

LTC15D060

Title: *Narrative Report on Academic Appeals, Complaints, Complaints to the OIA and Senate Student Disciplinary Cases in 2014-15*
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Issue

The report considers the Academic Appeals and Complaints and OIA referrals received in the academic year 2014-15

Recommendation

The committee is asked to note the report

Resource Implications

N/A

Risk Implications

N/A

Equality and Diversity

The report has no E & D implications

Timing of decisions

N/A

Further Information

For further information regarding the issues in this paper please contact Dr Jon Sharp (Head LTS) on 01603 9597374 jon.sharp@uea.ac.uk

Academic Appeals:

The number of Stage One Academic Appeals received in the academic year 2014-15 increased by approximately 30% compared to the previous year.

This is a significant annual rise that is slightly above sector norms which, anecdotally, are estimated to be approximately 20-25%. The increase in the volume of Stage One appeals may in part relate to the changes in degree regulations regarding the need for students to pass all modules; the increasing importance to finalists of achieving a 2i or I classification may also be a factor. However, while there have been a small number of Schools that have seen a spike in appeals, the increase has not been restricted to any particular type of appeal (eg against a classification or withdrawal).

In last year's report it was tentatively suggested that the reduction in the proportion of Stage One Appeals that proceeded to Stage Two might be a result of the improvements in the Appeals Procedures and the consideration of appeals by Faculty Appeal and Complaints Panels. In the 2013-14 academic year 16.7% of Stage One appeals proceeded to Stage Two and this reduction has increased in 2014-15 with 9.4% of Stage One appeals proceeding to Stage Two. The increase in the volume of Stage One appeals suggests that students are comfortable with the concept of submitting an appeal and so the significant reduction in the proportion that proceed to Stage Two would suggest that more students than previously was the case are now content that their appeal has been satisfactorily handled at Stage One.

We have seen an absolute reduction in the number of Stage Two appeals received (26 in 2014-15; 35 in 2013-14). Unsurprisingly, the proportion of Stage Two appeals that have been upheld has increased to 57% (48.5% in 2013-14) as the reduction in numbers suggests that we are less likely to receive speculative Stage Two appeals than in previous years. The majority of Stage Two appeals that have been upheld have been in relation to a lack of sufficient contemporaneous evidence that a student's case has been fully and properly considered, but the recording of FACP deliberations is continuing to improve and so this should reduce over time.

Complaints:

The statistical tables indicate that the number of Academic Complaints received within the University continues to be extremely low. There were 27 Stage One and 4 Stage Two Academic Complaints received within the period. While this represents an increase on the previous year, the number of Academic Complaints remains extremely low. The very low level of complaints across the University as a whole suggests that, for most of our students, the University provides a high quality of service delivery and in the rare instances where a complaint is received that it is satisfactorily dealt with at the first stage of consideration.

OIA Cases:

The University saw a further reduction in the number of cases proceeding to the OIA with only 10 new complaints compared to 15 in the previous year, a reduction of a third, building on the 30% reduction we had already seen in 2014-15. This now places our level of OIA complaints as below the average for our banding.

In 2014-15 the OIA issued judgements on 14 complaints. The OIA determined that none of the complaints were justified and only one complaint was partially justified. At this low volume percentages are not necessarily helpful, but it is certainly pleasing to see that the OIA outcomes reflect the view that we have an effective and fair appeals and complaints system in place.

Senate Student Disciplinary Cases

Analysis of Cases by Type:

Regulation 13

There has been a further reduction in the number of Regulation 13 referrals from 20 down to 8, which strongly suggests that the more consistent approach to addressing non-attendance has started to pay dividends. Only one case proceeded to a full panel hearing.

Regulation 18

Plagiarism and/ or collusion cases have seen a slight increase in the number of referrals with 10 cases being referred compared to 7 in the previous year. Half of the cases referred led to a confirmation that student in question had plagiarised. The very small numbers involved suggests that while we do have to meet the continuing challenge of ensuring that our students are suitably educated about the nature of plagiarism, we are broadly succeeding in that aim.

Regulation 14

These cases present the greatest complexity as they are concerned with matters of professional suitability and conduct. However, the number of cases is very small: There were only 1 case that proceeded to a full hearing. Given the significant number of students on courses that are covered by Regulation 14 this is a very pleasing figure that reflects the quality of teaching and professional guidance that our professional students receive.

Regulation 17

The significant reduction in assessment related disciplinary cases that we saw in 2013-14 where the number of cases fell from 20 to 4 has stabilised with a further small reduction in 2014-15 such that only 2 cases were referred to SSDC. This reduction would appear to confirm the view taken in last year's narrative report that the University is more effectively communicating the requirements upon students in terms of conduct in assessments.

Regulation 15

There was only one case referred in 2014-15 under this regulation. This suggests that the spike in referrals experienced in 2013-14 was, as surmised, an anomaly rather than an indication of a change in behaviour amongst our students.

Non-Academic Discipline

There were no cases of non-academic discipline that proceeded to a panel hearing. This contrasts with the six cases referred in the previous year. The variety of behaviours that are covered under the Non-academic Discipline remit means that it is very difficult to draw any conclusions in terms of institutional behaviour by looking at single year fluctuations and to date we have not seen any definite trend in the volume or type of cases.

ACADEMIC APPEALS - UNDERGRADUATE
October 2014-September 2015

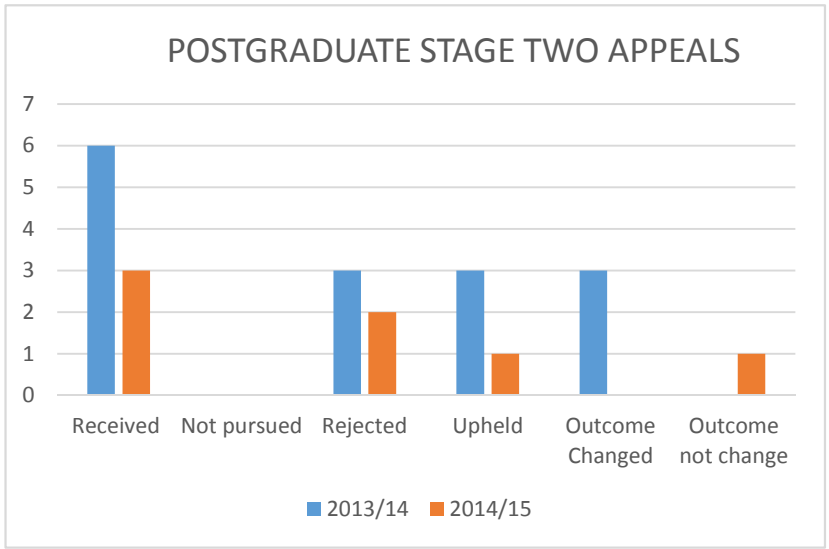
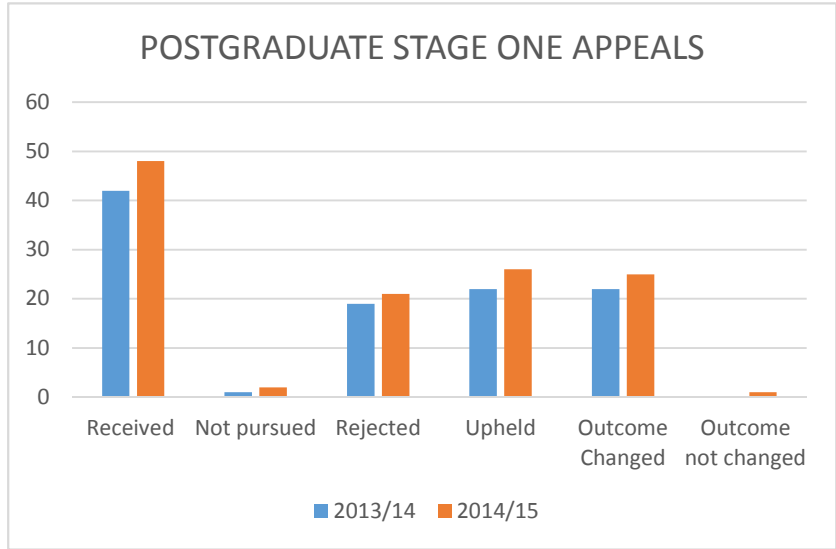
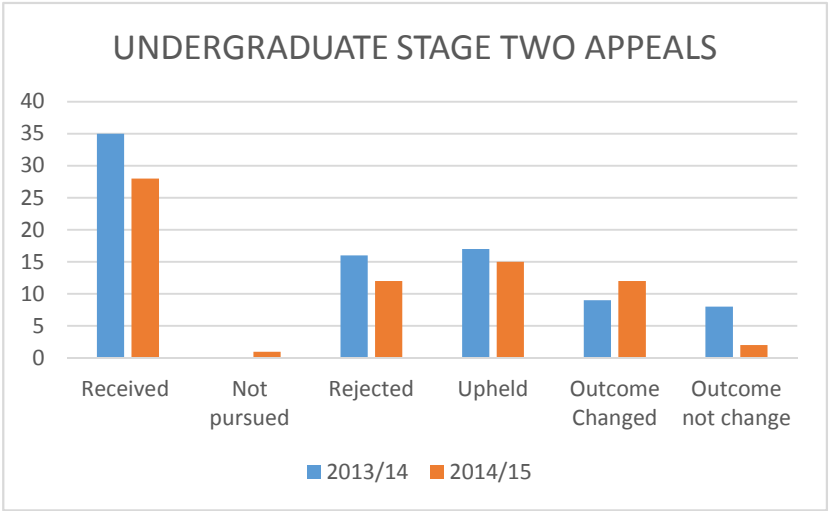
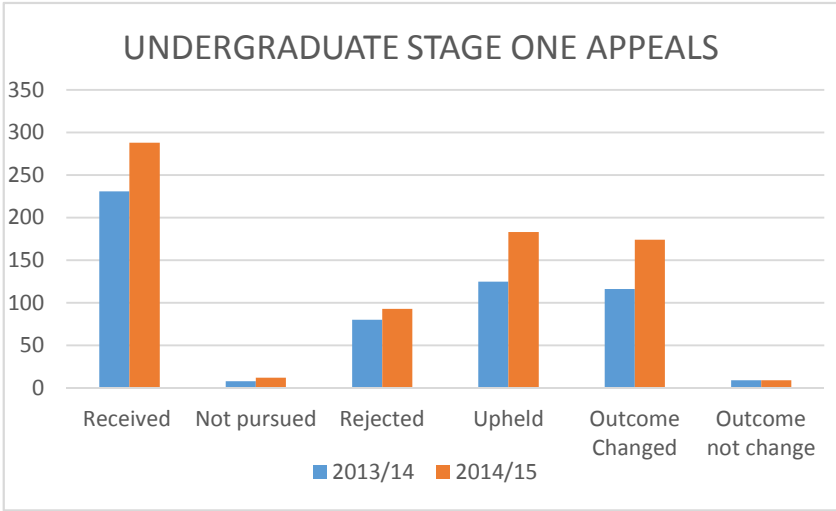
Faculty and School	STAGE ONE								STAGE TWO						
	No. of Stage One Appeals received	Carried Forward from 2013/14	Not pursued by complainant	FACP Reject	FACP Upheld	Upheld Academic Outcome Changed	Upheld Academic Outcome Not Changed	Out of time	No. of Stage Two Appeals received	Carried Forward from 2013/14	Not pursued by complainant	Reject	Upheld	Academic Outcome Changed	Academic Appeal Not Changed
HUM															
AMA	9		1	4	4	4				1		1			
HIS	3					3	2	1	1			1			
HUM	4					4	4								
LDC	15			2	13	12	1		1			1			
PPL	10		2	1	7	6	1								
FMH															
HSC	43	4	1	15	31	31			6			2	4	4	
MED	12			1	11	11			1			1			
SCI															
BIO	11			5	6	6			1				1	1	
CHE	20	2		3	19	16	3								
CMP	30	5		14	21	21			1				1	1	
ENV	11		1	4	6	6			3		1		2	2	
MTH	10		1	2	7	6	1								
NAT	2				2	2									
PHA	10	1		3	8	8			3			3			
SSF															
DEV	3			2	1	1									
ECO	17	5	1	12	9	9			2			1	1	1	
EDU	16		1	9	6	6			4	1			5	2	2
LAW	23		3	4	16	14	2		2			2			
NBS	19		1	10	8	8									
PSY	3			2	1	1			1				1	1	
SWK															
TOTAL	271	17	12	93	183	174	9	0	26	2	1	12	15	12	2

2013 / 14 total	206	25	8	80	125	116	9		35		0	16	17	9	8
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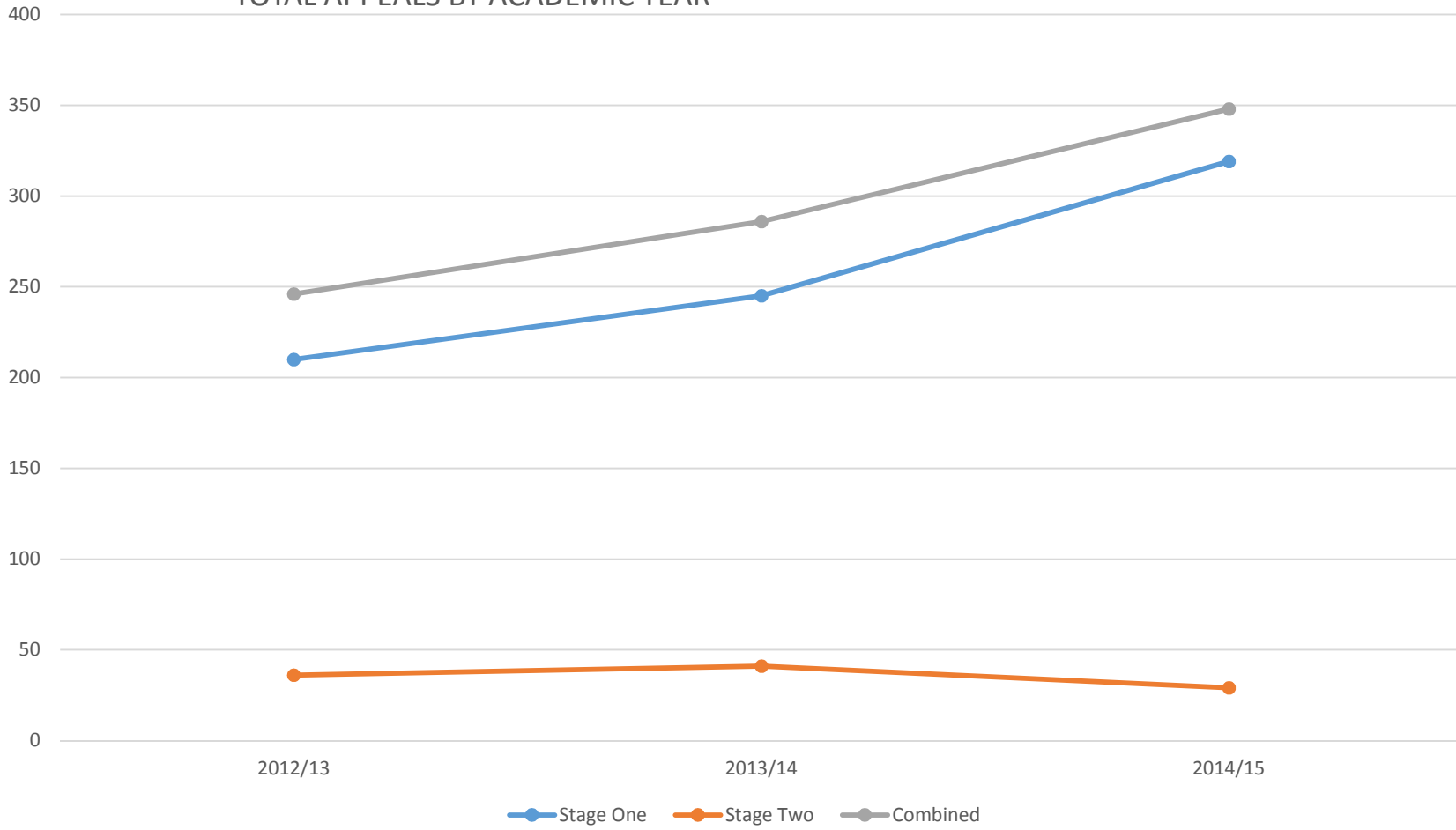
ACADEMIC APPEALS - POSTGRADUATE
 October 2014-September 2015

STAGE ONE									STAGE TWO						
Faculty and School	Stage One Appeals received	Carried Forward	Not pursued by complainant	FACP Reject	FACP Upheld	Upheld Academic Outcome Changed	Upheld Academic Outcome Not Changed	Out of time	No. of Stage Two Appeals received	Carried Forward	Not pursued by complainant	Reject	Upheld	Upheld Academic Outcome Changed	Upheld Academic Outcome Not Changed
HUM															
AMA	2				2	2									
HIS															
HUM															
LDC	2			2											
PPL	2			1	1	1									
FMH															
HSC	3			2	1	1									
MED	4			1	3	3			1				1		1
SCI															
BIO	1				1		1								
CHE	2				2	2									
CMP	3			3											
ENV	1			1											
MTH															
NAT	1				1	1									
PHA	8		1	1	7	7			1			1			
SSF															
DEV	2			1	1	1									
ECO	5		1	2	2	2									
EDU															
LAW	3			3											
NBS	9			4	5	5			1			1			
PSY															
SWK															
TOTAL	48	0	2	21	26	25	1	0	3	0	0	2	1	0	1

2013/14															
Totals	39	3	1	19	22	22	0		6		0	3	3	3	0



TOTAL APPEALS BY ACADEMIC YEAR



ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS - UNDERGRADUATE
October 2014-September 2015

Faculty and School	STAGE ONE								STAGE TWO						
	Stage One Complaints received	Carried Forward	Not pursued by complainant	FACP Reject	FACP Upheld	Academic Outcome Changed	Upheld Academic Outcome Not Changed	Out of time	Stage Two Complaints received	Carried Forward	Not pursued by complainant	Reject	Upheld	Upheld Academic Outcome Changed	Upheld Academic Outcome Not Changed
HUM															
AMA	2			1	1		1		1				1		1
HIS															
HUM															
LDC															
PPL	9			6	3		3		1			1			
FMH															
HSC	3			2	1		1		1			1			
MED															
SCI															
BIO															
CHE	1			1											
CMP															
ENV															
MTH															
NAT															
PHA															
SSF															
DEV	1				1		1								
ECO															
EDU															
LAW															
NBS	1			1											
PSY															
SWK	1			1					1			1			
TOTAL	18	0	0	12	6	0	6	0	4	0	0	3	1	0	1

2014/15 SSDC CASES

Regulation	No. of referrals	Paper/No Hearing	Hearing	Student withdrew prior to Hearing	Breach and Reassessment	Breach and Withdrawn by Committee	Breach and Penalty	Breach and No Penalty	No Breach and No Penalty	Case not Progressed	Still in Progress	Appeal	Reaffirmed decision of SSDC	Appeal Upheld	Other Decision	In Progress	OIA
Reg 13	6	6						2		4							
Reg 14	1	1								1							
Reg 15	1		1						1								
Reg 17	2		2		1			1									
Reg 18	6		6		4		1		1			1		1			
TOTAL	16	7	9	0	5	0	1	3	2	5	0	1	0	1	0	0	0

INTO UEA	No. of referrals	Paper/No Hearing	Hearing	Student withdrew prior to Hearing	Breach and Reassessment	Breach and Withdrawn by Committee	Breach and Penalty	Breach and No Penalty	No Breach and No Penalty	Case not Progressed	Still in Progress	Appeal	Reaffirmed decision of SSDC	Appeal Upheld	Other Decision	In Progress	OIA
Reg 13	2	1	1			1		1				1	1				
Reg 18	4	4								4							
TOTAL	6	5	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0