

SENATE RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2021/22

PARENT BODY: Senate

PURPOSE: Senate Research Degrees Committee is responsible for advising and making recommendations to Senate on the enhancement of academic quality and assurance of academic standards for Level 8 Research Degrees. It reviews the academic provision to ensure that standards are maintained and opportunities developed to enhance academic quality. It reviews and takes appropriate action on the academic regulatory framework and its operation, progress against the School Strategy and the evidence on the student experience. The Committee works with its student members in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of the student educational experience. It also ensures that equity, diversity and inclusion considerations are integrated into all aspects of the committee's business.

1. DELEGATED DECISIONS:

- 1.1. Approve the academic staff qualified to act as Research Degree Supervisors;
- 1.2. Approve the appointment of Research Degree Supervisors for specific Research Degree students;
- 1.3. Approve the appointment of Research Degree Examiners;
- 1.4. Award all Research Degrees on behalf of Senate;
- 1.5. Appoint Chair and Panel for Research Degree Academic Appeals and receive reports from the Panels;
- 1.6. Approve and monitor the implementation of School plans to enhance academic quality and monitor quality assurance for Research Degrees;
- 1.7. For any assessed taught components of Level 8 Programmes
 - 1.7.1. Approve new provision and any changes to existing provision including the termination of modules. Recommend to Senate the termination of a Programme;
 - 1.7.2. Approve terms of reference and appoint members of Validation Panels;
 - 1.7.3. Approve and oversee the arrangements for the annual and periodic review of the assessed taught components of Programmes and Modules;
 - 1.7.4. Approve and monitor implementation of any action plans to enhance academic quality and monitor quality assurance;
 - 1.7.5. Approve Programme and Module Specifications;
 - 1.7.6. Approve and oversee the Programme and Module Evaluation process;
 - 1.7.7. Approve the appointment of External Examiners
 - 1.7.8. Approve membership and terms of reference of the Programme Boards of Examiners including appointing their Chairs and Deputy Chairs;
 - 1.7.9. Approve the Programmes' responses to External Examiners' reports;

- 1.7.10. Appoint Chair and Panel for Academic Appeals and receive reports from the Panels
 - 1.7.11. Approve the terms of reference and appointments to Periodic Review Panels;
 - 1.7.12. Approve the Periodic Review Report
 - 1.7.13. Approve revalidation of assessed taught components of Programmes following the report of the Periodic Review Panel and any resulting action plan;
 - 1.7.14. Review preparations for any external review of provision. To approve and monitor any action plan following an external review;
- 1.8. Determine the terms of reference of any sub-committee or ad hoc working group including any appointments as Chair or Deputy Chair; and
 - 1.9. Approve a delegation framework identifying where authority delegated by Senate to the Committee is delegated. This will be reported to Senate.
- 2. OTHER TERMS OF REFERENCE:**
- 2.1. Provide assurance to Senate through an annual report covering the Committee's purpose as defined above;
 - 2.2. Review progress against the School Strategy for Research Degrees and assist in the periodic review of that Strategy;
 - 2.3. Review the management of risks relating to the School's Research Degrees and monitor actions taken to minimise those risks;
 - 2.4. Recommend changes to Senate Regulations and related policies & key procedures in respect of the Committee's purpose (above). Promote harmonisation between Faculties;
 - 2.5. Review preparations for any external review of Research Degree provision. To recommend and monitor any action plan following an external review;
 - 2.6. Assure itself that the process of assessment has been conducted appropriately having reviewed a report from the Level 8 Programme Committees and comments from the External Examiner for the assessed taught components of Level 8 Programmes. Also any other generic issues brought to the Committee's attention by Quality & Academic Standards including any issues raised in the Research Degrees Examiners' Reports. Recommend any changes to the regulatory framework, policies or key procedures;
 - 2.7. Consider at least annually a cross faculty report listing those who have been Research Degree Examiners in the School in the last year; and
 - 2.8. Review and promote educational developments and innovation including sector scanning for best practice. Share best practice across the School.

COMPOSITION:

Membership:

- Head of the Doctoral College (Chair)
- Pro-Director (Education)
- Chairs of Faculty Research Degrees Committees
- Level 8 Programme Directors
- Faculty Research Degree Managers
- Deputy Head of Quality and Academic Standards
- Head of Registry
- EDI Manager
- SRC Vice-President (Research Degrees)
- Up to 3 students – one from each Faculty plus one student from a Level 8 Programme with assessed taught components;

In attendance:

- Secretary to the committee
- Secretary & Registrar or their nominee
- Other Staff as required and approved by the Chair

MODE OF OPERATION:

Meetings shall be held at least once a term.

The quorum of the Senate Research Degrees Sub-Committee is a minimum of four members.

RESERVED BUSINESS:

Student members of the Committees shall not be entitled to participate in the consideration of reserved areas of business. Reserved areas of business normally include any sensitive or confidential matter relating to individual identifiable members of staff or students. It shall be for the Chair to decide in any case of doubt whether a matter is a reserved area of business and that decision shall be final. Agenda and papers for, and minutes of, any meeting relating to Reserved Areas of Business shall be recorded separately and circulated only to those members of the meeting entitled to receive them. Any important general issues relating to academic quality and standards arising from reserved business will be discussed at future meetings under unreserved business.