

## **GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

Thursday 19 May 2016

9.30 – 11.15 am in A204

**Present:** Ms Lisa Buckley, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Dr Patricia Flynn, Dr Charlotte Holland, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Rachel Keegan, Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Dr Tim McCormac, Dr Caroline McMullan, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Professor Kevin Rafter, Dr Mary Rose Sweeney, Dr Ana Terrés, Mr Ronan Tobin, Dr Blánaid White

**Apologies:** Ms Gillian Barry, Dr Mary Ivers, Dr Mark Roantree

### **SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **1. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted subject to the addition of two items under AOB.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 14 April 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of 14 April 2016, were approved, subject to a correction of the list of apologies, and signed by the Chair.

#### **3. Matters arising from the minutes of 14 April 2016**

- 3.1** The Dean of Graduate Studies provided an update on the review of the Graduate Training Element module results’ approval process. Having consulted with the Associate Deans for Research, Faculty Administrators and Registry it was now proposed to separate the approval of the award of GTEs from the Faculty Research Award Board, and to align the approval of the GTE module results with the regular cycle of Progression and Award Boards in June and September of each year.

From June 2017, it is proposed that one GTE Award Board, comprising Associate Deans for Research, Registry and relevant Faculty administrator would convene at each exam diet to review and approve the GTE modules taken by research students in that year (Item 3.1).

The proposal was agreed. It was noted that a minor change would be required to the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis to reflect this amendment, and this change would be completed for the approval of University Standards Committee at its May 2016 meeting.

- 3.2** It was noted that for the confirmation to the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies a re-submission containing more specific information on the oral examination was awaited (Item 3.3) (Item 8.53, 7 September 2015).
- 3.3** It was noted that the revision of the PGR3 form would take place by September 2016 (Item 7).
- 3.4** It was noted that additional information with respect to the intention to submit for examination form (PGR4) was awaited for a student in the School of Chemical Sciences (Item 8.18, Meeting of 14 April 2016).
- 3.5** It was noted that a Working Group to consider the development of a module on Communications Skills has been formed and will meet over the coming weeks (Item 3.2).
- 3.6** It was noted that the confirmation on the PhD Register (PGR3) of a candidate in the School of Law and Government, which had not been approved at the March meeting of GRSB, and was subject to clarification was included on the agenda (item 8.2) of this meeting (Item 3.5, Item 8.8, 3 March 2016 meeting).
- 3.7** It was noted that the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies was completed (Item 8.3).
- 3.8** It was noted that the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the DCU Business School, which was deferred at the meeting of 14 April 2016, was included on the agenda (item 9.2) of this meeting (Item 8.13).
- 3.9** It was noted that the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the DCU Business School, which was deferred at the meeting of 14 April 2016, was included on the agenda (item 9.1) of this meeting (Item 8.14).

- 3.10** It was noted that the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Communications, which was deferred at the meeting of 14 April 2016, was included on the agenda (item 9.3) of this meeting (Item 8.21).
- 3.11** It was noted that the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for candidate in the School of Computing, which was deferred at the meeting of 14 April 2016, was included on the agenda (item 9.4) of this meeting (Item 8.26).
- 3.12** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences had been completed (Item 8.20).
- 3.13** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Communications had been completed (Item 8.22).
- 3.14** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Communications had been completed (Item 8.23).
- 3.15** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Computing had been completed (Item 8.29).
- 3.16** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Education Studies had been completed (Item 8.41).
- 3.17** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Electronic Engineering had been completed (Item 8.44).
- 3.18** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Law and Government had been completed (Item 8.49).
- 3.19** It was noted that matters outstanding with respect to the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form for a candidate in the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering had been completed (Item 8.53).

## **SECTION B: Policy and strategy issues**

### **4. Graduate Researcher Development**

#### *4.1 MT612: Advanced Quantitative Research Methods, DCUBS*

The module was approved, subject to the following changes to the submitted specification:

- Amend hours under *Assignment Completion* to 29 to bring the total number of module hours to 125.
- The module MT611 is inserted on the specification as pre-requisite learning, however, further down the table, no pre-requisite is listed. This correction should be made.

#### *4.2 NS5041: Advanced Research Skills (Psychology), School of Nursing and Human Sciences*

The module NS5041 was approved.

It was noted that the module may be of interest in other Schools or Faculties. Should this be the case, Faculties were requested to notify Ms Rachel Keegan in the Graduate Studies Office. It was noted too that should the module prove to be of more general interest, then the title might need to be amended to reflect wider implementation.

### **5. Incorporation Update**

Progress to date with respect to Incorporation was reported and the following noted:

- The Postgraduate Research sub-group last met on 27 April 2016.
- With respect to the work of the St. Patrick's College and Mater Dei Institute of Education Ethics Committees, historical documentation has been provided to DCU and the DCU Research Ethics Committee will recognise the decisions of those Ethics Committees in respect of transferring students.
- An incorporation information meeting was held on St. Patrick's Campus for all transferring research students. The meeting was well attended and well received both by supervisors and research students.
- The data migration of research student data is underway.
- Research examiners' training was held in May and was well received.
- An Institute of Education framework for incoming research student applications is due to be discussed by the Institute of Education Interim Faculty Board shortly.

## 6. Update on DoctoralNet

The Dean of Graduate Studies provided an update on DoctoralNet, an online resource aimed at supporting part-time research students and piloted from the beginning of 2015. The following were noted:

- The Doctoralnet pilot involves research students (approximately 140) and their supervisors from DCU Business School, School of Nursing and Human Sciences and first year research students from the Institute of Education.
- Data on patterns of student engagement is available from the resource, showing a number of 'super-users'. A particularly strong value is attributed to the webinars but under-use is also evident.
- In a survey of students for whom the tool is available, some reported the usefulness of the webinars in particular, others that they hadn't used it because they felt well supported already, and others who had not been aware of it. The survey provided a useful insight into how motivated the students felt (or did not feel).
- GSO, in co-operation with the participating Schools will use these insights to plan the second year of the pilot.

## 7. Implementation of minimum registration periods

It was noted that clarification was required with respect to implementation of the minimum registration periods as outlined in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis, and the timing of the submission of the notification of intention to submit form (PGR4). It was noted that the minimum registration period is in place for the following reasons:

- (i) To ensure that adequate time is given to produce academic work of the appropriate standard, depth and breadth
- (ii) So that the award reflects only work undertaken while a registered student

It was noted that where PGR4 forms for full-time students are being submitted during the third year of registration, it can be unclear if the early submission of the PGR4 form represents an intention to submit the thesis early. As a result it has become necessary to introduce a framework to provide a specific timeframe in which GRSB will accept the PGR4 form and a student can submit the soft bound thesis.

Having reviewed historical data of submission time periods of DCU research students, and allowing time for notice and thesis examination, the Dean of Graduate Studies proposed the following timeframes for the submission of the PGR4 form to GRSB.

- For a full-time PhD student, consideration of the PGR4 by GRSB can only take place once 31 months of registration have been completed.
- For a part-time PhD student, consideration of the PGR4 by GRSB can only take place once 49 months of registration have been completed.
- For a full-time Research Master's consideration of the PGR4 by GRSB can only take place once 17 months of registration have been completed.
- For a part-time Research Master's consideration of the PGR4 by GRSB can only take place once 27 months of registration have been completed.
- Anything earlier than the timeframes laid out above would be categorised as an early submission and a special case for acceptance to GRSB would be required. Earliest submission times follow three months from these timeframes.

The proposed guidelines for implementing the regulation were agreed. It was noted that nationally in terms of timeframe the practice for Masters by Research do not have the same clarity or consistency of application as the PhD, and the Dean of Graduate Studies indicated that she intended to raise this issue with the IUA Group of Deans of Graduate Studies.

## **SECTION C: Individual student issues**

### **8. Applications for confirmation on the PhD Register (PGR3)**

8.1 GRSB2016/A4/8.1, PhD, School of Computing

Approved

8.2 GRSB2016/A4/8.2, PhD, School of Law and Government (Resubmission, original application:GRSB2016/A2/8.8)

Approved

### **9. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)**

9.1 GRSB2016/A4/9.1, PhD, DCU Business School

Professor Gregory Connor, Maynooth University

Approved. The School is to be advised that the student's registration should reflect the period of actual engagement by the student. It is noted that the gender balance of the examination board would need to be addressed through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson (re-submission, item 8.14, 14 April 2016 meeting).

- 9.2 GRSB2016/A4/9.2, PhD, DCU Business School  
Dr Cristiana Lages, University of Reading  
Approved (re-submission, item 8.13, 14 April 2016 meeting).
- 9.3 GRSB2016/A4/9.3, PhD, School of Communications  
Professor Yvonne Tasker, University of East Anglia  
Approved, (re-submission, item 8.21, 14 April 2016 meeting)
- 9.4 GRSB2016/A4/9.4, MSc, School of Computing  
Professor Joe Carthy, University College Dublin  
Approved, (re-submission, item 8.26, 14 April 2016 meeting)
- 9.5 GRSB2016/A4/9.5, EdD, Special Education Department, SPD  
Professor Michael Shevlin, Trinity College Dublin  
Approved, subject to internal examiner satisfying requirements for examining prior to examination
- 9.6 GRSB2016/A4/9.6, EdD, Education Department, SPD  
Professor Gary Granville, National College of Art and Design  
Approved, subject to internal examiner satisfying requirements for examining prior to examination (Re-submission, item 9.10, 25 June 2015)
- 9.7 GRSB2016/A4/9.7, PhD, Humanities Department, All Hallows College  
Professor Mark Burrows, University Bochum, Germany  
Approved. It is noted that the gender balance of the examination board would need to be addressed through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson.
- 9.8 GRSB2016/A4/9.8, PhD, All Hallows College  
Professor Jonathan Reams, Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
Approved. It is noted that the gender balance of the examination board would need to be addressed through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson.
- 9.9 GRSB2016/A4/9.9, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering  
Professor José Capmany Franco, Universidad Politécnica Valencia, Spain  
Approved
- 9.10 GRSB2016/A4/9.10, PhD, School of Law and Government  
Dr Tanja Muller, University of Manchester  
Approved, subject to ensuring that in the period in which the student was pursuing her research, and not registered she was provided with support and supervision. It is noted that the gender balance of the examination board would need to be addressed through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson.

## **10. Other student issues**

### **10.1 Request for Extension to Maximum Registration Period or Re-admission to the Research Programme (PGR14)**

- 10.1.1 GRSB2016/A4/10.1.1, MA, School of Law and Government  
Approved. It is noted that the School is to be advised that the re-admission of this student should have preceded his re-engagement with the Master's. The registration of this student should reflect engagement for the full academic year, 2015-2016.

## **11. Any other business**

### *11.1 PGR2 process and outstanding appointments of Independent Panel members*

Ms Lisa Buckley informed the Board that the online PGR2 process will be launched at the end of May 2016. She also reminded the Board that she had been in touch with Heads of School to remind them that there were some appointments for Independent Panel members still outstanding.

### *11.2 Expression of Thanks*

The Dean of Graduate Studies wished to note her thanks to Professor Colm O'Gorman whose term as Associate Dean for Research in DCUBS was coming to an end and who had served on Graduate Research Studies Board for the last six years. She thanked him for his valuable contribution and for consistently taking a very considered view, noting also that his contribution always reflected a focus on the overall good of the student.



**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday 23 June 2016 at 9.30 a.m. in A204

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

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