GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 10 September 2009

9.00-11.30 a.m. in A204

Present: Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Dr Dermot Brabazon,
Ms Olivia Bree, Dr Pat Brereton, Professor John Costello,
Ms Claudine Devereux, Ms Hannah Dyas, Dr Bernadette Flanagan,
Dr Gabriel Flynn, Ms Tanya Keogh, Ms Louise McDermott
(Secretary), Ms Patricia Moore, Dr Declan Raftery

Apologies: Dr Françoise Blin, Professor David Jacobson, Dr Christine Loscher,
Dr Mary Shine Thompson

In attendance: Ms Rachel Hill
(for Item 12)

SECTION A: Minutes and related issues

1.   Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one additional submission under
Item 4, two additional submissions under Item 5, eleven additional submissions
under Item 6, one additional submission under Item 7 and one submission under
Item 13.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 2 July 2009 (for noting only; already confirmed)

Signed by the Chair.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes

3.1   <u>Noted</u> that Professor Murphy was progressing the revision of *Academic Regulations
for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* and would make a draft available
to the GSB, the working group of the GSB which had initially discussed the

revisions, the Research Advisory Panel and the Faculty Research Committees. (Item 3.1)

3.2 <u>Noted</u> that Professor Murphy had met Ms Barbara McConalogue, Director of Information Systems and Services, to discuss a range of issues including online form completion, digital signatures and online support for students in remote locations, and that it was planned to hold further discussions on these matters with ISS and Registry.   (Item 3.3) (See also Item 5 below.)

3.3 <u>Noted</u> that, in the case of a student who had not been confirmed on the PhD register, had appealed this decision and had had the appeal upheld, a resubmission had taken place and the decision had been made again not to permit confirmation on the PhD register. (Item 3.5) (See also Item 5.13 below.)

3.4 <u>Noted</u> that the Graduate Research Office would make available hard copies of the IUQB *National Guidelines of Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Higher Education* and that it was intended to create a link from the GRO home page to the IUQB website. (Item 3.8)

3.5 <u>Noted</u>, in respect of the Quality Improvement Plan following the quality review of the postgraduate experience, that it was planned to support the training of supervisors as well as graduate training initiatives. Professor Murphy is to meet Training and Development staff from the Human Resources Office in relation to the former issue. <u>Noted</u> that, while it is usual for supervisory training to be undertaken by new supervisors, it might also be of considerable benefit to established supervisors. Professor Murphy outlined some of the features of the Peer Review Group report: there was considerable emphasis on the student experience and the importance of ensuring that a holistic approach was taken to this, with advance information being made available to students as to what they might expect from the experience of being a postgraduate student; it was recommended that a 'champion' for taught postgraduate students be appointed, and the possibility of progressing this matter was being investigated by the Office of the Vice-President for Learning Innovation; a submission in relation to the recommendations generally is to be made to Budget Committee. (Item 3.9)

3.6 <u>Noted</u> that reference had also been made in the QuIP to the resourcing issues attaching to the use of PAC for research student applications and that Professor Murphy was due to meet Ms Phylomena McMorrow, Director of Registry, to discuss these issues. Professor Murphy will also establish with Ms McMorrow whether or not PAC can be used for international student applications. <u>Noted</u> that it would be very important to ensure that, if PAC were used, it would still be necessary for a potential applicant to contact the relevant

School in advance to discuss the proposed research and no offer of a place could be made without this step having taken place.   (Item 3.10)

3.7   Noted that St Patrick's College was also discussing the option of using PAC for research student applications.   (Item 3.11)

3.8   Noted that it had been agreed to attribute five credits to the Qualitative Research Summer School in the School of Nursing but that some further discussion on procedures would be required in the more general context of approval processes for graduate training elements. (Item 3.12) (See also Item 10 below.)

3.9   Noted that Professor Murphy had contacted a number of Schools to convey the concern of the GSB about the long interval, in the case of some students, between initial registration on the Master's register and submission for transfer to the PhD register. Noted that it would be desirable to have an automated system for identifying students who are due for transfer to (or confirmation on) the PhD register and that it was hoped the introduction of ITS Version 14 would provide a facility for this. Agreed that this matter should be discussed at the meeting between Professor Murphy, ISS and Registry referred to at Item 3.2 above. Agreed that the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* should be specific about the need for timely transfer/confirmation.
(Items 4.1, 4.2 and 4.6)

3.10   Noted, in the case of a student whose application for transfer to the PhD register had not yet been approved, that discussions with the School were ongoing.
(Item 4.5)

3.11   Noted, in the case of eight students whose applications for confirmation on the PhD register had not yet been approved, that discussions with the School were ongoing. (Items 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12)

3.12   Noted, in relation to concerns raised about the standard of research students' academic writing skills, that Professor Murphy had discussed with Dr Claire Bohan, Director of Student Support and Development, the possibility of making tuition in writing skills available to some students through DCU Language Services and that he would hold further discussions with her about the needs of international students in terms of writing skills. (Item 5)

3.13   Noted that the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* would need to be more specific than the current version in respect of eligibility to act as internal and external examiner. Agreed that postdoctoral researchers should act as internal examiners only in exceptional circumstances and should never act if they report to the supervisor. (Item 6.14)

3.14   <u>Noted</u> that Professor Murphy had conveyed to the Royal Irish Academy of Music the concern of the GSB that advance permission had not been sought for early submission by a student on a taught doctoral programme. <u>Noted</u> none the less that the student in question had been successful at examination and that she would be the first student to graduate from the university with a taught doctoral degree. (Item 6.24)

3.15   <u>Noted</u> that it had been confirmed that a student referred to on an R-103 (change of supervisory arrangements) form was on the PhD track. (Item 7.3)

3.16   A request in respect of a change of supervisory arrangements was <u>approved</u>. (Item 7.6)

3.17   <u>Agreed</u> to await developments in the case of a request for a change of supervisory arrangements. (Item 7.7)

3.18   <u>Noted</u> that the possibility of classifying research Master's degrees would be discussed at a future meeting of the GSB. (Item 10)

SECTION B: Individual student issues

4.   Applications for transfer to the PhD register

4.1   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/4.1, School of Electronic Engineering
       <u>Approved.</u>

4.2   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/4.2, School of Mathematical Sciences
       <u>Approved.</u>   <u>Agreed</u> none the less that Professor Murphy would request
       the School to explain the long interval between the initial registration on the
       Master's register and the transfer submission.

4.3   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/4.3, Dublin City University Business School
       <u>Approved.</u> <u>Agreed</u> none the less that Professor Murphy would request
       the School to explain the long interval between the initial registration on the
       Master's register and the transfer submission.

5.   Applications for confirmation on the PhD register

5.1   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.1, Dublin City University Business School
       <u>Approved.</u> <u>Agreed</u> none the less that Professor Murphy would request the
       School to explain the long interval between the initial registration on the
       PhD-track register and the confirmation submission.

5.2   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.2, Dublin City University Business School
        Approved.
5.3   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.3, School of Chemical Sciences
        Approved.
5.4   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.4, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.
5.5   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.5, School of Electronic Engineering/NCPST
        Approved.
5.6   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.6, School of Law and Government
        Approved.
5.7   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.7, School of Law and Government
        Approved.
5.8   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.8, School of Law and Government
        Approved.
5.9   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.9, School of Law and Government
        Approved.
5.10   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.10, School of Mathematical Sciences
        Approved.
5.11   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.11, Dublin City University Business School
        Approved. The intention stated by the supervisors and the internal
        examiner to consider readmitting the student to the PhD-track register in due
        course was noted, as was the fact that no regulation exists about whether such
        a course of action is, or is not, permissible. Agreed that the Chair would
        discuss the intention with Professor David Jacobson, Associate Dean for
        Research in Dublin City University Business School, and would inform the
        GSB of the outcome of the discussion. Noted also that it would be helpful to
        stipulate a maximum time period for completion of a PhD. Agreed that
        this matter and the question of readmission of a student to the PhD-track
        register would be considered in the context of the review of *Academic
        Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*
        (see Item 3.1 above).
5.12   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.11, School of Biotechnology
        Approved.
5.13   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/5.12, School of Applied Language and
        Intercultural Studies
        Approved. (See Item 3.3 above.)

Noted that no regulations exist to stipulate (a) which person (internal examiner or
supervisor) should complete the form requesting transfer to/confirmation on
the PhD register and (b) whether or not it is appropriate to submit, along with the
form, a progress report from the student (particularly in cases where the report on
the examination process is brief). The importance of clear procedures and consistent
practice in these matters was noted. Agreed that they should be considered in the

context of the review of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* (see Item 3.1 above). <u>Agreed</u> also that the Chair would raise with the Director of Information Systems and Services the tendency for forms to be completed manually and request advice as to mechanisms that might be put in place to encourage electronic completion. (See also Item 3.2 above.)

6.   Appointment of external examiners

6.1   Professor Anna Sågvall Hein, Uppsala University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.1, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.2   Dr Denise Egan, Institute of Technology, Tallaght
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.2, MSc, School of Biotechnology/NICB
        Decision deferred pending the identification of an alternative internal examiner and details about collaborative activities undertaken by the nominated external examiner.

6.3   Professor David Otley, Lancaster University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.3, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.4   Dr Philip Stiles, University of Cambridge
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.4, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.5   Professor Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, Trinity College Dublin
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.6   Dr Olaf Schmidt, University College Dublin
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.6, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.7   Professor Kevin Williams, Swansea University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.7, MA, School of Communications
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.8   Professor Srdjan Capkun, ETH Zurich
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.8, PhD, School of Computing
        Decision deferred pending resubmission of the form with full citations included for all the listed publications by the nominated external examiner.

6.9   Professor Jan Hajic, Charles University, Prague
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.9, PhD, School of Computing
        <u>Approved.</u>

6.10   Dr Denis Ryan, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.10, PhD, School of Education Studies
        <u>Approved.</u>   <u>Noted</u> that a punctuation error in the title of the thesis would
        need to be corrected.
6.11   Professor Philippe Salembier, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya,
        Barcelona
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.11, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        <u>Approved.</u>
6.12   Professor Phil Barker, University of Dundee
        Professor Michel Tousignant, Université du Québec à Montréal
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.12, PhD, School of Nursing
        <u>Approved.</u>
6.13   Dr Paul McKenna, University of Strathclyde
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.13, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
        <u>Approved.</u>
6.14   Dr Craig Murray, Lancaster University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.14, PhD, School of Nursing
        <u>Approved.</u>
6.15   Dr Margaret Donovan-Hall, University of Southampton
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.15, PhD, School of Nursing
        <u>Approved.</u>
6.16   Dr David Hevey, Trinity College Dublin
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.16, MSc, School of Nursing
        <u>Approved.</u>
6.17   Professor Alison Phipps, University of Glasgow
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.17, MA, School of Applied Language and
        Intercultural Studies
        <u>Approved</u> subject to confirmation that the candidate is not a member of staff
        of the university as defined in Section 8.2 of *Academic Regulations for
        Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* (i.e. does not require two
        external examiners).
6.18   Dr Sakir Sezer, Queen's University, Belfast
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.18, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        <u>Approved.</u>
        Decision deferred pending resubmission of the form with full citations
        included for all the listed publications by the nominated external examiner.
6.19   Dr Mario Sznol, Yale Cancer Centre
        Dr Susan McDonnell, University College Dublin
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.19, PhD, NICB
        Decision deferred pending the identification of an alternative internal
        examiner and details about collaborative activities undertaken by the
        nominated external examiner.

6.20   Dr Tim McGloughlin, University of Limerick
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.20, PhD, School of Mechanical and
        Manufacturing Engineering
        Approved.
6.21   Professor James Lunney, Trinity College Dublin
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.21, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
        Approved.
6.22   Dr Gary N Sheldrake, Queen's University, Belfast
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.22, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
        Approved.
6.23   Dr John Schormans, Queen Mary, University of London
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.23, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved. Noted that the Chair had communicated to the School his
        concern about the fact that the external examiner who had examined the
        student originally had not been available to examine the resubmitted thesis.
6.24   Professor Pablo Angueira, University of the Basque Country
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.24, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.
6.25   Professor Liviu Iftode, Rutgers University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.25, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.
6.26   Dr George Ghinea, Brunel University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.26, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.
6.27   Dr James C West, Oklahoma State University
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.27, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.
6.28   Dr Kenneth Carroll, Institute of Technology, Tallaght
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.28, PhD, School of Biotechnology
        Decision deferred pending receipt of a list of recent publications by the
        nominated external examiner.
6.29   Dr William P Marnane, University College Cork
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.29, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.
6.30   Dr Brendan Redmond, Dublin Institute of Technology
        Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/6.30, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Approved.

The importance of ensuring that both the internal and the nominated external
examiners are appropriately independent from the supervisor was noted.

7.   Requests for changes to supervisory arrangements

7.1   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/7.1, Dublin City University Business School
          <u>Approved.</u>

7.2   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/7.2, School of Chemical Sciences
          <u>Approved</u> subject to the form being signed by the staff member who had
          been indicated in error as being the supervisor.

7.3   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/7.3, School of Electronic Engineering
          <u>Approved</u>

7.4   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/7.4, School of Physical Sciences/NCPST
          <u>Approved.</u>

7.5   Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/7.5, School of Applied Language and
          Intercultural Studies
          <u>Approved.</u>

8.   Other student issues

**8.1   Request for advice on eligibility of external examiner for PhD
           candidate**

Student ref. GSB/2009/A5/8.1, School of Computing

<u>Agreed</u> that the nominee was eligible and could be appointed.

`

SECTION C: Policy and strategy issues

9.   Proposed graduate education modules

None.

10.   Approval processes for graduate training elements

Professor Murphy summarised developments to date in respect of these processes,
<u>noting</u> that detailed information would be made available to the 5 November
2009 meeting of the GSB.

11.   Revised graduate research forms

11.1   The revised, combined PGR3 and PGR11 form was <u>approved</u>. It was <u>noted</u> with approval that, from now on, this combined form would cover both requests for transfer to, and requests for confirmation on, the PhD register, thus eliminating the need for staff to select from between two forms. The new form is to be called PGR3.

11.2   The revised PGR4 form (notification of intention to submit thesis for examination) was <u>approved</u> subject to the inclusion of a stipulation, beside the request to list five publications by the nominated external examiner of particular relevance to the area covered by the candidate's research, that full citations must be provided in all cases and that failure to do this would mean the form could not be considered.

11.3   The revised R103 form (request for change of supervisory arrangements) was <u>approved</u>.

11.4   Ms Devereux is to notify the relevant staff of the revised forms. The Chair thanked Ms Devereux for her work in revising the forms.

12.   Presentation by the Library on E-theses and Doras

12.1   Ms Rachel Hill, Institutional Repository Manager in the Library, made a presentation on E-theses and Doras, the online website for DCU publications and outputs, <u>noting</u> that Doras was a free open-access service which aimed to promote research carried out in the university.

12.2   In the course of the ensuing discussion, the following were <u>noted</u>:

- it is very important that students are made aware of issues relating to copyright at an early stage in their research
- the fact that responsibility for uploading the thesis to Doras rests with the supervisor may raise issues relating to verification of compatibility between the printed and the electronic versions
- there are also issues relating to restriction of access to theses, with potential tensions between conflicting needs, notably confidentiality and commercialisation
- amendments to online theses following graduation are not permitted in any circumstances
- the issue arises of uploading theses written before Doras and similar systems became available; related issues include the fact that students would not have given permission for this to be done, and the importance of quality control (in

particular, ensuring that the version uploaded is the final version as approved by means of the examination process); Ms Hill noted that the British Library is operating a system of contacting graduates, to the extent possible, by such means as newsletters, to ask their permission to upload theses; if, however, after a certain period has elapsed, the Library has not heard from a student, it uploads the thesis in any event

- there can be no control over who downloads theses or what use they make of them once downloaded.

12.3   Noted that a presentation from the Library on copyright would be useful.

12.4   Agreed that Professor Murphy and Dr Brabazon would discuss copyright and related issues, would seek advice from Professor Alan Smeaton of the School of Computing, and would report to a future meeting of the GSB.

12.5   Professor Murphy expressed appreciation to Ms Hill, on behalf of the GSB, for her presentation.

13.   Any other business

Professor Murphy alluded to discussions which were taking place at Budget Committee with a view to making funding available for capacity-building with regard to graduate research, including a scholarship scheme. The importance of continuity of funding and of having an easily-recognisable Graduate School 'brand' was noted. Agreed that the needs of the linked colleges would be factored into the discussions. Agreed that Professor Murphy would provide the GSB with updated information on these matters at the meeting of 5 November 2009.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 5 November 2009
9.00 a.m. in A204

Signed: _____   Date: _____
       Chair