



**TERMS OF REFERENCE, MEMBERSHIP AND STANDING ORDERS OF  
UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE,  
A SUB-COMMITTEE  
OF  
ACADEMIC COUNCIL  
OF DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY**

**Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar)**

**Approved, 4 October 2017**

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## UNIVERSITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

### Terms of reference, membership and standing orders Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar)

1 October 2017

#### 1. Context of University Standards Committee

The University Standards Committee was established by a decision of Executive on 6 April 2006.

The minutes of USC meetings, once approved by the USC, are sent to Academic Council for approval.

#### 2. Terms of reference of the University Standards Committee

The University Standards Committee is responsible to Academic Council for development, maintenance and review of University academic regulations and guidelines.

The remit of the USC includes:

- (i) Oversight of the development and operation of University regulations and guidelines in relation to academic affairs, to include responsibility for University-level regulatory issues, such as examination regulations and derogations to Marks and Standards.
- (ii) Oversight of academic affairs with a view to maintaining good practice.
- (iii) Oversight of developments to the University's academic framework (e.g. changes to the existing modular system)
- (iv) Consideration of relevant matters arising from minutes of Faculty Teaching/ Education Committees, to include:
  - requests for derogations from Marks and Standards
  - requests for changes to examination regulations
  - requests for approval of nominations/ changes to duties of external examiners for taught programmes
  - requests for readmission to programmes of study of candidates who have exceeded the maximum registration period
  - regulatory issues as highlighted in external examiners' reports and also relevant matters from quality reviews.
- (v) Periodically reviewing and making recommendations in relation to the University's policies on admissions, including CAO, non-traditional, access and international admissions.
- (vi) Considering, and where appropriate making recommendations on, relevant issues submitted by the Students' Union.

Consideration of the above matters may, on occasion, involve consideration and approval of the regulatory aspects of decisions taken by other committees such as the Education Committee and the Graduate Research Studies Board.

The USC normally meets six times in the academic year.

## **2 Membership of the University Standards Committee**

### **3.1 The Membership list**

- Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning - *Chair*
- Member of Academic Affairs' Secretariat - *Secretary*
- Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning/Education, and a representative from Open Education in respect of teaching and learning
- Representative from the Associate Deans for Research
- Director of Registry
- Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit
- Student's Union Vice-President – Academic Affairs
- Representative of Faculty Administration
- One representative of the Director of the Library and the Director of Information Systems and Services, normally on a rotating basis per academic year
- One Head of School, who may be a Group Head or the Deputy Dean in the case of DCUBS
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Such other members as may be co-opted from time to time.

### **3.2 Substitution of representation**

Substitution of representation is not permitted as a matter of course. If, however, a member wishes to speak to an agenda item and cannot be present, a substitute may attend for that item subject to permission from the Chair.

### **3.3 Representative from the Associate Deans for Research**

The representative from the Associate Deans for Research will be agreed among this group, and his/her identity notified by the group to the Secretary. At the end of each academic year, the group of Associate Deans for Research will be asked to nominate their representative for the coming year (who may be the current representative).

### **3.4 Representative from Faculty Administration**

The representative from Faculty Administration will be agreed by the Faculty Administration Peer Group, and his/her identity notified by the Group to the Secretary. At the end of each academic year, the FAPG will be asked to nominate their representative for the coming year (who may be the current representative).

### **3.5 Head of School**

The Head of School is nominated by the Deans of Faculty. At the end of each academic year, the Deans of Faculty will be asked to nominate the representative Head for the coming year (who may be the current representative).

### **3.6 Students Union**

Elections for officers of the Students' Union take place in Semester 2 of each academic year in accordance with approved procedures. The officers' term runs for one year, from 15 June to 14 June.

## **3 Standing orders of the University Standards Committee**

### **4.1 Chair, secretariat**

**4.1.1** The Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning is Chair of the USC. In the absence of the Chair from a meeting, another person as may be determined by the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning will chair the meeting.

**4.1.2** A member of the Academic Affairs' Secretariat is Secretary to the Committee.

### **4.2 Meetings**

**4.2.1** A schedule of meetings for each academic year is noted by Executive in advance of that year.

**4.2.2** Additional meetings can be convened either (i) by the Committee at one of its scheduled meetings; (ii) by the Chair; (iii) by a request to the Chair signed by at least one one-third of the members of the Committee and submitted at least ten working days in advance of the proposed date of the meeting.

**4.2.3** The normal duration of meetings will be not more than two hours.

### **4.3 Agenda**

**4.3.1** The first item of business at each meeting will be the adoption of the agenda.

**4.3.2** The agenda is divided into three sections:

- A Adoption of the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising from these minutes
- B External examiner nominations, and issues submitted by Faculty Teaching and Learning/Education Committees (see 2 (iv) above)
- C Other issues (non-Faculty specific). The first item in this section is always 'Marks and Standards'.

- 4.3.3** Any member may request to have an item placed on the agenda for a meeting of the Committee. Notification must be made to the Secretary in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year.

#### **4.4 Minutes**

The Secretary will keep minutes of every meeting of the Committee and will circulate these in draft form to all members in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year.

#### **4.5 Documents**

- 4.5.1** All documents for circulation to the members of the Committee must be submitted to the Secretary in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year. Documents (or draft agenda items or questions) given to the Chair will be considered to have been given to the Secretary. The Secretary will cause documents for a meeting to be circulated in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year.

- 4.5.2** A document may be tabled at a meeting provided it relates to one of the agenda items for the meeting and provided two-thirds of the members present agree to its being tabled.

- 4.5.3** Documents will normally be made available in electronic format only.

#### **4.6 Quorum and attendance**

- 4.6.1** A meeting will not commence until at least one third of the members are present. If a quorum is not forthcoming, the Chair will set an alternative date for the meeting.

- 4.6.2** The Chair may invite non-members of the Committee to attend for specific items of the agenda.

#### **4.7 Mode of address**

Speakers will always address the Chair. While a member is speaking, other members will be silent.

#### **4.8 Motions**

- 4.8.1** A motion is a proposal which is put forward. A resolution is the acceptance of a motion by a meeting.

- 4.8.2** For a motion to be put to a meeting, it requires a proposer and a seconder. A motion from the Chair does not require a seconder.

**4.8.3** For an amendment to a motion to be put, it requires a proposer and a seconder. An amendment will be put to a vote before the original motion.

**4.8.4** If an amendment is not carried, the Chair will put the motion in its original form to a vote. If an amendment is carried, the Chair will put the amended motion to the meeting. Before a motion or an amendment is put to a vote, the Secretary will read out the text to be voted on.

## **4.9 Voting**

**4.9.1** Where a motion has been put to the meeting, the Chair will ask the Committee whether or not it assents, and the decision will normally be by acclamation. Where there appears to be a division, the Chair will call for a vote; such a vote may also be requested by any member. The results of voting will be counted and recorded by the Secretary.

**4.9.2** It is open to any member to propose a motion demanding a secret ballot and this motion, if seconded, can be dealt with in the usual way.

**4.9.3** The number of votes for and against a motion, and the number of abstentions, will be recorded in the minutes.

**4.9.4** If the votes for and against a proposal are equal, the Chair has an additional, casting, vote as Chair.

## **4.10 Points of order and closure**

**4.10.1** A member may, at any time and without notice, interrupt debate by raising a 'point of order'. The Chair will decide whether the point of order is admissible, and his/her ruling will be final.

**4.10.2** A motion for closure, if seconded in the usual way, must be put to the vote at once, without being discussed.

## **4.11 Emergency items**

**4.11.1** Any member may seek to add an item to the agenda as an emergency item. An emergency item can only be one which could not have been foreseen in accordance with the schedule of notification/circulation/submission of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year and which must be resolved before the next scheduled meeting. A vote must be held on every proposal for an emergency item to be inscribed, and for it to be inscribed it must get the assenting votes of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting. Members may vote only for or against the inscription of an emergency item; members abstaining will not be considered, for the purposes of the vote, to be 'present and voting'.

**4.11.2** Occasionally, it may be appropriate to deal electronically with an urgent item which needs to be resolved before the next scheduled meeting. In such an instance, the

Secretary will cause the documentation relating to the item to be circulated and will request responses by a specified date and time. After the deadline has passed, the Secretary will inform the Committee of the outcome of the discussion. The outcome will be noted in the minutes of the next scheduled meeting.

#### **4.12 Delegated authority/Chair's action**

The Chair shall have delegated authority to act between scheduled meetings on:

- Matters relating to the implementation of decisions which have already been approved at previous meetings
- Items which in the view of the Chair are too urgent and important for consideration to be deferred until the next scheduled meeting, especially where any lack of timely action could damage the interest of the student or the university.

The outcomes of such actions shall be reported by the Chair to the next meeting.

#### **4.13 Other business**

4.13.1 The rubric 'other business' on each agenda will be used only (a) to inform the meeting of agenda items which are proposed for the next following meeting or (b) to convey briefly other items of information of a factual nature.

#### **4.14 Interpretation**

4.14.1 Where a dispute arises as to the interpretation of these orders, the decision of the Chair is final.