for information were received without comment.
8. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 2 May 2017 at 2pm in Parliament Hall.

Professor Lorna Milne
Vice-Principal (Proctor)
University of St Andrews

Postgraduate Research Committee

EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY

1. Introduction

1.1. This Employability Strategy has been developed by a Working Group (chaired by the Dean of Arts & Divinity), which included representatives from the Careers Centre, CAPOD and the undergraduate and postgraduate student bodies.

2. Action requested

2.1. Postgraduate Research Committee is asked to particularly note and discuss how the proposed Strategy impinges on the work of academic Schools, the Curriculum Approvals Group and other stakeholders in employability.

3. Consultation

3.1. The Strategy was considered by the Academic Business Committee and has been substantially revised to reflect ABC’s request for greater clarity on: responsibilities; (stretching) actions; and targets and measures. It will also be reviewed by Learning and Teaching Committee at its May meeting.

4. Recommendation

4.1. It is recommended that the Postgraduate Research Committee approve the Strategy.

5. Next steps

5.1. Following approval by the Postgraduate Research Committee, (and Learning and Teaching Committee), the paper will be submitted to the next meeting of Academic Council.

6. Further information

6.1. Further information is available from the presenter.

Authors
Paul Brown (Director, Careers Centre)
Cat Wilson (Head of Student Development, CAPOD)

Presenter
Paul Hibbert (Dean of Arts & Divinity)

11th April 2017
This strategy is designed to affirm the importance of the employability agenda for the University and to identify how student employability can best be enhanced in a St Andrews context. As outlined in the University strategy\(^1\), the University is committed “to continue to expand internship opportunities within our Degree programmes, to embed employability skills in the curriculum wherever possible without compromising academic ambition, and to offer extra-curricular avenues for the development of high-level professional skills.” The University will develop best practice in supporting all students’ employability and will actively monitor the success of this strategy through internal review and survey data.

1. Introduction

Lifelong graduate employability in the twenty-first century will depend on continuing mastery of a number of inter-related attributes. University students expect their university education and experiences to provide them with the foundations for either further study and research, or immediate and continuing graduate employment, or self-employment. The University of St Andrews is committed to delivering the education, resources and environment which will enable students to become highly employable in the present and the future. Both immediate and subsequent successful outcomes will depend, however, on the commitment and capabilities of the student or graduate as well as the contingencies of the labour market.

Graduates are employable when they have the skills, knowledge and personal attributes which enable them to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful. The University of St Andrews recognises students’ desires and needs to develop their employability while studying at the University and seeks to provide the most conducive environment possible for students to become highly employable. The University recognises that success in this endeavour is a shared responsibility, demanding the committed engagement of students themselves as well as significant contributions from academic schools and a range of professional service units. The Careers Centre and Centre for Academic, Professional & Organisational Development (CAPOD) have particular and clearly identified roles to play in respect to employability. These are outlined in section 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7.

The remainder of this document details where and how responsibilities are shared to deliver this strategy, how good practices are identified, established and shared, and how success will be measured. An operational plan is appended.

\(^1\) University Strategy 2015-2025 http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/about/governance/university-strategy/
2. Engagement with stakeholders

2.1 Student commitment and engagement

Students are expected to understand the importance of taking responsibility for their employability development and to engage with careers resources and support early in their university careers. Thereafter they will be encouraged to prioritise their employability development through active engagement with the resources and experiences made available to them.

They will be encouraged to approach their University experience with a growth mindset (a self-development disposition to feedback and support) and engage in personal development planning each year to strengthen their employability skills.

2.2 Academic Schools

Academic Schools will actively engage with developing student employability.

All academic modules can potentially contribute to students’ ability to develop a range of employability skills. Additionally, academic staff will, where appropriate, create and develop modules with specific employability outcomes in mind; make linkages between academic content and workplace skills; and incorporate assessment methods that mirror workplace outputs (e.g. writing reports, policy briefings and group presentations). Finally, Schools will provide an academic endorsement of the employability support available to students and communicate the importance of planning their future careers through engagement with the Careers Centre and CAPOD.

2.3 Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Students are encouraged to engage with the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities available. Such activities are an important part of the student experience and can also foster employability skills.

2.4 Careers Centre and CAPOD

Students will be encouraged to develop an additional range of employability and career management skills and attitudes, principally through the resources and guidance of the Careers Centre and CAPOD, that are complementary to the skills developed in their academic studies.

In addition to workshops, events and careers fairs, the Careers Centre will provide individual guidance and coaching for students which encompasses career choice, resource and opportunity identification, networking and application support. The Careers Centre will also provide a wide range of further study and employment resources, with global scope, mainly through its website.

CAPOD, primarily through its Professional Skills Programme, will raise students’ awareness of the range of professional skills which employers value. Their development will be facilitated via workshops, online learning, and training for voluntary student roles.
2.5 Work Experience

The Careers Centre will work to help each student identify areas of work experience suitable for their career aspirations, and support them in their applications. The University, through Schools and the Careers Centre, will provide an extensive range of exclusive undergraduate internship opportunities in research and professional areas. The Careers Centre will continue to gather and promote local part-time job opportunities.

2.6 Employer Engagement

The University will actively engage with graduate employers to better understand their needs, to promote to them the quality of St Andrews graduates and to maximise the number and range of internship and graduate opportunities. The Careers Centre will maintain a dialogue with graduate employers to remain informed about recruitment trends.

2.7 Alumni Support

The University, through the Careers Centre and CAPOD, will support recent alumni in the early stages of their career, and seek to draw on the experience of experienced alumni to strengthen the employability skills of future graduates.

3. Establishing and sharing good practices

The University will commit to the regular review and sharing of good employability practice in a number of ways, including through: the internal quality monitoring process; the Employability Working Group; the Careers Link network in Schools; and regular update meetings between the Careers Centre and CAPOD. A clear reporting line between these groups and the Proctor will be established to facilitate good communication and identification of priorities.

4. Monitoring Outcomes

The success of this strategy will be reported in the following ways:

**Internal review:** The Employability Working Group will commission an annual report, combining the Careers Centre Annual Report and CAPOD Professional Skills Curriculum data, to be tabled subsequently at the Learning and Teaching Committee and Service Directors’ Student Experience Group, reviewing the effectiveness of the Institution’s holistic approach to employability, and drawing conclusions from the data on usage of resources, student satisfaction, and comparative performance (e.g. HESA employability indicator). The Working Group will table recommendations for future improvements.

**Survey data:** Each year the DLHE survey data will continue to be analysed and shared institutionally as part of the Careers Centre’s Annual Report. In addition, an internal 2017 student pre-arrival and graduation employability survey will be introduced to establish benchmarks and to allow for improvement and maintenance targets to be set.
5. Operational Plan

This operational plan is a summation of a range of employability activities undertaken across the University. The success of these activities will be mainly monitored internally within individual Units and Schools. Trend lines will be closely scrutinised to identify areas of success or for action.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Employability</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible Partner</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>How Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-directed application, self-efficacy and self-awareness</td>
<td>Pre-arrival surveys sent to all incoming UG and PGT students</td>
<td>CAPOD, with support from Careers, Admissions, Student Services and Registry</td>
<td>Commencing in June 2017 and yearly thereafter</td>
<td>Survey data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creation of 'Preparation for Student Life App' including a section on 'skills for the future'</td>
<td>CAPOD, with support from Enhancement Theme Team</td>
<td>Launch in June 2017 and updated yearly thereafter</td>
<td>Creation of app and resultant student take up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All students encouraged to access the 'Making Feedback Work for You' (Growth Mindset) Moodle course</td>
<td>CAPOD, with support from Registry and Deans</td>
<td>Launched in September 2017</td>
<td>Data on student engagement with the resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Development planning resources signposted by Academic Advisors</td>
<td>Academic Advisors, with support from Careers Centre and CAPOD</td>
<td>Launch in September 2017</td>
<td>Informal monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic studies</td>
<td>The Curriculum Approvals Group will consider employability factors when approving new programmes.</td>
<td>Curriculum Approvals Group</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Inclusion on CAG agenda and in minutes, and through revision to the proposal form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employability will be made an explicit part of internal reviews of schools</td>
<td>CAPOD, with support from the Deans</td>
<td>Launch in September 2017</td>
<td>Inclusion in internal review documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schools will select a suitable member of Academic staff to act as a 'Careers Link' to support employability activity within the School</td>
<td>The Proctor</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Number of Careers Link staff identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-Curricular Opportunities</td>
<td>Working experiences in the School of Education and Care Professions</td>
<td>Careers Centre, with support from The Proctor</td>
<td>Numbers of leaflets distributed. Informal student feedback</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Extra-Curricular Opportunities</td>
<td>Provision of bespoke professional skills workshops for society and club committees</td>
<td>CAPOD</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Number of committees engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-Curricular Opportunities</td>
<td>Promotion of extra-curricular opportunities in admissions and orientation week materials</td>
<td>Student Services, Admissions</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Presence of information in materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-Curricular Opportunities</td>
<td>Promotion of extra-curricular activities in Careers Centre contexts e.g. workshops</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Internal monitoring through Careers Advisor meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-curricular Support</td>
<td>Provision and monitoring of comprehensive guidance, advice and careers information resources.</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Positive trend data in Careers Centre annual report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>Provision of Careers Centre’s suite of resources, 1:1 appointment service and Jobs-shop.</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Positive trend data in Careers Centre annual report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>A summer undergraduate internship programme, Laidlaw research internship programme and a range of Work Shadowing programmes will be run each year.</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Numbers of students engaged in the programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>Academic Schools will aim to facilitate and enable students who want to integrate work experience into their degree pathway where appropriate.</td>
<td>The Proctor and Heads of Schools, with support from the Deans</td>
<td>Review in academic year 2017/18 to produce guidance notes for 2018/19</td>
<td>Number of students integrating work experience into their degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Note: policy at https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/teaching-and-learning/policies/Work_Placements.pdf
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Engagement</th>
<th>Provision of Careers Fairs in St Andrews, and frequent employer events both on-line and in-person.</th>
<th>Careers Centre</th>
<th>On-going</th>
<th>Number of students attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify and monitor the outcomes from 10 representative employers of the comparative success of St Andrews students in the application process. Also monitor other 3rd party survey outcomes, eg High Fliers and THES</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>From academic year 2017/18</td>
<td>Number of graduate employers engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Support</td>
<td>Expansion of a bank of alumni case studies, networking, mentoring and shadowing schemes.</td>
<td>Careers Centre with support from Alumni and Development</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Number of case studies, mentors and shadowing opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continued access to support from the Careers Centre and CAPOD for recent alumni</td>
<td>Careers Centre and CAPOD, with support from Development</td>
<td>Resources marketed from September 2017</td>
<td>Number of alumni engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing and sharing good practice</td>
<td>Coordination of activities via an Employability working group comprising members of academic and professional staff, and the student body.</td>
<td>Deans</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Minutes of Employability Working Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish clusters of employability meetings, determined by employment profiles to raise awareness within the academic community of ongoing employability activities.</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>Launch in academic year 2017/18</td>
<td>Engagement of Careers Links and creation of items submitted for discussion at LTC and/or PGRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual discussion of employability at LTC and PGRC</td>
<td>The Proctor</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Inclusion in agenda and minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creation of a regular employability newsletter for University staff</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>Launch in June 2017</td>
<td>Newsletter published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Responsible Body</td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular meetings and communication to ensure collaborative working between CAPOD and the Careers Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td>Careers Centre and CAPOD</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Monthly meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Review</td>
<td>Commission of an annual report, reflecting on the usage of resources, student satisfaction, and comparative performance (e.g. HESA employability indicator).</td>
<td>Employability working group</td>
<td>Launch in June 2018</td>
<td>Publication of annual report for the Learning and Teaching Committee and Service Directors Student Experience Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Data</td>
<td>Analysis and sharing of annual DHLE survey data</td>
<td>Careers Centre</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Publication of analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction of a graduate employability survey for graduating students, embedded within the online graduation processes. Data will be compared with pre-arrival expectations via the pre-arrival survey.</td>
<td>Careers Centre with support from Registry</td>
<td>Launch in June 2017</td>
<td>Engagement with survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paul Brown, Cat Wilson, Paul Hibbert

11th April 2017
1. **Introduction**

1.1. The purpose of the paper is to propose revisions to the Policy for Postgraduate Research Students: Registration, Induction and Periods of Study (1.3 Co-tutelle – Joint PhD Programmes).

2. **Action requested**

2.1. PGRC is asked to review and approve the suggested amendments.

3. **Consultation**

3.1. The issues outlined in this paper were presented in the 2015/16 Annual Report on Collaborative Programmes which was considered by the Academic Monitoring Group in September 2016. Following that meeting, the Academic Policy Officer consulted with the Pro Dean (Postgraduate Research) and Collaborations & Study Abroad Office (Sam Lister and Christian Harding). Academic Business Committee has approved this paper.

4. **Background / context**

4.1. There are around 30 active co-tutelle agreements with a further 10 currently in negotiation, each specific to an individual student and a partner institution. Co-tutelle agreements are in place with several European institutions, as well as international institutions such as the University of Malawi, University of Stellenbosch, University of Cape Town, the University of Tasmania, Macquarie University and the University of São Paulo (a Science without Borders Joint PhD). Each co-tutelle is customised according to a student’s research plan, and so the number and range of active co-tutelles can vary considerably each academic year.

4.2. During the academic year 2014-2015, a new approval process was introduced for co-tutelle agreements, and this has significantly improved the set-up of co-tutelle arrangements, ensuring that key elements, such as progression and award requirements, are understood and agreed at the outset.

4.3. There are still several areas relating to co-tutelle agreements which require further discussion and development of policy. These include:

- Clarifying the examination process, particularly with partnerships in countries eg Australia where the *viva voce* is not a common form of assessment.
• Establishing consistent timelines for the development of new co-tutelle agreements, outlining when a co-tutelle is no longer a viable option due to communication concerns with the partner institution.
• Reinforcing the importance of joint supervision from the start of the co-tutelle agreement.
• Introducing clear guidelines for the treatment of Tier 4 students and shared reporting responsibilities with Partner Institutions.

4.4. This paper addresses bullet point one, i.e. clarifies the examination process where the *viva voce* is not a common form of assessment. The other issues are being taken forward separately by the Collaborations & Study Abroad Office.

5. Recommendation

5.1. To approve the policy amendment which would come into effect from academic session 2017/18.

6. Next steps

6.1. Once approved by the Postgraduate Research Committee the paper will progress to Academic Council for final approval.

7. Further information

*Author*  
Emily Feamster  
Academic Policy Officer

*Presenter*  
Sam Lister  
Head of Academic Partnerships

Sam Lister  
Head of Academic Partnerships & International Experience

11 April 2017
REGISTRATION, INDUCTION AND PERIODS OF STUDY

1.3 Co-Tutelle (Joint PhD Programmes)

The University may collaborate with other universities to register postgraduate research students under a co-tutelle (joint degree) agreement when this is strategically justified. This agreement facilitates joint supervision and awards to be formally recognised. A co-tutelle arrangement should only be proposed when all parties involved are confident that the partner institutions share appropriately high academic standards and quality assurance.

A formal co-tutelle agreement must be in place before the student matriculates for the first time. The rules that govern a co-tutelle or joint PhD programme (in terms of selection, admission, supervision, progress and review arrangements, training, assessment, etc.) must be negotiated between the institutions prior to signing the co-tutelle agreement, so that the minimum requirements of both can be met.

Where St Andrews is the lead institution our internal postgraduate research policies and procedures should be followed. Any exceptions to normal University policies may be approved by the Dean, but only where there is good reason and there are assurances that the standard of the PhD and the quality of the student experience will not be compromised.

Where St Andrews is not the lead institution, the following minimum progression and examination arrangements must be met:

- **Every research student will undergo a progress review at least once in each year of registration.** The institution at which the research student is currently hosted will undertake the review, but the Lead Institution will have overall responsibility for the process. When necessary, the School postgraduate committee will request a copy of the research student’s reports from the partner during the academic year to allow for monitoring to take place. The requirements, timing, style, assessment criteria and potential outcomes of the progress review must be made clear to research students from the beginning of their co-tutelle programme (see also Progress Reviews for Postgraduate Research Students).

- **If, due to the requirements of the partner institution, the thesis is presented in a language other than English, the student will be required to provide an in-depth synopsis in English at the time of submission.**

- **Examination requirements must be agreed at the point of the co-tutelle proposal.** The examining committee should always include at least one internal examiner from St Andrews and one external examiner who has been agreed by both institutions.

- **Every student must complete an oral examination.** The preference is to have a Viva at St Andrews or a similar oral examination organised by the partner institution. Where a viva is not the norm at the partner institution, a compromise arrangement should be agreed at the time of proposal, eg thesis examination by committee followed by a public defence.

For additional information about co-tutelle degrees, please contact the Collaborations and Study Abroad team at collabs@st-andrews.ac.uk.
1. **Introduction**

1.1. The purpose of the paper is to propose revisions to existing PGR Policy to clarify the different kinds of supervisors used by the University. The proposed revisions will also assist with making a distinction between supervisors and mentors in University systems including PURE.

2. **Action requested**

2.1. To approve the recommended revisions to Policy and SITS.

3. **Consultation**

3.1. The issues were first raised at a DoPGR lunch in 2015/16 and were further discussed at PGRC in March 2017. The Pro Dean (PGR) also consulted a team from Registry, including Alison Sandmen, Jacqueline Ritchie, and Alex Griffiths. Academic Business Committee has approved this paper.

4. **Background / context**

4.1. At present, different schools use the term ‘second supervisor’ in different ways, some to refer to pastoral mentors, some to refer to academic supervisors. The position of some other supervisors is also unclear, e.g. the use of retired members of staff or external supervisors. This can often lead to talking at cross-purposes and poor managerial decisions regarding PGR supervision. It has been agreed in consultations that the existing PGR Policy is unclear in its definitions. See Appendix A for commentary on the problems of the existing Policy and a proposed new version.

4.2. Please note that proposed changes should also be made in relation to QAA B11 Indicator 10 on Research Student Supervision. The key stipulations in this document are (i) that there be ‘a supervisory team containing a main supervisor who is the clearly identified point of contact’ and (ii) ‘in addition to the main supervisor, the supervisory team may include: other supervisors and research staff in the subject; a departmental adviser to postgraduate students; a faculty postgraduate tutor; other individuals in similar roles’.

4.3. At the same time, ‘second supervisors’ who are only pastoral mentors often find that their mentees are listed in their PURE profile as if they were their research students. This caused distortions in research records that were problematic when the University was preparing for REF2014. To solve this problem, Registry will use three categories in SITS: SUP-P (Principal Supervisor), SUP-
S (Secondary Supervisor), and SUP-R (Mentor), which will allow for clearer distinction between pastoral and academic supervision.

5. **Recommendation**

5.1. To approve the proposed revised text in Appendix A and the creation of a clear distinction between Second Supervisors and Mentors in SITS.

6. **Next steps (optional heading)**

6.1. Once approved by PGRC, Emily Feamster will change the Policy as stated online at [http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/teaching/strategypolicy/policy/postgraduate/research/pgrstudents/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/teaching/strategypolicy/policy/postgraduate/research/pgrstudents/) Registry will amend data in SITS as appropriate.

7. **Further information**

**Author and Presenter**

James Palmer  
Pro Dean (Research PGs)  
8 March 2016

**APPENDIX A**

**Existing Text and Its Problems (commentary in italics)**

1. Definitions and Requirements

There must always be one clearly identified point of contact for the student, this will generally be the principal (or main) supervisor who will be part of the supervisory team. Supervision of research degree students should involve at least two people.

At least one member of the supervisory team will be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s), so as to ensure that the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research developments. Breadth of experience and knowledge across the supervisory team will mean that the student always has access to someone with experience of supporting research student(s) through to successful completion of their programme.

**COMMENT: This section accurately captures the spirit of the QAA document.**

**Principal supervisor**

A member of the academic staff of the University appointed to supervise a research degree student. The principal supervisor normally will have relevant research expertise in the proposed study area. Principal supervisors are normally full-time members of academic staff in the post of lecturer and above. Exceptional arrangements for other academic staff may be allowed by agreement with the ProDean.

**COMMENT: This section accurately reflects QAA concerns, but it has been separated from the crucial issue of having a single point of contact.**
Second supervisor
A member of the academic staff who primarily acts as a mentor to the student. They will provide advice and support independent from the principal supervisor as necessary and may also provide pastoral support. The second supervisor may also provide appropriate specialist subject expertise in the research area; provide continuity of support when the principal supervisor is absent and/or act as a mentor to the principal supervisor when the principal supervisor does not have the required experience of supporting a research degree student through to graduation.

COMMENT: This section attempts to define mentors and joint supervisors simultaneously in a way which has generated confusion, not least because the following section defines joint supervisors. NB there is no QAA commitment to there being a mentor in every case if there is a team in place – it states ‘between them, the supervisors, and where relevant, other members of the supervisory team, ensure that research students receive sufficient support and guidance to facilitate their success’.

Joint supervisor
May be appointed when the research expertise required to support the student spans two or more research areas and therefore the supervision of the student is shared between two members of academic staff. The proportions of supervision are normally agreed at the start of the arrangement, 50:50, 70:30 etc.

COMMENT: The wording here is fine but it is not clear how this is supposed to work with the definition of second supervisor above.

Industrial supervisor
An individual who is responsible for the local supervision of a student whilst they are on an industrial placement. This individual will not normally be the principal supervisor.

COMMENT: Again the definition is fine but it is not clear how it relates to definitions of second or joint supervisor above it.

NB Nowhere in these definitions is an external supervisor other than an industrial supervisor mentioned. Schools are keen to bring in outside support or to appoint retired staff.

Proposed Revision (with significant changes underlined).

1. Definitions and Requirements

Supervision of research degree students must involve at least two people: a principal supervisor and at least one of the following:

- Secondary supervisor
- A pastoral mentor
At least one member of the supervisory team will be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s), so as to ensure that the direction and monitoring of the student’s progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research developments. Breadth of experience and knowledge across the supervisory team will mean that the student always has access to someone with experience of supporting research student(s) through to successful completion of their programme. All schools must use the agreed terminology for supervisors, as set out below.

Principal Supervisor

The main member of the academic staff of the University appointed to supervise a research degree student. They will act as the one clearly identified point of contact for the student. The principal supervisor will normally have relevant research expertise in the proposed study area. Principal supervisors are normally full-time members of academic staff in the post of lecturer and above. Exceptional arrangements for other academic staff may be allowed by agreement with the Pro Dean. Where more than one person has supervisory responsibilities for the student, there will still only be one principal supervisor.

Secondary Supervisor

A secondary supervisor is an academic co- or joint supervisor appointed to support a research degree student. They may be appointed when the research expertise required to support the student spans two or more research areas, or where research expertise overlaps, and therefore the supervision of the student is shared between two members of academic staff. The proportions of supervision are normally agreed at the start of the arrangement, 50:50, 70:30 etc. A secondary supervisor may also provide continuity of support when the principal supervisor is absent and/or act as a mentor to the principal supervisor when the principal supervisor does not have the required experience of supporting a research degree student through to graduation.

Supervisors who are not contracted members of staff at the University, including supervisors from industry, may only usually be appointed as a second supervisor on completion of an agreement outlining relevant responsibilities and expectations. In such cases an additional secondary supervisor or pastoral mentor should be appointed from the University.

Pastoral Mentor

A member of the academic staff who primarily acts as a mentor to the student. They will provide advice and support independent from the principal and secondary supervisors as necessary and may also provide pastoral support. They will not normally be involved in the direct supervision of the research project and would therefore be eligible to examine the final thesis if there were no other perceived conflict of interest identified by the Director of Postgraduate Studies. They may be involved in the annual progress review process for their mentees.
1. **Introduction**

1.1. Minor changes to the examination outcomes in the Postgraduate Senate Regulations are proposed to ensure consistency.

2. **Action requested**

2.1. This paper is for information only.

3. **Consultation**

3.1. The changes were made by the PGR Pro Dean, Academic Policy Officer, and Team Leader of the Postgraduate Research Thesis Examination Management project.

4. **Background / context**

4.1. As part of the Senate Efficiency Review (SER) programme a new e:Vision tool is being developed which will streamline the process of thesis submission and examination of postgraduate research students. The new development will allow much of the paperwork involved in submitting and examining a PGR thesis to be moved online, making the entire process simpler, quicker and more transparent.

4.2. It became clear during the development of this new tool that the paper exam outcome forms currently in use do not align with the Senate Regulations. Inconsistencies were also identified in the wording for the same outcomes across different degrees. This paper presents typographical changes to the Senate regulations to standardise examination outcomes as much as possible. The new e:Vision tool will incorporate the wording found here.

5. **Next steps**

5.1. The 2017/18 Postgraduate Senate Regulations will reflect the changes below and the new e:Vision tool will be live by the start of the 2017/18 academic year.

6. **Further information**

**Author**

Emily Feamster  
Academic Policy Officer

Jacqueline Ritchie  
Team Leader, Postgraduate Research Thesis Examination Management
I. Thesis for MPhil and MFA

1. The examiners shall recommend to the Dean:
   A. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil or MFA be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or
   B. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis within a period of three months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil or MFA be awarded; or
   C. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis and resubmit it for re-examination within six months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee—this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or
   D. that the thesis be rejected, and that the candidate be awarded the degree of MLitt, MSc, or Postgraduate Diploma where the work meets the required standard and is so qualified.

II. Resubmission of Thesis for MPhil and MFA

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:
   A. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil or MFA be awarded, as appropriate; or
   B. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil or MFA be awarded subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or
   C. that the thesis be rejected, and that the candidate be awarded the degree of MLitt, MSc, or Postgraduate Diploma where the work meets the required standard and is so qualified.

A. AWARDS FOR RESEARCH ONLY: MSc(Res), MSt(Res), MPhil (by research route) and PhD

I. Submission and Examination of the MPhil (by research route) Thesis

1. The examiners shall recommend to the Dean:
   A. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or
   B. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis within a period of three months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil be awarded; or
   C. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis and resubmit it for re-examination within six months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee - this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis, pay a
resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or

D. that the thesis being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MSc(Res) or MSt(Res); or

E. that the thesis be rejected and no award made.

II. Resubmission of the MPhil (by research route) Thesis

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil be awarded; or

B. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or

C. that the thesis being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MSc(Res) or MSt(Res); or

D. that the thesis be rejected and no award made.

III. Submission and Examination of the PhD by thesis or portfolio

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD/DLang be awarded without corrections; or

B. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD/DLang be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or

C. that the thesis or portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis or portfolio within a period of three months of the intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD/DLang be awarded; or

D. that the thesis or portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis or portfolio and resubmit it within twelve months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee—this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis or portfolio, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or

E. that the thesis or portfolio being of sufficient merit, the candidate be given the opportunity to resubmit the thesis or portfolio within twelve months for a further examination for the award of MPhil - this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis or portfolio under the regulations for the degree of MPhil (by research), pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; this recommendation may be offered to the candidate at the same time as recommendation G as an alternative option; or
F. that the thesis or portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the MPhil (by research), MSc(Res) or MSt(Res), where so qualified. This may only be offered as an alternative to D and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept; or

G. that the thesis or portfolio be rejected and no award made. This may only be offered as an alternative to E and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept.

IV. Resubmission of PhD by Thesis or Portfolio

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD be awarded; or

B. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD be awarded subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or

C. that, the thesis or portfolio being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil (by research), MSc(Res) or MSt(Res); or

D. that the thesis or portfolio be rejected and no award made.

B. DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN CREATIVE WRITING (PhD)

I. Examination

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD in Creative Writing be awarded without corrections; or

B. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD in Creative Writing be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or

C. that the thesis or portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis or portfolio within a period of three months of the intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD in Creative Writing be awarded; or

D. that the thesis or portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis or portfolio and resubmit it within twelve months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee—this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis or portfolio, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or

E. that the thesis or portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be given the opportunity to resubmit the thesis or portfolio within twelve months for a further examination for the award of MPhil - this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis or portfolio or portfolio under the regulations for the degree of MPhil (by research), pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; this recommendation may be offered to the candidate at the same time as recommendation G as an alternative option; or

F. that the thesis or portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the MPhil (by research) or MSt(Res), where so qualified. This may only be offered as an alternative to D and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of
the Exa

minating Committee to decide which option to accept; or

G. that the thesis or portfolio be rejected and no award made. This may only be offered as an alternative to E and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept.

II. Resubmission

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD in Creative Writing be awarded; or

B. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of PhD in Creative Writing be awarded, subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or

C. that, the thesis or portfolio being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil(by research) or MSt(Res); or

D. that the thesis or portfolio be rejected and no award made.

C. DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF ENGINEERING (DEng/EngD)

I. The Examination

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of DEng/EngD be awarded without corrections; or

B. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of DEng/EngD be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or

C. that the thesis or portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis or portfolio within a period of three months of the intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of DEng/EngD be awarded; or

D. that the thesis or portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis or portfolio and resubmit it within twelve months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee – this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis or portfolio, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or

E. that the thesis or portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be given the opportunity to resubmit the thesis or portfolio within twelve months for a further examination for the award of MPhil– this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis or portfolio under the regulations for the degree of MPhil (by research), pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; this recommendation may be offered to the candidate at
the same time as recommendation G as an alternative option; or

F. that the thesis or portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the MPhil (by research) or MSc(Res) where so qualified. This may only be offered as an alternative to D and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept; or

G. that the thesis or portfolio be rejected and no award made. This may only be offered as an alternative to E and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept.

II. Resubmission

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

   A. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of DEng/EngD be awarded; or
   B. that the thesis or portfolio be approved and the degree of DEng/EngD be awarded, subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or
   C. that, the thesis or portfolio being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil(by research) or MSc(Res); or
   D. that the thesis or portfolio be rejected and no award made.

D. DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PERFORMING ARTS (DPERF)

I. The Examination

1. The examination of the portfolio shall follow the same rules and procedures as laid down in the University of St Andrews Senate Regulations for PhD, except that the Research Degrees Committee of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland will appoint one internal Convenor and two External Examiners.

2. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

   A. that the portfolio be approved and the degree of DPerf be awarded without corrections; or
   B. that the portfolio be approved and the degree of DPerf be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or
   C. that the portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections within a period of three months of the intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the portfolio be approved and the degree of DPerf be awarded; or
   D. that the portfolio be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the portfolio and resubmit it within twelve months of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee – this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected portfolio, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or
E. that, the portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be given the opportunity to resubmit the portfolio within twelve months for a further examination for the award of MFA – this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected portfolio under the regulations for the degree of MFA or appropriate equivalent postgraduate diploma, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the the right to waive a further oral examination; this recommendation may be offered to the candidate at the same time as recommendation G as an alternative option; or

F. that, the portfolio not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the MFA or appropriate equivalent postgraduate diploma where so qualifiedThis may only be offered as an alternative to D and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept; or

G. that the portfolio be rejected and no award made. This may only be offered as an alternative to E and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept.

II. Resubmission

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

   A. that the portfolio be approved and the degree of DPerf be awarded; or

   B. that the portfolio be approved and the degree of DPerf be awarded subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or

   C. that, the portfolio being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MFA or appropriate equivalent postgraduate diploma; or

   D. that the portfolio be rejected and no award made.

E. DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MEDICINE (MD) BY RESEARCH

I. Examination of Candidates Presenting by Thesis

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

   A. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MD be awarded without corrections; or

   B. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MD be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or

   C. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis within a period of three months of the intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee and that, upon the Convenor of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis be approved and the degree of MD be awarded; or

   D. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis and resubmit it within twelve months of intimation to the
candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee – this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or

E. that the thesis not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be given the opportunity to resubmit the thesis within twelve months for a further examination for the award of MPhil – this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis under the regulations for the degree of MPhil (by research), pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; this recommendation may be offered to the candidate at the same time as recommendation G as an alternative option; or

F. that the thesis not being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil (by research) or MSc(Res), where so qualified. This may only be offered as an alternative to D and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept; or

G. that the thesis be rejected and no award made. This may only be offered as an alternative to E and the candidate must be given a period of two weeks from the intimation of the decision of the Examining Committee to decide which option to accept.

II. Resubmission

1. The examining committee shall make one of the following recommendations to the Senatus Academicus:

A. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MD be awarded; or

B. that the thesis be approved and the degree of MD be awarded subject to minor corrections to be completed within three months and approved by the Convenor; or

C. that, the thesis being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil (by research) or MSc(Res); or

D. that the thesis be rejected and no award made.
University of St Andrews
Postgraduate Research Committee

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE CLASSIFICATION AND MARKING SYSTEM FOR PGT PROGRAMMES

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to propose changes to the classification, assessment, progression and marking system for PGT programmes. This paper has been prepared by a Working Group that was formed on request of the Proctor following informal discussion at a Directors of PGT teaching lunch where the current classification and marking system for PGT programmes was identified as an area of concern. LTC (April 2017) discussed and approved the proposals presented in the discussion paper and consequently this paper now presents a formal request for change in policy.

1.2. The current PGT policy with respect to PGT classification and marking can be found here.

2. Action requested

2.1. This paper is presented to PGRC for information only. Learning and Teaching Committee will be asked to approve the items listed in Section 4 at the 3 May 2017 meeting.

3. Background

Scottish Qualifications framework and the wider context.

3.1. The University of St Andrews currently undertakes to adhere to the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework (SCQF). The SCQF also helps to define the relationships between Scottish qualifications and those in the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond and clarifies international progression routes and credit transfer. The SCQF has been referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), permitting comparison with European qualifications.

3.2. SCQF Level 11, (level-5000) is defined against a set of criteria. These criteria do not distinguish between Diploma and Masters standards; the defining distinction between a Postgraduate Diploma and a Masters degree is the amount of credit (120 credits vs 180 credits). Currently the University of St Andrews marking and classification systems distinguishes between achievement at Diploma level and achievement at Masters level.

Sector context

3.3. The University of St Andrews is unique in the sector and amongst competitor universities in not awarding the Masters degree when the student has achieved 180 credits. In a survey of all competitor institutions (see appendix 2) only the passing of 180 credits is required for the award of a Masters degree.

3.4. The University of St Andrews is also unusual in that a single failed module will result in no award at Masters level. Some institutions award Masters degrees to students who fail a certain number of credits and/or have a compensation process. For example, one institution operates the following compensation scheme: if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80/120 credits and
has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses. The working group is not proposing a compensation process, but here highlights this practice in other institutions of equivalent status.

3.5. The University of St Andrews is unusual in that it does not offer a Pass, Merit, Distinction classification of Masters degrees.

**Student satisfaction**

3.6. The current University of St Andrews grading system, which does not adhere to the SCQF, creates difficulties of understanding by PGT students, academic markers, future employers and other universities.

3.7. Not adhering to the SCQF creates matching problems for grade conversion, transfer of credit and standards in study abroad and collaborative degrees.

3.8. There is a negative impact on student satisfaction resulting from the confusion over the disparity between achieving a pass grade for 5000-level modules and a pass for the Masters; there is extensive evidence of such confusion in e-mails to Registry.

3.9. Students are negatively impacted by the absence of a Merit degree classification in the careers marketplace and academic competition.

3.10. There is a difference between 5000 and 4000 level which leads to confusion among academics. This has led to the provision of incorrect information and subsequent successful appeals (where passing a module on resit at grade 7 does not prevent award of the degree at undergraduate level whereas for Masters it currently does).

3.11. Students are dissatisfied that we do not permit students to graduate with Masters following reassessment (currently reassessment is only permitted for the PGDip).

3.12. Both students and staff have expressed concern that the handling of reassessment in study abroad and collaborative degrees causes issues where practices differ between the University of St Andrews and partner institutions.

**Common Reporting Scale**

3.13. In many of our Schools, 5000-level modules are accessed by Integrated Masters students, Undergraduate students, Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Masters students (104 different 5000 level modules in 13 Schools were accessed by undergraduates in the last three years). Similarly, postgraduate students often take 3000-4000-level modules as part of their programmes (80 different 4000 level modules from 11 schools were taken by PGT students in the last three years). All students studying the same module of the same level should be subject to the same assessment procedures and assessed using the same marking criteria.

3.14. Evidence (Figures 1 & 2 in appendix 1) shows that markers for 5000-level modules are currently reluctant to award less than 13.5, (even to individual pieces of work), because of the subsequent implications for the student’s degree outcome. At present, there is insufficient differentiation of performance students in the 13-16 grade category due to the compressed effective pass range.

3.15. External examiners have encouraged the University to promote the use of the full breadth of the 20-point scale available to them and to give marks reflecting the standard of the assessment. Currently, evidence provided by Registry
demonstrates that markers at PGT level use almost exclusively only grades 13.5 and above to grade PGT work and a wider range to grade UG work.

4. Proposal

4.1. That the University adopts an adjusted common reporting scale and marking criteria for 5000 level for all modules taught from academic year 2017/18 onwards.

4.1.1. University-level generic marking criteria (see appendix 3) are presented which remove distinction between Pass at Diploma level and Pass at Masters level and set grade 7.0 as Pass, 13.5 as Merit and 16.5 as Distinction.

4.1.2. The University’s common reporting scale for classification at 5000-level will be amended to set grade 7.0 as Pass, 13.5 as Merit and 16.5 as Distinction.

4.1.3. The attached new University-level generic marking criteria prepared by a LTC workshop are presented for approval and Schools will amend discipline and assessment specific marking criteria accordingly.

4.2. New Classification (contingent upon approval of 4.1)

4.3. The University of St Andrews will award classified Masters degrees with Pass, Merit and Distinction categories for entrants from 2017/18 onwards. The preferred classification process after consultation with Schools is:

4.3.1. To award a Pass Masters degree to those who acquire at least 180 credits, at least 150 of which are at 5000-level, in accordance with the Postgraduate Senate Regulations and SCQF.

4.3.2. To award a Merit to those who satisfy 4.3.1 and who have an overall credit weighted mean of between 13.5 and 16.4 across all taught and dissertation credits.

4.3.3. To award a Distinction to those who satisfy 4.3.1 and who have an overall credit weighted mean of 16.5 or more across all taught and dissertation credits.

4.3.4. Students who have entered PGT degree programmes prior to 2017/18, and will not graduate until after the November 2017 graduation, will be classified using the principle of no detriment.

4.4. Reassessment

- Students who have failed 5000-level modules at grades between 4.0 and 6.9 will be permitted to take reassessment.

- Students who have taken successful module reassessments will be able to graduate with a Masters. Reassessed modules will be capped at 7.0 and this capped grade will be used to calculate the credit weighted mean.

- Students will continue to be prohibited from retaking modules or taking alternative modules to accrue credit.

4.5. Progression (contingent upon approval of 4.3)

- In line with the current practice for reassessment, reassessments will ordinarily take place in the next available examination diet. Therefore, as
necessary, students with outstanding reassessment are permitted to progress to dissertation.

5. Implementation

5.1. For degrees with external accreditation, Schools will consult with the accreditation bodies and publish to the students any additional requirements for their degree to be accredited by the start of academic year 2017/18.

5.2. Proposed University-level generic grade descriptors are presented in appendix 3. Schools will be required to amend School-level marking criteria, and School webpages and publications accordingly by start of academic year 2017/18.

5.3. The proposed amendments to the regulations and the most relevant policies and webpages are in appendix 4. These updates will be published online by 1 September 2017.

5.4. A further more detailed plan for implementation and support of Schools will be provided over the summer months.

5.5. Schools are required to acquaint all teachers, markers and student representatives of the new procedures as relevant to their School in good time for the start of the new academic year.

6. Further information

Further information is available from the authors.

Dr Clare Peddie (PGT ProDean) (Chair)
Professor Tom Harrison (School of Classics)
Dr Ines Jentzsch (School of Psychology & Neuroscience)
Dr Mike Kesby (School of Geography & SD)
Dr Dee McDougall-Bagnall (Awards, Registry)
Professor Mary Orr (School of Modern Languages)
Dr John Thomson (School of Computer Science)
Dr Frederic Volpi (School of International Relations).

Presenter:
Clare Peddie
PGT Pro Dean

20 April 2017
Appendix 1: Data

Figure 1: Grade distributions for 4000 and 5000 level taught modules.

Figure 2: Cumulative grade distributions for 4000 and 5000 level taught modules.
## Appendix 2: Results of a survey of classifications in PGT competitor institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Marking Scale</th>
<th>Masters pass mark</th>
<th>Classifications</th>
<th>Results included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>Complicated compensation process for up to 45 failed credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>two options, 50 or 60</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>One resit allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Merit (60+), Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>Complicated compensation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Bad Fail, Fail, Pass, Merit (60+), Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>Can repeat any failed course once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Distinction (75+)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings College London</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Merit (60+), Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>Yes - capped at pass mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University College London</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial College London</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Merit (60+), Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>yes - one resit only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>A-H</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Pass, Merit, Distinction (a5)</td>
<td>Yes - grade &lt;C3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Merit (60+), Distinction (70+)</td>
<td>Yes - including dissertation as long as &gt;30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Fail, Pass, Merit (60+), Distinction (65+)</td>
<td>yes - some compensation in different schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3. University-level generic marking criteria at 5000-level

The generic marking criteria set out below are university level descriptors and should be augmented in Schools by discipline and task-specific criteria. These generic marking criteria are to be used for assessment submitted for 5000-level modules taken as part of a Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma or Masters degree. Classification of postgraduate taught degrees is described in [Taught Postgraduate Guidelines for Credit, Grades and Awards](#).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade &amp; Descriptor</th>
<th>Key Characteristics of the Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 16.5 or more Distinction at 5000 Level | Excellent work at 5000 Level. Work in this category will meet all of the requirements for a Merit and at least one of the following:  
- exceptional knowledge and understanding beyond the core issues.  
- demonstrates a very high level of critical awareness.  
- excellent structure and sophisticated argument.  
- takes an independent or original approach appropriate to the given task. |
| 13.5 to 16.4 Merit at 5000 Level | Strong work at 5000 Level. Work in this category will show all of the following:  
- very good knowledge and understanding of the core issues.  
- demonstrates a high level of critical awareness.  
- clear structure and consistent argument.  
- fully addresses the given task. |
| 10.5 to 13.4 Pass at 5000 Level | Competent work at 5000 Level. Work in this category will show three or more of the following:  
- reasonable knowledge and understanding of the core issues.  
- demonstrates reasonable critical awareness.  
- adequate structure and argument.  
- mostly addresses the given task. |
| 7 to 10.4 Marginal Pass at 5000 Level | Adequate work at 5000 Level. Work in this category will show one or more of the following:  
- limited knowledge and understanding of the core issues.  
- demonstrates only basic critical awareness.  
- weak structure or inconsistent argument.  
- does not fully address the given task. |
| 4 to 6.9 Fail with right to re-assessment | Inadequate work at 5000 Level. Work in this category will show one or more of the following:  
- very limited knowledge and understanding of the core issues.  
- seriously deficient in critical awareness.  
- lacks structure and logical argument.  
- does not address the given task. |
| 0 to 3.9 Fail without right to re-assessment | Inadequate work at 5000 Level. Work in this category shows one or more of the following:  
- no serious, demonstrable, attempt to carry out the task assigned.  
- no attempt at analysis and very little understanding or knowledge demonstrated. |
Appendix 4 – Consequential updates to Policies and Webpages

a) Common Reporting Scale (webpage)

The University uses a 20-point common reporting scale for grades. A grade is attached to a module and provides a numeric value between 0 and 20 (to one decimal place) to express the final outcome of a module. Grades awarded to modules allow for comparisons to be made across the University: a particular grade can be viewed as representing the same standing of achievement at the same level of study in any subject.

Marks are given to individual pieces of work: essays, dissertations, exam questions and so on. This marking will often be out of 20 but need not be, as some Schools, or some assignments, need another (e.g. percentage) scale. A conversion procedure is then applied to produce a grade on the 20-point scale once the module is completed.

Schools that use a marking scale other than 0-20, will publish in their handbooks the procedures that will be used for marking, and for conversion of marks to final grades.

As a rough guide only, the following Common reporting scale table describes each grade as a classification equivalent. The grades shown in italics mark the thresholds for the boundaries between classifications. Degree classification itself is dependent on an algorithm taking account of all eligible grades. Further information on degree classification may be found at: Honours classification and PGT Masters classification.

<p>| Reporting Scale Honours Classification Indicator PGT Classification Indicator |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20                      | First class             | Distinction at 5000 Level |
| 19                      | First class             | Distinction at 5000 Level |
| 18                      | First class             | Distinction at 5000 Level |
| 17                      | First class             | Distinction at 5000 Level |
| 16.5                    | <em>Cusp between classifications</em> | Distinction at 5000 Level |
| 16                      | Upper second class      | Merit at 5000 Level       |
| 15                      | Upper second class      | Merit at 5000 Level       |
| 14                      | Upper second class      | Merit at 5000 Level       |
| 13.5                    | <em>Cusp between classifications</em> | Merit at 5000 Level |
| 13                      | Lower second class      | Pass at 5000 Level        |
| 12                      | Lower second class      | Pass at 5000 Level        |
| 11                      | Lower second class      | Pass at 5000 Level        |
| 10.5                    | <em>Cusp between classifications</em> | Pass at 5000 Level |
| 10                      | Third class             | Marginal Pass at 5000 Level |
| 9                       | Third class             | Marginal Pass at 5000 Level |
| 8                       | Third class             | Marginal Pass at 5000 Level |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td><em>Cusp between classifications</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fail (with right to resit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fail (with right to resit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Fail (with right to resit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fail (with no right to resit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fail (with no right to resit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fail (with no right to resit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fail (with no right to resit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) **Postgraduate Senate Regulation B VI 4**

4. Where a student fails the assessment for a module, the Board of Examiners may offer a reassessment, the exact form of which must be approved by the External Examiner. Modules passed at reassessment will be capped at 7.0 and this grade will be entered into the algorithm for the classification of awards. Reassessed work will be marked either pass or fail. It will not be graded on the 20-point scale. A student who achieves a Pass at reassessment may be awarded the Certificate or Diploma where so qualified but not the Masters or higher degree. The only exception to this Regulation may be in the case of collaborative programmes where the exception will be detailed in specific programme documentation.

c) **Taught Postgraduate Guidelines for Credit, Grades and Awards**

1. Credits and Grades

A student’s studies towards a taught Masters degree are structured in terms of modules, each of which is assigned a credit value, reflecting the proportion of a student’s time devoted to that module. A full-time student normally takes 60 credits in a semester; so, for example, a module in a particular School might be worth 20 credits, this would represent one-third of the credits normally taken in a semester. Each module is a self-contained unit of teaching, learning and assessment. For the majority of modules the teaching takes place in one 11-week teaching block and in most cases followed by an examination. Others are concentrated into a shorter period, and some are taught over the whole year. A student’s performance in the examination, together with grades marks for pieces of work submitted during the module, determine whether he or she passes the assessment for the module and, therefore, whether he or she is awarded the credits attached to it. Thus a student who passes the module will have gained both credits, reflecting the workload of the module, and a grade, reflecting the quality of their work.

2. St Andrews GPA

The St Andrews GPA for taught postgraduate Masters degrees is normally the credit-weighted mean of all grades awarded from both taught and dissertation modules. The St Andrews GPA is calculated during classification and is displayed at the same time as the degree classification and/or degree award. In common with module final assessments the St Andrews GPA uses the 20-point scale.
3. Dip-down modules

The award of a taught postgraduate Masters degree requires 90 credits of the taught component to be at 5000-level. Students are permitted to 'dip-down' for the remaining credit. The grades achieved for dip-down modules taken at 1000 or 2000-level as part of a taught postgraduate degree are incorporated into the degree only when the subject of the module is required language training. In all other cases, only grades received for 3000 and 4000-level 'dip-down' modules are incorporated into the St Andrews GPA.

4. Reassessment.

Where a student fails the assessment for a module, the Board of Examiners shall offer one opportunity for reassessment. Modules passed at reassessment will be capped at 7.0 and this grade will be entered into the algorithm for the classification of awards. Reassessment of the dissertation is not permitted. It is not permitted to retake modules or take additional modules to substitute for failed modules.

5. Postgraduate Diploma

Candidates for the Postgraduate Diploma are required to gain at least 120 credits over two semesters (or the part-time equivalent), of which 90 credits must be at 5000-level, in an approved programme. Failure to gain 120 credits at pass level (Grade 7 or above) within the specified time means that the candidate will not be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.

6. Distinction or Merit in the Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate

The significance of the St Andrews GPA is as follows:

- 16.5 - 20.0 Distinction in the Diploma or Certificate may be awarded
- 13.5 - 16.4 Merit in the Diploma or Certificate may be awarded
- 7.0 - 13.4 Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate

A Distinction or Merit cannot be awarded when a re-assessment has taken place for any module within the Diploma. Results for modules taken, as part of the Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate must be reported by Schools to Registry on the same timescale as undergraduate modules.

7. Taught Masters degrees

Normally a full-time taught postgraduate Masters student takes modules worth 180 credits during the course of each year, i.e. 60 credits in each semester and 60 credits for the summer dissertation/project. Candidates for the MLitt/MRes/MSc degrees initially follow a programme equivalent to that of the corresponding Postgraduate Diploma, consisting of modules worth 120 credits, after which they submit a dissertation or project for examination. The dissertation has a maximum word limit of 15,000 words (excluding bibliography).

8. Pass in the Taught Masters degree

The Taught Masters degree will be awarded to students who pass 180 credits at grade 7.0 or more including reassessments.

9. Merit in the Taught Masters degree

A credit weighted mean (St Andrews GPA) of 13.5 or more is required over the entire programme (including any reassessments capped at 7.0) for the award of Merit for the degree.
10. Distinction in the Taught Masters degree

The Board of Examiners may recommend the award of the degree with distinction in relation to the whole, or to the dissertation, or to the taught component. A credit weighted mean grade of 16.5 or above constitutes the threshold for a recommendation of distinction in the taught component. A grade of 16.5 or above constitutes the threshold for a recommendation of distinction in the dissertation. A credit weighted mean grade of 16.5 or above in both the taught and the dissertation elements of the MLitt/MSc/MRes constitutes the threshold for a recommendation that the degree by granted with distinction overall. Some Schools have a policy to award Distinction only for the overall degree, and not for individual components. In such cases, the School must make this policy clear to students at the outset of their programme and in their programme handbooks. A Distinction cannot be awarded when a re-assessment has taken place for any module or dissertation within the programme.

A credit weighted mean (St Andrews GPA) of 16.5 or more is required over the entire programme (including any reassessments capped at 7.0) for the award of Distinction for the degree.

11. Dean’s List

Students on Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diplomas and Taught Masters programme are eligible for the Dean’s List. Students achieving a St Andrews GPA of 16.5 or above are placed on the Dean’s List at the point of award or graduation.

d) Policy on Postgraduate Change of Registration

Re-registration from PGDip to a Taught Masters

A student may apply to their School to transfer to Taught Masters after completion of the 120 taught credits required for the PGDip. Student applications can be made after completion of the first semester. At this stage, the School can make offers of upgrade to the Taught Masters, conditional upon completion of 120 credits with a minimum GPA of 13.5. The School can make unconditional offers of transfer to candidates who have achieved a minimum GPA of 13.5 in 120 taught credits at any point prior to graduation with the PGDip award. These requirements are a minimum and the School may wish to set additional requirements which must be published in advance and be applied equably across all candidates. It is recommended that Schools make the decision as early as possible to smooth the student transition.

Note: no proposed change to the requirement to change from PGDip to MPhil or from Masters to MPhil of 13.5 GPA (Merit grades).

e) PGT Masters Classification (webpage)

The taught postgraduate classification algorithm uses a combination of the St Andrews GPA, the taught average and the dissertation result in order to determine a final degree classification. The taught average is calculated as the credit-weighted mean of all modules taken during the taught component of the programme, and the St Andrews GPA is the credit-weighted mean of all grades including both the taught component and the dissertation. Only one decimal point is used in all calculations.
Outcomes for PGT Masters classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St Andrews GPA</th>
<th>Classification outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.5 or more</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.5 or more</td>
<td>Merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 or more</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9 or less</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to a St Andrews GPA of 13.5 over the entire programme, a grade of 13.5 or above is required for the dissertation to be accepted for the degree. If a lower mark is reported for the dissertation or for the St Andrews GPA, the degree should not be awarded, but the candidate may be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.

A credit-weighted mean grade St Andrews GPA of 16.5 or above constitutes the threshold for a recommendation of distinction in the taught component. A grade St Andrews GPA of 16.5 13.5 or above constitutes the threshold for a recommendation of distinction in the dissertation merit. A credit-weighted mean grade of 16.5 or above in both the taught and dissertation elements of the Masters constitutes the threshold for a recommendation that the degree be granted with distinction overall. Some collaborative programmes have a policy to award Distinction only for the overall degree, and not for individual components. If the classification policy for a collaborative programme differs from the above, the School must make this policy clear to students at the outset of their programme and in their programme handbooks.

Calculation protocols

The Senate Regulations specify that at least 180 credits should be gained during an approved Masters programme. For students who have taken extra modules, the calculations of taught average and St Andrews GPA must include all modules (allowing for the exceptions noted below). Thus a student cannot take an extra module with a view to disposing of another with a poorer grade.

The award of a taught postgraduate Masters degree requires 90 credits of the taught component to be at 5000-level. Students are permitted to 'dip-down' for remaining credit. The grades achieved for dip-down modules taken at 1000- or 2000-level as part of a taught postgraduate degree are incorporated into the degree only when the subject of the module is required language training. In all other cases, only grades received for 3000- and 4000-level 'dip-down' modules are incorporated into the St Andrews GPA.

Grades that are achieved (after suitable translation) from modules taken outwith St Andrews (usually abroad) as part of a Masters programme are entered into the algorithmic calculation. If ungraded credits are received from abroad or graded credits that are not formally approved as part of a Masters programme, then these will not influence the algorithmic calculation, although such credits will normally appear on transcripts.
Consideration of special cases

Students who are S-coded do not need to be brought to the attention of the Dean, so long as the S-coding does not cover more than 50% of the total credits for the taught component of a postgraduate Masters degree. Students with S-coded modules will have their results run through the algorithm twice: once with the S-coded modules included; once without the S-coded modules included. Whichever result produces the higher classification of degree will automatically be awarded. Further information on S coding is available in the Assessment Policies and Procedures (PDF, 515 KB).

Exceptional cases should be referred to the relevant Dean. These exceptions include the following types of case:

- Students who are marginally short of the required number of credits for a degree;
- Students who have been S-coded for more than the maximum number of credits stated above;
- Any other anomalies.

Where anomalies are referred to the Dean, the School must provide a minute of the discussion held at the School Examination Board, along with a recommendation from that Board.

Past algorithms (PGT Masters classification from 2014/5)

f) Taught Postgraduate Assessments and Awards (webpage)

Classification
Classifications of pass, merit and distinction may be awarded for taught postgraduate degrees. For Masters programmes it is also possible to achieve distinction for the dissertation or the taught element of the degree programme individually as well as overall. Full details about the current and previous algorithms are available at: PGT Masters Classification

St Andrews Grade Point Average
For entrants from 2014/15 onwards, the St Andrews GPA for taught postgraduates is the credit-weighted mean of grades counting towards the taught element of the degree programme and the dissertation. The St Andrews GPA is calculated during classification and is displayed at the same time as the degree classification and/or degree award.

For entrants prior to 2014/15, the St Andrews GPA for taught postgraduates was the credit-weighted mean of grades counting towards the taught element of the degree programme (i.e. excluding the dissertation).

In common with module final assessments at the University the St Andrews GPA uses the 20 point scale, which is available at: Common Reporting Scale

Decimal places and the St Andrews GPA
The calculation of the St Andrews GPA is to one decimal place and is displayed this way on the student record, transcript and related documentation.
Combining diverse experience and knowledge

**GRADskills** combines the expertise of St Andrews’ own academic and support staff with that of external consultants and training professionals to provide a diverse and interesting programme of generic skills development opportunities, courses and events. We seek to include a broad range of inputs from sector bodies and national organisations such as Vitae, the flagship national training and development organisation for researchers.

**Funding opportunities**

Although **GRADskills** provides a comprehensive and diverse programme of courses and events, there are also external organisations, such as Vitae, that provide valuable development opportunities for researchers. Doctoral students can therefore apply to the CAPOD Research Student Development Fund for financial support to attend external courses or events that provide development opportunities not covered in the **GRADskills** programme. In addition, research postgraduates who teach can apply to the Learning & Teaching Fund to attend external events that develop their teaching skills.

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/funding

Additionally, the **GRADskills Innovation Grant** aims to encourage students and staff to take a proactive and creative approach to skills development. Applications for funding of up to £2,000 are invited from research postgraduate students at the University to support short-term, well-defined projects to develop transferable skills training resources or activities.

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/funding/innovation

**Booking a place on a GRADskills course**

Visit the **GRADskills** page of the CAPOD website (www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/students/pgresearch/gradskills) to see the entire year’s programme of courses, sorted by theme or by Researcher Development Framework domain.

You can register on **GRADskills** courses via the University’s online Personal Development Management System (www.st-andrews.ac.uk/pdms). Select your cohort (Research postgraduate) using the Audience drop-down menu to see all upcoming courses. (Note that most GRADskills courses only “go live” for booking a month before they are due to run.) Registration and further details are confirmed by email and bookings can be cancelled up to 24 hours before a course is due to run by going to the “My Training Record” part of the system.

**What researchers say about GRADskills**

“...All of it was very beneficial, very well structured and pertinent."

“...The presenter made the topic very interesting and relevant. Terrific!"

“...Excellent presentation, extraordinary insight and helpful guidance."

“...Very helpful for career development."

“... Gets one thinking about one’s career path and how to better prepare for that ‘dream’ job.”
Enhancing researchers' skills and employability

**GRADskills** is the programme of courses, events and activities specifically for research postgraduate students delivered by the Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD). The **GRADskills** programme aims to support the development of postgraduate researchers at the University of St Andrews, improving their research capability and widening their employability inside and outside of academia.

**CAPOD offers:**
- Training courses and workshops
- PG X-change symposia
- Networking opportunities
- Innovation grants
- Online resources
- Funding to attend external training events
- One-to-one development support

Research postgraduate students can contact Dr Heather McKiggan-Fee for advice on what support is available.

**GRADskills** opportunities are widely publicised via the PG Wednesday memo, **GRADskills** email memo and our website at: [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/students/pgresearch](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/students/pgresearch)

GRADskills training and support is **free of charge** to all doctoral and MPhil students at the University of St Andrews.

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**Training and development opportunities**

**GRADskills** offers courses and support for research postgraduates in all four domains of the Researcher Development Framework – a small selection of these are listed below (see our website for more):

**Knowledge and intellectual abilities, e.g.**
- Introduction to Endnote/Refworks/Mendeley
- Basic & Advanced Statistics (5 workshops)
- Microsoft Office workshops
- Using the Library's Special Collections

**Personal effectiveness, e.g.**
- Assertiveness skills
- CV and Interviewee skills
- Preparing for your Viva
- Networking workshops and events

**Research governance and organisation, e.g.**
- Research ethics
- Intellectual property and copyright
- Managing your research and working effectively with your supervisor
- Project management for PhD success

**Engagement, influence and impact, e.g.**
- Presentation skills for researchers
- Maximising impact at conferences
- Successful publishing in Arts/Sciences
- Public engagement: the nuts and bolts
- Voice coaching

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**Meeting UK Research Councils' recommendations**

In 2001 the UK GRAD Programme, Research Councils and the HE sector agreed a joint statement of skills training requirements for postgraduate researchers. In 2002 the “Roberts’ Report” recommended that more generic skills development opportunities be provided for early-stage researchers. In 2010 Vitae produced the Researcher Development Framework, an evolution of the RCUK joint skills statement.

The **GRADskills** programme responds to these recommendations and provides a comprehensive suite of development opportunities underpinned by the Researcher Development Framework. The Research Councils recommend that a minimum of **two weeks** per year be devoted to developing these personal, professional and career related skills.

**Designed by researchers for researchers**

The **GRADskills** programme has been developed with extensive input from staff and students at the University of St Andrews. Consultations with Directors of Postgraduate Studies, supervisors and student focus groups, as well as individual course evaluation forms all generate ideas for the programme, and St Andrews staff contribute to the delivery of some of the courses.

The **GRADskills** team always welcomes further suggestions for courses and events that could be included within the scope of generic skills training for early-stage researchers by emailing capod@st-andrews.ac.uk
On the course booking system PDMS you can see a chronological list of all of the GRADskills workshops. However, we have also grouped the workshops into thematic “bundles”, which tend to be more relevant at different stages of the doctorate (see diagram). Note that some bundles, such as Microsoft Office, are “over-arching” in the sense of being relevant at all stages of the degree. Also, the bundles aren’t mutually exclusive, so the same workshop might appear in more than one bundle.

Every workshop has been mapped against the domains of the Researcher Development Framework:

- A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities
- B: Personal effectiveness
- C: Research governance and organisation
- D: Engagement, influence and impact

PhD students can also access modules from Epigeum’s Research Skills Masters Programme, and if they’re doing any teaching, from Epigeum’s University and College Teaching Programme. For more information on how to access these online resources see: http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/epigeum/

We also have online courses in how to network, see http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/kintish/
### Getting started

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<td>- Which software to use? (online)</td>
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<td>Is my writing 'academic' enough?</td>
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<td>Writing a literature review (Arts &amp; Science versions)</td>
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<td>Becoming a leader: a toolkit for those who want to lead</td>
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<td>Public Engagement: your questions answered</td>
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<td>Academic writing suite (particular workshops will be most suitable at different stages of your PhD):</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is my writing 'academic' enough?</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Creating digital texts II: Publishing and transforming XML for scholarly applications</td>
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<td>Social media for researchers: positives and pitfalls (to be confirmed)</td>
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<td>Excel 2010: Creating and Using Formulae</td>
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### Teaching

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PHD STUDENT
OUTWARD MOBILITY: PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND BENEFITS
FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP CONDUCTED IN DECEMBER 2016

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Action:
For information

Audience:
PVC International, Director/Head International, International office staff, outward mobility practitioners, Graduate Schools, Postgraduate administrators, Outward Mobility Network, Newton Fund Network
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Universities UK International (UUKi) conducted a focus group on PhD outward mobility on 1 December 2016. The focus group participants were PhD students enrolled at UK universities, at different stages in their studies and with different mobility experiences. All of the students were considering mobility, or had already been mobile during their PhD programme.

The focus group discussion was structured around four broad themes: (i) motivations and perceived benefits of mobility; (ii) perceived challenges and barriers to mobility; (iii) attitudes to mobility; (iv) information, communication and support.

According to the focus group participants, the main motivations for PhD students to consider undertaking a period of mobility abroad are to expand their professional and academic networks; to exchange ideas and spend time in a stimulating research environment that would positively contribute to their research; and to improve their skills.

A considerable part of the discussion was focused on perceived challenges of and barriers to outward mobility for PhD students. Most of the participants agreed that the two main barriers to mobility are a lack of funding and a lack of information about mobility opportunities provided by the home institution.

In some cases, lack of clarity from the funding body and pressure to complete their PhD research within a specified time frame were also mentioned as barriers. The discussion also touched on other issues, such as pre-existing personal commitments and language and cultural barriers, especially in reference to outward mobility to non-European destinations.

The group did not perceive certain destinations to be more attractive than others and were not put off by the prospect of periods of mobility to developing or non-Anglophone destinations. Likewise, they did not perceive the EU as a less attractive or more difficult destination following the UK’s vote to leave the continent.

They had very specific views on the best time within a PhD programme to be mobile, suggesting that mobility was easiest in the second year. Shorter-term mobilities such as conferences were viewed as being just as valuable as longer-term mobilities, for different reasons. Short periods of mobility still enable students to make connections and build their networks, which can lead to longer term mobility. Previous mobility experiences were also viewed as heavily influencing a student’s willingness to be mobile in their current programme.

In conclusion the students reiterated their belief that more could be done by institutions to communicate and signpost opportunities to PhD students. For future activity they suggested using different channels of communication, including through Students’ Unions, Graduate Schools and Postgraduate Units, and supervisors and Heads of Schools as trusted sources. They recommended the provision and communication of more short-term opportunities, particularly conferences, early on in a student’s programme. Finally they suggested that clear procedures in place for tracking PhD students’ mobilities would ensure that institutions are aware when these students go abroad; therefore institutions would provide more consistent and coordinated support to PhD students.

Note

1 By outward mobility we mean a period of time spent studying, working, researching or volunteering abroad for one week or more as part of a student’s UK higher education programme.
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The main objective for this focus group was to better understand why PhD students at UK universities are heavily underrepresented in outward mobility figures. As can be seen in Figure 1, in 2014–15 only 1.3% of students across all levels of study were mobile. Out of those 22,000 mobile students, only 2.3% were doing any kind of postgraduate research programme.

Teams within UUKi actively promote and support PhD mobility through their work on the Newton Fund, and through their work with universities implementing the UK Strategy for Outward Mobility. Findings from this focus group will feed into this work by providing a better understanding of the barriers and challenges to PhD mobility from the students’ point of view. These findings also aim to:

- Supply empirical data on the barriers to PhD mobility as potential reasons behind the low take-up of opportunities;
- Help shape future funding calls with an outward mobility element;
- Provide intelligence on postgraduate barriers to mobility for Universities UK International’s Go International programme’s activities.

1.2. Profile of recruited participants

- Number of participants: 10 PhD students enrolled at UK universities participated in the focus group.
- Nationalities: Five participants were British nationals, three participants were EU nationals, and two participants were non-EU international students.
- Geographical representation: the participants are enrolled at UK universities based in three different regions: England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Subject of research: seven participants were conducting research in STEM and Life Sciences subjects, one in Law, one in Business and Hospitality and one in Social Sciences.
- Outward mobility experiences: the range of experiences that the participants brought to the focus group discussion was mixed. Two participants had no concrete plans but were open to the idea of undertaking a mobility experience as part of their PhD; three participants had been abroad to attend conferences and workshops; four participants had been abroad or were planning to go abroad on placements or internships; and one participant had planned to go abroad but was not allowed to because of Ethics Approval and security issues.

![Figure 1: Distribution of Mobilities in 2014–15 by Level of Study](image-url)
MOTIVATIONS AND PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF GOING ABROAD

Finding 1: Networking opportunities and increased employability
The group noted the opportunity to connect with their peers and with academics in other universities thanks to mobility experiences during their PhD studies.

Collaborative research and attendance of conferences and workshops both contribute to the generation and dissemination of ideas with researchers around the world and also to expanding professional networks, which is generally considered a critical reason for going abroad.

Finding 2: Impact on personal growth and development
Some of the participants mentioned the importance of a mobility experience for students to ‘get out of their comfort zone’ and be exposed to different cultures and research environments. This would not only contribute to the students’ personal growth, but would have an indirect impact on their wellbeing. Some of the participants noted that ‘breaking the routine’ and exchanging ideas with international researchers could be beneficial for PhD students, who often experience isolation.

Finding 3: Impact on research and soft skills development
Participants noted that mobility experiences enable PhD students to gather new ideas and perspectives on their academic research and more generally improve their skillset. They mentioned that attending conferences or workshops abroad can have a direct impact on increasing their confidence, improve their networking and public speaking skills, whilst also contributing directly to their research. Participants agreed that this is especially true for qualitative research, which benefits from multiple and different perspectives.

‘As you speak with other people you get new ideas; your brain functions a bit better, and you develop ideas as you talk to different people.’

‘Sometimes you are in danger of being stuck in your own mind-set and unless you are being exposed to other ideas, there is a danger that you (and your research) will not be as objective as they could be.’
PERCEIVED CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO MOBILITY

Finding 4: Funding
The group unanimously agreed that the lack of funding was often one of the main barriers to outward mobility. Therefore, if students felt that the funding for undertaking mobility abroad was not enough or, even worse, absent, they would be discouraged from going abroad as part of their PhD. The charging of fees by the home institution, in some cases half fees, for their time abroad was also considered a deterrent.

Finding 5: Ethical and safety issues
One of the participants had planned a period of mobility in a country of the Maghreb region as part of their PhD research. However, the student’s home institution did not approve the mobility request, due to political instability in this country and security concerns. Even when students are willing to go abroad, they may face additional barriers if the situation in the destination poses a potential threat to the safety and security of the student.

Finding 6: Lack of institutional support and encouragement
The group suggested that, on occasions, PhD students experience a lack of encouragement from their institutions and/or supervisors and/or funding bodies to go abroad. The relationship between the student and the different organisations involved in a PhD journey is therefore of vital importance when it comes to encouraging students to undertake a mobility period abroad.

Finding 7: Time constraints and pressure to complete PhD research
With some exceptions the pressure to deliver research outputs and to complete their programme of work within the allocated timeframe can be a big barrier to mobility. Participants observed that when there are external demands on their time these take precedent over the opportunity to undertake a period of mobility overseas.

Finding 8: Personal commitments
Existing personal commitments were identified as a barrier to outward mobility by some of the participants of the group who noted that personal circumstances were often a deciding factor. The main challenges in this respect were identified as: family priorities and dependants; ‘double rent’ commitment (paying rent/mortgage in the UK and for accommodation overseas); and being a full-time member of staff.

Finding 9: Language barriers and cultural attitudes
The group discussed the possibility that some students might not be open to the idea of going abroad because of language barriers as well as cultural barriers. They suggested this was particularly true when the relocation was in a non-European country, where navigating a cultural system is seen as more challenging.

Another consideration was around the students’ past experiences - where they lived and whether they had been abroad in their previous studies. Students who had not been mobile within the UK were considered less likely to undertake mobility internationally.
Finding 10: Barriers toward mobility to non-European and/or developing countries

When asked about the perceived challenges of mobility to non-European and developing countries, such as China and India, some of the focus group participants cited concerns and uncertainty about completing the necessary processes and procedures in order to enrol at an overseas institution. Examples include: applying for a student visa; arranging accommodation; opening a bank account; accessing suitable facilities; and the quality of the research facilities and supervision in the destination country.

Finding 11: Ease of conducting research abroad

The group perceived challenges in conducting research abroad including that different regulations, processes and working practices are not always compatible with UK practice. This can result in a decreased research output. This was of particular concern in countries where labs and facilities at overseas institutions are not always up to the same standard as those used in the UK. The students also gave examples of complications related to obtaining project licences, and ethical approvals when conducting their PhD research overseas.
ATTITUDES TO MOBILITY

Finding 12: Relative attractiveness of destinations
Although they identified language and cultural barriers as a potential challenge, the group viewed European and Anglophone countries, and non-European and non-English speaking countries as equally attractive destinations. They did however, suggest that parents might be more concerned about travel to non-European and non-English-speaking countries. They also suggested that collaboration should be ‘outside of the political context’ and that they were not deterred by the negative reports and characterisation of certain countries in the media.

When asked if leaving the EU would impact mobility to the continent, there was a suggestion that it could impact the logistics by requiring visas – but that there still would not be a language or cultural barrier in the way there was with other non-English-speaking destinations. The group agreed that they were more familiar with navigating systems in Europe and that leaving the EU would not change the ease of mobility to these more familiar societies and systems.

Finding 13: Optimal time within a PhD programme to be mobile
The group agreed that year 2 of a PhD programme is the best time for any potential mobility to take place. They advised that by year 2 a student would know the background of their research and so the impact of an exchange would be greater. Specifically, they suggested that year 1 should be used for conferences, year 2 should include outward mobility, and year 3 should focus on the write-up, with the caveat that, if gathering data, outward mobility could take place at the end of year 1.

Finding 14: Duration of outward student mobility
It was suggested that students were more likely to undertake a longer placement if they had attended conferences in year 1. The group pointed out that conferences build connections and identify ‘doors to knock on’ for potential collaboration or placement opportunities; and that conferences let you know ‘who is out there and who is interested in your research’. There was a perception that the more you travel the more likely you are to find opportunities for collaboration. One student in the group attended a conference and made a contact who later offered them a four-month mobility placement that they went on to complete.

The group perceived short-term mobility to have value as a mobility experience that is more inclusive and accessible and more likely to spur more and longer mobility experiences. They recommended that short-term mobility be undertaken by all and promoted and supported more by institutions.

Finding 15: Importance of previous outward student mobility experiences
The group agreed that experiencing outward mobility as an undergraduate made you more likely to be mobile as a postgraduate. One member of the group linked their Erasmus experience during their BSc and their international internship during their MSc to their acceptance of an international placement as part of their PhD.
INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Finding 16: Lack of information and communication channels
The students felt that there is a lack of information and lack of openness from institutions around outward student mobility opportunities available to PhD students. The group did not recall being contacted by their university’s Study Abroad Office or the Graduate School (or equivalent units) about mobility opportunities. They also noted that students’ unions provide circulars advertising funds and placements which could be a communication channel. That said, they discussed that different outlets, offices and departments compete for students’ attention and that there was a risk of ‘information overload.’

Finding 17: Signposting to information
There was a perception that universities do not always support students in signposting information and opportunities. In one case a student was signposted to the opportunity by their supervisor. In two other cases the students found and administered the placement themselves. In another case a period of outward mobility was previously agreed with their funding body and the student spent part of their PhD with an industry partner. The group was not aware of mobility opportunities for PhD students through the Newton Fund or through the Erasmus+ programme.

The group suggested induction sessions as a forum for institutions to communicate opportunities for outward mobility to students. They were clear that while PhD students expect to be independent, they need to be informed of how to access opportunities and that institutions should consider timeliness in signposting opportunities and provide clarity about what is available and what is required in order to access them.

Finding 18: Pre-departure support and support on placement
The group agreed that while there is a range of practices across institutions, there is in general a lack of information and communication in supporting the students’ pre-departure. There was a perception that academic staff at institutions forget what it is like to be new to the sector and what may be obvious to them is not obvious to a new student – e.g. when going abroad you may require a research licence. When asked if they were provided with support while overseas, some participants confirmed there had been little support offered and in some cases the home institution was not aware that the student had undertaken a mobility period.
RECOMMENDATIONS

For providers of scholarship schemes:

- Exploration of using other channels of communication: Students’ Unions, postgraduate units, Graduate Schools. For some students, if the information comes from a Head of School or their supervisor, it is deemed more trustworthy.

For UK universities:

- Communication and marketing campaigns targeted at PhD students that highlight the benefits of outward student mobility for these students in particular. These benefits should include the expansion of their professional and academic networks and the opportunity to enrich their research through the exchange of ideas and time in a stimulating research environment.

- More initiatives such as inductions and short courses with a cross-cultural communication element that can both work as information sessions on funding opportunities for new PhD students and help them to meet other people, increase their confidence, and feel part of a community within the institution.

- The provision and signposting of more short-term opportunities including attendance of conferences, which are inclusive and offer important networking opportunities.

- Encourage travelling to conferences and other short-term opportunities early in students’ programmes in order to introduce and normalise outward student mobility early on.

- More consistent and coordinated support for students who are conducting a mobility period overseas. This should include making sure that the students are receiving appropriate support and advice by the host institution and that there are recognised procedures in place for tracking mobile students so that the institution is aware when PhD students are abroad.

- Circulation of outward student mobility opportunities by the Graduate School (or equivalent unit), the postgraduate unit (or equivalent team), and administrative members of their department/faculty including their supervisor.
Postgraduate Research Committee

Sustainability in PGR

1. Introduction

1.1. The Environment Team, at the request of the Sustainable Development Working Group headed by the Quaestor, is conducting a cross-institution audit of what is going on for sustainability at the University and we want to know what about PGR teaching and research on sustainability and climate change.

1.2. From this year on the Scottish Government requires us to report on our impact on climate change and for this, as well as other voluntary reporting and publicity, we would like to give the best possible picture of what we are doing for sustainability – including relevant teaching.

2. Action requested

2.1. Develop an account of PGR teaching/research across the institution that is relevant to sustainability, including Masters module codes and a summary of PhD projects.

2.2. We request that you come able to discuss any modules or PhD projects in your School that are relevant to sustainability (broadly defined).

3. Background / context

3.1. As of this year the Scottish Government requires the University to report on carbon emissions and its impact on climate change (i.e. Climate Change Duty Report), having a more holistic report on activity on sustainability is important going forward. Furthermore, a request from Friends of the Earth for information on what we were doing in response to the Paris Agreement this summer highlighted the need for a cross-institution account. Our response was worryingly short “in teaching we have a Sustainable Development programme and in research we have many research groups on e.g. hydrogen economy, high efficiency and devices” (all full response available here: https://www.foe.co.uk/page/paris-climate-change-agreement-responses), other universities were able to outline teaching, research and practical activity. This is also the beginning of the University celebrating ‘Earth Year’ which was started with ‘Earth Hour’ on 25 March. Part of this will be the Press Office, Environment Team and Transition University of St Andrews updating the University webpages on sustainability - documenting sustainability teaching and research across the institution will form part of this narrative.

3.2. We know that there is teaching and research relevant to sustainability (broadly defined) across the institution and beyond the Sustainable Development Programme. We want to give the best possible picture and not miss out on
'good things' that are already happening. We have already done an analysis of PURE to identify research across the institution as well as presented to the Learning Teaching Committee and contacted Directors of Teaching to establish a baseline of undergraduate modules related to sustainability. The PGR cohort are a substantive part of the University community and we do not want to miss out their contribution to sustainability scholarship. PhD students are not currently captured on PURE (although this is changing in the future) and we need your help in identifying current PGR activities relevant to sustainability teaching and research.

3.3. We would like to use 10 minutes at the PGR meeting to invite you to add to our list of modules and identify any PhD projects related to sustainability so we are not missing anything. Please make a list and bring these to the meeting or email them to Katherine Ellsworth-Krebs (ke68@st-andrews.ac.uk) before the meeting. Here are some examples of descriptions of module codes:

PH4027 Optoelectronics and Nonlinear Optics - covers some material directly relevant to electricity generation using solar panels.

MO3421 Making People’s Music: Folk Music Revival and Society in the U.S. 1900-1970 - raises questions of authenticity, belonging, technology, community which all contribute to thinking through environmental questions.

We would like to capture modules and projects which might not seem immediately to contribute to any 'sustainability' agenda. For instance, all the modules with ES or GG codes seem obvious - ‘Planet Earth’, ‘Oceans and Climate’ – but we also want to include the more ‘off-the-wall’ modules. Several Arts modules mentioned the environment and sustainability specifically, such as AH4081 The Scandinavian Art of Building and Design, CL4502 Ethics and Lifestyles, or PY4647 Humans, Animals, and Nature. But the 'ecocritical' agenda in the Arts stretches into all the different ways our relationship with the environment has been conceived in religion, in literature and culture. Even CO3021 Crossing the Mediterranean, or GM3088 Travel Writing in German - they deal with the movement of people and the effects of that on environmental issues, - same for all the modules on urban/rural questions - or even MO3421 on the Folk Music Revival in the US, where questions of authenticity, belonging, technology, community all contribute to thinking through environmental questions. Whereas Science modules - and also EC and MN modules - focus on the practical, many of the Arts modules have a lot to contribute as well to raising awareness, inspiring ecologically sensitive thinking, and placing all that in a wide variety of historical and geographical contexts, - building bridges, for example, between Ancient Greek Pantheism (CL4433) and contemporary Latin American eco-theology (DI4824).

3.4. This year the Sustainable Development Working Group has also appointed a new post within the University, the Transition Research Facilitator, tasked with facilitating teaching and research that uses the operations and management of the University as a case study – i.e. using the University as a ‘Living Lab’ to offer applied learning opportunities (see website for more details: http://www.transitionsta.org/living-labs/). For example, biology students having coursework that incorporates biodiversity surveys on campus that also inform
the University’s land management practices; the University’s Catering Manager presenting on the considerations shaping procurement and waste; getting a tour of Eden Campus to look at renewable energy and developing local economies. This ‘Living Lab’ will form part of the teaching for sustainability narrative at the University and we would like to draw attention to this new staff member/agenda so that PGR representatives can relay this to their Schools and/or initiate discussions of possible links. For reference, the ‘Living Lab’ approach has been happening (formally) at other universities (c.f. University of British Columbia: https://sustain.ubc.ca/our-commitment/campus-living-lab).

4. **Recommendation**

4.1. Use this consultation and the new Transition Research Facilitator to better publicise and promote the teaching and research on sustainability at the University of St Andrews. A cross-University symposium on teaching and sustainability would be a great next step.

5. **Next steps**

5.1. If anyone would like to help with writing website content/reporting of this cross-institution narrative please contact the Transition Research Facilitator (transition@st-andrews.ac.uk) and Katherine Ellsworth-Krebs (ke68@st-andrews.ac.uk).

5.2. From this consultation and discussion to map out PGR teaching and research relevant to sustainability, the Environment Team/Transition Research Facilitator will do an annual update with the Pro-Deans Curriculum.

5.3. If you are interested in using the University as a Living Lab and have ideas for coursework or a research project please contact transition@st-andrews.ac.uk.

6. **Further information**

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