

GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 10 January 2008

9.00-10.45 a.m. in A204

Present: Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Dr Françoise Blin,
Dr Patrick Brereton, Ms Claudine Devereux, Ms Jennifer Dowling,
Ms Tanya Keogh, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary),
Dr Andrew McGrady, Dr Declan Raftery, Professor Heather Ruskin,
Dr Mary Shine Thompson

Apologies: Dr Pierre McDonagh

The Chair welcomed two new members of the Committee: Ms Jennifer Dowling, postgraduate research student representative, and Ms Tanya Keogh, Senior Administrative Assistant, Graduate Research Office.

SECTION A: Minutes and related issues

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of two new submissions under Item 4, one new submission under Item 6, one new submission under Item 7 and three submissions under Item 11.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 1 November 2007

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 a request had been received from the Library relating to the harmonisation of use permissions for print theses and e-theses by means of the Creative Commons Licence. Noted that it might be helpful also to discuss a number of related issues, e.g. the extent to which the author, as distinct from the user, of material might need to sign any CCL. Agreed that the Chair would contact the Director of Library Services and other appropriate Library staff. (Item 3.3 from meeting of 6 September 2007)
- 3.3** Noted that fees for research students at DCU were on a par with those for research students at other Irish universities. (Item 3.5)
- 3.4** Noted that the Chair intended to discuss with the Director of Quality Promotion the question of how best to articulate the outcomes of quality reviews with the work of the Board. (Item 4.2)
- 3.5** Noted that issues relating to a joint supervisory arrangement had been discussed satisfactorily between the Chair and a School. (Item 5.1)
- 3.6** Noted that agreement had been reached with a School about an issue relating to the appointment of an internal examiner. (Item 7.1)
- 3.7** Noted that a nomination as external examiner for a research student had been approved following clarification of a number of issues with a School. (Item 9.3)
- 3.8** Noted that the Programme Board for the Doctorate in Education in St Patrick's College would submit, for the 6 March 2008 meeting of the Board, proposals on identifying potential external examiners in sufficient numbers to meet the examining needs arising from the increasing numbers of students on taught doctoral programmes.

Agreed that it would be most important to ensure that taught doctoral programmes were classified under the research heading in the context of the HEA's figures for research students per institution. Agreed that the Chair would discuss this matter with the Institutional Research and Analysis Officer and would also raise it at the meeting of the IUA Fourth-level Network on 29 January 2008.

(Item 12.1)

- 3.9** Noted that the Chair and Ms Keogh would attend the meeting of the PAC Steering Group of 15 January 2008 and that the Chair would report to the Board on the outcomes of this meeting as they related to the possibility of using an online application system for research students. Agreed that, in principle, it would be desirable to use such a system, though the importance of maintaining

communication with each prospective student outside the context of the application mechanism, and of ensuring that the mechanism used was a transparent and reliable one, was noted. (Item 12.2)

SECTION B: Individual student issues

4. Applications for transfer to the PhD register

- 4.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 4.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.2, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 4.3 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.3, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 4.4 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.4, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 4.5 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.5, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.6 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.6, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.7 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.7, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 4.8 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.8, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 4.9 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.9, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 4.10 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.10, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 4.11 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/4.11, School of Biotechnology/INCT
Approved.

Noted that, in some cases, students were not transferring until shortly before the submission of the PhD. Noted that this led to a number of problems including, from the point of view of the student, less than optimal funding and, from the point of view of the university, underestimation of the numbers of students due to complete PhDs. Agreed that the Chair would discuss this matter with relevant supervisors. Agreed also that, to make it clear when a student in respect of whom a transfer

request was being made had originally registered, the PGR3 form would be modified to include a space for the date of original registration to be indicated.

5. Applications for confirmation on the PhD register

- 5.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/5.1, School of Education Studies
Approved.

Noted that the relatively new procedures for confirmation on the PhD register would benefit from being further explained to relevant staff and that the Chair would do this in the context of a more general communication about procedures with regard to research students. Agreed that the inclusion of a flow-chart to indicate pathways through research degrees (in terms of issues such as PhD track registration and transfer to and confirmation on the PhD register) would be helpful.

6. Appointment of external examiners

- 6.1 Dr N Gavin, University of Liverpool
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.1, School of Communications
Approved.
- 6.2 Professor D Ball, Middlesex University
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.2, School of Communications
Approved.
- 6.3 Professor A Lavie, Carnegie Mellon University
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.3, School of Computing
Approved.
- 6.4 Dr G O'Connor, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.4, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 6.5 Dr T Norris, St Patrick's College Maynooth
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.5, School of Theology,
Mater Dei Institute of Education
Approved.
- 6.6 Dr M O'Rourke, University College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.6, School of Mechanical and
Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 6.7 Professor C Sreenan, University College Cork
Student ref. GSB/2008/G2/6.7, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.

7. Requests for changes to supervisory arrangements

- 7.1 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/7.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 7.2 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/7.2, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 7.3 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/7.3, School of Computing
Approved.
- 7.4 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/7.4, School of Law and Government
Approved.
- 7.5 Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/7.5, School of Nursing
Approved.

Noted that, while regulation 5.2 of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* covered some issues relating to joint supervision (with particular regard to situations in which the other supervisor is overseas), a number of other, related, issues were not yet the subject of regulation. These include: the role of joint supervision in the context of a GREP; the extent, if any, to which an institution should pay a supervisor from another institution; the question of recognition by one's own institution of supervisory work carried out elsewhere. Agreed that the Chair would propose revisions to the regulation. Noted that the concept of rotating the provision of PhD supervision across institutions could work well within a GREP but would be likely to be problematic outside this context.

SECTION C: Policy and strategy issues

8. Revised terms of reference for the Graduate Studies Board

Agreed that a small number of amendments would be made to this document and that a revised version would be circulated to the members of the Board for final comment.

9. Proposal on new fees procedures for students taking longer than the standard time for completion of research

- 9.1 Noted that the Chair had discussed this proposal with the Deputy President and that the latter had emphasised the importance of strict operational procedures in relation to it.

- 9.2** The proposal was approved subject to rewording to provide clarification on a number of points, as follows:
- research students are required to register by the start of Semester 1 in any given year (this may be before or after 30 September)
 - ‘Director’s Grace’ applies only after a full three years’ fees have been paid, and never prior to this
 - ‘Director’s Grace’ applies to the submission of the original thesis only, not to the submission of revisions.

**10. Proposed academic structures for taught modules to research students:
Therapeutics and Theranostics**

Approved in principle. Noted that a university framework for the approval of such modules would be very helpful.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Request for special-case admission to Master’s programme by research

Student ref. GSB/2008/G1/11.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.

11.2 Chair’s action in relation to decision-making

Noted that a small number of urgent requests in respect of individual students had been the subject of Chair’s action between this meeting and the previous meeting (of 1 November 2007) and that formal records of decisions taken by means of such action would be kept and the information conveyed to the Board.

11.3 Electronic submission of forms relating to research students

Agreed that the Registry would conduct some further discussions with the Computer Services Department with a view to making electronic forms as user-friendly as possible.

Date of next meeting:

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

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____