College of Science and Engineering

Notification for Progression Boards

Progression update and guidance

Effective from: 6/4/16

Applicable to: Board of Examiners, Progression Boards, Directors of Teaching, and Senior Tutors.

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References:
Tier4 Managed Migration wiki – Latest news April 2016
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/T4MMSI/Latest+news+-+April+2016

Immigration Rules: Sponsorship Duties page 33-35

Senate Meeting 14 April 2016
Reference to the application of Regulation 64 which can be used without first having to applying Regulation 24 that outlines the option to offer a full 4 attempts for all students.

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Point 1

Changes to implementation of progression decisions for Tier 4 students

The number of attempts at Junior Honours for students studying on a Tier 4 visa is restricted to a maximum of three attempts and one repeat year.

Repeat an academic year or part of a year (International students)

Non-honours Tier 4 students – a progression decision for a non-honours student to repeat an academic year or part of year can only be decided at Progression Board if:

- the student has failed to achieve the required number of credits for the year of programme for the first time, AND
- the student has had no previous repeat years, AND
- the courses to be repeated are either the second or third attempt, AND
- there are good reasons to support a claim to a likely improvement in progress

Any student who does not satisfy the above cannot progress without a concession from the College Office. The Progression Board must seek a concession providing an academic case.
Change of programme (international students)

The conditions surrounding a Tier 4 student’s ability to transfer between programmes have been amended by the Home Office (effective from 06/4/16). The amended progression guidance means that where the academic progression decision is a change from Honours to an Ordinary Degree this will in effect be considered by UKVI as a change of programme. The update to UKVI guidance has been interpreted by UKCISA and our International Office as meaning a student can no longer just seamlessly pass from one to another as this now has to be treated as a student changing to study at a level that is academically lower than the programme their Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) was issued (i.e. from a SCQF level 10 (Hons) to SCQF level 9 (Ordinary)).

A Progression Board will follow the normal process to make an academic decision based on a student’s level of ability to progress onto Honours as per the remit of the Board. However, the implementation of the progression decision may require the student to return to their home country (between 2nd and 3rd year and make a new visa application) to allow them to return to study at the University of Edinburgh. Only if a new Visa is issued will the student be entitled to continue with their studies and be in a position to achieve an Ordinary Degree. This amendment presently means that the University cannot guarantee that the student will be able to continue with studies.

Once the student has received the academic decision from the Progression Board it is mandatory for the student to speak with and receive written advice from the International student Advisory Service (ISAS) and return with this advice to the named contact in their School. Schools must ensure that they outline clearly, in writing, the academic options available to the student so that the student can take this to the International Office.

- The UKVI update does not affect a Board of Examiners right to award an ordinary degree at year 3 or 4 once the student has completed the appropriate academic study.
- If a student is unable to secure a Tier 4 visa the student will be awarded the appropriate award for the level of achievement they have completed to date.

Point 2

Senate Curriculum and Progression Committee has confirmed that Regulation 64 can be enacted prior to a student sitting the full four attempts (Reg. 24).

The College would therefore recommend where a student has not made academic progress and there is no realistic prospect of achieving success, the Progression Board should consider enacting Regulation 64 to allow a student an opportunity to pursue an alternative academic or career pathway. The College would recommend that any student who had only achieved 40 credits or less after two attempts should be considered under Regulation 64.

Enacting Regulation 64 would also be possible if a student’s academic failure was a result of a lack of engagement and participation.