



Resolution of the General Assembly

EB-R4 – 03.05.2020

Request: Creation of Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud

Passed on Thursday, 05 March 2020

Whereas,

In cases of graduate mentee abuse, individual departments, programs, and colleges are often not equipped to adequately resolve these situations in an impartial manner that protects all parties involved—including future graduate mentees; and

Whereas,

There is currently no consistent, impartial and campus wide system specifically designed to protect graduate students in all cases of mentee abuse; and

Whereas,

The current Ombud is a part-time appointment of a current faculty who, as a currently faculty member, may lack impartiality in cases involving their home college or department; and

Whereas,

The circumstances and needs of graduate students are sufficiently unique and often more complicated from the experiences of most undergraduates that the creation of a Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud Office led by a full-time Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud is warranted.

Resolved,

The Graduate Student Congress requests the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, and the Graduate School create an independent Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud Office overseen by a full-time, professional Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud who is not a current UK faculty member and who does not have ties to any UK college or department; and

Resolved,

The Graduate Student Congress requests that the Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud Office be established with the full ability and authority to conduct a broad range of independent and impartial investigations into both individual allegations of mistreatment of a graduate/professional student or postdoc



by a faculty member, and allegations of exploitive practices/policies on the part of an academic unit towards graduate/professional students or postdocs; and

Resolved,

The Graduate Student Congress requests that in cases involving alleged mentee abuse, following an impartial investigation by the Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud Office, the Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud, at an absolute minimum, files an official report with the Graduate School Dean which details the investigation findings and which makes recommendations for a resolution to the case; and

Resolved,

The Graduate Student Congress requests that the Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud Office also includes graduate/professional student advisors who trained are in mediation and conflict resolution and who can advise a student on how to effectively advocate for themselves with faculty and can act as an impartial mediator in cases of conflict between a graduate student and faculty members; and

Resolved,

The Graduate Student Congress requests that any hiring committee for the Graduate, Professional, and Postdoc Ombud consists of at least one member of the Graduate Student Congress leadership as a full hiring committee member.