

**Issued by:** Helen Smallbone, Academic Registrar

**Queries to:** Helen Smallbone/Chris Bill/Frances Scattergood  
Academic Registry (ext. 7982/7914/ 7670)

**Approval:** Academic Board, July 2018

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**Target Audience:** Academic staff and those with responsibilities for providing academic advice.

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**Purpose:**

The Academic Regulations 2018/19 are now available to view at:  
<https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/files/the-academic-regulations-2018-19.pdf>

The purpose of this briefing note is to ensure that staff are aware of the changes to the Academic Regulations for 2018/19 that were approved by Academic Board in July 2018.

**Summary of changes to the Academic Regulations:**

a. **Academic Malpractice Procedures (Appendix 8): Contract Cheating**

To align with new guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) on best practice to prevent, detect and deal with contract cheating, the Academic Malpractice Procedures have been updated to:

- recognise contract cheating as a distinct form of academic malpractice
- classify contract cheating as a 'grave' offence, which would always be progressed to an institutional panel for consideration and should be considered for the University's more serious sanctions
- provide information on the type of evidence that might be included in a contract cheating investigation (as described in the QAA guidance)
- expand on the guidance regarding the use of vivas as a form of investigation for academic malpractice, noting the QAA advice that: 'to ensure objectivity and fairness to the student, the viva should be chaired

by someone independent of the allegation, but appropriately experienced and trained. The Chair should ensure that the viva is conducted in a collegiate manner and that the student is treated fairly. Typically, the viva participants would be the student, a supporter or advisor (but not legal representative), the Chair and an academic subject expert (normally the person making the allegation)'

- incorporate the requirement for an educational element around academic integrity where a student who is found guilty of academic malpractice is permitted to continue at the University.

b. **Academic Malpractice Procedures (Appendix 8)**

A clause has been added to the regulations which will ensure that no sanction creates an advantage for a student guilty of malpractice, compared to the course of action that would be taken should the student simply fail to pass the assessment at that point.

c. **Graduation Procedures (Appendix 21)**

To update the University's Graduation Procedures to state that 'academic dress must *normally* be worn by all active participants of conferment ceremonies'. Adoption of the word 'normally' will retain the University's general position on students wearing academic dress to graduation ceremonies, but will allow some flexibility when required.

d. **Intercalation Policy (Appendix 9)**

In recognition of the limited understanding the term 'intercalation' outside of the Higher Education sector, the term 'interruption of studies' will now be used to describe taking a defined period of time out from study.

e. **Registration Periods for Stand-Alone Module Study (C10)**

Acknowledging the Academic Regulations were silent on the matter of registration periods for modules undertaken on a stand-alone basis, a regulation has been introduced which clearly sets out the expectation for a student to complete within a defined period of time.

f. **Repeat Year Policy (Appendix 10)**

The policy has been updated to enable the *opportunity* to take a level again rather than simply providing the facility to repeat study. Specifically, this means that students will no longer be required to have completed more than 50% of the year to be considered as eligible to apply to repeat.

Additionally, Level 4 students should not be required to withdraw at any stage if they wish to restart their studies. Instead, a restart process has been developed. This will enable a more flexible approach to handling cases where a student adjusting to University life may not have any exceptional circumstances, but would like the opportunity to start again.

g. **Withdrawal Procedures (new – Appendix 26)**

A new appendix has been added to the Regulations. This sets out the University's existing practice for the process relating to student-led withdrawal and University-led withdrawal. This doesn't represent a change to the process but does provide transparency for students.

h. **NEW\* approved Nov 2018: Deadline for declaring the need for Reasonable Adjustments\***

The University had previously operated with a strict deadline for students to declare their requirements for Reasonable Adjustments to the examination process. While the normal deadlines will still be set, discretion will be available to consider individual cases where students have not been able to meet the deadline. In cases where the University is not able to put in place a Reasonable Adjustment, but where it is recognised that one is required, the student concerned may be granted a deferral.

I would be grateful if you would ensure appropriate distribution of this briefing note to staff. If you require any further information, or would like to arrange a briefing session, please contact me, Chris or Frances.

Many thanks

*Helen*

Helen Smallbone,  
Academic Registrar