

Significant Changes to your Contract with the University: September 2019

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.

Revisions to the University General Regulations 2019-20

The most significant changes to the University Calendar: General Regulations for 2019-20 are summarised in each section below:

Regulations for All Students

| Regulations for Students | |
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| | The word 'normally' has been removed in most instances as regulations should prescribe the required approach, with any variations being agreed as an exemption to the regulations by the Chair of the Education Committee/Research and Postgraduate Committee. |
| 1.21 | Clarification under i. that this includes students who have not resumed their studies following a period of temporary withdrawal. |
| 1.22 | An amendment under v. to indicate that all persons who are permanently withdrawn from the University must apply for re-admission via the University's Admission and Access service. |
| 5.20 | Removal of the regulation permitting re-registration, in line with the amendment to regulation 1.22. |
| 5.22 | <p>Due to a change in the information requested by UCAS relating to criminal convictions, students are now required to disclose any unspent conviction* for a relevant offence**, upon enrolment and registration, to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs. Failure to do so within two working days may be deemed to constitute a disciplinary offence.</p> <p>*As set out in The Rehabilitation of Offenders NI Order 1978.</p> <p>** A relevant offence is deemed as a criminal offence involving any act of violence, offences concerning the intention to harm or resulting in actual harm, the unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking, offences involving firearms, arson or those</p> |

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| | listed in the Sex Offences Act 2003 or The Terrorism Act 2006. |
| General Updates to the Regulations, Procedures and Guidelines in Relation to Student Appeals, Complaints and Conduct | |
| | Addition that students are not permitted to make audio or visual recordings of meetings without the written consent of all present. |
| | Addition of a late appeals process to ensure that the University aligns to the QAA Quality Code. |
| Conduct Regulations | |
| 2.7 | Provision for the University to take action following disclosures under the Whistleblowing Policy or Report and Support. |
| 3.1.12 iv | Addition of an offence of burning incense or candles on University premises without appropriate authorisation. |
| 3.1.13 vii | Expansion of the offence of possession of an illegal substance to include illegal possession of a controlled drug, or possession of any prescription drug which has not been prescribed to the student. |
| 3.1.13 viii | Addition of an offence of production of, offer of, sale of or giving to any person any illegal substance, controlled drug or prescription drug. |
| 3.1.13 ix | Expansion of the offence to include threatening behaviour. |
| 6.2 | <p>Due to a change in the information requested by UCAS relating to criminal convictions, students are now required to disclose any unspent conviction* for a relevant offence** upon enrolment and registration, to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs. Failure to do so within two working days may be deemed to constitute a disciplinary offence.</p> <p>*As set out in The Rehabilitation of Offenders NI Order 1978.</p> <p>** A relevant offence is deemed as a criminal offence involving any act of violence, offences concerning the intention to harm or resulting in actual harm, the unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking, offences involving firearms, arson or those listed in the Sex Offences Act 2003 or The Terrorism Act 2006.</p> |
| 6.3 | Provision for disclosure in relation to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order has been included. |
| 7.1.5 | Provision for a student to seek a review of a decision to impose a precautionary suspension or exclusion has been expanded to include details of how the review is requested, applicable time limits and provision for the student to attend the review. |
| 8 | Expansion of the provisions for a risk assessment when considering a precautionary suspension or exclusion, or emergency precautionary suspension or exclusion, in relation to students who are subject to a Court Order. |
| 14.4 | Addition of the right for students to attend classes pending the outcome of an appeal against suspension, exclusion or expulsion (except for suspension or |

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| | exclusion imposed under 7 or 8). |
| Procedures for Dealing with Academic Offences | |
| 1.1.3 | Provision has been made for plagiarism or duplication in unpublished work submitted for assessment by a postgraduate research student to be dealt with under these Procedures. Any other allegation of academic misconduct by a postgraduate research student will be dealt with under the Regulations Governing the Allegation and Investigation of Misconduct in Research. |
| 1.9.2 | Provision for concerns reported under the Whistleblowing Policy to be considered. |
| 1.19 | Major offences now include plagiarism or duplication in unpublished work submitted by a postgraduate research student for assessment; and 'Contract Cheating'. Cheating in an examination has been extended to include cheating in a class test or laboratory test. |
| 2 | Definitions have been included for 'Copying or Permitting Copying' and 'Contract Cheating'. |
| 5.1.4 ii | Provision for a short viva voce, inspection of drafts and comparison of previous work has been included for allegations of contract cheating. |
| 7.4 & 7.5 | Provision for penalties available to postgraduate research students now falling under these Procedures, have been included. |
| Fitness to Practise Procedure | |
| 4.6.3 & 4.6.4 | Clarification that students should not wait until the annual self-declaration form to declare any recent criminal history and that failure to disclose could result in disciplinary proceedings. |
| 4.8.6 | Clarification that this procedure may apply to students who are qualified professionals and/or registered members of a regulatory body and that the School will take guidance from the relevant regulatory body with regards to how to investigate the concerns raised. |
| 4.10.3 | Inclusion of the right to appeal the decision to suspend a student from placement. |
| 4.12 | Clarification as to when proceedings under this procedure can be postponed (e.g. pending other investigations or for medical reasons). |
| Student Complaints Procedure | |
| 1.3.7 | Clarification of how the University will deal with allegations of misconduct by a registered student that would constitute a criminal offence. |
| 2.2.4 | Clarification of how a complaint in which no corroborating evidence could be provided but that the complaint is of serious concern, is dealt with by the University. |
| 2.2.6 | Addition of an initial evaluation process to allow the Investigating Officer to determine whether there is a basis to the Stage 2 complaint. |

| Guidelines on Fitness to Study on the Grounds of Health and Safety | |
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| | These guidelines have undergone substantial change to align with the principles of proactive student support as set out in the University's Student Wellbeing Strategy and Student Support Protocol. |
| | The appeal process has been reviewed to align with the Student Suspension Process, whereby the decision to direct a student to withdraw from their studies is underpinned by a robust process with input from relevant professionals to become a 'Review of Decision' process. This is reflected in: 4. Review of Decision. |
| Guidelines to Schools on Exceptional Circumstances | |
| 3.1 | Addition of specific reference to the fit to sit policy. |
| Guidelines to Support Informal Resolution | |
| | The former Student Dispute Resolution Policy has been substantially revised to reflect how this informal process, as a means of resolving a student issue or concern at local level, is enacted in practice. |
| Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy | |
| 3(v) | An additional example of harassment, of persuading someone to do something against their will or better judgment by using force, threats, duress or undue influence, has been included. |
| Student Maternity, Maternity Support and Adoption Policy | |
| 7.2 (iii) | Financial Considerations for PGR Funding / Awards. Funded international students advised to contact their official funding sponsor (previously advised to contact International Student Support). |
| 7.6 | Breastfeeding. Update to reference new Nursing Room at Childcare site. |
| 7.7 | Childcare. Rewording to remove number of places available at Childcare sites. The policy now refers to the website for up to date information on Childcare services. |
| Student Sexual Misconduct Policy | |
| 3.9 | Inclusion of reference to professional legal studies programmes which fall under the Fitness to Practise Procedure. |

Regulations Specific to Undergraduate Students

| Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes | |
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| | The word 'normally' has been removed in most instances as regulations should prescribe the required approach, with any variations being agreed as an exemption to the regulations by the Chair of the Education Committee. |
| | The Study Regulations have undergone a complete restructure to align with the sequence of the student lifecycle. |

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| 2.2 | Removal of the regulation: <i>Foundation Degree students who articulate onto a related Honours degree are not eligible for an Ordinary degree as this is inconsistent with students who articulate to stage two following any other route.</i> |
| 2.3 | Removal of the regulation: <i>Students will not be permitted to register for Stage 3 unless they have passed all their Level 1 (FHEQ Level 4) modules as this does not distinguish between modules that contribute to the acquisition of programme learning outcomes and those that do not. This should be assured through identifying specific Level 1 modules as pre-requisites for modules at later stages of the programme.</i> |
| 3.1.1 | An amendment to permit formal examinations outside the designated assessment period, when approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education and Students on pedagogic grounds |
| Academic Appeal Regulations (Taught Programmes) | |
| 1.9.2 | Addition of the ability to postpone a case if the student is unable to continue with the appeal at the time due to medical reasons. |
| 1.10.2 | Clarification that, if a student is accompanied to an appeal meeting, the student will still be required to answer questions and make their own representations. |
| 3.2 | Clarification of how CSAC appeals from INTO or China Queen's College will be considered. |

Regulations Specific to Postgraduate Taught Students

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| Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes | |
| | Where changes have been made to the Study Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes (see above), these will be applied, where appropriate, to the Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes. |
| 2.1.1 | Addition of credit requirements for a Postgraduate Certificate. |
| Academic Appeal Regulations (Taught Programmes) | |
| 1.9.2 | Addition of the ability to postpone a case if the student is unable to continue with the appeal at the time due to medical reasons. |
| 1.10.2 | Clarification that, if a student is accompanied to an appeal meeting, the student will still be required to answer questions and make their own representations. |
| 3.2 | Clarification of how CSAC appeals from INTO or China Queen's College will be considered. |

Regulations Specific to Research Degree Students

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| Principles for Professional Doctorates and Integrated PhD Programmes | |
| | The Principles have been extended to Integrated PhD programmes, and have been reworded for greater clarity and to reflect future provision of Professional Doctorates and Integrated PhD programmes. |

| Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes | |
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| | The word 'normally' has been removed in most instances as regulations should prescribe the required approach, with any variations being agreed as an exemption to the regulations by the Chair of the Research and Postgraduate Committee. |
| 3.4 | To refer to approval of recognised supervisor status for externally-based supervisors, as part of a collaborative research degree programme. |
| 6.1.1 | To clarify the appointment of a third supervisor who is external to the University. |
| 6.1.6 & 6.1.7 | To incorporate the blanket concession granted in 2018-19 to permit the appointment as principal supervisor to lecturers on probation with at least three years' experience since the doctoral degree award, subject to specified conditions; and to align with current practice of permitting recognised supervisors to be appointed as second or co-supervisors. |
| 6.4.1 | To clarify the requirement for ten formal meetings per year between the principal supervisor and full-time student; and six with students registered as part-time or thesis-only. |
| Academic Appeal Regulations (Research Degree Programmes) | |
| 1.9.2 | Addition of the ability to postpone a case if the student is unable to continue with the appeal at the time due to medical reasons. |
| 1.10.2 | Clarification that, if a student is accompanied to an appeal meeting, the student will still be required to answer questions and make their own representations. |