

## **IGC Postgraduate Studies Committee**

4<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 10.30 – 12 noon, S1.16

### **Present:**

Ian Adams

Kathy Evans

Susan Farrington

Nick Gilbert (chair)

Pauline McDonald (minutes)

### **HGU update (Ian)**

Nine students have been recruited onto HGU programme commencing September 2023, with a 100% acceptance rate. IA confirmed that one studentship has been used from 2024 intake, as the quality of candidates was exceptionally good. Application numbers were down this year, but PM reported that this was the case for most programmes across the University.

### **CRUK update (Susan)**

Interviews for this programme were held recently and 4 students have been recruited onto programme; 3 will be based in Glasgow, 1 in Edinburgh. For the purpose of diversity and widening participation, the Centre decided to send out anonymised candidate details; candidates were asked to submit a “recruitment form”, which was sent to supervisors for screening purposes. When supervisors had identified candidates of interest, they were given access to full application details for shortlisting.

### **CGEM update (Kathy)**

As there is no funded studentship programme for CGEM, supervisors are encouraged to apply for externally funded individual scholarships. KE confirmed that no supervisors submitted PM or EASTBIO projects for the 2023 intake.

KE reported that Sara Brown has been awarded a Medical Research Scotland studentship, and PM reported that Cathy Abbott has recruited a student via Simons Initiative for the Developing Brain (SIDB).

### **Precision Medicine update (Susan)**

SF reported that the programme is still undergoing second round of recruitment but that the first round was successful. As per HGU, application numbers for the PM programme were down, particularly from home students.

iCase students are still to be recruited. SF confirmed that no supervisors from IGC submitted an iCase project for consideration. PM are hoping to fund 1 or 2 years of a studentship if supervisors can recruit a home student, and are prepared to match fund.

### **Student administration update (Pauline)**

Recruitment – to date there are 9 students being recruited on to HGU 4-year programme, 1 on CRUK funded programme, 4 externally funded PhD students (2 in CGEM, 1 in HGU and 1 in CRUK). There is 1 confirmed MScR student in HGU (project/supervisor tbc) and 2 potential

MScR students (1 with HGU and 1 CRUK). There are 2 students recruited from Wellcome iCM programme based here with Greg Kudla and Duncan Sproul. All PhD assessments for these iCM students will be managed by the programme administrator in KB.

Deanery student support website – Pauline has been working with Jude Warner and Alison Webb to collate content for this student support website.

Upcoming student events:

Second year student poster session – 8<sup>th</sup> June

Early Career Awards – deadline 9<sup>th</sup> June

John Inglis Talks – Date to be confirmed

SSLC – 23<sup>rd</sup> May

Assessment timelines –the PGSC have agreed that an email should be sent to all students on commencing their studies to confirm their expected assessment timelines, as well as a link to the current student handbook. All students will be asked to take a note of their assessment timelines so there is no confusion about when they are due to submit reports and complete online reviews.

### **Pastoral Support Committee (Kathy)**

Guidelines for PSC mentors have recently changed; all staff based in IGC can now apply to become a mentor on a student committee. All PSCs will comprise of 2 staff members, one of which should be academic, who has undergone PhD training. The Committee agreed that having a variety of experience on committees is valuable and inclusive.

KE, Charlotte Patterson (Student Wellbeing) and Paddy Hadoke (College Head of PGR) recently ran a training session for new mentors which was successful. Following this session, it was agreed that feedback from the students to gauge their thoughts on the scheme would be timely, before a review from the pastoral support oversight committee is convened. KE pointed out that help from all members of this committee to recruit PSC mentors is needed to achieve the numbers required to make this scheme work.

PGSC committee members agreed that all students based in IGC, irrespective of which programme they are on, should be offered a PSC.

The committee agreed that students should meet once per year (as a recommended minimum), but that students can arrange to meet 6 months later, or request ad-hoc meetings when required.

**Action:** KE to re-write guidance on recommended frequency of meetings and recruit/train new mentors for new tranche of students commencing in 2023. Other committee members to help with recruitment.

### **Student/Supervisor Checklist (Nick)**

The committee agreed that the digitalisation of the student/supervisor structured discussion was a good idea. Students should initiate meetings with their supervisors and complete/submit the online form via the Graduate Research and Training website. Student-admin will monitor submissions coming in and will be able to remind students/supervisors to complete this.

**Action:** NG to send email at the end of summer to encourage staff/students to do this at the start of the academic year.

### **Student Support (Nick)**

UoE introduced a new student support system, which was originally developed with undergraduates in mind, which was then adapted to include PG students. IGC have 2 student support staff, Alison Webb, who is a Student Adviser and Jude Warner, who was appointed as a Wellbeing Adviser.

Student Advisers offer advice to PT students (in addition to Personal Tutors) and Wellbeing Advisers have a lot of experience in providing wellbeing support.

Pauline has been working with Jude and Alison to put together a Deanery webpage for student support, as a central portal.

### **Student Complaints (Nick)**

There is no clear mechanism for reporting student complaints and NG confirmed that the best thing to do in first instance, would be to refer any informal complaints to NG or Paddy Hadoke. If students register a formal complaint they will automatically reach NG and PH, although the committee agreed that hopefully most complaints would be resolved at local level. NG reported that only serious complaints need to be recorded at local level.

### **Any other business**

NG confirmed that the University's participation in the current Erasmus+ programme will only continue until 31 May 2023, following the UK government's decision to leave the programme. However, UoE will continue to welcome Erasmus exchange students from Europe.

Further information can be found on the UoE website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/global/study-abroad/study-options/erasmus-exchange>

### **Date of next meeting**

November 2023