

## COVID 19

### QM Update to External Exam/Progression Boards/School Examination Officer Role

#### **Schools Exam/Progression Boards**

In order to reduce the impact of COVID 19 and to enable the Exam/Progression Boards to take place in the summer, the following amended guidelines have been approved.

#### **Membership**

##### Chair of Exam/Progression Boards

In order to ensure the Board can still operate, it is proposed that the Head of School identifies up to 3 alternative members of the leadership team who can chair the Exam/Progression/ Board; for example, the Director of Teaching (UG and/or PG), Deputy Head of School (where one exists).

#### **Quoracy**

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that sufficient internal and external members are present to enable valid decisions to be taken.

In order to ensure that the Exam/Progression Board upholds academic standards a **quorate membership is required** for the Board to be operational.

Exam/Progression Board membership for this period (Summer 2020) to consist of the following:

- Chair – as above
- Exams Officer or Deputy Exams Officer, if not acting as the Chair
- Sufficient academic staff to cover all modules and at all levels (to be determined by the Chair and rationale noted in the minutes)
- External Examiner – from either the programme they are allocated to or a cognate programme, if not in person then by digital means (Skype, MS Teams, Video Conferencing) or Teleconferencing
- Where appropriate, UNM and UNNC to be represented either before, during or after the Board depending on their timelines
- Representation by Board members may be either in person or via electronic means (Skype, Teams, Video Conferencing), or via Teleconferencing
- In the event of a technical interruption as a result of conducting the Board by electronic means, Chair's actions will be taken as the final decision\*. (See note in Default agenda (Summer 2020) below.)

#### Notes on potential technological failure

- If there is a failure in the connection/technology, attempts should be made to re-connect. In the event of a serious or protracted breakdown in the connection or quality of the connection of more than 20 minutes the Exam/Progression Board should be halted. However, if it is clear that re-connection cannot be made or is unlikely before 20 minutes have elapsed, the Exam/Progression Board should be

halted.

- If the Exam/Progression Board must be halted due to a breakdown in the connection or quality of the connection, the Chair should consult with the Exams Officer and External Examiner via an alternative method (e.g. telephone). They should decide whether there is a need to reconvene at another date or whether sufficient discussion had taken place. If it is agreed that the Board needs to be re-scheduled this should be at a mutually agreed time for all parties.
- In making the decision whether or not the Board must reconvene, the Chair should consider whether or not the External Examiner has been able to provide an overview that overall standards have been met. If the Examiner has been able to do this, the Chair may judge that the External Examiner's input has been sufficient.

### **Powers and responsibilities**

Boards for Summer 2020 are to be conducted using the Exceptional Regulations in conjunction with the existing regulations.

### **Default agenda (Summer 2020)**

Please ensure that all Exam/Progression Board meetings from summer 2020 onwards until further notice, have a standing agenda item entitled 'Consideration of the effect of COVID 19' as this may still impact students beyond 19/20 particularly where Extenuating Circumstances have been carried over to a final Exam/Progression Board. Under this item the Board is asked to formally minute how COVID 19 has been considered and dealt with in terms of marks for award and progression if relevant.

\*In the event of Chair's actions, these must be fully documented and recorded.

### **School Exams Officer Role**

As part of the University's response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, a number of exceptional regulations have now been introduced to ensure that teaching and learning continues throughout this period.

Consultation with External Examiners on various aspects of the assessment process during this time may not prove feasible. The University will ensure that the exceptional assessment regulations and the underlying principles are confirmed to the External Examiner. School Exams Officers are asked to keep the External Examiner informed about the application of those regulations in the School setting as soon as possible and ahead of the Exam/Progression Board meeting.