

## **GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

Thursday 2 March 2017

9.30 – 12.25 am in A204

**Present:** Dr Joseph Stokes (Chair), Ms Gillian Barry, Ms Michelle Brennan, Ms Lisa Buckley, Professor David Collings, Dr Charlotte Holland, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Dr Caroline McMullan, Professor Eugene McNulty, Dr Mark Roantree, Mr Allan Stevenson, Dr Mary Rose Sweeney, Dr Ana Terrés, Dr Blánaid White

**In attendance:** Ms Roisín Morris-Drennan

**Apologies:** Dr Tim McCormac

The Chair introduced himself to the Board, providing information on his background and roles in research and leadership in DCU. He thanked Dr C. Holland for chairing the January 2017 meeting during the period before his appointment.

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

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

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

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 19 January 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of 19 January 2017, were approved and signed by the Chair.

### **3. Matters arising from the minutes of 19 January 2017**

- 3.1** It was noted that the Joint Supervision Agreement with the Military University of Technology (MUT) in Warsaw has been signed and a parchment draft received for review.

It was noted that discussions are ongoing with respect to a Joint Supervision Agreement with the University of Southampton (Item 3.2).

- 3.2** It was noted that the administrative solution to be put in place to enable the registration of research students on the module GS611 (spanning a two-year period) has been discussed with the Faculty administrator. It was noted that the GSO would confirm final arrangements (Item 3.3).
- 3.3** It was noted that a draft of the Residing Abroad Policy is on the agenda of this meeting of GRSB (Item 3.5).
- 3.4** It was noted that the document Draft Guidelines on Resolving Student/Supervisor Issues at School/Unit Level is on the agenda of this meeting of GRSB (Item 3.1).
- 3.5** It was noted that for a candidate whose notice of intention to submit was considered and approved, the School of Electronic Engineering had been asked, if possible to address a mix of gender for the examining panel through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson (Item 6.2).

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

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

There were no items for consideration.

### **5. Residing Abroad Policy**

An extensive discussion took place on the draft Residing Abroad Policy based on feedback provided by each of the Faculties. It was noted that in general the principle of allowing students to reside abroad and undertake postgraduate research studies was well received and, in light of Brexit, considered an opportunity. It was suggested that as each student potentially has a different set of circumstances that it would be advisable to provide principles and guidelines, rather than a policy per se.

The following points/issues were raised as items that might need to be considered:

- The requirement for students residing abroad to attend for registration and induction
- The frequency of required visits to DCU and visa considerations when students are registered part-time
- Providing innovative ways of including students residing abroad in the DCU research community, and providing a meaningful student experience
- In light of the National Framework for Doctoral Education, consideration of the practicalities of provision of Graduate Training Elements
- Having access to the same supervisory panel as students based on campus
- Ensuring that research integrity is monitored
- Consideration of appointing a ‘local supervisor’ depending on the location and/or circumstances of the student.

It was noted that the Faculty of Science and Health and the Faculty of Engineering and Computing had considered a different aspect of the proposal and the Associate Deans for Research undertook to revert with feedback in this regard at their earliest opportunity.

The Chair requested all other feedback to be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office. He indicated that he intended to set up a sub-group of GRSB to develop the document further. It was noted that the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees by Research and thesis for 2017-2018 should take account of the new guidelines.

## **6. Research Integrity Training for new supervisors—Faculty feedback**

It was noted that all Faculties, with the exception of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing, where feedback is yet to be sought, are in favour of all academic staff, who have not supervised previously, being required to take the Research Integrity module. It was noted that all other academic staff would be encouraged at Faculty level to take the module.

It was noted by the Director of Research Support that Science Foundation Ireland is currently in the process of amending its grant terms and conditions and will indicate that the university has responsibility to ensure adequate training in and awareness of research integrity for all PI funded investigators and their research teams.

It was noted too that compliance with the requirement to take the Research Integrity module will be monitored over time.

A brief discussion took place with respect to current research students taking the Research Integrity module and the following were noted:

- A technical issue prevented students from receiving confirmation of their result (pass or fail) for the module. The issue is being dealt with and it was clarified that a pass is 7/10
- As the module is mandatory, students would like credits for the module. However the workload associated with the module does not warrant five credits and, in addition, there is no means of assessment of the module at local level.
- It was suggested that the research integrity element could be integrated into a larger module and credits could then be awarded, e.g. ethics or personal development modules.

It was noted that the Chair would investigate the possibility of providing mechanisms for the award of credits.

## **7. Draft guidance document for Heads of School for Resolution of Student/supervisor Issues**

The Chair provided some background to the document as circulated and thanked Ms Sharon King of the Graduate Studies Office for her work in developing the guidelines. He indicated that in preparing the document he noted the importance of the independent panel member and the need to provide guidance to Heads/Research Convenors and Associate Deans for Research on how to implement the Independent Panel meetings.

The following were noted with respect to the discussion of the draft document:

- Practices vary between Faculties and Schools in the appointment of the independent panel members and recommendations will be provided in this regard
- The Institute of Education has research students who transferred into DCU, having been registered in the former linked college St Patrick's College before 2 March 2016, and do not have a supervisory panel. It was noted that some guidance on dealing with potential grievances from those students will need to be addressed.

The Chair requested that feedback with respect to the draft guidance document would be submitted to him by Wednesday 8 March 2017. He also asked the Associate Deans for Research to remind Heads of School in their Faculties about the need to appoint independent panel members, particularly in light of the recent correspondence from Registry about the organisation of meetings with supervisory panels.

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

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

- 8.1 GRSB2017/A2/8.1, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved
- 8.2 GRSB2017/A2/8.2, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved
- 8.3 GRSB2017/A2/8.3, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
Approved
- 8.4 GRSB2017/A2/8.4, PhD, DCU Business School  
Approved
- 8.5 GRSB2017/A2/8.5, PhD, DCU Business School  
Approved. It was noted that the student met the deadlines as outlined on the application to confirm on the PhD register.
- 8.6 GRSB2017/A2/8.6, PhD, School of Biotechnology  
Decision deferred. The School is to be requested to resubmit providing specific detail in the reports on the written submission and the oral examination. The reports should also reflect that both examinations were conducted by the internal examiner and principal supervisor.
- 8.7 GRSB2017/A2/8.7, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences  
Approved
- 8.8 GRSB2017/A2/8.8, PhD, School of Law and Government  
Approved. (Recommendation not to transfer)
- 8.9 GRSB2017/A2/8.9, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Approved

- 8.10 GRSB2017/A2/8.10, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved, subject to submission of full text of the report on the written submission and confirmation of supervisory panel
- 8.11 GRSB2017/A2/8.11, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Decision deferred, a re-submission with candidate detail with respect to both written submission and oral examination are to be requested
- 8.12 GRSB2017/A2/8.12, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved
- 8.13 GRSB2017/A2/8.13, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved
- 8.14 GRSB2017/A2/8.14, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Approved, it was noted that the candidate is subject to a joint award agreement and will receive a separate, rather than a joint parchment, as stated in the PGR3 form.

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

- 9.1 GRSB2017/A2/9.1, PhD, DCU Business School  
Professor Svante Andersson, Halmstad University, Sweden  
Approved
- 9.2 GRSB2017/A2/9.2, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences  
Professor Henning Menzel, Braunschweig University of Technology, Germany  
Approved
- 9.3 GRSB2017/A2/9.3, PhD, School of Computing  
Dr Philippe Mulhem, Laboratoire d'Informatique de Grenoble  
Approved
- 9.4 GRSB2017/A2/9.4, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
Professor Gerry Mac Ruairc, NUI Galway  
Approved
- 9.5 GRSB2017/A2/9.5, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
Dr Geraldine Mooney-Simmie, University of Limerick  
Approved

- 9.6 GRSB2017/A2/9.6, PhD, STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies  
Professor Ilga Salite, Daugavpils University, Latvia  
Approved
- 9.7 GRSB2017/A2/9.7, PhD, School of Human Development  
Professor Elizabeth Nixon, Trinity College Dublin  
Approved  
  
Professor Barbara Dooley, University College Dublin  
Approved
- 9.8 GRSB2017/A2/9.8, PhD, STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies  
Professor Catherine Montgomery, University of Bath  
Approved
- 9.9 GRSB2017/A2/9.9, MA, DKIT, School of Informatics and Creative Arts  
Dr Gwen Moore, University of Limerick  
Approved, subject to confirmation of supervisory panel
- 9.10 GRSB2017/A2/9.10, MA, DKIT, School of Informatics and Creative Arts  
Dr Adrian Scahill, Maynooth University  
Noted that the PGR4 form had been submitted at an early stage of the programme to facilitate the nominated examiner's attendance at and adjudication of the student's public performance. The examiner was approved to accommodate the circumstances outlined however, some further discussion is required on the qualification of a performance-based MA by Research
- 9.11 GRSB2017/A2/9.11, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering  
Professor Graham Reed, University of Southampton  
Approved, subject to confirmation of supervisory panel
- 9.12 GRSB2017/A2/9.12, PhD, School of Mathematical Sciences  
Dr Olivia Fitzmaurice (née Gill), University of Limerick  
Approved
- 9.13 GRSB2017/A2/9.13, MEng, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
Dr Stephen Onggo, Lancaster University  
Approved
- 9.14 GRSB2017/A2/9.14, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Professor Paolo Coppi, Yale University  
Approved, noted that the School is to be asked, if possible to address the gender mix of the examining panel through the appointment of the Independent Chair

9.15 GRSB2017/A2/9.15, PhD, School of Physical Sciences  
Professor Timo Gans, University of York  
Not approved. It was noted that the timing of the notice of intention to submit form submission for this candidate was not in line with the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis

9.16 GRSB2017/A2/9.16, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy & Music  
Professor Martin O’Kane, University of Wales  
Approved

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

10.1 GRSB2017/A2/10.1, PhD, DCU Business School  
This item was withdrawn.

10.2 GRSB2017/A2/10.2, PhD, DCU Business School  
Noted

## **11. Other student issues**

11.1 Notification of student admission to MSc by Research, School of Biotechnology

The Chair noted that he would like additional detail on the background of the applicant before formally noting the admission.

## **12. Any other business**

12.1 *Programme Regulations, Doctorate in Education 2016-2017*

The programme regulations for the Doctorate in Education 2016-2017 were noted. It was noted too that Registry requires some additional detail on the structure of the programme, particularly related to the MPhil exit route and the status of the 10,000-word dissertation.

12.2 *English language test score derogation, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences*

It was noted that the Chair had approved a special case derogation from English language requirements from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences by Chair’s Action. It was noted that the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, agreed to follow the process in place in the Faculty of Science and Health and Faculty of Engineering and Computing, where a derogation from English language



requirements exists, which enables the student to make up the English language test short-fall.

*12.3 Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*

The Chair requested members to review and provide feedback on any changes required to the Regulations for 2017-2018. It was noted that the Regulations would be considered and approved at the April meeting of GRBSB for subsequent consideration by University Standards Committee and Academic Council.

*12.4 Examination of PhD, sign-off of corrections*

It was noted that there is a gap in process in the examination of the PhD, where required corrections to the dissertation are not completed to the satisfaction of the examiner.

The Chair noted that the role of the Chair of the examining panel is vital in bringing about a final outcome and undertook to consider this issue.

*12.5 Expression of thanks*

The Chair noted that Ms Gillian Barry was stepping down from her role representing Registry at GRBSB and expressed his sincere thanks to her for her valued contribution to GRBSB over the last ten years. It was noted that Ms Roisín Morris-Drennan has now taken up this role.

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

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

**Date of next meeting:**

Thursday 20 April 2017

at 9.30 a.m. in A204

