

ANNUAL SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC POLICY DECISIONS 2014-15

This document refers to key decisions made during the 2014-15 academic year at the following meetings:

Senate (S): 29/10/14, 21/1/15, 22/4/15, 1/7/15

Education Committee (EC): 10/12/14, 11/2/15, 25/3/15, 17/6/15

Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC): 15/10/14, 28/1/15, 11/3/15, 3/6/15

SharePoint site: <https://sp.essex.ac.uk/sections/academic/senate/default.aspx>

	Category	Name of New or Amended Policy	Summary of change and link to source paper/committee minutes
1	Ordinance	a. Ordinance 46 – Boards of Examiners b. Ordinance 47 – Regulations, Policies and Procedures	i. Delegation of authority relating to UG Boards of Examiners, and where authority may revert back to Senate for reasons of a <i>force majeure</i> ii. Relating to enhancement to the University’s Tier 4 and Immigration Frameworks. <i>(please also see item 4 for more information)</i> Senate 1 July 2015 recommendation to Council S/15/26, S. M. 113/15 S/15/41
2	University Calendar (Section 6)	Posthumous Awards	That the Board of Examiners may recommend to Senate that a student who has complete two thirds of a programme of study and would have successfully completed the programme, be awarded a degree, diploma or certificate <i>post obitum</i>. Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 , Appendix N, Annex B
3	Periodic Reviews	Periodic Review of Courses	Enhancements following the QAA Higher Education Review including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Removal of Stage 1 ii. Requirements for departments to respond to recommendations and/or conditions at the same time. iii. New guidance and templates Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 , Appendix Q

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4	Tier 4 and Immigration Regulatory Frameworks	<p>Amendments to: Ordinance 47</p> <p>General Regulations: Academic Conduct</p> <p>Regulations Relating to Registration</p> <p>Regulations Relating to Academic Affairs</p> <p>Progress Procedure for Research Students</p>	<p>In order to meet Home Office requirements, amendment to be made to existing policy and regulation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Changes to General Regulations to be made in-year where required to meet institutional compliance with the Home Office. ii. Departments should be aware that immigration control requirements cannot be discounted even if academic progress is high and refer to the annexes of Appendix E of paper S/15/41. iii. Students who appear to be in breach of requirements should attend a meeting with the Immigration Compliance Team. iv. Students engaged in work placements or study abroad are required to attend their placement/place of study on a full-time basis. <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix E</p>
5	Student Representation	Student Representatives Policy	<p>Minor amendments to reflect its practical implementation and the robustness of the student representative mechanisms, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. More formal liaising with the Students Union regarding feedback to students ii. Performance assessment of student representatives. <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix S</p>
		Student Assessment of Modules and Teaching (SAMT)	<p>Widening student access to data.</p> <p>Education Committee 17 June 2015 EC/15/39</p>

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6	Work-based Learning (WBL)	Work-based Learning	<p>Education Committee endorsed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Definitions of work-based and work-related learning ii. Policy framework for WBL within the curriculum iii. Further actions to be undertaken to develop resources and management of WBL and WRL. iv. Also see separate item on Rules of Assessment for WBL and placement years. <p>Education Committee 17 June 2015 EC/15/40</p>
7	Professional programmes	Fitness to Practise	<p>Amendments and additions to enhance clarity including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Immediate action that may be taken when allegations about fitness to practise are raised. ii. Definition of “health” not including pre-existing medical conditions. iii. Definition of “working days” iv. That a nominee acting on behalf of the Head of School must be a member of academic staff approved by the PVC (Education) v. The amendment of the Fitness to Practise Committee indicative membership <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix K</p>
8	Taught Provision	a. Undergraduate Admissions Policy 2016-17	<p>Minor updates to apply to 2015/16 admissions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Requirements to comply with the Tier 4 policy. ii. Minor amendments to English language requirements. <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix O</p>

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8	Taught Provision	b. Rules of Assessment (Undergraduate)	<p>Various amendments to the Rules of Assessment including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Variations agreed for specific courses (please refer to relevant minutes and papers for full details).Amendments to sections relating to withdrawal. ii. The introduction of a new type of award. iii. Delegation of authority for Boards of Examiners for reasons of force majeure (paragraph 2.15) (<i>Please also see item 1a</i>) iv. Amended requirements for eligibility for placement year/year abroad (based on first stage mark thresholds and failure on stage two modules). <p>Senate 29 October 2014 S/14/62 S. M. 268/14</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/23,</p> <p>Vice-Chancellor's action on behalf of Senate S/15/17, S. M. 60/15</p> <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix B S/15/41 Appendix C S/15/26, Appendix B</p>
8	Taught Provision	c. Generic placement module SK701	<p>Introduction of a 120 credit for pan-University use where a placement year version of a course did not already exist.</p> <p>Academic Quality and Standards Committee 28 January 2015</p> <p>AQSC/15/18, AQSC. M. 15/115-15-122, EC/15/10 and EC. M. 44-45/15</p>

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8	Taught Provision	d. Regulations relating to Academic Affairs – Reassessment: paragraph 6.3, Tier 4: 6.16, 6.34-6.37	<p>Reassessment after the final examinations in the final year of undergraduate study.</p> <p>Senate 29 October 2014 Paper S/14/62, S. M. 268/14</p> <p>Tier 4 and Immigration Frameworks Senate 1 July 2015 Changes to University regulations in relation to compliance with the University's obligations as a Tier 4 sponsor with highly trusted sponsor status. (see also item 1b.ii amendments to Ordinance 47 and item 4 Tier 4 and Immigration Regulatory Frameworks)</p> <p>S/15/41 Appendix E</p>
		e. Graduate Admissions Policy 2016-17	<p>Minor updates to apply to 2015/16 admissions, including:</p> <p>i. Requirements to comply with the Tier 4 policy. ii. Minor alteration to the English language requirements.</p> <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix P</p>
		f. Rules of Assessment (Postgraduate)	<p>Variations to assessment policies agreed for UG and PGT courses, including:</p> <p>i. A change to the University's Credit Framework for Taught Postgraduate Courses ii. Chairing postgraduate Boards of Examiners. (see also item 1.a, amendment to Ordinance 46)</p> <p>Senate 29 October 2014 S/14/62 S. M. 268/14 Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/23, Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/26, Appendix C Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix N</p>

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8	Taught Provision	g. Academic Flexibility Policy for Taught Students (Sport)	<p>Specialist policy for elite student athletes allowing degree-pacing and deferral of examinations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The policy does not cover any circumstance already covered by the Extenuating Circumstances policy. ii. Student-athletes must already be in receipt of a University of Essex Sports Scholarship to be eligible. <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/13 S.M 45/15</p>
		h. Progress and Appeals Procedures for Taught Programmes of Study	<p>Amendments to the Progress and Appeals Procedures including revised progress procedures and a new definition of unsatisfactory attendance. Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increased departmental discretion with respect to the student meeting with the personal tutor. ii. That procedures dealing with students the departmental level are retained. iii. That departments should keep a record of all correspondence with students when undertaking progress procedures. <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/13 S.M 49/15</p> <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/39 S/15/41 Appendix F</p>
		i. Assessment Policies for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Awards of the University of Essex	<p>Extension of X9 module marks policy to L4 and postgraduate taught students</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/23, S. M. 96/15</p>

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8	Taught Provision	j. Marking Policy for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Work	<p>Minor enhancements to the existing policy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Designation of take-home examinations as coursework ii. Modification to circumstances where students can request a re-mark. <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/23, Annex I Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix I</p>
9	Postgraduate Research	a. Principles for approval of new courses and modules and changes to existing provision for PGR provision	<p>Clarification and introduction of an approval framework for PGR courses and modules, with templates.</p> <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41 Appendix R</p>
		b. Higher Degree Regulations	<p>Amendments to the Principal Regulations for Research Degrees including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All casework relating to PGR students registered at partner institutions will be overseen by the Dean of Academic Partnerships (or his/her deputy) from October 2015. (<i>The Code of Practice will also be amended</i>) ii. That 4.2 of the Principal Regulations for Research Degrees be amended to ensure that students are interviewed before an offer of admission is made. (<i>see also S/14/05</i>) iii. The timing of Confirmation Boards and conferring of awards. iv. PGR student eligibility for GTA roles. <p>Amendments to the Progress and Appeals Procedures for Research Degree Students Appeals against a Progress Decision (Professional Doctorate Students and PGR students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Amendments to who may accompany the student to an Appeal Committee.

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9	Postgraduate Research		<p>Amendments to the Higher Degree Regulations</p> <p>i. Minor amendment to paragraph 4.30 with respect to confirmation of PhD registration.</p> <p>Senate 29 October 2014 S/14/62 S. M. 268/14</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/01, S.M. 04/15</p> <p>Progress procedures for Tier 4 PGR students (<i>please also see item 4</i>)</p> <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S/15/41, Appendix G S/15/41, Appendix H for a full list of amendments to the Principal Regulations for Research Degrees</p>
9	Postgraduate Research	c. Higher Degree Regulations	<p>Variation for PGR progression and award requirements for Professional Doctorates with respect to the milestones for progression including:</p> <p>i. Requiring students to seek permission from the Research Students' Progress Committee to move on to the dissertation.</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/13 Appendix D, S.M. 48/15</p>
		d. Procedure for Handling Requests from Former Students for Readmission to the University	<p>Formal process for readmission to the University for PGR students. Amendment to Regulations relating to Registration (paragraph 5.13)</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/13 Appendix B, S.M. 46/15</p>

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9	Postgraduate Research	e. Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning for Postgraduate Research Provision	<p>That research provision be incorporated into the current AP(E)L policy. <i>(please also see item 9b)</i></p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/23, Appendix B, S. M. 95/15)</p>
		f. Electronic Repository for Postgraduate Research Theses	<p>Policy requiring all research students to submit a copy of their thesis electronically before the award can be conferred.</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/13, S.M. 47/15</p>
		g. Postgraduate Research Milestones	<p>Generic milestones documents by faculty for departments to use as minimal thresholds to monitor progression.</p> <p>Senate 21 January 2015 S/15/41, Appendix A, S. M. 93/15</p>
10	All provision	Complaints Procedure	<p>Minor amendments to existing procedure following the publication of the final draft of the OIA Good Practice Framework for the handling of Complaints and Appeals.</p> <p>i. Enhanced principles ii. New sections on confidentiality; advice, support and guidance; timeliness; students at partner institutions; complaints involving other organisations or contractors; complaints about the students union; complaints involving more than one department; complaints made directly to the VC, Registrar or Secretary; managing unacceptable behaviour; governance of the complaints handling procedure.</p>

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10	All provision	Complaints Procedure	<p>iii. Amendment of the definition of a complaint: “an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about a university’s action or lack of action about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the university.”</p> <p>Education Committee 17 June 2015 EC/15/61, EC. M. 186-187/15</p> <p>Senate 1 July 2015 S. M. 172/15</p>

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Authored by: Academic Standards and Partnerships Office

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