

To: All academic and academic support staff
Key academic contacts at Partner Institutions

From: Marie Sheehan, Academic Registrar

Date: 3 October 2011

Revisions to the Academic Regulations for 2011/12 and the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook 2011/12

I am writing to you to update you on the key changes to the Academic Regulations and Academic Quality and Standards Handbook for the forthcoming year. These changes are set out in detail below but if you do have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Academic Registry.

Changes to Academic Regulations 2011/12

At its meeting in June 2011, the Academic Board, acting on the recommendation of the Academic Regulations Committee and the Research Degrees Committee, agreed a series of revisions to the academic regulations governing relating to undergraduate, postgraduate and research degree programmes which will apply from 2011/12. Detailed Academic Regulations can be found at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations.

Academic Regulations 2A & 2B: Undergraduate courses - Undergraduate Module Scheme

These changes apply to all students from 2011/12.

Admissions

Para 4	New regulation for minimum English language requirements in light of UKBA policy changes for applicants who are neither nationals of, nor have completed a UK-degree equivalent qualification in a majority English-speaking country listed. A table listing the exempt countries has been added.
Para 9 and 12	New regulation minimum English language requirements for Foundation Degree, Diploma of Education, Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma and Level 3 of a Bachelors degree programme, applicants for Level 4 and above of a Bachelors degree programme and pre-sessionals.

Readmissions

Para 30	Rewording of regulation introduced in 2009/10 permitting exceptional re-admission of a student previously terminated on academic grounds. The regulations now state that any exception should be recommended by the Dean and approved by the Academic Registrar.
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Extensions and late submission of work

Para 101-107	It was agreed to revise the wording in order to make clear module leaders could authorise an extension of up to 7 days. Such extensions should be formally recorded but need not be presented to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.
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Attendance at Partner Institutions

Para 43	Regulation added to clarify whose procedures should be followed where a student does not meet the attendance requirements set by a partner institution – Academic Regulation 10: Expulsion on Academic Grounds, will be invoked.
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Appeals against the decision of an assessment board

Para 125-126	Amended in line with revised deadlines for appeals.
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The revised regulations are available at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations

Academic Regulations 3: Postgraduate courses: - Postgraduate Credit Framework

These changes apply to all students from 2011/12.

Admissions

Para 3	New regulation for minimum English language requirements in light of UKBA policy changes for applicants who are neither nationals of, nor have completed a UK-degree equivalent qualification in a majority English-speaking country listed. A table listing the exempt countries has been added.
Para 5	Regulation added for students to achieve a minimum score of 5.5 in each skill test of IELTS Academic English test. (The requirement for students to achieve IELTS 6.5 overall remains unchanged).

Readmissions

Para 18-20	Rewording of regulation introduced in 2009/10 permitting exceptional re-admission of a student previously terminated on academic grounds. The regulations now state that any exception should be recommended by the Dean and approved by the Academic Registrar.
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Extensions and late submission of work

Para 87-93	It was agreed to revise the wording in order to make clear module leaders could authorise an extension of up to 7 days. Such extensions should be formally recorded but need not be presented to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.
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Attendance at Partner Institutions

Para 31	Regulation added to clarify whose procedures should be followed where a student does not meet the attendance requirements set by a partner institution – Academic Regulation 10: Expulsion on Academic Grounds, will be invoked.
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Appeals against the decision of an assessment board

Para 152-153	Amended in line with revised deadlines for appeals.
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Award regulations

This change will apply to students registered from 2011/12 only. Students registered prior to 2011/12 will be subject to the classification method in place at the time of their registration.

Para 128-129	Postgraduate certificates are not classified.
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The revised regulations are available at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations

Academic Regulations 5: Mitigating Circumstances and Student Assessment

A review was undertaken of the Mitigating Circumstances and Student Assessment Regulations against best practice in the sector and QAA requirements and incorporating feedback from faculties, departments and KUSU. The key changes are as follows:

- the University will in future have only 1 version of mitigating circumstances procedures for both staff and students – Academic Regulation 5;
- a standard form for mitigating circumstances will be used across all faculties with a standard set of headings including for example: the deadlines for submission, student ID number (not name) and that students will be notified of the outcomes of mitigating circumstances claims via OSIS;
- expansion of the exclusions to mitigating circumstances to include: holidays, personal computer/printer problems; alleged medical condition without support from a medical practitioner;
- clarification that assessment outcomes would not normally be altered as a result of mitigating circumstances;
- inclusion of further details in respect of the mitigating circumstances panel including: minimum membership, terms of reference, confidentiality, recording of meetings and declaration of interests;
- confirmation that records would be kept for 6 years and that faculties would annually review the outcomes of mitigating circumstances under areas agreed by the Academic Regulations Committee.

The revised regulations are available at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations

Academic Regulation 6: Academic Misconduct (Cheating in Assessment) – Taught Courses

A review was undertaken of the Academic Misconduct Procedures for taught programmes against best practice in the sector and QAA requirements and incorporating feedback from faculties, departments and KUSU. Three key changes made were:

- new definition of an 'Academic Induction Period'. Procedures have been added outlining the process to be followed during and after the academic induction period;
- new regulation stating that the Academic Misconduct regulations apply to a student's registration (rather than the award the student is registered for); and
- new penalties have been defined with care given to ensure these are incremental according to:
 - type of offence – plagiarism or other offences (severity of penalties increases according to the serious nature of the offence);
 - first, second and concurrent offences (severity of penalties increases for repeat or concurrent occurrences); and
 - the module level at which offence occurs (severity of penalties increases with level of study).

The revised table of penalties for academic misconduct for undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses is available in Appendix 1 at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations. A brief guide to the process can also be found on this web page.

Academic Regulation 7: Academic Misconduct (Cheating in Assessment) – Research Degrees

A review was undertaken of the Academic Misconduct Procedures for taught programmes against best practice in the sector and QAA requirements and incorporating feedback from faculties, departments and KUSU. The key changes made were:

- new regulation stating that the Academic Misconduct regulations apply to a student's registration (rather than the award the student is registered for);
- inclusion of a definition of proof-reading services is included to clarify that correction of surface grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes is not considered as academic misconduct;
- instead of an Academic Induction Period the regulations differentiate on the process to be followed before and after submission of thesis/dissertation for examination;
- clarification that all evidence found after submission of the thesis/dissertation for examination is subject to a formal hearing; and
- revised penalties for academic misconduct during a research degree are included in the table of penalties in Appendix 2.

The revised regulations are available at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations

Academic Regulation 8 and 9: Academic Appeals – Taught Courses and Academic Appeals – Research Degrees

A review was undertaken of the Academic Appeals Regulations for taught and research programmes against best practice in the sector and QAA requirements and incorporating feedback from faculties, departments and KUSU. The key changes made are:

- clarifying that both stages of the appeal process are formal and would be named stage 1 faculty level and stage 2 University level for simplicity (rather than initial and stage 2);
- clarifying that stage 1 must be completed before stage 2 can be invoked;
- clarifying and reducing the timelines for submission of appeals to within 15 days of publication on OSIS for stage 1 and setting clear (and reduced) turnaround times for each stage of appeal;
- added an additional outcome for a stage 2 appeal of 'refer back to chair of assessment board for consideration';
- adding an further detail to our Appeal Hearing stage to adhere to best practice in the sector;
- confirmation that records would be kept for 6 years and that the annual report submitted to Academic Regulations Committee would also cover disability; and
- including reference to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

The revised regulations are available at www.kingston.ac.uk/academicregulations. A brief guide to the process can also be found on this web page.

If you have any queries regarding the academic regulations please contact Marie Ferrao, Assistant Registrar – m.ferrao@kingston.ac.uk

Changes to the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook 2011/12

Change to the Academic Quality and Standards Procedures were agreed by the Quality Enhancement Committee in June 2011. The 2011/12 version of the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook (ASQH) is now available on-line at:

www.kingston.ac.uk/aqshandbook

It includes a briefing guide to the changes to the 2011/12.

If you have any queries regarding the handbook please contact Annie Sander, Assistant Registrar – a.sander@kingston.ac.uk

Academic Regulations 2011/12 and Academic Quality and Standards Handbook 2011/12 on CD

The Academic Regulations 2011/12 and the ASQH will be made available to key contacts at Partner Institutions on CD in October 2011. They will be made available on CD to colleagues within the University on request to academicregistry@kingston.ac.uk .

Marie Sheehan
Academic Registrar