GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 15 March 2018*

9:30 a.m. – 12.45 p.m. in A204

Present: Ms Fiona Brennan, Ms Michelle Brennan, Dr Charlotte Holland, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Rachel Keegan, Professor Christine Loscher, Professor Eugene McNulty, Ms Roisín Morris-Drennan, Dr Mark Roantree, Ms Sabrina Smart, Mr Allan Stevenson, Professor Joseph Stokes (Chair) and Dr Blánaid White

Apologies: Professor David Collings, Dr Tim McCormac and Dr Caroline McMullan

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

The Chair opened the meeting expressing his sympathies on the untimely death of Ms Louise McDermott, Secretary of GRSB and noting that Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon had resumed the role of Secretary.

1. **Adoption of the agenda**

   The agenda was adopted subject to the addition of two items under AOB, accepted for consideration due to the unavoidable change in the date of the meeting from 1 March 2018 to 15 March 2018.

2. **Minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2018**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2018 were approved subject to the following amendments:

   Item 3.26: replace 'expected' with 'provided'
   Item 3.27: change 'completion of PGR3 forms' to 'completion of a PGR3 form'
   Item 5.2: change 'transfer onto PhD register' to 'confirmation on PhD register'
   Item 5.5: change 'transfer' to 'confirmation on the PhD register'.

2.2 The minutes of 30 November 2017 were signed by the Chair.

*Meeting originally scheduled for 1 March 2018 but postponed due to adverse weather conditions

3.   Matters arising from the minutes of 18 January 2018

3.1   Professor C. Loscher provided an update on practice with respect to the conduct of the *viva voce* in a School in the Faculty of Science and Health. She noted the School in question had an established practice of opening the *viva voce* examination presentation to all members of the School, for reasons of dissemination of the research.

There was extensive discussion on this issue and the fact that an open presentation was not permitted by the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis. It was agreed that for the purposes of the *viva voce*, the presentation should be held in private session and it was suggested that the School could organise an open presentation, independent of the examination, for the purposes of dissemination of the research. It was noted that the Academic Regulations would be made clearer in this regard to ensure consistency of practice (Item 3.1).

In the course of the discussion the transfer/confirmation examination was also raised and discussed and it was agreed that it could be optional to conduct the transfer/ confirmation examination presentation in a public forum.

3.2   It was noted that a meeting would be arranged with the Associate Deans for Research to discuss the provision of resources with respect to the GTE module GS602 (Item 3.2).

3.3   Mr A. Stevenson provided an update on an information session held recently by the Postgraduate Society and SIPTU. At that meeting some issues relating to student 'terms and conditions' including hours of work, correction time, periods of absence for illness or maternity leave and tutor training, were discussed. It was noted that only a small number of postgraduates students, those who have 'HR contracts', are eligible to be members of SIPTU.

It was noted that another information session, open to all postgraduate research students, is due to be held shortly, however it was noted that as the majority of students are not union members, SIPTU cannot act on their behalf.

It was suggested and agreed that the Postgraduate Society would meet with the Dean of Graduate Studies to discuss the issues (Item 3.3).

3.4   It was noted that an update on possible visa issues for students in DCU Business School would be provided at the next meeting (Item 3.4).

3.5   It was noted that the pilot of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement for research students is currently underway (Item 3.14).

3.6 Ms F. Brennan <u>noted</u> that feedback has been provided by all stake-holders with respect to amendments to the Retired Staff policy. The policy will be reviewed by the Vice-President for Research and, once signed, will be referred for agreement to Senior

Management Group. It was <u>noted</u> that the policy will reference the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis with respect to research student supervision (Item 3.15).

3.7 It was <u>noted</u> that work on ensuring the gender mix of examining panels through cross-school arrangements is ongoing (Item 3.9).

3.8 It was <u>noted</u> that work is ongoing on the guidelines on recital/performance and capacity building in terms of examining recital/performance (Item 3.10).

3.9 It was <u>noted</u> that work is ongoing on the Residing Abroad Principles (Item 3.11).

3.10 It was <u>noted</u> that work is ongoing on the recognition of completion of the Research Integrity module (Item 3.12).

3.11 It was <u>noted</u> that additional information with respect to a PGR3 form submitted for a candidate from the School of Biotechnology was submitted and the process was complete (Item 3.16, item 9.4 19 October 2017).

3.12 It was <u>noted</u> that a revised PGR4 form has been submitted by the School of Law and Government and is on the agenda (item 11.5) of this meeting (Item 3.17).

3.13 It was <u>noted</u> that PhD by publication requirements, in the context of joint award agreements, is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 9.1).

3.14 It was <u>noted</u> that submission of a finalised version of the GTE module, Conference and Symposium Organisation 1 is awaited (Item 3.18).

3.15 It was <u>noted</u> that additional information with respect to a PGR3 form submitted for a candidate from the School of Health and Human Performance was submitted and the item was deemed complete (Item 3.20).

3.16 It was <u>noted</u> that re-submission of a fully completed PGR3 form for a candidate in the School of Nursing and Human Sciences is awaited (Item 3.21).

3.17 It was <u>noted</u> that discussions on a PGR3 form submitted for a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences, and deferred at the 18 January 2018 meeting of GRSB, are ongoing (Item 5.3).

3.18   It was <u>noted</u> that issues with respect to the inclusion of the nomination of the Independent Chair on the PGR4 form have been addressed in the revisions of the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (Item 3.22).

3.19   It was <u>noted</u> that additional information with respect to a PGR4 form for a candidate in the School of Chemical Sciences was submitted and the process was deemed complete (Item 3.23).

3.20   It was <u>noted</u> that with respect to the Residing Abroad Guidelines consideration has been given to ensuring articulation with sections in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (Item 3.24).

3.21   It was <u>noted</u> that following submission of a more detailed report in Section B(ii), a PGR3 form for a candidate in the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering was deemed complete (Item 5.6).

3.22   It was <u>noted</u> that following a response from the School of Physical Sciences with respect to addressing gender mix through the appointment of the Independent Chair the related PGR4 form was deemed approved (Item 6.3).

SECTION B: Policy and Strategy Issues

4.   Graduate Research Development

There were no items for consideration.

5.   Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis

Changes as indicated in the Academic Regulations proposed were <u>agreed</u>, with the exception of the following which will be addressed in advance of the consideration of the final version at the April 2018 meeting of GRSB.

Note: page numbers quoted below refer to the hardcopy GRSB papers of 15 March 2018.

5.1   Page 21, Item 1.2: Query on MEd title: Master of Education Studies

5.2   Page 23, Item 4.5: <u>Noted</u> that it is sufficient to note those who reside aboard for 6-months but for those who request to reside abroad for a larger proportion of their studies this should be approved.

5.3 Page 23, Item 4:Application and Registration Procedures. Some clarification was sought on the level of detail required by Registry on a proposed research project at application stage. It was clarified that Registry is not assessing the project however administrative staff processing the applications need to be provided with sufficient information for the application to be progressed and this differed depending on the circumstances (e.g. self-funded versus funded projects). It was <u>noted</u> that Ms R Keegan would provide further information in this regard.

5.4 Page 24, Item 6.2. The Dean of Graduate Studies will explore the possibility of a leave of absence for research students (Currently leave of absence is not permitted for postgraduate research students).

5.5 Page 25, Item 7.1.2. The wording should change from 'must' to 'should'.

5.6 Page 26, Items 7.4.2 and 7.7.1 to be confirmed when the policy on retired staff is finalised.

5.7 Page 30, Item 8.2.1, to revert to original wording.

5.8 Page 31, Item 8.3, clarification to be sought on whether or not the research student is legally entitled to submit without the agreement of the supervisor and Head of School. Depending on the outcome of the clarification, provision for an appeal process may be required.

5.9 Page 40, Item 10.2.3, change proposed not to be made

5.10 Page 44, Item 1.3.5 change proposed wording to 'in private session'.

6. PhD by Publication

The Chair outlined that a query on the Academic Regulations for PhD by Publication had initially been raised by colleagues in the Dundalk Institute of Technology. It was queried if the number of publications required for the award was too high i.e. that 'novel contribution should normally be apparent in a least three of the papers in which the candidate is main or key contributor for the award of PhD by Publication'.

The Chair reported that he had consulted with the Associate Deans for Research and it was agreed that this standard (at least three) would remain in the Academic Regulations, however it was <u>noted</u> that additional detailed guidelines should be provided with respect to the outline content of the accompanying 10,000 word document.

7. Minimum Registration Submission Timeline DCU Postgraduate Research Forms

The Chair outlined that following on from a specific case which arose at the January 2018 meeting of GRSB he had drafted two alternative guideline submission months for part-time Professional Doctorate programmes. During the discussion which followed it was <u>noted</u> that the submission timeframe was governed by the structure of

the programme. It was <u>noted</u> too that a 3-year full-time Doctor of Education programme was approved last year and this should also be included in any submission guidelines.

It was <u>agreed</u> that the document would be revised and re-submitted for the future consideration of GRSB.

8.   Teleconferencing of the PhD *Viva Voce*

The Chair <u>noted</u> that he had received a number of requests for last minute approval of PhD *viva voce* by video-conferencing. He reiterated that the policy in this regard is that if an examiner cannot attend a *viva voce* unexpectedly then the examination should be re-scheduled and the venue and technology to be used authorised by ISS. It was confirmed that the decision to take this course of action rests with the Head of School.

It was <u>noted</u> that the role of GRSB is in approving the request in student cases, and it should be done in a timely and planned manner. The Dean of Graduate Studies requested that the Associate Deans for Research would ensure that this process is communicated within their faculties.

9.   Doctor of Education (EdD), changes to structure

The change to the structure of the Doctor of Education programme was <u>noted </u>subject to the following:

- The module descriptor for ED9001 should reflect the ECTS credit hours required for a 20-credit module
- The learning outcomes of ED9001 should be updated to reflect additional content
- All modules should be revised to reflect programme learning outcomes

It was <u>noted</u> that clarification with respect to approval of the amended programme would be sought by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

SECTION C: Individual student issues

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

10.1   GRSB2018/A2/ 10.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
          <u>Approved</u>

10.2 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.2, PhD, DCU Business School
Approved

10.3 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.3, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved

10.4 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.4, PhD, School of Computing
Approved

10.5 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.5, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved

10.6 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.6, PhD, School of Law and Government
Approved, subject to provision of the internal examiner signature and more detailed reports under B(i) and B(ii).

10.7 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.7, PhD, School of Law and Government
Approved

10.8 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.8, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music
Approved

10.9 GRSB2018/A2/ 10.9, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved

11. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)

11.1 GRSB2018/A2/11 .1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Dr John Baugh, University College Dublin
Approved, subject to appointment of the Independent Chair

11.2 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.2, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Professor Colin McCoy, Queen's University Belfast
Approved

11.3 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.3, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Professor Amilra Prasanna de Silva, Queen's University Belfast
Approved

11.4 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.4, PhD, School of Health and Human Performance
Professor John Groeger, Nottingham Trent University
Approved, noted that a new Independent Chair was nominated subsequent to submission

11.5 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.5, LLM, School of Law and Government
Dr Ger Coffey, University of Limerick
<u>Approved</u>

11.6 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.6, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
Professor James Lunney, Trinity College Dublin
<u>Approved</u>

11.7 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.7, PhD, School of Health and Science, DkIT
Professor Paul McLoughlin, University College Dublin
<u>Approved</u>

11.8 GRSB2018/A2/ 11.8, PhD, School of Informatics and Creative Arts, DkIT
Professor Frank Lyons, Ulster University
<u>Decision deferred</u>. It was <u>noted</u> that the submission is early, however it is to be clarified if the approval is being sought to accommodate a performance element. If so the request may be considered under Chair's Action.

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

12.1 GRSB2018/A2/12 .1, School of History and Geography
<u>Approved</u> by Chair's Action, 5 March 2018, due to the postponement of GRSB from 1 March 2018 to 15 March 2018.

12.2 GRSB2018/A2/ 12.2, School of Human Development
<u>Approved</u>

12.3 GRSB2018/A2/ 12.3, School of Policy and Practice
<u>Approved</u>

13.   Other student issues

None

14.   Any other business

14.1   RPL Application

<u>Noted</u>

14.2   *Video conferencing Viva Voce*

It was <u>noted</u> that a Head of School in the Faculty of Engineering and Computing has authorised the teleconferencing of a *viva voce*. Further clarification will be sought from ISS on the reliability of the technology and the room to be used, for the purposes of updating the existing guidelines.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Chair

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 26 April 2018
at 9.30 a.m. in A204