

**University of Essex**  
**Summary of Academic Policy Decisions – Autumn Term 2014/15**

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

[Senate \(S\): 29/10/14, 21/1/15](#)

[Education Committee \(EC\): 10/12/14](#)

[Academic Quality and Standards Committee \(AQSC\): 15/10/14](#)

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

Links are provided to relevant committee minutes and papers, where available. If a link does not exist for the documentation that you require, please contact the relevant committee secretary for further information: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/committees/CommitteeSearch.asp>

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#### **1. AMENDMENT OF THE REGULATIONS RELATING TO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, PARAGRAPH 6.26 PERTAINING TO FINAL YEAR REASSESSMENT**

Senate Agreed            That the changes to the Regulations relating to Academic Affairs be approved as set out in paper S/14/62. ([Paper S/14/62](#), [S. M. 268/14](#))  
**FOR ACTION 2015-16**

“6.26.

Candidates who do not satisfy the examiners in the final examinations of the final year of study for the degree may be re-assessed in accordance with the rules of assessment for Undergraduate awards. Marks will be capped excepted where a candidate is repeating the year. Candidates will be required to undertake the appropriate registration and pay the fee determined by the University. Students who are not fully registered shall not be permitted in the intervening year to receive instruction or supervision at the University of Essex. Students who are given the opportunity to be re-assessed shall be subject to the Statutes, Ordinances, and Regulations of the University at any time they are present in the University. ~~The following conditions apply only to candidates under the rules of assessment which applied before 2007-08: Candidates who satisfy the examiners in the final examinations for the degree of Bachelor at the second attempt shall be eligible for conferment an Honours degree at the Third Class level only and course level marks will be capped at the pass mark, unless the Board of Examiners has specified otherwise, normally in cases where candidates are being re-assessed for the purpose of demonstrating achievement of all programme learning outcomes or where extenuating circumstances have been taken into account.~~

## 2. VARIATIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE UNDERGRADUATE RULES OF ASSESSMENT

Senate Agreed

1. That the variations to the Undergraduate Rules of Assessment be approved **FOR ACTION 2014-15**
  - **LLB Law (with a Placement Year)**

“Students to be required to achieve a Stage mark of 60% in Stage One rather than the standard mark of 53% in order to remain on a course with a Placement.” ([Paper S/14/62](#): Appendix 1, [S. M. 268/14](#))
  - **BSc Sports Therapy courses**

a) Students to have only a maximum of two attempts at the clinical placements (HS382) rather than three, in line with all other professional accredited courses in the School of Health and Human Sciences.

b) Students to pass specified individual elements of assessment in designated modules”. ([Paper S/14/62](#) Appendix 1, [S. M. 268/14](#))
  - **BA Social Work**

“An additional variation to fulfil Health Care Professions Council requirements. The variation states that the award of an aegrotat degree does not lead to professional registration.” ([Paper S/14/62](#), Appendix 1 [S. M. 268/14](#))
  - **University of Essex Online courses**

“The variation amended the minimum number of credits a student must complete in a 12 month period of study without being required to withdraw from the course.”

In the Rules of Assessment, A.4 now reads as follows:  
“*In the event that a student does not complete a minimum of 30 credits in any 12-month period of study and there are no substantiated extenuating circumstances, the student will be require[d] to withdraw from the course.*”  
([Paper S/14/62](#), Appendix 1 [S. M. 268/14](#))
  - **BSc Nursing (Adult) and BSc Nursing (Mental Health)**

A variation to make the “HS541 drug calculation exam a pass/fail element of the module. Students are required to achieve a mark of 100% to pass this element.” ([Paper S/14/62](#), Appendix 2 [S. M. 268/14](#))
  - **BSc Occupational Therapy**

A variation to add an exit award for students who have undertaken “360 credits for the BSc Occupational Therapy” and passed “all core modules except HS535 Research and Evidence for Practice 3”. The exit award will be titled **BSc Rehabilitation Studies** and will not “lead to professional registration”. ([S/15/13](#) Appendix D, S.M 48/15)
  - **BSc Nursing (Adult) and BSc Nursing (Mental Health)**

“The wording of the section on exit awards on the BSc Nursing courses should be amended to change the code for HS562 Research Module to HS561.” ([S/15/13](#) Appendix D, S.M 48/15)

Senate Agreed That the proposed changes to the sections of the Undergraduate Rules of Assessment which relate to withdrawal be approved.

- **Withdrawal due to non-attendance at examinations**

The paragraph regarding the powers of Exam Boards when considering results from reassessment to be reworded:  
*where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:*

- *where the Stage mark is **below 20%**;*
- *where a student was absent from all examinations which were due to be sat in the most recent examination period.*

The following paragraphs are affected:

Three Year Honours Rules: 3.1.2 c); 3.1.5 c); 3.1.10 c); 3.2.4 c)

Four-Year Honours Rules: 4.1.2 c); 4.1.7 d); 4.2.3 c)

Foundation Degrees: 5.1.2 c); 5.2.3 c)

Diploma of Higher Education: 6.1.2 c); 6.2.3 c)

Certificate of Higher Education and the International Dip: 7.1.2 c)

Certificate of Continuing Education: 8.1.2 c)

Ordinary Degree: 9.2.3 c) with wording adjusted to reflect 60 credits not a stage mark;

Integrated masters: 3.1.2 c); 3.2.2 c); 3.3.2 c);

([Paper S/14/62](#), Appendix 1 [S. M. 268/14](#))

- **Withdrawal due to non-attendance at resit examinations**

The paragraph regarding the powers of Exam Boards when considering results from reassessment to be reworded to ensure greater clarity where reassessment is via coursework only or coursework and examinations:

*“where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:*

- *where the Stage mark is **below 20%**;*
- *where a student has undertaken none of the required reassessment.*

The following paragraphs are affected:

Three-Year Honours Rules: 3.1.3 e); 3.1.6 e); 3.1.11 d); 3.2.5 d)

Four-Year Honours Rules: 4.1.3 e); 4.1.8 d); 4.2.4 d)

Foundation Degrees: 5.1.3 e); 5.2.4 d)

Diploma of Higher Education: 6.1.3 e); 6.2.4 e)

Certificate of Higher Education and the International Dip: 7.1.3 e)

Certificate of Continuing Education: 8.1.3 e)

Ordinary Degree: 9.2.4 e);

Integrated masters: 3.1.3 e); 3.2.3 d); 3.3.3 d);

**This will only apply to students taking compulsory reassessment.** ([Paper S/14/62](#), Appendix 1 [S. M. 268/14](#))

### 3. AMENDMENT TO THE HIGHER DEGREE REGULATIONS

Senate Agreed

That the Higher Degree Regulations be amended as approved in papers S/14/62 (Appendix 3) (progress and appeals procedures) and S/15/01 (regulations relating to Confirmation for PhD students, paragraph 4.30)

- **Appeals Procedure against a Progress Decision – Postgraduate Research Students**

The changes clarified who may accompany students to hearings and now align with procedures for taught students:

13 The student will be invited to be present at the committee whenever oral evidence is being heard by the Committee, and will receive all the papers. He/she may ~~bring a~~ be accompanied by a student of the University, or other a member of staff of the University or by an employee of the Students' Union to help him/her in presenting their appeal to the Committee.

- **Appeals Procedure against an Examination Decision – Postgraduate Research Students (Thesis)**

The changes clarified who may accompany students to hearings and now align with procedures for taught students

7. The candidate shall be informed by the Secretary to the Appeal Committee of the date for consideration of the appeal not less than two weeks in advance. Candidates may present their case to the Committee in person, but, if they choose not to or are unable to, the Committee may proceed in their absence. Candidates may be accompanied by a student of the University, a member of staff of the University of Essex, or of the permanent staff an employee of the Students' Union of the University of Essex, or may nominate a member of the University to appear for them. A student who is unable to attend the meeting may ask a member of the University, a student of the University, a member of staff of the University, or an employee or a member of the full-time staff of the Students' Union, to attend on his or her behalf. No person may represent the student in his or her absence unless he or she has expressly been asked to do so by the student.

- **Appeals against a Progress Decision – Professional Doctorate Students**

The changes clarified who may accompany students to hearings and now align with procedures for taught students

9. The student will be invited to be present at the committee whenever oral evidence is being heard by the Committee, and will receive all the papers. He/she may ~~bring~~ be accompanied by a student of the University, a or other member of staff of the University or an employee of the Students' Union to help him/her in presenting their appeal to the Committee.

(Paper S/14/62, Appendix 3 S. M. 268/14) ACTION 2014-15

- **Amendment of the Regulations relating to Confirmation for PhD students**

“Following approval by Senate in July 2014 of the revised Higher Degree Regulations, that a further minor amendment be approved with immediate effect to paragraph 4.30:”

**“For students admitted from October 2008**

All intending PhD students are initially registered as Mphil/PhD. ~~During the second year of full-time study (or the equivalent for part-timers) a student’s PhD registration may be confirmed. Until this point intending PhD students are registered as Mphil/PhD. At the~~

end of the first year of full-time study (or the equivalent for part-timers), students studying in the Faculty of Social Sciences or Faculty of Humanities, may have their PhD registration confirmed. Students studying in the Faculty of Science and Health may have their PhD registration confirmed during the first term of the second year of full-time study (or the equivalent for part-timers). Until this point intending PhD students are registered as Mphil/PhD. The Research Students' Progress Committee shall decide that a student's PhD status be confirmed only if it is satisfied that the student has produced work of sufficient quality and quantity to provide evidence of appropriate PhD-level progress. The Research Students' Progress Committee's decision will be reported to the Executive Dean or his/her deputy, accompanied by appropriate supporting documents."

(Paper [S/15/01](#), S. M. 04/15) **FOR ACTION 2014-15**

#### **4. ACADEMIC FLEXIBILITY POLICY FOR TAUGHT STUDENTS (SPORT)**

Senate Agreed "That the policy be approved as set out in Appendix A of paper S/15/13."  
This is the introduction of "a specialist policy clearly articulating the flexible study options available to elite student athletes" which includes degree-pacing and flexibility in assessment. ([S/15/13](#) Appendix A, S.M 45/15)  
**FOR ACTION 2015-16.**

#### **5. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING REQUESTS FROM FORMER STUDENTS FOR READMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY: RESEARCH DEGREES**

Senate Agreed "That the procedure be approved as set out in Appendix D of paper S/15/13."  
• "As requests for readmission from research students had increased, it had been agreed that the process should be formalised in line with the readmission process for taught provision" which is the *Procedure for Handling Requests from Former Students for Readmission to the University: Undergraduates and Postgraduates on Taught Courses*.  
• "That Regulation 5.13 of the Regulations relating to Registration are amended as set out below with effect from 2015-16 to state:  
*Former students who have withdrawn permanently or been required to withdraw permanently or been deemed to have withdrawn permanently from the University will be considered for readmission to a programme of study in line with the University's Procedure for Handling Requests from Former Students for Readmission to the University.*  
([S/15/13](#) Appendix B, S.M 46/15)  
**FOR ACTION 2015-16**

#### **6. ELECTRONIC REPOSITORY FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH THESES.**

Senate Agreed That the policy be approved as set out in Appendix C of paper S/15/13.  
The policy will "require all research students (including MPhils, MSDs, Professional Doctorates, etc.) to submit one copy of their thesis to the library and to submit their second copy electronically via the University's Research Repository after the examination process has been completed and before the award can be conferred upon the student."  
The policy will be encouraged from March 2015 until the end of the academic year and mandatory from 2015-16.  
([S/15/13](#) Appendix B, S.M 47/15)  
**FOR ACTION 2014-15 and 2015-16**

## **7. PROPOSED CHANGES TO RULES OF ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS: TAUGHT AND RESEARCH PROVISION**

Senate Agreed That the progression requirements for research provision be approved as set out in Appendix D of paper S/15/13.  
“Additional milestones for progression onto the Professional Doctorate dissertation for all Professional Doctorate programmes in Health and Social Care, emulating the confirmation process for PhD programmes”  
([S/15/13](#) Appendix D, S.M 48/15) **FOR ACTION 2014-15**

## **8. AMENDED DEFINITION OF UNSATISFACTORY STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Senate Agreed That the proposed amendments to the Progress and Appeals Procedures for Taught Programmes of Study for 2014-15 be approved as set out in paper S/15/13, for 2014-15 only.  
“That the definition of unsatisfactory attendance be amended as follows with immediate effect for 2014-15 only:

- No attendance at any teaching event for a two-week period (thereafter continued non-attendance for a further one-week period would be considered to be ‘unsatisfactory’) (described in the Progress Procedures as ‘non-attendance’)
- Absence from more than 50 per cent of the timetabled events for the same module in a 2-week period (described in the Progress Procedures as ‘unsatisfactory level of attendance’)
- Absence from more than 50 per cent of the timetabled events for the course in a 2-week period (described in the Progress Procedures as ‘unsatisfactory level of attendance’).

([S/15/13](#) S.M 49/15) **ACTION 2014-15**

## **SECTION B – FOR INFORMATION**

- 1. The Information Supporting Strategy**
- 2. Strategic Partnerships Framework**
- 3. Policy on Peer Review of Teaching**
- 4. Changes to the Entry Requirements**
- 5. Schedule of Admissions Decision-Making**

### **1. THE INFORMATION SUPPORTING STRATEGY**

Senate approved and recommended to Council “That the Information Supporting Strategy be approved and recommended to Council as set out in paper S/14/71.”  
The Information Supporting Strategy is “one of five supporting strategies underpinning the University’s Strategic Plan.” There are “four key themes in the Strategy: information resources, access to information; technology supporting information and information culture”.  
([S/14/71](#) S.M 295/14-297/14)

### **2. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK**

Senate Agreed “That the Partnerships Strategic Framework be approved as set out in paper S/15/08”.  
The paper states that “It is envisaged that the strategic framework for partnerships, in conjunction with other policies, procedures and partner performance indicators, will serve a number of interrelated purposes primarily to inform decisions about proposed or existing partnerships, and to ensure that all of our partnership activities

are aligned with the University visions of excellence in education and excellence in research.”

([S/15/08](#), S.M 26/15-28/15)

### 3. POLICY ON PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

Senate Agreed “That the Peer Review of Teaching Policy be approved as set out in paper S/15/09”.  
“Senate noted that the policy promoted a flexible approach in ensuring that every member of academic staff engaged in teaching would be subject to peer review and discussion at least every two years and that it would be managed outside the line management and appraisal structure.”

Senate agreed the policy with the following amendments:

“(i) to make it clear that the forms included with the policy were provided as examples and their use was not a mandatory requirement of the policy, and (ii) to make it clear that all members of academic staff engaged in teaching were required to be peer reviewed within each two year period.”

([S/15/09](#), S.M 29/15-32/15)

### 4. CHANGES TO ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Education Committee Agreed Education Committee approved without discussion the proposed changes to entry requirements:

1. “Lower the undergraduate entry requirements for applicants taking the Irish Leaving Certificate” ([EC/14/94](#), EC. M. 187/14)
2. To agree “entry requirements under the new Cambridge English scale (in use from January 2015) for applicants taking Cambridge English: Advanced and Cambridge English: Proficiency to meet the University’s English language requirements.”
3. To agree “an amendment to the current (pre-January 2015) entry requirements for Cambridge English: Proficiency, for applicants who have already achieved this qualification.”([EC/14/95](#), EC. M. 187/14)

### 5. SCHEDULE FOR ADMISSIONS ACTIVITY DECISION-MAKING

Education Committee Agreed Education Committee approved without discussion the Schedule for Admissions Activity Decision-making.  
([EC/14/90](#), EC. M. 187/14)

## Academic Standards and Partnerships Office

February 2015

#### FOR ACTION:

Head of Departments/School  
Directors of Education  
Directors of: Centres  
Study Abroad Office  
Departmental Administrators (including Centres)

#### FOR INFORMATION:

Pro-Vice-Chancellor  
Executive Deans  
Deputy Deans (Education)  
Academic Registrar  
Faculty Managers  
Faculty Education Managers