

GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 6 March 2008

9.00-10.30 a.m. in A204

Present: Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Dr Françoise Blin,
Dr Tony Cafolla, Ms Claudine Devereux, Ms Louise McDermott
(Secretary), Dr Andrew McGrady, Dr Declan Raftery,
Dr Mary Shine Thompson

Apologies: Dr Patrick Brereton, Ms Jennifer Dowling, Ms Tanya Keogh,
Dr Pierre McDonagh, Professor Heather Ruskin

The Chair welcomed Dr Tony Cafolla to membership of the Graduate Studies Board in his capacity as representative of the Associate Dean for Research function in the Faculty of Science and Health.

SECTION A: Minutes and related issues

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one new submission under Item 4, three new submissions under Item 6, one new submission under Item 7, one new submission under Item 8 and one submission under Item 11, and the deletion of Item 6.12 and its substitution by a new Item 6.12.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 10 January 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 agreement had been reached with the Director of Library Services on the use of the Creative Commons Licence. Agreed that the Chair would send Dr Blin the web address for the information on the Licence. (Item 3.2)
- 3.3** Noted that the Chair would, when an opportunity became available, discuss with the Director of Quality Promotion the question of how best to articulate the outcomes of quality reviews with the work of the GSB. (Item 3.4)
- 3.4** Noted that a decision on whether or not to use PAC (the Postgraduate Applications Centre) for research student applications would be taken in the context of the decision by the university on the use of PAC generally from 2009 onwards. Agreed that, if PAC were to be used, it would be important to ensure that no application could proceed if the candidate had not first discussed the research proposal with the proposed supervisor. Noted that the university was not represented on the board of PAC. (Item 3.8)
- 3.5** Noted that professional doctoral students were counted under the research heading by the HEA. (Item 3.9)
- 3.6** Noted that the Chair had raised with relevant supervisors the issue of students transferring to the PhD register very late, and in some case shortly before submission, and had requested that it be ensured students transferred in a timely manner. (Item 4)
- 3.7** Noted that the PGR3 (application to transfer to the PhD register) and PGR11 (application for confirmation on the PhD register) forms had been amended to include space to indicate the date of the student's initial registration, with a view to making it easier to note the time difference between date of registration and date of transfer or confirmation. (Item 4)
- 3.8** Noted that the Chair intended to circulate information to all relevant staff members about a number of procedural issues relating to research students, but that this would not be done prior to the approval of a framework for graduate research training (see Item 9 below). (Item 5)
- 3.9** Noted that the details of the SIF funding available for graduate research training were now available. (Item 5)
- 3.10** Noted that the terms of reference of the GSB had been approved following electronic circulation of a slightly revised version. (Item 8)
- 3.11** Noted that Budget Committee and Executive had approved, on a trial basis for the academic years 2008/09 and 2009/10, the fee arrangements for the new submission facility entitled *Submission of Theses between September and December*. Agreed

that a clear procedure for use by relevant supervisors was needed and that the Chair would discuss this with Ms Devereux. Agreed that the Chair and Dr Shine Thompson would discuss the possible relevance of the new fee arrangement to St Patrick's College. (Item 9)

- 3.12** Noted that a small number of urgent issues relating to individual students had been the subject of decision by means of Chair's action. These were reported to the meeting. (Item 11.2)
- 3.13** Noted that the Systems Development Officer in the Registry would, in due course, review all the postgraduate research forms with a view to making them as easy as possible to use on an online basis. (Item 11.3)

SECTION B: Individual student issues

4. Applications for transfer to the PhD register

- 4.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/4.1, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/4.2, School of Electronic Engineering
Decision deferred pending further information about the supervisory arrangements for the student.
- 4.3 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/4.3, School of Health and Human Performance
Approved.
- 4.4 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/4.4, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 4.5 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/4.5, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.

5. Applications for confirmation on the PhD register

- 5.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/5.1, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 5.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/5.2, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.

6. Appointment of external examiners

- 6.1 Professor P Ironside, Indiana University and Dr G Moane,
University College Dublin

- Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved. Noted that the approval in relation to Dr Moane was granted on an exceptional basis, in view of the difficulty of identifying another person with the required expertise and notwithstanding the fact that she had recently acted as external examiner for two research students in St Patrick's College. Agreed that the difficulty of identifying sufficient numbers of external examiners for the range of disciplines across the university and the linked colleges would be discussed at a future meeting of the GSB. Noted that Dr Sheridan, listed on the nomination form as an additional internal examiner, was in fact a co-supervisor.
- 6.2 Professor M Byram, Durham University and Dr S Trahar, University of Bristol
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.2, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 6.3 Dr D Doherty, National University of Ireland, Maynooth
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.3, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.4 Dr S Giordani, Trinity College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.4, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 6.5 Professor A van den Bosch, Tilburg University
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.5, School of Computing
Approved. Agreed that the Chair would discuss another issue arising from the nomination form with the Head of School.
- 6.6 Professor R Stone, Indiana University
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.6, School of Nursing
Approved.
- 6.7 Dr R Callan, University College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.7, English Department, St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 6.8 Dr P Conway, University College Cork
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.8, Education Department, St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 6.9 Dr P Conway, University College Cork
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.9, Education Department, St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 6.10 Professor J O'Halloran, University College Cork
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.10, Education Department, St Patrick's College
Approved.
- 6.11 Professor H Farhat, Trinity College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.11, Music Department, St Patrick's College
Approved.

- 6.12 Professor M Dassisti, Politecnico di Bari
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.12, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 6.13 Dr S Ghani, Sheffield Hallam University
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.13, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 6.14 Dr M P Carty, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/6.14, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.15 Professor N Buckley, University of Limerick
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.15, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.

7. Requests for changes to supervisory arrangements

- 7.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/7.1, School of Computing
Approved.
- 7.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/7.2, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 7.3 Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/7.3, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.

8. Other student issues

8.1 Special-case application for entry to a Master's programme by research

Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/8.1, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

Approved.

8.2 Proposed amendment to Section 7.2, 'Thesis format', of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*

Approved.

8.3 Special-case application for entry to the PhD-track register

Student ref. GSB/2008/A2/8.3, School of Chemical Sciences

Approved.

SECTION C: Policy and strategy issues

9. Proposal on the establishment of a framework for graduate research training

9.1 The proposal was noted with approval for the general principles outlined in it. It was agreed that it would be necessary to establish clear procedures for the recording of all training activities undertaken by each student and that it would be desirable to make the list of all modules offered for training purposes, both generic and discipline-specific, available on line. The proposal from the meeting of the Academic Strategy Committee of 5 March 2008 that credits for training activities other than taught modules should be attributed retrospectively by the Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees, rather than being agreed in advance, was noted.

9.2 Agreed that the credit allocation for a Master's degree by research should be 180.

9.3 Noted that no fees would attach to taught modules taken for training purposes, and that this would apply regardless of whether a student undertook the assessment associated with the module or audited the module.

9.4 Agreed that the Chair would submit an amended proposal on a framework for graduate research training to the 1 May 2008 meeting of the GSB.

10. Identification and approval of external examiners for professional doctoral programmes

10.1 The difficulty of identifying sufficient numbers of external examiners for the professional doctoral programme (EdD) in St Patrick's College was noted, and it was noted also that similar difficulties were likely to arise with respect to all of the university's professional doctoral programmes. Agreed that the Chair would discuss possible approaches to the problem with Dr Shine Thompson and those managing the other taught doctorates and would submit a proposal to the 1 May 2008 meeting of the GSB.

- 10.2** Noted that it would be desirable to consider setting up a system whereby all research students, having completed or otherwise exited from the research programme, would be requested to complete a standardised exit survey. Agreed that the Chair would discuss this with relevant staff members.
- 11. Request for admission of a candidate who completed part of the PhD research in another institution**
- 11.1** Approved subject to a formal application process being undertaken and the candidate being required (a) to register as a Year 1 student and (b) in the event that the research was completed in less than the standard completion time, to request from the GSB a derogation from the regulation in respect of this standard completion time.
- 11.2** Noted that the university did not have a regulation about a situation such as had arisen in relation to this candidate.
- 11.3** Noted that a regulation was needed about candidates transferring directly from another institution to the university and that a proposal on such a regulation would be included on the agenda of the 1 May 2008 meeting of the GSB.

Date of next meeting:

**Thursday 1 May 2008
9.00 a.m. in A204**

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____