# College Forum Meeting Minutes

## ***PGR Cross-College Forum, Postgraduate Research Students***

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| **Date:  3/2/2023** | | **Time: 12:30** | | **Location: Teams** |
| Chair: | Angie Flores Acuña | | | |
| Minutes: | Rhys Jones | | | |
| **Apologies:** | | | | |
| Staff: | | | Student reps: | |
| * Sian Ballard (Lisa Davies attending in their place) | | | * Katherina Boncheva (CARBS) | |
| **In Attendance:** | | | | |
| Staff: | | | Student reps: | |
| * Michaela Hennessy (Representation and Policy Coordinator) * Angie Flores Acuña (VP Postgraduate) * Ella Ferris (Student Advice) * Fran Simpson (Estates Business Partner) * Joanne Jenkins (Student Futures) * Julie Gwilliam (PSE Postgraduate Dean) * Kath Evans (PSE Education Manager) * Amanda Tonks (BLS Postgraduate Dean) * Liz Wren-Owens (AHSS Postgraduate Dean) * Annabel Hurst (University Catering Services) * Lisa Davies (BLS College Education Development Manager) * Paul Jones (IT Services) | | | * Morgan Lee (ENCAP) * Juan Usubillaga Narvaez (ARCHI) * Kamal Haddad (ARCHI) * Micaela Panes (SHARE) * Kerry Bunkhall (MUSIC) * Sophie Slater (EARTH) * Gifty Andoh Appiah (ENCAP) * Stephen Miles (COMSC) | |
| **Update on Actions from the Previous Panel:** | | | | |
| N/A | | | | |

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| **Rep Feedback: ENCAP** |
| Morgan Lee (ML) stated how there hasn’t been another SSP meeting since the other college forum.   1. ML mentioned how there doesn’t seem to be considerations for students who are not full time to complete the corrections after their Vivas. One part time student was told that they had to complete their corrections within 3 months, the same as a full-time student. They were then unable to. ML asked whether this is particular to ENCAP or if it is a broader issue as there are other considerations for part-time students. 2. Gifty Andoh Appiah stated how there are no other points, the other issues such as teaching and contracts of PGR students have been addressed. 3. Micaela Panes expressed how PGRs are concerned that 1. They expected to receive the contracts in January and the date has been changed to September 2. That the VP PG is not a part of the working group. |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: Julie Gwilliam, Liz Wren-Owens When: ASAP** |
| 1. Julie Gwilliam (JG) responded by appreciating how that feels but specifying that at that stage the expectations are that any student are responding to those corrections as a part-time student. They should be able to undertake whatever corrections are expected within 12 weeks alongside a full-time job.  * Liz Wren-Owens (LWO) wanted to reassure that the staff at ENCAP are engaging, they mentioned how the staff at the school listened to the students and raised that question before.  1. Angie Flores Acuña (AFA) stated how there are working groups resolving PGR contacts.  * Juan Usubillaga Narvaez (JU) asked is there a timeframe for the contracts to be implemented? * AFA states how they were meant to be piloted this year, but there is no date at the moment. * MP asked if there are there PGR students that teach among the working groups? * JG noted they are expected to have students on those groups. They should be phased in from September, unsure how at the moment.  1. MP expressed how PGRs are concerned that 1. They expected to receive the contracts in January and the date has been changed to September 2. That the VP PG is not a part of the working group.  * JG clarified that the announcement was worded interestingly, it said that the implementation would start from Jan and that meant the Working Groups not the Contracts. JG expressed her surprise as to how AFA was not included in the working groups and that should be addressed. * AFA agreed and added an action to email all PGR students after AFA and JG have resolved these issues to keep them informed on what is going on. |
| **Rep Feedback: MUSIC** |
| 1. Kerry Bunkhall (KB) stated how there are issues with uploading compositions and PGRs are submitting larger work, during internal reviews the larger files are unable to be attached. This means that during marking the students are required to decrease the quality of aspects such as their presentation or sound quality (aspects they are marked on). KB asked if the file size could be increased? |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: Paul Jones, Kerry Bunkhall, Amanda Tonks, Liz Wren-Owens When: ASAP** |
| 1. Paul Jones (PJ) asked how these are being shared.  * KB responded by explaining and offered to share a screenshot. * PJ offered the idea of OneDrive and they both agreed that or sharing through a Link would also be a suitable alternative as both allow for bigger files. Amanda Tonks agrees. * PJ and AT clarified the T&Cs and access requirements. * LWO highlighted a theme from the ARE how PGs in Music are looking for more connectivity with other PGs in the college (specifically MLANG and SHARE). So, a series of AHSS sandpits – students working in particular areas will be invited to talk about their work – have been organised that hopefully will lead to collaborations. LWO asked KB to ask students about topics they would like Sandpits to be on so to be organised. * KB also stated how they are attemptingto set up a Francophone forum and invited staff and students to join. |
| **Rep Feedback: SHARE** |
| 1. MP stated how they have still not had a SSP or any sort of meeting. They are apparently being replaced by PG planning meetings, which they believe are separate things and should be held anyways. Those are also being held on days that are impacted by strikes – therefore they feel they are being shut out of their only forum to talk about issues. 2. MP raises that the PGRs do not have access to PaySlips and are unable to access HR. Noting this has been a problem for years. They contacted IT and Finance but were told to contact HR who are not responding. This means that students have no access to PaySlips for TAX purposes etc. |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: Liz Wren-Owens, Michaela Hennessy, Kerry Bunkhall, Paul Jones When: ASAP** |
| 1. LWO, said how within SHARE last year there were no elections for Reps, and they were decided upon self-nominations. This year they were elected and that should’ve been followed up by the SSPs. They noted that their understanding is that Student Voice organise SSPs alongside the Reps. They asked whether this was a misunderstanding on their part?  * Michaela Hennessy (MH) stated how the SSPs are typically organised by students alongside their Rep coordinators. Student Voice only set up the College Forums but are there to support anyway they can. * MH stated how Student Voice often hears from Rep feedback that PGRs have a different form of SSP i.e. PGRs meet once a month alongside the Director of Research. However, the guidelines do say that there should be an opportunity for students to have an SSP. Student Voice don’t facilitate this but are there to offer support, however it should come from staff and student collaboration. * KB added that among the school of MUSIC SSPs are organised by the school teams and not the students. * MH responded by stating how often staff take on the role, but it’s your decision of who takes on that role to best cater for everyone. MH will raise this with the SEOs of the school to discuss it and clarify the process and will provide MP with an update on how it goes. * LWO highlighted that any enquiries on this should be to the SHARE PGR office as the director of PGR has been in hospital recently.      1. PJ has messaged a colleague in HR to discover if HR have agreed that PGs were able to look into HR to find their Pay Data and if so, it would come to IT as there’s an access issue. PJ is attempting to discover what the situation is, once he has an answer he will respond. If HR have allowed access it’s an IT issue, if not MP should then talk to HR. |
| **Rep Feedback: ARCHI** |
| JU said how all is going well and there is a SSP next month.   1. JU asked are memberships to school’s research committees determined by schools or colleges and are PGR Reps entitled to go to these meetings? |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: Julie Gwiliam, Amanda Tonks, Liz Wren-Owens When: ASAP** |
| 1. JG stated that the Research Committees are probably defined by Schools and the Memberships are assumingly decided by the Director of Research – they note that they don’t see why PGRs shouldn’t be on that committee. JG stated how they are invited to Research Groups and clarified that they can ask the Deans of Research about. JG did not know if the directors of PGRs are on the committee either. JG, AT and LWO all agreed to contact the Dean’s regarding Membership and JG encouraged JU to email himself and ask to be a part of the committee**.** |
| **Rep Feedback: EARTH** |
| Sophie Slater (SS) confirmed that they have not had an SSP since the last forum but they are due once this month.  SS offered outcomes since the last SSP, the school has made the coffee room more welcoming for PGRs to encourage socializing and a research community. |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: Julie Gwiliam When: ASAP** |
| JG thanked SS for stating a positive and stated how this is good to pass back to the DPG that their work has been well-received as they hadn’t received feedback yet. |
| **Rep Feedback: COMSCI** |
| Stephen Miles (SM) declared there was nothing to raise. |
| **Action/Key Decision: Who: N/A When: N/A** |
| **N/A** |
| **Staff Updates:** |
| **Department/Service name:** Liz Wren-Owens (AHSS Postgraduate Dean)   * Spoke about the Sandpits and showed gratitude for student suggestions. * Referred to the content of PG action plans within the college, highlighted how there’s a breadth of content in those about the student experience of PGs. Noted that the schools are focused on a having a great PGR experience. * KB asked are those action plans accessible to students. * LWO doesn’t know but wants to share those to other DPGs across other schools. They noted that if they were available to students it would have to be about Taught Students as well and as such it is not appropriate. However, PGRs are different and LWO advised PGRs to speak to their directors and they’d be happy to talk about them. * JG encouraged future collaboration with PGRs to inform Action Plans in the first instance as they are generally solutions to problems that have been identified. JG doesn’t think that seeing an Action Plan would help PGRs but believes that they should be a part of designing the solution.   **Department/Service name:** Julie Gwilliam (PSE Postgraduate Dean)   * Spoke about research culture and the desire to understand what they can do better around research culture and about resources. The College of Engineering and Physical Science is going to run Focus Groups later in the semester and hopefully LWO and AT should run similar sessions in the future. This draws from the Research Culture survey and should be embedded in the Research Culture project the University is undertaking. The goal is to discuss with students what good research culture is, any changes needed, and the best allocation of space. At the moment the schools all have different understandings of PGRs space and resources needs, and they want to better align these among all schools to create a standard understanding, so students are aware what to expect.   **Department/Service name:** Paul Jones (IT Services)   * No update but added IT’s contact details.   **Department/Service name:** Kath Evans (College Education Manager)   * Highlighted how is working with JG on the focus groups.   **Department/Service name:** Joanne Jenkins (Student Futures)   * Reminded how all events and appointments are available to all students including PGR. * Advertised how there’s a series of Themed Weeks coming up, shared details in the chat. * Highlighted how there’s a futures fair on the 14th of March that involves talks and opportunities to speak to different employers. * Spoke about the work being done with the Doctoral Academy and GW4 to organise events specifically for PGR students, will share details once finalised.   **Department/Service name:** Annabel Hurst (University Catering Services)   * Strongly encouraged students to see the meal deals (e.g., Soup and Sandwich) at the Uni. * Advertised the Loyalty App, the Spin to Win game, the Supper Club and the TooGoodToGo app. * KB stated how the Vegan and Vegetarian Café is appreciated and loved by students. * AH expressed how that occurred as a result of Speak Week comments.   **Department/Service name:** Students Union   * AFA offered a reminder of how Spring Elections are open and will close on Monday (6th Feb). Offered to have a talk about the positions. * AFA highlighted the Student Rep Conference due to be held on 4th Feb. MH spoke about the different sessions on offer and that there are over 80 students signed up. Described how the event is for student leaders. * AFA spoke about Speak Week, gave some examples of how Speak Week has worked and encouraged everyone to advertise it. * Ella Ferris (EF) stated the role of Student Advice and how they are independent from CU. EF detailed some events that Student Advice will be running both at the Student Rep Conference and outside such as Period Dignity Week. |
| **Any Other Business:** |
| **N/A** |