

BY-LAW XX. JUNIOR MEMBERS

PART D: Academic Discipline and Examination Requirements

1 *Requirements for the maintenance of good academic standing: undergraduates.*

- i. For the purposes of By-law XX, 1-3, 'undergraduates' includes graduates reading for a Final Honour School.
- ii. Undergraduates are required to produce work of a standard commensurate with their individual ability and circumstances and appropriate to the stage which they have reached in their course: normally of 2.1 standard, but in no case of below Third Class standard. Undergraduates are not admitted to read for a Pass School.
- iii. Undergraduates must keep the residence requirements laid down by the University. An undergraduate who fails to do so will be sent down, unless she is granted dispensation by the University.
- iv. Attendance at tutorials, collections and at classes required by tutors is compulsory. Undergraduates must not absent themselves without prior permission except for illness or other urgent cause, which must be explained to the tutor as soon as possible afterwards. Undergraduates must satisfy any conditions required by the Examination Regulations and Faculty handbooks relating to the particular School for which they are studying, e.g. for practical work or vacation courses.
- v. Every undergraduate is required to produce assignments (essays, problem sheets etc.) with the regularity required by the tutor(s), except where permission on adequate grounds is obtained, preferably in advance, from the tutor(s) concerned.
- vi. Every undergraduate is required either to sit a written invigilated collection at the beginning of each term, or to submit by the end of 0th Week written work specified by her tutor and produced during the vacation, unless dispensed by her tutor. Collections take precedence over all other engagements.

2 *Academic Deficiency*

- i. 'Academic deficiency' means breach of Part D, 1ii, iv, v or vi above. It shall be dealt with according to the following Academic Disciplinary Procedure. Every breach of Part D, 1 vi, and every breach of Part D, 1 iv or v lasting two consecutive weeks, shall normally entail the immediate initiation of the procedure.
- ii. **Stage 1: Informal Warning:** Academic deficiency is dealt with initially by an informal warning, given by the subject tutor(s) after consultation with the Senior Tutor. Such a warning may be given on the basis of information concerning academic deficiency received from an external tutor or college lecturer. An informal warning shall be issued at a special interview, at which should first occur a full discussion with the undergraduate, so that the latter can put her case and make the college aware of any mitigating or complicating circumstances. Any such factors which come to light should (with the undergraduate's permission) be noted on her file, and may affect the course of action to be taken and the outcomes of the interview. The tutor should explain to the undergraduate what improvements she is required to make within a defined timescale (normally within 1-4

weeks). Beyond this deadline, the undergraduate will remain on probation against failure to sustain the improvements, normally until the start of the next term but one following that in which the warning is given. The tutor must write to the undergraduate, normally within 3 working days of the meeting, confirming what improvements she is required to make and the timescale. A copy of the relevant part of By-Law XX, giving details of the Academic Disciplinary Procedure, should be enclosed with the letter. A copy of the letter must be sent to the College Academic Registrar, to be kept in the undergraduate's file.

- iii. **Stage 2: Formal Warning:** If the undergraduate fails to produce the improvements required in Stage 1 during the specified timescale or to sustain them during the specified probation period, she shall be called to a special interview with the Senior Tutor at which should first occur a full discussion with the undergraduate, so that the latter can put her case and make the college aware of any mitigating or complicating circumstances. Any such factors which come to light should (with the undergraduate's permission) be noted on her file, and may affect the course of action to be taken and the outcomes of the interview. If the Senior Tutor and the subject tutors believe that the student is genuinely trying to achieve the level of performance required by Part D, 1(ii), then Part D, 2 (x) should apply. If a Formal Warning is issued then the Senior Tutor should explain to the undergraduate what required improvements she is required to make within a defined timescale (normally within 1-4 weeks). Beyond this deadline, the undergraduate will remain on probation against failure to sustain the improvements (normally until the start of the next term but one following that in which the warning is given). The Senior Tutor must write to the undergraduate, normally within 3 working days of the meeting, confirming what improvements she is required to make and the timescale. This will be copied to the relevant subject tutor and the Academic Registrar.
- iv. **Stage 3: Penal Collections:** If the undergraduate fails to produce the improvements required in Stage 2 during the specified timescale or to sustain them during the specified probation period –
 - a) if the academic deficiency includes the submission of substandard work, the undergraduate may be set penal collections. The form of, date (which shall be as early as practicable) for, and standard to be attained in these collections shall be notified to the Academic Committee on the advice of the subject tutor(s) and Senior Tutor, which advice shall be formulated after discussion with the undergraduate; the standard to be attained should not without good reason diverge from that required of the undergraduate in her previous warnings. These details shall be communicated by the Senior Tutor in writing to the undergraduate. Penal collection papers shall be set externally, and blind marked by two external assessors. The outcome will be communicated to the undergraduate as soon as possible, and normally within two weeks. Failure to attain the required standard shall be referred to the Academic Disciplinary Committee. Attainment of the required standard shall be followed by probation against failure to sustain it, for the remainder of the undergraduate's time at the college, breach of which shall entail recommencement of the procedure at Stage 2.
 - b) if the academic deficiency is of any other kind, it shall be referred directly to the Academic Disciplinary Committee.
- v. **Stage 4: Academic Disciplinary Committee:** If it is necessary under Stage 3 to refer an undergraduate to the Academic Disciplinary Committee, the Senior Tutor shall immediately

inform the Principal and Vice-Principal. The Vice-Principal shall convene the Committee, consisting of the Vice-Principal and three further Fellows not being the undergraduate's tutors. The Committee shall proceed as follows –

- (a) the Committee's hearing shall take place as soon as practicable; normally within one week of the Senior Tutor informing the Principal and Vice-Principal. The undergraduate shall in advance of the hearing be given a clear statement of the grounds for her being referred to the Committee, and a copy of all documentation with which the Committee is provided. She should be given the opportunity to bring forward material considerations and mitigating circumstances, which may include, but need not be confined to, medical evidence. The undergraduate should be allowed to take advice in advance of the hearing and should be adequately represented at the hearing itself, being given the chance either to make a written submission, or, if she prefers, to appear in person before the Committee. The undergraduate should in the latter case be offered the possibility of being accompanied by another junior or senior member, either of the College community or from elsewhere in the University.
- (b) it shall be the duty of the Committee to establish all relevant facts and to decide, bearing in mind the interests of the College and of the undergraduate, whether the undergraduate should be expelled; or should be rusticated, to be readmitted into residence on such terms as the Committee should decide; or should be permitted to remain in residence, on such terms as the Committee should decide. The undergraduate, her representative or companion, and her subject tutor(s) should withdraw before a decision is made. The Committee's decision, including a statement of all the relevant facts, shall be put in writing and conveyed to the Governing Body. A copy of it shall be given to the undergraduate.
- (c) the Committee may also decide, in exceptional cases, to refer the case to the University's Fitness to Study Panel. The Academic Disciplinary Committee would then be responsible for endorsing or rejecting the recommendation of the Fitness to Study Panel on behalf of the College.

vi. **Stage 5: Academic Disciplinary Appeal Panel:** The undergraduate may appeal against the decision of the Disciplinary Committee to an Academic Disciplinary Appeal Panel. Any appeal must be made in writing to the Principal within three days of the undergraduate receiving written notification of the Academic Disciplinary Committee's decision. The undergraduate may, but need not, communicate the grounds for their appeal. These may include failure of the Committee to follow procedure or the imposition of a disproportionate penalty. On receipt of an appeal, the Principal shall convene an Academic Disciplinary Appeal Panel.

- a) The Academic Disciplinary Appeal Panel consists of three Fellows, who need not be members of Governing Body; none of the members shall have been a tutor of the undergraduate; none of the members shall have sat on the Academic Disciplinary Committee hearing the case subject to appeal; the Senior Tutor may not be a member. Members of the Panel are appointed by the Principal, who also appoints one of them as Chair.
- b) The Panel shall meet as soon as practicable; normally within one week of being appointed. It shall be the duty of the Panel to review all the relevant facts and documentation, to verify that the academic disciplinary procedures were properly

applied and to consider the proportionality of the penalty, bearing in mind the interests of the College and of the undergraduate. There need not be a hearing held, unless the undergraduate requests to appear before the Panel. The Panel may, in the light of its investigation, uphold or dismiss the recommendation of the Academic Disciplinary Committee, or vary the penalty to be more lenient.

- vii. **Stage 6: Governing Body:** The decision of the Academic Disciplinary Committee and/or the Academic Disciplinary Appeal Panel will be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Body. The written record of the hearing(s) will be available to Governing Body members prior to the meeting. If the Governing Body considers the proposed penalty to be not appropriate for the academic deficiency for which the undergraduate was referred to the Committee, or believes that procedures have not been properly followed, it may ask the Committee (or where appropriate the Academic Disciplinary Appeal Panel), to reconsider its decision and to report back to the next scheduled meeting of the Governing Body. In such cases, the Governing Body must specify the precise nature of its concerns. The Principal shall convey the decision of the Governing Body to the undergraduate in writing within two days of its meeting, and the undergraduate must be provided with information on further appeal mechanisms available to him or her.
- viii. **Stage 7: Appeal Tribunal of the Conference of Colleges:** If the undergraduate wishes to appeal against the decision of the Governing Body, she may do so to the Appeal Tribunal of the Conference of Colleges, of which St Hilda's is a member. The appellant shall file such an appeal with the Secretariat of the Conference of Colleges, within five days of the date of the written notice to the student of the Governing Body's decision.
- ix. An undergraduate who, after any stage of the above procedure, attains what is required of her and meets the terms of any specified probation period, but who in the view of her tutor demonstrates fresh academic deficiency (whether or not of the same kind as before), shall be reported by the tutor to the Senior Tutor. The Senior Tutor shall then recommence the above procedure at Stage 2.
- x. If, at stages 1-3 in the above procedure, it is concluded that the undergraduate is experiencing genuine difficulty in producing the standard of work of which she is in principle capable, a strategy will be agreed between the undergraduate, the subject tutor(s) and the Senior Tutor whereby the undergraduate will have access to appropriate additional tuition/support. A note of the strategy will be sent to the undergraduate within a week of the agreement. The undergraduate's progress under the strategy will be monitored on a weekly basis for a period to be decided by the Senior Tutor in consultation with the subject tutor(s).

3 *First Public Examination and Final Honour Schools*

- i. An undergraduate may not continue to study at the College unless she has passed the First Public Examination before the beginning of her second year of study.
- ii. An undergraduate who fails to pass a First Public Examination at her first attempt shall be required to retake the Examination at the next possible occasion.
- iii. If an undergraduate's result in the First Public Examination (whether on a first or second attempt) constitutes a failure to meet requirements incumbent upon her under the

Academic Disciplinary Procedure, she shall (subject to iv below) be dealt with accordingly, following that procedure.

- iv. If, on her second attempt at the First Public Examination, an undergraduate fails the Examination, or achieves only an unclassified pass in a classified Examination –
 - (a) the Senior Tutor shall as soon as possible write to the undergraduate, enclosing a copy of the By-Law XX, giving details of the Academic Disciplinary Procedure, and giving her the opportunity to draw attention (in writing, and within a week) to any special contributory circumstances. If the undergraduate makes no such submission, the Senior Tutor shall inform the undergraduate that she is expelled and report the matter immediately to the Principal and to the next meeting of the Governing Body.
 - (b) If such a submission is made, the Senior Tutor shall forward to Education Committee a request for a further, exceptional, opportunity to re-sit the First Public Examination.
- v. Final Honour School: Undergraduates will not be allowed to defer Schools unless there are medical grounds or in very exceptional circumstances which seem reasonable to the Principal and the Senior Tutor. An undergraduate who has been or is on probation will be warned at the time of the probation that a poor academic performance will not be accepted as a reason for deferral.

Last amended 3.12.25 (with effect from 3.12.25)