



Senate

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Suspension of Regulations Summary Report: February – May 2014</b>
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked to <b>note</b> the report and to consider approaches for the reduction of situations resulting in suspensions.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	A summary of suspensions of regulations requested during the period February 2014 – May 2014, and the outcomes.
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are members concerned by the number of suspensions?</li><li>• How can the number of suspensions be reduced?</li><li>• Do members feel that the suspension decisions are appropriate?</li></ul>
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	The paper concerns exceptions granted to the normal application of the <i>Academic Regulations</i> , the main regulatory document for the management of quality and standards in relation to our academic provision.
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	Security of academic standards and quality relies upon the approved frameworks being applied consistently. There should be no exceptions. This paper details the actions taken to address those exceptions that did arise.
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	N/A
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## Suspension of Regulations Summary Report February 2014 – May 2014

### Background

A report on suspensions of regulations is submitted to each meeting of Senate. Examination boards may request a suspension where a situation arises in which the normal application of the Academic Regulations would either be manifestly unfair to one or more students, or where a situation has arisen which was not foreseen by the regulations (that is, where a change to the regulations is needed, but action is required on behalf of the current cohort). These cases should be *extremely* rare, and the situations leading to them are normally avoidable.

To obtain a suspension requires support from the appropriate Subject and Degree Examination Boards and the Vice-Principal (Teaching & Learning) for regulatory issues associated with assessment, or from the Head of School or Institute and the Vice-Principal (Teaching & Learning) for other regulatory issues (such as admissions regulations). All requests are passed through ARCS, and screened at that stage.

This report covers the period February to May 2014. Tables showing a breakdown of requests by faculty and school/institute are provided, and a précis of each suspension and its cause is given in the appendix.

### Summary data: February 2014 – May 2014

There were eight requests for suspension in this quarter. In the equivalent quarter in 2012/13 there were only five. There have been a total of 36 suspensions so far in the present academic year, against 27 at the same point last year.

School or Institute	Upheld	Rejected	Total
Law (1x CCLS)	1	-	1
History	1	-	1
IHSE (1x MBBS, 1x intercalated)	1	1	2
Biological and Chemical Sciences	1	-	1
Languages, Linguistics and Film	-	1	1
Politics and International Relations	2	-	2

Faculty	Upheld	Rejected	Total
Humanities and Social Sciences	4	1	5
Science and Engineering	1	-	1
Medicine and Dentistry	1	1	2
Other	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>

### Common or resolvable problems

#### Reweighting assessment schemes

Two suspensions were needed to reweight assessment schemes for entire modules because a module convenor had delivered an incorrect assessment scheme. This has been raised as a common problem in the past, and is a serious issue. Delivering unapproved assessment schemes poses a real risk to standards, and Senate is asked to consider measures to encourage Schools to scrutinise more closely the assessment that is delivered more thoroughly, and to ensure that module convenors are fully aware of the approved assessment schemes.

While a third suspension was needed in this quarter to reweight an assessment scheme, that was due to the module convenor falling ill and being unavailable for marking. That case should therefore be considered separately.

Kate Ruffell  
Assessment Governance Administrator  
May 2014

Appendix – suspensions of regulations February - May 2014

Ref.	Regulation	Desired outcome	Reason for request	Upheld?	Avoidable?	School
2013-29	Module (assessment)	Amend assessment from 60% exam/40% essay to 2x essays at 50% each (13/14 only).	School error	Y	Y	SPIR
2013-30	Academic 2.112	Handle an assessment offence investigation for an element worth more than 30% in the school rather than in ARCS.	School error	Y	Y	MBBS
2013-31	Module (assessment)	Change weighting of assignments to 'best 5 of 6 count, for 12% each'.	School error	Y	Y	CCLS
2013-32	Module (assessment)	Change assessment from an exam (2hrs) to an essay (3,000 words) for an individual student.	Individual student's circumstances	Y	Y	SPIR
2013-33	Academic 2.137	Student permitted to resit modules this year, following the application of a penalty for committing an assessment offence.	Individual student's circumstances	N	Y	IHSE
2013-34	Module (assessment)	Exclude group presentation (10%) from the module assessment.	Unforeseen circumstances - module convenor taken ill	N	?	SLLF
2013-35	Academic 4.45	Award a non-standard retake (UG, capped, as second attempt) in place of a resit	School error	Y	Y	SBCS
2013-36	Module (assessment)	Reweight assessments to exclude the 30% slide test.	School error	Y	Y	History