



Student Academic Reps
Cynrychiolwyr Academaidd Myfyrwyr

Cardiff University Students' Union
Undeb Myfyrwyr Prifysgol Caerdydd

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PGRR Forum		
Date: 28/03/19	Time: 14.00 – 16.00	Location: 4J, Fourth Floor, Students' Union
Chair:	Jake Smith (VP Postgraduate Students)	
Minutes:	Chilé Fernandez (SVA AHSS)	
Apologies:	VP Education, ENCAP, SOCSI, CHEMY, SOCSI, MLANG, LAWPL, MEDIC, SOCSI, ENCAP	
In attendance:	Jake Smith (VP Postgraduate Students) (JS) Holly Thomas/Lucy Davies (Student Voice Coordinators) (HT/ LD) Chilé Fernandez (Student Voice Assistant) (CF) Emma Kidd (Dean for Postgraduate Students (BLS)(EK) PSYCH MUSIC ENGIN MLANG MLANG	
Ratification of previous minutes:		
Amendments from PC.		



Agenda item: Welcome and General Points

JS commented on the University reorganisation plan "Transforming Cardiff". SU has raised numerous concerns about these plans, including staff and PGR teaching workload and PGT module changes. Following last PGR Forum where Reps reported varying practices and confusion regarding teaching documents, JS has written a short guide to the Code of Practice so PGRs can check they are receiving the correct support he presented attendees with a copy.

SU organised free travel to the recent People's Vote March in London. Seeking ideas on upcoming PG events were mentioned, as well. Jake then asked if there were questions.

Emma Kidd (Dean) next invited to sit in and she joins the meeting for a Q & A.

Supervision and Progress Monitoring-

JS asks how it can be improved for PGRs and/or addressed by Scoping asks how students should manage a relationship breakdown between student and supervisor, it should be established that students shouldn't restrain from raising issues they experience through worrying about far reaching impacts.

EK explains difficulties inherent in the PGR-Supervisor relationship.

Within 2nd hour, JS read the responses and feedback from other PGRs.

Action Point:	Who will do it?	By when?



Agenda item: Rep Issues, Q&A

asks whether return to study difficulties have been minimised, such as SIMS function and stipend payments re-issuing- students caught in dual positions and unaware of their standing, etc. EK mentioned possible scenarios, the policy on some of those difficulties, and what may need to happen for students coming after interruption of studies. Registry had been migrating systems across recently.

further spoke on Mature Student representation, labelling within the Student Body and integration.

raised that the communication that needs to improve within his School (was brought up in previous SSP) said that Wellbeing Champions and the likes need more promotion/better advertisement as it's important, especially for PG students

EK acknowledges that the issue must be handled within School; recommends speaking with Head of School.

pointed to matters from minutes = Office Space no longer has heating on weekends due to budget cuts, PGRs expected to work 40 hours a week, makes full heating necessary and that a formal complaint is being written; also brought up issue of no PGR student on Music website.

EK states that a formal complaint should not be needed for Estates to have personal heaters installed. mentions what has been done in MLANG for personal electronics.

JS mentions about escalating the matter to the Head of School.

Action Point:	Who will do it?	By when?
Encourage PGR Administrators to publicise the wellbeing initiatives	JS	29 th May



Agenda item: Rep Issues

mentioned tension in MLANG since the release of Transforming Cardiff, since PGRs did not receive the document when teaching staff did, though they are employed with the University. Asked EK whether the University were considering introducing contracts for PGRs who teach explained PGR Tutors don't have the information to signpost the students they teach to student support services. EK said no plans at present to introduce teaching contracts.

raised a point about possible teaching exploitation and asks about Code of Practice dilemma.

EK clarified who can address this concern to (PGR Teaching coordinator/Head of School).

JS spoke to the Code of Practice document being reviewed; asked if MLANG Reps have issues beyond what has been said, questioning Code of Practice; and asks EK if BLS Reps have accessed the Code of Practice under review for them to raise possible issues.

EK agrees to ask BLS Schools to consult PGR Reps on Code of Practice.

said that the impression is being given that PGRs are being asked to sort out professional issues, while learning and while considering a teaching career (without professional benefits); more integration with MLANG student experience still needed

asked about how to deal with difficult relationships with Supervisors. EK mentioned that training should be received, Personal Tutor Partnership system that could be setup; mentions that BLS could have been asked and she will re-check (to ascertain whether all is well with them or if concerns need to be raised); then spoke to the Transforming Cardiff matter- overall feel and affects.?

Action- HT to take this to Personal Tutor Partnership Group

Action Point:

Who will do it?

By when?

HT to take Personal Tutor & PGRs to Personal Tutor Partnership Group

HT

ASAP

Agenda item: PGR Teaching Code Review Focus

JS explains what this Review entails and that as PGR Reps, they should've been contacted or made aware of this matter and of the Code itself.

was surprised by the list of what it is policy for Schools to provide to PGRs because of the Code. hadn't been provided with Allocation of Hours form or Task List when appointed. Hasn't received full induction set out in Code.

hadn't received module information. Will endeavour to gain feedback from other PGRs in regards to the document and their experiences in teaching.

commented they had to wait 4/5 months for training.

raised that guide mentions how to go about raising issues in teaching experience, but not how to raise issues in PGR learning/supervision.



Agenda item: Focus on PGR Improvement

JS stated that over the last year PGRs Reps had requested various enhancements to PGR teaching and amendments to the Code of Practice. Passed around the list of points and asked if Reps still agreed with them.

All the Reps agreed.

said being able to opt-in to NI would be particularly useful. RB raised issue with timesheets (as mentioned in previous meetings) - unclear on how to fill out some key areas/sections, and feels the timesheet doesn't capture all Tutoring tasks, such as administration related to teaching. (uploading documents to Learning Central, responding to student queries about the seminars) JS asks they would like the issue of admin work/"office hour" duties to be managed. suggests PGRs should be given fixed amount of time per week to devote to this work. Another option could be bands of time relative to amount of teaching time to deal with admin/queries.

suggests being able to claim for 1 hour of such time per week.

Agenda item: SU & PG Support

JS mentioned that the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research is interested in Pastoral Support for PGRs; that Pastoral Support structure needs improving, and asked for suggestions on better Independent Pastoral Support; asked Reps whether they would want to be able to access Pastoral Support at the School, College or University level.

suggests clear documentation/guide on the way they operate; endeavours to get real life detailed feedback from students who have had terrible experiences with supervisory relationship.

agreed having IPS from someone outside of School is important for to guarantee independence; suggests having people who can give pastoral support in the Doctoral Academy could be best

said a system of IPS would provide useful anonymous data for the University about the recurring issues.



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