**Significant Changes to your Contract with the University: September 2025**

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.

**Summary of Revisions to the University Calendar: General Regulations for**

**2025-26**

The most significant changes to the University Calendar: General Regulations for 2025-26 are summarised in each section below. The updated regulations will be published online on 1 September 2025 at: [General Regulations | Academic & Student Affairs | Queen's University Belfast](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/)

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| Regulations for Students  |
| 1.21 iv | Update to specify the appropriate action required by the student following a presumed withdrawal notification to remain registered on the programme. |
| 1.22 | Update to define the various types of permanent withdrawal, specifying the decision-making body and right of appeal. |
| Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes |
| 5.4.11 | Addition to permit resubmission of the original work for dissertation or project modules on the basis of minor revisions, where the module is failed at first attempt. This change is to align the regulations with existing practice, supporting students to meet the required standard in a timely and academically appropriate manner. |
| General Provisions Relating to Academic Appeals, Conduct, Academic Offences and Student Complaints |
| 1.4 | Clarification of the criteria for those who can be involved in student cases in order to avoid a conflict of interest. |
| Conduct Regulations |
| 3.3.2 | To facilitate communication of the final University decision in relation to cases of Serious Misconduct, where the allegations have been raised by a member of the public or external organisation. |
| 3.5.3 (i) & (ii) | Clarification on rights of engagement in the process by a Responding Student who withdraws, is withdrawn or is suspended from their programme of study during the process. Clarification has also been provided in reference to the re-instigation of the process if a student returns to their programme of study.  |
| Serious Misconduct Procedure |
| Introduction & 9.4.12 | Provision for a member of the public or external organisation to be notified of the University’s final decision, where they have raised the allegations against the Responding Student. |
| 2.2 & 2.3 | Clarification of methods by which offences may be committed i.e. video recordings, websites and social media. |
| 7.13 | Clarification of the position if a witness withdraws from the process. |
| Fitness to Practise Regulations |
| 11.4 & 11.4.1 | Extension of the outcomes available to a Fitness to Practise Appeal Panel to allow the Panel to be able to either:* Uphold the appeal in full and rescind the penalty imposed.
* Uphold the appeal in part and impose an alternative (lesser or equivalent) sanction.
* Dismiss the appeal.

The Fitness to Practise Appeal Panel will still (in exceptional circumstances) be permitted to refer a case back to a new Fitness to Practise Panel (for reconsideration) and in these circumstances, the full range of outcomes will be available to the new Fitness to Practise Panel.  |
| Fitness to Practise Procedure |
| 5.8 | Clarification of the position if a witness withdraws from the process. |
| Academic Offences Regulations and Procedure  |
| Following a comprehensive review and stakeholder engagement, major revisions have been made to the regulations and procedure relating to academic offences, to be implemented from the 2025–26 academic year. These changes aim to enhance clarity, fairness, consistency, and alignment with sector best practice.* Regulations and Procedure are now separate to improve clarity and ease of navigation.
* The former ‘Initial Review’ has been redefined as ‘Preliminary Consideration’. Poor academic practice identified at this stage is no longer treated as an academic offence, which aims to reduce unnecessary progression to formal investigations.
* Separate definitions provided for ‘contract cheating’ and ‘improper use of AI’.
* Short viva voces clarified and expanded as an investigatory tool for all academic offences.
* New categorisation of ‘Serious’ and ‘Standard’ Offences replaces the former ‘major’ and ‘minor’ offences. A list of Serious Academic Offences is included, with built-in flexibility.
* All cases now follow a single investigation approach by an appointed Investigating Officer, regardless of offence severity.
* Decisions on Serious Offences made by an Academic Offences Officer and another staff member (internal or external to the School), removing the need for an Academic Offences Panel meeting.
* Penalties have been revised and streamlined to reflect the severity and intent of the offence.
* Detailed **criteria for consideration** is included, explicitly addressing the role of intent.
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| Procedure on Support to Participate Fully in Studies and/or University Life (on the Grounds of Health and/or Safety) |
| Following implementation and evaluation of major changes to the Procedure on Support to Participate Fully in Studies and/or University Life (on the Grounds of Health and/or Safety) in 2024-25, further updates will be introduced in 2025-26 to strengthen fairness, transparency, and alignment with other institutional processes.Students must now state specific grounds when requesting a review of a Level 2 Panel decision, bringing the process in line with academic appeals and complaints. This replaces the previous approach, which allowed reviews without grounds and often led to unproductive repetition and unmet expectations. A preliminary stage will assess whether grounds are met before a structured review meeting is held.The Procedure also clarifies when a Level 2 meeting can proceed without the student, such as during hospitalisation, to ensure transparency and sensitivity while maintaining procedural momentum. |