

## GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDIES BOARD

### MINUTES

Thursday, 15 February 2024  
10:00 – 11:30 am

A204, Glasnevin Campus

**Present:** Dr Conor Brennan, Ms Lisa Buckley, Ms Isabelle Caulfield, Ms Nuala Clancy, Dr Maura Coulter, Ms Karen Keating, Dr Gillian Lake, Dr David Mc Carthy (Secretary), Prof. Sharon O'Brien (Chair), Dr Niamh O'Sullivan and Dr Lisa Van der Werff.

**Apologies:** Prof. Edel Conway, Prof. Timo Gans, Dr Tim McCormac and Ms Nicola O'Reilly.

**In Attendance:** Ms Fiona Brennan.

### SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2024 were **approved**.

### 3. Matters arising from the minutes

Matters arising from the meeting of 18 January 2024 were **noted** as follows:

	<i>Item no. from 18 January 2024</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Details of decision/actions</i>	<i>Status</i>
3.1	10.2	Request to Host Fully Online Examination, School of Law and Government	Approved. It was noted that approval is subject to a PGR13 being submitted for this candidate to the next meeting of GRSB on 15 February 2024.	Ongoing Awaiting submission of PGR13.
3.2	N/A (Original Ref. Item 9.1, 30 November 2023)	PGR14, DCU Business School	Approved. It was noted that the student will be readmitted to Year 5 Part-Time and that the Principal Supervisor should confirm the date of readmission.  <b>Please Note:</b> Registry was informed that the candidate intends to register in the 2024/25 academic year, which is in contrast to the detail provided in the PGR14 considered by GRSB.	Ongoing Awaiting further update from Principal Supervisor.

3.3	3.1 (Original Ref. Item 6.9, 30 November 2023)	PGR3, School of Policy and Practice	Decision Deferred. It was noted that Section Bii should be amended to reflect that it is a joint report from the Principal Supervisor and the Internal Examiner. The revised PGR3 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.	Complete  Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 15 February 2024, Item 7.11.
3.4	8.1	PGR13, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies	Decision Deferred. It was noted that further information is required in Section A and the Agreement regarding the candidate's position in Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) and how this informs their rationale for residing abroad. Clarification is also required regarding how the candidate will be supported by their local supervisor, in particular, what is the reason for choosing a local supervisor not affiliated with PNU, access to training/resources and what will the frequency of communication be between the candidate and their local supervisor. The revised PGR13 must be submitted to GRSB.	Complete  Included on Agenda for meeting of GRSB on 15 February 2024, Item 9.1.

The Chair informed members that Item 3.1 is now complete. A PGR13 has been provided for this candidate and is included as a late item on the agenda, Item 9.2.

It was noted that the revised process for the approval and review of Graduate Training Element (GTE) Modules and Structured Doctoral Pathways (GRSB2024/A1/5) will be considered at the next meeting of GRSB. The Chair informed members that the deadline for providing feedback on 'Guidelines for the Development, Approval and Review of Graduate Training Element (GTE) Modules and Structured Doctoral Pathways' is 7 March 2024 and requested that the Associate Deans for Research share this document with relevant colleagues in their respective faculties.

The Chair informed members that the deadline for submitting new or revised GTE Modules for approval by GRSB is 15 April 2024 and that the deadline for submitting Structured Doctoral Pathways for noting by GRSB is 20 May 2024.

## **SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES**

### **4. Graduate researcher development**

#### **4.1 Graduate Skills Sessions, February-March 2024**

The Graduate Studies Office provided a list of the Graduate Skills Sessions that will be delivered from February to March 2024. The Chair requested the Associate Deans for Research to promote these sessions in their respective faculties.

The Chair called particular attention to 'Tell It Straight', which will take place on 6 March 2024. The Chair asked members to register to attend this event and Associate Deans for Research to encourage colleagues involved in supervising postgraduate research students to do the same.

#### **Noted**

### **5. Functions of Graduate Research Studies Board**

The Chair set out the Terms of Reference of GRSB, confirming the expectations associated with being a member of the committee and that decisions are made collectively by the committee and not individually by the Chair.

The Chair reminded members that they are expected to attend every meeting of GRSB and should review all PGR Forms in advance of each meeting, requesting to destar specific items that require more detailed consideration and discussion before a decision can be reached. The Chair also reminded members of the importance that all documentation submitted to GRSB contains the information required by the committee to make a decision and asked them to raise this with relevant colleagues in their respective faculties/units.

It was noted that due to the appointment of a new Dean of Graduate Studies, Chairs Action will not be taken on substantial matters in the short term. Such matters will instead be considered at the next scheduled meeting of GRSB

## 6. Updates to Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis 2024-25

The Chair explained the rationale for each of the proposed changes to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*. The following changes were **Approved**. Deletion of existing text is indicated by a ~~strike through~~, while the addition of new text is indicated by an underline.

### 1. Principles

National Framework for Doctoral Education was revised in 2023: “These regulations are guided by the University’s Marks and Standards; the Quality and Qualifications Ireland ‘Ireland’s Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes’ (2019); and the National Framework for Doctoral Education (~~2015~~ 2023)” (pp. 1).

#### 1.1 Doctoral Awards

1.1.1: Include reference to relevant academic regulation: “The PhD may vary in format of submission, as outlined in Section 9.1 below” (pp. 1).

#### 3. Qualification Requirements

3.2: Clarify the initial programme of enrolment for candidates with a Level 8 qualification or equivalent: “~~Such~~ These candidates are ~~will only be considered for entry only enrolment on the Master’s register~~ Degree by research initially” (pp. 6).

### 7. Supervision of Research Programmes

7.1: Deletion of footnote as students prior to 2011/12 have generally completed their studies and current academic regulations should apply in the case of readmissions to a postgraduate research programme (pp. 11).

#### 8.1 Annual Progression

8.1.5: Clarify when the first Annual Progress Report is due for students enrolled on a Professional Doctorate programme: “For students undertaking Professional Doctorates, ~~the requirement for an Annual Progress Report~~ will not be required ~~may be postponed~~ until the student embarks on the substantive research work” (pp. 17).

#### 13.1. Grounds for Appeal

13.1.2: Combine (i) and (ii) to reflect changes to academic regulations approved by GRSB on 30 March 2023 (GRSB2023/A3/6.2) (pp. 43).

The following change to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* was **Not Approved**.

## 9.2 Thesis Submission Procedure

9.2.3: Included in response to a concern raised at a recent FABRD regarding e-thesis copies and student signatures being included. The concern relates to data protection of the student and the risk of impersonation of their identity: “The candidate's e-signature should not appear anywhere in the electronic copy of the thesis or accompanying materials. Only unsigned theses will be uploaded to the secure web space” (pp. 26).

It was noted that revised wording for this proposed change will be presented at the next meeting of GRSB, alongside revisions to the PGR12 Form to provide guidance on the inclusion of a candidate's signature in the thesis and accompanying materials.

The Chair informed members of a further change to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* that will be considered at the next meeting of GRSB. This proposed change arose following discussions between the Academic Secretariat, DCU Library, the Graduate Studies Office and the Office of the Chief Operations Officer regarding the requirement to amend a candidate's thesis after they have completed the examination process.

## SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

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

#### 7.1 GRSB2024/A2/7.1, School of Chemical Sciences

**Decision Deferred** - It was noted that confirmation is required that the format of the PhD is by publication and full citations for each of the publications to date should be provided. The revised PGR3 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration. It was further noted that the candidate has accumulated 40 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1.

#### 7.2 GRSB2024/A2/7.2, School of Communications

**Approved** - It was noted that the candidate has accumulated 40 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 18 and 31.5 months.

#### 7.3 GRSB2024/A2/7.3, School of Computing

**Approved** - It was noted that the candidate has accumulated 28 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1.

- 7.4 GRSB2024/A2/7.4, School of Computing  
**Approved** - It was noted that the candidate has accumulated 36 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1. It was further noted that Section Bii should contain further detail on the oral examination.
- 7.5 GRSB2024/A2/7.5, School of Health and Science DkIT  
**Approved** - It was noted that the candidate has accumulated 39 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1.
- 7.6 GRSB2024/A2/7.6, School of Health and Science DkIT  
**Approved**
- 7.7 GRSB2024/A2/7.7, School of Electronic Engineering  
**Decision Deferred** - It was noted that the affiliation of the student needs to be changed and, subsequently, the PGR3 must be resubmitted to GRSB for consideration. It was further noted that the candidate has accumulated 31 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1.
- 7.8 GRSB2024/A2/7.8, School of Electronic Engineering  
**Approved** - It was noted that the candidate has accumulated 40 months and should have undergone the process for confirmation on the PhD Register between 12 and 21 months as per Academic Regulation 8.2.1. It was further noted that Section C should be revised to remove any references to the inclusion of publications as the thesis format is monograph.
- 7.9 GRSB2024/A2/7.9, School of Law and Government  
**Decision Deferred** - It was noted that changes to the composition of the supervisory panel need to be confirmed following a meeting of the Faculty Research Committee in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The revised PGR3 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.
- 7.10 GRSB2024/A2/7.10, School of Policy and Practice  
**Approved**
- 7.11 GRSB2024/A2/7.11, School of Policy and Practice  
**Approved**

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

- 8.1 GRSB2024/A2/8.1, MSc, School of Biotechnology  
**Approved** - It was noted that an Independent Chairperson is not required for the examination of a thesis submitted for the award of a Master's Degree by Research.
- 8.2 GRSB2024/A2/8.2, PhD, DCU Business School  
**Approved**
- 8.3 GRSB2024/A2/8.3, PhD, DCU Business School  
**Approved**
- 8.4 GRSB2024/A2/8.4, PhD, School of Communications  
**Approved**
- 8.5 GRSB2024/A2/8.5, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
**Decision Deferred** - It was noted that there is a reciprocal arrangement query with the nominated External Examiner, which has been raised with the Head of School. The revised PGR4 must be submitted to GRSB for consideration.
- 8.6 GRSB2024/A2/8.6, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
It was noted that this item was withdrawn from the agenda.
- 8.7 GRSB2024/A2/8.7, EdD, DCU Institute of Education  
**Approved**
- 8.8 GRSB2024/A2/8.8, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering  
**Approved**
- 8.9 GRSB2024/A2/8.9, PhD, School of Communications  
**Noted** – Approved by Chairs Action on 22 January 2024.

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

- 9.1 GRSB2024/A2/9.1, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies  
**Approved** – It was noted that any training completed by the candidate in Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University should not conflict with the policies and practices of DCU.
- 9.2 GRSB2024/A2/9.2, School of Law and Government  
**Approved**



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

10.1 GRSB2024/A2/10.1, PhD, School of Health and Human Performance (CA)  
**Noted** – Approved by Chairs Action on 17 January 2024.

**11. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

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

**Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 28 March 2024

10.00 a.m.

A204, Glasnevin Campus