

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 13 October 2016

9.30 – 11.10 am in A204

Present: Ms Gillian Barry, Ms Lisa Buckley, Dr Charlotte Holland, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Rachel Keegan, Professor Lisa Looney (Chair), Dr Tim McCormac, Dr Caroline McMullan, Professor Eugene McNulty, Professor Colm O’Gorman, Dr Mark Roantree, Mr. Allan Stevenson, Dr Mary Rose Sweeney, Dr Ana Terrés, Dr Blánaid White

Apologies: Representative of FAPG (to be appointed)

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) of the new academic year noting that this was the first meeting post incorporation, with a reduced Board membership. The Chair welcomed Mr Allen Stevenson, representing postgraduate research students, to his first meeting.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of agenda

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

2. Minutes of the meeting of 5 September 2016

The minutes of the meeting of 5 September 2016, were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 5 September 2016

- 3.1** It was noted that the individual Joint Supervision Agreements with the Military University of Technology in Warsaw and the University of Southampton were awaiting final ratification from each of the participating institutions (Item 3.1).
- 3.2** It was noted that discussions with Registry with respect to the administrative arrangements to be put in place to run the Graduate Training Elements (GTE) module GS611 over a two-year period were ongoing (Item 4.2a).
- 3.3** It was noted that Registry were awaiting a response from the School of Human Performance with respect to a follow-up query from GR SB relating to the nomination of an external examiner from a closer geographical location (Item 10.29).
- 3.4** It was noted that the Chair had met with the Heads of School of Electronic Engineering to discuss issues raised during consideration of two requests for extension to the maximum registration (Items 11.8 and 11.9).
- 3.5** It was noted that the Chair had met with Heads of School to ask them to promote engagement with Research Integrity Training at School level (Item 6).
- 3.6** It was noted that the proposed minor changes to the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis discussed briefly at the 5 September 2016 meeting of GR SB were on the agenda of this meeting for further discussion (Item 8).
- 3.7** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD register (PGR3) of a candidate from the School of Education Studies had been completed following the requested submission of a more detailed report on the candidate's written submission (Item 9.13).
- 3.8** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD register (PGR3) of a candidate from the School of Law and Government had been completed. Confirmation had been received that an oral exam had taken place and the exam involved both the internal examiner and principal supervisor (Item 9.17).
- 3.9** It was noted that the transfer to the PhD register (PGR3) of a candidate from the School of Nursing and Human Sciences had been completed. Confirmation had been received that the oral examination had taken place, and the process had been conducted in line with regulations (Item 9.19).

- 3.10** It was noted that as requested by GRSB, the School of Biotechnology had submitted an alternative nominee for the external examiner (PGR4) and the nomination was on the agenda (Item 10.2) of this meeting (Item 10.4).
- 3.11** It was noted that following the meeting of 5 September 2016, an external examiner, previously approved for a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences was identified as not being eligible to be an external examiner and an alternative nominee was sought. The revised nomination (Item 10.5) is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 10.12).
- 3.12** It was noted that the notice of intention to submit form (PGR4) for a candidate in the School of Computing was deemed approved following confirmation of the qualification of the nominated external examiner (Item 10.13).
- 3.13** It was noted that the notice of intention to submit form (PGR4) for a candidate in the School of Computing was deemed approved following confirmation of the previous experience at DCU of the nominated external examiner (Item 10.16).
- 3.14** It was noted that the notice of intention to submit form (PGR4) for a candidate in the School of Human Development has been resubmitted (Item 10.11) for the consideration of this meeting of GRSB (Item 10.18).
- 3.15** It was noted that the decision on the notice of intention to submit form (PGR4) for a candidate in the School of STEM, Education, Innovation and Global Studies, was deferred at the last meeting of GRSB and has been re-submitted (Item 10.17) for the consideration of this meeting (Item 10.21).
- 3.16** It was noted that the notice of intention to submit form (PGR4) for a candidate in the School of Nursing and Human Sciences was deferred at the last meeting of GRSB and has been resubmitted (Item 10.14) for the consideration of this meeting (Item 10.34).
- 3.17** It was noted that for the notice of intention to submit forms (PGR4) for candidates referenced below, the relevant Schools had been advised to address if possible the gender mix of examination panels through the nomination of the Chair of the examining panel (10.11, 10.16, 10.18, 10.19, 10.22, 10.23, 10.26, 10.28, 10.29, 10.33).
- 3.18** It was noted that for the application to extend the maximum registration (PGR14) for a candidate in the School of Communications, it had been confirmed that permission had been granted for the student to study abroad (Item 11.4).

- 3.19** It was noted that the candidate from the School of Nursing and Human Sciences whose extension of the maximum registration (PGR14) had been approved for a second time by GRSB, had been advised that the same rationale for extension would not be considered for a third time (Item 11.13).
- 3.20** It was noted that the minor amendments to the PGR14 and PGR6 forms suggested at the GRSB meeting of 5 September 2016 had been completed (Item 12).
- 3.21** It was noted that a re-submitted (expired) notice of intention to submit form (PGR4) for a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences had been approved by Chair's action on 6 September 2016 (Item 2016/A6/10.37).
- 3.22** It was noted that an application to extend the maximum registration (PGR14) for a candidate in the School of Law and Government was approved by Chair's Action, 12 September 2016 (2016/A6/11.14).
- 3.23** It was noted that an application to extend the maximum registration (PGR14) for a candidate in the School of Law and Government was approved by Chair's Action, 23 September 2016 (2016/A6/11.15).

SECTION B: Policy and strategy issues

4. Graduate Researcher Development

There were no items for consideration relating to Graduate Research Development.

The Chair noted the recent formal launch of the DCU ENRICH Framework on 19 September 2016 and provided a copy of the recently published information on the framework to the Board. She outlined that the framework has been developed to enable graduate researchers identify the skills and competencies for development to assist them in preparing for work in a variety of settings beyond academia. It is hoped that Schools would consider including the framework when designing doctoral pathways. The Graduate Studies Office staff offered to attend School meetings over the coming months to raise awareness of the framework and to seek to embed the framework into doctoral pathways.

The Chair noted her thanks to Ms Rachel Keegan for her work in the development of the ENRICH framework.

5. Incorporation Update

It was noted that the Incorporation process has been completed with the signing of the legal agreements on 30 September 2016. With respect to the final stages of Incorporation relating to graduate students, the following were noted:

- The majority of transfer students have now been transferred and registered in their new Schools
- Registry is awaiting the transfer of files for a small number of students.

6. GRSB Standing Committee to consider Appeals

The revised membership of the GRSB Standing Committee to consider Appeals was approved. It was agreed that membership of the Committee would be approved on an annual basis, to take account of the changes in personnel which can occur each year.

It was noted that the Secretary of GRSB would be in touch to arrange a meeting over the next number of weeks for any appeals submitted by the upcoming deadline of 21 October 2016.

7 Report on GRSB activities 2015-2016

The report on GRSB activities 2015-2016 was noted. The Chair extended thanks to members of GRSB for the work achieved in 2015-2016 and in particular the introduction of new PhD formats, the clarification of the existing regulations and the work completed in the introduction of supports (online tools and resources) for research students.

8. Minor amendments to Academic Regulations for postgraduate degrees by Research and Thesis

The Chair outlined that at the 5 September 2016 meeting of GRSB the absence of a gender mix of examiners at the stage of transfer/confirmation on the PhD register and at the approval of the examination board stage was raised as a concern. The Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis contains the following stipulation 'in line with the University's policy and stated commitment to best practice in equality issues, Heads of School must ensure, in so far as possible, a balanced gender representation in the appointment of examiners to the examining team for research awards'. The Chair had reviewed the regulations

to explore whether there could be a more overt reference to gender balance/mix at every stage of the research examination process, however she came to the conclusion that to stipulate the requirement for example at the confirmation/transfer stage would put a heavy constraint on schools in terms of finding staff members with the relevant academic discipline and of the required gender in every case.

Following a brief discussion it was agreed that the wording in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis would be amended and the phrase 'gender balance' would be replaced with 'gender mix'.

SECTION C: Individual student issues

9. Applications for transfer to the PhD Register or confirmation on the PhD Register (PGR3)

- 9.1 GRSB2016/A7/9.1, PhD, SALIS
Approved
- 9.2 GRSB2016/A7/9.2, PhD, SALIS
Approved
- 9.3 GRSB2016/A7/9.3, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved
- 9.4 GRSB2016/A7/9.4, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved
- 9.5 GRSB2016/A7/9.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved
- 9.6 GRSB2016/A7/9.6, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved, subject to provision of greater detail in both the report on the written submission, and the report on the oral examination
- 9.7 GRSB2016/A7/9.7, PhD, School of Computing
The recommendation not to approve confirmation onto the PhD register was approved.
- 9.8 GRSB2016/A7/9.8, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved
- 9.9 GRSB2016/A7/9.9, PhD, School of Health and Human Performance
Approved, subject to the PGR3 form being completed, as required

- 9.10 GRSB2016/A7/9.10, PhD, School of Law and Government
Not approved. Noted that it was not clear from the PGR3 form submitted that the examination was conducted in line with regulations. Subject to clarification on the process, either the form will be re-submitted for GRSB consideration, or the existing form will be approved by Chair's action.
- 9.11 GRSB2016/A7/9.11, Master's, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved
- 9.12 GRSB2016/A7/9.12, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved
- 9.13 GRSB2016/A7/9.13, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved
- 9.14 GRSB2016/A7/9.14, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
The recommendation not to approve confirmation onto the PhD register was approved. It was noted that the number of supervisory panel members, as indicated on the PGR3 form, exceeds the maximum four recommended, and noted too that two secondary external supervisors are not formally recorded on Registry records.
- 9.15 GRSB2016/A7/9.15, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
Approved
- 9.16 GRSB2016/A7/9.16, Master's, School of Health and Science, DKIT
Approved
- 9.17 GRSB2016/A7/9.17, Master's, School of Health and Science, DKIT
Approved
- 9.18 GRSB2016/A7/9.18, Master's, School of Health and Science, DKIT
Approved
- 9.19 GRSB2016/A7/9.19, Master's, School of Health and Science, DKIT
Approved
- 9.20 GRSB2016/A7/9.20, Master's, School of Informatics and Creative Arts, DKIT
Approved

10 Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)

- 10.1 GRSB2016/A7/10.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Professor Anthony Mc Hale, Ulster University
Approved, noted that the School is to be advised to address if possible the gender mix of the examination panel through the appointment of the Independent Chair
- 10.2 GRSB2016/A7/10.2, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Professor Conor Lynch, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Centre and Research Institute
Approved. (Original submission GRSB2016/A6/10.4, change to External Examiner)
- 10.3 GRSB2016/A7/10.3, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Dr Grace Morgan, University College Dublin
Approved
- 10.4 GRSB2016/A7/10.4, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Dr John Cassidy, Dublin Institute of Technology, Kevin St
Approved (note change of external examiner nominee in advance of GRSB meeting, original nominee member of staff in linked provider, and ineligible for consideration)
- 10.5 GRSB2016/A7/10.5, MSc, School of Chemical Sciences
Dr Francisco Andrade, Universitat Rovira i Virgili
Approved (resubmission, change to external examiner, original submission GRSB2016/A6/10.12)
- 10.6 GRSB2016/A7/10.6, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Professor Isabel Rozas, Trinity College Dublin
Approved
- 10.7 GRSB2016/A7/10.7, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Professor Angela Casini, Cardiff University
Approved

- 10.8 GRSB2016/A7/10.8, PhD, School of Computing
Professor Giulia Rotundo, Sapienza University of Rome

Some discussion took place on the qualifications of the nominated external examiner in the context of the regulations, and extra information provided to the Chair was presented and considered. Following the discussion GRSB approved the nominated external examiner. It was agreed that an internal examiner with a greater degree of experience than the current internal examiner nominee should be appointed to this examination board.

- 10.9 GRSB2016/A7/10.9, MA, School of English
Dr Nerys Williams, University College Dublin
Approved

- 10.10 GRSB2016/A7/10.10, PhD, History and Geography
Professor Terence Dooley, Maynooth University
Approved, subject to the provision of evidence of recent research activity. Noted that the School is to be advised to address if possible the gender mix of the examination panel through the appointment of the Independent Chair

- 10.11 GRSB2016/A7/10.11, EdD, School of Human Development
Dr Emer Ring, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
Approved (noted: registration date error on original form)

- 10.12 GRSB2016/A7/10.12, EdD, School of Human Development
Dr Rory McDaid, Marino Institute of Education
Deferred decision, as the nomination seemed to include conflicting information. The approval of the internal examiner was also deferred until the issue is resolved. It was agreed that, subject to clarification, the nominations could be approved by Chair's Action.

- 10.13 GRSB2016/A7/10.13, PhD, School of Inclusive and Special Education
Dr David Preece, University of Northampton
Approved
Dr Emer Ring, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
Approved

- 10.14 GRSB2016/A7/10.14, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Professor Michael Brown, Edinburgh Napier University
Approved (original submission, GRSB2016/A6/10.34)

- 10.15 GRSB2016/A7/10.15, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Professor Jack Whitehead, University of Cumbria
Noted that the submission of the PGR4 is a short period earlier than the minimum normally accepted for the consideration of the PGR4 form however, it was agreed to consider the submission and it was approved.
- 10.16 GRSB2016/A7/10.16, EdD, School of Policy and Practice
Dr Seán Delaney, Marino Institute of Education
Decision Deferred (resubmission original reference GRSB2015/A6/9.36) until improved clarity could be achieved as to research examination experience. The Internal Examiner was approved. The Chair undertook to follow-up with the School.
- 10.17 GRSB2016/A7/10.17, PhD, School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies, (resubmission, original ref 2016/A6/10.21)
Dr Michael Hammond, University of Warwick,
Dr Kevin O'Rourke, Dublin Institute of Technology
Decision Deferred. It was noted that a case was made that the submitting candidate had been engaging in research on a basis consistent with full time study, which conflicted with her part-time registration record. The Chair undertook to follow-up with the School.
- 10.18 GRSB2016/A7/10.18, PhD, School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies
Dr Andreas Stylianides, University of Cambridge
Approved
Dr Aisling Leavy, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
Approved

11. Other student issues

11.1 Special Case Admission

- 11.1.1 GRSB2016/A7/11.1.1 PhD, DCUBS
Approved, noted the student is to be registered on Year 3 PhD track unless he has already completed a confirmation exercise or equivalent in the previous home university

11.2 Notification of Intention to Reside/Carry out Research Abroad (PGR13)

- 11.2.1 GRSB2016/A7/11.2.1, PhD, STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies
Noted, noted too that a more broad discussion should take place around the rationale for allowing students residing abroad to be registered for a PhD at DCU

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

11.3.1 GRSB2016/A7/11.3.1, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Approved

12. Any other business

12.1 Changes to academic title conventions

In the context of considering examiner nominations, the Chair drew colleagues' attention to the fact that two Irish universities had changed their post titles, and equivalence with DCU titles could not be assumed.

12.2 QQI and IUQB Research Guidelines

The Chair informed the Board that a second draft of the QQI draft guidelines on quality assurance of research degrees, replacing the draft originally circulated in July 2016, would issue shortly for consultation. She indicated that this draft would be a more concise, higher level document.

A revision of the IUQB 2009 document *Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities* was also expected to begin this year.

12.3 Meeting with Science Foundation Ireland

It was noted that, in the context of the IUA Deans group, the Chair had met recently with Professor Mark Ferguson, Director General of Science Foundation Ireland. He had indicated that there is likely to be an SFI funded programme at doctoral level.

It was noted by the Director of RIS that Professor Ferguson had raised the issue of the responsibilities of supervisors and the implications for them of a breach of research integrity policy by a student under their supervision. In the discussion which followed, it was suggested that it would be beneficial that new supervisors complete the DCU training on Research Integrity. As this is a decision that would require discussion and support at Faculty level, the Chair asked that Associate Deans for Research raise the issue at Faculty Research Committees.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 1 December 2016 at 9.30 a.m. in A204