GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 3 March 2011

9.00-10.45 a.m. in A204

Present:	Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Ms Gillian Barry, Dr Françoise Blin, Dr Dermot Brabazon, Dr Pat Brereton, Ms Claudine Devereux, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Dr Bernadette Flanagan, Ms Tanya Keogh, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Ciarán Mac Murchaidh, Dr Anne Morrissey, Professor Colm O'Gorman
Apologies:	Professor John Costello, Ms Hannah Dyas, Dr Christine Loscher, Ms Patricia Moore, Dr Declan Raftery

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1.   Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of one additional submission under Item 4.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2011

The minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes

3.1   <u>Noted</u> that the PAC application system was now live, that some applications had been received through it and that, as well as being processed for the purposes of decision-making as to suitability for admission, they were being treated as test cases with a view to determining the fitness for purpose of the system as currently set up. Any problems or issues that emerge will be noted and addressed. One-to-one training on the use of the system will be provided to staff as required. A standard

operating procedure will be drawn up. An explanatory e-mail about the use of PAC for research applications will be sent to all campuses. The Chair thanked all involved, and especially the members of the working group, for their work in making the system available for research applications. (Items 3.1 and 10.2)

3.2   Noted that the problems associated with paying service providers to proofread and/or edit theses were being discussed by the IUA Fourth Level Network and that it was hoped to arrive at a sector-wide agreed position on the issue by 28 March 2011. Following this, the Chair will draft an appropriate regulation for inclusion in the draft revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* (see Item 3.9 below). Noted that the issue of contract cheating (i.e. paying another person to write one's assignment or making arrangements designed to lead to payment) had been discussed by the University Standards Committee at its meeting of 3 February 2011 and that a decision had been made to request the University Secretary to indicate, in the Code of Discipline, that it is an offence to engage in such contract cheating. Agreed that the Secretary would be requested to word the reference in such a way as to ensure that the reader would know that the regulation is applicable to all students, including research students. (Item 3.2)

3.3   Noted that the issue of making 2.5-credit modules available as part of Graduate Training Elements would be discussed at a future meeting of the GSB. (Item 3.4)

3.4   Noted that the GSB would be requested to approve academic structures for 2011/12 (with respect to new Graduate Training Elements) on an electronic basis in the week beginning 11 April 2011 and that, in future years, the approval would take place within the time period scheduled for the approval of academic structures generally. (Item 3.6)

3.5   Noted, with regard to the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between St Patrick's College and Dundalk Institute of Technology, that DKIT was awaiting sign-off from HETAC on the proposed collaboration. Noted that HETAC had agreed to ensure the implementation of the recommendations in the IUQB guide *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Higher Education*. (Item 3.7)

3.6   Noted, with regard to Memoranda of Understanding between DCU and other institutions in respect of joint research initiatives, that approval would need to be sought from the GSB as well as at School and Faculty level and at Executive, with a view to ensuring that the GSB was fully aware of all such developments. (Item 3.8)

3.7   Noted that a School was in the process of identifying an alternative external examiner for a student. (Item 3.10)

3.8   Noted that the signature of a student on an R103 (change of supervisory arrangements) form had been obtained. (Item 3.12)

3.9   Noted that the draft revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* would be submitted for the consideration of Academic Council at its meeting of 13 April 2011 having been considered and approved, with some amendments, at the meeting of the University Standards Committee of 3 February 2011.   With regard to the stipulation that a staff member who leaves the University should normally retain responsibility for supervising his/her research students until they graduate, it was noted that it would be helpful to ascertain the position with regard to the contractual obligations of former staff members. It was noted too that it would be desirable for staff members who expected to leave the University within a relatively short timeframe to refrain from taking on new research students if they considered they would not be in a position to see them through to completion. It was noted, additionally, that issues relating to supervisory continuity following the departure of staff would become more prominent as increased numbers of staff retired. The Chair mentioned that there was still some time left for the submission of final comments on the revised regulations, and thanked all who had contributed to their development.   (Item 3.13)

3.10   Noted that the issue of credit attribution for attendance at a Summer School was under consideration within a School.   (Item 3.14)

3.11   Noted that a call for applications for the Daniel O'Hare Scholarships would be made in due course. (Item 3.15)

3.12   Noted that all research students must be registered with a School. With regard to specific issues pertaining to Oscail in this regard, the Chair suggested that Dr Morrissey seek the advice of the Deputy President/Registrar, Professor Anne Scott.   (Item 3.15)

3.13   Noted that the importance of completing PGR3 (application for transfer to/confirmation on the PhD register) forms fully had been mentioned to a School. (Items 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6)

3.14   Noted that confirmation had been obtained that a student's performance in the oral examination for transfer to the PhD register had been satisfactory. (Item 4.5)

3.15   Noted that it had been mentioned to a School that it would be desirable to include the recommendations in respect of a student's transfer to or confirmation on the PhD register on the PGR3 form itself rather than in an accompanying document. (Item 4.13)

3.16   <u>Noted</u> that confirmation had been obtained that a student is in agreement with proposed arrangements in respect of the *viva voce* examination.   (Item 5.5)

3.17   <u>Noted</u> that additional information was being sought from a School in respect of a request to admit a student on the basis of a transfer from another university.   <u>Noted</u> that it might be necessary to convene a short-life committee within the School to make a recommendation on the issue, as had happened in the case of a similar request in another School in late 2010.   (Item 7.2)

3.18   <u>Noted</u> that the supervisor assessment form to be used in the context of applications through the PAC system had been amended in line with the recommendations of the GSB and had been approved by Chair's action on 27 January 2011.   (Item 10.1)

3.19   <u>Noted</u> that a schedule of dates of meetings relevant to the processing of forms, together with details of the new policy on the acceptance of late forms, had been made available to the Graduate Research Office and also e-mailed to all relevant staff members.   (Item 11)

SECTION B: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

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

4.1   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.1, School of Biotechnology
<u>Approved.</u>

4.2   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.2, School of Biotechnology
<u>Approved.</u>

4.3   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.3, School of Biotechnology
<u>Approved.</u>

4.4   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.4, School of Biotechnology
<u>Approved.</u>

4.5   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.5, Dublin City University Business School
<u>Approved</u>

4.6   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.6, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> .

4.7   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.7, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> subject to clarification of the meaning of a sentence in the report on the oral examination.

4.8   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.8, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> subject to clarification of the meaning of a sentence in the report on the oral examination.

4.9   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.9, School of Chemical Sciences
        Approved.
4.10   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.10, School of Chemical Sciences
        Approved.
4.11   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.11, School of Computing
        Approved.
4.12   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.12, School of Computing
        Approved.
4.13   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.13, School of Law and Government
        Approved.
4.14   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.14, School of Physical Sciences
        Approved.
4.15   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.15, School of Physical Sciences
        Approved.
4.16   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/4.16, School of Computing
        Approved.

Noted that there were three cases in which a PGR3 form (application for transfer to the PhD register or confirmation on the PhD register) and a PGR4 form (notification of intention to submit thesis for examination) had been submitted for the consideration of the GSB at the same time in respect of the same student. Noted that this was not good practice, and agreed that the Chair would mention to the relevant supervisor, in respect of two of the cases, the desirability of ensuring timely transfer/confirmation in respect of the PhD register. Noted that, in the third case, the delay had been caused by an oversight on the part of the supervisor, of which the supervisor was aware.

5.   **Appointment of external examiners**

5.1   Student ref. GSB/2011/A21/5.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
       Professor Anthony McHale, University of Ulster
       Approved.
5.2   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.2, PhD, School of Biotechnology
       Professor Cliff Taggart, Queen's University Belfast
       Approved.
5.3   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.3, MSc, School of Biotechnology
       Dr Adrienne Fleming, Institute of Technology, Tallaght
       Approved. Noted that, in cases such as this one in which a student originally intending to complete a PhD had been advised to exit with a Master's degree, the fact could be noted on the PGR2 (annual progress report) form, and that an appropriately revised PGR2 form would be submitted for the consideration of the GSB at its meeting of 5 May 2011 (see also Item 10.1 below).

5.4   Student ref. GSB/2011/A21/5.4, PhD, Dublin City University Business
        School
        Professor Robert Blackburn, Kingston University
        Approved.
        Dr Maura McAdam, Queen's University Belfast
        Approved.
5.5   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
        Professor Arben Merkoçi, Institut Català de Nanotecnologia, Barcelona
        Approved.
5.6   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.6, MSc, School of Chemical Sciences
        Dr Dara Fitzpatrick, University College Cork
        Approved.
5.7   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.7, PhD, School of Communications
        Dr Adam Lowenstein, University of Pittsburgh
        Approved.
5.8   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.8, PhD, School of Communications
        Professor Bob Franklin, Cardiff University
        Approved.
        Professor Karen Sanders, CEU San Pablo University, Madrid
        Approved.
5.9   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.9, PhD, School of Computing
        Professor Marcello Federico, University of Trento
        Approved.
5.10   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.10, PhD, School of Computing
        Dr Jesús Giménez, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya
        Decision deferred pending receipt of additional information in respect of the
        nominee.
5.11   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.11, PhD, School of Computing
        Dr Philipp Koehn, University of Edinburgh
        Approved.
5.12   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.12, PhD, School of Computing
        Professor Jan Hajic, Charles University, Prague
        Approved.
5.13   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.13, PhD, School of Computing
        Professor Philippe Langlais, University of Montreal
        Approved. Agreed, however, that the School would be requested to
        nominate an alternative internal examiner.
5.14   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.14, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Professor Martyn Pemble, Tyndall National Institute, University College
        Cork
        Approved.

5.15   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.15, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
        Dr Anding Zhu, University College Dublin
        Approved.
5.16   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.16, PhD, Fiontar
        Professor Liam Mac Mathúna, University College Dublin
        Approved.
        Professor Colin Williams, Cardiff University
        Approved.
5.17   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.17, PhD, School of Nursing
        Professor Philip Larkin, University College Dublin
        Approved.
        Dr Honor Nicholl, Trinity College Dublin
        Approved.
5.18   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.18, PhD, Education Department,
        St Patrick's College
        Professor Nóirín Hayes, Dublin Institute of Technology
        Approved.
5.19   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.19, PhD, Education Department,
        St Patrick's College
        Professor David Carr, University of Edinburgh
        Approved.
5.20   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/5.20, PhD, Education Department, St Patrick's
        College
        Dr Patrick J Matthews, University College Dublin
        Approved.

6.   **Requests for changes to supervisory arrangements**

    6.1   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/6.1, Dublin City University Business School
           Approved.
    6.2   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/6.2, Dublin City University Business School
           Approved.
    6.3   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/6.3, Dublin City University Business School
           Approved.
    6.4   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/6.4, School of Chemical Sciences
           Approved.
    6.5   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/6.5, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing
           Engineering
           Approved.
    6.6   Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/6.6, School of Nursing
           Approved.

7.   Other student issues

7.1   Application for admission to part-time Master's by research

      Student ref. GSB/2011/A2/7.1, School of Electronic Engineering

      <u>Approved.</u>

SECTION C: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

8.   Proposed Graduate Training Elements

8.1   Faculty of Engineering and Computing: Module MM600 – Radio Frequency Integrated Circuit Design

      <u>Approved.</u>

9.   Revised proposals in respect of Higher Doctorates

      The Chair <u>noted</u> that the proposals, incorporating the amendments recommended by the GSB at its meeting of 13 January 2011, had been submitted for the consideration of the President, Professor Brian MacCraith, and the Deputy President/Registrar, Professor Anne Scott, and that it was hoped that they would then be submitted (with further amendments, if so recommended by the President and Deputy President/Registrar) for the consideration of Executive. If approved by Executive, they will be noted at a future meeting of the GSB. <u>Noted</u> that the proposals make provision for approval of the award of Higher Doctorate by a specially-convened awards board in the relevant Faculty followed by approval by Executive.

10.   Any other business

10.1 <u>Noted</u> that the PGR1 (application) form had now been subsumed into the PAC online application system. <u>Noted</u> that the PGR2 (annual progress report) form required revision, including revision to allow for noting an exit at Master's level from a research programme in a case where a student had originally intended to complete a PhD (see Item 5.3 above). <u>Noted</u> that Ms Barry intended to meet some Heads of School and supervisors to ascertain their views as to the more general fitness for purpose of the PGR2 form. It is intended that the discussions will cover,

but not be confined to, the challenge of ensuring that the comments on the PGR2 form are appropriately supportive while also giving the student unambiguous feedback about progress (including unsatisfactory progress where this is the case). As noted at Item 5.3 above, a revised PGR2 form will be submitted for the consideration of the GSB at its meeting of 5 May 2011. Noted that the existence of the progression system underpinning the PGR2 form had been commented upon with approval in the context of both the quality review of postgraduate programmes undertaken in 2009 and the institutional review of DCU undertaken in 2010.

10.2   Noted that the R103 (change of supervisory arrangements) form did not need to be used in the event of an additional (as distinct from a replacement) supervisor being appointed and that the PGR2 form could be used for the notification of the addition.

10.3   Noted that a practice had arisen of requesting the Chair to take Chair's action to approve exceptional admission for applicants whose native language is not English and who have not yet fulfilled the University's entry requirements in terms of English language competency. Agreed that this practice should continue, as an when necessary, but that the Chair would monitor it and the issue would be discussed again at a future meeting of the GSB. Agreed that consideration should be given to requiring students who enter without the English-language requirements to meet them by a specified cut-off date (or face exclusion from their research programmes). Noted however that, in some cases, students who had not fulfilled the University's English language requirements were competent in terms of spoken English and academic writing in English while, conversely, some students who had met the requirements were not particularly competent. Agreed that Dr Blin and Dr Brereton would ascertain the position with regard to the availability of a SALIS module in English for academic purposes for non-native speakers and would inform the Chair.

10.4   Noted, with regard to training for supervisors, that it was intended to agree a common programme across all the universities under the auspices of NAIRTL (the National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning). This matter will be discussed at the 5 May 2011 meeting of the GSB. Meanwhile, there is a workshop on the issue, organised by NAIRTL, on 11 April 2011. The Chair undertook to send the details of the workshop to the GSB members as well as making them available to Dr Ana Terres of the Office of the Vice-President for Research so as to enable her to inform her contacts. Noted that postdoctoral students were eligible to attend the workshop.

10.5   Noted that the numbers registered for the generic modules offered as part of Graduate Training Elements tend to be very low. Noted that it would be helpful if Principal Investigators could ensure that they drew students' attention appropriately to the existence of the modules. Noted that students sometimes could not register for generic modules because their credit allocation was devoted in its entirety to discipline-specific modules. Agreed that it would be desirable to open these

modules to students in the linked colleges who require them, both from the point of view of raising the numbers in attendance and to avoid duplication of work and unnecessary expense. <u>Agreed</u> that this possibility could be promoted in the linked colleges both by relevant staff in the colleges and by the Chair. <u>Agreed</u> that the issues relating to generic modules would be kept under review.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 5 May 2011
9.00 a.m. in A204

Signed: _____   Date: _____
        Chair