

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday, 21 October 2021

9:30 a.m. – 11:35 a.m.

Zoom Meeting

Present: Ms Isabelle Caulfield, Prof. David Collings, Ms Karen Keating, Dr Rachel Keegan (Secretary), Dr Gillian Lake, Dr Pascal Landis, Dr Tim Mc Cormac, Ms Niamh McMahon, Dr Jennifer McManis, Ms Siúin McManus, Prof. Sharon O’Brien, Ms Christina O’Keeffe, Dr Sally Smith and Prof. Joseph Stokes (Chair).

Apologies: Prof. Edel Conway, Dr Maura Coulter and Prof. Christine Loscher.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 30 August 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 30 August 2021 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

The Chair informed members that a previously highlighted issue regarding the prohibition of the use of professional copy-editing and proofreading services by research students has been raised again through the Graduate Studies Office. It was noted that it would be useful to ascertain the direction and views nationally on this issue. It was agreed that Dr Lake would discuss this with the Deputy Registrar/Dean for Teaching and Learning, who is currently the Chair of the National Academic Integrity Network and revert to the Chair of the GRSB.

The matters arising from the meeting of 30 August 2021, were noted as follows:

	<i>Item no. from 30 Aug 2021</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Details of decision/action</i>	<i>Status</i>
3.1	3.1 (original ref. 7.9, 17 June 2021)	PGR3, School of Electronic Engineering	Not approved. It was noted that the Internal Examiner is also the Internal Panel Member.	Ongoing
3.2	8.14	PGR3, School of Health and Human Performance	Decision deferred. It was noted that Section B should be jointly written by the internal examiner and principal supervisor.	Ongoing
3.3	9.20	PGR4, School of Communications	Approved at the meeting of 30 August 2021. Subsequently, a conflict of interest was identified which necessitates a new internal examiner.	Ongoing
3.4	9.29	PGR4, School of Health and Human Performance	Approved subject to clarification as to why the submission is being sought so soon after the transfer examination.	Ongoing
3.5	9.31	PGR4, School of Law and Government	Decision deferred. It was noted that the nominated external examiner does not meet the requirements as per regulation 10.2.9.	Ongoing
3.6	3.2 (original ref. 10.3, 17 June 2021)	PGR15, School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies	Not approved. It was noted that the candidate's previous programme is more closely aligned to the DCU EdD programme.	Completed
3.7	8.11	PGR3, School of English	Decision deferred. It was noted that Section B should be jointly written by the internal examiner and principal supervisor.	Completed
3.8	8.19	PGR3, School of Law and Government	Approved subject to a fully legible copy of the form being submitted to Registry.	Completed
3.9	8.32	PGR3, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music	Decision deferred. It was noted that Section B should be jointly written by the internal examiner and principal supervisor.	Completed
3.10	9.14	PGR4, School of Chemical Sciences	Approved subject to clarification that the nominated chairperson is a member of staff.	Completed

3.11	9.33	PGR4, School of Law and Government	Approved subject to clarification as to why submission is being sought so soon after the transfer examination.	Completed
3.12	9.36	PGR4, School of Mathematical Sciences	Approved subject to full citations being provided in the external examiner publication list.	Completed
3.13	9.46	PGR4, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music	Approved subject to full citations being provided in the external examiner publication list.	Completed
3.14	9.48	PGR4, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music	Approved subject to full citations being provided in the external examiner publication list.	Completed
3.15	11.6	PGR14, School of Biotechnology	Decision deferred. It was noted that Section C must be completed by the principal supervisor.	Completed
3.16	11.27	PGR14, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health	Decision deferred. It was noted that Section C must be completed by the principal supervisor.	Completed
3.17	9.42	PGR4, School of Policy and Practice	Not approved. It was noted that the notification of intention to submit is outside of the permitted time period.	On the agenda (item 9.20)
3.18	(original ref. 9.8, 8 April 2021)	PGR4, School of Communications	Chairperson approved by Chairs Action, 15 September 2021.	For noting
3.19	(original ref. 9.18, 8 April 2021)	PGR4, School of Health and Science, DkIT	Alternative Chairperson approved by Chairs Action, 7 October 2021.	For noting

SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

4. Graduate researcher development

There were no items for discussion.

5. Report on GRSB activities 2020-21

The report on GRSB activities for the 2020-21 academic year was noted. The Chair drew attention, in particular, to the increase in the number of PGR forms considered by the GRSB in 2020-21.

It was noted that the increase in the number of PGR14 (extension or re-admission request) forms has been largely driven by pandemic-related issues.

The increase in the number of PGR4 (intention to submit) forms was also noted. The Chair informed members that almost 100 research students are due to be conferred in what would have been the November conferring period, and this may suggest that the pandemic did not deter the majority of students from completing.

It was noted that it would be useful to capture the details of the HEA cost extension scheme, including the number of applications assessed and the amount awarded to students. It was agreed that this information could be captured in the Graduate Studies Office annual report, which will be considered at the January meeting of the GRSB.

6. DkIT annual report to DCU GRSB

The DkIT annual report was noted. Dr Mc Cormac highlighted the key information in the report noting, in particular, the number of deferrals and withdrawals in the previous academic year. He advised members that information gathered by DkIT suggests many of these were due to COVID-19 related issues including funding, work pressures, health issues, impacts to research projects and broadband issues.

It was noted that graduation ceremonies in DkIT are scheduled to take place in November, with 4 PhD and 4 Masters by Research students due to be conferred by DCU. Dr Mc Cormac noted that he expects a significant increase in the number of graduates in 2022.

It was noted that DkIT training for graduate research students moved online during the pandemic and that DkIT conducted two surveys to ascertain how research students managed during this period. Dr Mc Cormac also informed members of plans to run internal examiner and chairperson training shortly.

7. PGR adjusted processes while working under Covid-19 restrictions

The Chair briefed members on work underway with colleagues in Registry, GSO and the OVPAA, to review processes that were modified during the pandemic. The review will involve a revisiting of each process to determine what was successful and what might be retained post-pandemic. Areas to be considered include the PGR3 process, the submission of softbound and hardbound theses to Registry, the submission and circulation of PGR paperwork, the *viva voce* examination process and how GRSB might conduct its business going forward.

It was noted that any plans to return to fully in-person *viva voce* examinations depends on external examiners being comfortable to come onto campus or for those coming from outside the state, their home country travel restrictions. It was noted that *viva voce* examinations can currently take place in person where a suitable location can be identified

and with the approval of the Head of School (i.e. where the candidate is examined on campus). The Chair informed members that he will be issuing further communication to staff and students shortly on the conduct of *viva voce* examinations for the remainder of this semester.

The importance of considering the student experience in the confirmation/transfer procedure and the *viva voce* examination was noted, and this will be taken into consideration in reviewing these processes.

It was noted that any review should also consider where inefficient processes might be improved. It was noted that any significant re-engineering of processes will likely be driven out of the SIS project. It was agreed that this item would be revisited at the December meeting of the GRSB.

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

8. Applications for transfer to the PhD Register or confirmation on the PhD Register (PGR3)

- 8.1 GRSB2021/A7/8.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved
- 8.2 GRSB2021/A7/8.2, DCU Business School
Approved
- 8.3 GRSB2021/A7/8.3, School of Communications
Approved
- 8.4 GRSB2021/A7/8.4, School of Computing
Approved
- 8.5 GRSB2021/A7/8.5, DkIT, Health and Science
Approved. It was noted that the student will be confirmed on the PhD register.
- 8.6 GRSB2021/A7/8.6, DkIT, Informatics and Creative Arts
Approved
- 8.7 GRSB2021/A7/8.7, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved
- 8.8 GRSB2021/A7/8.8, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved
- 8.9 GRSB2021/A7/8.9, School of Human Development
Approved
- 8.10 GRSB2021/A7/8.10, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved

- 8.11 GRSB2021/A7/8.11, School of Physical Sciences
Approved
- 8.12 GRSB2021/A7/8.12, School of Physical Sciences
Approved
- 8.13 GRSB2021/A7/8.13, School of English
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 5 October 2021.
- 8.14 GRSB2021/A7/8.14, School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 5 October 2021.

9. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)

- 9.1 GRSB2021/A7/9.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved
- 9.2 GRSB2021/A7/9.2, PhD, DkIT, Health and Science
Approved. It was noted that two internal examiners are being approved, as per the joint award agreement.
- 9.3 GRSB2021/A7/9.3, MA, DkIT, Informatics and Creative Arts
Approved
- 9.4 GRSB2021/A7/9.4, PhD, School of English
Approved. It was noted that this is a resubmission to nominate an alternative internal examiner.
- 9.5 GRSB2021/A7/9.5, PhD, School of English
Approved subject to full citations being provided in the external examiner's publication list.
- 9.6 GRSB2021/A7/9.6, PhD, Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge
Approved. It was noted this is a resubmission.
- 9.7 GRSB2021/A7/9.7, PhD, Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge
Approved
- 9.8 GRSB2021/A7/9.8, PhD, School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education
Approved
- 9.9 GRSB2021/A7/9.9, PhD, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health
Approved
- 9.10 GRSB2021/A7/9.10, PhD, School of Policy and Practice
Approved. It was noted that this is an early submission request.
- 9.11 GRSB2021/A7/9.11, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music
Approved

10. Notice of intention to reside/carry out research abroad (PGR13)

- 10.1 GRSB2021/A7/10.1, School of Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies
Noted
- 10.2 GRSB2021/A7/10.2, School of Communications
Noted
- 10.3 GRSB2021/A7/10.3, School of Communications
Not considered. It was noted the PGR13 form is not required at this time as the student has not been, nor intends to be, outside of the country for more than six months.

11. Request for extension to maximum registration period OR re-admission to the research programme (PGR14)

- 11.1 GRSB2021/A7/11.1, MSc, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved for 2021-22.
- 11.2 GRSB2021/A7/11.2, PhD, School of Communications
Approved for 2021-22. It was noted that relevant regulation or policy has not changed, as has been suggested in the form.
- 11.3 GRSB2021/A7/11.3, PhD, Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge
Approved for 2021-22.
- 11.4 GRSB2021/A7/11.4, EdD, DCU Institute of Education
Approved for 2021-22.
- 11.5 GRSB2021/A7/11.5, PhD, School of Law and Government
Approved for 2021-22.
- 11.6 GRSB2021/A7/11.6, PhD, School of Law and Government
Approved for 2021-22. It was noted that no further extensions will be considered.
- 11.7 GRSB2021/A7/11.7, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
Approved for 2021-22.
- 11.8 GRSB2021/A7/11.8, PhD, School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies
Approved for 2021-22.
- 11.9 GRSB2021/A7/11.9, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 5 October 2021.
- 11.10 GRSB2021/A7/11.10, PhD, School of Law and Government
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 27 August 2021.
- 11.11 GRSB2021/A7/11.11, PhD, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 10 September 2021.

- 11.12 GRSB2021/A7/11.12, PhD, DCU Business School
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.13 GRSB2021/A7/11.13, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.14 GRSB2021/A7/11.14, PhD, School of Communications
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.15 GRSB2021/A7/11.15, PhD, School of Computing
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.16 GRSB2021/A7/11.16, PhD, School of Computing
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.17 GRSB2021/A7/11.17, PhD, School of Computing
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.18 GRSB2021/A7/11.18, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.19 GRSB2021/A7/11.19, PhD, School of Law and Government
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.20 GRSB2021/A7/11.20, PhD, School of Law and Government
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.21 GRSB2021/A7/11.21, PhD, School of Law and Government
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.22 GRSB2021/A7/11.22, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.23 GRSB2021/A7/11.23, PhD, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.24 GRSB2021/A7/11.24, DPsych, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.25 GRSB2021/A7/11.25, PhD, School of Physical Science
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.26 GRSB2021/A7/11.26, PhD, School of Policy and Practice
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.27 GRSB2021/A7/11.27, PhD, School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.
- 11.28 GRSB2021/A7/11.28, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.

- 11.29 GRSB2021/A7/11.29, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music
Noted. Approved by Chairs action on 8 October 2021.

Prof. Collings queried the need to consider PGR14 forms in instances where students have completed the viva but who need to register for an additional academic year in order to complete corrections. It was agreed that this would be considered as part of the review of PGR processes.

12. Application for transfer/advanced entry to postgraduate research programme (PGR15)

- 12.1 GRSB2021/A7/12.1, School of Computing
Not approved. It was noted that the form is incomplete and that the required supporting documentation has not been submitted.

13. Any other business

- 13.1 Dr Lake highlighted an issue caused by the closure of the Student Application Portal on 13 October. It was noted that the system will not re-open until 1 November and that a number of postgraduate research applications are currently unprocessed in the system. This is delaying these applicants from being progressed and registered. It was noted that the system is closed to facilitate the rollover to the new academic year and that this process is a complex one, requiring input from multiple work areas. It was noted that the timing of the rollover needs to take into consideration the busy periods for postgraduate research applications. It was agreed that Ms McMahon would raise this issue with relevant colleagues in Registry.
- 13.2 Ms McMahon informed members that the new 2021/2022 PGR forms are now available on the web and that Registry will be asking colleagues to fill in the correct forms for the current academic year.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date of next meeting
Thursday, 2 December 2021
at 9.30 a.m.
Zoom meeting