AGENDA: PARTS I – III

The next meeting of the Board of the Graduate Research School will be held in the Old Senate Room (Irwin Street Building) on Tuesday, 13 October 2009 at 2.15 p.m.

Parts I and II of the agenda are to be dealt with en bloc by motion of the Chair. Parts III and IV are for discussion. A member may request the removal of an item from Parts I or II to Part III.

Cheryl Wenninger/ Dr Janice Chong
Executive Officers
Board of the Graduate Research School
1. CALL FOR DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST – REF: F34

The Chair will invite members to declare potential for conflict or perceived conflicts of interest, if applicable, with regard to items on the agenda.

2. MINUTES – REF: F36

The meeting of the Board of the Graduate Research School scheduled for 8 September 2009 was held inquorate. Items were circulated for members’ endorsement, having been discussed and approved by the members in attendance (Attachment A1 – A5). There were no objections therefore the items are to be formally endorsed by this meeting.

3. ITEMS/BUSINESS IN PROGRESS FOR NOTING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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<th>ITEM/BUSINESS IN PROGRESS</th>
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<td>Change if format of printed thesis</td>
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PART I – ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

Professor Dennis Haskell has resigned his position on the Board to concentrate on his new duties as Chair of the Australia Council Literature Board. The Chair congratulates Professor Haskell on this prestigious appointment and thanks him for his contribution to the Board of the Graduate Research School.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE DOCTORATE

Attached for members’ information (Attachment B1 – B14) is a paper prepared by Winthrop Professor David Plowman in response to a call for submissions regarding the Australian Qualifications Framework and its proposed new architecture for degrees. In the paper, Professor Plowman has summarised the history and evolution of the doctorate internationally, and has also described the variety of structures of doctorates in Australia generally and at UWA in particular.

Members will note that the paper recommends that UWA creates a Working Party, including strong representation from the Graduate Research School, to investigate the opportunities for rationalisation and innovation afforded by the current course review, and to enable a more comprehensive set of recommendations concerning Cycle 3 courses at UWA. The Board will be informed of developments in this regard in due course.

For noting

PART II – ITEMS FOR DECISION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

There are no items
PART III – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

6. REGISTRATION OF SUPERVISORS FOR HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH

As members will be aware, the Board has, over the years, determined various criteria for the appointment of supervisors and various policy points for the conduct of supervision.

For members’ information the Rules and policy for nomination and appointment of supervisors are as follows:

From the 2009 Postgraduate Handbook:

Supervisors—Nomination, Appointment and Responsibilities

1.3.1.7(1) The head of school concerned must nominate at least one supervisor but may nominate two or more supervisors for a student and must, before the commencement of the student’s prescribed period of advanced study and research, submit the name(s) of the supervisor(s) to the Board for approval together with any other details requested by the Board.

(2) A student must have at least one supervisor who is a member of staff of this University.

(3) A student must have at least one supervisor who has previously supervised a research higher degree student to successful completion at this or another recognised tertiary institution.

(4) A supervisor who has not previously supervised a research higher degree student to successful completion at this or another recognised tertiary institution must attend an approved workshop on supervising postgraduate students.


(6) If the Dean of the Graduate Research School is of the opinion that a supervisor may have infringed the Code of Good Practice for Postgraduate Student Research Supervision or the Guidelines on Research Ethics and Research Conduct, the Dean may, after consultation with the Board of the Graduate Research School, refer the matter to the Vice-Chancellor.

(7) In addition to the supervisor(s) nominated in accordance with (1), (2) and (3), the head of school may recommend the appointment of a co-supervisor who is not a member of staff of this University.

(8) If a student has more than one supervisor the head of school must nominate one of the supervisors as the co-ordinating supervisor.

(9) The co-ordinating supervisor must be a member of staff of this University.

(10) The co-ordinating supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the administrative and reporting requirements of the supervisors are met.

(11) The co-ordinating supervisor receives all correspondence from the Graduate Research School relating to the student and is responsible for communicating with and between other supervisors.

(12) If a student has more than one supervisor, the supervisors and the student must discuss the relative roles of the supervisors, record this in writing and lodge the record with the Graduate Research School as part of the Research Proposal.

From the Guidelines for Graduate Research Supervisors:

2. Selection and nomination of supervisors

(a) Supervisors will normally
be appointed from among the staff of the University of Western Australia. If the proposed supervisor is not a member of academic staff, then a co-supervisor must be appointed from among the academic staff.

have the necessary knowledge, time, commitment and access to resources to undertake the supervision. In cases where the coordinating supervisor has the necessary knowledge, time, commitment and access to resources but is not an experienced supervisor, an experienced co-supervisor must be appointed. In cases where the proposed supervisor has the necessary knowledge, commitment and access to resources but not the necessary time to give adequate supervision (e.g. is a Head of School, is supervising a large number of research candidates or has heavy teaching or other commitments), a co-supervisor must be appointed.

have research expertise and experience relevant to the area of the candidate’s proposed research and provide evidence of continuing and active involvement in research programmes.

reasonably expect to hold a university appointment for the duration of the course.

normally hold a qualification at least equivalent to the level of qualification being supervised and have an appropriate record of scholarly publications. A member of staff who is also a research higher degree candidate enrolled at this University may not supervise another candidate at the same level. It is recommended that supervisors who are enrolled candidates in a PhD and are supervising candidates for the degree of master by thesis do not undertake sole supervision of these candidates.

(b) Joint supervision across Schools or from outside the University (from industry or from another university) is permissible. There is no limit to the number of supervisors a candidate may have but it must be possible to ensure that all parties are able to meet regularly and agree on the direction of study. Joint supervision differs from joint enrolment.

(c) Where it is appropriate to appoint a supervisor from outside the University, who has particular expertise unavailable within the University, an additional supervisor must be appointed by the Board of the Graduate Research School or faculty, as appropriate. In cases where the proposed supervisor has not previously supervised a research higher degree candidate at UWA a curriculum vitae or other supporting material must be provided.

Concern has been expressed that an increasing number of supervisors fail to keep abreast of changes in the management of Higher Degree by Research students that have occurred as a result of changes in national policy and legislation, and University policies. This is of particular concern with respect to Coordinating Supervisors, who need to be up to date with requirements in order to fulfil their roles.

Rule 1.3.0.7 (4) states that a supervisor who has not previously supervised a Higher Degree by Research student to completion is obliged to attend a workshop on supervision. However, in practice not all new supervisors do this. Further, having previously supervised even several students to completion is not a guarantee that a supervisor is aware of their obligations in the current environment. This is especially so if the supervision was undertaken in another university.

In the interests of risk management, quality assurance, quality enhancement, professionalism and enhancement of students’ experience, the Board is asked to consider a preliminary proposal to establish a simple system to register supervisors of Higher Degree by Research students. Key points of this are:

(1) No changes will be made to existing supervisory arrangements;

(2) There will be three levels of registration, for internal supervisors (see below for descriptions);

(3) There will be no changes to the arrangements for external supervision;

(4) All existing internal supervisors will automatically be in at least Level One;
After the system is implemented only Level Two or Level Three staff will be appointed as Coordinating Supervisors for new students;

The proposed levels are as follows:

Level One: This would be all existing internal supervisors plus all new suitably qualified staff who attend a workshop on supervision within their first year of employment. Level One staff could co-supervise but could not be appointed as Coordinating Supervisors (and therefore they could also not be appointed as sole supervisors).

Level Two: These would be suitably qualified staff who have attended at least a half day workshop on supervision within the last two years and continue to update their knowledge by attending a workshop every two years. These staff could be appointed as Coordinating Supervisors.

Level Three: These are appointed by the Board of the Graduate Research School. They are Level Two staff who have, for example, served as Graduate Research Coordinators or are in another way determined by the Board to be qualified to be senior supervisor mentors. They would be identified as Invited Mentors and encouraged to contribute to supervisor development and networking activities.

In addition, the Board is requested to approve the following amendment to Rule 1.3.1.7(4). The Graduate Research and Scholarships Office recommends this amendment regardless of whether or not the Board approves development of the strategy above:

1.3.1.7(1) The head of school concerned must nominate at least one supervisor but may nominate two or more supervisors for a student and must, before the commencement of the student’s prescribed period of advanced study and research, submit the name(s) of the supervisor(s) to the Board for approval together with any other details requested by the Board.

(2) A student must have at least one supervisor who is a member of staff of this University.

(3) A student must have at least one supervisor who has previously supervised a research higher degree student to successful completion at this or another recognised tertiary institution.

(4) Any new staff member who wishes to supervise higher degree by research students must attend an approved workshop on supervising postgraduate students, either before the supervision commences or within their first year of employment.

Deleted: (4) A supervisor who has not previously supervised a research higher degree student to successful completion at this or another recognised tertiary institution must attend an approved workshop on supervising postgraduate students.


(6) If the Dean of the Graduate Research School is of the opinion that a supervisor may have infringed the Code of Good Practice for Postgraduate Student Research Supervision or the Guidelines on Research Ethics and Research Conduct, the Dean may, after consultation with the Board of the Graduate Research School, refer the matter to the Vice-Chancellor.

(7) In addition to the supervisor(s) nominated in accordance with (1), (2) and (3), the head of school may recommend the appointment of a co-supervisor who is not a member of staff of this University.

(8) If a student has more than one supervisor the head of school must nominate one of the supervisors as the co-ordinating supervisor.

(9) The co-ordinating supervisor must be a member of staff of this University.
(10) The co-ordinating supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the administrative and reporting
requirements of the supervisors are met.

(11) The co-ordinating supervisor receives all correspondence from the Graduate Research School
relating to the student and is responsible for communicating with and between other supervisors.

(12) If a student has more than one supervisor, the supervisors and the student must discuss the
relative roles of the supervisors, record this in writing and lodge the record with the Graduate
Research School as part of the Research Proposal.

If the Board approves development of the strategy proposed above, then further draft amendments
to the Rules will be brought to the Board.

For Discussion