

From: Joanne Tallentire, Senior Assistant Registrar

21 May 2003

SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC POLICY DECISIONS – SPRING 2003

This information note refers to decisions made at the following meetings:

ASC – 26 February 2003

Senate – 19 March 2003

Minute numbers are given to indicate the source of the information set out below. Where extracts of minutes are included verbatim, this is indicated by speech marks.

Summaries of academic policy decisions are available online at:

<http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/calendar/restricted/academic-policy-summary.html>

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SECTION A – FOR ACTION BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AND CENTRES

1. Student Assessment of Courses – Retention of Questionnaires (ASC.MM.32-33/03)

Academic Standards Committee discussed how much of the paperwork generated by the annual Student Assessment of Courses process should be retained by departments and

'RESOLVED:

- (a) That summary reports of SAC responses should be kept for the Periodic Review cycle. 32/03
- (b) That individual student responses should be returned to staff or destroyed after one year.' 33/03

2. Graduate School Policy on Resits and Re-Submission of Dissertations (S.MM.41-44/03)

'RESOLVED:

41/03 that the Graduate School policy on re-sitting and re-submission of dissertations should be amended, with effect from October 2003, as follows (new text underlined, text to be deleted struck through):

Re-sits

42/03 The criterion for permitting re-sit examinations should normally be substantiated extenuating circumstances, accepted at the discretion of the Board of Examiners.

Re-submission of Dissertations

43/03 Re-submission of dissertations is not normally permitted except in the following circumstances:

- a) substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted at the discretion of the Board of Examiners;
- b) where the original mark awarded is within 2% of the minimum pass mark for the dissertation

44/03 Re-submission is subject to the following conditions:

- (i.) a dissertation must normally be re-submitted within two months of notification of permission to re-submit in cases of extenuating circumstances, this may be extended to a maximum of twelve months;
- (ii.) a dissertation which has been re-submitted because of a marginal fail shall be awarded no more than the minimum pass mark; in the case of re-submissions because of extenuating circumstances, ~~the candidate will not normally be eligible for either merit or distinction.~~
The full range of marks should be available to examiners.
- (iii.) ~~permission to re-submit a dissertation will not normally be granted where a candidate has been permitted to re-sit examinations in the scheme.~~

SECTION B – FOR INFORMATION

1. Student Assessment of Courses – Monitoring Arrangements 2003/04 (ASC.MM.26-30/03)

Student Assessment of Courses (Paper ASC/03/8)

26/03 '[Academic Standards Committee] received a paper on the proposal to combine feedback to Deans on departmental follow-up to SAC with annual monitoring. The principle had been agreed at the previous of the Committee and members were now asked to consider the detailed arrangements for implementation. Members accepted the recommendations of the paper, subject to the amendment indicated in italics.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that Heads of Department should be sent a reminder of the policy on SAC in the Autumn term, together with a checklist of the courses they are running during that academic year. The checklist should be sorted into undergraduate and postgraduate courses and should indicate which courses are new that academic year. The checklist should include two further columns, one to be used for recording that the course will be subject to SAC that year, and one which Heads of Department should annotate with their comments once they have considered the outcomes of the assessment, e.g. to indicate discussion with a course director or to report which Annual Monitoring Committee will receive a report on the outcomes; 27/03
- (b) that Heads of Department should be required to return a copy of the checklist to Deans at the beginning of the Spring term, annotated to show which courses are to be assessed that academic year. This will enable Deans to monitor the effective implementation of SAC in the departments in their School, e.g. that all new courses are being assessed; 28/03

29/03 (c) that Heads of Department should append a blank copy of any standard SAC questionnaire(s) to the Annual Monitoring report which is submitted to the Dean of the relevant School. *The Annual Monitoring reports for the department should also be accompanied by the completed checklist of courses sampled, indicating action taken.*

30/03 It was noted that the new procedure would be reviewed after one year to ensure that the arrangements were supportive of SAC activity in departments.'

The revised *SAC Procedure and Notes for Guidance Document 2003/04* will be published in July 2003.

2. Transcripts and Extenuating Circumstances (S.M.40/03)

'RESOLVED:

40/03 that when a Board of Examiners has decided to condone a failed component on the basis of extenuating circumstances, FAIL should not appear on the transcript, but that it should be annotated accordingly.'

Heads of Department are asked to note that the detailed arrangements for implementing this resolution are under discussion by administrative staff in the Academic Section. Further information will be provided when these discussions have been concluded.

3. Establishment of a New Administrative Section: Learning Partnerships (S.MM.46-50/03)

The Senate noted plans to establish a new administration section, Learning Partnerships, which would bring together the Centre for Lifelong Learning and the Collaborative Projects Office into a single unit to be managed by the Director of Learning Partnerships (currently Director of Lifelong Learning). The Senate resolved:

- (i) that the Board of Studies for Lifelong Learning and the Board of Collaborative Education should be merged from 1 August 2003 (the membership and terms of reference are available from the Academic Registrar's Office);
- (ii) that the title of the Dean of Collaborative Education should be changed to Dean of Learning Partnerships from 1 August 2003.

4. Library Borrowing Allocations (S.M.78/03)

'RESOLVED:

78/03 that the borrowing allocations be increased to 12 for undergraduates, 18 for postgraduates and 24 for academic/academic related staff and that Regulations 11.15 and 11.16 be amended accordingly.'

FOR ACTION:

**Heads of Department
Directors of**

**Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies
Centre for Theatre Studies
Human Rights Centre**

**Pan-European Institute
Centre for Theoretical Studies**

FOR INFORMATION:

Vice-Chancellor

Pro-Vice-Chancellors

Deans

Academic Registrar

Academic Section Administrators

Departmental Administrators (including Centres listed above)

Executive Officer, Socrates Office