



RESEARCH INDUCTION COMMITTEE

Meeting 2/05 of the Research Induction Committee of the Faculty of Education held on Wednesday 8 March 2006 at 11.00 a.m. in the room 423, Clayton Campus

Dr Evan Kritikakos,
Executive Officer (temp)

MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

Assoc. Prof Ilana Snyder, Dr Helen Forgasz, Assoc Prof Trevor Gale, Dr Jill Brown, Dr Amanda Berry, Mr Raqib Chowdhury, Ms Claire Charles, Dr Umesh Sharma, Dr Jenny Miller,

1.2 In Attendance

Mr Ed Irons, Mr Jamie McDonald

1.3 Apologies

Dr Margaret Gearon

2. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

2.1 Starring of Items

All items for discussion on the Agenda were starred.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of meeting no. 01/05 of the Research Induction Committee held on Wednesday 14 December 2005 were confirmed as an accurate record.

Chair's Recommendation

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder has recommended that the Associate Dean (Research Degrees & Induction) attend the Research Committee, not as a member but as an attendee. It is believed, and supported by all

members, that Research Degrees matters are intrinsically related to Research matters given the changes brought about by the RQF. It is suggested the Associate Dean (Research) should also be approached to attend the RIC as an attendee.

3. MATTER ARISING FROM MINUTES

3.1 Promoting exPERT Series

Mr Ed Irons has approached Mr David Bell (MRGS) to determine whether copies of the exPERT seminar video recordings can be made available in the LMR. Mr Ed Irons is awaiting a response and advised the committee that he will follow up on this proposal.

Mr Ed Irons also advised members that exPERT seminar series program and announcements are communicated to students via the Monash Bulk Email facility managed by Dr Evan Kritikakos.

3.2 Supervision Matters

Mr Ed Irons advised that the Supervision Code of Practice has been included in the Orientation kit for Commencing HDR students. Academic staff who complete their accreditation training are also sent a hardcopy of the Code of Practice.

Associate Professor Trevor Gale pointed out the importance of managing a list of recipients of the Code of Practice as there may be academic staff who have completed accreditation but did not receive a copy of the code.

***Action 1:** Supervision Database maintained by Mr Ed Irons will include fields for tracking details re: accredited staff and their level of accreditation. Another field will also be included to track Academic staff who have been sent a copy of the Supervision Code of Practice.*

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder advised members of the MRGS training requirements for supervision accreditation. Dr Helen Forgasz recommended that academic staff supervising 24 point Masters coursework theses should have at least Level 1 accreditation.

Dr Jill Brown recommended that additional training is required as part of the accreditation process that focuses on International HDR students and their learning/research requirements.

***Action 2:** Dr Jill Brown will contact Ms Fiona Nielsen (MRGS) who is responsible for the supervision accreditation training program and discuss the possibility of an additional training module that will focus on International HDR students' needs.*

3.3 Advertising of Funding Sources to HDR Students

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder advised members that the BulkEmail facility is the most effective way to communicate important and updated information to HDR students.

***Action 1:** When Bulk Emails are sent to HDR students, Dr Evan Kritikakos will include in the notified list Dr Helen Forgasz and MERC representatives, Mr Scott Bulfin and Ms Hongming Ma.*

Associate Professor Trevor Gale pointed out that HDR students are not automatically subscribed to EdNews.

***Action 2:** Associate Professor Ilana Snyder will investigate what the subscription procedure is for EdNews and request an efficient process which will automatically include HDR students on the EdNews subscription list.*

3.4 Research Funding Increase for Research Students

Dr Helen Forgasz advised that the Research Committee agreed that Research funding for HDR students will be included in the Research Degrees sub-committee portfolio.

Dr Helen Forgasz is in discussion with Ms Trudi Brunton re: the process for moving the administration of research funding of HDR students to student services.

New documentation for application for research funds will be made available on the HDR website. It was advised that \$450 of the \$1000 HDR students are eligible for will be made available for travel costs. The same amount of \$450 will be matched by MRGS for travel.

3.5 Orientation Materials and Induction Kit

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder advised that the hardcopy of the Orientation Handbook which will be included in the Induction kit HDR students will receive at the Faculty's Orientation afternoon on the 5th April 2006 will be available on the revamped HDR webpage. Members were advised that the Research Degrees site will include the information in the Orientation handbook.

***Action 1:** Associate Professor Ilana Snyder will take responsibility over the development of the HDR site with the assistance of Ms Debby Kloot (IT Services).*

***Action 2:** Mr Ed Irons will produce a set of FAQs for HDR students that will be included on the RD website.*

***Action 3:** Under section "Writing the thesis", Dr Umesh Sharma recommended including a hyperlink to a PDF document distributed to all psychology research students re: writing literature reviews, style guides etc. Dr Umesh Sharma will forward document to Associate Professor Ilana Snyder.*

Action 4: Dr Jenny Miller recommended under section “General Writing guidelines” to include a link to the LMR’s page on Referencing styles and conventions. Associate Professor Ilana Snyder will include on HDR students website.

4. * ITEMS FOR REPORT

4.1 MERC Report

Mr Raqib Chowdhury as a MERC representative put to the committee three recommendations

Recommendation 1: Job advertisements to be linked to the HDR website.

Recommendation 2: HDR students profiles to be included on Faculty’s Research website.

Recommendation 3: a link to the HDR students’ website to be included on the Faculty’s homepage.

All three recommendations were supported by the committee.

Dr Amanda Berry proposed that HDR students’ profiles should be included in Faculty’s Research Strength areas information on the web.

Action 1: Associate Professor Ilana Snyder to propose to Research Committee inclusion of HDR students’ profiles in the Faculty’s Research Strength areas.

Ms Claire Charles expressed concern that communication with HDR students is not effective and can be improved, including the communication of orientation sessions, events and special seminars (i.e. exPERT seminars) that are offered outside the Faculty.

Action 2: 1) Mr Ed Irons to send a letter to all HDR students re: Bulk Email and the revamped HDR website. Associate Professor Ilana Snyder will draft the letter.

2) Associate Professor Ilana Snyder will send a memo to all academic supervisors re: Bulk Email facility and the revamped HDR website.

3) MERC will produce a list of discussion items for commencing HDR students outlining issues/questions that should be raised with their supervisors during their first formal meeting.

4.2 Assoc Dean Research Degrees & Induction

4.2.1 Dean’s nominees for RIC

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder advised that the Dean's nominees for the Research Induction committee will be announced before the next meeting.

4.2.2 Supervision Code of Practice

Discussed as part of agenda item 3.2.

4.2.3 Retention of students' research data

MRGS have stipulated that there is a 5 year limitation on the retention of students' research data. Faculty will have to set up an inventory, with a detailed record of where research data is kept in the Faculty, and this will be forwarded to MRGS.

Action 1: Add as item to next Agenda. It is proposed the Coordinator, Research Degrees Administration will take responsibility for organising;

(a) Inventory

(b) A designated storage area where students' research data is to be confidentially kept.

4.2.4 HDR Completion rates

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder strongly encouraged completion rates within the funding period alerting committee members to the fact it impacts on the RQF.

4.2.5 Research Quality Framework (RQF)

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder advised that the Faculty of Education will go through the mock RQF exercise in preparation for its implementation in 2007.

4.2.6 Student publications

It was noted that across the Faculty that HDR students can be encouraged more strongly to publish throughout their candidature. This will also impact on RQF.

Recommendation 1: Supervisors are encouraged to organise joint publication with their HDR students. This will be considered a positive outcome in terms of RQF in terms of increase in research activity and the enhancement of the Faculty's research profile.

4.2.7 Examination procedures

The Chair advised that the expectation of the MRGS examinations unit is that (according to current examination regulations) supervisors should forward nominated Examiners' forms/information to the Examinations officer **prior** to the submission of their student's thesis.

4.2.8 Research Strengths

No discussion.

4.2.9 HDR enrolments

Chair advised that we are close to meeting our planned load for 2006.

4.2.10 Exit Survey

The Chair advised that the committee will need to decide on what to do with the results of the Exit Survey. Key areas identified where dissatisfaction is high are:

- (a) Orientation
- (b) Induction,
- (c) Supervisors' timely response to students' thesis drafts
- (d) Resources and funding opportunities

***Action 1:** Associate Professor Ilana Snyder to send a memo to all supervisor's re: the Results of the MRGS Exit Survey (2005) and the key issues that need to be addressed.*

4.3 Director of Research Degrees

4.3.1 Scholarship update

Faculty lost two scholarships because the awardees did not realise they were only awarded a stipend scholarship (tuition fees not included).

***Recommendation 1:** When assessing applicants for a Faculty Scholarship that consideration is given to applicants in this category and offer scholarships for tuition fees. A Faculty Scholarship strategy is required and Associate Professor Ilana Snyder will prepare a draft for the next RIC meeting in May.*

4.3.2 Sport and Outdoor Recreation Scholarship

The Sport and Outdoor Recreation Scholarship will be advertised again.

4.3.3 HDR Exit Survey

Discussed as part of item 4.2.10

4.3.4 Masters documentation

Dr Helen Forgasz advised the committee that she has reviewed all Faculty HDR documentation (application forms etc.). She has revised the forms that go to examiners of MEd Research theses in line with the Monash MPhil documents. She has also revised the documents that are sent to adjudicators for disputed MEd Research theses. These were approved by the Research Degrees Com. Dr Forgasz also said that there is a great need for the revision and up-dating of other standard letters that are used in the Research Degrees office.

***Action:** New Coordinator, Research Degrees will take responsibility for the review and redrafting of all MEd Research application forms and documentation according to Dr Helen Forgasz's recommendation.*

4.3.5 Working party for confirmation processes

Dr Helen Forgasz has advised that the written component of the candidature confirmation process will be changed to 5,000-7,000 words. This will be a formalised requirement for all candidates and it will taken to the PhD and Scholarships Committee.

Action 1: Ed Irons to contact RGS to make the change on the Web and in all printed documentation.

4.3.6 Stats advice for students

Stats support within the Faculty not formalised.

Action 1: Dr Helen Forgasz to present a recommendation to the next meeting of the RIC re: best process to resolve this matter and organise Stats support for HDR students.

4.3 Co-ordinator of Master of Education- Research

4.3.1 Strategies and initiatives to recruit Masters Research Students

Associate Professor Trevor Gale briefed the committee re: Strategies and initiatives to recruit Masters Research Students by improving the quality of what we offer and candidates' research/learning experience whilst undertaking an MEd Research. Emphasis was given to student cohorts and alternative research projects that could be considered as part of assessment (i.e. portfolios etc.).

Action 1: Associate Professor Gale to present a proposal of strategies and initiatives to recruit Masters Research Students for the next RIC.

4.3.2 Allocation of Supervisors

Processes have been put in place to assign research applicants who have not been matched with supervisors in their Research Strength area. A Bulk Email (call for supervision) is then sent to all staff. Associate Professor Trevor Gale raised the issue re: timing of supervision allocation. Academic staff capacity has also been raised as a potential problem.

Action 1: Associate Professor Gale to present a proposal re: ways to improve supervision allocations for HDR students.

Action 2: Associate Professor Gale to present a proposal re: ways to improve supervision Masters Research students.

4.4 Curriculum Committee

Dr Margaret Gearon is an apology.

4.5 Honours Degree in Bachelor of Education

Dr Amanda Berry advised all but five commencing Honours students attended Orientation session. Orientation handbook for Honours students was included as part of the Orientation kit.

4.6 Confirmation of Candidates- Faculty of Education

Discussed as part of item 4.3.5.

4.7 Master in School Leadership Pathways

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder advised that the Master in School Leadership research pathway has been endorsed by the PhD and Scholarships Committee. She recommended that the RIC endorse the MSL as a research pathway. The Committee endorsed the recommendation. This means that students who complete the MSL are now eligible to apply for higher degrees by research. It does not mean that they will automatically be accepted to a research degree, just that they can apply for higher degrees by research offered in the Faculty and will be seen to have the minimum prerequisites.

4.8 Automatic H1 E

Dr Helen Forgasz has advised that the Automatic H1 E for Masters Coursework thesis (i.e. HD average in 24 point research thesis, research methodology unit and one other coursework unit) has been endorsed by the RGSC, after she made the recommendation to the RGS Steering Committee.

5. * ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Jamie McDonald tabled a draft document of a Marketing strategy for HDR recruitment which will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

6. * NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Research Induction

Wednesday 24 May 11:00 am Room 423 Clayton Campus

DISTRIBUTION

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder – Chair
Dr Helen Forgasz
Associate Professor Trevor Gale
Dr Margaret Gearon
Dr Mandi Berry/Dr Jane Mitchell
Dr Jill Brown
Dr Jenny Miller
Dr Umesh Sharma

FOR INFORMATION

Professor Jane Kenway
Ms Trudi Brunton

Executive Officer: TBA
Administrative Officer: Mr Ed Irons

Student Representatives

Ms Claire Charles
Mr Raquib Chowdhury