GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 8 March 2012

9.00-11.35 a.m. in A204

Present:	Dr Lisa Looney (Chair), Dr Dermot Brabazon, Dr Pat Brereton, Ms Jennifer Bruton, Ms Goretti Daughton, Dr Tracy Dixon, Dr Bernadette Flanagan, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Enda McGlynn, Ms Patricia Moore, Dr Ciarán Mac Murchaidh, Professor Colm O'Gorman, Ms Caitríona Rowsome, Dr Ana Terres
Apologies:	Ms Gillian Barry, Dr Christine Loscher, Dr Anne Morrissey
In attendance:	Ms Gráinne Curran

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1.   Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the withdrawal of Item 5.10 and the inclusion of two additional submissions under Item 5 and three submissions under Item 11.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 12 January 2012

The minutes were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes

3.1   <u>Agreed</u>, with respect to students approaching the maximum registration period, that a reminder e-mail would be sent to supervisors and research convenors in advance

of the deadline for the submission of PGR2 (annual progress report) forms in 2012. A more structured system will be devised for future use. (Item 3.2)

3.2   Agreed, with respect to students approaching the deadline for requesting transfer to, or confirmation on, the PhD register, that a reminder e-mail would be sent to supervisors and research convenors in advance of the deadline for the submission of PGR2 (annual progress report) forms in 2012. A more structured system will be devised for future use. The issue will also be mentioned on the Facebook page that has been set up for research students (see Item 3.12 below). (Item 3.2)

3.3   With respect to the revised postgraduate research forms, it was noted that the recommended minor adjustments had been made and that staff had been requested not to use old versions of forms but to advert only to the current online versions. (Item 3.2)

3.4   Noted that a mechanism had been put in place in the Registry to ensure that double or multiple nominations of the same external examiner were avoided. (Item 3.4)

3.5   Noted that the terms of reference of Academic Council would be updated to reflect the fact that the postgraduate research community is now represented as a matter of course in the membership, that consideration would be given to the future nomination procedure for the student representative on the GSB (who would also be the representative on Academic Council), that a representative of students on taught postgraduate programmes would join Academic Council as soon as he/she had been identified by the Students' Union and that practice in other universities with regard to the representation of students on taught postgraduate programmes on GSBs (or equivalent committees) would be ascertained. (Item 3.7)

3.6   Noted that a number of issues which had been identified in respect of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* would be kept under review and considered in the context of the overall review of the *Regulations* at the meeting of the GSB of 3 May 2012.   (Items 3.8 and 5)

3.7   With respect to academic staff due to retire and recently retired, it was noted that all appropriate arrangements in respect of internal examining duties had been made. (Item 3.15)

3.8   Noted that a PGR3 form had been signed by a Head of School, and the request for transfer to the PhD register had therefore been deemed approved. (Item 4.6)

3.9   Noted, with respect to DCU students taking non-DCU modules and non-DCU students taking DCU modules, that a system for recording results had been agreed

both within DCU and across the DRHEA institutions.   In the case of DCU students, the ITS system had been modified to allow their non-DCU modules, and results, to be recorded. There will be a single inter-institutional process for organising registration and examination result administration, and this process will be publicised on the websites of all the relevant institution. Dr Dixon is in the process of drawing up a standard operating procedure in consultation with her counterparts in the other institutions. The IUA Registrars indicated that, ideally, there should be compatibility between the various student record systems; in the absence of the necessary technical developments, the present process will serve as an interim measure. Proposals on policies with respect to GTEs will be drafted following the HEA review of Fourth Level Ireland.   (Items 3.18, 3.19 and 7.2)

3.10   Noted that very considerable work in respect of the provision of training for supervisors had been undertaken by Training and Development in the Human Resources Department; in this connection, the Chair expressed appreciation to Mr Martin Leavy and Ms Kathryn McCarthy of T&D, whose work includes engaging with peers in other institutions and consolidating their relationship with NAIRTL. Consideration is being given to the provision of short, focused training sessions for experienced supervisors(these may take the form of reviews of case studies) and to the provision of seminars (e.g. lunchtime seminars) for research students with respect to their roles and responsibilities in the context of the supervisory process. Noted that a training session for early-career supervisors in St Patrick's College was being planned.   Noted that Dr Gina Wisker's workshop on supervision had taken place in All Hallows College on 11 February 2012. (Item 3.23)

3.11   Noted that the old version of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* had been archived on line. (Item 3.24)

3.12   Noted that the Facebook page for research students was in the early stage of development. While it is being publicised and upgraded, the extent to which it is used (particularly vis-à-vis the extent of use of the generic e-mail address graduateresearch@dcu.ie) will be monitored. (Item 4)

3.13   Noted that a PGR4 form had been signed by the student and approval had therefore been deemed complete. (Item 4.3)

3.14   Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that PGR3 forms should be typed. (Item 4.21)

3.15   Noted that, in the case of a student who had transferred to the PhD register, the supervisors had been contacted with a request to advert to the fact that progress was slow and to discuss the student's optimum registration status with him. (Item 4.23)

3.16　　Noted that satisfactory information had been obtained about the experience, expertise and independence of two external examiners, and that the nominations had therefore been deemed approved. (Items 5.13 and 5.17)

3.17　　Noted that a School had confirmed compliance with *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* in respect of supervisory arrangements for a student. (Item 5.17)

3.18　　Noted, in respect of requests to write theses in languages other than English or Irish, that the *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* do not refer to the need for rationales for such requests to be provided. (See also Item 7 below.) With respect to the rationale provided on the present occasion, it was noted that the fact of the candidate being a native speaker of French is not a reason to accede to the request; however, the reasons outlined in the rest of the document amount to a reasonable rationale; therefore the request was approved. (Item 6.1)

3.19　　Noted that a proposed policy on Recognition of Prior Learning with respect to applicants for research degrees would be on the agenda of the GSB meeting of 28 June 2012. (Item 6.2.2)

3.20　　Noted that satisfactory information had been made available about a student's reason for changing registration status, and the request for early submission had therefore been approved by Chair's action on 23 January 2012. (Item 6.2.3)

3.21　　Noted that issues relating to full-time vis-à-vis part-time registration would be discussed at a future meeting of the GSB. (Item 6.2.4)

3.22　　Noted that discussion was in progress in Faculties on the desirability or otherwise of including the Uaneen Module in the list of available GTEs and that the Extracurricular Committee was due to confirm that the module descriptor is accurate and up to date. (Item 7.1)

3.23　　Noted that a proposed policy on *cotutelle* agreements would be on the agenda of the GSB meeting of 3 May 2012. (Item 8.1.1)

3.24　　On the issue of students residing overseas, it was noted that details were available in the case of Dublin City University Business School and would be made available by the other Faculties, though the Faculty of Engineering and Design and the Faculty of Science and Health have few such students. The importance of maintaining appropriate oversight of such students was noted. (See also Item 7.4 below.) (Item 8.1.2)

3.25   Noted that discussions about the management of professional doctorates were ongoing. (Item 8.2)

3.26   Noted that the Deputy President/Registrar had advised that the proposal to move the dates of the Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees from early to late February would be unworkable because the decisions of the Boards need to be approved by the February meeting of Academic Council. The Chair will, however, keep the suitability of the present dates of the Boards under review. In light of the importance of ensuring an appropriate interval between the card fee deadline and relevant Registry deadlines and of not requesting external examiners to undertake workloads in an unduly short timeframe, it was agreed that the new deadline, previously suggested as 31 December, would in fact be the first working Monday in January. (Items 8.3.1 and 13)

3.27   Noted that the Associate Deans for Research had made arrangements in their Faculties to ensure that research students in the later years of study were aware of all issues pertaining to fees. A diagram indicating all relevant dates and deadlines is being prepared for inclusion in the guidebook for research students and on the Facebook page. There will also be an information page for supervisors, accessible from the Graduate Research Office pages. (Item 8.3.2)

3.28   Noted that discussions about management issues relating to accommodation scholarships were ongoing. Noted that the criteria in respect of the Daniel O'Hare Scholarships 2012 had been agreed, and the Scholarships had been launched (Item 10)

3.29   Noted that the revised version of the advice relating to publication of work had been publicised and made available to the Research Committee. (Item 11)

3.30   Noted that a proposal on English-language requirements, including a proposal on the locus of responsibility for their implementation, if agreed, would be on the agenda of the meeting of the GSB of 3 May 2012. (Item 12

3.31   Noted that module CA660: *Data Analysis* had been approved as a GTE by Chair's action on 27 January 2012 and attached to the academic structure for the Faculty of Engineering and Computing.

SECTION B: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

4.   Applications for transfer to the PhD register or confirmation on the PhD register

4.1   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.1, School of Biotechnology
        Approved.
4.2   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.2, School of Biotechnology
        Approved subject to the relevant academic year being indicated on the form.
4.3   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.3, Dublin City University Business School
        Approved.
4.4   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.4, Dublin City University Business School
        Approved.
4.5   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.5, Dublin City University Business School
        Approved.
4.6   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.6, School of Computing
        Approved,
4.7   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.7, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
        Approved.
4.8   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/4.8, School of Communications
        Approved. Noted that the form should have been typed and that the comments should have been included on the form rather than in a separate document.

5.   Appointment of external examiners

5.1   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology/Institute of Ethics
        Professor David Smith, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
        Approved.
5.2   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.2, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
        Professor Richard Elliott, University of Bath
        Approved.
5.3   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.3, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
        Professor Vincent Mangematin, Grenoble Ecole de Management
        Approved.
5.4   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.4, PhD, Dublin City University Business School
        Professor Thierry Post, Koç University, Istanbul
        Approved.

5.5   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
        Professor Donal O'Shea, University College Dublin
        Approved.
5.6   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.6, PhD, School of Communications
        Dr Caroline Bassett, University of Sussex
        Approved.
5.7   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.7, PhD, School of Computing/CNGL
        Dr Chris Callison-Burch, Johns Hopkins University
        Approved.
5.8   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.8, PhD, School of Computing/CNGL
        Dr Ralf Brown, Carnegie Mellon University
        Approved.
5.9   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.9, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Professor Gianluca Cornetta, CEU San Pablo University, Madrid
        Approved subject to confirmation that the nominee has experience of
        supervising research students.
5.10   Withdrawn.
5.11   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.11, DPsych, School of Nursing and Human
        Sciences
        Professor Mary Creaner, Trinity College Dublin
        Approved following discussion.
5.12   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.12, PhD, School of Nursing and Human
        Sciences
        Dr Anne Hickey, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
        Approved.
5.13   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.13, DPsych, School of Nursing and Human
        Sciences
        Dr Shay Caffrey, Trinity College Dublin
        Approved following discussion.
5.14   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.14, PhD, Education Department,
        St Patrick's College
        Dr Dympna Devine, University College Dublin
        Approved.
5.15   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.15, PhD, History Department,
        St Patrick's College
        Professor Mary Daly, University College Dublin
        Approved. Noted that the names of both supervisors should be printed on
        the form.
5.16   Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.16, PhD, Education Department,
        St Patrick's College
        Dr Tim Rowland, University of Cambridge

Approved following discussion. It was agreed that the name of the second proposed internal examiner should be withdrawn, as only one internal examiner is required.

5.17 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.17, PhD, Education Department, St Patrick's College
Dr Tim Rowland, University of Cambridge
Approved following discussion.

5.18 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.18, PhD, Music Department, St Patrick's College
Dr Michael Murphy, Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick
Approved.

5.19 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.19, MEd by research, Education Department and Special Education Department, St Patrick's College
Dr Ann MacPhail, University of Limerick
Approved following discussion.

5.20 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.20, EdD, Education Department, St Patrick's College
Professor James Tooley, Newcastle University
Approved.

5.21 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.21, MA, Department of Philosophy, All Hallows College
Dr Jenny Daggers, Liverpool Hope University
Approved subject to confirmation that the nominee has experience of supervising and examining research students.

5.22 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.22, MA, Department of Psychology, St Patrick's College
Dr David Tacey, La Trobe University, Melbourne
Approved.

5.23 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.23, PhD, Education Department, St Patrick's College
Dr John Walsh, Trinity College Dublin
Approved.

5.24 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.24, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Dr Humphrey Moynihan, University College Cork
Approved subject to confirmation that the number of appointments held by the nominee is within regulations and confirmation that the nominee has experience of supervising and examining research students.

5.25 Student ref. GSB/2012/A2/5.25, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Professor Xinxin Niu, Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications
The external examiner had already been approved (GSB meeting of

12 January 2012, Item 5.14). As the original internal examiner had become unavailable, an alternative internal examiner was <u>approved.</u>

The concern raised by the Deputy President/Registrar at the University Standards Committee meeting of 26 January 2012, in relation to more than one appointment in the same year of external examiners from the same departments in other institutions, was noted. It was agreed that it would be important to monitor this issue on an ongoing basis. It was also agreed that a review of examining arrangements since the inception of the GSB in September 2007 would be undertaken to establish the extent to which such repetition of appointments might have occurred between then and now. It was noted, however, that such repetition does not necessarily vitiate the impartiality of the external examining process, particularly in view of the wide variety of areas of disciplinary expertise typically found within Schools both in DCU and in higher education institutions generally.

It was <u>noted</u> that the parameters within which retired staff could act as internal examiners would be articulated clearly by the GSB as soon as possible.

It was <u>noted</u> that, in the event that an alternative internal examiner needed to be approved within a short timeframe owing to unforeseen events, the approval could be effected by means of Chair's action, though it was <u>agreed</u> that this approach is not ideal.

It was <u>noted</u> that no regulation exists to specify for how long approval of an internal or external examiner is valid (e.g. in the event that there is a delay in conducting the examination, post approval). It was <u>agreed</u> that, as a matter of principle, the main consideration should be the best interests of the students and, as a matter of practice, the written agreement of all involved should be obtained in the event that more than twelve months elapse between approval and examination.

6.   **Other student issues**

No items.

SECTION C: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

7.   Agreement on guidelines on the criteria for decisions of the Graduate Studies Board

7.1   It was <u>noted</u> that guidelines on further issues (e.g. with respect to retired staff, as noted in Item 5 above) would be considered in due course and that the present proposed guidelines represented initial work rather than a finished product. The guidelines will be made available on the internal web page available for supervisors from the Graduate Research Office site.

7.2   With respect to the issue of requesting an extension to the registration period, it was <u>agreed</u> that in the proposed wording a reference should be made to the need to submit any request by means of a memorandum and that the PRG2 (annual progress report) form should be alluded to at the end of the first bullet point.

7.3   With respect to the guidance on submitting the thesis in a language other than English or Irish, it was <u>agreed</u> to include a reference to the fact that any request should be submitted by means of a memorandum, to indicate at the end of the first paragraph that any approval of a request would not constitute a precedent, and to substitute the words 'change' and 'evolve' for 'drift' and 'emerge' in the final paragraph

7.4   With respect to the location of the student (whether in Ireland or abroad), it was <u>noted</u> that the current regulation was potentially over-restrictive, particularly in view of the capabilities of technology in terms of communication between students and supervisors. It was suggested that consideration be given to replacing the concept of requesting permission for residence abroad with the concept of notification of residence abroad. It was <u>noted</u> that *cotutelle* arrangements, due for discussion by the GSB at its meeting of 3 May 2012, would often be likely to involve students and supervisors resident in different countries. Further consideration of the guidance was deferred. With regard to joint and dual awards more generally, the Chair <u>noted</u> that the issues (which had been alluded to at the meeting of the Education Committee of 7 March 2012) were wide and complex and required detailed consideration.

7.5   With respect to the confirmation/transfer process to the PhD register, it was <u>agreed</u> to delete the words 'unsuitable project and' from the second paragraph and to substitute the word 'continue' for the word 'persist in this same paragraph. It was <u>agreed</u> that the final sentence should read: 'Heads of School are asked to monitor PGR2 forms for 2nd year with a view to ensuring that students do not exceed 24 months registration without completing/embarking on this process'. It was <u>noted</u>

that legacy issues exist with regard to students being late in requesting transfer/confirmation and that, while current students in this position should be considered in light of the fact that the timescales had only recently been tightened, such flexibility should not be afforded to future students. The role of supervisory panels in the transfer/confirmation process will be considered as part of the review of the regulations to be undertaken by the GSB and discussed at the meeting of 3 May 2012.

7.6   It was <u>agreed</u> that a general reference would be included in the guidelines to indicate that the issues covered are intended to be the subject of detailed and considered decisions rather than being approached purely from a compliance perspective.

8.   Proposed method of approval for new structured research awards

8.1   It was <u>noted</u> that footnote 2 in the document had been altered to 'With a view to speedy implementation, decisions of EC can be fast-tracked to AC, i.e. we don't always wait for approved minutes. A mechanism can be explored whereby this could also be the case from GSB to EC.'

8.2   It was <u>noted</u> that the proposal did not relate to the issue of joint degrees (a topic that will be addressed by the GSB in due course).

8.3   It was agreed that it would be helpful to separate the two sentences in step 2 of the proposed process into two separate steps. On the issue of conformity with University regulations, it was agreed that it would be helpful to include a question with a tick-box in funding application documentation; the Chair will formulate this question and send it to Ms Terres.

8.4   The importance of ensuring a clear system approval for structured awards was <u>noted</u>, as was the need to establish such as system in the near term. It was, however, <u>agreed</u> that it would be helpful to refer the matter for further discussion at Faculty Research Committee meetings with a view to considering the feedback, and making final decisions, at the meeting of the GSB of 3 May 2012.

9.   Report on exit survey

It was <u>noted</u> that this and future reports had the potential to be very useful tools in establishing the ongoing and future needs of graduate students and formulating the University's responses to these. While the response rate to this present survey had

been low, it was intended to take measures, based on feedback from the respondents, aimed at increasing the response rates in future. It was noted that, while quite a high percentage of respondents said they would recommend DCU to potential graduate students, it would be desirable if this figure improved. The very high level of satisfaction with supervisors was noted. The Chair noted that some of the concerns mentioned by the respondents were in the process of being addressed or had been addressed. She also cautioned against over-surveying of students/graduates and noted that the exit survey system would be reviewed for fitness for purpose in due course.

10.   Learning support duties

10.1   The Chair noted that the proposed policy represented the response to the relevant 2010 IRIU recommendation, though it took a more nuanced approach than had been envisaged in this recommendation by taking account of the variation in context and circumstances across different Schools and Faculties. She noted too that the aim of the proposal was to enhance transparency of practice and consonance with IUQB Good Practice guidelines.

10.2   It was agreed that the first section of the first sentence in the last paragraph should read: 'However, all Schools should make clear what their policies and their minimum and maximum expectations in this regard are for research students … '. It was agreed that the policy should then be inserted in the graduate student handbook and that each School would be asked to develop its own policy based on this general one.

11.   Any other business

11.1   It was noted that a graduate had raised a concern about the fact that, because her award is worth 270 credits but the Diploma Supplement indicates that a DCU PhD can be worth between 270 and 360 credits, a third party might form an erroneous impression of inadequacy in terms of her award. The Chair undertook to discuss this matter with the Registry.

11.2   It was noted that the Excel summary template in respect of changes to supervisory arrangements would be made available to Faculties by the Registry.

11.3 The Chair, on behalf of the GSB, expressed appreciation to Dr Dermot Brabazon, whose term of office as Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing is coming to an end, for his very significant contribution to the work of the GSB during his period of membership.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 3 May 2012
9.00 a.m. in A204

Signed: _____   Date: _____
            Chair