

## UKCGE Executive Committee – 2023 Election

UKCGE are pleased to confirm the list of candidates standing for election to the Council's Executive Committee in 2023. A total of 20 candidates will stand for election, with three places available on the committee.

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*Voting will open on Monday 6th March and will close at midday on Friday 17th March 2023. The ballot will be held using the single transferable vote system.*

*Nominated link-members at each UKCGE Full-Member institution will cast a vote on behalf of their institution. Those link members will be emailed voting instructions on 6th March. If you believe you are the eligible link member for your institution, but haven't received the voting instructions then please contact the UKCGE office on [ukcge@ukcge.ac.uk](mailto:ukcge@ukcge.ac.uk).*

**1. Dr Janet Carton**

**Head of Graduate Studies & Research Strategy, University College Dublin (UCD)**

**Biographical Note**

Dr. Janet Carton is Head of Graduate Studies and Research Strategy at UCD and currently holds the Vice Presidency of ORPHEUS. Her career focus is professional development for research supervisors and doctoral student skills training. She designed and implemented the first Irish, multi-disciplinary supervisor support programme in 2001 at TU Dublin. She has since driven supervisor development nationally and internationally, growing key partnerships and policy (NAIRTL, Universitas 21, ORPHEUS, EUA-CDE, CGS and UKCGE). Janet developed and is currently implementing the first supervisor support framework in Ireland at UCD, runs a multi-institutional support programme and key IUA (Irish Universities Association) collaborative initiatives.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

Strengthening and representing the sector:

A large part of my role is the identification of excellent practices in doctoral research internationally and I have always engaged stakeholders in the development and implementation of new initiatives that arise from this work. This approach supports engagement, relevance and input from stakeholders for future growth. This is done in line with institutional strategy and has the added bonus of informing future strategy. As a UKCGE EC member, this model would contribute to strengthening the Graduate Education Sector.

Building on our trust and credibility:

As VP of ORPHEUS, I have contributed to the development of our new website, using the following tenets, what we do must be clear, information must be unambiguous and concise, easily accessible and relevant. What services the UKCGE can offer to it's community must be easily accessible and testimonies of how the organisation has supported members should be evident.

Setting standards and expectations:

Having been involved in establishing a culture of professional development for research supervisors in Ireland, I am passionate about 'floating all boats' in this area, through recognition, building relevant and timely training opportunities, engaging supervisors and students frequently to identify ever changing challenges encouraging reflection to inform future practice and building a sense of community. I would bring this approach to the UKCGE and deliver initiatives in this space.

Sustaining the impact of our events:

Taking a thematic approach to the UKCGE events programme is the sensible way to sustainably build knowledge, garner input and develop potential solutions. I would support this approach.

Developing our role as a knowledge exchange facilitator:

I have built an extensive european and international network of colleagues and friends through free and open exchange of knowledge and practices. I can bring the international

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perspective, priorities and salient policies to the UKCGE community. I can also share the UKCGE knowledge with international colleagues (U21, ORPHEUS, EUA-CDE etc.) This knowledge extends to the directional trends and priorities set by European funding agencies. I am currently co-writing an Erasmus Plus grant proposing the training and professional development of students and supervisors in Mozambique with colleagues from Karolinska and UMinho.

### **Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I currently contribute to EDI by ensuring that all communities are invited and participate in any training or support initiatives offered by Graduate Studies in UCD and via collaborative projects. I ensure that modes of training are supportive of those who learn in different ways and also those who have differing personalities. For example, material, interactive sessions, case studies, role play, recorded offerings etc, all support different groups of individuals on their doctoral training or supervisory journey. In the use of UDL (Universal Design for Learning), Constructive Alignment Learning and using Gardner's Multiple Intelligencies Framework, our supervisor programme is valuable to many kinds of learners and personality types. I can contribute this learning in my role on the EC of the UKCGE is accepted.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Carolyn Wynne, Coventry University
2. Professor Duncan Ross, Glasgow University

## **2. Professor Steve Christie**

**Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Doctoral College), Loughborough University**

### **Biographical Note**

I am the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (A-PVC) for the Doctoral College, and Professor of Chemical Technologies in the Dept. of Chemistry, School of Science (SoS), at Loughborough University (LU). My academic career began in 1997, and to date I have supervised over 25 PhD students to successful completion, and a further 20 Masters students. In addition, I was Associate Dean for Enterprise (2012-14) and Associate Dean for Research (2014-17), with responsibility for supporting PhD students in the SoS (approx. 100). As A-PVC, I oversee all aspects of the Doctoral College at LU to ensure approx.1000 PhD students have an outstanding experience from pre-recruitment to graduation.

### **Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I would like to bring my breadth of experience to UKCGE, covering all aspects of the postgraduate life cycle. My role as APVC allows me oversight of all the academic and Professional Services functions that come together to provide an outstanding graduate experience. It is the collective teamwork that provides for innovative practices to come to the fore, including working in partnership with the students themselves. One the most enjoyable parts of my role is working with the students to come up with shared solutions to the problems they face.

We need to celebrate and enhance the standing of Graduate Students, and provide them the best experience we can throughout their studies. Communication and active engagement with the postgraduate study body and those that support them is crucial. As such, I would advocate for permanent representation of postgraduate student(s) on the Board. We should also proactively engage with the major funders of postgraduate education (HEIs, UKRI, charities, industry etc) to provide a consistent and coherent voice to Government on the future of graduate education and training. Indeed, the UKRI's transition to Collective Talent Funding will change how UK studentships and fellowships are funded and institutions will need to ensure a continuum of excellent experience and opportunities to attract, develop and retain the most talented individuals. For UKCGE to advocate effectively, it must be attentive to fundamental changes in the sector.

UKCGE needs to empower the Deans and Directors of Graduate Schools to increase the profile of postgraduate education across the membership. I would raise the profile of UKCGE among the supervisor community, to increase engagement and to offer consistent best practice. Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) is now seen as a standard in teaching in Higher Education; the Good Supervisory Practice Framework could and should have a similar standing among research supervisors. Promotion of the benefits of the scheme should be a priority.

### **Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I work closely with our PVC(EDI) and the student body to consider how we embed equity into everything we do at Loughborough, and I would look to expand this in the role at

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UKCGE. My experience of supervising multiple postgraduate students and coordination of Professional Services at a University level gives a great oversight of the issues effecting students. To make the UK the most attractive destination for postgraduate education, HEIs must create equitable and inclusive experiences in which all postgraduates can realise their full potential. I believe that the UKCGE is in an excellent position seek out and promote best practice from across the UK (and beyond) to ultimately inspire students from all backgrounds to embrace postgraduate education and training.

To make the postgraduate system more inclusive, all aspects of EDI must be considered. I would support the UKCGE to consider in detail the barriers to entry and the reasons for leaving education. Broad characterisations such as BAME can hide more subtle distinctions. For example, in my own institution, our BAME intake looks healthy, but we know black students are very under-represented. Consequently, a more nuanced approach to the statistics is required, and more targeted interventions may be required. UKCGE can play a high-level role in this by coordinating data and approaches and offering advice to members. Similarly, we need to look more carefully at intake across the pitch; are pathways available to those with physical disabilities? Do we take consideration of neurodiverse applicants and where they may be best advised to apply and study? Do we design courses that suit part time students? Can we better involve industrial partners at the outset to co-create courses that will provide the best employment opportunities?

UKCGE can act as a resource for members to assess both statutory obligations and best practice around the sector, and thus offer guidance on the best solutions for an inclusive educational experience.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor Dan Parsons, Loughborough University
2. Professor Steve Rothberg, Manchester Metropolitan University

### **3. Jennifer Coates**

**Plus Programme Lead, University of Leeds**

#### **Biographical Note**

As Plus Programme Lead Officer at the University of Leeds, I lead a range of initiatives and approaches to reduce access and success gaps for widening participation (WP) students across the institution. The programme actively engages with 6,000 students per year, feeds into the University's Access and Student Success strategy and contributes to APP targets. I lead on the university's means-tested scholarship for Masters students and am responsible for our WP work at Masters level. I am the link between our PGT WP activity and PGR diversity plans including the implementation of contextual admissions, and I am well connected with Doctoral College colleagues.

#### **Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I have led on coordinating a project via NEON to collect application data for postgraduate students, to better understand gaps in application and enrolment at a sector level. Understanding the current picture will be imperative to move forward the widening participation agenda in relation to postgraduate study. I would bring this knowledge with me and would look forward to sharing findings and improving links between the two groups.

Having written high level institutional plans for addressing access and success gaps at Masters level, I am knowledgeable in relation to both institutional and sector wide data and trends, barriers students may be facing and interventions and approaches that can be trialled to overcome some of these challenges. Working regularly with a large number of WP Masters students, I would be able to share insight into issues students are facing in real time, as well as linking in with students where their input is required.

Based in a central team, I am highly collaborative and bring with me experience of working with colleagues across our Doctoral College, Careers, Student Support, Library services and with academic staff. I am able to lead agendas and enjoy participating in discussions and exchanging knowledge with colleagues across the sector, as well as proactively taking forward actions as needed. Working at a large Russell Group institution, with 40,000 students, for over six years, I have access to a large network of colleagues and would make links between the UKCGE and the institution as required.

I have an evidence led approach working regularly with data and embedding evaluation into practice. I work with logic models and undertake long term evaluation, such as mapping student engagement against retention rates to indicate whether there is correlation. I enjoy taking evaluation findings and presenting to colleagues, making changes to approaches as a result.

#### **Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I am passionate about equity and inclusion and have developed my expertise throughout my career, which I would be keen to share. I believe it is important that students have a sense of belonging within their Postgraduate studies, that they can feel confident and well supported, and that all students have access to the same opportunities, regardless of background. I have piloted schemes for Masters students from Black, Asian and minority

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ethnic backgrounds to have access to additional coaching provision, with a view to reducing awarding gaps in this area.

I have a sound knowledge of the use of positive action, having implemented the first institutional level process at the University, for use within scholarships provision. I am aware of the importance of data and implementing a sound evidence base when using positive action, and the legal challenges of not doing so correctly. Developing this process has led to the creation of 10 Masters scholarships and 21 PGR studentships for Black, Asian and Minority ethnic students to date.

I regularly work with our Lifelong Learning Centre and am involved in our institutional work to reduce awarding gaps for mature students, which have recently worsened at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate level. Mature postgraduate students can be overlooked, with university provision often focussing on the experience of Undergraduate mature students. I am keen for this to change.

Based in a WP role, I have worked with diverse students including those who are estranged, care experienced, have caring responsibilities and who are from LPN areas. I am adept at listening to students' lived experiences and some of the challenges they face, and implementing institutional and local level change to improve the situation. I believe wholeheartedly in placing student voice at the centre and I regularly work with students on advisory boards and steering groups.

**Nominated by:**

1. Professor Luke Windsor, University of Leeds
2. Rachel Van Krimpen, University of Nottingham

#### **4. Professor Jane Creaton**

**Professor of Higher Education, University of Portsmouth**

##### **Biographical Note**

I am a Professor of Higher Education at the University of Portsmouth and my expertise is in doctoral education, particularly professional doctorates and mental health and wellbeing. I am an experienced doctoral supervisor and examiner and I contribute to professional doctorate taught programmes and to the institution wide development programmes for postgraduate students and supervisors. I currently lead a pilot online programme to support part time and distance learning doctoral students. I led one of the Office for Students PGR Wellbeing projects and now chair the Vitae Working Group on Mental Health and Wellbeing and am a member of the EU Researcher Mental Health Observatory (ReMO) working group.

##### **Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I have been actively engaged with the UKCGE since presenting at the international conference on professional doctorates in London in 2009, and have since attended and presented at conferences, participated in residential workshops and online seminars and been on the organising committee of the three International Conferences on Mental Health and Wellbeing. I would welcome the opportunity to become a trustee so that I can build on this engagement with the Council in championing and enhancing postgraduate education. I believe that my skills and experience can support the goals of the Council and help deliver the UKCGE Strategic Plan in the following ways:

1. Through my well-established links with relevant national and international sector bodies (Vitae, the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) and ReMO) I can support the Council's aspirations to build strategic partnerships and collaborations and to share innovation and good practice.
2. My experience as trustee of the Society of Research into Higher Education from 2019 to 2022 has familiarised me with the role of trustee and the duties and responsibilities involved.
3. I currently use the Good Supervisory Practice Framework in supervisor training sessions and I am keen to explore how the framework can be more firmly embedded across the sector, for example, through running writing retreats to support the drafting of applications.
4. I was a member of the Writing Group which drafted the current Researcher Development Concordat and would relish further opportunities to work on policy development at national level.
5. Through my experience of working with the UKCGE on previous conferences and events, I can make a significant contribution to the development and promotion of the events programme.
6. Through my experience of publication and securing research funding in areas relating to doctoral education, I can support the development of UKCGE's role as a knowledge exchange facilitator.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

My commitment to supporting equality, diversity and inclusion is evidenced through my work on widening participation and access to doctoral education. I became a passionate advocate for the interests of part time students through my involvement in the design and delivery of professional doctorates in criminal justice and education. Although part time students constitute a quarter of the UK PGR population (and a significantly higher proportion in some institutions), these students are often omitted from policy discourses around postgraduate education. Yet this population includes a higher proportion of minoritised ethnic and self-funded students who often have more limited access to professional development opportunities and may face other barriers to accessing the academic pipeline. At my own institution, I deliver sessions as part of the continuing professional development programme for supervisors which specifically addresses the needs of the part-time student population and the additional challenges that they may face. I am also leading a pilot programme which aims to develop a supportive community of doctoral researchers who can provide advice and support, share useful resources and learn from the experience of others. Designed in collaboration with students, the programme includes core development sessions, writing workshops and informal discussion and peer support sessions. I am also committed to supporting and promoting good PGR mental health and wellbeing, an issue which also has a disproportionate impact on minoritised ethnic groups, on students with caring responsibilities and international students. I have recently been working on a project which addresses both these areas of interest by exploring the mental health and wellbeing of part time PGR students. A bursary for a PhD student to work on the project has been secured and, subject to a successful funding bid, the aim is to work with UKCGE to hold an event on these issues.

**Nominated by:**

1. Dr Darren Van Laar, University of Portsmouth
2. Professor Helen Higson, Aston University

**5. Dr Carlos De Luna**

**Head of the Doctoral School, University of Winchester**

**Biographical Note**

I have twenty-two years of experience in academia in the UK, spending the last twelve years in leadership positions in postgraduate education, mainly working in non-research-intensive universities. I have developed a strong track record of positive impact and commitment to excellence in postgraduate education. I have written policies and regulations, including two institutional strategies, that have led, influenced, developed processes, and motivated a positive culture by instilling behavioural changes, enshrining quality assurance, and the provision of an inclusive student and supervisor environment.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I am keen on working with the UKCGE and relevant stakeholders to offer innovative solutions to advance the postgraduate education in the UK. I am passionate in empowering postgraduate students with the ability to create a positive impact, in both, their own careers, and their communities. I will work with UKCGE to strengthen its representation in the sector by bridging the gap with potential employers to increase the skill base and employability of postgraduates.

I will work with the Council to set standards and expectations in PG education. I have led initiatives that have aimed to increase both the number and quality of PGR students and PGR supervisors, by focusing on meeting and exceeding the commitments of relevant stakeholders in PG education.

I am deeply interested in developing the Council's role as knowledge exchange facilitator, I can offer my experience supporting knowledge exchange initiatives in UK universities. Many of these, have provided PG students with invaluable experience working with partners outside academia.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I have spent over a decade working with a diverse population of PGR students. Many of them studying for a PG degree at a UK university, while at the same time, working full-time. Most of them self-fund their studies, and many of them return to academia after spending several years developing a career.

Therefore, I am committed to working with the Council in expanding the voice of this cohort of students, learning from them to improve the PG environment to allow them to thrive. I am experienced at working with several mission groups in the sector (i.e., GuildHE, Million+, etc.) developing an inclusive and supporting environment for students and supervisors.

**Nominated by:**

1. Marcus Cerny, City, University of London
2. Richard Bottoms, University of East London

**6. Dr Carol Azumah Dennis**

**Programme Leader: EdD / Deputy Associate Dean (Curriculum), The Open University**

**Biographical Note**

I have been the Programme Leader for the EdD at the Open University since 2017 and am currently about to take up the post of Deputy Associate Dean (curriculum). I am also a co.ordinator for the National Network of EdD directors. My research is focussed primarily on post-16 education, with a strong interest in professionalism, policy and ethics. In 2022 I completed a funded research project exploring the reconciliation of professional and academic epistemologies. Most recently I have lead the development of an EDI in Research statement for the Faculty of Well Being, Education and Language Studies.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

My research work in post-16 education has focussed on ethics in relation to social justice and equity. If appointed a UKGCE trustee I would like to build on the equity work I have undertaken at an institutional level. I am particularly interested in Doctoral supervision. Notably, how BME candidates researching the experiences of BME communities experience equitable supervision. My experience is that this has at times been problematic to the detriment of BME researchers. I am interested in what the sector considers to be PGR 'entitlements' and how the sector might be reshaped to ensure BME (and other marginalised groups) PGRs have access to BME (and other marginalised groups) supervisors. In short what this means is working with relevant organisations (such as 100 Black Women Professors), to promote black (and other marginalised groups) academics participation in the PGR space as supervisors. Perhaps accomplished through offering specific training programmes for BME (and other marginalised groups).

As Deputy Associate Dean involves I am faculty lead on short course and micro-credentials. I would like to explore if and how it might be possible to offer supervisors accredited online short course ultimately positioning these as similar to the PGCE a minimal requirement conferring a licence to practice. Alongside, I'd be keen to explore more focussed sessions on particular aspects of supervision such as: working with PGRs with mental health difficulties, transitioning from L7 to L8, supervising at a distance.

While my experience of the PG space has primarily been in research, I have also worked with PG taught provision and with both research and teaching interest and keen to lead discussion and activity around decolonising the curriculum. Decolonising the taught curriculum is well thought through even if there is considerable scope for action. Decolonising the research curriculum is in my view less well defined.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I have recently led the development of an EDI in Research document for the Open University. It is a detailed comprehensive statement that explores the EDI implications of all aspects of the research process from building a research team to disseminating the outcomes of research activity. In working with a team of OU colleagues to develop the EDI guidance, it is notable that such statements are not standard across the sector. I would like to work as a trustee and other relevant, closely aligned bodies to ensure there is a robust

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empirical base for such statements and supportive materials that encourage institutions to develop EDI in research approaches that fit neatly into the complexity of their specific context.

As a co-ordinator of the National EdD Directors' network, I have good working relationships with the sector and am well placed to contribute towards this work. I am Education Research Lead for the school of Education, Childhood and Youth Studies and work to ensure all PGRs, especially those who are self-funded and part-time are integrated into the academic life of the school and faculty. Understanding the experiences of and how to work effectively with part-time PGRs is a significant aspect of equitable PG work.

**Nominated by:**

1. Dr Inma Alvarez, Open University
2. Dr Tony Armstrong, Birmingham City University

**7. Dr Mark Erickson**

**Reader in Sociology, University of Brighton**

**Biographical Note**

I have been involved in PGT and PGR for over two decades, as a PGT Course Leader from 2003 to 2015, and as a doctoral supervisor since 1998. I was appointed Director of Postgraduate Studies in 2015, became Director of Doctoral Studies and was Director of Brighton Doctoral College until July 2022. I am currently Doctoral Studies Lead for my School (Humanities and Social Science). I have extensive experience of training doctoral supervisors and providing training and support for PGR and PGT students. I have supervised 8 PhD students to completion, am currently supervising 6 PhD students, and have examined 6 PhD theses.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

The UKCGE is an important voice for PG across the sector, and strengthening that voice is an imperative. I would propose that we do this by expanding institutional membership through advocacy and networking at academic events (conferences, symposia, etc.). Moving our membership figure from 80% to 100% of UK HEIs is an achievable target, and would strengthen the finances of UKGCE. We should also look to have much closer ties to all the UKRI-funded DTPs, providing PGRs with a way in to UKCGE activities, and have more PGR and PGT-oriented events, both of which I have a lot of experience in running.

UKCGE's role in identifying and leading change is clear, but we must recognise that the sector, particularly PGR, is under considerable pressure to innovate. Unless we are careful the 'UK doctorate' could become fragmented, losing comparability and, perhaps, status. We can address this through bold research and innovation into alternate and appropriate doctoral formats and training to support this, something that I have considerable experience in already. The good offices of UKGCE and the collective experience it brings together can be brought to bear to oversee the transformation of the doctorate. Diversifying beyond the professional doctorate to consider team / collective doctorates, placement-based doctorates and multi-paper theses, for example, is imperative if we are to keep up with changing labour markets and the needs of employers. Enhancing ties to UKRI and, where appropriate, ARIA will give UKCGE a voice in the changing landscape of PGR provision.

Our PGT work is becoming more and more important as labour markets become saturated with graduates, and employers seek additional value in recruitment processes. PGT is quite fragmented across the UK HEI sector, unsurprising given the diversity of institutions and, particularly, funding streams that have emerged in the past two decades. This has been further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to, and then back from, remote learning, something that I have researched and published on. A sector in flux would benefit from UKCGE offering overview experience and research knowledge of how PGT as a whole is shaping up in these uncertain times and I feel that I can make a useful contribution here.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

In my role in Brighton Doctoral College I pushed forward our EDI strategy to expand and enhance diversity in all our PGR and PGT provision. This was done through a combination of

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including EDI awareness in our supervisor training, PGT and PGR support throughout their studies – in particular recognising the institutional frameworks that present obstacles to students from minority backgrounds – and pushing EDI to the front of our recruitment strategies. This latter was quite effective; we have developed a diverse and vibrant PG community, one that is mutually supporting, and is supported by the institution (though I note that there is always room for improvement).

Tied to this was my initiative to decolonise my teaching and research, something that I have been striving to do for some time and with some success. Too often we consider EDI to be about others; other members of staff, other institutions, 'others'. This is inappropriate and we must recognise that EDI, diversification, decolonization are an imperative, not just for social justice but also for our own research and scholarship, and for our own lives. Too much of our academic activity is tied to outdated and exclusive models that do not take us into the new spaces of knowledge that we need to face these extraordinarily challenging times. Without new voices, knowledges, methods, without promoting EDI and challenging the current mindset we will not achieve this.

My approach to EDI in UKCGE would be quite simple: to put this at the heart of all of our activities to the mutual benefit of all parties.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Dr Rebekah Smith McGloin, Nottingham Trent University
2. Professor Andrew Church, University of Bedfordshire

## **8. Elizabeth Halton**

**Director, Doctoral School and Early Career Research Staff, University College London**

### **Biographical Note**

I completed my Master's in Developmental Linguistics at UCL in 2007. Since then I have moved through various roles within Higher Education, some concurrently, including in management at the Institute of Psychiatry and Cardiovascular Division at King's College London, and in teaching at Middlesex and Birkbeck Universities. I have been back at UCL since 2015, first managing a £20M+ Neurodegeneration Centre and prestigious Doctoral Training Programme and then joining the Doctoral School. I have been Director of the Doctoral School and Early Career Staff since 2021 where I support 10k+ ECRs.

### **Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I have a strong track record in enabling collective leadership, supporting professional development and mentoring, innovating new ways of working which are responsive to the needs of the modern researcher, and generally improving Research Culture. I believe my experience and passion for these activities are conducive with UKCGE's strategic plan and would make me an ideal Trustee.

I am dedicated to Knowledge Exchange and supporting the global community of those who support research training. In the past 12 months, I have been an invited speaker at the Professionals in Doctoral Education (PRiDE) conference (Prague), the AESIS Impact of Science conference (Leiden), and the AESIS Impact of Social Science conference (Stockholm) conferences. Based on my positive reception in Prague, PRiDE have since asked me to stand on their Network Board.

I am also dedicated to mentoring and supporting professional development. In my previous role at UCL, I initiated mentoring schemes for professional services staff as well as research staff. I have since been asked to speak at numerous careers events both at UCL and externally, e.g. King's College London and the Royal Society. I have also personally mentored numerous staff and students, an activity I cherish.

I have a strong interest in following research and trends in Higher Education and regularly read WONKHE and Times Higher to keep abreast of current affairs. As a result of my research, I am currently working on modernising several areas of our PGR regulations which I hope will, in due course, make UCL a leader in providing a new type of research training that better prepares students for roles which utilise their research skills to have a positive impact on society both within and beyond academia. Being the Director for the largest cohort of research students nationally, I also prioritise having modern and responsive systems and technology, and would like to work with the wider PGR community to make improvements in this space, as I know it is a pain point for many.

### **Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion should be embedded in all the activities we undertake. I am currently focused on recruitment policies and procedures, particularly for funded doctoral

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training opportunities, to ensure we reach a wide community and also to bring more consistency and fairness to this process. However, without inclusive training practices, any diversity achieved through recruitment will not endure. Thus, I am also working on projects with colleagues: to improve research culture (through a Research England grant); to improve access to research (through a Research England grant); with the Students' Union (SU), to improve visibility of support services to students with disabilities and neurodivergence; and with the UCU and SU on improving conditions for our Teaching Assistants. I am in the process of hiring a new role to join my team focused on Postgraduate Research Access and Widening Participation and hope to expand my contributions to the sector more in the coming years as a result. This is a rapidly changing space and a relatively new one for PGR, and it is essential that we all work together to consistently and transparently collect data so that we can continually update our thinking and best practice in this area.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor David Bogle, University College London
2. Dr Nigel Eady, King's College London

**9. Dr MARRISA JOSEPH**

**Associate Professor of Organisation Studies & Business History, University of Reading**

**Biographical Note**

Dr MARRISA JOSEPH began her academic career teaching postgraduate students. She has School level strategic experience in academic and professional development, has held numerous academic leadership roles and has been involved in writing institutional policy for PG students. MARRISA teaches across all levels in HE and is currently Programme Area Director for PG Business & Management programmes at Henley Business School; she is a Senior Fellow of HEA and sits on the University of Reading Senate. MARRISA has continuously been an advocate for students, beginning when she was elected as Sports Federation President, Officer and Trustee of the University of Chichester Students' Union.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I have experience of sitting on institutional level teaching & learning and quality assurance committees, demonstrating my knowledge and understanding of institutional policy and regulatory frameworks, alongside governance of different types of HE institutions in the public and private sectors. Through various strategic and academic leadership roles, I have been involved in writing institutional level policies to better support PG students and I have led the design and implementation of a range of student support initiatives. I understand how policy can have a significant impact, and my experience has made me well placed to identify how policy can be improved alongside the mechanisms to implement successful changes. I believe my expertise would be a strong contribution to delivering UKCGE's strategic plan in developing national policies to improve student experience.

I have experience of organising successful events and networking opportunities for students, in which I secured speakers in senior positions from a range of sectors including the Cabinet Office, Barclays and HSBC. I would use my experience to contribute to an events programme which has an increased impact, and can help address challenges in the sector whilst supporting the aims of disseminating best practice and knowledge. In addition, I am interested to support UKCGE in strengthening its representation by proposing initiatives to support further engagement with a range of stakeholders. An example of this is creating a podcast to promote the work of the Council, and to provide a springboard for debates and conversations. This could be a platform for individuals to share their perspectives on developments in the sector, leading to further engagement and increased opportunities for researchers and students to be involved in UKCGE activities.

My experience of strategic and academic leadership, coupled with my knowledge in learning and teaching, demonstrates the strong contributions that I would make to UKCGE activities.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I am an advocate for the advancement of student success and EDI in Higher Education, which I approach with a broad mindset and the resilience to explore opportunities until we get a solution. Listening to the membership I believe is an important step to better advocate for EDI. Understanding the perspectives of individuals in greater detail could foster a

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systematic and sustainable approach to EDI through improved policy. This in turn could support more inclusive cultures at the institutional level and in tandem, influence policy at national level. I believe that policy is a strong approach to changing practices and embedding change. Therefore, including perspectives, thinking and approaches from the membership – which are the sites at which the policies could demonstrate impact – is advantageous. Engaging those who are responsible at local level for EDI, and getting a consistent pipeline of information to feed into UKCGE strategy to improve EDI across the sector I believe is an important step. Therefore, I would endeavour to create a strong and sustainable pipeline between the membership and UKCGE through various activities such as working groups, or through a series of away days to ensure that views, research and data at both the individual and institutional levels will be increasingly fed through. This could then be used to inform thinking towards policy in the sector, and could be used to support events that further promote EDI and the development of new initiatives at UKCGE.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor Peter Miskell, University of Reading
2. Dr Karen Dennis, University of Surrey

**10. Professor Mona Kanaan**

**Professor in Applied Health Research and Statistics, University of York**

**Biographical Note**

Mona Kanaan is a Senior Fellow of HEA, a fellow of the Royal Statistical Society(RSS) and Chair of the RSS Medical Section; further details

<https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/our-staff/mona-kanaan/>

Mona has over twenty-two years of experience in teaching applied statistics at post-graduate level in Health Sciences and has designed a post-graduate programme to enable foundation year doctors to develop their skills in Health Research Methods and Statistics. She chairs the post-graduate teaching committee at the Department, has supervised PhD students to successful completion and currently supervising a number of PhD students, led on strengthening research capacity elements in research projects, and acts as a mentor to early career researchers. Mona has experience in designing/conducting studies in public health and social sciences.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I believe I am well suited to this role as it aligns with my personal goals that are at the heart of everything I do, including promoting equality and inclusivity in postgraduate teaching and research and supporting the development of early career researchers, and I am excited by the prospect of being able to positively contribute to the provision of these values at a national level.

I consider that my teaching and research experience of over 22 years, including leadership roles in teaching and research, coupled with my enthusiasm and passion for teaching, research, and training and my background as a statistician makes me a worthy candidate for the role.

My experience in the governance and management of teaching affords me with the opportunity to understand the challenges faced by postgraduate students and doctoral researchers, and the academic staff providing support to them, and the means to address these issues. Through these insights, if elected, I would be able to help promote the professional recognition of staff supporting post-graduate provision.

This would build on some of the work that I am currently engaged with at national level that looks at the professional recognition of applied statisticians working in health and social sciences through my work with the Royal Statistical Society Medical section and the National Institute of Health Research Methodology incubator (Statistics Workstream).

These experiences and links would help in working with other colleagues on the committee to advance the strategic plans of the council including addressing equity and inclusivity issues in postgraduate education and research, increasing the visibility of the council, and working with members from across the sector to develop and set standards and expectations.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I strongly believe that opportunities to learn and advance knowledge should be inclusive and open to all who are interested in pursuing higher education. In pursuing this aspiration,

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I will draw on my personal experience (in learning, teaching, supervision and research, previous involvement with an ATHENA SWAN application, and current involvement in the development a reverse mentoring scheme), those of other members of the committee and the wider sector to help shape a strategy to develop a supportive environment for post-graduate and doctoral research students from all backgrounds to achieve their full potential.

Building on the current work by the committee and relevant sector players, I am committed to working with colleagues to identify, develop, and help implement strategies that address equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in post-graduate education. I am keen to take part in evaluating current mechanisms that monitor EDI, help identify main areas that need addressing, and to promote the best practice in tackling them.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor David Barrett, University of York
2. Professor Dawn Teare, Newcastle University

### **11. Professor Felicity Matthews**

**Director of the White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership, University of Sheffield**

#### **Biographical Note**

Professor Felicity Matthews is the Director of the ESRC-funded White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership (WRDTP), which brings together the Universities of Bradford, Hull, Leeds, Manchester Metropolitan, Sheffield Hallam, Sheffield and York to deliver cutting edge social science training to postgraduate researchers. She joined the University of Sheffield in 2012, and was promoted to Chair in 2021.

At the University of Sheffield, Felicity has held a range of leadership positions, including Faculty Deputy Director for Learning and Teaching, with specific responsibility for Widening Participation (2014-18), Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research (2021-22), and Director of the WRDTP (2022-present). She was the editor of Policy & Politics between 2015-2020, and currently serves on the editorial advisory board of several journals.

#### **Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

As a UKCGE trustee with extensive sectoral experience, I will contribute to UKCGE's activities as follows. Firstly, I will progress UKCGE's critical work in relation to supervisory practice and supervisor continuous professional development, and will advocate for the sector-wide adoption of the principles outlined in the 'Good Supervisory Practice Framework'. I will also advocate for the greater recognition of supervisory excellence in promotion and reward, and will work with UKCGE to further promote the 'Research Supervision Recognition Programme'. Secondly, I will complement this work by engaging academic and professional service colleagues to build communities of best practice in relation to three of the key areas highlighted in the Framework: EDI, admissions (both of which are discussed below) and degree completion. In the context of a cost of living crisis and the increasing recognition of the mental health and wellbeing pressures experienced by postgraduate students, it more important than ever that postgraduates are fully supported to complete their research degree in a timely manner, and UKCGE can play a vital role in terms of setting sector-wide standards and expectations. Thirdly, I will capitalise on UKCGE's reputation as a trusted voice of the sector to shape key debates about the purpose and value of postgraduate education. In particular, I will impress on key decision-makers the significant social and economic benefits of postgraduate education; the importance of international mobility for UK and international postgraduates alike; and the vital contribution made by international students to the sector's reputation for world-leading research. Finally, by adopting an inclusive and collegiate approach to realising the objectives above, I aim to support UKCGE's aspiration of strengthening its representation of the sector in terms of enhancing participation rates and growing member numbers. In doing so, this will further burnish UKCGE's reputation as the leading voice for postgraduate education and research, as reflected in its motto 'by the sector, for the sector'.

#### **Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I am committed to EDI and will work with UKCGE to ensure our sector provides inclusive and nurturing educational experience where postgraduate students from a range of

backgrounds, particularly underrepresented or minoritised communities, are supported to realise their potential, and where their mental health and wellbeing is respected at all times. To achieve this ambition, I will adopt a 'lifecycle' approach that focuses on all stages of the postgraduate student experience; and will maximise the unrivalled platform afforded by UKCGE to pursue sector-wide change via engagement and advocacy, and by strengthening the evidence base for the strategic use of positive action. Firstly, I will leverage the reach of UKCGE and work with its members to identify the key points in the postgraduate lifecycle where individual HEIs can have a meaningful impact. Sharing best practice from across the sector, I will work with HEIs to ensure that admissions practices are open, equitable, and recognise the wide range of skills that contribute to successful postgraduate outcomes. I will also work with HEIs to progress their work on decolonisation to ensure intellectual plurality within postgraduate education, and a receptiveness to a widening range of perspectives and bodies of knowledge. Secondly, I will similarly leverage the reach of UKCGE to advocate for EDI considerations in national conversations concerning postgraduate education policy and the future direction of the sector. In particular, I will reach out to policymakers, funders and regulators to advocate for fair and sustainable levels of postgraduate funding, and for a proper recognition of societal and economic benefits brought by a diverse postgraduate population, including international students. Finally, I will work with UKCGE members to identify attainment and participation gaps within the postgraduate community in order to better understand the intersections of disadvantage that combine in the experience of underrepresented groups, and to build a robust evidence base for positive action.

**Nominated by:**

1. Professor Ruth Blakeley, University of Sheffield
2. Professor Sarah Pearson, Sheffield Hallam University

**12. Dr Ross McGarry**  
**Reader, University of Liverpool**

**Biographical Note**

I am a Reader within the Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology (SSPC) at the University of Liverpool (UoL) and have been directly involved in a range of postgraduate research (PGR) education during the past seven years. I am currently Director of PGR for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at UoL, having previously served as a Department Director of PGR for SSPC's Sociology and Social Policy PhD (2016-2020); as UoL's Institutional Pathway Representative (2017-2020) and Overall Pathway Lead (2018-2019; 2020-21) for the ESRC NWSSDTP Criminology, Social Policy and Social Work Pathway, and UoL's ESRC NWSSDTP (interim) Institutional Lead (2021-2022).

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I am an experienced and committed leader of postgraduate education and a keen advocate for making postgraduate opportunities accessible, and attainable, to researchers from a diverse range of backgrounds. At this stage in my career I am eager to begin further developing my postgraduate leadership by making a valuable contribution to UKCGE to help benefit and shape the strategic direction of postgraduate education nationally.

As a leader of postgraduate activities for many years, I have developed an aptitude for working with, and implementing, institutional postgraduate policies. I can therefore make a professional contribution to producing UKCGE reports and publications, and I am keen to support the facilitation of UKCGE activities across UK institutions.

I have an empathic understanding of the many challenges postgraduates can face during the course of their studies, particularly as independent researchers often working alone, remotely, or having their studies disrupted from wider postgraduate networks in increasingly digital contexts. I am therefore keen to support and contribute to the development of national networks, peer groups, and communities of practice to ensure requisite professional, social, and wellbeing support is made available to postgraduates and PGR supervisors, within and across their disciplines of expertise.

Following the ESRC 'Review of the PhD in the Social Sciences', it is vital the sector responds quickly and proactively to the changing postgraduate landscape currently underway in the UK, particularly with regards to postgraduate supervision, training, employability and knowledge exchange. I have a sound grasp of these issues and an energy to proactively engage with the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. It is now as important as it has ever been to ensure postgraduate provision is prioritised and resourced, alongside undergraduate education, within UK HEI institutional strategies; I will therefore contribute my advocacy on this position, if elected as a Trustee of the UKCGE.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

Having been responsible for the recruitment and management of a postgraduate research (PGR) programme, I understand the importance of ensuring that EDI considerations are sensitively and thoughtfully embedded within HE provision at all levels. Key to which, with

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reference to the UKCGE Strategic Plan, is ensuring postgraduate research and education is underpinned by inclusiveness and equity, and enables candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds to pursue postgraduate study. It is therefore a priority to ensure that the postgraduate opportunities that are available within UK HEI institutions are open, inclusive and accessible fairly, particularly for candidates who are from underrepresented backgrounds within higher education. And, once recruited, an importance needs to be placed on keeping all postgraduates connected and well networked. My commitment to EDI in these regards is something that I take seriously and am committed to as a leader of postgraduate education, and I will be certain to make this contribution meaningfully within my role as a Trustee of the UKCGE, if appointed.

As a student having attended university from an underrepresented working class background, I am also fully aware that barriers exist for many people wanting to pursue higher education at any level. The current socio-economic and political context, including the UK government's response to the Augar Review; pressures directed at Universities in the 'levelling up' agenda; introduction of the Turing Scheme as a consequence of Brexit; and the enduring cost of living crisis in the UK, each have consequences for future postgraduate opportunities and cohorts, which will be felt most acutely by those from underrepresented backgrounds. I am therefore committed to ensuring that best practice with regards to making postgraduate funding available, accessible, and attainable is prioritised within HE institutions, especially for postgraduates from underrepresented backgrounds, to help ensure the diversity of postgraduate education is protected.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor Georgina Endfield, University of Liverpool
2. Dr Kirsteen Paton, University of Glasgow

**13. Professor Sonja McIlpatrick**  
**Dean of Doctoral College, Ulster University**

**Biographical Note**

Professor Sonja McIlpatrick is newly appointed Dean of Doctoral College at Ulster University and a Professor in Nursing and Palliative Care. She is a distinguished academic whose career has spanned clinical practice, postgraduate education, academia, research, and scholarship. Sonja is an internationally recognized leader in palliative care research publishing extensively in the area. She has a keen interest in doctoral education and served as the first non-US based President for the International Network of Doctoral Education in Nursing. She holds various Visiting Professor appointments and has served on numerous international research-funding boards. She was appointed as Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and awarded a Fellowship of the Royal College of Nursing, UK. She is a UK Florence Nightingale Leadership Scholar and a graduate of Harvard authentic leadership course. Her current role involves leading the institution regarding post graduate research and developing good practice for doctoral education.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I have over 20 years experience in higher education, that spans postgraduate teaching and research, alongside previous clinical experience within the health service. During this time, I have held various leadership roles, bridging health service, research, education and policy, providing a breadth of experience that would contribute to UKCGE plans around collective leadership. I have experience of contributing to UK wide group, serving on the research advisory committee for the UK Council of Deans of Health. I am passionate about postgraduate education and research. I am keen to contribute to various UKCGE's activities. My proposed contributions would focus on enabling priority setting for next few years. Specifically, I would seek to lead on increasing the visibility and contribution of UKCGE to the sector. One way to enable this is via the use of social media, podcasts, webinar activity to increase visibility and relevance for members. Such interests would be co-produced and involve strategic priority setting. Another key contribution would be drawing on my experience of 'community of practice' initiatives in key areas of thematic interests. Specific areas would include Good Supervisory Practice Framework, drawing from international experience in this area. Another contribution would provide different country perspectives across the UK and contributing towards Equality, Diversity and Inclusion operational plans.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I am currently leading on developing an institution operational EDI plan for Postgraduate Research. This involves looking at various initiatives for various specific groups within the postgraduate research community, but also plans around recruitment and selection. I would contribute to EDI by drawing on data and need to have accurate baseline data to identify both areas of need and then subsequent action plans. This needs to take into consideration specific challenges in certain areas, reflecting diversity across the UK and from a four-nation perspective. I would also plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE by identifying and sharing good practice and developing good practice frameworks/toolkits for both postgraduate education and research. This could be developed in partnership with other organisations, for example UKRI and Research Councils. Another aspect of

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contribution would be around, developing an inclusive approach to all aspects of UKCGE strategy work and seeking to co-produce both plans and priority areas and ensure that EDI is embedded in all aspects of UKCGE approach and culture. Some examples could include the identification of EDI Champions and Forum for both postgraduate research and education.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor Andrea Nelson, Glasgow Caledonian University
2. Professor Mark Hayter, Manchester Metropolitan University

**14. Dr Lesley McIntyre**

**Associate Professor, Northumbria University, Newcastle**

**Biographical Note**

Dr. Lesley McIntyre is an Associate Professor of Architecture at Northumbria University and has been the Post-Graduate Research Lead for the Department of Architecture and Built Environment since 2020. She has successfully supervised several PhD students to completion and built an active PGR community, earning her a Student-led Teaching award in 2021. With experience in architectural practice in Northern Ireland, New York, and Scotland, Lesley's research focuses on the intersections of landscape, architecture, human interaction, and the architectural design process. Her work explores domains of health and well-being, ageing and accessibility, design for longevity, and smart environments, and has been exhibited both nationally and internationally.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

As an advocate for equity and inclusiveness in postgraduate education and research, I would prioritize taking several actions to promote greater diversity and inclusiveness. The focus of my efforts would be on creating a more inclusive environment for students from diverse backgrounds by removing barriers to access and opportunities and providing support for mental health and well-being.

One of my key priorities would be to encourage and support diverse students to become PhD candidates. To achieve this, I would advocate for more funding and support for international students undertaking PhDs within the UK. Additionally, I would work to widen opportunities for students to ensure equity of access to and participation in research, both in terms of contributions to knowledge and in terms of opportunities being equally given/accessible. To achieve this, I would advocate for postdoctoral schemes for minority groups to promote their career advancement in academia.

In addressing structural barriers to opportunity, I would work to better connect graduates from underrepresented groups with PhD opportunities. This would involve working with universities and funding bodies to develop and implement targeted initiatives that support students from diverse backgrounds. I would also work closely with graduate schools and admissions teams to ensure that students receive the support and resources they need to pursue their academic goals.

To promote inclusiveness and diversity, I would explore different ways of engaging with the PhD process. This would involve working with universities to develop and implement innovative teaching and learning approaches that are tailored to the needs of a diverse student population. Additionally, I would learn from PGR groups (such as the Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education) to gain insights and best practices on how to promote equity and inclusiveness in postgraduate education and research.

Finally, to enhance the on-course postgraduate research (PGR) experience, I would work to ensure that all PGRs feel valued and a part of the wider scholarly community. This would involve working with universities to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for students from diverse backgrounds, including providing support for mental health and well-being.

Finally, I would initiate case studies and narratives of successful PhD journeys, connecting them with postgraduate research forums and conducting research to understand the contexts of both best and bad practices in postgraduate education and research. These actions would contribute to improving the quality and outcomes of postgraduate education and research across the sector.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

As a female working in the Construction industry across New York, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, I have observed first-hand the challenges that underrepresented groups face in academia and research. In my role with UKCGE, I plan to contribute to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) by creating a partnership framework that involves engagement with expert groups and the postgraduate research (PGR) community. I believe that the PGR community can play an instrumental role in building and supporting a diverse community that is more equal and inclusive. Therefore, I would advocate for doctoral studentship schemes and the introduction of targeted postdoctoral schemes for minority ethnic groups. I firmly believe that everyone should have access to opportunities in academia, and I will work to mitigate structural barriers to opportunity, ensuring that graduates from underrepresented groups are better connected with PhD opportunities. Additionally, I would advocate for the development of an understanding of early research career inequalities, with a need for better and more joined-up data.

Supporting carers is also a vital aspect of EDI. I plan to work with institutions to ensure that they provide adequate support for carers to allow them to continue to engage in research and academia. Women and people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are severely underrepresented in higher education. I believe that widening opportunities to ensure equity of access to and participation in research is vital, both in terms of contributions to knowledge and in terms of opportunities being equally given and accessible.

It is important to acknowledge that completing a PhD can be incredibly demanding and stressful, especially when combined with gaining experience in teaching, publications, conferences, networking, and impact/outreach necessary to get an academic job. Support for emotional and mental wellbeing/health should be a priority.

I am committed to working towards building a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive postgraduate education and research community. This requires engagement with expert groups and the PGR community to create a partnership framework that promotes EDI. Additionally, advocating for doctoral studentship schemes, targeted postdoctoral schemes, and supporting international students, carers, and graduates from underrepresented groups is crucial in ensuring equity of access to and participation in research. Finally, providing support for emotional and mental wellbeing/health is essential in recognizing the demanding and stressful nature of postgraduate research.

**Nominated by:**

1. Dr Peter Holgate, Northumbria University, Newcastle
2. Dr Lorens Holm, University of Dundee

**15. Kelly Preece**

**Head of Academic Development and Skills, University of Exeter**

**Biographical Note**

I am currently the Head of Academic Development and Skills at the University of Exeter. During my 15-year career in Higher Education I have held roles as an academic, researcher and researcher developer. From 2015-2022 I led the Researcher Development Programme for PGRs at the University of Exeter, taking an holistic and inclusive approach to Researcher Development, designing training programmes and learning inventions that support the researcher as a person. In 2022 I was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship in recognition of my excellent and sector leading support for PGRs.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

There are several areas where I believe I could contribute to UKCGE's activities and the development of postgraduate education and research. My expertise in training and development would be invaluable in the organisation and running of conferences and workshops, but as a practitioner who regularly presents and publishes their practice, I would be particularly keen to lead the development of resources and case studies with our member institutions. This would advance the evidence-led mission of UKCGE, and our role as a knowledge exchange facilitator.

When leading the Researcher Development Programme for PGRs at Exeter I developed an open access resource website for PGRs at [www.researcher-development.co.uk](http://www.researcher-development.co.uk). I want to encourage more sharing of practice and resources to improve the experience of PGRs sector wide. One way I would like to do this is by using my expertise in podcasting (having run the successful R, D and the In-betweens podcast for 3 years) to develop a UKCGE practice sharing podcast. This podcast would also enable us to spread awareness about UKCGE's vision, mission and values. This would, I believe, support building trust and credibility with our partners and stakeholders, and advance the values of openness, collegiality and joint enterprise.

I would also propose contributing to the ongoing development of the Good Supervisory Practice Framework. The team I lead is developing a new programme of professional development for doctoral supervisors, based on the framework and to include application to become a UKCGE Recognised Research Supervisor. I would like to use this process to develop the framework, but also training materials and resources associated with it in collaboration with UKCGE. This would help advance the standards, expectations and consensus around supervisory training and practice in the sector.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

During my role as Researcher Development Manager, I participated in two secondments – one as the REF Environment Lead, and one as a Research and EDI Manager. My work and advocacy in this area resulted in being asked to lead the development of a University of Exeter Research and EDI action plan. I would contribute to EDI by leading a Working Group to develop an EDI strategy and action plan to support our vision to create an equitable and inclusive postgraduate sector. This action plan would be evidence-led, utilising focus groups

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and town hall meetings to listen and respond to the experiences of PGRs and the staff supporting and supervising them.

The working group would also lead on the development and analysis of postgraduate sector EDI data, utilising HESA statistics and PRES responses to understand the experiences of different PGRs. Using the framework for this analysis I developed at the University of Exeter, the group would be able to provide oversight of the make-up of our PGR student base, alongside providing recommendations and training for staff and doctoral colleges to improve the recruitment and retention of PGRs from protected backgrounds.

I would also contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE based on my experience as a disabled woman working in Higher Education. I have long been an activist and advocate for intersectional gender equality in HE and was the founder of the University of Exeter's Disabled and Chronically Ill Staff and Student network. Alongside my professional expertise I would use my personal experience and my advocacy work to support UKCGE in creating a more inclusive and equitable postgraduate sector.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor Andrew McRae, University of Exeter
2. Dr Kay Guccione, University of Glasgow

**16. Dr Tina Ramkalawan**  
**Graduate School Director, Brunel University London**

**Biographical Note**

At Brunel University London, I lead on doctoral and post-doctoral researcher development across the institution. I have an interdisciplinary background (psychology, health & medical research) and completed my doctorate at MRC Institute of Hearing Research, University of Nottingham. I've worked in academia for over 25 years at various HEIs, including Bristol University, where my work focused on building research(er) capacity in health services research across a collaboration of nine UK universities. I have initiated doctoral programmes for funders (MRC and EPSRC), and contribute to sector working groups and committees, most recently as a co-opted UKCGE Trustee and a member of the UUK Advisory Panel for Bureaucracy in R&D.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I wish to express interest in the position of Trustee on the Board of UKCGE. Having been a co-opted member of the Board for the last year, I have gained valuable insight into the Board's work and strategic plans that inform current activity. The opportunity to use my knowledge and skills to continue contributing to this activity portfolio is one that I would relish.

As a co-opted member, I have supported UKCGE conferences, events and internal initiatives (e.g. EDI review). I would value the opportunity to use insights I have gained and follow projects through to implementation whilst informing forthcoming activities. UK postgraduate education faces challenges of identity and purpose, funding and recruitment, inclusivity and culture, amongst others. The multiplicity of organisations within HE is central to the informed debate needed for sustainable change alongside continued excellence. The breadth of perspectives amongst the Council's membership places it in a unique position to lead this debate.

My involvement in HE committees is driven by my desire to promote quality postgraduate education that centres wellbeing and support in rewarding doctoral experiences. Collaboration is at the heart of everything I do and I value working at the intersection that bridges academia and professional services. I have a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing HEIs in the UK, and internationally through my involvement in doctoral partnerships and projects. Drawing on work with multiple stakeholders enables me to contribute broad strategic insights to the Council and I am keen to collaboratively develop effective policies and beneficial initiatives for students, supervisors and institutions. Reflections on my own experiences as a Black British academic will inform current discourses. I bring a diverse professional network which will hopefully broaden inclusion and enhance the Council's representativeness.

I hope you will consider entrusting me with the opportunity to help support you and the UKCGE into the future.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

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In addition to my academic and professional experience, I have a strong personal commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and have been dedicated to promoting these values in all aspects of my work. My own experiences in HE have allowed me to develop a multi-faceted personal and professional vision of equitable UK higher education that I continue to work towards in partnership with a variety of stakeholders and HE actors, including the researchers themselves. Key to this vision is the enabling of scholarly communities of all backgrounds, especially those who are marginalised, providing space for diverse and unique voices and needs.

Working at an institute with over 80% of postgraduate students from global majority backgrounds, I have been instrumental in creating pathways of support to enhance the doctoral experience for specific groups. Examples of recent activities include the establishment of a Black Doctoral Researchers' Network, organising a "Researchers of Colour" symposium in collaboration with other London-based partners, and working with expert stakeholders to create leadership training for trans and non-binary researchers. These endeavours highlight my commitment to equity matters in HE and provide key learning contexts that I can bring to Council activities.

I have gained expertise on disability, gender and race-based inequities within my own institution and the wider HE sector, which is underpinned by a profound understanding of how power operates within universities and in society. This gives me the confidence to discuss a multiplicity of needs and intersectionalities, without oversimplifying intercultural complexities, and I would work to encourage the Council to reflect and provide more integrated opportunities for these considerations and their potential impact on us and our PG communities.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Rachel Van Krimpen, University of Nottingham
2. Professor Priscilla Harries, Kingston University

**17. Professor Hilary Robinson**

**Professor of Feminism, Art & Theory; Director, CDT: Feminism, Sexual Politics, and Visual Culture, Loughborough University**

**Biographical Note**

Hilary Robinson is Excellence 100 Professor of Feminism, Art, and Theory; and Director, Centre for Doctoral Training: Feminism, Sexual Politics, and Visual Culture, Loughborough University. At University of Ulster (1992-2005) she became research Director, then Head of School. In 2005 she became Dean, College of Fine Arts, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA. She returned to the UK 2012 as Dean, School of Art and Design, Middlesex University, before taking up her present position 2017. Board memberships include: USA: Andy Warhol Museum; advocacy task force, International Council of Fine Arts Deans; Committee for Women in the Arts, College Art Association; UK: Art, Design, Media-Higher Education Academy; Executive Committee, CHEAD; H.E. Committee, Association for Art History.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I am pleased to offer my skills at UKCGE's disposal for whatever purpose is helpful. They are in four clusters:

First: I bring leadership, board, and committee experience in plate-glass, post-'92, and 'new ivy' universities, national/international academic organisations, and not-for-profit arts institutions. I was a Dean for 9 years; and a member of both Executive and Research Committees of CHEAD when post-'92 Art & Design (A&D) sector was consolidating research strategies. I have led strategic planning, for focused research groups through to a College comprised of five schools.

Second: I bring understanding of both Arts and Humanities: my research is in Humanities; >95% of my teaching has been to practice-based students. A&D has extensive provision (mainly post-'92s; some Russell group; world-renowned specialist institutions), but is often under-represented in broader HE organisations. My A&D leadership roles have been within a multi-disciplinary operating environment: I can both advocate for a field and for the greater good of multi-disciplinary strategy.

Third: I bring extensive PGT/PGR/research experience. I developed PhD Arts cohorts at Ulster, and the CDT at Loughborough. The latter has mostly practice-based PGRs, prompting development of innovative supervisory pedagogies. I have 8 practice-based supervisions amongst 12 completed and 5 current students. I have taught MFA (practice/theory) and MSc; successfully co-ordinated RAE2001 and REF2014 submissions; was external research reviewer for Goldsmiths, UCLan, and Oxford Brookes.

Fourth: I bring whole-hearted support of UKCGE's Strategic Plan. The Plan's Value of developing a 'community of practice' is one I espoused in building PhD cohorts. It acknowledges enhanced learning through sharing interests, problems, and reflection; and the need for exchange between informal and formal structures, ensuring the latter remain fit for purpose. UKCGE applies this, in its Mission, to the ethos of its relationship with its membership. This is rightly entrusted to collective leadership and effective communication

with the sector, to fulfil UKCGE's Vision of equity and inclusion: from students through to support structures.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I bring lifelong commitment to research and pedagogies that are embedded in and explore issues of equity: my first conference presentation, after my BA, was on 'Women in third level art education' (1983); my last peer-reviewed journal paper was 'Feminism, Women and Art Education: the UK Experience', *Women's Studies International Forum* n.85 (2021). While assessing basic equality data (based upon numbers) is a good reality check, my interest is in how disciplines structure gender and other identities. In my field this would include canon-formation: both why the National Gallery has thousands of paintings, but only 21 by women; how such structures are maintained by the values and language of Art History; and how art by women can be meaningful in this context. Further complexities must be considered, as there are always national and racial identities at same time. But the question is: how could I use this knowledge in the UKCGE role? The relation between exclusionary practices in the disciplines, and the pedagogies that are practiced, is not hard to see, but it is hard to unpick. While some EDI practices amount to saying 'we have opened the door, please come in' this can be an invitation to assimilate if the contents of the house and the reason for the closed door in the first place are not interrogated. I would be very interested in working with UKCGE, across different disciplines, on how to develop equitable, non-exclusionary pedagogies at PGT and PGR levels: not only teaching and supervision practices, but also the institutional and disciplinary barriers to implementing such pedagogies.

**Nominated by:**

1. Paul Haywood, Central St Martin's, University of the Arts London.
2. Professor and Head of Programme: MA Print Jo Stockham, Royal College of Art

**18. Dr Kaat Smets**

**Reader in Politics, Royal Holloway, University of London**

**Biographical Note**

Dr Kaat Smets is Reader in Politics at Royal Holloway, University of London. She was recently Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Politics and International Relations (2018-22). As DoGS, Kaat mentored and oversaw a large cohort of PhD students. She convened the weekly Postgraduate Research Professional Development Seminar, chaired the PhD Admissions and Upgrade Panels, liaised with PhD students, supervisors and the Doctoral School, provided pastoral care, and kept track of students' progression. Kaat also contributed actively to the selection process of the SeNNS (ESRC) DTP and was part of Royal Holloway's Doctoral Supervision Award judging panel. Kaat is currently co-investigator of IP-PAD - a Marie Curie Doctoral Network.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

I am committed to promoting the graduate education sector in the UK and beyond by contributing to the UKCGE's activities. Whilst I will contribute where needed, the following activities in particular play to my strengths.

As a quantitative researcher, I am well-versed in survey design and survey methodology. I can, therefore, actively contribute to conducting periodic surveys of postgraduate providers to determine institutional trends. I am comfortable processing large amounts of (quantitative) data and would be well-suited to monitor annual HESA / Advance HE statistics on postgraduate participation, monitor the latest research on postgraduate education, and respond to national consultations on the development of postgraduate education and research.

I am a firm believer that the inclusion of postgraduate students in all facets of UKCGE's activities is important. They are receiving education and make use of services on offer to postgraduate students. As such, they provide a different perspective compared to those of us who offer education and services. I have put this inclusion into practice in my former role as Director of Graduate Studies (2018-22), where the content of the weekly Postgraduate Research Professional Development Seminar was co-determined with the input of the PGR student body. Student input was also received in staff-student committees and through fostering an environment where any kind of problems and/or issues could be discussed. Together with the students, we also developed a Supervision Charter, outlining the responsibilities of both the supervisor and the supervisee. This experience is useful for contributing to developing the UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework.

I am committed to using my experience to develop learning and professional development events. For example, as of 2018 I am co-editor-in-chief of Electoral Studies – Europe's largest journal on elections and public opinion. In this capacity I have gained knowledge of the do's and don'ts of publishing and reviewing, that I regularly share with graduate students within as well as outside my own institution.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I am committed to advocating for equity and inclusiveness in postgraduate education and research. In my former role as Director of Graduate Studies (2018-22), I have seen a number

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of positive developments in the sector. For example, some research councils ring-fence studentship for students from a disadvantaged background. The sector is also more aware of the challenges that our minority students (in the widest sense of the word) face. That said, there is still progress to be made. In my current role as Deputy Head of Department (2022-present), I am leading on a project that aims at better supporting our disabled and neurodiverse students. To this effect I am mapping the available provisions, working out where the bottlenecks are, and investigating best-practices in other Departments and at other institutions.

In doing so, it is imperative to consult the student body but equally important to keep in mind that disabled, neurodiverse (but e.g. also students from an ethnic or sexual minority, transgender and gender non-conforming students) suffer from research fatigue. These students already must work harder to make their voices heard, and it is therefore important to make sure that any time we ask for their involvement there is a clear benefit also to them for investing this time.

Mentoring students and early career researchers is probably one of the most favourite parts of my jobs. In advocating for equality and inclusiveness, it is especially important that mentoring opportunities are available for underrepresented groups. I have actively mentored PhD students, teaching assistants, PGR students outside my Department and early career researchers. I myself have hugely benefitted from mid-career's women's mentoring. I would like to bring this experience to the UKCGE, but am equally keen to learn from existing networks. At Royal Holloway, the first-generation student group and the women of colour student group spring to mind.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Alex Borrett, Royal Holloway, University of London
2. Dr Laura Sudulich, University of Essex

**19. Dr Sandrine Willaime-Morawek**

**Associate Professor in Stem Cells and Neurobiology, University of Southampton**

**Biographical Note**

I am an Associate Professor in Stem Cells and Neurobiology at the University of Southampton, sharing my time between research, as Principal Investigator, linking my basic research to industry and clinical needs, and education. I lead the iPhD programme in Translational Biosciences as well as my school Doctoral Programme, and I am the deputy lead for the MRC DTP at the University of Southampton. I also teach at both UG and PG levels, have supervised 9 PhD students and >50 short research projects, and I am a personal academic tutor and academic integrity officer.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

The UKCGE is very well placed to enable collective leadership in the sector with its wide representation from HEI. This will be achieved through being a trusted voice in the sector and developing evidence related to the sector statistics and policies. As part of the committee, I look forward to developing forums and task groups and widening the communication around these in my own network, as I have done locally with the cross faculty networking and career events we organise for example.

I have also advocated for equity and inclusiveness in the PGR recruitment processes I lead for the iPhD/DTP with the introduction of a summer school for UG students from underrepresented minorities, an anonymous selection step, as well as using our selection and interview procedures to share good practice across my faculty.

Setting standards and expectations is key to develop good practice, and I have developed this across institutions with our iPhD/DTP, sharing recruitment and interview training for staff, student training, career and networking events, and bioinformatics training. Having participated in UKCGE discussion groups on assessments, supervision, and admission, I have started to develop the Council's role as a knowledge exchange facilitator and shared some of the outputs, events and opportunities to both staff and students locally.

To strengthen the Council's representation and build its trust and credibility, my candidature would add another HEI, the University of Southampton, to the committee, where I will be able to collect perceptions and feedback, and share opportunities to staff and students.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

Widening the research workforce and building a diverse postgraduate community is close to my heart as it broadens our approaches and expertise pool. Having worked in three different countries, I experience first-hand the benefit of a diverse research group and encourage the whole research community to continue to open itself to a wider workforce, both locally to underrepresented minorities and internationally.

The institutions in the DTP I co-lead are committed to making EDI an integral component of university life. In the DTP, we particularly welcome applications from those from minority ethnic groups, a disadvantaged background or having taken a career break. Within this

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context, I introduced a flexible study route to allow those with carer responsibilities or part-time jobs for example to join our PhD student cohorts, as well as added EDI staff and student champions to our DTP committee.

Moreover, we have started to take concrete actions to develop the diversity of our pool of iPhD/DTP candidates at each step of the selection. We advertise on different platforms including [bbstem.co.uk](http://bbstem.co.uk), our first selection step is now anonymous with a new application form, avoiding bias against protected characteristics. We have introduced advice and training to our candidates, on writing a CV, writing a personal statement, and preparing for an interview. At institutional level, I also advocate for EDI data access to be able to monitor the effectiveness of our actions and compare our data with the sector. Should the data show effectiveness of our actions, sharing those across the UKCGE would allow colleagues and the post-graduate community to have evidence base developments to consider and adapt locally.

Having ensured the development of a strong EDI ethos in all of the programmes that I lead, I feel well equipped to contribute to EDI with UKCGE by reflecting on trials and errors and sharing good practices.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Prof John Marshall, QMUL
2. Dr Franchesca Houghton, University of Southampton

**20. Professor Richard Yarwood**

**Director of the Doctoral College, University of Plymouth**

**Biographical Note**

I am the Director of the Doctoral College (DDC) at the University of Plymouth (UoP) and also serve on the management board of the South West Doctoral Training Partnership (SWDTP). I am a Professor of Human Geography and, alongside my Doctoral College work, I continue to teach and research in this area. I am passionate about PGR issues and relish working with other partners within, across and outside the University. I have been in my post as DDC for just over a year and have found UKCGE to be immensely supportive.

**Proposed Contributions to UKCGE's Activities**

The UKCGE is the representative body for PGR education. As such, I will contribute to its key aims of providing collective leadership for PGR education and providing advocacy and support for PGR educators. I endorse the five current strategic directions of the UKCGE's 2021-2025 strategic plan. As we reach the midpoint of this period and look to develop over the next five years, I feel that UKCGE could strengthen its presence in UK HEIs by:

1. Seeking to develop good practice and standards that could be adopted across UK HEIs. The Supervisory Framework provides an excellent example of this and I would like to explore whether other aspects of the PGR journey would also benefit from similar guidance: e.g examinations, admissions, milestones and training
2. The UKCGE is focused on UK issues but would benefit from global perspectives. I would seek to link us more closely with similar organisations in other countries with the aim of establishing an international PGR network
3. Listen to student voices and liaise with student bodies more closely. One option might be to set up a student forum. More formally, we should establish closer links with the OfS and Student Union.
4. Continue to be responsive to the changing PGR landscape and ensure the value of UKCGE by commissioning research and intelligence gathering to support and enable HEIs to deliver excellence in PGR affairs.

**Brief statement about how you plan to contribute to EDI when working with UKCGE**

I would seek to ensure that UKCGE should:

- define EDI principles and ensure there are adhered to in UKCGE's practices;
- contribute towards driving positive research culture change across UK HEIs. This might include providing bespoke training; establishing champions; working closely with other partners, especially from under-represented groups; and follow, and contribute to, industry guidance from UKRI, OfS et al.
- Support efforts to diversify PGR population and those supervising/working with PGRs. This should focus on the whole of the PGR journey, not just admissions and monitoring. Attention should be given to developing inclusive research cultures that supports staff and

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student. UKCGE's task should be to develop and disseminate research on these issues, establishing itself as the 'go to' agency in these matters.

- Work with partners to identify and share good practice in EDI issues;
- Monitor, measure and evaluate change. Suggest evidence-based interventions for improvements, where needed, and to further good practice.

### **Nominated by:**

1. Professor Richard Harris, South West Doctoral Training Partnership (SWDTP) and University of Bristol
2. Sarah Kearns, University of Plymouth