1. Composition of the Committee

**ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE** (Calendar 2012-13, part 1, B146)

The Registrar, Chair
The Senior Tutor, Secretary (in attendance)
The Senior Lecturer (in attendance)
2 nominees of the Registrar,
- One from the Law School (currently Desmond James Ryan, LL.B., B.C.L., M.A., PH.D.)
- Bruce Dudley Robert Misstear, B.A., M.SC.
The previous Senior Tutor (currently Myra O'Regan, B.A., M.SC., PH.D.)
2 representatives from the tutors, normally elected (currently Joan Lalor, B.N.S., M.A., M.SC., PH.D. and James Paul Spiers, B.SC., M.A., PH.D.)
The Vice-President, Graduate Students’ Union

2. Calendar entry (see page H12-13, Calendar 2012-13)

*Academic Appeals Committee*

53 The Academic Appeals Committee meets to consider appeals arising out of examinations or other academic circumstances where a student case (i) is not adequately covered by the ordinary regulations of the College, or (ii) is based on a claim that the regulations of the College were not properly applied in the applicant’s case, or (iii) represents an *ad misericordiam* appeal. An appeal other than an *ad misericordiam* appeal, cannot be made against the normal application of College academic regulations approved by the University Council. The Academic Appeals Committee will consider appeals concerning events occurring more than eighteen months previously only in the most exceptional circumstances. Appellants must have exhausted the appropriate appeals mechanism in the first instance through the relevant Court of First Appeal prior to coming before the Academic Appeals Committee. Appeals should be made in writing by a student’s tutor or, if the tutor is unwilling or unable to act, by the Senior Tutor or his/her nominee who shall be another tutor. Students may request a representative of the Students’ Union to represent them as an alternative to their tutor or the Senior Tutor. Tutors or Students’ Union representatives who are filing an appeal must use the procedural form, must indicate the precise grounds upon which the appeal is being made and what the appeal is attempting to achieve on the student’s behalf, e.g. permission to repeat the year, special examination etc.

The Senior Tutor acts as secretary to the Academic Appeals Committee and attends the committee as a non-voting member. The Senior Lecturer attends for the presentation of the case and may provide comment if required. In cases concerning clinical placements (and in particular where the student is considered to be an
employee of the institution providing the placement) the committee will be joined by an appropriate professional, nominated by the chair of the Academic Appeals Committee, who shall be drawn from the discipline of the student.

Any student who has an appeal underway that could have implications for their degree result is advised not to proceed with degree conferral until the outcome of the appeal has been confirmed.

3. Guidelines for taking a case

The student has responsibility for advising his/her tutor in good time of his/her intention to make an appeal.

Students may request a representative of the Students’ Union to represent them as an alternative to their tutor or the Senior Tutor.

Appellants must have exhausted the appropriate appeals mechanism in the first instance through the relevant Court of First Appeal prior to coming before the Academic Appeals Committee. In exceptional circumstances outside of the control of the student and/or the tutor, the Academic Appeals Committee may agree to hear a case that was not previously heard by the relevant Court of First Appeal.

The College Academic Appeal Form/Court of First Appeal Form (MS Word), also available through the Senior Tutor's Office, must be used when submitting an appeal. Appropriate background documentation and FULL evidence must be included e.g. medical certificates. This information MUST include ALL results for the student to date, for each year, in mark format, and must indicate if course work has been completed. If possible, an attendance record should be provided.

The attention of those bringing an appeal is directed to the assistance offered by the school or course administrators and the Senior Lecturer's Area staff in the Office of the Vice-Provost (ext 1090, student.cases@tcd.ie) in helping them to complete their records, providing copies of medical certificates and other appropriate documents. Appeal forms not completed properly will not be considered by the committee.

Tutors should consult the Senior Tutor’s Office website to check the date of the relevant meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee and the deadline for the submission of the paper work. Tutors are advised to consult with the Senior Tutor’s Office prior to submitting an appeal.

The Academic Appeals Committee normally meets in the Senior Tutor’s Office after the Courts of First Appeal following the Summer and Supplemental examinations, in June (normally one meeting only) and early October (normally up to four meetings, currently during the first week of teaching term).

Tutors should note that their tutee (the appellant) must attend at the statement of their case to the committee. In exceptional circumstances, the committee may permit an appellant not to appear before it.
All tutees and their tutors should ensure that they arrive 10 minutes before the scheduled meeting.

If a case has not been heard by a Court of First Appeal for serious reasons beyond the control of the student or the tutor, the tutor may approach the Senior Tutor to request that the case be heard by the Academic Appeals Committee. The Committee will decide during a preliminary discussion whether or not the case can be heard. When the case has not been heard by the relevant Court of First Appeal, the Chair of the Court of First Appeal and/or the relevant School/Course Representative are invited to attend the presentation of the case. The student will be made aware that by taking their case directly to Academic Appeal, they are accepting that this will be the only hearing of their case.

4. Conduct of Academic Appeal Committee meetings:

When the Senior Tutor takes a case, a member of the committee who has previously been a senior tutor will act as Secretary.

The student, their representative and the Chairperson of the relevant Court of First Appeal attend for the presentation of the case. Sometimes it may be appropriate for the chairperson to be accompanied by another person involved in the First Court as it is very important that the Committee has all information to hand. In cases involving clinical placements which have taken place in another institution, it may be appropriate for a representative of that institution to attend the presentation of the case and give their views to the Committee.

The Chair introduces the members of the Committee to the student, their representative and the Chairperson of the Court of First Appeal and then outlines the process.

The student and/or their tutor present the case. The Chair of the Court of First Appeal or the person accompanying him/her presents the views of the Court of First Appeal.

Members of the Academic Appeals Committee may ask questions to obtain additional information or to request clarification.

The Senior Lecturer then presents their point of view, based on the College rules and regulations and the particulars of the student’s situation and status in College. Members of the committee may ask questions of the Senior lecturer.
The student, their representative and the Chair of the Court of First Appeal may respond to this and the student and their representative may make concluding remarks.

Once the case has been heard in full, the student, their representative, the Chair of the Court of First Appeal and the Senior Lecturer withdraw and the Committee deliberates and reaches a decision.

The tutor is informed orally of the outcome later in the day, when all cases have been heard.

A summary of the Academic Appeals Committee decisions is prepared and circulated to the Senior Lecturer’s Office, the Exams Office, the Student Records Office, the relevant school/course office, and the relevant tutor or representative who was present at the appeal if this is was not the tutor. It is the responsibility of the tutor/ nominated representative to notify the student of the outcome.

A formal minute of the decisions is then prepared by the Senior Tutor and approved by the Registrar. The formal minutes are sent to the Senior Lecturer for information. An anonymised version of the minutes together with a key to cases are sent to the Office of the Secretary to College for approval either under Vacation Procedures (appeals following Summer examinations) or at the next Council meeting (appeals following Supplemental examinations). The Secretary of the Academic Appeals Committee keeps a record of the rationale for the decision.

In cases where the Appeal is taken against a decision of the Senior Lecturer to overturn a decision of the Court of First Appeal, the same process is followed.

**Fitness to practice cases:**

According to the College Fitness to Practice Policy, “Where a fitness to practice issue arises in the context of an academic appeal being pursued by a student, Course Office based Courts of First Appeal, School based Courts of First Appeal, Faculty based Courts of First Appeal, the Academic Appeals Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee shall each have discretion to refer that issue to the relevant School FTP Committee if this is considered a more appropriate way of dealing with the matter.”