

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday, 28 April 2022

9:30 am – 11:30 am

Zoom Meeting

Present: Ms Isabelle Caulfield, Prof. Edel Conway, Dr Maura Coulter, Ms Karen Keating, Dr Gillian Lake, Dr Pascal Landais, Dr David Mc Carthy (Secretary), Ms Niamh McMahan, Ms Siúin McManus, Dr Sally Smith and Prof. Joseph Stokes (Chairperson)

Apologies: Prof. David Collings, Prof. Christine Loscher and Prof. Sharon O'Brien

In Attendance: Ms Gráinne Curran and Mr Waqar Ahmed

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 31 March 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 31 March 2022 were **approved**.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Matters arising from the meeting of 31 March 2022 were **noted** as follows:

	<i>Item no. from 31 March 2022</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Details of decision/actions</i>	<i>Status</i>
3.1	3.1 (Original Ref. 12.1, 21 October 2021)	PGR15, School of Computing	Not approved. It was noted that the form is incomplete and that the required supporting documentation has not been submitted.	Ongoing

3.2	N/A (Original Ref. 9.22, 8 April 2021)	PGR4, School of Health and Human Performance	Approved. Thesis issued to examination panel in September 2021. New External Examiner appointed in November 2021 and updated PGR4 requested.	Ongoing
3.3	3.2 (Original Ref. 5.1, 2 December 2021)	Guidance on the electronic completion and submission of GRSB papers	Guidance to be documented and circulated. To include acceptable signature formats, the submission of fully completed forms and strict adherence to deadlines.	Ongoing
3.4	3.3 (Original Ref. 7, 20 January 2022)	Guidance on the use of video conferencing for <i>viva voce</i> examinations	Guidance to be updated to reflect learnings from recent months.	Ongoing
3.5	5	Change to PGR15 Form / Process – Application for Transfer / Advanced Entry to Postgraduate Research Programme	Two changes to the PGR15 that were proposed by Registry were approved. The Chair and Registry will develop a criterion relating to ethical approval, which will be reviewed by DCU Ethics Committee before it is included in the form.	Ongoing
3.6	7.7	PGR3, School of Electronic Engineering	Decision deferred. It was noted that Section C is not complete. May be considered by Chairs Action.	Ongoing
3.7	8.30	PGR4, School of Electronic Engineering	Decision deferred. It was noted that the examination panel must include one female member. This can be achieved through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson. The nomination of a female panel member should be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Ongoing
3.8	8.58	PGR4, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering	Decision deferred. It was noted that justification is required for how the student is ready to submit the PGR4 so soon after the PRG3 confirmation examination and why the confirmation exercise was not conducted within the timeline as per Regulation 8.2.1. This should be provided to GRSB for consideration.	Ongoing

3.9	9.3	PGR13, School of Communications	Approved subject to confirmation of the start and end dates for the period that the student will reside abroad. To be verified by the Chair.	Ongoing
3.10	9.4	PGR13, School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education	Approved subject to confirmation of the start and end dates for the period that the student will reside abroad. To be verified by the Chair.	Ongoing
3.11	7.11	PGR3, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering	Approved subject to confirmation that both Principal Supervisor and Internal Examiner completed Section C together. To be verified by Chair.	Complete Approved by Chairs Action, 8th April 2022
3.12	8.1	PGR4, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies	Decision deferred. It was noted that the External Examiner is a lecturer at DKIT. Therefore, a different nomination is required as per Regulation 10.2.4. This must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.1
3.13	8.11	PGR4, DCU Business School	Decision deferred. It was noted that only one recent publication is provided. One other publication in the last five years should be provided to confirm the expertise of the external examiner. This may be considered by Chairs Action.	Complete Approved by Chairs Action, 4 th April 2022
3.14	8.15	PGR4, School of Communications	Decision deferred. It was noted that full citations of the External Examiner's publications are required. May be considered by Chairs Action.	Complete Approved by Chairs Action, 5 th April 2022
3.15	8.44	DCU Institute of Education	Decision deferred. It was noted that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Regulation 10.2.9. A different nomination for External Examiner is required and must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.6
3.16	8.48	DCU Institute of Education	Decision deferred. It was noted that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Regulation 10.2.9. A different nomination for External Examiner is required and must be submitted to GRSB for	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.9

			consideration.	
3.17	8.51	PGR4, School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education	Decision deferred. It was noted that the External Examiner (1) does not meet the requirements as per Regulation 10.2.9. A different nomination for External Examiner is required and must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.11
3.18	8.55	PGR4, School of Law and Government	Decision deferred. It was noted that the External Examiner (1) does not meet the requirements as per Regulation 10.2.9. A different nomination for External Examiner is required and must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.12
3.19	8.59	PGR4, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering	Decision deferred. It was noted that the candidate is a member of staff of DCU and therefore, a second external examiner nomination is required as per Regulation 10.2.3.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.13
3.20	8.66	PGR4, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health	Decision deferred. It was noted that the examination panel must include one male member. This can be achieved through the appointment of the Independent Chairperson. The nomination of a male panel member should be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 28 th April 2022, Item 8.14
3.21	8.69	PGR4, School of Theology, Philosophy and Music	Decision deferred. It was noted that the full citations of the External Examiner are required.	Complete Approved by Chairs Action, 4 th April 2022
3.22	9.1	PGR13, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies	Approved subject to confirmation of candidate's mode of study, i.e., full-time or part-time. To be verified by the Chair.	Complete Approved by Chairs Action, 4 th April 2022
3.23	11.1	PGR15, DCU Business School	Approved subject to receipt of confirmation of ethical approval from institution of transfer. To be verified by the Chair.	Complete Approved by Chairs Action, 6 th April

				2022
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The Chair **noted** that Item 3.9 is now complete. The start and end dates for the period that the student will reside abroad was confirmed. The PGR13 was approved by Chairs Action on 21 April 2022.

SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

4. Graduate researcher development

4.1 GTE – Graduate Studies Office – GS602A, Postgraduate Tutoring Principles and Practice

Approved

4.2 GTE – School of Electronic Engineering – EE611/A, Enterprise Exp. for Grad. Research Students

Approved – It was **noted** that this is an alternative code for GS606, which will allow the module to be delivered to the increased number of postgraduate research students involved in Science Foundation Ireland projects. Dr Pascal Landais is the Module Coordinator and the module is coded according to his school, the School of Electronic Engineering.

4.3 GTE – School of Mathematical Sciences – PS526, Astrophysics 1

Approved – It was **noted** that this module was already approved as part of the *MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity* (Academic Council, 17 June 2019, Item 13.1).

4.4 GTE – School of Mathematical Sciences – PS528, Advanced Astrophysics 1

Approved – It was **noted** that this module was already approved as part of the *MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity* (Academic Council, 17 June 2019, Item 13.1).

4.5 GTE – School of Mathematical Sciences – PS529, Advanced Astrophysics 2

Approved – It was **noted** that this module was already approved as part of the *MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity* (Academic Council, 17 June 2019, Item 13.1).

4.6 GTE – School of Physical Sciences – PS524, Plasma Science and Technology 2

Approved – It was **noted** that this module was already approved as part of the *MSc in Astrophysics and Relativity* (Academic Council, 17 June 2019, Item 13.1).

5. GRSB PGR4 Consideration Timelines

The Chair proposed to clarify how the Minimum Registration Submissions Timelines for PhD, Research Master's and Professional Doctorate candidates are operationalised to ensure accordance with the academic regulations. These timelines, excluding those for Research Master's candidates, were initially approved by GRSB on 16 May 2019 (GRSB2019/A4/6). This clarification requires a change to the standard operating procedure for GRSB's consideration of PGR4 Forms for Research Master's candidates rather than a change to the academic regulations themselves.

At present, the cut-off timeframes for the appointment of examiners and thesis submission for Research Master's candidates do not align with the DCU Regulations, i.e. 2 years (24 months) full-time and 3 years (36 months) part-time.

In order to align them with the regulations, the following change to the cut-off timeframes for the appointment of examiners and thesis submission for Research Master's candidates is required:

	Full Time (24 months min.)		Part Time (36 months min.)	
	<i>Current</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
Earliest GRSB will consider examiner nomination	Once 17 months have been completed	Once 19 months have been completed	Once 27 months have been completed	Once 31 months have been completed
Notice period	Months 18 - 20	Months 20 - 22	Months 28 - 31	Months 32 - 34
Earliest Submissions will be accepted	Once 20 months have been completed	Once 22 months have been completed	Once 31 months have been completed	Once 34 months have been completed
Exam allowance	Months 21 & 22	Months 23 & 24	Months 32 & 33	Months 35 & 36

As with PhD and Professional Doctorate candidates, Research Master's candidates who intend to submit early must include a memo with their PGR4 Form. The Chair explained that this change will not prevent early submission by Research Master's candidates but will ensure that such requests are duly considered by GRSB.

This change was **approved**. The Chair **noted** that this change will be adopted for the 2022/23 academic year onward and will not be applied retrospectively.

6. Updates to Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis 2022-23

A subsequent change was proposed to the updates to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* that were approved by GRSB on 31 March 2022 (GRSB/A3/6).

This proposed change involved removing the word “negative” from the following section of Regulation 13:

Examination recommendations are approved at the relevant FABRD meeting and the opportunity to appeal follows notification of the decision of the relevant FABRD Boards or the notification of the negative recommendation to the candidate.

This change was proposed as describing recommendations as negative may be perceived to limit the appeals to instances when the candidate has failed the examination.

Ms Niamh McMahon explained that “negative” is used in Registry in instances when a lower award is recommended for a candidate than the award that he/she originally sought, for example, the recommendation of a Master’s Degree when the candidate has sought a Doctoral Award. The Chair **noted** that removing the word “negative” from this section of Regulation 13 might give the impression that, in addition to the above, all other recommendations by the examination panel can be appealed by a candidate, other than those considered by an Appeals Board.

It was **agreed** that the reasons/grounds for appeal will be clarified in *Guidance in Respect of Research Student Appeals* in light of the change to Regulation 13 that was approved by GRSB on 31 March 2022 (GRSB/A3/6).

This proposed change was **not approved**. The Chair **noted** that this may be revisited when *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* are updated for the 2023/24 academic year.

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

- 7. Applications for transfer to the PhD Register or confirmation on the PhD Register (PGR3)
 - 7.1 GRSB2022/A4/7.1, School of Computing **Approved**
 - 7.2 GRSB2022/A4/7.2, School of Computing **Approved**
 - 7.3 GRSB2022/A4/7.3, School of Computing **Approved**

8. Appointment of internal and external examiners (PGR4)

- 8.1 GRSB2022/A4/8.1, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved
- 8.2 GRSB2022/A4/8.2, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved
- 8.3 GRSB2022/A4/8.3, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved
- 8.4 GRSB2022/A4/8.4, PhD, School of Communications
Approved
- 8.5 GRSB2022/A4/8.5, PhD, Fiontar & Scoil na Gaeilge
Approved
- 8.6 GRSB2022/A4/8.6, EdD, School of Human Development
Decision Deferred – It was **noted** that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Regulation 10.2.9.
- 8.7 GRSB2022/A4/8.7, EdD, School of Education
Decision Deferred – It was **noted** that the External Examiner does not meet the requirements as per Regulation 10.2.9.
- 8.8 GRSB2022/A4/8.8, EdD, School of Education
Approved
- 8.9 GRSB2022/A4/8.9, EdD, School of Education
Approved
- 8.10 GRSB2022/A4/8.10, EdD, School of Human Development
Approved
- 8.11 GRSB2022/A4/8.11, PhD, School of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood Education
Decision Deferred – The Memo was considered by GRSB. The Board decided that the External Examiner does not meet the requirement, as per Regulation 10.2.9, of having experience in supervising research students to completion at the level of the award being sought and in the examination process of such students at the level of the award being sought. The experience of external examiners as per the regulations is considered on an individual basis rather than on the collective experience of the panel.
- 8.12 GRSB2022/A4/8.12, LLM, School of Law and Government
Decision Deferred – The Memo was considered by GRSB. The Board decided that the External Examiner does not meet the requirement, as per Regulation 10.2.9, of having experience in supervising research students to completion at the level of the award being sought and in the examination process of such students at the level of the award being sought. The experience of external examiners as per the regulations is considered on an individual basis rather than on the collective experience of the panel. GRSB will look at the wording in the regulations, to ensure there is no ambiguity that both supervision and

examining experience are required, as any alternative to this would be to lower DCU's standards.

8.13 GRSB2022/A4/8.13, PhD, School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering
Approved

8.14 GRSB2022/A4/8.14, PhD, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy & Community Health
Approved

8.15 GRSB2022/A4/8.15, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
Approved

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

9.1 GRSB2022/A4/9.1, DCU Business School
Approved

9.2 GRSB2022/A4/9.2, School of English
Noted – It was **noted** that the period for residing abroad is from April 2022 onward.

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

10.1 GRSB2022/A4/10.1, EdD, School of Human Development
Approved

11. Any other business

There was no other business.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date of next meeting

Thursday, 26 May 2022
at 9.30 a.m.
Zoom meeting