

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 24 May 2018

9:30 a.m. – 11.20 a.m. in A204

Present: Ms Michelle Brennan, Professor David Collings, Dr Charlotte Holland, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Rachel Keegan, Professor Christine Loscher, Dr Caroline McMullan, Ms Roisín Morris-Drennan, Dr Mark Roantree, Ms Sabrina Smart, Mr Allan Stevenson and Professor Joseph Stokes (Chair)

Apologies: Ms Fiona Brennan, Dr Tim McCormac, Professor Eugene McNulty and Dr Blánaid White

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the addition of 6.13.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 26 April 2018

The minutes of the meeting of 26 April 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 26 April 2018

- 3.1 The Chair noted that he had explored the circumstances of SIPTU's involvement with research students. He noted that the most recent development in this regard was the circulation of a postgraduate research student charter which was drafted with the support of SIPTU and was due to be launched on 30 May 2018. The Chair indicated that he had spoken to the SIPTU representative and outlined how all issues contained in the charter are already addressed in the various DCU policies and procedures related to research students. He noted that he would continue to follow-up in this regard.

It was noted too that a formal DCU Student Charter is already in place for all DCU students and has formal status in the University having been agreed with all stakeholders (Item 3.3).

3.2 It was noted that the Chair is in the process of developing a research student skills development strategy and he intended to include the recognition of the Research Integrity Module into this larger exercise. As it would be a more extensive project than originally envisaged he indicated that, in the interim, the item would be taken off the GRSB matters arising listing (Item 3.7).

3.3 It was noted that the Chair was awaiting a response from ISS on additional venues which can be utilised for video conferencing for the purposes of conducting a *viva voce* examination (Item 3.12).

3.4 The Chair noted it was suggested at the GRSB meeting of 26 April 2018 that it would be useful for the Board to have an understanding of the phrase ‘nearing completion’ used in the Retired Researcher Policy (under the headings: Terms of the DCU RSA and DCU Retired Staff Agreement) in the context of outlining the circumstances in which a retired member of staff might remain as a primary supervisor. He noted that he had suggested to the Research and Innovation Support GRSB representative the interpretation of ‘nearing completion’ could be where the student has met the minimum registration period (Paragraph 5.2, Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis). He had also requested, if agreed, that this interpretation would be inserted into the Retired Researcher Policy as an explanatory footnote. He noted he was awaiting a response to this request.

It was noted that Ms F. Brennan was awaiting advice from Human Resources on the use of the phrase secondary ‘internal’ supervisor when referring to retired researchers in the Retired Researcher Policy (Item 5).

3.5 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: Postgraduate Tutoring: Principles and Practice (Item 3.2).

3.6 It was noted that work on ensuring the gender mix of examining panels through cross-school arrangements is ongoing (Item 3.4).

3.7 It was noted that work is ongoing on the guidelines on recital/performance and related capacity building (Item 3.5).

3.8 It was noted that work is ongoing on the Residing Abroad Principles (Item 3.6).

3.9 It was noted that a PGR3 form for a candidate in the School of Nursing and Human Sciences had been submitted with all relevant sections completed and was approved (Item 3.8) (original ref: 2017/A8/8.12).

- 3.10 It was noted that work is ongoing on the drafting of guidelines for the 10,000-word document which accompanies the PhD by publication (Item 3.10).
- 3.11 It was noted that the document entitled *Professional Doctorates, Time line for consideration of PGR4 forms* will be completed for September 2018 (Item 3.11).
- 3.12 It was noted that a PGR4 form for a candidate in the School of Biotechnology had been approved following nomination of an alternative internal examiner (Item 9.4).
- 3.13 It was noted that a PGR4 form for a candidate in the DCU Institute of Education had been approved following confirmation that a second external examiner was not required (Item 9.18).
- 3.14 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR4 form for a candidate in the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, a decision on which was deferred at the 26 April 2018 meeting of GR SB, is ongoing (Item 9.27)
- 3.15 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR4 form for a candidate in the School of Nursing and Human Sciences, where it was requested that an alternative internal examiner be appointed is ongoing (Item 9.30).
- 3.16 It was noted that the GTE module, LG608 Research Methods considered at the 26 April 2018 meeting has been submitted for reconsideration and is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 4.5).
- 3.17 It was noted that a PGR3 form for a candidate in the School of Policy and Practice, a decision on which was deferred at the 26 April 2018 meeting, has been re-submitted and is on the agenda (item 5.3) of this meeting (Item 8.11).
- 3.18 It was noted that the GTE module, Rancare International Training School had been amended to reflect feedback from GR SB and was deemed approved (Item 4.4).
- 3.19 It was noted that a PGR4 for a candidate in the School of Computing was deemed approved following clarification of 'months of registration' and that the candidate did not require a second external examiner (Item 9.13).
- 3.20 It was noted that a PGR4 for a candidate in the School of Electronic Engineering was deemed complete following the appointment of an Independent Chairperson to address the gender mix of the examination board (Item 9.14).

SECTION B: Policy and strategy issues

4. Graduate Researcher Development

The Chair noted that it had originally been intended to note School structured doctoral pathways at this meeting, however not all were available by the deadline.

It was agreed in discussions that the initial doctoral pathway structures would be reviewed in March of each year with a view to ensuring a cross-faculty approach in terms of module offerings and, should issues arise, the structures could then be finalised at the April meeting of GRSB. This timing would ensure that Registry deadlines for the submission of structures would be met.

It was noted that the published format of structured doctoral pathways provided to students could be completed following agreement of the structures.

4.1 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences – LG608: Research Methods

Approved

Following discussions on the research methods offered in the Faculty it was noted that the module LG608, Research Methods will replace LG603: Qualitative Methods.

SECTION C: Individual student issues

The Chair requested that colleagues would be mindful of the deadline with respect to submission of forms to Registry for the consideration of GRSB. It was noted that the deadline is at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled meeting of GRSB and forms submitted after this date will have to be considered at the next scheduled meeting.

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

5.1 GRSB2018/A4/5.1, DCU Business School
Approved

5.2 GRSB2018/A4/5.2, School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education
Approved

5.3 GRSB2018/A4/5.3, School of Policy and Practice
Approved

6. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)

- 6.1 GRSB2018/A4/6.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Dr Jim Carolan, Maynooth University
Approved. Noted that this nomination was discussed in the context of the Academic Regulation 10.2.6, reciprocal arrangements, however GRSB were satisfied to approve this appointment in the context of the different disciplines of the examiners.
- 6.2 GRSB2018/A4/6.2, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Professor Cliona O'Farrelly, Trinity College Dublin
Approved
- 6.3 GRSB2018/A4/6.3, DCU Business School
Professor Belinda Dewar, University of West Scotland
Approved subject to the appointment of a second external examiner
- 6.4 GRSB2018/A4/6.4, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Professor Robert Paxton, Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Germany
Approved
- 6.5 GRSB2018/A4/6.5, EdD, DCU Institute of Education
Professor Tony Gallagher, Queen's University Belfast
Approved
- 6.6 GRSB2018/A4/6.6, PhD, School of Human Development
Dr Patricia Mannix McNamara, University of Limerick
Approved
- 6.7 GRSB2018/A4/6.7, PhD, School of Human Development
Dr Gráinne Kirwan, Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Approved
- 6.8 GRSB2018/A4/6.8, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Professor Andreas Vossler, The Open University
Approved
- 6.9 GRSB2018/A4/6.9, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Dr Sheila Spong, University of South Wales
Approved
- 6.10 GRSB2018/A4/6.10, PhD, School of Nursing and Human Sciences
Dr Mary Creaner, Trinity College Dublin
Approved, subject to the provision of the signature of the Head of School and the replacement of the Independent Chair to ensure the gender mix of the examining panel

- 6.11 GRSB2018/A4/6.11, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music
Dr Anderson Jeremiah, Lancaster University
Approved
- 6.12 GRSB2018/A4/6.12, PhD, School of Informatics and Creative Arts, DkIT
Professor Frank Lyons, Ulster University
Approved
- 6.13 GRSB2018/A4/6.13, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Professor Gillian Greenway, University of Hull
Approved, subject to the nomination of the Independent Chair and confirmation of the previous DCU examination experience of the nominee

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

- 7.1 GRSB2018/A4/7.1, PhD, DCU Business School
Approved
- 7.2 GRSB2018/A4/7.2, PhD, DCU Business School
Approved
- 7.3 GRSB2018/A4/7.3, PhD, DCU Business School
Approved

Prof David Collings queried a decision made previously by GRSB relating to students who have been through the examination process, but who, in taking time to complete required corrections, need to register for the following year. The decision was that when they exceed the maximum registration period they are required to submit a PGR14 form.

There was a brief discussion on the matter and it was noted one difficulty of the examination process in general was that incomplete PGR6 forms were often held by Chairs until such time as the examination process was complete.

It was noted that in introducing the PGR14 process while students are 'in examination' it will only capture those students who exceed the maximum registration period, however it was agreed it would be implemented for 2018-2019 and the situation would be monitored.

It was noted that to address the difficulties of incomplete PGR6 forms, consideration would be given to a request that Chairs be required to submit the parts of the PGR6 form relating to the examination immediately after the examination and, if required, to submit the section on verification of corrections separately at a later date.

8. Other student issues

There were no issues for consideration.

9. Any other business

9.1 Open Presentation for Viva Voce purposes

Prof C. Loscher queried the amended regulation with respect to open presentations for the purposes of the *viva voce*, as the custom and practice of a School in the Faculty of Science and Health was to hold an open presentation. The School has proposed maintaining the practice of an open presentation with examiners present, however, the format would be changed so that no questions would be asked of the candidate by members of the School.

It was clarified that for purposes of equity, the open presentation could not involve any element of examination and therefore the examiners should not be present.

9.2 Postgraduate Research Conference

Ms R. Keegan informed the Board that an interdisciplinary postgraduate research conference, involving the Postgraduate Society and the Graduate Studies Office is being planned for 8 and 9 November 2018. The conference is aimed at early-stage research students. The proposed theme will be Research Contribution to Society.

9.3 Last meeting

Mr Allan Stevenson noted that it was his last meeting of GR SB as Students' Union representative. He thanked colleagues for all their help and support. The Chair in turn thanked Allan Stevenson for his valued contribution to GR SB.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Chair

Date of next meeting

Thursday 21 June 2018
at 9.30 a.m. in A204