

## **GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

Thursday 4 September 2008

9.00-11.00 a.m. in A204

**Present:** Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Dr Pat Brereton, Dr Tony Cafolla, Ms Jennifer Dowling, Professor David Jacobson, Ms Tanya Keogh, Dr Christine Loscher, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Ms Noeleen Peel

**Apologies:** Dr Françoise Blin, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Dr Declan Raftery

The Chair welcomed Dr David Jacobson to his first meeting of the Graduate Studies Board in his capacity as Associate Dean for Research in Dublin City University Business School. He noted that it was expected an appointment would be made to the post of Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing. He noted also that Dr Gabriel Flynn, Head of the School of Theology and Academic Leader for Research in Mater Dei Institute of Education, had joined the Board though he was unable to attend the present meeting.

#### **SECTION A: Minutes and related issues**

##### **1. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the renaming of Items 4.2, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.12 as Items 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 respectively (with consequent renaming of the remaining Items under 4) and the inclusion of five additional submissions under Item 4, eight additional submissions under Item 6 and one additional submission under Item 8.

##### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 3 July 2008**

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 Management Committee in St Patrick's College would discuss the possibility of adopting a system similar to *Submission of Theses between September and December*. (Item 3.2)
- 3.3** Noted that the research student exit survey would shortly be available. (Item 3.3)
- 3.4** Noted that the working group to review *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* had met for a second time (on 2 September), had discussed a range of issues and had agreed a broad redrafting of the early sections as well as a number of further actions (e.g. the Chair is to hold discussions with CSD and Registry about the possibility of increasing the use of online, as distinct from paper, transactions). Dr Cafolla, Dr Jacobson and Dr Shine Thompson have joined the working group. The next meeting is scheduled for 7 October. (Item 3.4)
- 3.5** Noted that discussions were continuing about the procedures for making graduate research training modules and other activities available to students and that a meeting was due to take place between the Chair, the Associate Deans for Research and the Faculty Managers to progress the issues. With regard to a specific query from DCU Business School, it was agreed that the staff member in question would be requested to send details of the proposed modules to the Graduate Research Office. (Item 3.9)
- 3.6** Noted that an alternative external examiner for a student had been nominated, and approved by means of Chair's action. (Item 6.1)
- 3.7** Noted that discussions were ongoing about the appointment of an alternative external examiner for a student. (Item 6.8)
- 3.8** Noted that additional information had been obtained about a nominated external examiner for a student and that the nomination had been approved. (Item 6.14)
- 3.9** Noted that confirmation had been obtained that a student did not require two external examiners. (Items 6.16, 6.17 and 6.25)
- 3.10** Noted that, following discussion between the Chair and the supervisors of a student, a nomination of an external examiner had been approved. (Item 6.18)

- 3.11 Noted that, following the submission of a more detailed *curriculum vitae*, including details of publications, a nomination of an external examiner had been approved. (Items 6.26 and 6.48)
- 3.12 Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that, where a student had two supervisors, it was necessary to include the names of both, and not just one, on relevant forms. (Item 6.45)
- 3.13 The Chair described the HEA quality review visit which had taken place on 26 August, noting that it had been a detailed and searching one. It is not expected that a lengthy report will ensue from this review. A further review, by the IUQB, is to take place in October. Noted that statistical information made available for such reviews should be used by Faculties, as appropriate, for planning purposes. (Item 9.1)
- 3.14 The Chair noted that information was awaited on the call for submissions under PRTLI Cycle 5. (Item 9.2)
- 3.15 The Chair noted that the IUA *Graduate Student Skills Statement* was a penultimate version and that the final version was in preparation and would be launched at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint IUQB Conference in UCD on 14 October. The theme of this conference is ‘Opportunities and Challenges in Developing 4<sup>th</sup> Level Education’. The Chair is to lead one of the workshops at this conference. He will alert all staff to the conference. (Item 10)

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

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

- 4.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.1, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 4.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.2, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.3 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.3, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 4.4 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.4, School of Communications  
Approved.
- 4.5 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.5, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.6 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.6, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.

- 4.7 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.7, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 4.8 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.8, School of Electronic Engineering  
Approved.
- 4.9 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.9, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.10 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.10, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.11 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.11, School of Mathematical Sciences  
Approved.
- 4.12 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.12, School of Law and Government  
Approved.
- 4.13 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.13, School of Communications  
Approved.
- 4.14 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.14, School of Biotechnology  
Approved.
- 4.15 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/4.15, School of Electronic Engineering  
Approved.

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

- 5.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.1, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 5.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.2, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 5.3 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.3, School of Nursing  
Decision deferred pending discussion between the Chair and the supervisor.
- 5.4 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.4, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 5.5 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.5, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 5.6 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.6, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 5.7 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/5.7, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.

Noted that, in the case of PGR3 (transfer to the PhD register) and PGR11 (confirmation on the PhD register) forms, the issues raised by the examiners should be summarised on the form itself (without the necessity for their detailed reports to be made available to the GSB), and any additional examiner should not be referred to as an 'external' examiner so as to preclude any possible confusion with the

external examiner to be appointed by the university at a later stage when the student is due for examination.

Noted that there was potential for confusion between the PGR3 and the PGR11 forms because they are very similar. Noted that the working group referred to under Item 3.4 above would address this issue.

Noted that it would be helpful to have a clear regulation as to how to proceed in the case of a student on the PhD register who wished to exit with a Master's award. Noted that the working group referred to under Item 3.4 above would address this issue. (Note also Item 8.1 below.)

## 6. Appointment of external examiners

- 6.1 Professor Donal O'Shea, University College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.1, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 6.2 Professor Kenneth Paterson, Royal Holloway, University of London  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.2, PhD, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.3 Dr Tomáš Pajdla, Czech Technical University  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.3, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering  
Approved.
- 6.4 Dr Fiona Timmins, Trinity College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.4, MSc, School of Nursing  
Approved.
- 6.5 Professor Peter Myers, University of Liverpool  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.
- 6.6 Dr Alberto J Castro-Tirado, Instituto de Astrofísica de Andalucía  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.6, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 6.7 Professor Michael Clinton, University of Calgary  
Dr Tom Andrews, University College Cork  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.7, PhD, School of Nursing  
Approved.
- 6.8 Dr James O'Donnell, Institute of Molecular Medicine, St James's Hospital  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.8, PhD, School of Health and Human  
Performance  
Approved.

- 6.9 Dr John Mackrill, University College Cork  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.9, MSc, School of Health and Human Performance  
Approved.
- 6.10 Dr Fearghal McGarry, Queen's University, Belfast  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.10, PhD, History Department, St Patrick's College  
Approved.
- 6.11 Dr Michaela A Swales, Bangor University  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.11, PhD, School of Nursing  
Approved.
- 6.12 Mr Gregory O'Hare, University College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.12, MSc, School of Computing  
Approved.
- 6.13 Dr Steve Hodges, Microsoft Research, Cambridge, UK  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.13, PhD, School of Computing  
Decision deferred pending discussion between the Chair and the supervisor.
- 6.14 Professor Ursel Fantz, Max-Planck-Institut für Plasmaphysik  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.14, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved.
- 6.15 Dr Jonathan Campbell, Letterkenny Institute of Technology  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.15, MEng, School of Electronic Engineering  
Approved.
- 6.16 Dr Garret O'Donnell, Trinity College Dublin  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.16, MEng, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved.
- 6.17 Dr Richard Crampton, Sheffield Hallam University  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.17, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved.
- 6.18 Professor Luigi Galantucci, Politecnico di Bari, Italy  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.18, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Decision deferred pending discussion between the Chair, Professor Jacobson and the supervisor.
- 6.19 Professor Mohammed Sarwar, Northumbria University  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.19, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved.
- 6.20 Dr Maeve Martin, National University of Ireland, Maynooth  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.20, PhD, School of Education Studies  
Decision deferred pending discussion between the Chair and the supervisor.

- 6.21 Professor Richard Crooks, University of Texas at Austin  
Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/6.21, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved.

Agreed that it would be desirable to have broadly the same background information in respect of all nominated external examiners and, in particular, that it was most important that the *curricula vitae* included information of relevance to the nomination (such as recent relevant publications). Agreed that a draft *pro-forma curriculum vitae*, for completion in respect of nominees, would be submitted to the 6 November 2008 meeting of the GSB. Noted in this connection that it would be important to avoid any undue increase in workload for either nominees or staff members.

Noted that it would be desirable for the role and responsibilities of the internal examiner to be made more explicit in regulations and that this would be undertaken in the context of the working group referred to under Item 3.4 above.

Noted that, where research was interdisciplinary in nature, it might be expected that the range of disciplines would be reflected in the choice of internal and external examiners, though the relevance of their backgrounds would need to be ensured in all cases.

Noted that all references to research awards, including references on forms, should be to 'PhD' or 'Doctor of Philosophy' and not to 'PhD in [discipline area]' or 'Doctor of Philosophy in [discipline area]' (and similarly in the case of Master's awards).

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

- 7.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/7.1, Dublin City University Business School  
Approved.

## **8. Other student issues**

### **8.1 Request to submit Master's by research rather than PhD**

Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/8.1, School of Electronic Engineering  
Approved. (Note also Item 5 above.)

## **8.2 Permission to transfer from Professional Doctoral Programme to the Master's register**

Student ref. GSB/2008/A5/8.2, Dublin City University Business School Approved. Noted that confirmation would be required as to the title to be awarded in the event that the student graduated with a Master's degree rather than progressing to the PhD register. Noted that no procedure currently existed to cover a request such as this one (which had not arisen previously because professional doctoral programmes are a recent feature of the university), that it would be necessary to put one into place and that it should be incorporated into the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* (see Item 3.4 above).

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

### **9. Arrangements for 'Cotutelle' awards**

A request from the School of Chemical Sciences to establish a 'Cotutelle' agreement with James Cook University, Australia, was approved. It was noted that a similar agreement had previously been established between St Patrick's College and Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris III and that the research student involved had just successfully completed the examination. Agreed, as a matter of principle, to give active consideration to setting up future 'Cotutelle' agreements as and when appropriate.

### **10. Proposal on Lero Graduate Programme**

Agreed that this proposal was very desirable in principle though a number of procedural issues remained to be resolved – e.g. the alignment of Lero entry requirements with standard university entry requirements and the locus of decision-making about applications (whether central or institution-specific). Agreed that the Chair would discuss these issues with the programme leader.

### **11. Any other business**

- 11.1** The Chair noted that a workshop on supervisory skills would take place on 16 September, facilitated by representatives from all Faculties, and that places on it had filled rapidly. It is intended also to involve external facilitators in future workshops.

- 11.2** The Chair also noted that the first ISSP (Irish Social Science Platform) conference, with the theme ‘After the Celtic Tiger’, is to be hosted by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences on 11 and 12 September.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Thursday 6 November 2008  
9.00 a.m. in A204**

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

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