

RESEARCH DISCIPLINE AREA VALIDATION

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Discipline Area: | Science |
| Date of Panel: | 15 th February 2017 |
| Review panel: | Mr Tom Cullivan, Retired Secretary of HETAC, Chair Dr Miriam Clegg , Oxford Brookes University, UK Dr Edel Keaveney, Athlone IT Dr Aileen McGloin, Safefood Dr Des Foley, Acting Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar (Secretary) |
| Proposing Staff: | Dr Seamus Lennon, Head of Department of Biopharmaceutical & Medical Science Dr Lisa Ryan, Head of Department of Natural Sciences Dr Sean Duignan, Head of Department of Computer Science & Applied Physics |
| Proposal: | <p>This proposal arises from the introduction of the “Sectoral Protocol for the Awarding of Research Master’s Degrees at NFQ Level 9 under delegated authority (DA) from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)” and the subsequent “GMIT policy NFQ Level 9 Research Discipline Area Validation Policy and Procedures.”</p> <p>This is the first validation of its type in GMIT. GMIT’s research validation policy requires the submission of a self-evaluation report, to be considered by an internal panel and if approved to proceed by an external panel. The function of this panel is to evaluate the capacity/capability to run research Masters programmes (level 9) in the discipline of science. The following criteria to be used in assessing the proposal are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The link between research activity in a research unit and the Institute’s Research Strategy has been established; 2. There is support for the new research degree discipline area from relevant external stakeholders; 3. The infrastructure, staffing and resources for the new research degree discipline area will be made available; 4. The Academic Unit, Research Centre or Research Group has the research capability; level and range of competencies and |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>expertise necessary to deliver the Research Degree Programme(s) in the discipline area.</p> <p>5. Organisation, sustainability and the research unit's growth trajectory were evaluated.</p> <p>This submission for research discipline area validation covers the broad area of science as outlined in ISCED Fields of Education and Training 2013 (ISCED-F 2013), specifically covering biological and related sciences, environment, physical sciences, mathematics and statistics and information and communication technologies.</p> |
| <p>Findings and Recommendation:</p> | <p>Following consideration of the self-evaluation report, the panel was of the view that the School of Science and Computing has the appropriate capacity and capability to run research masters programmes in the broad area of science as proposed. Therefore, the panel recommends that the School of Science & Computing be awarded delegated authority for level 9 research programmes.</p> <p>Under each criterion, the panel had the following findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The link between research activity in a research unit and the Institute's Research Strategy has been established The Institute should be in a position to develop without artificial barriers and commended the School Strategy in this regard. 2. There is support for the new research degree discipline area from relevant external stakeholders No comments or observations 3. The infrastructure, staffing and resources for the new research degree discipline area will be made available The School has identified resource issues in the report most particularly in the SWOT analysis and is aware of the challenges, and is dependent on the Institute funding of research to some extent. It was clarified that each post-graduate research student attract 2 hours teaching/supervision time for academic staff which in itself is very useful for staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation: Enhance the detail provided in the documentation, as articulated in the meeting, in relation to student support as they undertake masters by research programmes. 4. The Academic Unit, Research Centre or Research Group has the research capability; level and range of competencies and expertise necessary to deliver the Research Degree Programme(s) in the discipline area. It was noted by the panel at the meeting that the staff profile in the School is very impressive with over 60% having PhD |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | <p>qualifications. The point was also made that there are a high number of new recruits to the staff and that The School needed to set them on a research trajectory and keep them research-active.</p> <p>5. Organisation, sustainability and the research unit's growth trajectory were evaluated. Whilst this panel is concerned with Level 9, the clear intent is to work towards expanded Level 10 provision in the future.</p> |
| Recommendation | <p>Enhance the detail provided in the documentation, as articulated in the meeting, in relation to student support as they undertake masters by research programmes.</p> <p>DA document updated (Section 5.1) in response to the above recommendation and subsequently reviewed and approved by the panel chair on 20th February 2017.</p> |
| FAO Academic Council | Approved. |
| Signed: | Chair |
| Signed: | Secretary |
| Date: | |