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| **Academic Board**  |  |
| March 2020 |  |
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| **Minutes** |
| BackgroundThe meeting of Academic Board scheduled for 18 March 2020 was regrettably halted in response to the worsening Covid-19 pandemic and at the request of several members of the Board. In light of the fact that this was a fast moving situation and that it was not possible to ascertain whether all members of the Board could participate in a virtual Board meeting, a shortened agenda was prepared for members and all were invited to submit questions or comments. The period for these to be received was 4pm on Wednesday 18 March, the point at which the scheduled in-person Board meeting was due to close.There were a limited number of comments and points of clarification. In response to the comments about the composition of the Board outlined in paper AB/20/01, it was decided to withdraw this paper from the March business and to recommend to members instead that the Board composition remains the same for the next 12 months. Revised AgendaFive questions were posed on the revised agenda:1. To approve an amendment to the Academic Board Standing Orders to enable committees of Academic Board to meet virtually.
2. To approve the appointment of a Principal External Examiner.
3. To approve changes to the Research Degree Regulations for 2020-21
4. To approve changes to other academic regulations for 2020-21
5. To confirm whether the Board supports a proposal to continue with the current membership for the 2020-21 period

Board members were initially given until 5pm on Monday 23 March, later extended to Friday 27 March, to indicate whether they were for, against, or were abstaining from voting on each of the proposals. One set of responses was not received until Monday 30 March but it was agreed to accept these. However, the total number of responses totalled 15 which did not meet the threshold to make quorum, which is  one third of the membership of Academic Board (19). Therefore the business of Academic Board will be held over until the next meeting (3 June 2020) with the exceptions of items 1 and 2 which have been approved by Chair’s action. Accordingly:1. the Standing Orders will be amended (in line with those of Academic Board itself) as outlined in paper AB/20/00 to allow for committees of the Board to meet virtually. This is to allow the conduct of business during the current working arrangements.
2. the College will appoint an Institutional Principal External Examiner. This appointment will be with effect from the 2019-20 academic year and until the end of the 2020-21 academic year in the first instance.
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