

LTC14D189

Title: *Semester dates*
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Issue

To confirm University semester dates for standard undergraduate courses for the academic years 2016/17 through to 2020 -21.

Recommendation

Recipients are invited to:

- 1) Recommend:
 - a) the proposed dates for 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21;
 - b) a revision to the approved dates for 2017/18;

- 2) Consider
whether a change for 2016/17 is academically desirable and therefore if a change is feasible whether a change should be recommended.

Resource Implications

There are no major resource implications as semester dates conform to a 30 week period which has been the case at UEA for over the last ten years. The dates at which the standard semesters start and end may have some financial consequences on some Library services where some working days are required either side of University closed periods and within semester breaks if additional costs are to be contained. Some working days after the Christmas break were considered desirable by DOS to deal with building maintenance issues arising in residences during the closed period and before students returned to their accommodation.

ARM have indicated that the period between “A” level results and the start of term is a critical one for them in processing visas, and have expressed some concern about the University stepping outside sector norms in respect of academic year start dates. ARM also commented that our semester dates needed to tie in with those of any feeder pathway and/or pre-session courses run internally, by INTO or other providers.

Risk Implications

Risks have been carefully considered to ensure that business needs of the University are not compromised by the proposed semester dates.

The risks of not setting the dates in a timely manner would have consequences if our partner colleges set their dates such that pathway course dates did not dovetail with our own start dates.

Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity issues in setting the dates as the basic pattern of the academic year is familiar with all staff and students. The determination of the semester dates will enable all staff and students and applicants to have good notice of the academic year and be able to plan accordingly.

Timing of decisions

It is proposed to report the semester dates to Senate in June 2015.

Further Information

For further information please contact Dr Andrea Blanchflower (a.blanchflower@uea.ac.uk) (x2618).

Background

From time to time the University sets semester dates for the years ahead. In particular a course end date is required for visa applications for international taught students.

In October 2013, at a time when the University was operating a 12-12-6 academic year structure of two twelve week teaching semesters followed by a six week assessment period, LTC determined that the principles in setting the academic year should be:

- a) A 4 week break at Christmas
- b) A 4 week break at Easter
- c) Ideally no broken back semesters
- d) If a break was required this should ideally be 9 weeks before and 3 weeks after the break.

The dates for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 were reported to LTC in October 2013, based on this 12-12-6 pattern, see links below.

<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/7728212/ltc13d023.pdf/23f4a2f7-943a-4615-bec2-a636348dea19>

<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/7728212/ltc13d023appendix1.pdf/c4d2fdb4-1eb8-4b58-a18b-b0349c9703a0>

Discussion

The University is moving to a 4 week examination period under the New Academic Model (approved by Senate in April 2011) and therefore some consideration needs to be given to the structure of the academic year. The four week assessment period should have been introduced in 2015/16 but for practical reasons it has been decided that the University will move to a five week period in 2015/16 and a four week assessment period thereafter. This change in the length of the assessment period had been overlooked when dates had been determined and reported to LTC in October 2013.

It is proposed to introduce an additional week into each taught semester to enable Schools to use the additional days for induction, transition and employability events. The semester length would therefore be extended to 13 weeks. Course Directors would need to give some thought as to how to best use the additional time in the teaching period to consolidate course level outcomes. However there would be no change in the work effort required by students:

20 credits = 200 hours study

120 credits = 1,200 hours study over 30 weeks, i.e. 40 hours per week

Further guidance on the use of Week 13 will be brought forward to a future meeting of the Committee.

In determining semester dates and the shape of the academic year consideration has been given to the following influences:

- a) A 4 week break at Christmas
- b) A 4 week break at Easter
- c) Ideally no broken back semesters
- d) If a broken back semester is necessary then there should be a minimum of 3 weeks after the break
- e) Congregation should take place during the third week in July.
- f) A clear two working weeks are required between Pass List production for UG finalists and Congregation
- g) Some standard working days are required either side of University closed periods and within semester breaks to undertake activities in support of teaching and learning and the student experience, e.g. library returns, attending to building maintenance issues, and preparing for January and post Easter intakes etc.
- h) Allowing sufficient time between "A"- level results and the start of term to process late applications.
- i) Bringing the re-assessment period earlier to benefit students and create more time for consideration by Examination Boards, Extenuating Circumstances Panels, Faculty Appeals Panels and concessions requests ahead of the start of the new academic year.

Recipients are invited to note that more work is required to determine the optimum time for reassessment. The times indicated in the Appendix are windows within which re-assessment could happen and a report will be prepared for discussion at a future meeting of the Committee.

In October 2013 when semester dates for future years were reported the future requirements of the New Academic Model and a desire for Congregation during the third week in July had not been taken fully into consideration. An investigation is underway to determine the feasibility of making changes to the published dates for 2016/17 if this is considered desirable. Two options are presented in Appendix A for the Committee's consideration. A change may not be practicable for 2016/17 since the UEA INTO course dates for 2015/16 have already been advertised. If a change is not practicable then the 2016/17 Autumn semester week 13 will slip into January with everything else slipping back by one week. Whilst the dates for 2017/18 have been reported it is considered that this is so far ahead that a change to published information can be implemented.

The proposed semester dates can be viewed in the attached table.

Recipients are invited to:

- 1) Recommend
 - a) the proposed dates for 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21
 - b) a revision to the approved dates for 2017/18
- 2) Consider whether a change for 2016/17 is academically desirable and therefore if a change is feasible whether a change should be recommended

Attachments

Appendix A – Table of actual and proposed semester dates 2013/14 – 2021/22.

	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
	10-Mar	17-Mar	24-Mar	31-Mar	07-Apr	14-Apr	21-Apr	28-Apr	05-May	12-May	19-May	26-May	02-Jun	09-Jun	16-Jun	23-Jun	30-Jun	07-Jul	14-Jul	21-Jul	28-Jul	04-Aug	11-Aug	18-Aug	25-Aug	01-Sep	08-Sep	
	9	10	11	12	EV1	EV2	EV3	1	2	3	4	5	6	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	SV6	Congregation								
	09-Mar	16-Mar	23-Mar	30-Mar	06-Apr	13-Apr	20-Apr	27-Apr	04-May	11-May	18-May	25-May	01-Jun	05-Jun	15-Jun	22-Jun	29-Jun	06-Jul	13-Jul	20-Jul	27-Jul	03-Aug	10-Aug	17-Aug	24-Aug	31-Aug	07-Sep	
	9	10	EV1	EV2	EV3	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	SV6	Congregation		Reassessment from Friday A-level results 13.8.15		Reassessment ends Friday		Exam Boards		
	07-Mar	14-Mar	21-Mar	28-Mar	04-Apr	11-Apr	18-Apr	25-Apr	02-May	09-May	16-May	23-May	30-May	06-Jun	13-Jun	20-Jun	27-Jun	04-Jul	11-Jul	18-Jul	25-Jul	01-Aug	08-Aug	15-Aug	22-Aug	29-Aug	05-Sep	
	9	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	5	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation		Reassessment			Exam Boards		
	9	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	5	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation						Exam Boards		
																Detail tbc	30th June Board	5th July - Pass Lists,							A-level results 18.8.16			
	06-Mar	13-Mar	20-Mar	27-Mar	03-Apr	10-Apr	17-Apr	24-Apr	01-May	08-May	15-May	22-May	29-May	05-Jun	12-Jun	19-Jun	26-Jun	03-Jul	10-Jul	17-Jul	24-Jul	31-Jul	07-Aug	14-Aug	21-Aug	28-Aug	04-Sep	
	8	9	10	11	12	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	1	2	3	4	5	6	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Congregation						
	7	8	9	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards		
	8	9	10	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards			
	05-Mar	12-Mar	19-Mar	26-Mar	02-Apr	09-Apr	16-Apr	23-Apr	30-Apr	07-May	14-May	21-May	28-May	04-Jun	11-Jun	18-Jun	25-Jun	02-Jul	09-Jul	16-Jul	23-Jul	30-Jul	06-Aug	13-Aug	20-Aug	27-Aug	03-Sep	
	8	9	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards		
	8	9	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards			
	04-Mar	11-Mar	18-Mar	25-Mar	01-Apr	08-Apr	15-Apr	22-Apr	29-Apr	06-May	13-May	20-May	27-May	03-Jun	10-Jun	17-Jun	24-Jun	01-Jul	08-Jul	15-Jul	22-Jul	29-Jul	05-Aug	12-Aug	19-Aug	26-Aug	02-Sep	
	8	9	10	11	12	13	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards			
	02-Mar	09-Mar	16-Mar	23-Mar	30-Mar	06-Apr	13-Apr	20-Apr	27-Apr	04-May	11-May	18-May	25-May	01-Jun	08-Jun	15-Jun	22-Jun	29-Jun	06-Jul	13-Jul	20-Jul	27-Jul	03-Aug	10-Aug	17-Aug	24-Aug	31-Aug	07-Sep
	8	9	10	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards			
	08-Mar	15-Mar	22-Mar	29-Mar	05-Apr	12-Apr	19-Apr	26-Apr	03-May	10-May	17-May	24-May	31-May	07-Jun	14-Jun	21-Jun	28-Jun	05-Jul	12-Jul	19-Jul	26-Jul	02-Aug	09-Aug	16-Aug	23-Aug	30-Aug	06-Sep	
	8	9	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards			
	07-Mar	14-Mar	21-Mar	28-Mar	04-Apr	11-Apr	18-Apr	25-Apr	02-May	09-May	16-May	23-May	30-May	06-Jun	13-Jun	20-Jun	27-Jun	04-Jul	11-Jul	18-Jul	25-Jul	01-Aug	08-Aug	15-Aug	22-Aug	29-Aug	05-Sep	
	8	9	10	EV1	EV2	EV3	EV4	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	Congregation	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?	Reassessment ?		Exam Boards			