

**Quality Assurance Procedures
To Approve Changes to Delivery & Assessment of TU Dublin Programmes
Necessitated by Covid-19 measures.**

Approved by Academic Council 23rd March 2020

Context

Arising from the unforeseen emergency measures required for the containment of the COVID-19 virus outbreak, contingency QA procedures are being enacted. This will allow changes to approved programme/course documents regarding the delivery and assessment of student learning during this emergency period to be adopted. This measure is one of several initiatives taken by the University to address the national requirements for the containment of the Covid-19 virus. Examinations invigilated in the traditional manner will not take place in May and all programmes should move towards alternative assessment arrangements.

There is a consensus that in the case of an emergency closure, the University should prioritise the maintenance of academic integrity by ensuring the appropriateness of alternative student assessments that may be adopted by each programme. Schools can continue to deliver modules remotely if the required expertise and applications are available, and in addition, student independent and self-directed learning can continue under the guidance of the lecturer through the provision of appropriate learning resources.

Following on from discussions at the relevant University and Campus committees, the quality assurance procedures for approving emergency changes to assessment procedures are described below. These procedures are to be applied in the event that the assessment methods prescribed within the module descriptors cannot be facilitated due to the measures put in place to address the Covid-19 virus.

The need to replace assessments arises as examinations invigilated in the traditional manner will not take place in May as provided in the 2019-2020 academic calendar. The procedures can also be applied to address other assessment related issues arising from the Covid-19 situation, such as:

- To replace group assessments to avoid close face-to-face proximity;
- The University is open but a decision is made not to facilitate invigilated examinations;
- A student cannot complete a work-placement.

Procedures for approving Emergency Changes to Assessment Methods

It is noted that different contingency arrangements are required for:

- Modules that do not contribute to the final award classification
- Modules that contribute to the final award classification

Procedures for Modules that do not contribute to the Final Award Classification

1. Examinations invigilated in the traditional manner will not take place in May and all programmes should move towards alternative assessment arrangements.
2. Schools develop a contingency assessment strategy for modules that normally include an invigilated examination or any assessment that cannot be completed due to the University buildings closing or any measure put in place to address the Covid-19 virus.

An alternative assessment should assess the required learning outcomes and should be a non-invigilated assessment(s) to be completed remotely by students and submitted electronically.

3. An assessment status record (template attached) will be compiled by each School. The template requires Schools to provide the following information for semester 2 or year-long modules, on programmes that reside in their school:
 - What is the current assessment method(s) per module descriptor?
 - What is the proposed contingency assessment method(s) if teaching is completed but pending any assessment?
 - What is the proposed contingency assessment method(s) if teaching is cut short?
 - What are the learning outcomes (or parts of learning outcomes) that may not be covered?
 - What supports are required to facilitate the proposed alternative assessments?

Any proposed changes in currently approved assessment weightings also need to be identified. Schools should approve the proposed changes and collate the information into one file and forward the completed database to their Academic Board (City) or the Registrar (Blanchardstown, Tallaght). Academic Boards will in turn forward the databases to Academic Affairs and the Registrars will forward the information to Examinations. The role of Academic Affairs/Registrar is to oversee the agreed procedure and bring forward details relating to interim assessment arrangements to Academic Council for approval.

4. In the context of assessments that have already been completed, schools should identify which of the associated learning outcomes have been addressed. Schools are requested to note prerequisite learning outcomes that may not be met and make arrangements to integrate the learning outcomes into modules in the following year of the programme. Where applicable, particular focus should be on pre-requisite learning outcomes for the follow-on modules. Where appropriate, module delivery remotely through the provision of learning resources to support independent learning should be implemented.
5. Subject to approval by the School, modules not contributing to the final award classification can be assessed on a pass/fail basis, i.e. no grades assigned.
6. All assessments replacing invigilated examinations should be completed and submitted by **20th May 2020**. Deadlines for submission of assessment work by students should be staggered to ensure adequate time for marking before assessment boards and to avoid students having to submit multiple assessments at the same time.
7. If alternative arrangements for assessment are not proposed then examinations will be facilitated at the earliest opportunity.

The following points should be noted:

- Schools should ensure that a strategy is put in place to maximise the number of learning outcomes assessed.
- It may be the case that a school is satisfied that all learning outcomes have been sufficiently assessed through assessments that have already taken place at that point.

Procedures for Modules that contribute to the Final Award Classification

1. Steps 1 to 3 of the procedures detailed above should be followed.
2. Schools should decide whether a cohort of students at the final year of their programme can be considered for an award on the basis of the teaching that has taken place prior to the closure of the buildings, considering the programme learning outcomes. If so, the school should set out the procedures through which this can take place (e.g. involving reweighting of modules).

3. In the event that a school determines that additional teaching is required in order for a cohort of students at the final year of their programme to be considered for an award, considering the programme learning outcomes, the continued delivery of the programme will take place in line with University policy (e.g. upon the reopening of buildings, or using an alternative means of delivery prior to the reopening of buildings).
4. For modules contributing to the final award classification, grades must be assigned.
5. Where a module contributes to the final award classification but the module is not in the final year, an amendment to the weighting of its contribution to the final mark, for that cohort only, can be brought forward for approval. For instance, where the overall award classification is based on modules from the penultimate years plus the final year, the overall award classification calculation can be amended to be based on modules already completed and assessed in the penultimate year and the final year only, with approval from Academic Board.
6. All assessments replacing invigilated examinations should be completed and submitted by **20th May 2020**. Deadlines for submission of assessment work by students should be staggered to ensure adequate time for marking before assessment boards and to avoid students having to submit multiple assessments at the same time.
7. If alternative arrangements for assessment are not proposed then examinations will be facilitated at the earliest opportunity.

Programmes involving External Body Accreditation

Programmes with external accreditation requirements that may not permit the replacement of stated assessments should be identified, e.g. CORU. The focus on many of these programmes relates to the development of specified competencies and that students will need to satisfy the regulatory body requirements before graduating. Such programmes will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Also, additional hours of teaching may be required for such programmes in order to ensure that regulatory body requirements are met.

Continued Delivery of Modules

When the delivery of a module is to be continued via remote access, such as through the VLE or other online platforms, the School delivering the module must ensure all students have confirmed they have the necessary access to enable their full engagement remotely, taking in

consideration students with learning difficulties. The same requirements should be applied where alternative assessments have been proposed. Continued module delivery can be facilitated through the VLE by the provision of learning resources and tasks that require the students to engage in independent learning.

Assessment Regulations

All regulations and provisions as described in the Marks & Standards document or the General Assessment Regulations, such as personal circumstances forms, re-check and appeals, are still valid.

Resources

<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/10-Points-to-Consider-in-Choosing-Alternative-Assessment-Methods.pdf>

<http://bit.ly/OnlineTeachingHEIE>