

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 22 May 2014

9.00-11.05 a.m. in A204

- Present:** Dr Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Gillian Barry, Professor Liam Barry, Ms Lisa Buckley, Ms Goretti Daughton, Dr Tracy Dixon, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Dr Patricia Flynn, Dr Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Enda McGlynn, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Dr Ana Terrés, Dr Blánaid White
- Apologies:** Dr Bernadette Flanagan

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of two submissions under Item 10.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 17 April 2014

The minutes were confirmed subject to the deletion of the last sentence of the second-last paragraph in Item 9 and its replacement by the following: ‘Registry is in the process of revising travel expense processes for external examiners.’ They were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1** Noted that the preparations for the full roll-out of the online PGR2 (annual progress report) system were progressing satisfactorily, that an explanatory e-mail would be sent to all relevant parties in early June 2014 and that training would be made available on 13 June 2014. The e-mail will include links to the online system rather than links to Word files. (See also Item 10.1 below.) (Item 3.1)

- 3.2** Noted that the draft *DCU Graduate Research Handbook 2014/15* would be circulated to the GRSB shortly, with a request for comments, and that it would be discussed at the meeting of 26 June 2014. (Item 3.2)
- 3.3** Noted that a revised module descriptor for a GTE had been made available by the School of Computing, that a second revised module descriptor would be made available, and that both would be reviewed together. (Item 3.3)
- 3.4** Noted that a PGR3 form, revised as requested by the GRSB, was awaited from a School. (Item 3.6)
- 3.5** Noted that the HEA/QQI Engagement Document on the National Framework for Doctoral Education would be launched in due course. (Item 3.8)
- 3.6** Noted that consideration was being given to making provision for requesting that additional information be included on the PGR4 form to forestall perceptions of conflict of interest. (Item 3.10)
- 3.7** Noted that the wording on payment and insurance issues in documentation relating to the Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions had been clarified. (Item 3.12)
- 3.8** Noted that the GRSB would give consideration, at its meeting of 26 June 2014, to the procedures for ensuring transparency, in terms of fees, for students required to resubmit for examination. (Item 3.13)
- 3.9** Noted that the proposal on the award of MPhil would be submitted for the consideration of the University Standards Committee at its meeting of 29 May 2014 (in the context of amendments to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*) and, if approved there, would be submitted to the meeting of Academic Council of 11 June 2014 (together with the other amendments, provided these are approved by the USC). If the amendments relating to appeals are approved by Academic Council, the relevant dates will need to be added to the Academic Calendar 2014/15 and the revised calendar submitted for approval to the meeting of Council of 30 June 2014. (Items 3.14 and 5)
- 3.10** Noted that the date 2 March had been substituted for the original 1 April in Section 5.6 of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*. (Item 5)
- 3.11** Noted that Dr Dixon had discussed the proposals on student representation with Mr Ciarán O'Connor, Vice-President – Education Officer of the Students' Union. The outcome is that the Faculty representatives appointed for 2014/15 will work with the incoming Vice-President – Education Officer to operationalise the

- appointment of School representatives for 2014 and 2015/16. A meeting to discuss the issues further will take place on Monday 16 June 2014 between the Chair, Dr Dixon, the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer, Mr O'Connor and his successor Mr Gary Gillick. The possibility was raised that the Associate Deans for Research might attend this meeting also. (Item 6.3)
- 3.12** Noted that a revised standard operating procedure and explanatory note in respect of the management of GTEs had been made available to Faculties. (Item 7)
- 3.13** Noted that a PGR3 form had been revised to reflect the joint nature of the examination process and had been deemed approved. (Item 8.1)
- 3.14** Noted that a PGR3 form, revised to provide a more detailed report on the examination than was available originally, was awaited from a School. (Item 8.7)
- 3.15** Noted that a PGR3 form, revised to provide a more detailed report on the examination than was available originally and to include an appropriate signature from the relevant School and an indication of the thesis format, was awaited from a School. Noted that the PGR4 form for the same student had been withdrawn pending confirmation of the student on the PhD register. (Items 8.8 and 9.23)
- 3.16** Noted that fees for external examiners were being revised to ensure compliance with tax regulations. (Item 9)
- 3.17** Noted that, at its meeting of 26 June 2014, the GRSB would give consideration to issues relating to the word count of theses. (Item 9)
- 3.18** Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that the proposed word count of the thesis was above the maximum permitted. (Item 9.25)
- 3.19** Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that the independent chair of a *viva voce* examination must be a current member of academic staff. (Item 9.27)
- 3.20** Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that it was not obligatory that the external examiner for a student be female, on the grounds that gender representation at the *viva voce* examination had already been ensured. (Item 9.32)
- 3.21** Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that all the members of a supervisory panel must be listed on a PGR4 form. (Item 9.37)
- 3.22** Noted that a revised justification for the nomination of an external examiner had been provided by a School, and the nomination had been deemed approved. (Item 9.40)

- 3.23** Noted that a School had been asked if it would be possible to identify an external examiner from a less distant location than the original (approved) nominee. (Item 9.42)
- 3.24** Noted that a School had been asked if it would be possible to identify an external examiner from a less distant location than the original (approved) nominee. (Item 9.50)
- 3.25** Noted that, in two instances, a School had provided additional details about a nominated external examiner's recent research activity, and both nominations had been deemed approved. (Items 9.52 and 9.53)

SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

4. Proposed Graduate Training Elements

None.

5. DCU Graduate School relationship with Dundalk Institute of Technology

- 5.1** In the discussion on this proposal, it was noted that a number of issues would be the subject of further consideration in the University, including the need to ensure appropriate oversight of quality issues (as required by legislation, though quality assurance is a key issue in its own right). In addition, the importance of consultation on the issues relating to the proposed second phase of implementation with all relevant parties in the University was noted, particularly with regard to financial issues, implications for University staff in terms of responsibilities, and access to library and laboratory facilities for DkIT students. Dr Looney undertook to make relevant members of Senior Management aware of the various points raised.
- 5.2** It was agreed to support the two-phase approach to developing this relationship. It was noted that the new relationship, if established, would apply only to future and not to current DkIT research students. Noted that the proposed relationship with DkIT would be considered by Academic Council as soon as possible.

6. New form for requests to extend registration period

Approved. Noted that Ms Buckley would shortly notify all relevant parties in cases where the maximum registration period was approaching.

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

7. Applications for transfer to the PhD register or confirmation on the PhD register

- 7.1 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.1, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 7.2 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.2, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 7.3 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.3, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 7.4 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.4, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved subject to an amendment to the report to reflect the joint nature of the examination process.
- 7.5 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.5, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 7.6 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.6, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 7.7 Student ref. GRSB/2014/A4/7.7, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved. Agreed that the Registry would draw the attention of the student to the guidelines on PhD by publication.

8. Appointment of external examiners

- 8.1 Professor Denis Alexander, University of Ulster
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 8.2 Dr John Cardiff, Institute of Technology Tallaght
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.2, MSc, School of Computing
Agreed not to consider this nomination pending the submission of a revised justification for early submission.
- 8.3 Dr Kevin O'Rourke, Dublin Institute of Technology
Dr Mary Fleming, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.3, PhD, School of Education Studies
Not approved in the case of Dr Fleming, on the basis that to grant approval would be in contravention of regulations. Noted that Dr O'Rourke's appointment had been approved at the meeting of 17 April 2014.
- 8.4 Dr Marion Bowl, University of Birmingham
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.4, EdD, School of Education Studies
Approved.

- 8.5 Dr Jesse Simsarian, Bell Laboratories, Alcatel-Lucent, USA
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.5, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 8.6 Professor Eduward Tangdiongga, Technische Universiteit Eindhoven
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.6, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 8.7 Dr Jason Bonacci, Deakin University, Australia
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.7, PhD, School of Health and Human
Performance
Approved. Agreed, however, that the School would be asked if it would be
possible to nominate an alternative examiner to Dr Bonacci, from a less
distant location (unless it emerges that Dr Bonacci is in Ireland/Europe for
other purposes in any event).
- 8.8 Professor Cathal Heavey, University of Limerick
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.8, PhD, School of Mechanical and
Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 8.9 Dr Benny Tjahjono, Cranfield University
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.9, PhD, School of Mechanical and
Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 8.10 Dr Edward McCann, Trinity College Dublin
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.10, PhD, School of Nursing and Human
Sciences
Approved.
- 8.11 Professor Mike Hazelton, University of Newcastle, Australia
Dr Lesley Henderson, Brunel University
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.11, PhD, School of Nursing and Human
Sciences
Approved in the case of Dr Henderson, subject to the form being signed by
the full supervisory panel. Noted that Professor Hazelton's appointment had
been approved at the meeting of 17 April 2014.
- 8.12 Professor Eileen Savage, University College Cork
Dr Sue Timmis, University of Bristol
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.12, EdD, School of Education Studies
Approved.
- 8.13 Professor Colin Feltham, University of Southern Denmark
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.13, DPsych, School of Nursing and Human
Sciences
Approved.
- 8.14 Dr Vinod Dhanak, University of Liverpool
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.14, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.

- 8.15 Professor Sip Jan Pijl, University of Groningen
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.15, EdD, Special Education Department,
St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 8.16 Dr Stephen McKinney, University of Glasgow
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.16, PhD, School of Education, Mater Dei
Institute of Education
Approved.
- 8.17 Dr Rory McDaid, Marino Institute of Education
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.17, PhD, School of Education, Mater Dei
Institute of Education
Approved.
- 8.18 Dr Lindsey Earner-Byrne, University College Dublin
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.18, MA, School of Humanities, Mater Dei
Institute of Education
Approved.
- 8.19 Professor Leslie Francis, University of Warwick
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.19, PhD, School of Education, Mater Dei
Institute of Education
Approved.
- 8.20 Professor Robertus Faesen, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Student ref. GRSB2014/A4/8.20, MA, All Hallows College
Approved.

9. Other student issues

None.

10. Any other business

- 10.1** Noted that the Dean of Graduate Studies planned to hold a seminar for students and supervisors, on Friday 13 June 2014, on getting the most out of the annual review exercise and that there would be a presentation at it from the Registry on the recently-introduced online process (which is due to be extended University wide in late May 2014). (See also Item 3.1 above.)
- 10.2** Noted that Alana James had given a workshop on completing theses and preparing for a *viva* and that the feedback had been very positive, and also that considerable interest had been shown by students in the forthcoming Dan Soule workshop on academic writing, for which places are limited.

Date of next meeting:

**Thursday 26 June 2014
9.00 a.m. in A204**

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____