

## **GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

Thursday 5 March 2009

9.00-11.00 a.m. in A204

**Present:** Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Dr Françoise Blin,  
Dr Dermot Brabazon, Dr Pat Breerton, Dr Tony Cafolla,  
Ms Hannah Dyas, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Ms Tanya Keogh,  
Dr Christine Loscher, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary),  
Ms Noeleen Peel, Dr Mary Shine Thompson

**Apologies:** Dr Bernadette Flanagan, Dr Declan Raftery

The Chair welcomed Dr Dermot Brabazon, Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing, and Ms Hannah Dyas, representative of the Faculty Administration Peer Group, to their first meeting of the Graduate Studies Board. He also noted that Ms Noeleen Peel was about to undertake different responsibilities in the Registry and would therefore be leaving the Board and thanked her, on behalf of the membership, for her contribution to the work of the Board.

#### **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, one additional submission under Item 5, five additional submissions under Item 6, one additional submission under Item 7, one additional submission under Item 8 and two submissions under Item 11.

##### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 8 January 2009**

Confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **3. Matters arising from the minutes**

- 3.1** Follow-up actions from the last meeting were reported.
- 3.2** Noted that the Spring deadline for registration for research degrees had now been fixed at 1 April and that students were deemed to be covered by insurance once registered. (Items 3.2 and 11.3)
- 3.3** Noted that the exit survey for completion by exiting research students would be available in DCU and St Patrick's College with effect from Semester 2 2008/09. (Item 3.3)
- 3.4** Noted that the working group to review *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* was next due to meet on 30 March 2009 and that, in due course, the GSB would be asked to review and comment on the draft revised regulations. (Item 3.4)
- 3.5** Noted that, by the end of March 2009, all students on structured PhD programmes would be registered for all relevant taught modules (and registered retrospectively where necessary). (Item 3.5)
- 3.6** Noted that the deadline for the submission for funding under PRTL Cycle 5 was 2 April 2009 and that a number of fully-funded four-year structured PhD proposals would be included in this submission. (Item 3.7)
- 3.7** Noted that the new online *curriculum vitae* template for nominated external examiners was being used quite extensively and appeared to be proving useful. (Item 3.9)
- 3.8** Noted that the supervisory skills programme organised by the Graduate Research Office and the Training and Development section within Human Resources was being delivered and that it was expected that participation in such programmes would be encouraged through the forthcoming revised IUQB guidelines on *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities*. (Item 3.11)
- 3.9** Noted that a request to allow a non-standard thesis format for a PhD student had been approved electronically by the University Standards Committee on 16 January 2009 and that preparations for submission were being made. (Item 3.14)
- 3.10** Noted that the IUA 4<sup>th</sup>-level Network does not have imminent plans to establish a national database of all PhD proposals. (Item 3.16)

- 3.11** Noted that the Faculty Administration Peer Group is now represented in the membership of the GSB. (Item 11.1)
- 3.12** Noted that a new student representative would be identified (if possible from among the student representatives on Faculty Research Boards) and invited to join the GSB. (Item 11.2)

## **SECTION B: Individual student issues**

### **4. Applications for transfer to the PhD register**

- 4.1 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/4.1, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.2 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/4.2, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.3 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/4.3, School of Mathematical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.4 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/4.4, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.

### **5. Applications for confirmation on the PhD register**

- 5.1 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.1, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 5.2 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.2, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 5.3 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.3, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 5.4 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.4, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 5.5 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.5, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 5.6 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.6, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved.
- 5.7 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.7, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved. A reference on the form to the level of support provided by the university for online presentations by research students undergoing examination in a remote location was noted, and the issue will be raised by the Chair with the relevant members of the School.

- 5.8 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.8, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 5.9 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.9, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved subject to the form being signed by the internal examiner and a more extensive report being submitted.
- 5.10 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.10, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved subject to the form being signed by the internal examiner and a more extensive report being submitted.
- 5.11 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/5.11, School of Education Studies  
Approved.

## **6. Appointment of external examiners**

- 6.1 Dr Gerard Walls, National University of Ireland, Galway  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 6.2 Professor Martin Volk, University of Zurich and University of Stockholm  
and Dr Carl Vogel, Trinity College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.2, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.3 Professor Giulia Rotundo, University of Tuscia, Italy  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.3, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.4 Professor David Gwilliam, University of Exeter  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.4, PhD, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 6.5 Dr Siobhán Mullally, University College Cork  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.5, Master of Laws, School of Law and Government  
Approved. Noted that this would be the first time a student graduated from the university with this qualification.
- 6.6 Dr Ross Anderson, University of Limerick  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.6, MSc, School of Health and Human Performance  
Approved.
- 6.7 Professor Gary Brown, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.7, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering  
Approved.

- 6.8 Professor Alistair Anderson, The Robert Gordon University  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.8, PhD, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.
- 6.9 Dr Brendan Purcell, formerly University College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.9, PhD, All Hallows College  
Approved.
- 6.10 Revd Fintan Morris, St Patrick's College, Carlow  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.10, MA, All Hallows College  
Decision deferred pending the submission of a new nomination form by All Hallows College.
- 6.11 Dr Orina Belton, University College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.11, PhD, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 6.12 Professor Josiane Mothe, Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres de Midi-Pyrénées, Toulouse  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.12, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.13 Dr Joe Carthy, University College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.13, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.14 Dr Mark Sanderson, University of Sheffield  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.14, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.15 Professor Françoise Ugochukwu, The Open University  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.15, PhD, School of Communications  
Approved.
- 6.16 Professor Dekang Lin, Google, Inc.  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.16, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.17 Dr Martin Volk, University of Zurich and University of Stockholm  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.17, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved.
- 6.18 Dr Aidan Seery, Trinity College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.18, MA, School of Education Studies  
Approved.
- 6.19 Dr Valerie Barron, National University of Ireland, Galway  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.19, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved.

- 6.20 Professor Dawn Dowding, University of York  
and Professor Pamela Shakespeare, The Open University  
Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/6.20, PhD, School of Nursing  
Approved.

## **7. Requests for changes to supervisory arrangements**

- 7.1 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/7.1, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 7.2 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/7.2, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 7.3 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/7.3, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 7.4 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/7.4, School of Education Studies  
Approved.

## **8. Other student issues**

### **8.1 Reversion to Master's from PhD track**

- 8.1.1 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/8.1.1, Dublin City University Business School

Decision deferred pending receipt of fuller background information from the Business School.

- 8.1.2 Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/8.1.2, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies

Decision deferred pending receipt of fuller background information from the School, including the completion of the appropriate form.

Agreed that the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* should include a clear procedure for reversion to Master's from PhD track.

### **8.2 Non-submission of revised thesis within one academic year**

Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/8.2, School of Chemical Sciences

Agreed that, where a thesis was deemed to require resubmission and was resubmitted beyond the specified deadline (usually one year from the date of original submission), the approval of the GSB would have to be obtained

before it could be examined. Agreed that a regulation to cover this matter should be included in the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*. Noted that further action in relation to the present case could be taken only if the student made any relevant extenuating circumstances known.

### **8.3 Request for advice on procedure with regard to student**

Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/8.3 , School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

Agreed that the student should be allowed a total of four attempts at the qualifying modules if required.

### **8.4 Proposed procedure in relation to a student in receipt of an IRCSET PhD scholarship who is still registered for a Master's degree by research**

Student ref. GSB/2009/A2/8.4, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

Agreed that the student should be facilitated in completing the Master's degree as soon as possible and that he should also be registered on the PhD track.

## **SECTION C: Policy and strategy issues**

### **9. IUA definition of a structured PhD**

Noted that it is the defining characteristics of a structured PhD, rather than a structured PhD itself, that are susceptible to definition. The definition was none the less noted as being a very helpful one.

### **10. Reviews:**

- **HEA quality review**
- **DCU quality review of the postgraduate student experience**
- **IUQB review of guidelines on *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities***

#### **10.1** The Chair noted that the IUA had responded to the HEA to clarify issues arising from the report from the quality review.

- 10.2** The Chair noted that the self-assessment report for the quality review of the postgraduate student experience had been submitted by the deadline of 27 February 2009 and that the peer review group visit would take place in April. The SAR had indicated that the quality of students is high. Other significant issues that had emerged from it include the importance of ensuring that students benefit from university central services and become appropriately aware of the Graduate Research Office and its functions and the importance of both high-quality research supervision and high-quality instruction on taught programmes. The SAR will be made available to GSB members on request. The possibility of integrating relevant outcomes of the quality review process into the current PRTL Cycle 5 funding submission was raised.
- 10.3** The Chair noted that the revised IUQB guidelines on *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities* were being prepared and undertook to circulate to the GSB membership the extract from the draft revision which relates to structured PhD programmes (see Item 9 above).
- 11. Any other business**
- 11.1** Noted that a significant number of forms were still being submitted in handwritten form. Agreed that the Chair would discuss with the Director of Information Systems and Services the means that might be used to encourage online completion and the legal issues relating to digital signatures.
- 11.2** Noted that the School of Computing intended to establish a ‘cotutelle’ agreement with the University of Mysore, India.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Thursday 7 May 2009  
9.00 a.m. in A204**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_