

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 28 February 2019

9:30 a.m. – 12.10 p.m. in A204

Present: Ms Michelle Brennan, Ms Lisa Buckley, Professor David Collings, Dr Charlotte Holland, Ms Margaret Irwin-Bannon (Secretary), Ms Rachel Keegan, Professor Christine Loscher, Professor Eugene McNulty, Dr Mark Roantree, Ms Sabrina Smart and Dr Joseph Stokes (Chair)

Apologies: Dr Yseult Freeney, Dr Tim McCormac, Dr Sally Smith and Dr Blánaid White

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Ms L. Buckley on her return to GRSB in her new capacity as senior administrator in Registry.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted, subject to the following changes:

- Item 8.6, should read 8.6 a and 8.6 b
- Delete 'PhD' from Item 9.4.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 10 January 2019

The minutes of the meeting of 10 January 2019 were approved subject to two minor amendments:

- Move '(original reference 5.33, 3 September 2018)' from item 3.10 to 3.11 (amended prior to the meeting)
- Correction of typo under item 3.3.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 10 January 2019

- 3.1 The Chair informed the Board that he had completed the investigations into a possible breach of academic regulations, which came to his attention following a request for an extension of registration, ref:GRSB2018/A7/12.1 (PGR14). He confirmed that he had received a declaration from the principal supervisor and the secondary external supervisor with respect to the sequence of events which led to the breach of academic regulations and the matter had been drawn to the attention of relevant parties. It was confirmed that the 'hold' on permission to extend the student registration to complete thesis corrections would now be lifted (Item 3.1).
- 3.2 The Chair informed the Board that an issue had arisen with respect to a special case admission approved by GRSB in January 2019. It had come to light subsequent to the January 2019 meeting that the applicant did not have the required language IELTS score for admission to DCU and would therefore be subject to the application of the English language derogation. However, as the applicant's admission was approved by GRSB in the first instance for entry to the Master's qualifier, the English language derogation could not be applied. The Chair confirmed that the applicant intended to meet the English language requirements in advance of admission to the Master's qualifier (Item 8.1).
- 3.3 It was noted that the Dean of Graduate Studies met with a Head of School with respect to ensuring the gender mix of examining panels through cross-school arrangements and was awaiting a decision in this regard (Item 3.2).
- 3.4 It was noted that work is ongoing on the guidelines on recital/performance and related capacity building (Item 3.7).
- 3.5 It was noted that work is ongoing on the drafting of guidelines for the 10,000-word document which accompanies the PhD by publication submission (Item 3.8).
- 3.6 It was noted that work is ongoing on the document entitled *Professional Doctorates, Time line for consideration of PGR4 forms* (Item 3.9).
- 3.7 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR3 form for a student in the School of Law and Government, where additional information was requested, is ongoing (Item 3.11), (original ref 5.33, 3 September 2018).
- 3.8 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR4 form for a student in the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, where the appointment of a female Independent Chair was requested was completed. It was noted that the student deferred the academic year 2018-2019 and the PGR4 form, which will expire before his return will be resubmitted to GRSB for approval (original ref 6.28, 3 September 2018) (Item 3.13).

- 3.9 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR3 form for a student in the School of Computing, where additional information was requested for sections B (i) and B (ii), was ongoing (original ref 9.7, 25 October 2018), (Item 3.15).
- 3.10 It was noted that the updated draft document *Guidance in respect of Remote Supervision of Research Students* is on the agenda of this meeting (Item 3.5).
- 3.11 It was noted that a report on the pilot of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement for postgraduate research (ISSE PGR) is on the agenda (item 6) of this meeting (Item 3.14).
- 3.12 It was noted that the revised PGR13 form for a student in DCUBS where the decision on approval was deferred until receipt of final sign-off by the partner university and the student, is on the agenda of this meeting under item 10.1 (original ref 9.3, 29 November 2018) (Item 3.18).
- 3.13 It was noted that on foot of an investigation into a potential breach of academic regulations the letter of offer to external examiners was amended to ensure that responsibility rests with the nominated external examiner to self-declare, should there be any potential conflict of interest (Item 3.4).
- 3.14 It was noted that the policy on the English Language derogation documentation and the operational document have been merged and the item is completed (Item 3.10).
- 3.15 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR4 form for a student in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, where the abstract was requested, was completed (original ref 6.1, 3 September 2018), (Item 3.12).
- 3.16 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR13 form for a student in the School of Nursing and Human Sciences, where additional detail in the attached agreement was requested was completed (original ref: Item 11.2, 25 October 2018), (Item 3.16).
- 3.17 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR3 form for a student in the School of Health and Human Performance, where additional detail under sections B (i) and B (ii) was requested was completed (Item 3.17).
- 3.18 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR3 form for a student in the School of Biotechnology where relevant signatures on the revised version of the form were requested, was completed (Item 5.1).
- 3.19 It was noted that follow-up with respect to a PGR3 form for a student in the School of Physical Sciences where completion of minor changes to Section B (i) of the form was requested, was completed (Item 5.3).

- 3.20 It was noted that follow-up was completed with respect to a PGR13 form for a student in the School of Computing following clarification of the planned communication schedule (Item 7.1).

SECTION B: Policy and strategy issues

4. Graduate Researcher Development

There were no items for consideration.

5. Joint Award Agreement with University of Padova

The agreement was noted.

Ms R. Keegan sought the permission of GRSB to use the same agreement as presented to GRSB for a second student for the University of Padova joint award. This course of action was agreed.

6. Irish Survey of Student Engagement Research Students: results from the pilot survey 2018, and plans for 2019

The Chair introduced this item and thanked Ms R. Keegan for her work in analysing the pilot ISSE postgraduate research data. He noted that the pilot phase of the survey had been reviewed and an additional section on 'well-being' had been added. He informed GRSB that the next postgraduate ISSE will take place from 11-31 March 2019. He indicated that once a second year of data has been gathered, there would then be an opportunity to compare data and respond to the feedback provided.

In the discussion which ensued the following was noted:

- Members felt that it was important that there would be a response to the pilot survey. It was noted that the Graduate Studies Office will be in contact with research students to let them know the outcomes of the pilot survey and to inform them that due to the late release of data there had not been time sufficient time to respond. It was noted that some changes were being introduced in any event, e.g. running research student orientation twice a year.
- The Dean of Graduate Studies indicated that he will bring the survey outcomes to the attention of Heads and Deans and to members of Education Committee and Academic Council.
- The Associate Deans for Research were invited to share the data with faculty colleagues.

- It was questioned why all students do not have a full understanding of the requirements and deadlines for the formal monitoring of their progress. It was noted too that there is quite a variance between faculties.

The report was noted.

7. Guidance in respect of remote supervision of research students

There was an extensive discussion on the proposed document which focused on the need or otherwise to fully centralise the approval process, and on the appropriate timing during the student application process, to submit the PGR13.

Following discussion on the Guidance document and consideration of the related documentation, it was agreed that:

- Those who wish to reside and undertake research abroad for six months or more can be approved at Faculty level and the approval will be noted by GRSB.
- Some further discussion should take place at Faculty and GSO level with respect to the timeframe range over and above six months that can be approved at Faculty level, e.g. 6-12 months. The proposed approval mechanism, for the yet to be determined timeframe, would be to approve at Faculty and to note at GRSB.
- Should the 6-12 months timeframe noted above be agreed, then from 12-months upwards residing abroad requests would be considered for approval by GRSB
- Requests to reside abroad for the entire duration of a research degree would also be considered for approval by GRSB.
- It was noted that some further exploration would need to take place with Registry as to the timing of the application to reside abroad during the admissions process, given that this is not a student application requirement.

SECTION C: Individual student issues

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

8.1 GRSB2019/A2/8.1, School of Computing Approved

- 8.2 GRSB2019/A2/8.2, School of History & Geography
Approved, subject to the provision of an alternative counter signature, as both the Head of School and the counter signer were involved in the transfer examination
- 8.3 GRSB2019/A2/8.3, School of History & Geography
Approved. It was noted that some clarification was required with respect to the period of time the student has been registered and whether or not registration was full-time or part-time.
- 8.4 GRSB2019/A2/8.4, School of Policy & Practice
Approved
- 8.5 GRSB2019/A2/8.5a and GRSB2019/A2/8.5b, School of Health & Science, DkIT
Approved
- 8.6 GRSB2019/A2/8.6, School of Informatics & Creative Arts, DkIT
Approved
- 9. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)**
- 9.1 GRSB2019/A2/9.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Approved
- 9.2 GRSB2019/A2/9.2, PhD, DCU Business School
Approved
- 9.3 GRSB2019/A2/9.3, MSc, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved. It was noted that the School of Chemical Sciences nominated external examiners from the same school within the same institution for this student and the nomination numbered item 9.5. A case was made by the School to not amend the nominee in this case.
- 9.4 GRSB2019/A2/9.4, MSc, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved
- 9.5 GRSB2019/A2/9.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
It was noted that this was the second nomination from the same school within the same institution, however a case was made on the grounds of the nominee being from a different discipline area.
- Approved, subject to the nomination of a new internal examiner and a new Independent Chair, and provision of a full citation of publications

- 9.6 GRSB2019/A2/9.6, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved
- 9.7 GRSB2019/A2/9.7, PhD, School of Communications
Approved
- 9.8 GRSB2019/A2/9.8, PhD, School of Health & Human Performance
Approved
- 9.9 GRSB2019/A2/9.9, MSc, School of Health & Human Performance
Approved
- 9.10 GRSB2019/A2/9.10, PhD, School of Human Development

It was noted that this re-submission was not necessary as the student was already 'in examination'.

- 9.11 GRSB2019/A2/9.11, EdD, DCU Institute of Education
Approved
- 9.12 GRSB2019/A2/9.12, PhD, School of Theology, Philosophy & Music
Decision deferred. It was noted that the external examiner nominated is a member of staff of the Royal Irish Academy with which DCU has had a 'linked agreement' and therefore an alternative external examiner should be appointed. However, if the nominated external examiner has had input in terms of examination of a 'performance' then an alternative course of action may be considered.

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

- 10.1 GRSB2019/A2/10.1, School of Computing
Approved

It was noted that the insurance details requested were provided to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

- 10.2 GRSB2019/A2/10.2, School of Computing
Noted

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

- 11.1 GRSB2019/A2/11.1, DCU Institute of Education
Approved, from July 2019 to July 2020

12. Any other business

12.1 Obtaining a visiting visa for Saudi Arabian research students who normally reside abroad

Ms R. Keegan informed GRSB that it has been confirmed by the Department of Justice and Equality that research students from Saudi Arabia who are residing and conducting research abroad should apply for the short-term internship visa via the INIS website (choosing 'other' for the purpose of the visit) each time they plan to visit DCU.

12.2 Joint supervisory agreement with Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University (PNU)

The Chair informed GRSB that Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University (PNU) has withdrawn from the negotiations on joint supervisory agreements. It was noted that existing research students will be supported, as there are existing research agreements in place, but no new students will be supported.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date of next meeting

<p>Thursday 18 April 2019 at 9.30 a.m. in A204</p>
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