

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday, 30 October 2014

9:00 – 11:45 am in A204

Present: Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Ms Gillian Barry, Ms Lisa Buckley, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon, Ms Rachel Keegan (minutes), Dr Tim McComac, Professor Enda McGlynn, Dr Patricia Flynn, Dr Bernadette Flanagan

In attendance Dr Tracy Dixon (items 5 and 6)

Apologies: Professor Liam Barry, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Mr Brian Harman, Dr Caroline McMullin, Professor Kevin Rafter, Dr Ana Terrés

The Chair, on behalf of the Graduate Research Studies Board, welcomed two new members: Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon, FAPG Representative, and Ms Rachel Keegan, Senior Research Officer in the Graduate Studies Office.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one additional submission under item 12.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 8 September 2014

The minutes from the meeting of 8 September 2014 were confirmed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1 Noted that it is expected that a draft National Framework for Doctoral Education statement will be made available by the HEA and QQI in November, with a view to a formal launch of a finalised document in Q1 of 2015. The drafting of the document has involved input from the IUA Deans of Graduate Studies Group, and is

currently is a slimmed down version of what was seen previously, containing a statement of purpose and principles. The associated action will also be more broad in scope than initial drafts indicated.

- 3.2 Noted that orientation took place on 19 September and that there had been very good engagement by incoming graduate research students. The SU Education Officer, Gary Gillick, gave an overview of the new approach to research student representation in DCU at the session. (3.11)
- 3.3 Noted that the agreement with DkIT, underpinning development of the DCU DkIT Graduate School had been signed by DkIT. (3.13)
- 3.4 Noted that the Chair had discussed issues relating management of descriptors for some GTEs with the Dean of Teaching and Learning. He has agreed that it would be beneficial to have a place where university wide agreed descriptors could be hosted, but suggested that the optimum time to introduce his would be subsequent to adoption of the new version of Coursebuilder in 2015. (3.15)
- 3.5 Noted that no appeals for consideration by the GRBSB Standing Committee for Appeals had been submitted prior to the deadline for appeals on October 24th. (5)
- 3.6 The proposal from the short life working group, established following the September 8th meeting was endorsed. It was agreed to propose changes to the *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* to introduce an option for double-sided printing in the current hardbound thesis format, and to require that an electronic copy be submitted to Registry along with the two soft-bound examinable copies. It was noted that there was not strong support for the suggested change to a smaller-sized, soft-bound format. The Chair, on behalf of the GRBSB thanked Ms Keegan and the other members of the working group for their efforts in considering the proposal.
- 3.7 It was noted that a new PGR3 was expected from the School. (9.27)
- 3.8 It was noted that the Chair has discussed the issue of introducing a possible cap on external examiners' travel expenses with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and that this issue would come back to GRBSB and for consideration by Faculties, once some data had been gathered and a specific proposal drafted.(10)
- 3.9 It was noted that the missing information on the PGR4 form had related to evidence of recent research activity on behalf of the internal examiner, which had been made available, and the nomination approved. (Item 3.8)
- 3.10 The Chair noted that she had taken Chair's action on an unusually high number of items toward the end of September, most of which related to permission to continue registration, because not to have done so would have resulted in student hardship. She assured the Board that the cases so approved were in line with those decisions previously taken at GRBSB meetings.

- 3.11 Noted that amendments had been made to GTE – BE533 and it deemed approved. (Item 3.16)
- 3.12 Noted that the *Graduate School Guide 2014/15* has been made available to stakeholders. (Item 3.18)
- 3.13 Noted that the pilot module for international students has been removed from the list of structured PhD pathway in the School of Computing. (Item 4.1)
- 3.14 Noted that the Pilot module for international students has been removed from the list of structured PhD pathway in the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering. (Item 4.3)
- 3.15 Noted that amendments have been made to the revised procedures on videoconferencing, these have been made available. (Item 6.2)
- 3.16 Noted that students attention has been drawn to the National Policy Statement on Research Integrity at orientation and induction. Noted that a number of new policies referencing (among a broad range of issues) research practice were approved by DCU Executive and promulgated. (Item 8.1)
- 3.17 Noted that communications have taken place with School re completion on PGR3 forms. (Item 9)
- 3.18 Noted re PGR3 form a more detailed report was submitted and deemed approved. (Item 9.7)
- 3.19 Noted that the regulation about use, only in exceptional circumstances, of videoconferencing was mentioned to relevant Schools. (Item 10)
- 3.20 Noted that the internal examiner submitted on PGR4 form is a different person to that originally nominated, and was approved by Chair's action on 10/09/2014. (Item 10.5)
- 3.21 Noted that it was ascertained that a less distant nominee with equal expertise could not be identified, and that the approved nominee is retained. (Item 10.5)
- 3.22 Noted that it was confirmed that student was not a member of staff. (Item 10.7)
- 3.23 Noted that the student was advised that the word count exceeded the maximum permitted. (Item 10.9)
- 3.24 Noted that PGR4 form was signed by the student. (Item 10.14)
- 3.25 Noted that evidence of external examiner recent research activity had been provided. (Item 10.20)

- 3.26 Noted that required information had been supplied, and external examiner deemed approved. (Item 10.22)
- 3.27 Noted that a PGR4 form was included in papers of the meeting of 30/10/2014. (Item 10.24)
- 3.28 Noted that the School selected the extern for item 10.26 and an alternative extern was on the agenda of 30/11/2014 for Item 10.25. (Items 10.25 and 10.26)
- 3.29 Noted that it was ascertained that a less distant nominee with equal expertise could not be identified, that the School was contributing to costs, and that the approved nominee was retained (Item 10.31)
- 3.30 Noted that evidence of recent research activity had been provided. (Item 10.36)
- 3.31 Noted that it was ascertained that the nominee is currently based in Europe, and that the approved nominee was retained. (Item 10.38)
- 3.32 Noted that it was ascertained that a less distant nominee with equal expertise could not be identified, and that the approved nominee was retained. (10.43)
- 3.33 Noted that evidence of recent research activity had been provided. (Item 10.44)
- 3.34 Noted that an alternative internal examiner was approved by Chair's action on 16/09/2014. (Item 10.45)
- 3.35 Noted that it was confirmed that the appointment was within regulations. (Item 10.48)
- 3.36 Noted that it was confirmed that the student is not a member of staff, and also noted that approval of this PGR4 was rescinded by Chair's action on September 11th, when it was noticed that the minimum registration period had not been reached. (Item 10.50)
- 3.37 Noted that the PGR14 form had been signed by the student (Item 11.2.6)
- 3.38 Noted the extensions to registration period had been approved by Chair's action in the case of a student from the School of Law and Government and two from the School of Physical Sciences (29/09/2014), one from the School of Biotechnology (30/9/2014), four from the School of Electronic Engineering (30/9/14 and 15/10/2014) and one from the School of Chemical Sciences (1/10/2014).
- 3.39 Noted that examiners had been re-appointed by Chair's action in respect of a student in the School of Biotechnology (30/9/2014).

- 3.40 Noted that examiners had been re-appointed by Chair's action in respect of a student in the School of Electronic Engineering (7/10/2014).

SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

4. LC602: Advanced Writing Support for International Students

Approved subject to (a) removal of a reference in the descriptor to the module being offered in the HSS Faculty, (b) inclusion, after the final sentence in the description, of an example of the type of wiring envisaged (e.g. transfer/confirmation report), (c) removal of the text 'not necessarily during the same academic year' and (d) that more information be given to indicate what is involved during the two sets of 'independent learning' hours.

It is recommended that the logistical issues around offering the module over more than one academic year be discussion at Faculty level and with Registry.

The Chair noted that LC600 (English for Academic Purposes), a precursor to this module, is by far the most popular GET currently offered in DCU. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and in particular SALIS, had piloted an approach to further support non-native speakers of English, work which formed the basis of the proposed descriptor.

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6. DkIT linked provide schedule

A draft linked provider schedule for research awards undertaken in DkIT was endorsed, subject to revision of the governance section to better reflect the responsibility of the DCU appointed representative. It was agreed that particular provision regarding validation and accreditation would have to be added in respect of professional doctorates, and that wording to accommodate DCUBS considerations regarding external accreditation should also be included. The Chair thanked Dr

Dixon and Dr McCormac for their work on the schedule, possibly one of the first to be implemented under the 2012 legislation.

Approved subject to the above action items

7. Transitional supervisory arrangement agreements

The Board provided comment on a draft agreement to underpin transitional situations, prior to completion of the incorporation process, whereby a DCU student will have a principal supervisor who is a MDI or SPD colleague. It was agreed that it would be appropriate for colleagues in the respective institutions to act as independent chairpersons, and that the agreement should limit statements on library access to that of the students. Concerns were raised as to the level of detail regarding process included, and agreed that this be further discussed with Registry. It was agreed that, in reference to the organisation of examinations and liaison with External Examiners, the agreement should refer to the Department or School, rather than the Institution.

8. Proposal on deferrals

A proposal that students be able to defer for a full academic year, or a half year (within one academic year) was agreed, subject to the Chair consulting with the Instructional Statistical Officer as to whether, in the context of reporting, it is feasible that any 6 month period within a year could be deferred. It was agreed that some flexibility be introduced in the regulations to allow for retrospective deferrals, in line with circumstances allowed for those on taught programmes. The need for a humane approach to cases where retrospective deferral is requested was raised. It was agreed that guidelines on deferral for supervisors and students be drafted. It was noted that students who defer a full academic year will, on registering, be returned to the same study period.

9. Overview of fees

A document providing clarity on research student fees in certain circumstances, which was based on input from the Fees Office, was noted. It was agreed that this information would be re-phrased when presented for student/supervisor information, to better reflect student perspective and their possible lower familiarity with systems.

The difficulty in addressing outstanding fees was acknowledged, but also noted that there is a problems associated with blocking a student account, in that this also blocks email correspondence, which may be needed to further engage on the issue. It was also suggested that the relevant Associate Dean for Research be copied on emails alerting Head of School that fees are outstanding.

The fairness of never allowing a change in registration status after registration was questioned, as there may be cases where engagement necessarily and unexpectedly

changes during the year. In the context of systems limitations and reporting requirements, it was suggested that the record should reflect what engagement is over the majority of the year. It was agreed that this needed further consideration and the Chair undertook to discuss all of the issues raised with the Fees Office.

10. Report on GRSB activities 2013/14

A report on GRSB activities during the 2013/14 academic year was noted.

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

11. Applications for transfer to the PhD Register or confirmation on the PhD Register

10.1 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.1, School of Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies

Approved

10.2 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.2, School of Biotechnology

Approved subject to confirmation that the report is was jointly completed report by the supervisor and examiner.

10.3 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.3, School of Chemical Sciences

Approved

10.4 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.4, School of Electronic Engineering

Approved

10.5 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.5, School of Electronic Engineering

Approved

10.6 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.6, School of Health and Human Performance

Approved

- 10.7 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.7 School of Health and Human Performance
Approved
- 10.8 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.8 School of Health and Human Performance
Approved
- 10.9 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.9 School of Law and Government
Approved
- 10.10 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.10 School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Approved
- 10.11 Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/10.11 School of Physical Sciences
Approved

11. Appointment of external examiners

- 11.1 Professor Bazbek Davletov, University of Sheffield
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved
- 11.2 Professor Marc Goergen, Cardiff University
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.2, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
Approved
- 11.3 Dr Eva van Reijmersdal, University of Amsterdam
Approved
Professor Michelle Nelson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Approved
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.3, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
- 11.4 Professor John Barry, Queen's University Belfast
Approved
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.4, PhD, School of Communications
- 11.5 Dr John Cardiff, Institute of Technology Tallaght
Approved, Noted GRSB concern about the relatively short time period to submission for the award
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.5, MSc, School of Computing
- 11.6 Dr Mark Childs, Coventry University
Approved
Dr Mario Barajas, University of Barcelona
Approved
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.6, PhD, School of Computing
- 11.7 Dr Jacqueline Baxter, The Open University
Approved
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.7, EdD, School of Education Studies
- 11.8 Professor Peter Bradshaw, University of Huddersfield
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.8, EdD, School of Education Studies
Approved
- 11.9 Dr Rob Mark, University of Strathclyde
Approved
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.9, EdD, School of Education Studies

- 11.10 Dr Yacine Ghamri-Doudane, ENSIIE, France
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.10, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved
- 11.11 Dr George Ghinea, Brunel University
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.11, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved
- 11.12 Dr Julfikar Haider, Manchester Metropolitan University
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.12, MEng, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved, Agreed that the School/Supervisor be alerted to the excessive word count
- 11.13 Professor Elisabeth Verpoorte, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.13, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved
- 11.14 Professor Kathy Murphy, NUI Galway
Approved
Professor Dr Johannes Keogh, University of Applied Science, Fulda, Germany
Approved
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.14, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
- 11.15 Dr Zeni Fox, Seton Hall University, USA
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.15, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved
- 11.16 Dr Lluís Marquez, Qatar Computing Research Institute, Qatar
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.16, PhD, School of Computing
Approved
- 11.17 Dr Maggie Donovan-Hall, University of Southampton
Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/11.17, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Approved

12. Other student issues

12.1.1 Request from student to transfer from the Doctorate in Psychotherapy to the PhD register, School of Nursing and Human Sciences

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.1.1, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Approved that the student be transferred to the part time, PhD-track register, year 2.
It was noted that credits earned by the student are within the limits indicated under the *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*.

12.2 Request for special case admission to the PhD-track register, School of Health and Human Performance

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.2.1, School of Health and Human Performance
Not approved on the basis that the university minimum entry requirements are not met.

12.3 **Transfer applications from All Hallows College**

The Chair noted that over the summer a process had been put in place to explore whether some All Hallows College research students might be facilitated in completing their awards by transferring to DCU. A memo was submitted to GRSB by the Chair, seeking the approval of the transfer of five PhD students from All Hallows College to DCU, on the basis that the student had formally applied, transfer was being supported by a principal supervisor in DCU or the Mater Dei Institute and by the relevant Head of School or Department.

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.3.1

Approved that the student be transferred to the part time, PhD-track register, year 4, subject to final Registry checks and an underpinning agreement being in place (ref item 6).

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.3.2

Approved that the student be transferred to the full time, PhD-track register, year 3, subject to final Registry checks and an underpinning agreement being in place (ref item 6).

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.3.3

Approved that the student be transferred to the part time, PhD-track register, year 2, subject to final Registry checks.

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.3.4

Approved that the student be transferred to the part time, PhD-track register, year 3, subject to final Registry checks.

Student ref. GRSB2014/A7/12.3.5

Approved that the student be transferred to the part time, PhD-track register, year 4, subject to final Registry checks.

It was noted that secondary supervisor involvement, where indicated, is subject to formal acceptance of the role by those nominated.

It was agreed that the Chair should take Chair's action in respect of a possible five further, similar applications.

Any other business

On behalf of GRSB, the Chair expressed appreciation to an outgoing member of the Board, Professor Enda McGlynn, who is due to step down from his role as Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Science and Health. She noted with thanks his insightful, thorough and consistent engagement with the issues of GRSB.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 11 December 2014

9.00 a.m. in A204

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chair