EXTRACT FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES: 14.3.18

18.37 Timing of Changes to Regulations (Item 1)

The Committee noted that current practice was for a change to regulations to apply from the next intake, i.e. to new students, unless the change was not detrimental to all current students, in which case it might be introduced earlier with the informed consent of each cohort. The relevant committee in considering changes decided on their timing. It was now proposed that revised regulations be applied routinely to current students if this gave a more favourable outcome. Such an outcome would be determined on an individual basis, not by cohort or year group, as the particular change might not always favour the whole set. The new approach would only apply to matters of award (grade bands or classification algorithm), not other regulatory matters such as the consequences of failure.

It was noted that, if adopted, it might no longer be necessary to obtain the consent of current students to such changes, as only those changes which were to their advantage would be applied to them, and detrimental ones would only apply to new students. The Learning and Teaching Committee had considered this approach preferable and that explicit student consent should no longer be needed. It would, however, remain the responsibility of Faculties to ensure that current students were advised of the changes and that Boards of Examiners considered outcomes for current students against more than one set of regulations.

It was noted that new students who might study particular modules alongside continuing students would not benefit from a more favourable old regulation, in contrast to continuing students for whom both sets of rules would apply.

AGREED: that the proposal be endorsed and that it be recommended to Senate that the following new penultimate clause be added to the Regulations Governing Examinations in Programmes of Study which detail the duties of Boards of Examiners (Regulations 4, 8 and 11), to make explicit their responsibility to consider the circumstances of each current student who enrolled under earlier regulations and to apply the most favourable outcome:

“if regulations regarding the classification of final results have been revised during a candidate’s period of registration, to apply the regulation which gives the most favourable outcome.”