MDCSG 26 Nov 2025
11:00 - 1300
Roscoe 4.9

Notes

In attendance: Elizabeth Cartwright, Helen Baker, Amy Smith, David Bechtold, Tasleem Hanif, Jon Pittman, Ruth Whelan, Admos Chimhowu, Alex Hinchliffe.

For Item 1iia – Lynne Bianchi

Apologies – Richard Cotton, Anne-Marie Walsh, Rachel Miller, Georgina Dalton.

1. **MDCSG**
    i. **Notes from the previous meeting**
       Received: the notes from the October 2025 MDCSG meeting
       Noted: that the notes were approved as an accurate record.

    ii. **Matters Arising**
    a. **EDI Questions on Application Form**
       Received: an update on progress and list of example questions previously agreed to be added.
       Noted:
          a. Despite high level PGR support EDI questions were not was not placed in the top 10 priorities for product management development work by TLSIG.
          b. Despite not being prioritised product manager Paige Massey is collecting requirements to assess scope and technical needs, but her progress may be affected by her notice period.
          c. HB has shared initial requirements, and UKRI has clarified the information to be collected in the new PGR studentships system.
          d. Once requirements are gathered, they will be reviewed alongside other work; timelines remain unclear until then.
          e. Without capturing full EDI data in the application form, we cannot compare applicants and registered students and may miss internal strategic data needs.
          f. MDCSG had agreed to include certain questions, but their wording should be reviewed for social responsibility, EDI considerations, and clear applicability to home and overseas applicants.
       Agreed:
          a. AH will produce a Word version of the application form, incorporate the new questions, and share it for feedback **(ACTION – AH).**
          b. Lynne Bianchi to escalate the requirement via Vice Deans with MDCSG approval to relevant colleagues e.g. Nalin Thakkar **(ACTION – LB).**

    b. **PDS Refocus**
       Noted:
          a. The 26/27 theme is Environmental Impacts on Human Health, Behaviour, and Productivity.
          b. The next governance group meeting will be in March 2026 to set the 27/28 priority theme.
       Agreed:

a. That the suggested triage dates (late January) would work and projects could now be advertised.

b. AMW will join in January to review the main PDS PGRs offerings (training, events, funding). MDCSG suggested two major cohort-building events per year.

2. **Recruitment and Admissions**

   i. **Relaunch of PGR**

   Noted: The system has been relaunched across all faculties with no reported issues.

3. **Planning and Quality Assurance**

   i. **Metrics**

   Noted:

   a. The University has launched a new strategy and created a list to track progress toward 2035 goals.

   b. MDCSG is responsible for selecting relevant, measurable PGR metrics aligned with these objectives.

   c. The group should present two or three key metrics (with targets) to Research Committee and justify their selection. It is recommended to include additional metrics that are relevant, even in cases where data may not currently be available (highlighting the need for investment / resource).

   d. That a distinction should be made between internal MDCSG metrics and those tied to the 2035 UE strategy.

   e. At the last MDCSG, it was suggested that interruptions should be considered, but not extensions in completion rate data. However, HB cannot currently assess the impact on our data due to identified issues with both extension and interruption data (HB working to fix this).

   f. That a report could show the percentage of PGRs completing within 5 years, with a realistic target which would in turn help to identify when and why this is not achieved.

   g. That including a withdrawal rate metric alongside the completion rate would capture % of PGRs requiring extensions or interruptions.

   h. For MDCSG only, a separate report could also include all PGRs who withdraw within their first year.

   i. A report on submissions during the funded period would benefit MDCSG.

   Agreed: HB to discuss with Marianthy Riga (Lead Student Data Analyst) about what data is possible and confirm with Research Committee that we will have a completion rate metric, UKRI market share metric, PGR satisfaction metric, PGR outputs metric, and possibly withdrawal rate metric (targets tbc) **(ACTION – HB)**.

   ii. **M2035 Implementation Plan**

   Received: the draft M2035 Research Implementation Plan

   Noted:

   a. In the plan MDCSG's main goal is to build an inclusive Postgraduate Research (PGR) community by boosting completion rates, supporting EDI, improving the PGR experience, developing enterprise PhD options, funding studentships, and linking research with training.

   b. The implementation plan also covers both foundational and innovative steps, including expanding student collaboration with external partners, supporting flexible digital learning, increasing scholarships and philanthropy, and integrating partner-enabled and hybrid models. Should PGR be included in these areas as well?

   Agreed: HB will upload the document to the MDCSG Teams area so the group can

provide feedback **(ACTION – HB)**.

4. Funding

i. Bid Updates

    a. Leverhulme

    Noted: Faculty bids have been submitted to the central panel, which will select the UoM bid on Friday (28th).

    b. Branco Weiss Fellowship by ETH Zurich

    Noted: The call has been widely shared across faculties.

5. Progression and Assessment

i. Professional Doctorate Regulations

Noted:

    a. FBMH is retendering the HSST professional doctorate and considering introducing greater flexibility, such as allowing breaks from the programme, accepting previous master's degrees for credits or exit awards at different stages.

    b. The MDCSG expressed concerns that extended interruptions (exceeding 12 months) during the research phase of the programme would be inadvisable; however, they agreed greater flexibility for interruptions during/between the taught or practical components of the programme could be supported.

Agreed:

    a. HB will consult with Teaching and Learning colleagues to determine whether previous awards may be accepted as credit or whether exit awards can be rescinded if re-registering on programme later **(ACTION – HB)**.

    b. DB will draft a flexibility model paper for MDCSG review and discussion **(ACTION – DB)**.

6. Researcher development, experience and wellbeing

i. Supervisor CPD

Received: An update paper on initiative to enhance the support for PGR supervisors.

Agreed:

    a. The ResDev website should display Faculty CPD offerings with clear branding and labels. Sessions specific to a faculty, such as 'Lunchtime sessions', should be identified as such, while noting that members from other faculties may attend.

    b. To maintain consistency with Faculty pages, the 'Supervisor Development' section on the ResDev page should instead be named Supervisor CPD.

    c. CPD content will be developed / revised collaboratively by Faculties, Academic Leads, and ResDev through the mapping exercise and the Community of Practice. With joint responsibility for delivery.

    d. That the UKCGE pilot policy and procedures could be shared externally.

7. Careers and employability

No Items

8. Activity Reports

i. RDRD / Library Activity Report

Received: activity reports from the RDRD and Library teams.

Noted: no comments on the reports.

9. Any Other Business

No further business raised

10. Date of Next Meeting

Wed 21 January 2025, 11:00 – 13:00, Roscoe 4.9