**Faculty of Science (SCS) Board of Examiners consultation**

Online surveys open for 1 week. Additional feedback collected through conversations and emails prompted by the survey.

**Referral timing**

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| Option 1  | Re-assessments before Graduation with late July Boards |
| Option 2  | Re-assessments after Graduation with early August Boards |
| Option 3  | Re-assessments in August with September Boards (the status quo) |

Staff were able to select more than one option. There were 111 respondents.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | Option 1 | Option 2 | Option 3 |
| NSP Academics | 45 | 26 | 5 | 21 |
| PBS Academics | 42 | 22 | 3 | 17 |
| SPS Academics | 14 | 10 | 1 | 3 |
| SCS Administrative | 10 | 0 | 2 | 8 |

*Option 1 is favoured by the majority of academics in all three Science schools, particularly in SPS. Option 3 is favoured by administrative staff.*

Colleagues spoke of the need to talk with their significant others before completing the survey. Academics noted that with the increase in PGT provision made option 1 more attractive than it previously might have been. It was acknowledged that no option was perfect; Administrative staff reported that Option 1 would mean an “extremely difficult tight turnaround” from June Board of Examiners to prepare for early July exams and late July Board of Examiners. Option 2 was referred to by one line manager as the ‘nightmare’ scenario for those with children on their team.

**Mid-year Board of Examiner powers**

The survey first summarised the characteristics of Boards of Examiners:

i) Ability to make recommendations on awards and progression = award power.

ii) Ability to approve marks after assessment samples have been shared with, and reviewed by, the External Examiner = approval power.

iii) All associated External Examiners, representing all considered programmes, in attendance.

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| Option A:  | Award and approval powers. All associated External Examiners must attend (status quo). |
| Option B:  | Award and approval powers. A minimum of one of the associated External Examiners must attend. |
| Option C:  | Approval powers only. A minimum of one of the associated External Examiners must attend. |
| Option D:  | Approval powers only. No External Examiners are required to attend. |
| Option E:  | No mid-year Board: Semester 1 marks approved in June. |

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|  | N | Option A | Option B | Option C | Option D | Option E |
| NSP Academics | 23 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 10 |
| PBS Academics | 16 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| SPS Academics | 7 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total  | 46 | 6 | 18 | 7 | 15 | 15 |

*Maintaining award and approval powers and requiring a minimum of one of the associated External Examiners to attend is the most popular option in two of the three Science schools and the most popular option in the Faculty overall.*

There are a range of opinions across the Faculty and both options D and E had strong support in two schools. The 100% preference for maintaining award powers in SPS was reported to be due to their well-developed MSc portfolio and their wish to recommend timely awards to PGT students whose studies had overrun.

Option D garnered strong support and one academic commented that a requirement for them to attend was not necessary; externals would definitely had reviewed work prior to the Board and they would probably have already visited to view work. It was noted that, as there are no award ceremonies following the February Boards, there is nothing for externals to sign off. Option D was supported if it did not preclude externals attending, if they wished.

It was noted that Option E might interfere with existing plans for continuous monitoring and evaluation (CME), the successor to AMR reporting.

Phil Denton, ADE, 1/12/17