ACADEMIC PROGRESS REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE  
BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY (HONS)  

MINUTES  
Meeting Fri 7 Dec 2012, Student Services  
Meeting Mon 10 Dec, by arrangement  

PRESENT  
Meeting 1  
Ms Lisa Beckley, Manager, Student and Academic Support, Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics  
Dr Barbara Goodwin, Student Advisor (Undergraduate), Science Student Office  
Mr Paul Lloyd, Sub-Dean, Faculty of Business  
Ms Sabbia Tilli, Student Advisor, Faculty of Arts  
Assoc. Prof. Jenna Mead, Academic Co-ordinator, BPhil (Hons) (Presiding)  

Meeting 2  
Winthrop Professor Ian McArthur, nominee of BPhil (Hons) Board of Studies  
Ass. Prof. Jenna Mead, Academic Co-ordinator, BPhil (Hons)  

BACKGROUND  
In accordance with BOARDS OF STUDIES AND ADMINISTRATION OF NEW UNDERGRADUATE COURSES (F28106), s 1.1.3 and 1.2.1, the Academic Progress Review Sub-committee convened to consider results in BPhil (Hons) under Rule 15. Two meetings were convened to accommodate W/Prof. McArthur’s absence from UWA.  

DOCUMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION  
The Academic Review Sub-committee considered the  
1. Completions Register, provided by Student Administration and the  
2. Report for Current BPhil Students, provided by Ms Kerry Clohessy, Information Analyst, IRU.  
Both documents were circulated by email; both documents are attached here.  

RECOMMENDATIONS  
Members worked through the sections in Rule 15 and its application through Rule 16.  

Bearing in mind that 2012 sees the introduction of Degree Rules for BPhil (Hons) and that amendments on the basis of operationalizing those Rules are to be expected, members recommend:  

1 http://rules.handbooks.uwa.edu.au/rules/UGDegreeCourseRules/Part4
1. That Rule 15 be re-visited and, in particular, section 15(1)\(^2\). Members acknowledged the need for an exclusionary mechanism in any rule for progression but considered 15(1) to be problematic:

   a. This section is a recent addition and doesn’t appear in any of the policy, Board, or public documents surrounding BPhil (Hons) from 2008 onward.
   
   b. The introduction of a Credit grade as the primary criterion for progression, evidenced by its position in the Rule, conflicts with s 15(2) where the criterion is a Weighted Average Mark from best_6 results. At the September 2012 meeting, the Board argued that this criterion acknowledges that broadening units, required by new Courses, may not represent a student’s strengths. Further, the Board accepted using this criterion over a 2-year period to enable students to adapt and mature in the context of university learning, adding weight to this criterion’s being the primary one for progression.
   
   c. The consequence of 15(1) is that the BPhil (Hons) student achieving and generating a best_6 WAM of 88.50 (and an all_8 WAM of 83.63) would be EXCLUDED from the degree on the basis that CLAN1101 Latin 1 — the LOTE required by Rule 7 — result was 59: 1 mark short of a Credit. The student would need to re-apply for entry to UWA having not applied to transfer to another degree.\(^3\)
   
   d. This result is especially egregious since the result would have been quarantined from WAM calculations altogether had it been undertaken as part of an approved SAS/Exchange program.
   
   e. A “work-around” can be retrieved from Rule 16(3) — “because of exceptional circumstances”\(^4\) — where the clearly aberrant mark is regarded as “exceptional.” Rule 16(4) would require the student to

   ![Table of Marks](image)

\(^2\)(1) Subject to (2) to (4) inclusive, to make satisfactory progress in a calendar year a student must achieve at least a credit pass in all units in which they remain enrolled after the final date for withdrawal without academic penalty.


\(^4\)(3) Unless the relevant board determines otherwise because of exceptional circumstances or (4) applies, a student who does not make satisfactory progress is assigned the progress status of ‘Excluded’.
be placed on “probation” which, in this case where the student will not enrol in another language unit (having satisfied both a Cat A broadening unit and Rule 7), would not improve the student’s educational experience.

2. that appropriate terminology be developed for BPhil (Hons) since the categories nominated in Rule 15 are not the same as those applied in mainstream degrees, following University policy. See, for example, “Excluded” “Probation.”

that steps be taken to ensure that Progress Standing that appears on the student’s transcript is both transparent and doesn’t disadvantage the student. For example, “Excluded,” meaning “not permitted to re-enrol in the course,” in the context of BPhil (Hons), may mean “not permitted to re-enrol in UWA’s highest progression criteria” rather than “student has failed for the third time in more than half the units in which the student remained enrolled.”

FURTHER ACTION

1. Winthrop Professor McArthur reviewed both the discussion and results in the cohort and signed off on the BPhil Progression Committee Recommendations for Students Not Meeting All Criteria; (attached here).

2. Academic Co-ordinator met with Mr Harvery von Bergheim, Associate Director, Student Services, Ms Leandra Corich, Examinations Officer and Ms Tanya Aquino , Admissions Co-ordinator (Mon 10 Dec) to discuss processes for implementing academic progression.

3. There are a number of points here:

a. Assessment results, progression and academic records are managed through the Callista system whereas progression in BPhil (Hons) is assessed by a separate program managed through IRU; essentially because Callista isn’t able to generate best_6 WAMs in an appropriate format.

b. At present, BPhil students’ internal records and final transcripts will show data generated by Callista, rather than IRU. Thus, WAMs shown will be all_8 rather than best_6 and it may not be immediately obvious how a student has progressed, given differences in the scores.

c. Similarly, the terminology showing on documentation generated by Callista doesn’t indicate conditions relevant to BPhil, e.g. terms of Probation or, in the case of 2 Exclusions, a comment will be

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6 http://www.universitypolicies.uwa.edu.au/search?method=document&id=UP10%2F11 at page A8. For more details, see this document, Appendix 3, Undergraduate Course Administration: Summary Report to the Board of Studies
added specifying Rule 15(2) and facilitating students’ applications for transfer.

d. Some adjustment will need to be made here: interim solutions, proposed by colleagues in Student Administration and Admissions, will be implemented. Colleagues here concurred with the recommendation of the Academic Review Sub-committee at 2 and 3 (above).

CONCLUSION

At its Sept meeting, the Board of Studies considered SATISFACTORY PROGRESS IN THE BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY (HONOURS) COURSE (F27161)\(^7\). This paper asserted

> As a context for estimating the likely scale of exclusions, the following data supplied by the IRU may be illuminating. WAM figures for Year 1 UWA students in 2009, based on their best 6 unit results, show that 38% of those with an ATAR of 99.5 or above were unable to achieve a WAM of 80 or more. It seems probable that some of those would have slipped below the 80 WAM threshold in subsequent years.\(^8\)

The Sub-committee’s judgment is that of 10 students not fulfilling the criteria for progression,

- 2 should be awarded Good Standing (ie. Satisfactory Progression),
- 6 students should be placed on Probation (ie. Required to consult with the Academic Co-ordinator about unit selection prior to enrolment ie. the minimal condition for probation):
  - 1 student applied for transfer before assessment; didn’t meet 15(2);
  - 2 have not met 15(1) but have best_6 WAM > 80 and
  - 3 have not met 15(2) ie. best_6 WAM < 80.
- 2 students should be Excluded; 1 has already applied for transfer.

That is, 8/42 students (19.04%) have not progressed satisfactorily under Rule 15; 5/42 (11.9%) didn’t meet 15(2) best_6 WAM > 80.

It’s noteworthy that 3 students, whose all_8 WAMs at the end of semester 1, were < 80 have achieved satisfactory progression (on both best_6 and all_8 criteria).

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\(^8\) Footnote 2, page A6