



**Academic Quality
Framework
Student Experience Committee
Terms of Reference**

Approved by Academic Council

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The Student Experience Committee (SEC) is a sub-committee of Academic Council. SEC shall have responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the student experience across the University.

1. Responsibilities

The Student Experience Committee (SEC) has the following responsibilities:

- a. To ensure there is a consistent, quality, student-centred experience for all TU Dublin students (full-time and part-time undergraduates and postgraduates from all cohorts i.e. taught programmes, research and apprentices) in alignment with the Education, Diversity and Inclusion Framework.
- b. To champion an inclusive model of student engagement and identify priority initiatives to support the development and recognition of student skills for success in both curricular and co-curricular activities.
- c. To commission, subject to approval by Academic Council and/or funded by means of other appropriate University structures, new work to help address shared TU Dublin and Students' Union priorities.
- d. To consider and provide commentary on TU Dublin policies, proposals and reports that can inform, enhance or impact on the quality of the student experience.
- e. To prepare and report regularly (including an annual report) on its work to Academic Council.
- f. To review national surveys and reports and provide responses and action plans.
- g. To monitor, review and report on mechanisms and systems which enable students to provide feedback on all aspects of their experience at TU Dublin and on subsequent modifications made as a result of these changes.
- h. To make recommendations to Academic Council and other appropriate boards/committees regarding retention and student success reports.

- i. Providing avenues for all students to give feedback and make recommendations on their experience in line with its function as a committee of Academic Council.
- j. Carry out such other functions as are considered appropriate subject to the approval of Academic Council.
- k. Submit approved minutes to Academic Council and where required submit reports and/or draft proposals for noting/approval.

2. Membership

2.1 The Membership of SEC shall ensure the committee has members with the required expertise, to ensure effective and efficient decision making, from across the University to carry out the responsibilities listed above.

2.2 The membership of SEC shall comprise:

- Head of Student Services & Wellbeing (Chairperson) (ex-officio)
- Head of Recruitment, Admissions & Participation (ex-officio)
- Head of Academic Affairs (ex-officio)
- 1 academic staff member from each Faculty Board and from the Graduate Research School Board (elected)
- 5 student members (nominated)
- 6 members from Professional Services (elected) with at least one from each of the following:
 - i. ICT Services
 - ii. Library Services
 - iii. Recruitment, Admissions & Participation
 - iv. Student Services & Wellbeing
- 3 Academic Council members (elected)

2.3 The academic staff from the Faculty Boards will be identified through the process described in Appendix B.

- 2.4 The student members will be nominated by the Students' Union in accordance with its own procedures.
- 2.5 The SEC members from Professional Services will be identified through an Expression of Interest process.
- 2.6 All Academic Council members will have the opportunity to nominate themselves to become a member of SEC. In the event there are more nominations than required members an election will be held as per the process described in Appendix B.
- 2.7 With the approval of Academic Council up to two additional members may be co-opted and in addition other persons may be invited to attend by the Chairperson as considered appropriate. To propose new members, the Chairperson should write to the Chairperson of Academic Council with the names of the proposed additional members and a rationale for their membership.
- 2.8 The membership of SEC will be at least 40% gender balanced.

3. Term of Office

- 3.1 The term of office of non-ex-officio members of SEC shall not exceed 3 years and a member may not serve more than two consecutive terms of office.

4. Removal or Disqualification

- 4.1 A nominated or elected member of SEC who has been absent from three consecutive meetings, unless such absence has been approved by the Chairperson in advance, shall be deemed to have resigned from SEC.
- 4.2 Where a nominated or elected member is absent for two consecutive meetings without explanation, the secretariat will communicate this to the member outlining consequential actions if the member misses the next meeting. If no satisfactory written explanation is received and the member does not attend the next meeting, this outcome will be communicated to the next SEC meeting for removal of the

member, with this vacancy filled in line with the procedures in Section 2 above. The replacement will fill this vacancy for the unexpired term of office remaining.

5. Resignation

- 5.1 A nominated or elected member of SEC may at any time resign from SEC by written communication to the Chairperson, and the resignation shall take effect from the date of receipt of such communication.

6. SEC Meetings

Chairperson

- 6.1 The Head of Student Services & Wellbeing will be the Chairperson of SEC.
- 6.2 If and so long as the Chairperson is not present, meetings of SEC will be chaired by the Head of Recruitment, Admissions & Participation. If the Head of Student Services & Wellbeing and the Head of Recruitment, Admissions & Participation are not able to attend a meeting of SEC, the Head of Student Services & Wellbeing will select a member of SEC to chair the meeting in advance of the meeting.

Secretariat

- 6.3 The secretariat will be provided by Academic Affairs.

Quorum

- 6.4 The quorum for all SEC meetings shall be 50% of the complete membership plus one. Where the complete membership constitutes an odd number the quorum shall be 50% of the membership rounded up to the next whole number.

- 6.5 SEC may hold or continue a meeting by the use of any means of communication by which all the members can hear and be heard at the same time (in this document referred to as an “online meeting”):
- i. A member of SEC who participates in an online meeting is taken for all purposes to have been present at the meeting.
 - ii. A duly convened meeting of SEC at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, power and discretions vested in or exercisable by SEC.

Frequency of Meetings

- 6.6 SEC shall hold at least two meetings per semester and such and so many additional meetings as may be necessary, as determined by the Chairperson, for the due fulfilment of its functions.

Notice and Convening of Meetings

- 6.7 The dates of SEC meetings should be determined by the Chairperson and published at the start of the Academic Year and aligned to the document submission dates of Academic Council.
- 6.8 Additional meetings of SEC shall be summoned by the Secretariat of SEC at the request of the Chairperson of SEC.
- 6.9 The Secretariat to SEC shall ensure that all members receive information and papers in a timely manner to enable full and proper consideration to be given to the issues.
- 6.10 Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda shall be forwarded to each member of SEC electronically, and any other person required to attend, not less than five working days before the date of the meeting. Supporting papers shall be sent, or made available electronically, to SEC members and to other attendees as appropriate, at the same time.

Attendance at Meetings

- 6.11 Only members of SEC have the right to attend SEC meetings. Other individuals from the University and external advisers may be invited to attend, by the Chairperson, for all or part of any meeting, as and when appropriate.
- 6.12 Attendances shall be recorded as Present, Apologies (apology furnished in advance or at the meeting) or Absent (no apology furnished).
- 6.13 If a member cannot attend a meeting of SEC, this should be communicated to the Secretariat in advance of the meeting, or alternatively it can be communicated to the Chairperson at the beginning of the meeting.

Agenda Items

- 6.14 The agenda shall contain details of the matters to be put before the meeting for discussion.
- 6.15 Any member of SEC may request a matter be placed on the agenda for discussion provided it is conveyed to the Secretariat in writing not less than ten working days in advance of the meeting to which it refers (not including the date of the meeting) and the matter falls within the terms of reference of SEC. Such matters shall be considered by the Chairperson as to their appropriateness for inclusion on the agenda.
- 6.16 Any matter which has been accepted for discussion in accordance with the provision of these Terms of Reference shall be placed before the meeting by the Chairperson in the order in which it appears on the agenda.
- 6.17 The inclusion of the item “Any Other Business” (AOB) on the agenda shall be used by the Chairperson only to inform the meeting of any other items which are germane to the matters already discussed and for the elucidation of any other items of a factual or relevant nature. The Chairperson may permit a member to raise a matter under AOB provided this item has already been raised with the Chairperson prior to the meeting and the Chairperson has decided it was appropriate to bring it to the attention of SEC members for the consideration under AOB.

- 6.18 Approved agenda items must be submitted in the correct format to the Secretariat ten working days before the date of the SEC meeting to facilitate the timely distribution of papers to members.
- 6.19 The Chairperson has the delegated authority of SEC to remove an item from the Agenda if it is not received in time to allow members due consideration of the matter or to a suitable standard.

Proceedings at Meetings

- 6.20 Members who wish to speak at any meeting shall make their address to the meeting through and at the request of the Chairperson.
- 6.21 The first business of each meeting shall be the reading and approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting which, if approved, shall be signed by the Chairperson as proof of the accuracy thereof. The secretariat shall minute the decisions and resolutions of all meetings of SEC, including recording the names of those present and in attendance.
- 6.22 The Minutes of the meeting shall be drawn up and approved at the next meeting of SEC. No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy or where the Chairperson considers discussion appropriate.
- 6.23 Any amendment to the Minutes shall be recorded and agreed by SEC at the next meeting. The Minutes of SEC meetings shall be circulated to all members of SEC.
- 6.24 Every question at a meeting of SEC shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present and voting on the question, and in the case of an equal division of votes, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.
- 6.25 Any member of SEC may, at any time during a meeting and without notice, raise a point of order. The Chairperson's ruling on the acceptability on the point of order shall be subject to a vote of the meeting if called for by the member raising the point of order.

Duration of Meetings

- 6.26 Each meeting of SEC shall continue until such time as the business to be conducted thereat shall have been satisfactory dealt with.
- 6.27 In cases of extreme time pressure, the Chairperson may, at their discretion reasonably exercise the following:
- i. Either curtail discussion of any motion or other matter before the meeting and put the motion or matter before the meeting for a vote, or
 - ii. Adjourn agenda items (other than Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising therefrom) to a subsequent meeting. This may be either a scheduled meeting or at an extraordinary meeting convened specially to consider them.
- 6.28 The Chairperson's ruling shall be final in regard of either alternative.
- Procedures for obtaining decisions between meetings
- 6.29 In accordance with subparagraphs 6.30, 6.31 and 6.32 below, the Chairperson of SEC, has the delegated authority of SEC to deal with matters that in their opinion, are urgent and cannot wait until the next meeting of SEC and are certified in writing. If the Chairperson is unavailable to act for any reason, the Head of Recruitment, Admissions & Participation shall have the same powers and this procedure shall be read accordingly.
- 6.30 In all situations, the Chairperson shall endeavour to convene a quorate meeting, to consider urgent matters that arise between meetings and shall only utilise this procedure as a final option having made every effort to hold a quorate meeting.
- 6.31 In seeking Chairperson's action, the person making the request shall in all cases prepare a written report. The report shall be in accordance with the same procedures and shall require the same clearances from other parties with an interest in the issues as if the report was to be submitted to a meeting of SEC. The report must specify the reason(s) for the urgency and the reason(s) why the matter cannot wait until the next meeting of SEC.
- 6.32 When submitted, the Chairperson shall, if practicable, also seek the views of the members of SEC.
- 6.33 In respect of any decision taken by the Chairperson under this procedure, the Chairperson shall record their decision in writing and shall also certify in writing

that in their opinion the issue is urgent and cannot wait until the next meeting of SEC.

- 6.34 The Chairperson shall report every decision taken under this procedure in writing to the next meeting of SEC for noting.

7. Reporting and Communication

- 7.1 The Head of Student Services & Wellbeing, as Chairperson, shall be responsible for reporting the decisions and views of SEC to Academic Council and/or other Academic Council sub-committees, as appropriate.
- 7.2 Minutes shall be recorded and, when approved, submitted to Academic Council.
- 7.3 Approved minutes shall also be available on the University intranet.

8. Committees

- 8.1 SEC may establish other sub-committees subject to the approval of the Academic Council or at the request of Academic Council. To propose a new sub-committee, the Chairperson should write to the Chairperson of the Academic Council with the draft Terms of Reference, and a rationale for the establishment, of the new sub-committee.
- 8.2 SEC may establish working groups at any time to undertake specific tasks on behalf of the Board. The establishment of working groups does not require the approval of the Academic Council.
- 8.3 SEC may invite individuals from outside the University to become members of sub-committees subject to the approval of the Academic Council. To propose external members of sub-committees, the Chairperson should write to the Chairperson of the Academic Council with the names of the proposed external members and a rationale for their membership.
- 8.4 SEC sub-committees will normally be chaired by a member of SEC.

9. APPENDIX A

Student Experience Committee Membership

1. Ex-Officio Members

- 1.1 Members of the committee because of their role in the University.
- 1.2 Members of the committee bringing specific expertise and knowledge and/or they have specific University responsibilities, management or otherwise, for functions or activities aligned to the responsibilities of the committee as listed in Section 1 of this document.

2. Nominated Members

- 2.1 Members representing the views of a function, academic unit or representative body, but may also have specific responsibilities, management or otherwise that are required by the Committee to successfully undertake its responsibilities as listed in Section 1 of this document.
- 2.2 These members are nominated by the Head of the relevant function, academic unit or representative body.

3. Elected Members

- 3.1 Members elected to by a cohort of stakeholders within a function, academic unit or a Committee/Board.
- 3.2 Elected members must nominate themselves through the process described in Appendix B of this document, and where more nominations are received than required number of member, an election process will be followed to identify the committee members.
- 3.3 Elected members bring their own knowledge, understanding, expertise and experience to the SEC discussions and decisions.
- 3.4 Elected members may also bring the views of colleagues to SEC.

10. APPENDIX B

Election of SEC Members

1. Academic Staff Member from each Faculty Board

- 1.1 Each Faculty Board will elect one academic staff member to be a member of SEC.
- 1.2 The academic staff member will be appointed using an election process whereby each academic staff member on Faculty Board will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for election.
- 1.3 Eligibility to vote for the academic staff member shall be confined to the academic staff members of the Faculty Board.
- 1.4 The Returning Officer for the election of staff to SEC will be the Assistant Head of Academic Affairs (Operations) and may authorise any person to exercise designated functions on their behalf.
- 1.5 A call for nominations shall be circulated at least two weeks before the election date. Nominations shall be made on the Nomination Paper available from Academic Affairs and submitted to the Returning Officer or nominee. The Returning Officer shall rule on the validity of each Nomination Paper and may rule that it is invalid if, but only if, it is not in accordance with the eligibility criteria.
- 1.6 Every person in respect of whom a Nomination Paper has been determined to be valid and whose candidature has not been withdrawn, shall stand validly nominated as a candidate.
- 1.7 In the event that there is only one validly nominated candidate from a Faculty Board, the Returning Officer shall declare the candidate elected.
- 1.8 A poll will be conducted if more than the one person is validly nominated. Voting shall be by secret ballot and on the basis of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. Votes shall be counted by the Returning Officer or nominee in accordance with the arrangements made by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall give due notice of these arrangements to the electorate.

- 1.9 In the event that there are no validly nominated candidates, the Faculty Dean, as Chairperson of Faculty Board may nominate an academic staff member from the membership of Faculty Board to be a member of SEC.

2. Academic Council Members

- 2.1 All non-ex-officio Academic Council members will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for SEC membership through an 'Expression of Interest' process.
- 2.2 An "Expression of Interest" call shall be circulated to all non-ex-officio Academic Council members and nominations shall be submitted to Academic Affairs.
- 2.3 A poll will be conducted if more nominations than required members are received. Voting shall be by secret ballot and on the basis of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. Votes shall be counted by the Returning Officer or nominee in accordance with the arrangements made by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall give due notice of these arrangements to the electorate.
- 2.4 The Returning Officer for the election of Academic Council members to SEC will be the Assistant Head of Academic Affairs (Operations) and may authorise any person to exercise designated functions on their behalf.