

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 3 December 2015

9.30 – 10.40 in A204

Present: Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Gillian Barry, Ms Lisa Buckley, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Dr Patricia Flynn, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Rachel Keegan, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Professor Kevin Rafter, Dr Mark Roantree, Dr Mary Rose Sweeney, Dr Blanaid White

Apologies: Dr Charlotte Holland, Dr Mary Ivers, Dr Tim McCormac, Dr Caroline McMullan, Dr Ana Terrés, Mr Ronan Tobin

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the following:

- Withdrawal of Item 11.1.1
- Inclusion of Item 4.3: approval of GTE module PS524

2. Minutes of the meeting of 22 October 2015

The minutes of the meeting of 22 October 2015, were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 22 October 2015

- 3.1** It was raised that it would be useful if a presentation were to be made to the Heads and Dean's Group regarding the changed payment processes for research student support for academic activities. The Chair agreed to discuss this with Human Resources (Item 11).
- 3.2** It was noted that some additional changes and additions had been made by the Faculty of Science and Health to structured doctoral pathways during the process of applying the standardised template. With the exception of the pathway for the School of Health and Human Performance, all these structured pathways have been finalised and are available to the Board on the shared drive (Item 4.1).
- 3.3** It was noted that arrangements for the support of academic staff in delivering modules GS608 and GS609 had commenced with a workshop on how to support reflective writing, which forms an element of assessment in these modules. A second workshop on feedback on writing more generally is planned (Item 3.3).
- 3.4** It was noted that resolution of Course Builder issues (university wide agreed descriptors for GTE modules) was awaiting the introduction of a new version of Course Builder in 2015 and will be addressed when possible (Item 3.3).
- 3.5** It was noted that for the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies a re-submission containing more specific information on the oral examination was awaited (Item 3.11, Item 8.53, 7 September 2015).
- 3.6** It was noted that for the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences, confirmation that both principal supervisor and internal examiner were involved in the oral examination, and more specific information on the oral examination were awaited (Item 13.6).
- 3.7** It was noted that for the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Computing more specific information on the oral examination was awaited (Item 13.16).
- 3.8** It was noted that additional specific detail with respect to both the written and oral reports for an application for transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3), DCU Business School had been provided and was complete (Item 3.7) (Item 8.3, 25 June 2015).
- 3.9** It was noted that the student's signature had been provided with respect to the request for Extension to Maximum Registration Period (PGR14) for a candidate from DCUBS and this item was complete (Item 3.12) (Item 10.2.18, 7 September 2015).

- 3.10** It was noted that further detailed information relating to recent publications is awaited with respect to the nomination of an external examiner for a candidate from the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (Item 14.1).
- 3.11** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Biotechnology was complete (Item 3.8) (Item 8.7, 7 September 2015).
- 3.12** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Computing was complete (Item 3.9) (Item 8.21, 7 September 2015).
- 3.13** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Physical Sciences was complete (Item 3.10) (Item 8.52, 7 September 2015).
- 3.14** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) for a candidate in the School of Biotechnology was complete (Item 13.2).
- 3.15** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences was complete (Item 13.3).
- 3.16** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences was complete (Item 13.9). The approval of notification of intention to submit (PGR4) with respect to the same candidate was also complete (Item 14.5).
- 3.17** It was noted that permission to extend the maximum registration period of a candidate in the School of Biotechnology had been approved by Chair's action on 24 November 2015 (Item 15.2.1).
- 3.18** It was noted that a revised notification of intention to submit (PGR4) form was approved for a candidate from the School of Chemical Sciences by Chair's action on 23 October 2015 (original approval 2014/A8/11.1).

SECTION B: Policy and strategy issues

4. Pathways for PhD students in Faculties

4.1 Faculty of Engineering and Computing

Structured pathways for the Faculty of Engineering and Computing (FEC) were circulated in hard copy.

4.1.1 School of Computing

Noted

4.1.2 School of Electronic Engineering

Noted

4.1.3 School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

Noted

It was noted that the module CS551A, listed on the School of Computing and School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering structured doctoral pathway should carry 5 credits, rather than 2.5 as indicated. It was also clarified that there is a requirement to hold a degree in Science before undertaking this module. It was noted too that CS519, as listed on the School of Computing pathway has been discontinued. Ms. Rachel Keegan undertook to make finalised versions of the pathways available on the shared drive.

4.2 Annual timeline for Graduate Training Elements (GTE) and pathway approvals/noting

The Chair outlined that she had initiated a process to provide clarity with respect to the timelines and process for the approval of GTEs and for the noting of structured doctoral pathways. An initial meeting had taken place with the relevant administrators from Faculties and Registry and a process flow has been prepared based on feedback received. It is now intended to consult with the Associate Deans for Research in this regard with a view to working towards an agreed approach and defined timeframe. It was noted that a final proposal will be submitted for the consideration of GRSB.

It was noted that in tandem with the timeline mapping process, a review of other related systems and processes with respect to Graduate Research Assessment Boards, Faculty Award Boards for Research Degrees and related administration was underway and would also involve consultation with the Associate Deans for Research.

4.3 GTE Module: PS524: Plasma Science and Technology

The module was approved.

5. Incorporation update

Progress to date with respect to Incorporation was reported and the following were noted:

- The integration of the DCU/MDI and the St. Patrick's College Doctorate in Education has taken place and has been approved by Education Committee.
- The Interim Institute of Education structures have been established and are currently integrating into existing structures. Dr Charlotte Holland, will be joining the Graduate Research Studies Board in her capacity as Interim Associate Dean for Research in the Institute of Education.
- Planning is underway with respect to enhancing research supervision and examining capacity.
- Recruitment of research students is continuing in St. Patrick's College and six applications have been received to date, with further interest noted at the recent Open Day event.

6. Report on induction/exit surveys

The Chair made a presentation on the outcome of the first entry survey of DCU Research Students, which aimed to examine their expectations, concerns and motivations. The survey was run from 17 September 2015 to the end of October 2015. The same survey was also run in the University of Strathclyde (part of the ECIU network to which DCU belongs) and the data from both surveys will be analysed together.

The following were noted:

- The response rate to the survey was 62%
- The students are most motivated by intrinsic factors when applying for a research award
- Career related motivation is high and within that there is a very clear emphasis on academic careers
- The incoming students are very optimistic about the outcome of undertaking a research programme.

It was noted that further analysis of the entry survey, including more discipline specific analysis was underway and a paper would be circulated to Graduate Research Studies Board when complete.

The Chair also presented on the exit survey from 2014 and 2015 and drew the attention of the Board to the following:

- Based on their study experience 93% of research graduates would recommend DCU to potential research students.

- 25% of the graduates had 4 or more research papers published or accepted, however there was slight concern over the fact that 20% did not present any conference papers and 12.5% neither presenting at a conference nor published a paper. Differences in discipline expectations in this regard were raised and acknowledged.

7. Report on card fee and scholarships/grants

The Report on the Card Fee and Scholarship/Grants was noted.

8. Guidance for preparation for *viva voce*

It was noted that a draft document which aims to provide guidance to doctoral research students in preparing for thesis submission and the *viva voce* has been drafted by Ms Rachel Keegan and will be circulated for feedback from Faculties, seeking discipline-specific input in particular.

SECTION C: Individual student issues

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

9.1 GRSB2015/A8/9.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)
Approved

9.2 GRSB2015/A8/9.2, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved

9.3 GRSB2015/A8/9.3, School of Computing
Approved

10. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)

10.1 GRSB2015/A8/10.1, PhD, School of Communications
Professor Brian O'Neill, Dublin Institute of Technology
Approved

10.2 GRSB2015/A8/10.2, PhD, School of Health and Human Performance
Dr Michael Harrison, Waterford Institute of Technology
Approved, subject to the revision and re-submission of the abstract

- 10.3 GRSB2015/A8/10.2, MEng, School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering
Dr Caterina Brandoni, University of Ulster
Approved
- 10.4 GRSB2015/A8/10.3, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Professor Brian O’Neill, Dublin Institute of Technology
Approved
- 10.5 GRSB2015/A8/10.4, PhD, All Hallows College
Dr Pádraig Corkery, Pontifical University, Maynooth
Approved

11. Other student issues

11.1 Permission to Submit before Minimum Registration Period is Complete

- 11.1.1 GRSB2015/A8/11.1.1, PhD, School of Computing
Withdrawn

12. Any other business

There were no items.

End

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 21 January 2016 at 9.30 a.m. in A204