

Significant Changes to your Contract with the University: September 2018

As outlined within the terms and conditions of entry to Queen's University Belfast which were issued to applicants after they were made an offer, the University committed to informing students directly of any significant changes to the regulations and policies that form part of their contract with the University. The changes also apply to students continuing on their programmes of study.

Please note that the majority of changes are minor and have been introduced to enhance internal procedures and practice across the University.

The most significant change relates to modifications in Exceptional Circumstances which now makes provision for self-certification for short-term illnesses which impact on examinations and assessments.

Revisions to the University General Regulations 2018-19

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These revisions were approved by the University's Education Committee on 21 May 2018, the Research and Postgraduate Committee on 28 May 2018 and Academic Council (regarding Guidelines for Schools on Exceptional Circumstances) on 13 June 2018. The most significant changes to the regulations are summarised below:

Regulations for All Students

Regulations for Students

- (i) Regulation 1.11 - Postgraduate taught modules in Queen's Management School will carry 15 credit points.
- (ii) Regulation 1.19 – This has been rewritten to clarify the main categories of student status, of which there are nine, and to align these with the definitions of study-load detailed in the Student Finance Framework.
- (iii) Regulations 4.11 and 4.12 –Regulations governing absence due to illness are now included in this section. These were previously presented within each set of Study Regulations).

Conduct Regulations

- (i) Regulation 2.31 – This new regulation has been added to address circumstances where the student withdraws prior to the conclusion of the investigation into an allegation of misconduct.

- (ii) Regulation 3.12 – This amendment reflects provision for a Disciplinary Officer to normally hear offences related to vaping and breach of Student Visa requirements. This amendment is also reflected in Annex 1 of the Conduct Regulations, with vaping and breach of Student Visa requirements now included in the table of standard penalties for offences normally considered at Disciplinary Officer Stage.
- (iii) There are a number of amendments included in the Conduct Regulations to extend the time period for notification of decisions, in light of GDPR requirements.

Guidelines

- (i) Guidelines on Fitness to Continue in Study on the Grounds of Health and/or Safety

The Guidelines on Fitness to Continue in Study on the Grounds of Health and/or Safety have been significantly updated to reflect that the University's Occupational Health service provision is now out-sourced to a third-party provider, as the University no longer retains its own Senior Medical Officer. In addition, the Guidelines have been updated to remove reference to the University's Student Multi-Disciplinary Team, as the role and remit of this team has been taken on centrally by the University's Student Wellbeing Team.

- (i) Guidelines for Schools on Exceptional Circumstances

The Guidelines for Schools on Exceptional Circumstances have been updated to permit students to submit self-certificates for short-term illness if it impacts upon their examinations or assessment. There will continue to be safeguards in place to monitor student requests for concessions either through submission of evidence-based exceptional circumstances requests or self-certification. Students who submit multiple or frequent self-certified requests may be required to provide medical evidence.

Students are permitted to use notes from online doctors as evidence of exceptional circumstances.

Procedures

- (i) Procedures for Dealing with Academic Offences

- (i) Regulation 1.23 – As with Regulation 2.31 (Conduct Regulations), this provision has been included to cater for circumstances where the student withdraws prior to conclusion of any action under the Procedures.
- (ii) Regulation 1.34 - This regulation now includes specific reference to Contract Cheating as an example of an academic offence.
- (iii) Amendments have been made to extend the time period for notification of the outcome of meetings, in consideration of GDPR requirements.

- (ii) Fitness to Practise Procedure

- (i) Regulation 1.69 – This amendment has been included to cater for circumstances where the student withdraws from their programme of study prior to going through the formal Fitness to Practise procedure, and subsequently re-applies for admission.
- (ii) Regulation 1.70 – In line with Regulation 1.69 above, this additional provision relates to circumstances where the student withdraws from the University prior to conclusion of the Fitness to Practise procedure.

(iii) Regulation 1.106 – This amendment extends the period for notification of the decision of the Appeal Panel, in light of GDPR requirements.

(iii) Student Complaints Procedure

(i) Regulation 62 – This regulation has been amended to extend the period for notification of the decision of the Appeal Panel, in light of GDPR requirements.

Regulations Specific to Undergraduate Students

Study Regulations

- (i) The most significant changes to the regulations relate to amendments to the procedures for the request of exceptional circumstances, which now permit students to self-certify for short-term illness resulting in absence from assessment or examination (see Guidelines for Schools on Exceptional Circumstances).

Regulations Specific to Postgraduate Taught Students

Study Regulations

- (i) Amendments have been made to the procedures for request of exceptional circumstances, which now permit students to self-certify for short-term illness resulting in absence from assessment or examination (see Guidelines for Schools on Exceptional Circumstances).
- (ii) Regulation 1.3.11 – this regulation now stipulates that external examiners must annually attend the Programme Board of Examiners meeting at which award decisions are normally taken.
- (iii) The former Regulation 1.4, Academic Appeals Regulations (Taught Programmes) has been separated from the Study Regulations and will be included in a new Appeals section of the University Calendar.

Academic Appeal Regulations

- (i) Regulation 6 – This regulation has been amended to include provision for appeals from INTO Queen's.
- (ii) Regulation 7 – This new regulation has been included to facilitate appeals against a decision of the Fitness to Continue in Study Panel and details the required constitution of the Appeals Committee.
- (iii) Regulation 16 – This regulation has been amended to extend the period for notification of decisions, in light of GDPR requirements.

Regulations Specific to Postgraduate Research Degree Students

Study Regulations

- (i) Regulation 1.2 – This regulation now includes specific reference to the Code of Conduct and Integrity in Research and the new Intellectual Property Policy.
- (ii) The former Regulation 8, Academic Appeals Regulations (Research Degree Programmes) has been separated from the Study Regulations and will be included in a new Appeals section of the University Calendar.

Academic Appeal Regulations

- (i) Regulation 3 - This new regulation has been included to facilitate appeals against a decision of the Fitness to Continue in Study Panel and details the required constitution of the Appeals Committee.
- (ii) Regulation 15: This regulation has been amended to include provision for the University to seek professional opinion, including medical opinion, if deemed appropriate.

(iii) Amendments have been made to extend time periods in respect of the notification of decisions, in light of GDPR requirements.