

MEMORANDUM

From	Professor Jeff Bale Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)	To	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Schools • College Directors of Education • College Directors of Quality Assurance and Enhancement • College Directors of Operations • Sabbatical Officers of the Guild of Students
Date	22 July 2011	Tel	42265
Email	n.l.morris@bham.ac.uk	cc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Karen O'Brien, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) • Clare McCauley, Interim Director, Academic & Student Administration • Tam Milner, Assistant Director, (Registry Services) • Dr. Chris Twine, Director, Student Support and Development (Student Services as of 01 August 2011) • Sarah Letters, Academic Quality Manager • Margaret Cannadine, Collaborative Provision Manager

Changes to University Regulations and Codes of Practice from 1 August 2011

The academic and student related Regulations (i.e. Sections 5 to 8 of the Regulations) and Codes of Practice are no longer cohort based but are updated annually on 1st August for all Registered Students for the proceeding academic session.

This memo includes information regarding substantive changes to academic and student Regulations and Codes of Practice, which were approved by the Academic Policy & Regulations Committee, and which come into effect on 1st August 2011. These are:

- (a) Creation of a new Code of Practice on Extenuating Circumstances and Fit to Sit Procedure (to replace the current Mitigations guidelines).
- (b) Creation of a new Code of Practice on Reasonable Adjustments.
- (c) Creation of a new Code of Practice on Leave of Absence to formalise existing procedure.
- (d) Creation of the Student Concerns and Complaints Policy (based substantively on the Student Complaints Policy).
- (e) Amendments to the Codes of Practice on Student Development and Support and Taught Programme and Module Assessment to provide clarity on the 4 week assessment feedback timescale.

KEY POINTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

To notify Schools of changes to University Regulations and Codes of Practice, effective from 1st August 2011.

OF INTEREST TO:
All staff

DEADLINE:
1st August 2011

KEY WORDS:

Legislation
Regulations
Codes of Practice

- (f) Amendments to the Code of Practice on Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committees regarding allegations of misconduct involving two or more students registered within two or more Colleges, and to also clarify the roles of respective parties within the Committee.
- (g) Amendments to the Regulations relating to the Admissions process for the MD and DDS.
- (h) Amendments to the Regulations relating to Collaborative Provision.
- (i) Amendments to the Code of Practice on Plagiarism, substantively to allow for one single plagiarism meeting, (thus removing the requirement for an initial meeting followed by a plagiarism interview), also amendments to penalties, and amendment of the term "low level plagiarism" to "poor academic practice".
- (j) Amendments to the Regulations relating to registered students attempt to retrieve failure.
- (k) Amendments to the Student Representation Policy.
- (l) Amendments to the Code of Practice on the Conduct of Centrally Coordinated Formal Written Examinations.
- (m) Amendments to a number of Codes of Practice and Regulations governing postgraduate researchers.

Please note that there will be a series of briefing sessions as part of the AASK series of sessions for Schools in the Autumn to discuss the changes in more detail and further information will follow.

The University Regulations and Codes of Practice are available at:
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/>.

Detailed changes are documented in the APRC Committee papers at:
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/APRC.shtml>

In the case of query, please contact: Ms Nina Morris, n.l.morris@bham.ac.uk /42265

Changes to University Regulations and Codes of Practice from 1 August 2011

(a) Code of Practice on Extenuating Circumstances and Fit to Sit Procedure

The new Code of Practice replaces the current Mitigations Guidance, and specifically removes the term "mitigations" from University legislature. The major new initiative as part of this Code of Practice is the "Fit to Sit" procedure, which allows for a deferral of an examination due to ill health on the day of the exam, and pending submission of appropriate evidence. In addition, detail on the possible routes for dealing with extenuating circumstances has been included. The final substantive change relates to the membership of Extenuating Circumstances Panels, and notes that Welfare Tutors will no longer be permitted to sit on the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

(b) Code of Practice on Reasonable Adjustments for Students

The new Code of Practice has been developed in order to fulfil the University's statutory obligations. It should be noted that as a result of the creation of this Code of Practice, each Programme of Study (or School, where appropriate), is required to designate a member of academic or support staff whose responsibility it is to manage reasonable adjustments for that programme. This member of staff can be the same person as the Welfare Tutor.

(c) Code of Practice on Leave of Absence

The new Code of Practice formalises existing procedure and clarifies procedure in light of the demands of statutory compliance. The Code of Practice sets out the categories of Leave of Absence, evidence requirements, how to process such requests, and possible alternatives to Leave of Absence.

(d) Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure

This procedure replaces the current Student Complaints Procedure. A memo detailing all of the substantive changes will be circulated shortly. Please contact Jo Luckett for further details (j.c.luckett@bham.ac.uk).

(e) Codes of Practice on Student Development and Support and Taught Programme and Module Assessment

A change was made to section 3.2.2 (c) of the Code of Practice on Student Development and Support and 7.1 of the Code of Practice on Taught Programme and Module Assessment to define in further detail the definition of the four-week assessment feedback period.

(f) Code of Practice on Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committees

Substantive changes include:

- Additions to the “Order of the College Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committee”, to clarify the various stages of the process and to enable any appropriate participant in the Committee to question other parties (through the Chair, as appropriate);
- Separation of the sections on academic and non-academic misconduct, and information on how suspension of sanctions by the Committee should be handled by the School;
- Additional information on the considerations that the College Misconduct Committee or the College Fitness to Practise Committee need to decide upon prior to the closure of the process, including entitlement to an academic transcript.

(g) Admissions for the DDS and MD

Amendments have been made to Regulations 5.1.1(h) and 5.1.1 (i) relating to admissions to include information on the eligibility requirements for students wishing to gain admission on the DDS or MD.

(h) Collaborative Provision

Changes have been made to the Regulations governing Collaborative Provision (6.4) relating to protocol on a Registered Student's right to appeal in conjunction with any formalised agreement already in place between the University of Birmingham and the collaborative institution.

(i) Code of Practice on Plagiarism

Substantive changes include:

- Conflation of the Initial Procedure and Plagiarism Interview to one single meeting;
- Amendments to the penalties that can be imposed under “Penalties for Moderate Plagiarism” (section 7.1);
- Replacement of the term “Low-level plagiarism” with “poor academic practice”.

(j) Students attempt to retrieve failure

An amendment has been made to the Regulations relating to academic failure to note that when a student fails a module, their mark will be capped at one mark below the pass mark for that module.

(k) Student Representation System Policy

Substantive changes include:

- Renaming of the “Good Practice Guidelines” to “Key Requirements” in order to make the Student Representation System (SRS) Policy a less ambiguous statement of what is expected of staff involved in the operation of the SRS;
- Greater detail on the responsibilities of Heads of School;
- Greater clarity regarding the responsibilities of College-level committees
- Greater emphasis on the responsibilities of Student Representatives
- Amendments to the guidance for Staff Liaison Contacts (SLCs) on the elections of Student Representatives;
- A list of key agenda items for Staff Student Committee (SSC) meetings
- Guidance on seeking approval for implementing a variant from the standard model of representation.

(l) Code of Practice on the Conduct of Centrally Coordinated Formal Written Examinations

Addition of a new section 5 on alternative forms of assessment to examinations.

(m) Amendments to a number of Codes of Practice and Regulations governing postgraduate researchers

Substantive changes have been made to the following legislature:

1. Code of Practice on Assessment and Award of PhD by Published Work
 - Further detail on the procedure to be followed in the case of failure of examiners to reach an agreement (section 7).
2. Code of Practice on Assessment and Award of Higher Doctorates
 - Further detail on the procedure to be followed by examiners where the candidate is a member of the University (section 5.1).
 - Clarification on the process for re-application and appeals (section 7)
3. Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses
 - Amendment made to allow individual Schools greater discretion as to the number of thesis submissions submitted to Turnitin (sections 2.2 and 2.4);
 - Further detail on the criteria for nomination of Examiners, and change to requirements in line with Regulation 7.4.4 for members of staff from one internal and two external examiners to two external examiners (section 3.2);
 - Clarification on points of detail within the procedure for conducting the Oral Examination (section 5.2);
 - Further detail on the role of the Chair, and what to do in the event that the oral examination is interrupted (sections 5.1 and C12);
 - Creation of a new section 7 in order to provide guidance on corrections which cross references a new regulation (7.4.7(e)) which requires PGRs to submit a document detailing the corrections made.
 - Amendments made throughout the Code of Practice to allow plagiarism to be identified and prevented before the submission of a thesis.

4. Code of Practice on Supervision and Monitoring of Postgraduate Researchers
 - The frequency of supervision is now required to take place at least monthly to be in line with the Tier 4 attendance monitoring requirements (sections 2.17 and 5.1.3);
 - A new requirement for supervisors to make alternative arrangements to cover planned leave (e.g. study leave and maternity leave), in advance of the period of absence and confirmed to the Postgraduate Researcher at least 4 weeks before the beginning of the period of leave. (section 2.20);
 - A new requirement to confirm supervisory arrangements to postgraduate researchers where supervisor leaves the University within 4 weeks (section 2.23);
 - Amendment to allow individual Schools greater discretion as to the number of thesis submissions submitted to Turnitin (section 4.14);
 - Changes throughout to allow plagiarism to be identified and prevented before the submission of a thesis.
5. Regulations
 - Addition of a new regulation 7.4.8 (d) on transfer from a Masters to a related research degree;
 - Addition of a new regulation 7.4.7 (e) which requires postgraduate researchers to submit a document detailing any corrections made to their thesis.