

## GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

### MINUTES

Thursday, 25 April 2024

10:00 – 11:30 am

A204, Glasnevin Campus

**Present:** Ms Lisa Buckley, Ms Isabelle Caulfield, Dr Maura Coulter, Prof Timo Gans, Ms Karen Keating, Dr Gillian Lake, Dr David Mc Carthy (Secretary), Prof. Sharon O'Brien (Chair), Ms Nicola O'Reilly and Dr Lisa Van der Werff.

**Apologies:** Dr Conor Brennan, Ms Fiona Brennan, Ms Nuala Clancy, Prof. Edel Conway, Dr Niamh O'Sullivan and Dr Gëzim Visoka.

**In Attendance:** Prof. Theo Lynn.

### SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 28 March 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of 28 March 2024 were approved.

### 3. Matters arising from the minutes

Matters arising from the meeting of 28 March 2024 were **noted** as follows:

	<i>Item no. from 28 March 2024</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Details of decision/actions</i>	<i>Status</i>
3.1	3.1 (Original Ref. Item 7.7, 15 February 2024)	PGR3, School of Electronic Engineering	Decision Deferred. It was noted that the affiliation of the student needs to be changed and, subsequently, the PGR3 must be resubmitted to GRSB for consideration. It was further noted that the candidate has accumulated 31 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1.	Ongoing  Registry awaiting response from Principal Supervisor(s).
3.2	10.7	PGR4, School of Biotechnology	Not Approved. It was noted that there is a reciprocal arrangement query with the nominated External Examiner, which has been raised with the Head of School. An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Ongoing  Awaiting submission of revised PGR4 Form.
3.3	10.27	PGR4, School of Electronic Engineering	Not Approved. It was noted that there is a reciprocal arrangement query with the nominated External Examiner, which has been raised with the Head of School. An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Ongoing  Awaiting submission of revised PGR4 Form.
3.4	10.38	PGR4, DCU Institute of Education	Not Approved. It was noted that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Academic Regulation 10.2.9, "experience in supervising research students to	Ongoing  Awaiting submission of revised PGR4 Form.

			completion at the level of the award being sought". An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	
3.5	10.55	PGR4, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health	Approved subject to the nomination of an alternative Independent Chairperson to address the gender mix.	Ongoing  Registry awaiting nomination of an alternative Independent Chairperson to address gender mix of examination panel.
3.6	10.1	PGR4, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies	Not Approved. It was noted that there is a potential conflict of interest between the Principal Supervisor and the External Examiner (see Academic Regulation 10.2.10). An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete  Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 25 April 2024, Item 7.1.
3.7	10.17	PGR4, School of Computing	Not Approved. It was noted that there is a reciprocal arrangement query with the nominated External Examiner, which has been raised with the Head of School. An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration."	Complete  Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 25 April 2024, Item 7.2.
3.8	10.23	PGR4, School of Electronic Engineering	Not Approved. It was noted that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Academic Regulation 10.2.9, "experience in supervising research students to completion at the level of the award being sought". An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete  Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 25 April 2024, Item 7.17.

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3.9	10.37	PGR4, DCU Institute of Education	Approved subject to the Chair verifying that the External Examiner has experience in supervising research students to completion at the level of the award being sought.	Complete Registry confirmed on 4 April 2024 that the External Examiner has experience of supervising research students to completion at the level of the award being sought.
3.10	10.56	PGR4, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health	Not Approved. It was noted that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Academic Regulation 10.2.9, "experience in supervising research students to completion at the level of the award being sought". An alternative External Examiner is required and the revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 25 April 2024, Item 7.15.
3.11	11.1	PGR13, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies	Decision Deferred. It was noted that a number of revisions need to be made to the PGR13 in order for GRSB to make its decision. The revised PGR13 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 25 April 2024, Item 8.1.

The Chair provided an update on Item 3.1. The revised PGR3 was submitted to Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) and the affiliation of the student has now been changed. The PGR3 is **approved** and Item 3.1 is now complete.

The Chair provided an update on Item 3.5. Registry confirmed that an alternative Independent Chairperson has been nominated. The PGR4 is **approved** and Item 3.5 is now complete.

## SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

### 4. Graduate researcher development

#### 4.1 Graduate Skills Sessions, May – June 2024

The Graduate Studies Office provided a list of the Graduate Skills Sessions that will be delivered in May – June 2024. The Chair requested the Associate Deans for Research to promote these sessions in their respective faculties.

#### **Noted**

#### 4.2 Graduate Training Element (GTE) Modules

##### 4.2.1 GTE New Module – (IE605) Becoming a Researcher in Education

Dr Gillian Lake, Chair of Postgraduate Studies by Research in DCU Institute of Education, informed members that the module was developed in response to the specific training needs of postgraduate research students identified by members of faculty. Dr Lake confirmed that this entry-level module will be delivered in Semester 1 of Stage 1 to support students to transition from practice to research and to begin preparing for the confirmation process at as early a stage as possible.

#### **Approved**

### 5. PGR Students: Processes and Timelines

#### 5.1 Process for Transfer to PhD Register

The Chair presented data to the Board on the process for confirmation on/transfer to the PhD Register, calling particular attention to the fact that in 44% of the submissions considered by GRSB during the period April 2023 to March 2024, the candidate exceeded the expected time to confirm on/transfer to the PhD Register as set out in *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* (AR 8.2.1).

#### **Noted**

## 5.2 PGR Students Completion Times

The Chair presented data to the Board on the completion times for PhD students across the 2011/12 - 2022/23 academic years, acknowledging that restrictions imposed during Covid-19 most likely had an impact on completion rates but the trend seems to be correcting itself to pre-COVID levels. The Chair emphasised the importance of continuing to monitor this data to ensure that completion rates are kept within expectations.

### **Noted**

The following proposals were **approved**:

- Colleagues are strongly encouraged to ensure that the confirmation/transfer process takes place within the timelines indicated in the regulations.
- Confirmations on/Transfers to the PhD Register that are currently outside the maximum recommended time be conducted between May and August 2024.
- Late PGR3s submitted to GRSB (i.e. two or more months beyond the maximum period advised in the regulations) should be very exceptional and will require a sufficient explanation within the form before they will be considered for approval by GRSB.
- Considering that the confirmation/transfer process should take place no later than 21 months for a full-time student and that the minimum registration period for a full-time student is 36 months, a PGR4 form submitted within 12 months of a PGR3 approval should be an exceptional occurrence and a credible justification will be required. A similar position applies pro rata for part-time registration.

The Associate Deans for Research were requested to communicate the above to relevant colleagues through their respective Faculty Research Committees.

## **SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES**

### **6. Applications for transfer to the PhD Register or confirmation on the PhD Register (PGR3)**

#### 6.1 GRSB2024/A4/6.1, DCU Business School

**Approved** – It was noted that the candidate has exceeded the expected time to undergo the procedure for confirmation on the PhD Register (see Academic Regulation 8.2.1).

- 6.2 GRSB2024/A4/6.2, School of Chemical Science  
**Approved** – It was noted that the candidate has exceeded the expected time to undergo the procedure for confirmation on the PhD Register (see Academic Regulation 8.2.1).
- 6.3 GRSB2024/A4/6.3, School of Computing  
**Approved** – It was noted that the candidate has exceeded the expected time to undergo the procedure for confirmation on the PhD Register (see Academic Regulation 8.2.1).
- 6.4 GRSB2024/A4/6.4, School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education  
**Approved** subject to verification from Registry that Section B.1(b) has been amended to indicate that the student is being confirmed on the PhD Register.
- 6.5 GRSB2024/A4/6.5, School of Physical Sciences  
**Approved** – It was noted that the candidate has exceeded the expected time to undergo the procedure for confirmation on the PhD Register (see Academic Regulation 8.2.1).
- 6.6 GRSB2024/A4/6.6, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music  
**Approved**
- 6.7 GRSB2024/A4/6.7, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music  
**Approved**
- 7. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)**
- 7.1 GRSB2024/A4/7.1, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
**Approved**
- 7.2 GRSB2024/A4/7.2, PhD, School of Computing  
**Approved**
- 7.3 GRSB2024/A4/7.3, PhD, School of English  
**Approved**
- 7.4 GRSB2024/A4/7.4, PhD, Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge  
**Approved** – It was noted that there is no record of the Independent Chairperson having completed the required training. They should complete the necessary training for chairing a viva voce examination if they have not already done so.

- 7.5 GRSB2024/A4/7.5, PhD, School of History and Geography  
**Approved**
- 7.6 GRSB2024/A4/7.6, PhD, School of History and Geography  
**Approved**
- 7.7 GRSB2024/A4/7.7, PhD, School of History and Geography  
**Approved**
- 7.8 GRSB2024/A4/7.8, PhD, School of History and Geography  
**Approved**
- 7.9 GRSB2024/A4/7.9, PhD, School of History and Geography  
**Approved**
- 7.10 GRSB2024/A4/7.10, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
**Decision Deferred** – It was noted that there is an outstanding reciprocal arrangement query regarding the nominated External Examiner. As per Regulation 10.2.6, "a year should elapse between appointments involving the same Schools/Departments". Justification for this nomination must be provided or an alternative External Examiner nominated. The revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.
- 7.11 GRSB2024/A4/7.11, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
**Approved**
- 7.12 GRSB2024/A4/7.12, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
**Approved** – It was noted that there is no record of the Independent Chairperson having completed the required training. They should complete the necessary training for chairing a viva voce examination if they have not already done so.
- 7.13 GRSB2024/A4/7.13, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
**Approved**
- 7.14 GRSB2024/A4/7.14, DPpsych, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Comm Health  
**Approved**
- 7.15 GRSB2024/A4/7.15, DPpsych, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Comm Health  
**Approved** – It was noted that there is no record of the Independent Chairperson having completed the required training. They should complete the necessary training for chairing a viva voce examination if they have not already done so.

7.16 GRSB2024/A4/7.16, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music  
**Approved**

7.17 GRSB2024/A4/7.17, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering  
**Approved**

**8. Notice of Intention to Reside/Carry out Research Abroad (PGR13)**

8.1 GRSB2024/A4/8.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
**Approved**

**9. Request for Extension to Maximum Registration Period OR Re-admission to the Research Programme (PGR14)**

9.1 GRSB2024/A4/9.1, PhD, School of English  
**Approved**

**10. Any other business**

10.1 The Chair informed the Board that the names of supervisors were included in the convocation booklet as a pilot for the graduation ceremony in April 2024, which was done to recognise the contribution of the principal supervisor(s) to the student's research. The Chair explained that, due to the different supervision arrangements in place across the University and how these can change over the duration of the student's research project, there was a significant difficulty in ensuring that the correct individuals were acknowledged in the booklet.

It was **noted** that GRSB is not in favour of continuing the pilot due to this unavoidable difficulty and recommends that the Associate Deans for Research are included in the convocation booklet instead as Programme Chairs.

10.2 The Chair informed members that the next meeting of GRSB will take place on St. Pat's campus and reiterated the importance of attending this meeting as the Structured Doctoral Pathways for the 2024/25 academic year are due to be considered.

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

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

**Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 30 May 2024

10.00 a.m.

F327, St. Pat's Campus