Queen Margaret University
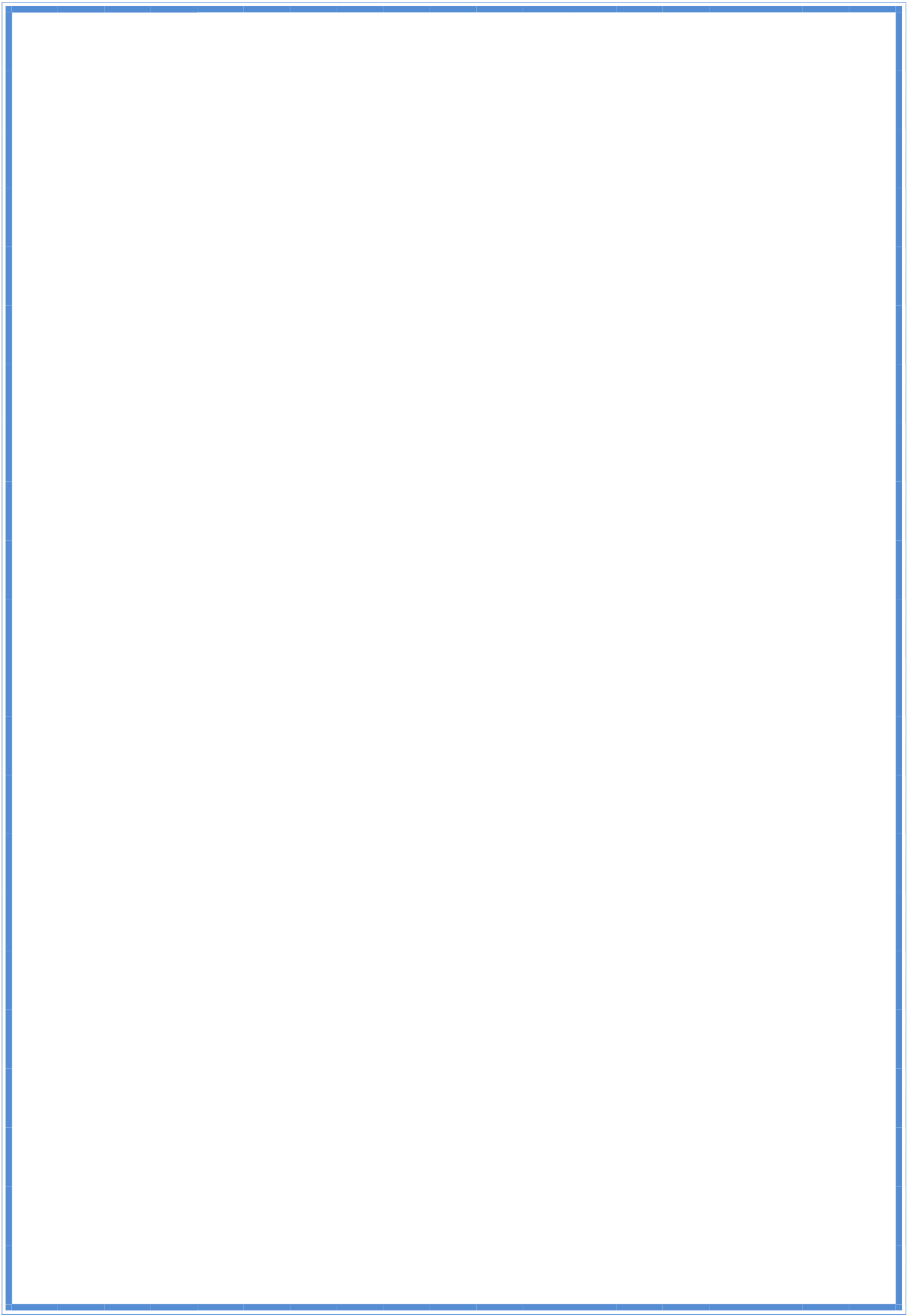
EDINBURGH

Essential Information for Students

ACADEMIC SESSION 2019/20

Contents:

1. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate at the time of publication. The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide programmes of study listed in the prospectus and to deliver them in accordance with the descriptions of programmes set out. However, as the University is committed to ensuring that programmes remain up to date and relevant, it reserves the right to discontinue, merge or combine programmes and to make variations to the content or method of delivery of programmes, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary by the University. This, combined with the need to publish the prospectus well in advance, means that changes to the information presented in the prospectus may have occurred. Intending applicants are advised to visit the University website https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here or contact admissions@qmu.ac.uk before applying. The content curriculum of a programme may change for a number of reasons, including that:

- The change is required to ensure that the programme continues to deliver its key learning outcomes and the content of the programme is responsive to changes and developments in the areas covered by the programme;
- For programmes leading to professional qualifications, accreditation or registration, the changes are required to continue to satisfy pre-requisites of a particular professional or regulatory body responsible for awarding such qualification, accreditation or registration;
- The change is not a material change to the content or curriculum;
- The change operates for the benefit of the students on the programme;
- The change is required due to circumstances outside the control of the University;
- It is necessary to ensure that the programme continues to align with the University's aims, strategy and mission.

Remedies for students impacted by any such change may include, but are not limited to, provision of alternative modules or programmes or the option to transfer to another programme at the University. It may be desirable or necessary to withdraw certain programmes from the University's portfolio of provision as a result of a number of factors including changes in patterns of demand from prospective students, changes in staffing, a strategic realignment of the University's portfolio or a major organisational change. The University will use its best endeavours to consult meaningfully with students who would be affected by any such change in order to assess any impact on students and mitigate any disruption arising from the change and to identify appropriate alternative arrangements. Arrangements to support the academic interests of existing students impacted by any programme withdrawal will be put in place. In all cases, the University will make every effort to advise students at the earliest possible opportunity of any changes to the course content or curriculum that may impact upon them.

II. In the event of external factors, such as industrial action, the University undertakes to minimise any disruption that may subsequently arise, as far as is practicable.

III. An offer of a place at the University is made on the understanding that, in accepting the offer, the student undertakes to observe and comply with these Terms and Conditions and

to abide by, and to submit to the procedures of, the University's Regulations, Policies and Codes of Conduct, as amended from time to time. The University's Regulations, Policies and Codes of Conduct are set out in full within the University's website at the following link: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/. Changes to the University's Regulations may be made from time to time for one or more of the following reasons: to reflect changes to the statutory requirements with which the University is required to comply; to reflect best practice regulation across the higher education sector and more broadly; to ensure that the University's Regulations remain fit for purpose as a result of changes or developments within the University and across the higher education sector. Where the University's Regulations are changed and the operation of a new regulation would place a student in a less favourable position than they would otherwise have been under the old regulations, that student may rely on the old regulation as if it continued to apply. Whether a student would be in a less favourable position is a matter to be determined by the University on a case by case basis, depending on the facts and circumstances of a particular student. This would not apply to a situation where the new regulations seek to address a previously unregulated matter. All policies and procedures are subject to regular review and formal approval by the appropriate committee. The University Court has agreed that the University, recognising the need to protect the health of students, staff and visitors to the University, should aspire over time to become a non-smoking campus. The University is currently reviewing its Smoking Policy with a view to achieving this aspiration. Students' attention shall be drawn to any amendments to policy in this area.

IV. Applicants will have 14 days from receipt of their offer to challenge their Fee status. Only exceptionally will changes to Fee status be considered after the 14 day period. Applicants who accept an offer by distance communication (for example, via UCAS or online, without face to face contact) have a legal right to cancel the contract at any time within 14 days of the date of acceptance of the offer. Where an applicant wishes to cancel the contract within 14 days of acceptance, he or she must do so by informing the University in writing. Where an applicant cancels within the 14 day period after acceptance, any advance payment made by that applicant shall be refunded in full. Notwithstanding the aforementioned rights to cancel within the initial 14 day period from acceptance, applicants may withdraw from study at the University, and cancel the contract at any time after registration, by following the University's withdrawal procedure. Where the contract is cancelled in this way, applicants may lose all or part of the tuition fees paid by them or on their behalf, in accordance with University Procedures. The University may cancel the contract at any time in accordance with the University's Regulations, Policies and Codes of Conduct

V. Tuition fees are payable for all programmes and are subject to review annually. Tuition fees for new and existing students are liable to increase each year as a result of review. For continuing students, any increase in the level of fee each year will be subject to a maximum percentage equivalent to the higher of the annual increase in the UK Retail Prices Index and 5%. Factors that will determine the need for, and extent of, any increase include any increase set or prescribed by regulatory bodies such as the Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Government, Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) and the UK Government, and/or increases in the costs of delivering and administering the programme. Tuition fees for the forthcoming academic session are published on the QMU website well in advance of the start of that academic year. Details on tuition fees and other charges can be found on our

website at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/current-students-general-information/fees-and-charges/. All students who are continuing with their studies should review their fee rates prior to starting their next academic session. No student will be deemed to be fully matriculated until his or her tuition fees have been paid in full, or satisfactory evidence is produced that such fees will be paid by a sponsoring authority. No student will be permitted to attend a graduation ceremony, or to proceed to the next year of their programme until tuition fees for all preceding years have been paid in full. Failure to settle tuition fees by the due date may lead to a student being excluded from attendance at classes. Ensuring tuition fees are paid is the responsibility of the student and, in the event of a student's sponsoring authority refusing or failing to make payment in full or in part, the student will be held personally liable for payment. Students will also be liable for any travel and accommodation costs incurred whilst on placement. Such costs may be paid by a sponsoring authority but should a sponsoring authority refuse or fail to do so, the student will be personally liable for such costs.

VI. For some programmes, an additional fee may be payable in respect of registration with a professional body. Additional charges will be made in respect of graduation and, where applicable, reassessment. Full details of registration fees and other charges are set out at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/current-students-general-information/fees-and-charges/ and students are also personally liable for such fees.

VII. Tuition Fees become due on the first day of study and should be paid within 21 days of the due date, or an arrangement made with the Finance Office for payment to be made by instalments. Where a student has opted to pay by instalments, a direct debit mandate must be completed prior to, or at the time of, matriculation. For returning students a new Direct Debit form is required for each year of study. If students experience payment difficulties resulting in tuition fees remaining unpaid for 21 days after falling due, interest on the full amount at 2.5% above the UK clearing bank base rate may be charged. Where payment is being made by instalments, interest will run on an instalment from the due date to the date when the instalment is paid. Where a student encounters difficulty in paying tuition fees, they are required to contact the Credit Controller at the University Finance Office for assistance in drawing up a payment schedule. Any payment schedule drawn up by the Credit Controller must be adhered to by the student until the fees in question are paid in full. Where no payment schedule has been arranged with the Credit Controller and tuition fees remain outstanding 8 weeks after the end of the 21 day period, or where an instalment is over 4 weeks late, a student may be asked to leave the University and the debt shall be transferred to a debt collector. If outstanding fees are then paid prior to the end of the academic year, the University may permit a student to be reinstated. However, where the University agrees to such a reinstatement, a student may be required to repeat parts of any programme which have been missed, resulting in additional fees being incurred. Students who leave the University more than 28 days after the start of a programme of study will be liable for the appropriate proportion of the fee, based on semesters attended in whole or in part.

VIII. The University may withdraw or amend its offer or terminate a student's registration at the University, if it finds that a false or materially misleading statement has been made in, or significant information has been omitted from, a student's application form.

IX. Admission to some degree programmes offered by the University, and to some of the professions for which it provides training, may be precluded by certain medical conditions. Students are obliged to include information regarding any medical condition, past or present, which may affect their participation on a programme when completing their UCAS or Queen Margaret University application form. If an individual has any doubt as to the effect that a medical or health-related condition may have on his/her application, he/she must contact the programme Admissions Tutor who will be able to advise accordingly. The University does not warrant or guarantee that a student admitted to a particular programme will necessarily be allowed to complete the programme if the student subsequently suffers from or contracts any material medical or health condition. All applicants are asked to disclose criminal convictions to help safeguard the welfare of our students. Applicants for certain programmes of study must declare all criminal convictions, and in these cases the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply. As a condition of entry, candidates for these programmes will be required to provide a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau, Disclosure Scotland, or an appropriate equivalent. If an applicant has any doubt as to the effect a criminal conviction may have on his/her application, he/she must contact the programme Admissions Tutor who will be able to advise accordingly.

X. To safeguard the welfare of staff, students, visitors and the general public, the University scrutinises all criminal convictions declared by applicants. Continuing students must declare at the point of matriculation any criminal conviction acquired in the previous 12 months. The existence of a criminal conviction itself does not preclude entry to the University, but admission to, or progression within particular programmes may be precluded by certain types of convictions. Any student who is found to have falsified his/her self declaration at the point of application or at matriculation will be subject to disciplinary action.

XI. Whilst programmes are designed to prepare students for employment, the University does not warrant or guarantee that students will obtain employment as a result of successfully completing any programme.

XII. The University does not accept responsibility, and expressly excludes all liability, to the full extent permitted by law, for any loss, damage or injury incurred by a student or to his/her property, whether in connection with his/her studies or not, except in circumstances where the student has suffered personal injury or death caused by the negligence of the University or its employees. In particular, the University shall not be liable for any loss of, or damage to, any computer or electronic data or information owned or used by a student.

XIII. Personal information on students will be held and processed according to the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act (2018). This information will be used by the University to fulfil its part of the contract between it and the student. As part of the contract, the University is also required to release certain information on the student population to government agencies. Full details of the way in which the University uses students' information are provided in the Student Privacy Statement which is issued as part of the matriculation process.

XIV. Every matriculated student is automatically a member of the Students' Union. However under the 1994 Education Act, students have the right to opt out of being a member should they wish.

2. ACADEMIC APPEALS REGULATIONS

These regulations take effect from October 2014 and supersede all previous regulations.

These regulations should be read in conjunction with the University's Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

Under these regulations, a University officer may act through his or her properly appointed nominee.

1   Right to Academic Appeal
An 'appeal' is a request for a review of a decision of a Board of Examiners that has been charged with decisions on student progression, assessment and awards. The appeal may be in respect of any decision that affects the student's grade or progress.

2   Nature of the appeal
Those hearing the appeal will not attempt to re-examine the student, nor to appraise the professional judgement of the examiners, but will consider whether or not the decision of the Board of Examiners was fair, and whether or not all relevant factors were taken into account.

3   Time limit
The appeal must be submitted in writing to the University Secretary within 21 days of the publication of the decision of the Board of Examiners, or receipt of the academic transcript.

An extension to this time limit will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances e.g. when, for reasons outside his or her control, a student did not receive timely notification of his/her result.

4   Grounds for an appeal

4.1   The grounds for appeal are as follows:

4.1.1   **additional information** is available that was not, and could not, reasonably have been made available to the Board at the time it made its original decision and which had it been available could have led the Board to making a different decision (see also 4.3 below);

4.1.2   there was a **material irregularity** in the procedures of the Board of Examiners or in the conduct of the assessment.

4.2   A student may NOT appeal on grounds which:

- could have been considered by the Board of Examiners had notice been given prior to the meeting; and
- the student has no valid reason for having failed to give such notice.

4.3   References in 4.1 and 4.2 to information available to the Board of Examiners include recommendations on student cases made by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel (EC Panel). Appeals on the grounds of extenuating circumstances will not be accepted where there is

evidence that the circumstances that form the basis of the submission could have been submitted to the EC Panel by the published deadline, and the student has no grounds for not submitting by that deadline.

4.4   A student's disagreement with the academic judgement of a Board of Examiners does not provide a valid ground for appeal.

4.5   Any student considering an appeal is encouraged to contact the Students' Union for advice and assistance.

5   **Stage 1 – Academic Appeal**

5.1   A student wishing to appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners should submit the appeal in writing to the University Secretary within the time limit stated in paragraph 3 of these procedures. Appeals should be sent to appeals@qmu.ac.uk with the relevant supporting documentation.

5.2   The student's written statement should provide the following information in support of his/her appeal:

- name and matriculation number
- up-to-date contact address for correspondence, including email address
- title and year of programme
- examination or result being appealed
- the grounds for appeal
- supporting evidence
- the remedy being sought

5.3   The University Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the Academic Appeal within 3 working days of receipt of the appeal, and pass the appeal to the relevant Dean of School who shall attempt to resolve the case. The Dean of School will normally respond to the student by first class post within 21 days of receipt of the appeal, either giving a decision or specifying a date for the decision. This timescale may be extended where the Dean of School is absent from the University through leave or illness.

5.4   The Dean will produce a report that documents fully the issues raised by the appellant, the facts established by the investigation, and the manner in which the facts were used to inform the judgement. The Dean of School will provide a copy of the response to the University Secretary. In coming to a judgment, the Dean may:

- confirm the decision of the Board of Examiners, on the grounds that the evidence presented did not support the case;
- provide the appellant with an additional first or second diet of examination, as the case may be, provided that, in upholding the appeal and granting an additional diet, the terms of the University's Assessment Regulations are taking into consideration; or

- should it not be possible to provide an additional diet for the appealed result, to provide a suitable alternative as the Dean thinks fit and is reasonable in all the circumstances.

5.5 If a reconsideration of the student's case gives rise to a change in the student's progression this must be ratified, depending on how material the changes are, by:

- the Convener of the Board of Examiners;
- the Convener of the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner/s
- all the members of the Board of Examiners by correspondence
- a meeting of a subset of the Board
- a meeting of the full Board of Examiners.

5.6 The University Secretary, in consultation with the Dean of School, will determine the most suitable of those identified above to deal with the matter, and the procedure to be followed thereafter.

6 Stage 2 - Academic Appeals Committee

6.1 If the appellant is dissatisfied with the decision at Stage 1, he/she may resubmit the appeal in the original or in a revised form to the University Secretary within 21 days of receipt of the response from the Dean of School.

6.2 The University Secretary will pass the appeal to the Deputy Principal, who, having considered the substance of the appeal and the previous attempts at resolution, will decide whether or not a prima facie case is established. If such a case is established, then the appeal will be referred to an Academic Appeals hearing.

6.3 Normally, an academic appeals hearing will be convened only where the Deputy Principal judges that:

- there has been demonstrably an irregularity in the proceedings at Stage 1;
- evidence has become available that it was not reasonable for the appellant to provide at Stage 1.

6.4 If a prima facie case is judged not to have been established, the appeal shall fail and the student shall be duly informed in writing.

6.5 Exceptionally, where the Deputy Principal judges that the evidence provided at Stage 2 provides unequivocal evidence to support the academic appeal under the grounds set out in regulation 6.3, the Deputy Principal may uphold the appeal.

6.6 In determining under regulation 6.5 above, the Deputy Principal shall enjoy delegated powers to review a decision reached by a Board of Examiners equivalent to those provided to the Academic Appeals Committee under paragraph: 7.9 below.

7 Proceedings of the Academic Appeals Committee

7.1 In the event that an academic appeals hearing is judged appropriate, an Academic Appeals Panel will be convened. The Panel will be chaired by a Dean or Head of Division from outside the student's School. A Panel will consist of two other members of academic staff drawn from an academic or support area unrelated to the appeal, and a representative from the Students' Union Executive Committee. Care will be taken to ensure an appropriate gender balance in the composition of the Panel. The University Secretary will act as technical adviser to the Panel and will nominate a clerk to the committee.

7.2 The Academic Appeals Panel shall conduct its proceedings according to the principles of natural justice in that it will it will seek to act fairly, no person may be a judge in his or her own case and all parties shall have access to all the evidence used by the Committee in reaching its decision.

7.3 The Appeals Panel shall meet, normally within one calendar month (excluding University vacations) of the referral from Part I, and communicate its conclusions to the student and the subject area/department concerned within one calendar month of its being convened. The University Secretary will keep all parties informed of progress and will advise of any necessary extension of the timescale, for example, if an adjournment in the proceedings is necessary.

7.4 The appellant shall have the right to appear before the Committee and to be accompanied by one other person of his or her choice. Representation external to the University will not be permitted in the context of this procedure.

7.5 The Academic Appeals Panel may interview staff and/or students relevant to the appeal. If the appeal is on the ground of the actions of an individual, that individual has the right to be informed of the substance of the appeal, and to attend the appeal hearing and be accompanied by a friend or supporter.

7.6 Any person called to give evidence to the Appeal hearing will be given at least 72 hours' notice of the time and place of the hearing. Copies of written submissions will also be made available to all parties prior to the hearing.

7.7 In the event that the appellant is unable to attend the Academic Appeals Committee due to illness or other good cause, the meeting will be rescheduled.

7.8 The University Secretary will act as technical adviser to the Panel and will nominate a clerk to the committee.

7.9 The Committee may, acting under powers delegated to it by the Senate, review a decision reached by a Board of Examiners and determine:

- to confirm the decision of the Board of Examiners, on the grounds that the evidence presented did not support the case;
- to require the Board of Examiners to reconsider the results of the assessment of the students on an entire programme or part of a programme; the reconsidered results

will be referred to the Convener of the Committee to decide the appropriate course of action;

- to annul the relevant decision of the Board of Examiners and refer the case for decision back to the Board of Examiners (the subsequent decision of the Board of Examiners will be referred to the Convener of the Committee to decide the appropriate course of action);
- to annul the relevant decision of the Board of Examiners and assign a revised result to the student concerned;
- to make decisions on the student's progress or award outside the University's general assessment regulations.

7.10 The Panel will produce a report that documents fully the issues raised by the appellant, the facts established by the investigation, and the manner in which the facts were used to inform the judgement of the committee.

7.11 The Panel shall report all these cases to the Senate for information.

7.12 Consequent to the decision arising from the particular case, the Committee may ask the Senate or other senior committee to reconsider the wording of University's academic regulations, and the Programme Committee to review its programme regulations and/or management.

7.13 The University has the right to levy a fee for appeals. If the process involves the re-marking of a number of examination papers, it may charge per paper re-marked. The fee will be reimbursed if the appeal is upheld.

7.14 The decision of the Academic Appeals Committee shall be final within the University.

8   INDEPENDENT REVIEW

8.1 The University's internal procedures having been exhausted, a student may seek review of his/her complaint by an independent person, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman [SPSO].

8.2 The Ombudsman is independent and her staff will advise whether or not the complaint is one that they can investigate. Normally the student will have to tell the Ombudsman about his/her complaint within 12 months of first knowing about the problem about which they are complaining, although the Ombudsman may look at complaints outside this limit if she thinks there is good reason to do so.

8.3 There are some restrictions on what the Ombudsman can investigate. For example, she cannot consider the subject matter of complaints about personnel matters or matters of academic judgement. However, she may be able to investigate the manner in which the complaint was handled. If the complaint is appropriate to his office and is investigated, the Ombudsman's staff will send details of how this will be done.

8.4 The complaint should be submitted in writing to the Ombudsman, and should include any relevant documents including correspondence with the University and the University's response to the complaint. This can be sent to the Ombudsman without cost at the freepost

address given below. A student may discuss the complaint with an Investigator at the SPSO before deciding to submit.

8.5 The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman has an online complaint form accessible through the website, although papers in support of the complaint would still have to be supplied to the Ombudsman by post or other means. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman can also supply paper complaint forms direct to complainants.

8.6 Further information may be accessed through the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman website, or by calling her office for advice. Contact details are:

Freepost SPSO, SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9am‑5pm, Tuesday 10am‑5pm

SPSO freephone **0800 377 7330**

Website **www.spso.org.uk**

Online contact form **www.spso.org.uk/contact-form**

You can fill in the complaints form online at **www.spso.org.uk/complain/form**

Fax **0800 377 7331**

3. ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Introduction

Queen Margaret University provides its users with access to state-of-the-art Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment and a wide range of electronic resources. All users need to be aware of what constitutes the Acceptable Use of these resources to enable them to be used in a safe and secure manner. This document outlines the policies relating to both ICT and e-resources and facilities.

For all our users; staff, students, visitors and any others, using our technology infrastructure constitutes an undertaking to abide by this acceptable use policy and the legal requirements implicit and explicitly contained within.

For the purposes of this document, designations include staff and students at collaborative partners. You are reminded that accessing QMU ICT systems and resources via the Remote Desktop service you are bound by the laws and regulations in the UK as well as any applicable laws in the country from which you are connecting.

Acceptable Use Policy

1. Purpose

- The purpose of an Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure the proper use of all the University's ICT facilities and resources.

- Access to the University's ICT facilities and resources requires users to accept certain responsibilities and obligations. All users must be aware of and comply with the JANET Acceptable Use Policy, which covers all UK HE academic and research network activity.

- Use of IT and associated resources should always be legal and ethical and reflect academic integrity and the standards of the University community.

2. Authorisation

In order to use the ICT facilities in the University you must first be authorised. For students, this will require your matriculation number and password, which are distributed at matriculation. Staff will receive a confidential mailing containing notification of their username and password. Your matriculation number/username and password is for the exclusive use of the individual to whom they are allocated. You are responsible and accountable for all activities carried out under your matriculation number/username and password.

3. Privacy

It should be noted that systems staff, who have appropriate privileges, have the ability, which is occasionally required, to access all files, including electronic mail files, stored on a computer which they manage. It is also occasionally necessary to intercept network traffic. In such circumstances, appropriately privileged staff will take all reasonable steps to ensure the privacy of service users. The University fully reserves the right to monitor e-mail, telephone and any other electronically-mediated

communications, whether stored or in transit, in line with its rights under the [Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000](). Reasons for such monitoring may include the need to:

- ensure operational effectiveness of services
- prevent a breach of the law, this policy, or other University policy
- investigate a suspected breach of the law, this policy, or other University policy
- monitor standards

Access to staff files, including electronic mail files, will not normally be given to another member of staff, unless authorised by the appropriate line manager, Head of IT Services, or nominee, who will use their discretion, in consultation with a senior officer of the University, if appropriate. In such circumstances, the Head of Division, or more senior line manager, will be informed and will normally be consulted prior to action being taken. Such access will normally only be granted in the following circumstances:

- where a breach of the law or a serious breach of this or another University policy is suspected
- when a documented and lawful request from a law enforcement agency such as the police or security services has been received
- on request from the relevant Head of Division, where the managers or co-workers of the individual require access to e-mail messages or files, which are records of a University activity and the individual is unable, e.g. through absence, to provide them

The University sees student privacy as desirable but not as an absolute right, hence students should not expect to hold or pass information, which they would not wish to be seen by members of staff responsible for their academic work. In addition to when a breach of the law or of this policy is suspected, or when a documented and lawful request from a law enforcement agency such as the police or security services has been received, systems staff are also authorised to release the contents of a student's files, including electronic mail files, when required to by any member of staff who has a direct academic work-based reason for requiring such access.

After a student or member of staff leaves the University, files which are left behind on any computer system owned by the University, including servers and including electronic mail files, will be considered to be the property of the University. When leaving the University, staff should make arrangements to transfer to colleagues any e-mail or other computer-based information held under their account, as this will be closed on their departure.

4.   Acceptable Use of ICT

University ICT and electronic resources are provided to facilitate your work as a member of the University community, specifically for educational, training, research or administrative purposes. Any other uses are a privilege and not a right and must never take priority over the needs of those who require the facilities for directed academic work.

The University does not block or filter keywords or search terms, nor does it prevent you from accessing specific sites. That does not mean however, that you can access or download pornographic or other offensive or objectionable material.

You should bear the following in mind:

- You must not share your QMU username and password with anyone else. This will result in your account being disabled immediately. For students, if your account has been disabled then you must appeal for its reinstatement. This must be done in the first instance to your Dean of School. There is no automatic reinstatement. Staff should contact Assist helpdesk
- You must never use University ICT systems to alarm or inconvenience others
- You must not display anything on your screen which is likely to cause offence or upset other users. However, it is recognised that sometimes it is necessary to display material which is medical in nature, in relation to some programmes/modules
- You must respect other people's electronic privacy. In particular, you may not use your QMU accounts to distribute spam and other chain emails
- For your own security, you should be careful who you share your QMU email and other contact details with
- You must never pass off other people's work as your own. The University produces a guide to referencing, "Write and Cite" which is available online
- You should not use data which is confidential or not already in the public domain in your work without first consulting the author; there may be copyright or data protection implications
- You must not maliciously damage or interfere with any item of hardware

Anyone found abusing QMU ICT systems will usually be cautioned in the first instance. Continued abuse will lead to your account being disabled. This means that you will be unable to access any of the networking and communications services. In cases of serious abuse, your account will be disabled immediately. Serious abuse includes the sharing of your username and password.

5. Forms of Unacceptable Activities

Unacceptable activities can take a variety of forms. Some examples of behaviour which is unacceptable are listed below:

- Transmitting or downloading obscene or offensive material
- Transmitting or downloading threatening material, or material intended to harass or frighten
- Transmitting or downloading defamatory material
- Infringing copyright (see below)
- Hacking, attempted hacking or other deliberately disruptive activities such as introducing viruses to computer equipment
- Sending a bulk email to everyone in the University
- Interfering with hardware or software configurations
- Installing or attempting to install unauthorised software to QMU ICT equipment
- Adding software to University computer equipment
- The use of QMU ICT services and equipment to distribute unsolicited advertising *(spam)*, to run a business or similar activities
- Downloading or distributing pirated software or data;
- Viewing or hosting of any illegal streaming content.
- Any other activities that disrupt QMU ICT services

6. Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

All users are advised that the University has a statutory obligation under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism'.

The Terrorism Act (2000) makes it an offence for an individual to collect or make a record of information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism; or to possess a document or record containing information of that kind (e.g. a terrorist training manual). The Terrorism Act (2006) makes it an offence to disseminate terrorist publications in order to encourage others to engage in terrorism.

The Terrorism Act (2000) defines terrorism in section 1 of the Act as set out in the following:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/section/1.

7.   Use of copyright software or datasets

By accessing QMU ICT systems, you also agree to the following with regard to copyright:

That usage of any Software, Computer Readable Dataset or Courseware or other similar material, hereafter referred to as "the Product", issued or otherwise made available is subject to the following conditions:

- You will ensure that all the requirements of the agreements, contracts and licences under which the Product is held by the Institution will be maintained. (Copies of the relevant agreements, contracts and licences may be seen by application to the School or Department which made the Product available)
- You will adhere to the regulations governing the use of any service involved in the provision of access to the product whether these services are controlled by this institution or by some other organisation
- You will not remove or alter the Copyright Statement on any copies of the Product used by yourself
- You will ensure the Security and Confidentiality of any copy released to yourself and will not make any further copies from it or knowingly permit others to do so, unless permitted to do so under the relevant licence
- You will use the Product only for purposes defined and only on computer systems covered by the agreement, contract or licence
- You will only incorporate the Product, or part thereof, in any work, program or article produced by yourself, where this is permitted by the licence or by "Fair Dealing"
- You will only incorporate some part or version of the Product in any work produced by yourself with the express permission of the Licensor or unless this is permitted under the Agreement
- You will not reverse engineer or decompile the software products or attempt to do so, unless this is explicitly permitted within the terms of the Agreement for the use of the Product

You will return or destroy all copies of the Product at the end of the programme/year/period of employment or when requested to do so.

8.   Legal constraints

- You must adhere at all times to appropriate statutory law such as the Computer Misuse Act 1990, Defamation Act 1996 and the General Data Protection Regulations and not commit the common law crimes of theft, reset or fraud.
- You should be aware that the Terrorism Act (2000) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/section/1 makes it an offence for an

individual to collect or make a record of information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism; or to possess a document or record containing information of that kind (e.g. a terrorist training manual).

- You must undertake to comply with the [Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988](#) and the provisions of the University's licence with the Copyright Licensing Agency and with any other applicable legislation, statutory instrument or regulation
- You should always consider the provisions of the [General Data Protection Regulations](#) when storing data on a computer. Please review the University's Data Protection Policy 2018.
- You should be aware of the [Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000](#) when making use of ICT systems
- You must respect the intellectual property rights, copyright and moral rights of authors
- You must undertake to abide by all licence agreements for software entered into by the University with other parties (see below)
- You may only use software and/or information provided by the University for educational purposes as a member of the University

9. **Code of Conduct when using our facilities**

   All users at QMU shall:

- Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working, studying and living environment within the University, respecting the institution's policies on equal opportunities and anti-harassment and ensuring that their conduct complies with these policies

- Accept individual and collective responsibility for keeping a clean and safe working and studying environment, ensuring personal guests act in an appropriate manner. Anything which you believe constitutes a health and safety hazard must be reported immediately to Reception

- Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures

- Have an individual and collective responsibility to contribute to a study environment that promotes scholarship and learning. All persons should be considerate of the needs of others for an appropriate study environment and share a common goal in learning

- Have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that the safety of themselves and others is not compromised

- Ensure that their use of the computer systems and networks is always legal and ethical and reflects academic integrity and the standards of the University community

- Have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure respect for other people and property is maintained.

- Know that the use of mobile phones in lectures, seminars and computing laboratories is strictly prohibited. Mobile phones should be switched into silent mode before entering the secure area of the Learning Resource Centre.

- Know that the University will not tolerate antisocial behaviour: this includes the use of abusive language, physical abuse, obscene comments, verbal or physical harassment and comments or remarks that discriminate on the basis of sex, race or any other irrelevant distinction

10. Penalties for unacceptable use

Infringements of this Policy will be dealt with within the University's normal disciplinary procedures – see the Student Regulations website for more information.

11. Using computers whilst on placement

Most placement organisations allow QMU users access to their ICT facilities. Make sure you know and respect their requirements on how you use their computers.

KNOW THE RULES

External organisations may have very different attitudes in the use of ICT. It is important, therefore, when you go out on a placement that you make it a priority to familiarise yourself with the local regulations. Before you go out on your placement, your academic supervisor will try to ensure that you get a copy of the organisation's specific ICT usage regulations. When you get onsite, it is worthwhile going over these regulations with your placement supervisor. This will help you get a better understanding of what is permitted and what is not. You may also find it helpful to make contact with the local ICT support department or helpdesk. The staff there will be able to give you more help and advice.

Remember – all organisations have different regulations about what you can and cannot do with their ICT facilities. You must respect these when you are out on placement. It is your individual responsibility to familiarise yourself with the local regulations and to ensure that you do not abuse the ICT facilities offered to you when you are on placement. Any computer facilities offered to you whilst on placement will be provided for University work only, i.e. for use in learning, teaching and pursuit of studies. You must not abuse these facilities for any other purpose, e.g. to play computer games, for excessive social use of email, or for recreational internet use.

KEEPING SAFE

If you are a Health Sciences student, your research will require internet searches based on anatomical words and phrases. This may generate unwanted links to pornographic or other objectionable websites. To be safe, read the site summary carefully before clicking on a link. If you are not sure, do not click through! Where possible, you should use specific health science related search engines.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENS

Even if you are careful, you may accidentally access internet sites you did not mean to. This might happen because you clicked on a misleading link, you clicked on a link by accident, or because a site has been 'hijacked'. You may also find that you get bombarded by unsolicited and explicit 'popup' advertising. If any of these things happens whilst you are out on placement:

- Take a note of the URL (web address) of the site and the time you accessed it
- Tell someone immediately. If possible, show them what happened.

- If you are working in a public area, you may want to 'lock' the PC before fetching help. (You can do this by pressing the CTRL-ALT-DEL keys at the same time, then clicking on Lock Computer. If you cannot lock the PC, then make sure you have the details of the site you accessed, then log off.)
- Tell your placement supervisor as soon as possible
- Tell local ICT staff (any alerts regarding inappropriate internet use will go to them first)

Tell your QMU supervisor to advise them of what has happened

There may be an investigation into your online activities, but if the accident was legitimate and these steps are followed, it will be resolved quickly.

12.   Recording of lectures

QMU recognises that from time to time students may wish to record lectures, seminars and tutorials for their own personal use to support their learning. As a matter of courtesy students should inform the lecturer prior to the commencement of the recording. If the student has not informed the lecturer, the lecturer may ask for the recording to be stopped.

However, students are reminded that:

- Distributing a recorded lecture/seminar/tutorial is an unacceptable activity. Students should always check with lecturers before distributing a recording; this includes distributing on the internet
- Editing a recorded lecture/seminar/tutorial is also an unacceptable activity. Students should always check with lecturers before changing a recording

13.   Publishing to the Web

The University provides the opportunity to publish web pages within the qmu.ac.uk domain to:

- support research activity
- enhance teaching
- provide means of disseminating information about the University to its members, to potential staff and students and to the general public.
- allow individual users to provide non-academic information as part of the general process of learning through our use of Google sites and wikis

Guidelines

All information provided using our web facilities will be seen as having, in some way, the support of the University and will affect how people view the University. Therefore, no provider should publish any information in a way which could adversely affect the good name or reputation of the University, nor provide material which is inappropriate for dissemination by the University. Included in this is any material that could lead to legal action, such as alleged libel or a breach of copyright.

A disclaimer should also be included indicating that the University has no direct responsibility for the content and giving individual contact name and email address.

The information provided on this web page does not necessarily represent the views of Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. The responsibility for all material in this page rests wholly on a personal basis with the owner of this page. The named owner of this page is responsible for liability for loss, liability for hypertext links, liability for defamation and for compliance with relevant acts of law.

The page is also subject to the University Acceptable Use Policy.

Google sites and wikis

All of the above Guidelines apply to the Google sites/wikis service, except that contributions will in this case always be at the page level with automatic attribution made to the author, such that no further use of the copyright symbol, linking to any Home Page, or disclaimer is necessary.

The service is offered to certain members of the University either as part of their learning, research or other use considered appropriate by the Head of Information and Learning Services.

All information published on our web pages is subject to our standard takedown policy whereby any report of issues with content will result in the page being removed immediately and subject to investigation.

May 2018

4. ADMISSIONS POLICY

Contents:

1.   Introduction

1.1   Queen Margaret University Admissions Policy supports the University Strategic Plan QM150 to 'build on our existing success in widening participation, to ensure that we fulfil people's potential, whatever their background'.

1.2   This policy applies to the admission of students to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study at Queen Margaret University.

2.   Admissions Principles

2.1   The University seeks to provide access to its courses from as wide a range of entrants as possible, subject to the essential principle that entrants have a reasonable expectation of completing their course successfully within the normal duration of the course.

2.2   This principle is codified through:

- University-wide general minimum entrance requirements specified by level of course.
- Specific entrance requirements for each course framed to apply the University's general entrance requirements to the particular needs of that course.
- Clear provisions and procedures for the admission of students who do not meet these normal entrance requirements, but who fulfil the essential principle set out in point 2.1.

2.3   Queen Margaret University is committed to equality of opportunity. We seek to promote diversity amongst our students, staff and applicants. We recognise the particular contributions that are made by individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, to the achievement of our vision and strategic objectives. We aim to promote entry to, and provide education at, undergraduate and postgraduate level to a diverse range of students, whatever their background. Our equal opportunities policy is available on our website.

2.4   Each application received by the University is considered carefully on its own merits, taking into account educational, professional and personal experience.

In assessing candidates for admittance to the University, we are committed to the following principles:

- **Fairness** – the University strives to use admissions assessment methods that are reliable and valid.
- **Transparency** – details of our entry requirements are published in our prospectus and on our website, and are clear and transparent to applicants and their advisers.
- **Reflecting our community** – we are committed to admitting as wide a range of applicants as possible to reflect our community.
- **Encouraging participation** – we aim to minimise barriers to applicants and encourage progression and retention through our targeted pre-entry, transition and post-entry support services.

3.   Service delivery

3.1   The University is committed to continuous improvement in all it does. We take a professional approach to admissions.

3.2   The University ensures a wide range of pre-entry and outreach activities are available to applicants and stakeholders, along with individual advice and guidance.

3.3   Admissions, student recruitment and outreach & community engagement staff receive regular training, support and guidance to ensure that they provide accurate, timely and consistent advice and guidance to applicants and other stakeholders.

3.4   A range of staff, including the Transition and Pre-entry Adviser, College Articulation Officer, Student Funding Adviser and the Disability Team are available to ensure that potential students obtain all the relevant information required, so they are appropriately informed during their decision making process to come to the University.

3.5   Academic admissions tutors work closely with recruitment and admissions staff to ensure that entry requirements are fair and transparent.

3.6   Staff in admissions are trained and supported to ensure that they are able to make fair and equitable admissions decisions.

3.7   We aim to process applications as quickly as possible. However, where there is an application deadline, applications may not be processed until after the deadline in order to ensure equal consideration.

3.8   Offers of admission are communicated to applicants in clear and easy to understand language.

3.9   We recognise the importance of providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants. Where an applicant is unsuccessful, we give a reason for this via UCAS for undergraduate applicants or by email for postgraduate applicants. While the University aims to provide informative feedback that is helpful to applicants, it may not always be possible to provide highly specific or tailored advice.

3.10   If the University makes a change to a course, which is deemed to impact significantly on the student, or withdraws a course after an application has been received, we will email applicants to explain the reason for the change or withdrawal and offer advice and guidance about alternative courses, either at QMU or elsewhere.

4.   Terms and conditions

The University's published terms and conditions apply to all applicants for undergraduate and postgraduate study. All applicants are referred to the University's Terms and Conditions in their offer letter, to which all students must agree, when accepting the offer of a place to study at QMU. Terms and Conditions can be found on our website:
www.qmu.ac.uk/registry/ImportantInformation.htm

5.   Roles and responsibilities

5.1   The Admissions Policy is approved by the Student Experience Committee and any changes or updates will be approved by that committee. A full review of the policy in its entirety is undertaken every 5 years. The Head of Admissions and Recruitment are responsible for the operation of the policy and for its regular monitoring and review. The policy will be checked annually to ensure accuracy and to reflect any changes.

5.2   This policy is underpinned by several other University policies which are available on our website:

- Contextual Admissions Policy
- Fitness to Practice Policy
- Code of Practice on Criminal convictions and disclosure
- Data protection policy
- Undergraduate and postgraduate regulations.

5.3   The University has a centralised admissions service. All applications are dealt with by a team of professionally trained officers and administrators. Decisions on applications may be made by Admissions Officers or by Academic Admissions Tutors.

5.4   Admissions Tutors are responsible for setting entry criteria, subject to advice from programme teams, validation and review panels, School Academic Boards and the Head of Admissions & Recruitment.

5.5   Entry requirements are set when a new course is approved, or validated, and are reviewed on a regular basis. Any changes to entry requirements will be agreed by the School Academic Board.

6.   **Admissions process**

6.1   All full time applications for undergraduate courses must be made through UCAS. All part time applications and applications for postgraduate courses should be made directly to the University using our on-line application form, accessible through each course page.

6.2   All UCAS applications received by the published UCAS deadline are given equal consideration. Postgraduate applicants are encouraged to submit applications as early as possible. Where a programme has a specific deadline, this will be clearly published in the prospectus and on the course pages of our website. Postgraduate programmes which have limited numbers of places may become full before a published deadline has been reached. In such cases, the programme will be closed and any applicants waiting for a decision will be informed as quickly as possible.

6.3   A number of courses require interviews or auditions as part of the application procedure. Where an interview or audition forms part of the selection criteria, we stipulate this in our prospectus and on our website. Arrangements are made to interview applicants by telephone or Skype where travel to the UK is not possible.

    We explain to applicants the nature and purpose of the interview and ensure that interviews are conducted fairly by appropriately qualified staff.

6.4   A number of courses require the inspection of a portfolio of work. Full details of these requirements are published in our prospectus and on our website.

6.5   Where applicants have made more than one application to study, decisions will be made separately.

6.6   Applicants may be offered an alternative programme of study if they do not meet the minimum entry requirements for their chosen programme.

6.7   Where applicants are required to provide photocopies of their qualifications with their application, we may require sight of the original documentation at matriculation. Applicants will be notified in advance of matriculation if this is required.

6.8   We allow applicants to defer entry to most of our programmes for one year. UCAS applicants wishing to defer are required to meet all the conditions for entry in the year that they apply. Postgraduate applicants can defer a conditional offer. An applicant can only defer the offer of a place once, and after that they will be asked to reapply unless in exceptional circumstances. Where it is not possible to defer an offer of study, an applicant can reapply the following academic year.

6.9   Where an applicant has extenuating circumstances, we take this into consideration. However, where these circumstances have affected the grade achieved in a qualification required for entry, we would expect that this is dealt with by the examining body.

7   **Entry requirements**

7.1   General entry requirements

7.1.1 All courses have prescribed entry requirements relating to previous academic attainment. The minimum entry requirements for each course are published each year in our prospectus and on our website.

7.1.2 Achieving the minimum entry standards does not guarantee an offer of a place on a course as there can be considerable competition for places.

7.1.3 For all courses we look for evidence of motivation, suitability, skills and attitudes. For programmes which lead to eligibility for professional registration we also expect applicants to demonstrate an exploration of the profession within their personal statement.

7.1.4 If an applicant does not have the normal entry requirements, but has relevant experience and can demonstrate that there is a reasonable expectation that they will complete the course, then it may still be possible to consider them.

We recommend that applicants who have no formal qualifications, or have been out of formal education for some time, contact admissions to discuss appropriate pathways to study.

7.2 Undergraduate entry requirements

7.2.1 The University accepts a wide range of qualifications for entry. We set our entry standards for Scottish Highers, A Levels and Irish Leaving Certificate using the UCAS Tariff as a metric to ensure equity. We also consider a range of other equivalent qualifications using established bodies such as UCAS and UKNARIC to compare qualifications

7.2.2 Our entry criteria and offers are usually expressed in grades. When making a grade based offer, we will make it clear when we expect those grades to be achieved by. Applicants are expected to achieve the required number of qualifications at specific grades, dependent on the degree programme applied for. We may use the UCAS Tariff to calculate equivalencies for non-standard entry qualifications.

7.2.3 Where an applicant has attempted a qualification more then once, we normally count the highest grade achieved, but we do not double count the qualification.

7.2.4 The general minimum entrance requirement for an Undergraduate Degree is usually one of the following:

- At least three SQA Highers at grade C or above. Most degrees also require passes in Maths and English at Standard Grade/Int2/ National 5 at grade C or above;
- At least two full A Levels at grade D or above. Most degrees also require passes in Maths and English at CGSE at grade C/ 4, or above;
- The Irish Leaving Certificate with at least three passes in the Higher Level subjects at grade H3 or above;
- Pass in the International Baccalaureate Diploma
- Pass in the European Baccalaureate;
- A BTEC national Diploma at level 3;
- A relevant Access or Foundation course.

7.2.5   Where we have requested Higher English as an entry requirement, we will also accept Higher ESOL as meeting that requirement for all programmes except BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary).

7.2.6   Where National 5 Mathematics is required for entry to a course, National 5 Lifeskills Mathematics and National 5 Applications of Mathematics will be considered to meet this criteria, at the required grade.

7.2.7   The University welcomes the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. Our entry criteria are largely based on qualifications achieved 'on entry' rather than over a particular number of sittings. Published entry requirements for Scottish Highers may be achieved over two or more sittings.

7.2.8   The University acknowledges that the Curriculum for Excellence gives students the opportunity to take a broader range of qualifications, undertaken at different stages of learning. Some students may progress from general education to Highers, without achieving a National 5 qualification. If you do not hold a subject that is required at National 5, you must have achieved or be predicted to achieve that subject at SQA Higher.

7.2.9   QMU values the Advanced Higher qualification as an excellent preparation for University study, but will only count the highest level of qualification in any subject. This means that we wouldn't count AS levels or SQA Highers if you have the full A Level, or an Advanced Higher in the same or similar subject.

7.2.10   We will accept AS level qualifications in addition to the two A Levels. We do not accept A Level General Studies for entry to any of our courses.

7.2.11   We welcome applications from those studying the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), however we recognize that not all students have access to the qualification, so we do not include them within entry requirements, and they do not carry additional credit in the selection process.

7.2.12   The University welcomes applications from those studying Foundation Apprenticeships. The Foundation Apprenticeship will count as one subject within an applicant's overall presentation of qualifications. Where specific subjects are required for entry to one of our degree programmes, a Foundation Apprenticeship will not replace that requirement, but will be counted as one of an applicant's additional subjects.

7.2.13   The University welcomes and supports students seeking to apply for advanced or direct entry to our undergraduate programmes of study. Applicants must apply through UCAS, by the UCAS deadline in order to be considered for a place.

Advanced entry may be offered to applicants with evidence of accredited prior learning, such as HNC, HND, Advanced Higher or A Level qualifications. Applicants who wish to be considered for Advanced Entry should state this clearly on their UCAS application, using the Point of Entry box.

7.2.14   We have established articulation agreements with local colleges. Applicants must apply through UCAS by the UCAS deadline in order to be considered for a place. We aim to place applicants with a relevant HNC into the second year of our courses and those with an HND into the third year of our courses.

Generally applicants applying for second year entry with an HNC will be required to get a B in their graded unit, while applicants applying for third year entry with an HND will be required to get C/B in their graded units.

Where advanced entry is not possible, then a relevant HN qualification may be considered for entry into the first year of a programme.

7.2.15   We also accept a wide range of other qualifications, including diplomas and certificates that equate to SCQF level 7 or 8 for advanced entry. However, the content and level must match that of our courses sufficiently for us to be satisfied that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

7.2.16   We are able to consider accreditation of non-certified learning (APL) and we have a rigorous process in place for assessing APL. We are also able to identify, explore and claim academic credit for previous certificated and/or experiential learning through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. For learning to be awarded as credit towards your programme of study, it needs to match learning outcomes and to be evidenced.

You **may** be able to gain RPL credit for previous certificated study, undertaken elsewhere. You also may be able to gain academic credit for experience; for example experience gained through volunteering, or in your workplace. Please see our website for further details: www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures

7.2.17   Students presenting with Advanced Highers or strong A Level grades in relevant subjects may be eligible for entry to the second year of some of our courses**.**

7.2.18   Admission to the joint degree BA (Hons) Acting for Stage and Screen is via UCAS to Queen Margaret University. The selection process requires an audition.

7.3 Postgraduate Taught entry requirements

7.3.1   All postgraduate applicants should have already achieved a first degree, normally at Honours level or equivalent, or a professional diploma which is recognised by the relevant professional body as the equivalent of an Honours degree. We may also accept diploma level qualifications and considerable relevant experience.

7.3.2   Exceptionally, we can accept applicants for postgraduate level study without a first degree for some courses if they have considerable relevant professional experience.

7.3.3   Postgraduate applicants are usually required to provide one reference in support of their application. This will usually be an academic reference, but may be a professional reference where the applicant has been out of education for longer than 3 years. The reference must be presented in one of the following formats:

- On headed paper reflecting the referee's professional standing, signed and dated. This can be posted, scanned and emailed, or handed into the Admissions team.
  OR
- In the form of an email sent to the Admissions team from an email address reflecting the referee's professional standing. Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail, etc. email addresses are not acceptable.

7.3.4   For certain postgraduate programmes students can be admitted as 'associate students' to allow them to take one or two modules, without registering for an award.

Applicants will be required to complete an application via the relevant course page on the University's website, including a short personal statement.

Normally a student can study as an 'associate student' for a maximum period of 2 years, or for 2 modules.

If a student wishes to register on a named award in a similar area after studying as an 'associate student', any modules they have successfully completed may be given as credit towards their named award.

The commencement date for the period of registration for the named award would be taken from the point when the student first registered as an 'associate student'.

If a former 'associate student' requires a Tier 4 visa in order to study a full time, named award they will be required to complete an application and provide evidence of English language proficiency at the level required for the named award, before they can be issued with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS).

7.4   Postgraduate Research entry requirements

Applicants applying for a PhD by research must provide a proposal. This allows us to check how well the applicant understands the research process and to make sure the topic is in an area we can supervise.
The research topic must be within the expertise of our staff. The topic must have academic merit and it must be capable of generating new knowledge. Research which is linked to the applicant's creative work may be considered.
Details of how to apply to our PhD research programme can be found on our website at:
https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/how-to-apply/phd-and-professional-doctorate-applications/

7.5   International applicants

7.5.1   We welcome applications from international applicants around the world and accept a wide range of international qualifications. We use NARIC and other reliable sources to establish equivalences of international qualifications with UK standards of entry, and make offers on a like for like basis. We publish equivalencies for popular overseas qualifications on our website and can offer advice on alternative routes for entry where they do not meet our requirements (such as foundation level courses).

7.5.2   We work with a number of agents who act as official representatives of the University and can assist with advice on applications and suitable course options.

7.5.3   The University has a number of partners overseas through whom students can study for a QMU degree. Minimum entry requirements for such arrangements are the same as those that apply to the course delivered in Edinburgh.

7.5.4   We welcome applications from students who have achieved one of our awards overseas and who wish to continue with further studies at QMU Edinburgh.

7.5.5   Applicants who are non-native speakers of English must demonstrate English language proficiency in all four language competencies. We require a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 with no element below 5.5 or equivalent qualification. For many courses, the minimum score required is higher than this. Information about minimum scores is given in our prospectuses and on the course pages of our website.

8.   UKVI requirements

8.1   QMU is a registered Tier 4 Sponsor. QMU can issue Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) allowing applicants to apply for immigration as a student. QMU has responsibilities as a Sponsor to report on Tier 4 students to the Home Office and UKVI.

8.2   Staff at QMU can provide advice and guidance on applying for a Tier 4 visa, however we strongly advise students to check the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website www.ukcisa.org.uk

8.3   It is the student's responsibility to abide by immigration laws and to notify the Home Office of any changes to circumstances.

8.4   We require any Tier 4 sponsored students to pay a deposit or to provide proof of full financial sponsorship prior to issuing a CAS. Applicants will also be required to demonstrate they hold sufficient funds to meet UKVI requirements, prior to issuing a CAS. Please see the International student pages on our website for further details.

9.   PVG/Disclosure checks

Applicants for Health Science and certain other courses that involve interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults must declare all criminal convictions, and in these cases the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply.

Candidates for healthcare courses will be asked to provide a satisfactory criminal record check from the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme. Full details about those courses that require full PVG/ Disclosure checks are given in our prospectus and on our website.

International and EU students are required to provide comparable information in English from their own country. We will offer guidance regarding how an applicant can obtain this information within the offer letter. Students will also be required to provide a satisfactory criminal record check from the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme, once they have arrived in the UK, as detailed above.

10.   **Criminal convictions**

To safeguard the welfare of staff, students, visitors and the general public, Queen Margaret University will scrutinise any criminal convictions declared on the part of applicants for entry or by matriculating students.

Continuing students will be required to declare, as part of on-line matriculation, whether they have had any criminal conviction in the last 12 months. In the event of a positive response, the process set out in 2.3 below will be followed.

NOTE: Any student who is subsequently found to have falsified his/her self-declaration will be subject to disciplinary action.

Where an applicant or a matriculating student has declared a criminal conviction, identified staff of the University Secretary's Group will contact the applicant or student to ascertain the nature of the conviction, requesting further information, including the nature of the conviction, date of conviction, nature of sentence etc. The Head of Admissions and Recruitment or the relevant School Manager will review this information and carry out a risk assessment using an established classification taken from the Health and Care Professions Council. The risk assessment may be reviewed by the Head of Division or the Dean. The following criteria will be considered:

- Programme requirements
- Potential risk to other students and staff
- Responsibilities to employers and the public
- The rights of the individual and entitlement to rehabilitation

11   **Selection and offer making**

11.1 For all programmes the selection process will take into account the following:

- Achieved and predicted academic qualifications
- Interest in the subject area and motivation for study, demonstrated in the Personal Statement
- Work experience, or other relevant non-academic experience, demonstrated in the personal statement
- Academic and/or professional reference(s)
- Where required, performance at interview or audition
- Where required, an applicant's portfolio
- Where required, an applicant's research proposal
- English language proficiency

11.2   In addition to the factors outlined above, we aim to take into account the context of an applicant's academic achievement, giving consideration to a range of factors, which may impact on attainment. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being eligible for the Lothian Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS)
- Attendance at a school where few students progress to University
- Living in an area of high deprivation, as defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)
- Being Care experienced

- Undertaking an alternative study route to higher education

Please see our Contextual Admissions Policy for further information.
https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

11.3 Each application is considered, and a decision made, on an individual basis. Admissions decisions will be communicated to applicants in a timely manner. Where an application requires an interview, portfolio submission or audition, the decision making process will take longer.

11.4 Postgraduate applicants applying to a programme that does not have an equal consideration deadline should receive a decision on their application, or notice of an interview, within four weeks of submitting a completed application with supporting documentation.

11.5 Any conditions attached to an offer will be clear and specific. The offer letter will contain details of any action the applicant needs to take in order to accept the offer. The offer letter will also give details on fee classification and fee levels for the programme.

11.6 The University also provides information about scholarships and bursaries available to applicants. Full details of eligibility and deadlines are available on the University website.

11.7 Applicants who accept their offer of admission will be sent further welcome information prior to the start of semester, to ensure they are ready to start their studies. Entrants should check the Induction website for details of matriculation. These may be tailored to different types of students such as direct entrants, international students etc. We offer a short pre-induction course, 'QM Advance', for mature undergraduate students, to help ensure smooth transition into our courses.

11.8 Direct entry students benefit from Direct Entrant Induction which is a designated induction programme for direct entrants at the start of the academic year.

11.9 The University also supports a student mentoring scheme, 'QM Connect' which offers new students the opportunity to be matched with a trained mentor.

12. Applicants with Disabilities

The University welcomes a diverse learning community and aims to support all students to participate fully in their studies and in University life. Applicants are strongly advised to declare any disability on their application. This information does not form part of the admission selection process, but is used to identify support needs early on.

We encourage applicants who disclose a disability to contact our Disability team to have an early discussion about their support needs. This discussion will not form part of the admissions decision process, but would focus on preparation for any support needed by the applicant.

All applicants who have declared a disability and/or additional support needs and have accepted an offer of admission, will be contacted by a Disability Adviser to discuss their individual requirements and the support that may be available to them should they choose to study at QMU.

The University will make every effort to ensure that required support arrangements are put in place, however this is dependent on the student applying in sufficient time and identifying their disability clearly at the time of application.

13.   Care Leavers

The University recognises that care leavers who have spent time in local authority care, either in residential accommodation, foster care or under supervision orders at home, may require additional advice and support during both the pre-entry and post-entry transitional period. We offer all care leavers additional support from our Student Funding Advisor, who will guide them to the support available across the University studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk

The University is committed to increasing the number of applications and entrants from applicants who have spent time in care. We therefore strongly encourage care leavers to declare this as part of their application. Please see the University's Contextual Admissions Policy for further information.

14.   Fraud and Plagiarism

14.1   All applicants are responsible for ensuring that the information they submit within their application is accurate and current.

14.2   Where it is discovered that an applicant has submitted incorrect or inaccurate information, the University will investigate to determine if there has been an error, fraud or plagiarism, and reserves the right to reject an application, or withdraw an offer of admission.

14.3   Qualifications submitted in support of an application, are subject to verification at matriculation.

15   Complaints and appeals

15.1   Appeals

STAGE 1 - If an applicant is not satisfied with the feedback on their application and wishes to appeal the decision, they can do so by contacting the admissions office by email in the first instance. An administrative review of the decision will be conducted and if an error has been made then the decision will be corrected straight away.

STAGE 2 – If there has been no administrative error and the appeal is concerning the judgment of the decision, then the decision will be reconsidered by the academic admissions tutor and the Head of Admissions and Recruitment.

A decision will be communicated within 14 days of receipt of the appeal.

15.2   Complaints

Complaints about any aspect of our admissions policy or service should firstly be raised with the member of staff responsible. If the complaint cannot be resolved, then applicants may submit a formal complaint either by using our complaints form or by emailing complaints@qmu.ac.uk. All complaints will be answered within 10 working days. The University's Complaints Procedure can be found within the Quality pages of the website.

16   **Data Protection and GDPR**

The University needs to keep certain personal data about students to fulfil its purpose and to meet its legal obligations to funding bodies and government. In processing and holding personal data, supplied as part of the Admissions process, the University will comply fully with the terms of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Please see our website for further information: www.qmu.ac.uk/footer/foi-and-data-protection/data-protection/

17   **Admissions Contact Details**

The Admissions team can be contacted at:

Admissions
Queen Margaret University
Queen Margaret University Drive
Edinburgh
EH21 6UU
Tel: +44 (0)131 474 0000
Email: admissions@qmu.ac.uk

Sarah Bailey, Head of Admissions and Recruitment
Reviewed November 2018

5. ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

1. **Principles**

   Queen Margaret University is wholly committed to fostering an environment in which all students, regardless of their background and personal circumstances should be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

   The University recognises that bullying and harassment can have a serious detrimental effect on the confidence, morale, performance and health of those affected, and may in extreme circumstances ultimately lead to students withdrawing from studies. The University believes that this situation should never be permitted to materialise and will treat all reports of bullying and harassment seriously.

   The purpose of this policy is to promote a culture where bullying and harassment are acknowledged to be unacceptable and are not tolerated under any circumstances. Where allegations of such behaviour occur, this policy seeks to ensure that they are dealt with fairly, and in a timely fashion, without fear of victimisation.

2. **Aims and Objectives**

   The aim of this policy and procedure is to:

   - Create and sustain a learning environment which is free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation;
   - Tackle swiftly and effectively incidents of bullying, harassment or victimisation of, or by, students;
   - Ensure that individuals are supported and encouraged in the event of any legitimate complaint;
   - Establish that all members of the University - staff and students - are responsible for ensuring that individuals do not suffer any form of bullying or harassment;
   - Safeguard the respect for students' diverse talents, skills and experience;
   - Promote the message that harassment, bullying or victimisation will not be tolerated in any form.

3. **Scope of this Policy**

   This policy applies to all students at Queen Margaret University, irrespective of whether an alleged incident takes place on University premises or elsewhere. All types of bullying and harassment, as described in this policy, are covered, whether or not the interactions have occurred between students and other students, or whether the allegations relate to students' treatment by University staff. This policy covers face-to-face actions, as well as non-face-to-face interactions, for example email, written correspondence, social networking sites and text messages.

The University shall, where possible and appropriate, seek to ensure that partners have an equivalent policy in place.

4.   Data Protection

All information gathered on individuals as part of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

5.   Monitor and Review

Monitoring of the Bullying and Harassment policy will be undertaken by the University's Governance and Quality Enhancement Team and Student Services.

6.   Harassment Defined

The definition of harassment in the Equality Act 2010 is wide. It is 'where a person (A) engages in unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic and the conduct has the purpose or effect of:

(a)   violating another person's (B's) dignity, or
(b)   creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B'

It should be noted that 'unwanted' does not mean that express objection has to be made, and a serious one-off incident can amount to harassment.

It is important to note that differences of personality traits or culture and the misinterpretation of social signals can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another. The defining feature, however, is that the behaviour is offensive or intimidating to the recipient, and as such would be regarded as harassment by any reasonable person. It would need to be considered that, if the purpose of the conduct was to violate the individual's dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, then this is sufficient to establish harassment. However if harassment was not the purpose, but an individual argues that this was the effect of the conduct, the Equality Act says that in deciding whether conduct has that effect, consideration must be given to:

•   the perception of the claimant;
•   the other circumstances of the case; and
•   whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have had that effect.

Forms of harassment involve offensive conduct or behaviour directed at a person's racial origin, religion and beliefs (including non-belief), gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, age, family status (including their role as a carer or as a part-time worker, fixed term worker), marital status, political opinion, socio-economic status, or because he/she is a member of a trade union or similar associations or some other personal characteristic. It can also include the inappropriate use, or threat of use, of physical and mental power, authority or through social media.

With regard to religion and belief, it should be noted that there may be cultural differences which make some forms of behaviour generally regarded as acceptable by one group and unacceptable to another because such behaviour does not form part of the normal social interaction of that particular group.

Examples of potential harassment could be:

- Unwanted physical contact or physical attack.
- Offensive, suggestive or derogatory remarks, gestures, mockery, taunts, pranks, jokes, insults or ridicule; in person, on the telephone, by emails or social networking sites.
- Verbal abuse, threats or intrusive questioning.
- Insulting remarks based on the grounds of personal appearance or personal circumstances.
- Using an individual's known disability to demoralise them.
- Leering at another individual's body.
- Compromising invitations or gifts.
- Requests or demands for sexual favours.
- Circulation or displays of offensive, suggestive or degrading materials (such as pictures, graffiti or objects) in the teaching, learning, living or working environment.
- Sending of unwanted messages via e-mail and social networking sites.
- Ridicule for cultural differences such as appearance, dress, diet, religion or ethnic background.
- Subjecting an individual to group pressure.
- Derogatory or belittling remarks in front of others regarding appearance, work or personal attributes.
- Deliberately or repeatedly ignoring someone.
- Unwarranted exclusions.
- Any comments which imply that gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, race or ethnic or national origins, religious or other belief impairs the individual's ability to perform satisfactorily.
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.
- Incitement to commit any such act.

7. **Discrimination**

Harassment may or may not be linked to discrimination and can be based on characteristics which are protected under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage or civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion and belief;
- Sex;

- Sexual orientation.

Discrimination can be direct, associative, perceptive or indirect. The table below defines these terms. It is important to remember that the legislation focuses on the outcome of the discriminatory behaviour over the motive or intent.

Concept	Definition
Direct Discrimination	This occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in similar circumstances.
Associative Discrimination	This occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than another because they are associated with a person who has a protected equality characteristic. This is a form of direct discrimination. The key point to note is that the person bringing the claim does not need to have the protected characteristic (i.e. the protected characteristic can belong to another person). It is sufficient that the treatment is because of a protected characteristic. A student may also be able to bring a claim for harassment in those situations.
Perceptive Discrimination	This occurs when the protected characteristic is a perceived characteristic which the individual does not actually have. An individual may also be able to bring a claim for harassment in those situations.
Indirect Discrimination	This occurs when a condition is applied equally to all students but one group is particularly disadvantaged, and this disadvantage cannot be justified as being necessary for the efficient running of the University.

8. Bullying Defined

Bullying is a particular form of personal harassment and may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, as abuse or misuse of power, position or knowledge through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. It may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or it may be insidious (such as ignoring a person).

Bullying can result from a misuse of individual power derived from perceived superior status/position, physical strength or force of personality. It can also arise from the collective power that arises out of strength of numbers.

Bullying is normally characterised by the emergence of a pattern of behaviour however if one act is deemed serious enough, this could amount to bullying.

Examples of potential bullying could be:

- Threats;
- Abuse;
- Public humiliation;
- Ridicule;
- Repeated shouting or swearing at an individual;
- Undermining an individual; and
- Intimidating behaviour.

9. **Victimisation Defined**

    Victimisation is when an individual is treated less favourably than they would otherwise have been because:

    - They have made a claim or complaint;
    - They have helped someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information; or
    - It is known or suspected that they are contemplating bringing a complaint.

    Under the Equality Act 2010, these are known as 'protected acts'. If a member of the University treats a student less favourably because he or she has carried out a protected act, this could be regarded as unlawful victimisation. There must be a link between the student's protected act and the resulting treatment of that student.

10. **Criminal Offences**

    Where behaviour has been alleged that would amount to a serious criminal offence, e.g. physical or sexual assault, this should be immediately reported to the police.

    In such cases, any resulting criminal proceedings would normally be expected to have been completed before the University will take action under this policy (although suspension via the Student Disciplinary Regulations may be considered appropriate, if necessary).

11. **Malicious Complaints**

    The presumption will always be that complaints are made in good faith and that the complainant genuinely believes that they have grounds for raising a grievance. All cases will be investigated on this basis. An unfounded complaint will not be considered as malicious unless a deliberate attempt to mislead or of dishonesty is shown. However, should an investigation reveal a complaint to be malicious, this will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action against the complainant.

12.   The Procedure

All complaints should be raised as soon as possible through one of the following procedures, ideally within 12 months. Where it can be demonstrated that circumstances have prevented the individual concerned from raising the complaint within this time frame, the University will consider whether to allow an extension to this time scale.

12.1   *The Informal Procedure*

Every effort should be made for parties to aim to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If a student feels that he or she is being bullied or harassed by another student or by a member of University staff, he or she is encouraged first of all to seek to try to resolve the matter informally. As a first step, the student should try to make it clear to the person causing the offence that such behaviour is unacceptable, is unwelcome and should be stopped. This will sometimes be sufficient to put an end to the behaviour in question, as in some cases the person against whom the complaint is directed might be unaware that his or her behaviour had inadvertently caused offence. Where this is the case, it is likely that the inappropriate behaviour ceases quickly.

If students require any help or advice, they may consider approaching, for example, one of the following people:

- Their Personal Academic Tutor
- The Programme Leader
- A member of Student Services
- A trusted friend
- A supportive lecturer or any other member of academic staff
- The Students' Union

12.2   *The Formal Procedure*

It is accepted that there may be instances where the nature of the complaint is too serious to be dealt with informally and it is necessary to undertake a formal investigation of the complaint from the outset. It may be that a student feels unable to approach the alleged bully or harasser informally from the outset, or that, due to the nature of the alleged conduct, this is not appropriate. Formal proceedings may also be appropriate where a previous attempt at an informal resolution has been unsuccessful.

The student involved should set out the complaint, in writing, to the University Secretary. Complaints can be raised individually or as part of a group acting together. The student may be required to attend a meeting to give their side of events.

An Investigating Officer will be appointed by the University Secretary to conduct an investigation into the alleged bullying or harassment.

Where the complaint is by a student regarding alleged behaviour by another student, the investigation will be carried forward under the Student Disciplinary Procedure. Where the complaint is by a student regarding alleged behaviour by a staff member, the investigation will

be carried forward under the Staff Disciplinary Procedure, and will be overseen by a member of the Human Resources Team.

The purpose of the investigation, via either route, is for the University to establish a fair and balanced view of the facts relating to the complaint. The extent of investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. The Investigating Officer will conduct a full and thorough investigation as speedily as possible and document the results.

It is important that any student alleging bullying or harassment co-operates fully and promptly in any investigation. This will include providing details of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to the investigating officer and attending investigative interviews if required.

The investigation may involve interviewing and taking statements from the student(s) and any staff member(s) involved and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents.

The investigation will seek to:-

- establish the nature and circumstances of the alleged offence or problem;
- allow the complainant to provide details of his or her version of events to the investigating officer; and
- take into account any personal or mitigating factors that may come to light during the investigation.

Where the investigation is in relation to an allegation of bullying by a member of staff carried forward under the Staff Discipline Procedure, the decision on whether or not a complaint is upheld will be made by Human Resources.

After completing the investigation under the appropriate procedure, the investigating officer will provide the University Secretary with a report and recommendations arising from the investigation. On the basis of the report, the University Secretary will advise the complainant in writing whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld.

13. **Independent external review (SPSO)**

Once the investigation stage has been completed, and the complainant remains dissatisfied with the manner in which the complaint was addressed by the University, the complainant is entitled to appeal to the Scottish Public Ombudsman Service (SPSO). The SPSO considers complaints from those who remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of the University's procedure, for example on grounds of an administrative failure by the University. The SPSO will not investigate complaints on the grounds that the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the University's investigation in itself – the SPSO can only look at complaints where the complainant is alleging a fault or maladministration in the *process* followed by the University.

The SPSO also cannot normally look at complaints where:

- Students have not gone all the way through the University's procedures;

- It is more than 12 months after the student became aware of the alleged offensive behaviour being complained about; or
- The matter is being considered in court.

Contact details for the SPSO are as follows:

Freepost SPSO, SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9am–5pm, Tuesday 10am–5pm

SPSO freephone **0800 377 7330**

Website **www.spso.org.uk**

Online contact form **www.spso.org.uk/contact-form**

You can fill in the complaints form online at **www.spso.org.uk/complain/form**

Fax **0800 377 7331**

6. ASSESSMENT OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

If you have a criminal conviction, you should have declared this on your application form. If a declaration has been made, the nature of the conviction will have been investigated and a decision made on whether or not you may be admitted to the programme.

We would like to emphasise that a criminal record does not automatically prevent you from joining a programme. However, failure to disclose a criminal conviction is a disciplinary offence. Failure to declare on your application form and/or providing misleading information will result in your being asked to withdraw from your programme.

Disclosure Scotland

Students of certain programmes at QMU are required to complete a clinical placement. Duties on these placements may involve caring for children and vulnerable adults.

In line with NHS policy and Scottish Government regulations, students will not be allowed to undertake clinical placement until the appropriate criminal record checks have been made.

Below is a list of the specific programmes this covers at QMU:

- BA (Hons) Education Studies
- BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary)
- BSc (Hons) Podiatry
- BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
- BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography
- BSc (Hons) Therapeutic Radiography
- BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
- BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy
- BSc (Hons) Dietetics
- BSc (Hons) Nursing
- MSc/PgDip (pre-reg) Dietetics/ Master of Dietetics
- MSc/PgDip (pre-reg) Occupational Therapy
- MSc/PgDip (pre-reg) Physiotherapy
- MSc/PgDip (pre-reg) Speech and Language Therapy
- MSc/PgDip (pre-reg) Audiology
- MSc/PgDip (pre-reg) Diagnostic Radiography
- PgDip Radiotherapy & Oncology
- MSc Art Psychotherapy (International)
- MSc Music Therapy
- MSc Person Centred Practice (professional pathways only)
- PGDE Secondary (Home Economics)

BA (Hons) Drama and Performance/ Theatre and Film Studies students may also require a PVG Scheme Record for working with Children, depending on their specialism/dissertation projects. These are normally applied for during their second year of study (for specialisms) or third

year for Honours projects. BSc (Hons) Physical Activity, Health & Wellbeing and BSc (Hons) Nutrition students may also require a PVG Scheme Record for working with Children, depending on their placement experience, and this will be advised by the Programme Leader when required.

As you may have been advised in your offer from Admissions, you need to provide "a satisfactory PVG check from Disclosure Scotland and/or equivalent police check." If you have not applied for this yet, please do so as a matter of urgency.

New UK students should have already received a PVG application pack from the Admissions office. However, if you do require a new pack, please contact the Admissions Office.

For International or European applicants, this is **in addition to** a comparable check from the police in your home country. While we appreciate that the process is likely to be difficult depending on nationality, students are nevertheless asked to investigate the availability of alternative forms of evidence of their personal record.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

1.   INTRODUCTION

Queen Margaret University has introduced this Code of Conduct to help every student enjoy and benefit from their education and life with us.

Our ethos is one of mutual understanding and respect, through the development of friendships and by adopting good citizenship skills and attitudes. Through this we wish to enhance each person's experience throughout their time with us.

This Code of Conduct has been developed to provide clear guidelines of acceptable behaviour. This general set of Principles is supported by more detailed Codes of Conduct specifically relating to Halls of Residence, Library, Learning Environments and IT facilities.

It is expected that all students will wish to support and actively implement this Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following:

The University's current Student and Academic Regulations, Disciplinary, Fitness to Practise and Appeals Procedures outlined on the University's Quality website: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

The University's Equality Policy, which is to be read in conjunction with the University's Mainstreaming Report: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/equality-and-diversity/

The Code of Conduct is compatible with the University's Data Protection Policy.

The Code of Conduct is available in different formats. Details can be obtained from the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement by emailing Dawn Martin: dmartin1@qmu.ac.uk

STUDENTS' UNION ENDORSEMENT

The Students' Union has worked closely with the University in providing this Code of Conduct for all students. The Students' Union fully supports this Code of Conduct because we believe this will help create a better learning and working environment whilst also ensuring a safe and enjoyable place to live. The Students' Union will also use this Code of Conduct for all activities undertaken by the Union and will use it in conjunction with our own Disciplinary Procedures should an incident take place within the Union or whilst representing the Students' Union if the Union deems it necessary.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2.1 All students at the University shall:

2.1.1 Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working, studying and living environment within the University, respecting the institution's policies on equal opportunities and harassment and ensuring that their conduct complies with these policies.

All persons within the University have an individual and collective responsibility to contribute to an environment which is free from harassment (e.g. psychological, verbal, physical, racial, religious, gender, sexual or on grounds of disability) and from offensive behaviour (e.g. noise, language or bullying). All persons should promote tolerance and share a common goal in learning.

2.1.2 Accept individual and collective responsibility for keeping a clean and safe working, studying and living environment, ensuring personal guests act in an appropriate manner.

All persons within the University have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that safety is not compromised and that respect for other people and property is maintained.

2.1.3 Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures.

All persons within the University should demonstrate respect for local and international cultures as well as each person's learning needs. This refers to maintaining appropriate conduct in learning environments such as the library, lecture/seminar rooms and IT facilities as well as in Halls of Residence.

2.1.4 Ensure that the University is not brought into disrepute.

All persons within the University have an individual and collective responsibility to uphold the range of policies within the institution which underpin the overarching criteria of the Code of Conduct and which are designed to ensure that everyone can work, study and live in an environment characterised by mutual respect.

3. LIBRARY CODE OF CONDUCT

3.1 This Library Code of Conduct has been developed to support the general University Code of Conduct.

3.2 General Principles

3.3 All students at QMU shall:

3.3.1 Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working and studying environment within the University Library, promoting appropriate conduct and respecting the right of others to a quiet study environment.

All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to contribute to a study environment in the Library which promotes scholarship and learning, and where these study areas are respected. All persons should be considerate of the needs of others for an appropriate study environment and share a common goal in learning.

- *Silence in areas designated as Silent Study Areas must be observed.*

3.3.2 Accept individual and collective responsibility for keeping a clean and safe working and studying environment.

All persons using the QMU Library have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that safety is not compromised, that food and drink packaging is disposed of correctly and that respect for other people and property is maintained. In particular that no library materials are damaged or defaced and that none are removed from the Library unless they have been properly issued.

- *All Library users should carry their matriculation card (smart card) with them at all times and be prepared to show it if asked.*
- *All Library materials removed from the Library, by an individual, should be issued to their own card.*
- *Any vandalised property should be reported immediately.*

3.3.3 Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures.

All persons within QMU should demonstrate respect for the range of local and international cultures as well as each person's learning needs. This means maintaining appropriate conduct in learning environments such as the Library so that the needs of all users can be met.

3.3.4 Ensure that the University is not brought into disrepute.

All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to comply with the law, e.g. Copyright and Data Protection. This is to ensure that everyone can work and study in an environment characterised by mutual respect and free from the harassment and distress which the transmission of offensive or threatening material may cause.

3.4 Specific Codes

The Library Code of Conduct is underpinned by the Library Regulations and the Acceptable use policy for information and communication technology and electronic resources. The Library Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following:

The University's current Student and Academic Regulations, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedures outlined on the University's Quality website: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

The University's Single Equality Scheme, which is to be read in conjunction with the Mainstreaming Report: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/equality-and-diversity/

4. ACCOMMODATION CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1   This Accommodation Code of Conduct has been developed to support the general University Code of Conduct.

4.2   General Principles

4.3   All students at QMU shall:

4.3.1   Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working, studying and living environment within the University, respecting the institution's policies on equal opportunities and harassment and ensuring that their conduct complies with these policies.

In particular all students should:

- *maintain rooms and communal areas in a clean, tidy and hygienic condition.*
- *co-operate in fire evacuation practices.*
- *show consideration for others by minimising noise levels, in particular between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m.*

4.3.2   Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures.

All persons within QMU Halls of Residence should demonstrate respect for the range of local and international cultures within the University. You must not harass, threaten, bully or victimise other residents, staff or visitors. This will include displaying sexually explicit or politically offensive notices.

- *You are expected to show courtesy and consideration to those with whom you are sharing facilities, to your neighbours and to University staff and visitors.*

4.3.3   Ensure that the University is not brought into disrepute.

- *All persons within QMU Halls of Residence have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that all students can live and study in an environment characterised by mutual respect.*
- *You are asked to consider the impact that unacceptable behaviour may have on local residents and to behave as an ambassador of Queen Margaret University.*

4.4   Specific Codes

The Accommodation Code of Conduct is underpinned by the Halls of Residence Code of Conduct, which is applicable for all students in halls of residence and all persons entering halls as visitors.

5.   CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
e.g. LECTURES, SEMINARS, TUTORIALS, LABORATORIES AND PLACEMENTS

5.1   This Code of Conduct for Learning Environments e.g. Lectures, Seminars, Tutorials, Laboratories and Placements has been developed to support the general University Code of Conduct.

5.2   General Principles

5.3   All students at QMU shall:

5.3.1   Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working, studying and living environment within the University, respecting the institution's policies on equal opportunities and harassment and ensuring that their conduct complies with these policies.

All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to contribute to a study environment which promotes scholarship and learning. All persons should be considerate of the needs of others for an appropriate study environment and share a common goal in learning.

- *Attendance at lectures, seminars etc. is essential, in particular where students' absence may be detrimental to the performance of fellow students and the quality of learning experience gained. In addition, lateness is a discourtesy to the whole group and the group itself should make clear that lateness or other disruptive behaviour is not acceptable.*
- *Students are expected to prepare for lectures, seminars etc. Students who attend tutorials or seminars without doing preparatory work or contributing to the discussion will be reminded of their obligations by the tutor and, when appropriate, by student members of the group. Suitable preparation enhances the overall learning experience.*
- *The use of mobile phones in lectures, seminars etc. is strictly prohibited. All phones should be switched off before entry into lectures, seminars etc.*

5.3.2   Accept individual and collective responsibility for keeping a clean and safe working and studying environment.

- *All persons attending QMU lectures, seminars etc. should ensure that the safety of themselves and others is not compromised.*
- *All persons attending QMU lectures, seminars etc. should ensure respect for other people and property is maintained.*
- *Smoking, eating and drinking are strictly prohibited within the learning environment.*

5.3.3   Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures.

All persons within QMU should demonstrate respect for the range of local and international cultures as well as each person's learning needs. This means maintaining appropriate conduct in learning environments such as lectures and seminars so that the needs of all users can be met.

- *The University will not tolerate antisocial behaviour: this includes the use of abusive language, physical abuse, obscene comments, verbal or physical harassment, and comments or remarks that discriminate on the basis of sex, race or any other irrelevant distinction.*

5.3.4   Ensure that the University is not brought into disrepute.

- *All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to comply with the law, this is to ensure that all students can work and study in an environment characterised by mutual respect and free from harassment and distress.*
- *You are asked to consider the impact that unacceptable behaviour may have on other people and to behave as an ambassador of Queen Margaret University.*

5.4   Attendance Policy

This Code of Conduct must be read in conjunction with the University's Attendance Policy, available from the Quality website:

https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

For some programmes, a more detailed attendance policy will apply, details of which will normally be available within individual programme documentation.

6.   IT FACILITIES CODE OF CONDUCT

6.1   This IT Facilities Code of Conduct has been developed to support the general University Code of Conduct.

6.2   General Principles

6.3   All students at QMU shall:

6.3.1   Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working, studying and living environment within the University, respecting the institution's policies on equal opportunities and harassment and ensuring that their conduct complies with these policies.

All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to contribute to a study environment which promotes scholarship and learning. All persons should be

considerate of the needs of others for an appropriate study environment and share a common goal in learning.

- *Use of the computer systems and networks should always be legal and ethical, and reflect academic integrity and the standards of the University community. IT facilities must never be used to cause offence, worry or inconvenience to anyone.*
- *Users should accept the need to be restrained in the use of available resources. Electronic resources are provided to facilitate the work of students, specifically for educational, training, research or administrative purposes. Any other uses are a privilege and not a right, and must not take priority over the needs of those who require the facilities for directed academic work.*

6.3.2 Accept individual and collective responsibility for keeping a clean and safe working and studying environment, ensuring personal guests act in an appropriate manner.

- ***All persons using QMU IT facilities have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that the safety of themselves and others is not compromised.***
- ***All persons using QMU IT facilities have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure respect for other people and property is maintained.***

6.3.3 Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures.

- ***All persons using QMU IT facilities have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that the study environment is characterised by mutual respect, which can help enhance the quality of learning experience.***
- ***The University will not tolerate antisocial behaviour: this includes the use of abusive language, physical abuse, obscene comments, verbal or physical harassment, and comments or remarks that discriminate on the basis of sex, race or any other irrelevant distinction.***

6.3.4 Ensure that the University is not brought into disrepute.

All persons using QMU IT facilities should adhere to appropriate statutory law eg: the Computer Misuse Act 1990, the Defamation Act 2013, Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 and the provisions of the University's licence with the Copyright Licensing Agency, Data Protection Act 2014 and licence agreements for software. All persons using QMU IT facilities should also respect the intellectual property rights, copyright and moral rights of authors.

- ***All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to comply with the law, this is to ensure that all students can work and study in an environment characterised by mutual respect and free from harassment and distress.***
- ***You are asked to consider the impact that unacceptable behaviour may have on other people and to behave as an ambassador of Queen Margaret University.***

6.4   Specific Codes

The IT Facilities Code of Conduct is underpinned by the JANET Acceptable Use Policy, published by JISC) which covers all UK academic and research network activity.

7.   SCIENCE LABORATORY CODE OF CONDUCT

7.1   This Science Laboratory Code of Conduct has been developed to support the general University Code of Conduct.

7.2   General Principles

7.3   All students at QMU shall:

7.3.1   Accept individual and collective responsibility for maintaining a healthy working, studying and living environment with the University, respecting the institution's policies on equal opportunities and harassment and ensuring that their conduct complies with these policies.

All persons within QMU have an individual and collective responsibility to contribute to a study environment, which promotes scholarship and learning. All persons should be considerate of the needs of others for an appropriate study environment and share a common goal in learning.

- *The use of computer systems within laboratories is subject to the same code of conduct identified for IT laboratories in QMU.*
- *The use of mobile phones within laboratory environments is strictly prohibited. All phones should be switched off before entry into laboratories.*

7.3.2   Accept individual and collective responsibility for keeping a clean and safe working and **studying environment.**

All persons using the QMU science laboratories have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that safety is not compromised, that food is not consumed and that respect for other people and property is maintained. In particular that no laboratory equipment is damaged and that no item is removed from the library unless it has been properly issued.

- *Smoking, eating and drinking are strictly prohibited within laboratories, with the following exceptions:*
Food or fluid intake specifically associated with experimental procedures and specified in laboratory schedules.

  Fluid intake following exercise testing regimes in which an individual may become dehydrated.

Individuals should:

- *Read and observe any special safety instructions displayed in the laboratory, or which have been issued to them (e.g. Local rules for Radiation Safety, Safe use of Gas Cylinders).*
- *Ensure familiarity with equipment, including safety devices before beginning work.*
- *Wear protective equipment as required and directed when working in the laboratory.*
- *Report all breakages and spills to a member of staff. Broken glass, needles and other sharps should be placed in appropriate bins or sharps boxes and not mixed with waste paper.*
- *Take responsibility for the safe storage of clothing, bags and personal items, so that they do not represent a hazard within the laboratory environment.*
- *Students should not work in laboratories outwith timetabled classes, unless appropriate arrangements have been made for supervised group or individual project work. This should include the completion of a Risk Assessment, which must be fully understood and signed by both student and supervisor. COSHH forms must be completed if required.*
- *Students should request equipment for project work using the appropriate form and should ensure its safe return to a member of staff.*

7.3.3   Have a mutual respect for others especially with regard to differing cultures.

- *The University will not tolerate antisocial behaviour: this includes the use of abusive language, physical abuse, obscene comments, verbal or physical harassment, and comments or remarks that discriminate on the basis of sex, race or any other irrelevant distinction.*

7.3.4   Ensure that the University is not brought into disrepute.

7.4   Specific Codes

Students are expected to follow specific codes of conduct, regarding equipment, hazards or procedures where these are in force in specific laboratory areas.

8. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Queen Margaret University is committed to providing an excellent education and high quality services to our students from enrolment to graduation.

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about our service standards and what you can expect from us. Our Complaints Procedure can be found at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- the quality and standard of any service we provide;
- the quality of our facilities and learning resources;
- the quality and standards of academic services and personal support services available to you;
- the quality and standards of administrative processes;
- unfair treatment by a student or staff member.

Your complaint may involve more than one of the University's services or be about someone working on our behalf.

What can't I complain about?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- a request for information or an explanation of policy or practice
- a request under freedom of information or data protection legislation
- requests for compensation from the University
- things that are covered by academic appeals, such as academic judgements and decisions
- an issue which is being, or has been, considered by a court or tribunal
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following an investigation. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) for an independent review of the complaint.

<u>If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.</u>

Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by the services of the University can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf you will need their personal written consent. Please also read the section on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

How do I complain?

You can complain in person on campus, by phone, in writing, or by email via our <u>complaints form</u>.

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff within the department you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Contact details

Email: <u>complaints@qmu.ac.uk</u>

Write to: University Secretary
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
Musselburgh
EH21 6UU
Telephone: +44 (0)131 474 000

What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

Stage one – frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem. Where possible, your concerns should be raised with the relevant staff member, tutor, university representative or school office or at a staff/student liaison meeting. This can be done face-to-face, by phone, in writing or by email.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure. You may choose to do this immediately or shortly after you get our initial decision.

Stage two – investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation. We have a *complaint form*, which will help you to state your complaint clearly to us. Although we will also accept complaints that are made in person or on the phone, we encourage you to complete the complaint form in the interests of clarity and in order to best assist the investigation process.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (**so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO**)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

Freepost SPSO, SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9am–5pm, Tuesday 10am–5pm

SPSO freephone **0800 377 7330**

Website **www.spso.org.uk**

Online contact form **www.spso.org.uk/contact-form**

You can fill in the complaints form online at **www.spso.org.uk/complain/form**

Fax **0800 377 7331**

Getting help to make your complaint

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your written consent to complain for you.

Useful contacts details:

- The Students' Union: http://qmusu.org.uk/
- Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/quality-contacts/
- Citizens Advice Bureau: https://www.citizensadviceedinburgh.org.uk/

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all students. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us at the above address or on the telephone or email us at complaints@qmu.ac.uk.

We can also give you this leaflet in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille)

8. COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE & UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

FOREWORD

Queen Margaret University's Complaints Handling Procedure, under Section 4: Managing Unacceptable Behaviour, states as follows:-

The actions of complainants who are angry, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on time and resources or unacceptable behaviour towards the University's staff. The University will, therefore, put into place policies and procedures to protect staff from such unacceptable behaviour. These policies and procedures will include the requirement to inform the complainant of any decision to restrict their access, their right of appeal, and any procedures for reviewing such a decision to restrict contact.

The University conforms to the principle that complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected and the University strives to respond to all complaints in a fair, transparent and proportionate manner. However, occasionally the behaviour or actions of individuals prevents the University from dealing with the complaint under the Complaints Handling Procedure. The University is committed to equality of opportunity of all and expects all members of its community to be treated courteously and with respect. This Policy details the procedure to be followed in the event of unacceptable behaviour being determined, and procedures for reviewing that decision.

1 DEFINING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

It is recognised that people may act out of character at times of trouble, distress or as a symptom of illness. Behaviour that is forceful or determined is not, of itself, considered unacceptable. However, the actions of a person that result in unreasonable behaviour or demands on University staff or services or aggressive behaviour will be considered unacceptable. Examples of this are as follows:-

1. **Unreasonable demands**: a demand becomes unreasonable when it starts to (or complying with that demand would) impact substantially on the work of the staff or on University services. This could relate to the amount of information sought or the nature and scale of the service expected. All circumstances should be taken into account. Examples could be repeatedly changing the substance of a request or raising unrelated concerns.

2. **Unreasonable levels of contact**: if the level of contact from an individual exceeds what would be considered normal or reasonable, for example, numerous phone calls over a short space of time or being inundated with further information, then the contact may be considered unacceptable, particularly when this contact impacts on the complaint handler's ability to undertake other work tasks.

3. **Unreasonable use of the complaints process**: when an individual submits multiple complaints which have the objective of preventing the University pursuing a legitimate aim or implementing a legitimate decision.

4. **Aggressive or abusive behaviour**: behaviour or language, whether spoken or written, that may cause staff or students to feel afraid, threatened or abused will not be accepted. This can include threats, physical violence, inappropriate gestures, indecent comments, personal verbal abuse, discriminatory or derogatory remarks, rudeness, inflammatory statement or unsubstantiated allegations.

2   MANAGING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

If an individual's behaviour adversely affects the ability of a member of staff to do their work or provide a service to others, that member of staff will be entitled to restrict the contact that individual has with the University. If that individual is a member of staff or a student then the relevant discipline procedures may need to be considered. In serious cases, there may be a termination of all direct (face-to-face, voice or email) contact with the individual and incidents may be reported to the police.

The following actions may be used in situations where an individual shows unreasonable persistence:-

- Limit contact to telephone calls from the complainant at set times on set days;
- Restrict contact to a nominated member of staff;
- See the complainant by appointment only;
- Restrict contact to written correspondence only, this may be through a third party;
- Return all correspondence and documents and in extreme cases, advise that further correspondence will be destroyed; or
- Take other actions as appropriate, for example, restricting the complainant's University email address or blocking emails from a specific address.

The threat or use of physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment towards staff will not be tolerated and is likely to result in the termination of all contact with the complainant. If the complainant is a member of staff or student, the relevant discipline procedures will be considered.

Staff have the right to politely end telephone calls or meetings if an individual is considered aggressive, abusive or offensive.

3   PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Before determining whether to use one of the actions listed above, the member of staff should consider whether:-

- The relevant complaints/appeals/freedom of information or subject access request procedure has been correctly and fully implemented in relation to that individual's request;

- Due warning has been given to the complainant that continued contact may be deemed unacceptable;
- Any reasonable adjustments have been made for that individual; and
- There has been due regard to any of the protected characteristics in relation to the individual.

Staff should, where possible, try to diffuse the situation by calmly informing the individual that their behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. Staff can ask their line manager to assist with this as appropriate. Should this approach not work, the member of staff should approach their line manager who will determine whether the actions of that person affects one member of staff or the whole team and then take the appropriate action to limit contact. When staff across the University are affected, the University Secretary should be consulted.

Decisions to restrict contact can only be made after the individual has been given an opportunity to modify their behaviour. The decision should be communicated in writing, with clear contact arrangements specified and the length of time the restriction will be in place.

4   APPEAL, RECORD AND REVIEW

The individual concerned should be given the opportunity to appeal the decision to restrict contact. The appeal should be referred to the University Secretary who may nominate another senior member of staff to determine on whether the restriction was made appropriately. The procedure undertaken, the proportionality of the decision and the reasoning for the decision to restrict contact may all be reviewed. The appeal will be considered on the balance of probabilities. The decision of the University Secretary, or of their properly appointed delegate, is final.

Any decision to restrict contact with an individual should be thoroughly recorded, with clear and transparent reasons, and an appropriate entry should be made in the individual's file.

The decision to restrict contact may be reconsidered should the individual display reasonable behaviour. A review procedure, at set intervals, should be included in the correspondence which communicates the decision to restrict contact.

10. DATA PROTECTION: STUDENT PRIVACY STATEMENT

Who we are

This is the privacy statement of Queen Margaret University. This privacy statement explains how we collect and use personal information about you.

Queen Margaret University (QMU) is a Data Controller in terms of the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. The University is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. Our Registration Number Z6013920.

https://ico.org.uk/ESDWebPages/Entry/Z6013920

We are a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and a Scottish public authority under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Personal Information that we collect and hold about you is used by us for our statutory and/or public functions. Where we collect or share data it is on the basis of the exercise of official authority vested in us as a public authority, and on the basis of public interest.

Processing of your personal information is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in us as the Data Controller (See GDPR Article 6(1)(e)) and for statistical and research purposes (See GDPR Article 89). Processing of Special Categories of data is necessary for statistical and research purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) based on the duties in the Equality Act 2010 (See GDPR Article 9(2)(j)).

We process personal information to enable us to provide education and support services to our students and staff; advertising and promoting the university and the services we offer; publication of the university magazine and alumni relations, undertaking research and fundraising; managing our accounts and records and providing commercial activities to our clients.

We also process personal information for the use of CCTV systems to monitor and collect visual images for the purposes of security and the prevention and detection of crime.

QMU needs to process and retain certain personal information relating to you, because you are an applicant to, or student of the University. All of your personal information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation, which comes into effect on 25 May 2018. This means that confidentiality will be respected and that appropriate security measures will be taken to prevent unauthorised disclosure.

Queen Margaret Students' Union is a data controller in its own right. You can read its privacy policy here: https://www.qmusu.org.uk/

How we collect your data

The personal data QMU holds about you is obtained from a variety of sources, including but not limited to:

- Information you have provided on your application form (including applications made directly to the University, via a third party such as UCAS, via a partner institution, or via an overseas agent);
- Information you provide us with annually at enrolment (matriculation) and during the course of your studies;
- Information related to performance, attendance and awards during your studies;
- Funding organisations such as SAAS or sponsorship bodies;
- Partner organisations such as professional bodies, employers, and other educational establishments for the purposes of external study or exchange.

Why we collect and use your personal information

This privacy statement explains how we collect and use personal information about you. When you apply and then accept your offer you enter into a contract with the University and agree to accept the University's Terms and Conditions, and agree that the University can process your personal information for administrative and educational purposes. These include, but are not limited to:

- Administering and providing education & training.
- Managing and administering the University, including accommodation services.
- Recruitment, admissions and enrolment.
- Maintaining your student records and managing academic processes, including attendance and assessment.
- Processing financial transactions including fee payments and the administration of grants and loans.
- Providing advice and support to you, including disability services, counselling and wellbeing services, mentoring, health and safety, attendance monitoring, pastoral services (Personal Academic Tutor system) and careers guidance.
- To protect your vital interests e.g. in an emergency situation.
- Verifying your identity where this is required.
- Contacting you by post, email or telephone.
- Managing behavioural or disciplinary issues, appeals and complaints.
- Providing you with information about educational programmes and services.
- Managing and monitoring access to University services including library, IT, printing, sports, catering and events.
- Research including monitoring quality and performance.
- Seeking feedback on University programmes, services and facilities.
- Graduation and confirmation of awards.
- Alumni membership.
- Statistical and archive purposes.
- Preventing and detecting crime, fraud or corruption.
- To meet our obligations under equality law.

Special categories of personal information

Under the UK Equality Act 2010, we need to collect sensitive personal data about our applicants and students on UK campuses to assist with monitoring equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We hold this information in strictest confidence and only disclose it, again in confidence, to bodies with a statutory duty to collect it, such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency. You can choose whether you want to provide information for this purpose.

Special categories of personal information are afforded an extra level of security and confidentiality. This includes information about racial or ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning physical or mental health, data concerning sexual life or sexual orientation and data relating to criminal offences, convictions and sentences.

If a student or applicant declares that they have a disability, we have a duty to disclose this information on a need-to-know basis to staff to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made, enabling disabled students to meet their full academic potential.

Access to your personal information

The University will manage your information securely and will restrict access to only those who need to use it in the course of their duties. The University will put in place technical and organisational measures necessary to ensure the security of your information.

 The University will only disclose your information to third parties where we:

- Have a legal basis to do so under the General Data Protection Regulation; or
- Are required to under a statutory or regulatory obligation; or
- Have your consent.

Sharing your personal data

To fulfil our statutory or legal obligations your data may be provided, without your explicit consent, to organisations or agents acting on their behalf including but not limited to:

For academic purposes

- With a partner institution to deliver a programme collaboratively or jointly between the University and the partner institution.
- With our external examiners: to check that our assessment of your work is fair.
- For official independent assessment of our programmes e.g. by the QAA.
- Verify your attendance and qualifications, e.g. in a reference for a potential employer or agency (with consent).
- Confirm your attendance, progress and assessment marks to your sponsor or the institution through which you are studying (if this is not QMU).
- Arrange a suitable work placement if this is part of your course.
- If you have taken part in the Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS), which provides advice and support to help eligible students to enter Higher Education, we may share limited information with LEAPS about your progress and outcome of your studies, in order to improve the LEAPS service for future participants.
- With relevant support agencies to enable appropriate adjustments to be made in line with an individual needs assessment.
- Publicise your award in our graduation programme and in the list of awards we provide in press releases. You have the right to opt out of your award being detailed in the press release.

To meet statutory and legal obligations

- The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). For more information on what HESA does with your personal data please see the HESA Student Collection Notices (https://www.hesa.ac.uk/about/regulation/data-protection/notices);
- The Scottish Funding Council (SFC).
- The Student Loans Company (SLC).
- The Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS).
- Home Office/UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
- The Office for Students.
- UKRI, including agents managing the Research Excellence Framework (REF)
- HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).
- Local authority for Council Tax exemption purposes.
- Electoral Registration Office in accordance with the Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001.
- Professional bodies, for example HCPC, NMC, GTCS.
- Embassies and other Governments.
- Law enforcement agencies and debt controllers.
- Potential employers or education and placement providers.
- Research surveys approved by the University covering student progress, attitudes, social and financial circumstances including the National Student Survey (NSS) and the International Student Barometer (ISB).
- Relevant authorities dealing with emergency situations at the University.
- The University also provides limited information to the QMU Students' Union for the purpose of academic representation, running of elections, administering clubs, societies and sports clubs and social marketing activities.

International data transfer

As an international organisation, the University may need to process your personal information in a country other than the one you are studying in, when this is necessary to provide you with academic and support services, meet a legal obligation, fulfil a contract with you, or where we have your consent.

Personal data may be transferred outside the European Union, to countries which may not have equivalent data protection laws. Examples of circumstances when personal data may be transferred outside the EU include:

- Managing collaborations with overseas educational institutions including student exchanges and partnership programmes.
- Working with overseas recruitment agencies.
- Information posted on our website which is accessible outside the EEA.
- Some of the systems and services the University uses to store data in the Cloud which may include storage facilities based outside the EEA.

Personal information processed by consent

Where the processing of personal information falls outwith the scope of your contract with the University (i.e. the information that the University is required to process to manage and administer

your time at University) then we will require another legal reason to process your data. This may require us to ask for your consent for processing. Consent will be sought when it is required.

Profiling or automated decision making

We do not use profiling or automated decision-making processes. Some processes are semi-automated but a human decision maker will always be involved before any decision is reached in relation to you.

Graduation ceremonies

Graduation ceremonies are public events. Audio and visual images of ceremonies may be made publically available via the sale of DVDs and live broadcast at the venue, on campus and on the Internet. Names of graduands, including those graduating in absentia, are published in the graduation programme. Lists are published in the press and you will be offered the opportunity to opt out of this.

The University may take photographs and other images for possible use in University publicity and promotional material. Graduands who do not wish to be included, must inform the photographer at the time the photograph is taken.

A separate Privacy Notice is provided for Alumni Engagement.

Use of our Website

QMU respects the privacy of every individual who visits our websites or responds to our interactive advertisements. The Privacy Statement on our website outlines the information we collects via its various web pages and how we use that information. The Statement also instructs you on what to do if you do not want your personal information collected or shared when you visit QMU's website or respond to our advertisements: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/footer/privacy-statement/

Retention of your personal information

The University will retain your personal data only as long as necessary for its purposes as described. Please note, however, that even after termination of your student relationship with the University, QMU may still need to retain your personal data to satisfy its obligations to keep certain records for particular periods under applicable law. Such retention is documented in the University Records Retention Schedule, held by the Data Protection Officer.

Your rights relating to your personal information

You have the right to:

Access your information

Find out what personal data we process about you and obtain a copy of the data, free of charge within one month of your request. We may make a charge for additional copies of the same information.

Correcting your information

We want to make sure that your personal information is accurate, complete and up to date and you may ask us to correct any personal information about you that you believe does not meet these standards.

Deletion of your information

You have the right to ask us to delete personal information about you where:

• You consider that we no longer require the information for the purposes for which it was obtained.
• We are using that information with your consent and you have withdrawn your consent – see Withdrawing consent to using your information below.
• You have validly objected to our use of your personal information – see Objecting to how we may use your information below.
• Our use of your personal information is contrary to law or our other legal obligations.

Objecting to how we may use your information

You have the right at any time to require us to stop using your personal information for direct marketing purposes. In addition, where we use your personal information to perform tasks carried out in the public interest or pursuant to the legitimate interests of us or a third party then, if you ask us to, we will stop using that personal information unless there are overriding legitimate grounds to continue.

Restricting how we may use your information

In some cases, you may ask us to restrict how we use your personal information. This right might apply, for example, where we are checking the accuracy of personal information about you that we hold or assessing the validity of any objection you have made to our use of your information. The right might also apply where this is no longer a basis for using your personal information but you don't want us to delete the data. Where this right to validly exercised, we may only use the relevant personal information with your consent, for legal claims or where there are other public interest grounds to do so.

Portability

If we process personal information that you provide to us on the basis of consent or because it is necessary for the performance of a contract to which you are party, and in either case that processing is carried out by automated means, then you have the right to have that personal information transmitted to you in a machine readable format. Where technically feasible, you also have the right to have that personal information transmitted directly to another controller.

Automated processing

If we use your personal information on an automated basis to make decisions which significantly affect you, you have the right to ask that the decision be reviewed by an individual to whom you may make representations and contest the decision. This right only applies where we use your information with your consent or as part of a contractual relationship with you

Please contact us in any of the ways set out in the Contact information and further advice section below if you wish to exercise any of these rights.

Changes to our privacy statement

We keep this privacy statement under regular review and will place any updates on this website. We will publish any changes we make to this data protection policy on our website at the following link: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/ or at:

https://www.qmu.ac.uk/footer/foi-and-data-protection/data-protection/

Paper copies of the privacy statement may also be obtained by request from the Data Protection Officer.

This privacy statement was last updated on 10 May 2018.

Contact details and further advice

If you have any queries about the processing of your personal data as described above, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer. You can do this by email: ihynd@qmu.ac.uk; telephone: 0131 474 0000 or post:

Data Protection Officer
Queen Margaret University
Queen Margaret University Drive
Musselburgh
EH21 6UU

Complaints

We seek to resolve directly all complaints about how we handle personal information. If you have any issues about this statement or the way the University has handled your personal information, please contact the University Data Protection Officer in the first instance.

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the University, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
Email: casework@ico.org.uk; Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Version 1 – May 2018

11. REGULATIONS GOVERNING DISCIPLINE

1   Preliminary matters

1.1   All students of the University are subject to the jurisdiction of the Principal in respect of their studies and their conduct. It is a condition of entry to the University that each student shall conform to the published rules and regulations.

1.2   Under these regulations the University has the power to discipline students and to suspend or expel any student for good cause.

1.3   Once disciplinary proceedings have been instituted against a student under these regulations, no disciplinary action will normally be taken against the student under other disciplinary rules or regulations within the University for the same misconduct. However, where an allegation of misconduct is upheld against a student on a health care programme that requires professional registration, that student may be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel.

1.4   References within these regulations to any University officer shall include his or her properly appointed nominee.

2   Misconduct

2.1   Any student studying or registered at the University shall be subject to disciplinary measures if he or she is found to be guilty of misconduct as defined below.

2.2   The essence of misconduct under these regulations is:

a)   Improper interference with the functioning or activities of the University, or of those who work or study in the University; or

b)   Action which otherwise improperly damages the University or its reputation.

2.3   In particular, the following shall constitute misconduct, whether occurring on University premises or elsewhere:

a)   Any conduct which constitutes a criminal offence.
b)   Disruption of, or improper interference with, the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University.
c)   Obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any student or member of staff of the University, or any visitor to the University.
d)   Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour or language.
e)   Harassment of any student or member of staff of the University, or any visitor to the University, on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race or disability.

f) Fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff, students or visitors

g) Cheating or plagiarism in academic course work or in examinations

h) Theft, misappropriation or misuse of University property, or the property of the University's staff, students or visitors, including computer misuse.

i) Misuse or unauthorised use of University premises.

j) Damage to University property, or the property of the University's staff, students or visitors, caused intentionally or recklessly.

k) Action likely to cause injury or impair safety on University premises.

l) Failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of belief and freedom of speech.

m) Breach of the provisions of any University code, rule or regulation

n) Failure to disclose personal details to a member of staff of the University in circumstances in which it is reasonable to require that such information be given.

3 Involvement of the police and criminal courts

3.1 The following procedures apply where alleged misconduct is reported to the Principal, and the misconduct, if proved, would also constitute a serious offence under the criminal law.

3.2 A serious offence is one that is likely to attract a custodial sentence if proved in a criminal court or one that can be tried as a criminal offence only at the High Court/Crown Court.

3.3 Where the Principal does not regard the alleged misconduct as constituting a serious offence, s/he may decide that it is dealt with internally. If the offence is reported to the police, the Principal may decide to defer action until the police and/or courts have dealt with the matter.

3.4 If the Principal regards the alleged offence as serious, no internal disciplinary action, other than suspension or exclusion from the University, will normally be taken until the matter has been reported to the police, and either a prosecution has been completed or a decision not to prosecute has been taken.

3.5 The University has the right to report any alleged criminal offence to the police. However, if a person claims to be the victim of a serious offence committed by a student, but does not wish the police to be involved, the Principal may agree not to report the matter to the police. In such circumstances the University will not normally proceed with internal disciplinary measures for the serious offence, although it may take disciplinary action over other related offences.

3.6 Where a finding of misconduct has been made under these regulations, and a student has also been sentenced by a criminal court on the same facts, the penalty imposed by the criminal court will be taken into account in deciding the penalty under these regulations.

4   Suspension or exclusion

4.1   A student who is the subject of a complaint of misconduct or against whom a criminal charge is pending or who is the subject of police investigation, may be suspended or excluded from the University by the Principal, pending disciplinary hearing or trial.

4.2   A student who is suspended is prohibited from entering University premises and from participating in University activities. Suspension may be subject to qualification, such as permission to take an examination. The terms of the suspension will be notified in writing to the student. An order of suspension may include a requirement that the student shall have no contact with a named person or persons.

4.3   A student who is excluded from the University has restricted rights to enter University premises and to take part in University activities. The terms of the exclusion will be notified in writing to the student. An order of exclusion may include a requirement that the student shall have no contact with a named person or persons.

4.4   Orders of suspension and exclusion pending a disciplinary hearing or trial are normally to be used where necessary to protect a member or members of the University, or the property of the University or the property of a member or members of the University community. Written reasons for the decision will be recorded and made available to the student.

4.5   Unless the matter is deemed to be urgent by the Principal, no student shall be suspended or excluded unless he or she has been given an opportunity to make representation to the Principal. The representation may be made in person or in writing, as the student chooses, and may be put forward by the student or by the student's adviser, friend or representative. In cases deemed to be urgent by the Principal, a student may be suspended or excluded with immediate effect. An opportunity will be given to the student to make representation as soon as reasonably practicable.

4.6   A decision to suspend a student, or to exclude a student from academic activities associated with the student's programme of study, shall be subject to review at the request of the student after four weeks. Such a review will not involve a hearing, but the student, either personally or through his or her adviser, friend or representative, will be entitled to make written representation. The Principal will conduct the review.

4.7   In addition to the initial review, the Principal shall review the suspension or exclusion on receipt of evidence of altered circumstances that might affect the order.

4.8   A student may appeal against an order of suspension or exclusion using the process set out under section 9 of these Regulations.

5   Summary procedure

5.1   Allegations of misconduct under these regulations should be made to the University Secretary, who will refer them to the Principal. The Principal may dismiss the allegation immediately if he or she believes that there is no case for the student to answer, or that it is for some other reason appropriate to do so.

5.2   If the allegation is not so dismissed, and the offence does not lead the Principal to suspend or exclude the student under the provisions outlined in section 4 above, the matter will be referred to the relevant Dean of School. The Dean of School will consult with the University Secretary to determine whether or not the matter should be dealt with summarily or referred to a Disciplinary Panel, subject to paragraph 5.6 below.

5.3   If the matter is dealt with summarily, the Dean will consider written or oral evidence as he or she thinks fit. The Dean will find the student guilty of misconduct only if, on the available evidence, he or she is satisfied of the student's guilt. If a finding of guilt is made, he or she may impose any of the penalties set out in these regulations, other than expulsion from the University.

5.4   At the termination of the proceedings, the Dean will write a short report. In the event of a finding of guilt, the report will set out the misconduct alleged, a brief summary of evidence received, the grounds for the finding of guilt, the penalty imposed, and the factors taken into account in deciding the penalty. A copy of the report will be sent to the student. Where the misconduct relates to examinations or other assessed work, the report may contain recommendations concerning examination marks, and a copy of the report will also be sent to the appropriate Board of Examiners.

5.5   There is a right of appeal against a finding of guilt as set out in section 9 below.

5.6   If the University Secretary does not consider it appropriate to deal with the matter summarily, or if the student does not agree to its being dealt with in that way, then it shall be referred to a Disciplinary Committee under the procedure set out in section 6 below.

6   Disciplinary committee

6.1   The University Secretary will appoint the members of the Disciplinary Committee, and invite one of them, other than a student, to act as Convener. The Committee will have three or five members, at the discretion of the University Secretary. The members will normally include both a member of the academic staff of the University and a student of the University. The University Secretary shall have regard to the need to ensure that all members of the Committee are impartial and have had no previous involvement with the matter. Care will be taken to ensure an appropriate gender balance in the composition of the panel.

6.2   The University Secretary will appoint a clerk to the Committee and will arrange for a note of the proceedings to be taken. The Committee may seek advice from a qualified lawyer.

6.3　The student may attend the disciplinary hearing, and may be accompanied by an adviser, friend, or other representative. If a student is accompanied and opt to have their adviser, friend or representative speak on their behalf, should it become necessary to ensure good order in the hearing, the Committee may stipulate that the student may speak only when called upon to give evidence by his or her representative. Legal representation is not permitted.

6.4　The Committee will rely only on evidence presented at the hearing. The deliberations and decisions of anyone previously considering the matter shall be irrelevant for the Committee's purposes.

6.5　The Committee will find a student guilty of misconduct only if, on the evidence before it, it is satisfied of the student's guilt. If the members of the Committee cannot agree, the verdict of the Committee will be that of the majority of its members. Any decision of the Committee shall be based on the balance of probabilities.

6.6　Subject to the provisions of these regulations, the order of proceedings shall be at the discretion of the Committee. Members of the Committee may ask questions of any witness called before it. The Committee may ask for additional enquiries to be undertaken, and may call for additional witnesses to attend.

6.7　If two or more students are involved in related misconduct, the Committee may at its discretion deal with their cases together.

6.8　The evidence presented at the hearing will normally be oral evidence, given by witnesses appearing in person. The Committee may accept a witness's written statement in evidence where it agrees that the witness need not attend, or where it is impracticable for the witness to attend, or where in the opinion of the Committee it is for some other reason in the interests of justice to do so.

6.9　The allegation or allegations will be notified to the student at least one week before the hearing.

6.10　The University Secretary may call for written witness statements in support of the allegation in advance of the hearing. If such statements are obtained, members of the Committee will be entitled to see them in advance of the hearing and copies will be made available to the student at least one week before the allegation is heard.

6.11　The Committee may impose time limits on oral addresses and submissions.

6.12　The Committee will refuse to admit evidence that is in its opinion irrelevant to the issues raised.

6.13　The Committee shall have power to adjourn a hearing to another date, as it thinks fit.

6.14 If the Committee finds that there is no case for the student to answer, it must dismiss the allegation.

6.15 At the termination of the proceedings, the Convener of the Disciplinary Committee will write a short report. In the event of a finding of guilt, the report will set out the misconduct alleged, a brief summary of evidence received, the grounds for the finding of guilt, the penalty imposed, and the factors taken into account in deciding the penalty. A copy of the report will be sent to the student and to the Principal. Where the misconduct relates to examinations or other assessed work the report may contain recommendations under section 7 of these regulations, and a copy of the report will also be sent to the appropriate Board of Examiners.

6.16 The Convener of the Committee, on the advice of the University Secretary, has the power to suspend the activity of the Disciplinary Committee at any time and to stop the proceedings against the student, if he or she believes it appropriate to do so.

7   Penalties

7.1 If a student is found guilty of an allegation of misconduct, penalties may be imposed by the Dean in the case of matters dealt with summarily, or by the Disciplinary Committee in other cases. The penalties are set out below. A student may not be expelled following an allegation heard under the summary procedure. The student or his or her representative shall be entitled to make representations in mitigation before the penalty is decided.

7.2 When determining penalties, consideration will be given to the seriousness of the misconduct, the circumstances of the misconduct, and the means and general personal circumstances of the student.

7.3 A student found guilty of misconduct may be:

a. Absolutely discharged, which means that although the student may be technically guilty of the misconduct alleged, no blame should be attached to his or her actions

b. Admonished

c. Cautioned, which means that no penalty is imposed, but if the student is found guilty of misconduct on a subsequent occasion in the following twelve months, or some other specified period, he or she will then be dealt with for both offences

d. Conditionally discharged, which means that no penalty is imposed, subject to the student fulfilling certain stipulated conditions including future good behaviour over the following twelve months or some other specified period. If the conditions are not met, a penalty may be imposed following a further hearing

e. Required to pay a fine or a reasonable sum by way of compensation for identified and quantified loss.

f. Required to perform unpaid services for the University community to a maximum of 40 hours

g. Excluded from the University for a fixed period of time, up to a maximum of twelve months. A student who is excluded from the University has restricted rights to enter University premises and to participate in University activities. The terms of the exclusion will be notified to the student in writing. An order of exclusion may include a requirement that the student shall have no contact with a named person or persons

h. Suspended from the University for a fixed period of time, up to a maximum of twelve months. A student who is suspended is prohibited from entering University premises, and from participating in University activities. Suspension may be subject to qualification, such as permission to take an examination. The terms of the suspension will be notified to the student in writing. An order of suspension may include a requirement that the student shall have no contact with a named person or persons

i. Expelled from the University, which means that the student ceases to be a member of the University, and loses all rights and privileges of membership.

7.4 Where misconduct relates to examinations or other assessed work, a recommendation may be made to the appropriate Board of Examiners that it should:

a) Award the student lower marks than those which he or she would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the examination or assessed work in which the student committed the offence

b) Award the student lower marks than those which he or she would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the unit of which the examination or assessed work was part

c) Award the student a lower class of degree or other academic award than that which he or she would otherwise have been awarded.

d) Exclude the student from the award of a degree or other academic award. This may be either permanent or for a stated period, and may be absolute or subject to compliance with stipulated requirements.

7.5 Where an allegation of misconduct is upheld against a student on a health care programme that requires professional registration, that student may be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. The University Secretary will consult with the Dean of School and advise accordingly.

8   Mental illness

If it appears to those considering an allegation of misconduct that the student in question is suffering from mental illness or mental instability, the proceedings may be adjourned for the preparation of a medical report.

If there is medical evidence that the student is suffering from mental illness or mental instability, those dealing with the case may suspend or terminate the proceedings, if it is felt appropriate to do so. It may be made a condition of suspension or termination of the proceedings that the student seeks medical treatment.

9   Appeals

9.1   A student may appeal against a finding of guilt. The appeal must be made to the University Secretary within twenty-eight days of the conclusion of the proceedings, which includes the imposition of a penalty. The student must set out in writing the grounds on which the appeal is based.

9.2   There will be no entitlement to a rehearing of the case, which will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances.

9.3   The appeal will be submitted to the Principal, who will judge whether or not a prima facie case exists on the basis that:

- there has been demonstrably an irregularity in the disciplinary procedure;

- evidence has become available that it was not reasonable to present during the original hearing.

9.4   In the event that a re-hearing is judged appropriate by the Principal, a panel will be convened.

9.5   An appeals committee will be constituted as described in Section 6.1 above. The Legal Adviser will act as technical adviser to the Panel and the University Secretary will nominate a clerk to the committee. The student may be accompanied by a friend or representative at this meeting.

9.6   The committee hearing the appeal may overturn the finding of guilt where they consider it just to do so. In particular, a finding may be overturned in the light of new evidence; or where it is considered that the original hearing was not conducted fairly; or where the finding of guilt was unreasonable in the light of the findings of fact. The student may present the appeal in person or in writing as he or she chooses, and may be accompanied by an adviser, friend or other representative.

9.7   A student may appeal against a penalty imposed following a finding of guilt. The appeal must be made to the University Secretary within twenty-eight days of the conclusion of the proceedings. The student must set out in writing the grounds on which the appeal is based.

9.8   The committee hearing an appeal against penalty may impose a lesser or greater penalty, having considered whether the original penalty imposed was fair and reasonable in the light of all the circumstances of the case, and the student's means and general personal circumstances.

10   Independent review

10.1   The University's internal procedures having been exhausted, a student may seek review of his/her complaint by an independent person, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman [SPSO].

10.2   The Ombudsman is independent and her staff will advise whether or not the complaint is one that they can investigate. Normally the student will have to tell the Ombudsman about his/her complaint within 12 months of first knowing about the problem about which they are complaining, although the Ombudsman may look at complaints outside this limit, if she thinks there is good reason to do so.

10.3   There are some restrictions on what the Ombudsman can investigate. For example, she cannot consider the subject matter of complaints about personnel matters or matters of academic judgement. However, she may be able to investigate the manner in which the complaint was handled. If the complaint is appropriate to her office and is investigated, the Ombudsman's staff will send details of how this will be done.

10.4   The complaint should be submitted in writing to the Ombudsman, and should include any relevant documents including correspondence with the University and the University's response to the complaint. This can be sent to the Ombudsman without cost at the freepost address given below. A student may discuss the complaint with an Investigator at the SPSO before deciding to submit.

10.5   The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman has an online complaint form accessible through the website although papers in support of the complaint would still have to be supplied to the Ombudsman by post or other means. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman can also supply paper complaint forms direct to complainants.

10.6   Further information may be accessed through the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman website or by calling her office for advice. Contact details are:

Freepost SPSO, SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS
Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9am–5pm, Tuesday 10am–5pm
SPSO freephone **0800 377 7330**
Website **www.spso.org.uk**
Online contact form **www.spso.org.uk/contact-form**
You can fill in the complaints form online at **www.spso.org.uk/complain/form**
Fax **0800 377 7331**

12. RESEARCH ETHICS GUIDELINES, PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

SECTION 1

Ethical Principles to guide research involving human participants

1.   Introduction

Ethics permeates all research, so only by getting it right can research excellence be achieved. It is essential for researchers to gain an understanding of ethical principles, because in practice ethical issues are often complex, relative to the particular research project, relative to the competence of the research team and require the reasonable anticipation of likely future risks and problems. The core of ethical research is the ethical sensitivity of the research team, which is an art based on principles rather than a rule-governed process, or a set of tick box barriers to be overcome before the real work can begin.

Ethical research requires a balance to be struck between minimising probable harm and advancing academic knowledge, being appropriate in terms of human dignity, and in social and cultural impact. Researchers should use the basic ethical principles outlined here to guide their decisions about how to conduct research, how to treat their research participants and how to handle the data that they gather about them. For much research the relevant decisions are straightforward or have sound precedents.

Issues such as protection of identity, privacy, obtaining informed consent, communicating appropriately with participants, ensuring participant autonomy and freedom of choice, and ensuring that no harm comes to participants or researchers are among the many ethical issues that people planning research must have in their minds. Additionally, researchers have a moral responsibility to tell the truth and to preserve participant confidentiality.

However, in some cases deciding on an acceptable ethical approach within a study may be more difficult. Top quality research is by definition innovative and may pose new ethical challenges. For these reasons, although the competence of the research team is critical (imagine surgery by the untrained), neither the track record of the team, nor the prestige of the institution waives the need for an adequate ethical review process.

The ethics review process at QMU aims to be collaborative and constructive. In considering ethical issues from the conceptual stage of a proposal it is intended to enhance the quality of research and increases the chances of productive funding and publication outcomes. In cases where ethical approval is not granted at the first stage, the aim is that discussion with members of the School or University Ethics Panel is used to achieve an acceptable approach that should also facilitate positive research outcomes for students and staff.

2.   The Main Ethical Principles

There are four 'clusters' of moral principles which provide a framework for making decisions about the ethical aspects of a study (Beauchamp and Childress, 2001).

   *   **Respect for people's autonomy**

* **Non-maleficence; do no harm**

* **Beneficence; do good**

* **Justice**

It is hard at the ethical approval stage for research to guarantee doing good and being just, but it is critical for it to avoid disrespecting people's autonomy or harming them.

2.1   Respect for Autonomy

2.1.1 Dignity

Participants in research should be treated with appropriate dignity. A rule of thumb test is for researchers to ask whether they would consider it appropriate for a beloved family member to participate in the research. Historical cases abound of research participants being treated in undignified, even brutal, ways that are clearly unethical. Nonetheless, sometimes research requires intrusive, invasive, tedious or unpleasant treatment of participants. Participating can be boring, stressful, challenging, upsetting or even painful. Such 'invasive' research protocols need to be justified by the potential benefits of the research. It is essential to consider also the social impact of the research results, independently of the scientific impact. Cases have occurred where because of the rarity or uniqueness of participants, their anonymity has easily been violated and social stigma and other harm has resulted.

2.1.2 Informed Consent

Respect for autonomy also requires ensuring that research participants have truly consented to participate in the research, of their own free will, without coercion or manipulation of any kind and fully informed of the risks, benefits and consequences of their participation. This is not simply about getting the required signature on the consent form.

All research involving human beings requires informed consent. This applies even to tissue samples or data acquired about those people for other purposes.

To ensure genuine informed consent, it is essential that researchers consider the extent to which the people being recruited are capable of fully and freely giving their informed consent. There are two common restrictions on this, which often need to be dealt with. First, when the people to be recruited are, in some sense, vulnerable or limited in their capacity to consent in an autonomous fashion. Researchers who are working with vulnerable people such as children, prisoners, those with some form of mental illness or incapacity or the very sick or old will need to pay particular attention to the way in which they gain informed consent. The process of gaining informed consent from young people and children is complex and must be informed by current legislation (BMA, 2000).

Second, when the demand characteristics of the social situation where the research occurs implicitly or explicitly coerces people into participating in the research. Examples include potential participants believing that the research will benefit them, believing that their therapy or treatment will suffer if they do not participate, believing that significant others, whether friends, family or professionals, will think badly of them, and believing that they will,

in some sense, 'stand out' or be incriminated by refusal. For example, does refusal imply that they have something to hide?

A third, rarer, limitation is when research offers money or other benefits that are so large as to easily persuade people to participate for the benefits alone. This is generally considered to exclude modest payments to cover the costs of travel and inconvenience. Pay and other benefits offered should be modest in proportion to the effort required to participate.

2.1.3 Who Should Consent?

Only persons able to freely understand, question and refuse without fear of sanction or reprisal can give informed consent. For research involving participants who may lack the capacity for understanding and questioning, such as children, people with mental or intellectual difficulties, or people severely ill or heavily medicated, consent should be obtained from a parent, carer or other person serving in a responsible capacity AND from the participant themselves, to the extent that they are capable of understanding and offering consent. Ingenuity needs to be exercised in providing satisfactory consent procedures in such cases. Consent from the parent or carer alone is rarely adequate.

The freedom to refuse to participate in research is potentially threatened where there is a power imbalance between the prospective participant and the researcher, along with their perceived allies. For example, students may believe that refusing to participate in staff research will not count well for them when they are being educationally assessed. This can occur even if the researcher is not directly one of the student's teachers. The two key methods of ensuring true refusal are:

- to ensure whenever possible that the research team is completely independent of anybody in a position of power over the potential participants, and
- that the procedures to ensure independence are explicit during the informed consent process. For example, should the medical consultant be one of the research team (as is often the case), it should be clear that they will have no knowledge of whether an individual patient has participated or not. Where this is impossible, other means of enabling true refusal should be actively written into the research protocol.

It is also important to remember that research on groups, societies, organisations, institutions and their members also 'involves human beings' who ought to consent to it occurring. This does not necessarily mean obtaining consent from everybody, but appropriate procedures should be in place for collective consent, treating the organisation as the 'participant'.

2.1.4 The Process of Informed Consent

All international declarations stipulate that, prior to consent, each participant in a research project should be clearly informed of its goals, its possible adverse events, and the possibility to refuse to enter or to retract at any time with no consequences. How to inform is a critical part of the process. Participants are rarely able to recall what they have agreed upon when signing an informed consent form. An example Information Sheet and Consent Form can be found in Appendix 2.

The following strategies may help to safeguard informed consent:

- Close attention to the language and readability of written material, which includes translation procedures for non-native language speakers.
- Honest explanation of the possible risks and benefits of participation. Particular caution should be exercised to avoid 'lies of omission'; if the research procedure is boring, unpleasant or simply lengthy, it is best to make this clear.
- The opportunity for potential participants to discuss the project and ask questions with somebody sympathetic who understands the research: Ideally one of the research team.
- Use of alternative media, such as visual information.
- In complex or hazardous cases, the informed consent procedure should involve a detailed interview and discussion, rather than the mere signing of paperwork.

2.1.5 The Informed Consent Form

This usually includes an actual form to be signed, along with an information sheet and as much additional material as is appropriate. This entire pack constitutes 'the consent form'.

Two general questions should be answered on the information sheet:

- What are the likely benefits of the research for science, for society and for the research participants? This should enable potential participants to make an informed choice to participate, even if there are risks. Researchers should avoid the temptation to exaggerate about benefits.

- How will participants and the data about them be protected? This should include explanation of how confidentiality will be ensured and what data will be retained where, in what format.

Other information that should be included in the information sheet includes:

- A clear explanation of who is involved in the research, what their roles are, and who to contact for further information or in case of concern.
- A clear and appropriately brief description of the research explaining its purposes, how long participation will take, what will happen and which, if any, parts of the research involve new or experimental procedures.
- An explanation of any screening procedures used to select participants.
- An accurate description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts. Notably, much research interviewing people poses some risk of participant distress, should the topics covered include ones sensitive to individual people.
- A modest description of any benefits that may reasonably be expected as a result of participating, to the participants and to others.
- In research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation of insurance and compensation procedures, should harm occur.
- An explanation of the procedures that will be followed should the research discover important information about the participant. Two common dilemmas are:

- When research incidentally discovers signs of disease or abnormality. In most cases the appropriate procedure is to notify the participant and refer to appropriate health care professionals. In some cases it is appropriate for the participant to choose to not be informed, or be informed, as part of the consent procedure. Genetic screening research is one example.
- When research incidentally discovers a significant risk of harm to the participant by others, or by the participant to others. With children under 16, researchers are legally obliged to disclose such risks to appropriate people and this is a limit on confidentiality.

- In research involving interventions or treatments, a clear explanation of alternative approaches that participants might use instead.
- An explanation of procedures used to preserve confidentiality and anonymity (see 2.4.1).
- A statement explaining that participation is entirely voluntary and that participants may withdraw at any time, for any reason, without explanation or obligation to the research team and without repercussions elsewhere.

2.2   Non-Maleficence; Do no harm

<u>Researchers must not harm their study participants.</u> But, even simple time-wasting can be harmful, so it is the research team's duty to weigh up the potential for harm against the benefits of the study and to come to a justifiable conclusion. It is also the team's duty to ensure that research which carries a risk of harm should only be conducted by competent research teams. Many potential ethical issues can be resolved by ensuring that the research team has sufficient competence to manage problems appropriately. For example, a badly designed survey by an undergraduate may waste participants' time, where a well-designed one would not.

2.2.1 Competence

The normal model for a research team is that there are one or more researchers who directly interact with participants and one or more supervisors who oversee. Part of the ethics review process is to establish that the research team is competent to (a) minimise harm, (b) conduct research that is like to be of sufficient quality to be worth any risks of harm, which at the mildest level includes wasting participants' time and effort, and (c) manage serious harm should it arise, even if it is very unlikely. Competence is a function of relevant skills, experience, training to be achieved during the research process and the devotion of appropriate time and effort to the research project. A good research team has an appropriate mix of competencies. When researchers are less competent, then supervisors need to be more competent and supervise more closely. Therefore, particular care should be exercised in decisions about what types of research can be conducted by undergraduates. Staff teaching loads can sometimes make close supervision difficult, so unless a student has special demonstrable competencies caution should be exercised in developing undergraduate research that raises major ethical issues. Conversely, a team with specialist expertise can conduct research that might be unethical conducted by a team without such competencies. Where appropriate, it is important to report on the team's competence in the ethics

application. A track record of publications in the area is not always sufficient. There are also specialised competencies that need to be considered. For instance, researchers working with young people or other vulnerable groups will need to be police checked according to current Disclosure Scotland guidelines (www.disclosurescotland.co.uk) Researchers who intend to work with children should consider this when planning the timescale of their research.

2.2.2 Risk Assessment and Risk Management

In order to address the issue of 'risk of harm', researchers must demonstrate that they have exercised a standard of due care. As well as being competent, this involves <u>identifying</u> the likely risks, <u>assessing the probability</u> that they will occur, <u>evaluating</u> the risk to determine its acceptability in relation to the objectives of the research and finally <u>managing</u> the risks which involves the steps that can be taken to minimise them (Beauchamp and Childress, 2001:199).

Common examples of managing risk include:

- Screening procedures that identify participants more likely to come to harm through the research.
- Competence to work with participants who become distressed, including being able to listen and communicate appropriately about the distress and being able to refer to further counselling should this be required
- Sufficient knowledge to provide advice about services or help as a result of discussing needs which are not being met
- Sufficient knowledge to discuss the benefits of appropriate interventions
- Adequate post-research debriefing, including offering explanations of any necessary deception or withholding of information.
- Appropriate research training on the proposed research techniques: For example, appropriate specialist interview skills; specific experimental methods; specialist biological sampling.
- Appropriate risk assessment for the conduct of the research, including any physical or biological risks faced by researchers and participants.
- Adequate supervisory procedures to address researchers' difficult thoughts and feelings about the research and the participants, to reduce harm to researchers.

2.3 Beneficence: Do good

Will the research truly benefit the individual participants, or those like them? Will the research truly benefit some wider or more abstract entity such as science, knowledge, or society? Naturally, researchers generally hope the answer to at least some of these questions is 'yes'. However, in justifying research it is important to reflect upon and respect conflicting notions of benefit. It is unethical to assume that benefit to participants, to science, or to society are an absolute good. Contemporary disagreements abound: For example, over animal rights, over the age at which the foetus becomes a person, or the appropriate balance between eroding individual liberties and promoting safety.

When research can genuinely indicate likely beneficence, then this is important ethically and may justify research that would otherwise seem excessively hazardous to participants. However, this situation is relatively rare. Usually, ethical research involving human participants is about minimising harm, rather than increasing likely benefits.

2.4   Justice

It is important to treat people equally and fairly and ensure that they are accorded their full rights. In research practice, much of this occurs under issues of truly informed consent (see 2.4.2). It is also worth mentioning the need to consider issues of participant selection criteria. There are often legitimate reasons for restricting a study to a specific gender, or excluding non-native speakers of the predominant language, or excluding specific ethnicities. However, sometimes these choices are made mainly for convenience, which may be ethically debatable and can require justification. There are many instances where convenient sampling criteria have resulted in a consequent lack of knowledge of whether findings apply to excluded groups. Any inclusion or exclusion criteria to be employed in the research should be clearly outlined and justified in the ethical approval application. There are also issues, now widely recognised by research councils and the NHS, of the extent to which research participants are entitled to help form the research agenda. Participant involvement in research design is good practice.

2.4.1 Confidentiality

As well as being a basic rule of research ethics, confidentiality is also the subject of considerable literature and legislation including the Data Protection Act 2018. It is important to keep confidentiality distinct from anonymity.

Anonymity involves the protection of the participant so that even the research team cannot link them to the information provided. Nowadays, this not only requires the avoidance of names, but also other identifier information such as postcodes. Moreover, particularly in small-scale more qualitative studies, some participants may be identifiable solely by the data they provide. Consequently, true anonymity from start to finish is relatively rare in research and should not be offered unless it is really provided.

Confidentiality in contrast involves the prevention of disclosure of identity other than to authorised people, for authorised purposes. For example in the NHS, patient records are confidential, but may be accessed by any NHS staff for appropriate purposes; but not for inappropriate ones. Using records for malicious gossip would be a serious breach of confidentiality.

In most research projects confidentiality is a process, rather than a condition. It is important to make clear to participants what confidentiality involves and what measures will be in place to protect participants from unwanted violations of confidentiality.

If the data are retained for further research researchers need to ensure that the informed consent form explains and justifies this. Applicants should describe the measures taken to encode or anonymise stored data. Generally, data sets should be anonymised as soon as it is reasonable to do so, even if this requires the loss of potentially useful information. Even

where only anonymised data are used, adequate security for storage and handling of such data must be demonstrated. This includes avoiding the unnecessary duplication of electronic data sets, which increases the chances of their being misused.

2.4.2. Data Storage

The data protection act and confidentiality requirements (see above) pose a dilemma for data storage, which is another ethical requirement of research. If research is not going to be published in the public domain, but was conducted primarily for educational purposes, then raw data should be destroyed once the research work has been educationally assessed. Any data retained electronically should have all personal identifying information removed. QM has electronic (eResearch, QMU Research Repository: http://eresearch.qmu.ac.uk/) and physical data repositories and is developing a thesis repository (http://etheses.qmu.ac.uk/). Please contact Information Services for further details. For research that may be published in the public domain whether this is student or staff work, raw research data needs to be stored for a reasonable period of time so that it can be re-accessed and checked should issues or queries arise (for example from conflicting findings by other research teams). The QMU Retention Policy is that raw data, including interview tapes, completed questionnaires, and other material, generally should be retained for five years after the research programme is completed, although this can vary depending on funder and other requirements. Additionally, signed consent forms should be kept separately from the data for 12 months on campus and thereafter in remote secure storage for the duration of the retention of the physical data. It is the responsibility of the principal researcher to store data securely for the appropriate length of time. Storage will normally be in the Subject Area.

2.5.   Academic freedom and restrictions on publication

QMU policy is opposed to research that has restrictions placed on the publication of findings (see Appendix 4). These restrictions are usually placed by some funders, including some NHS, government and industry sources. Sometimes there are legitimate ethical reasons for restricting publication, for example to protect commercial interests. However, is becoming more common for funders to stipulate that they own the intellectual rights to research they have funded, simply to control the information and, potentially prevent or manage its release into the public domain. This is contrary to the spirit of academic inquiry and such research is arguably unethical because it colludes in the suppression of information. Research at QMU should not be contracted with strong clauses restricting publication. This should have been negotiated during the funding application process, but the Ethics Panel reserves the right to challenge the ethical probity of research where publication of findings has been restricted by the funding contract.

SECTION 2

Procedures for Ethical Approval

1.   SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

Without recorded ethics approval, under no circumstances can a research project proceed at QMU. The process of applying for ethical approval at QMU is described in this section, and is outlined in the flowchart in Appendix 1. The research team are responsible for applying for approval in a timely manner.

Research should not collect any data from participants, or use other data that is not in the public domain until Ethical Approval has been granted. So doing potentially constitutes serious research misconduct. In some circumstances, the data collected may be inadmissible. In serious cases students or staff involved may be subject to disciplinary procedures. If anyone becomes aware that research data is being collected or used without Ethical Approval, then they should immediately notify their Head of Division/Research Centre and the Research Ethics Panel. At minimum, staff and students will be required to suspend data collection/use immediately until Ethical Approval is obtained. The Research Ethics Panel cannot guarantee that approval will be granted retrospectively for data already collected.

The first step in gaining ethical approval is to complete an 'Application for Ethical Approval for a Research Project'. This form is available on QMU's website, or can be obtained from the Secretary to the Research Ethics Panel: researchethics@qmu.ac.uk

Most questions on the form are self-explanatory. Section 1 of this document – Ethical Principles to guide research – should be read before the Application for Ethical Approval is completed.

It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the Application for Ethical Approval form is fully completed, legible and literate, and has any supplementary material such as consent forms or information sheets attached as appropriate. Any form that deviates markedly from this standard will be returned to the applicant by the Head of Division, without review.

2.   THE ROLE OF THE HEAD OF DIVISION/RESEARCH CENTRE OR OTHER AUTHORISED PERSON

The completed application with information sheet and consent form included as appropriate, should be submitted to the Head of Division/Research Centre for consideration. The Head of Division/Research Centre will review the application and supplementary material, and will make a decision from four possible alternatives. External applicants wishing to conduct research using staff or students at QMU should apply directly to the University Research Ethics Panel, providing a copy of the approved ethics application obtained from their own organisation. If ethical approval has not been granted by their own organisation then they should complete the QMU standard form and submit it to the Secretary of the Research Ethics Panel.

2.1   If the application has been incorrectly completed, relevant information omitted or necessary supplementary material not included, the Head of Division should tick *'I refer this application*

back to the applicant because…' The reason(s) for referring the form back should be given, and the form signed and returned to the applicant. No record of the application need be kept by the Head of Division in this case.

2.2 If the application has been completed correctly and all relevant information included, there are three remaining alternatives, which should be considered in the order they are listed. The first, *'I refer this application to the Research Ethics Panel'*, should be chosen if any of the following circumstances apply:

- where any non-routine harm, physical or psychological discomfort, or physical, biological or psychological risk is involved;
- where participants are used who are under 16 or over 65 years of age or whose ability to give voluntary consent is limited, including cognitively impaired persons, prisoners, persons with a chronic physical or mental condition, or those who live in or are connected to an institutional environment;
- where any invasive technique is involved, DNA testing, or collection of bodily fluids or tissue;
- where a degree or duration of exercise or physical exertion is involved that might be painful, stressful or hazardous to some participants;
- where manipulation of cognitive or affective human responses are involved which could cause stress or anxiety;
- where drugs, including liquid and food additives or other substances, are administered for research purposes;
- where deception of participants is used of a nature which might cause distress or which might reasonably affect their willingness to participate in the research;
- where highly personal, intimate or other private or confidential information is sought;
- where payment is made to participants other than to cover expenses or time involved.
- Where restriction is intended on the publication of results (see Appendix 4)
- Where the research involves a 'sensitive' research topic. Researchers, in particular undergraduate students, should carefully consider the implications of conducting research in sensitive topic areas which may cause emotional distress to participants or the researcher themselves, for example:
    - domestic abuse
    - rape or sexual assault
    - psychological disorders e.g. Self-harm, eating disorders
    - Illegal or unethical activities e.g., crime, drug abuse
    - acute or terminal illness

Please note this list is not exhaustive.

Unless there are established research procedures at QM to deal with a specific sensitive topic that have previously been agreed to be minor invasive, research involving sensitive topics should be referred to the REP.

2.3 The second option, '*I find this application acceptable and an application for ethical approval should now be submitted to a relevant external committee'*, should be chosen if any of the following apply:

- The proposed research includes use of NHS patients or employees as subjects, NHS data, or it will be carried out (wholly or partly) on NHS premises.
- The applicant has indicated that ethical approval from another body will be required.
- The Head of Division knows that ethical approval from another body will be required.

Where a student is submitting to an external committee, the application should be seen and checked by the Head of Division before it is submitted externally.

2.4 The third option, *'I grant ethical approval for this research'*, should be chosen if none of the above bullet points apply and the Head of Division (or other authorised person) is satisfied that the research can proceed ethically.

2.5 In all three cases, once signed by the Head of Division/Research Centre, the application form must be submitted to the Secretary to the Research Ethics Panel to be logged on a centrally-maintained record of applications. Applications referred to the Research Ethics Panel must be received before the submission deadline in order to be considered at the next review period. Submission deadlines will be published by the Secretary to the Panel at the start of the academic year, and reminders will be circulated throughout the year.

3.   THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS PANEL

The Research Ethics Panel reviews applications on a monthly basis. The application submission deadline will be the second Friday of each month and the dates will be published online before the start of each academic year. The Panel's membership and remit can be found in Appendix 3. External applicants wishing to conduct research using staff or students at QMU should apply directly to the University Research Ethics Panel (see 2. above).

3.1 Applications for ethical approval referred to the Panel by a Head of Division/Research Centre are reviewed by three members of the Panel and a decision regarding approval is reached. The members' comments are submitted to the Secretary who will communicate the Panel's decision to the applicant in writing approximately two working days after the decision is reached.

3.2 There are three possible options available to the Panel when considering an application. The first, *'The Panel agrees that full ethical approval could be granted for the research'*, will be chosen when the Panel are satisfied that the researcher has taken all necessary steps to ensure that the research will be conducted ethically, and that any potential risk to applicants has been considered and minimised.

3.3 The second option is *'The Panel agrees that amendments to the application are required before ethical approval can be granted for the research'*. This will be chosen when the Panel supports the proposed research in principle, but agree that amendments to the application must be made before ethical approval can be granted. The amendments required by the Panel will be communicated to the applicant in writing by the Secretary. The amended application

should be submitted to the Secretary in the first instance. It will then be reviewed by three members of the Panel and the Convener. If satisfied that the required amendments have been appropriately completed, ethical approval may be granted by Convener's Action.

3.4   The third option available to the Panel is *'The Panel invites the applicant to resubmit a revised application to its next meeting'*. This option will be chosen when the Panel agrees that the proposed research involves significant ethical issues that have not been adequately addressed by the applicant in the application for ethical approval. The issues raised by the Panel when considering the application will be notified to the applicant in writing by the Secretary, along with the submission deadline and date of the next meeting. The revised application should be submitted to the Secretary for review by the Panel members that reviewed the original application. If the applicant chooses to resubmit on another topic, an application should be submitted to the Head of Division/Research Centre in the first instance and should be treated as a new application.

3.5   Where applicants require an urgent decision on their application, a special request for fast track approval should be lodged with the Secretary. Fast track involves the review process described above, but reviewers' comments are returned directly to the Convener for decision.The Panel reserves the right to delay fast tracked applications to the next application cycle, should the Convener deem this necessary.

3.6   Please note that fast tracking should only be requested in exceptional circumstances. Researchers should allow sufficient time in the planning of their research for completing the ethical approval process, including, if necessary, revisions to the application or resubmission to the Panel.

4.   **ATTENDANCE OF THE APPLICANT AT A PANEL MEETING**

If the application has been referred by the Head of Division/Research Centre to the Research Ethics Panel, the applicant may be invited to attend a meeting of the Panel to answer further, verbal questions. The purpose of attendance would be to help Panel members gain a better understanding of the proposal. This could speed up the process of approval.

Staff applicants would normally attend the meeting on their own. Undergraduate and MSc students should be accompanied by the supervisor of the research project as named on the application form, or an alternate if the supervisor is not available. Professionalt doctorate students and PhD students have the option of attending alone or with their supervisor.

The Secretary of the Panel will inform applicants of the date of the relevant meeting and ask that this time is kept free. Applicants will be informed approximately three days in advance of the meeting whether attendance will be necessary.

5.   **CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESEARCHER**

Any changes to the programme of research which are made following the granting of ethical approval and which would result in different information being given in any section of the Application for Ethical Approval form, should be notified to the Secretary to the Research Ethics Panel, who will advise on any action required. A report is also required should there be

any adverse occurrences or any results that raise questions about the safety of the research. Notification should be submitted to the Panel on completion of the research.

6. **DEFINING DIFFERENT RESEARCH PROCEDURES – NON-INVASIVE, MINOR INVASIVE AND MAJOR INVASIVE RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

These distinctions originated in medical research, where the distinctions are relatively obvious in terms of physical harm or disturbance. Invasive procedures involve the possibility of major harm, even if there may also be major benefits. Minor invasive procedures pose a risk of some harm and non-invasive procedures are unlikely to be harmful at all. These distinctions can also be applied to research with human participants that is not physically invasive.

6.1 **A non-invasive procedure** in humans would be one where it was unlikely that anybody would find participating at all stressful, upsetting, disturbing or psychologically or socially harmful. Usually, this requires a short procedure, a topic not controversial, stigmatising or distressing, no deception or discomfort during the procedure and highly confidential data handling procedures. Truly non-invasive procedures require only the addressing of standard ethical issues, clear demonstration that they are non-invasive, and should generally be approved by School/ Subject ethics committees.

6.2 **A minor invasive procedure**, in contrast, might be stressful, upsetting, disturbing, or psychologically or socially harmful, but probable harm would be brief and limited in nature relative to the participants' lives. For example, some participants will find somewhat invasive any procedure that involves any overt or implied element of personal appraisal, because they have concerns about doing things properly or appropriately. On the other hand, someone suffering from a serious illness might find an interview about it only mildly invasive, compared to the invasion and upset already associated with their clinical care. To judge research non-invasive it is important to make a positive case that upset is highly unlikely and/or worth the benefits to participants and research. Minor invasive procedures additionally require the addressing of procedures to recognise and minimise upset should it occur and clear demonstration that the procedure is not major invasive. When the same or similar procedures have been used before at QMU, then these may be approved by the School/ Subject ethics procedures. **Minor invasive procedures commonly used in the subject should be referred to the University Ethics Panel on first use at QMU and part of the application should document their common use in the subject beyond QMU.**

6.3 **Major invasive procedures** are those where some participants are likely to find participation stressful, disturbing, or psychologically or socially harmful, and probable harm could be protracted or severe. That only a small minority of participants may respond in this manner does not render the procedure minor invasive. In addition to requirements for minor and non-invasive procedures, applications for ethical approval for major invasive techniques should explain how risks are to be minimised and how the research team is collectively competent to minimise and manage harm, should it occur. **Major invasive procedures should be referred to the University Ethics Panel.**

A research procedure being major invasive is a function of the nature of the participants, the research topic, the research procedures themselves and the competence of the research

team. Vulnerable participants, intimate, illegal, stigmatised or controversial research topics, protracted, demanding, physically stressful or tedious research procedures and a less competent team make it more likely that the procedure will be major invasive.

6.4 The Panel delegates responsibility for approving non-invasive and established minor invasive research procedures to the Schools. As discussed above, these criteria are relative to (a) the participants, (b) the researchers and (c) the research topic. Significant changes in any of these should be referred to the Research Ethics Panel in the first instance. For example, that some staff commonly use a technique does not justify its use by a student not supervised by any staff member experienced in the technique. Another example is that the invasiveness of questionnaires or interviews is heavily topic-dependent.

A reasonable principle is often that research procedures approved for vulnerable participants, less experienced researchers and more sensitive topics can often be conducted unproblematically with less vulnerable participants, more experienced researchers and less sensitive topics.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Division or Subject Area Ethics Committee if applicable to keep an updated list of approved methods in that school or subject and to provide the University Ethics Panel with this list at least once a year. This list will include relevant information about any restrictions on this approval in terms of researchers, participants or topics.

Process for Obtaining Ethical Opinion at QMU-wide Research Ethics Panel level – guidance on deciding which committee (internal or external) should grant approval is available from researchethics@qmu.ac.uk
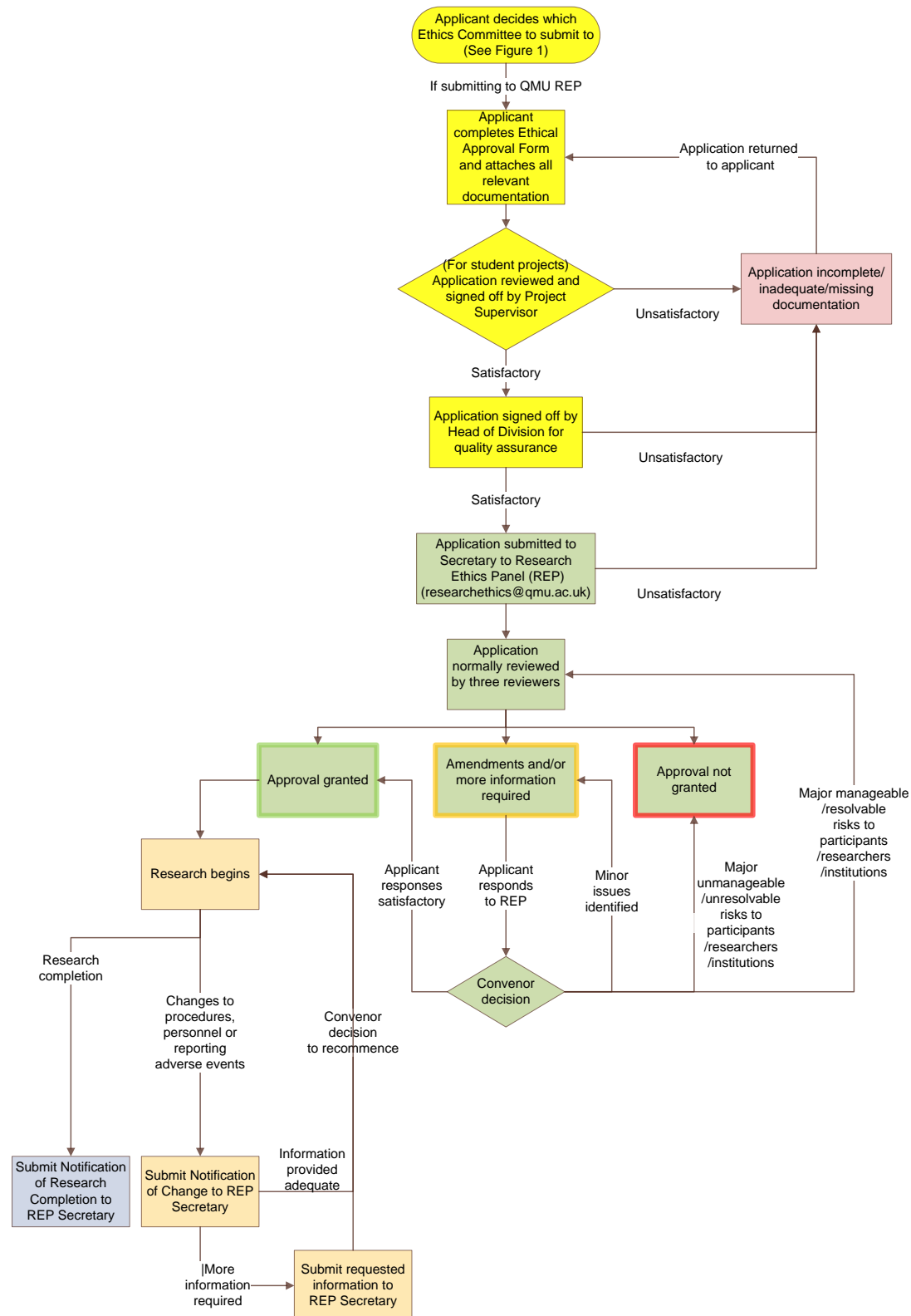
Appendix 2

Research Ethics Panel Remit and Membership

Remit

To ensure that the research conducted in the University complies with appropriate ethical standards and to make recommendations to the Research Strategy as set out below.

The Panel will have delegated authority to:

a)   determine the ethical propriety of such research projects as are referred to it;
b)   provide advice to researchers and supervisors on the ethical propriety of their research;
c)   review on a regular basis the University's Guidelines on Ethics related to research;

Membership

Convener   Nominee of the Research Strategy Committee

Nominated   Three academic representatives nominated from the academic staff of each School, who are actively involved in research

Secretary   To be appointed by the University Secretary

Frequency   Business is conducted virtually. Applications are circulated to reviewers following submission of all required documentation to researchethics@qmu.ac.uk

Example Consent Form

Note: This is an example of a consent form. You will need to adapt it for your own study.

<div align="center">"The title of the project goes here"</div>

☐ I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.

☐ I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this study.

☐ I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage without giving any reason.

☐ I agree to participate in this study.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Contact details of the researcher

Name of researcher: Sam Student

Address: Undergraduate Student, Division, School
                                         Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
                                         Queen Margaret University Drive
                                         Musselburgh
                                         East Lothian, EH21 6UU

Email / Telephone: sstudent@qmu.ac.uk / 0131 474 0000

Note: You should give your QMU (not home) contact details.

Example Information Sheet for Potential Participants

Note: This is an example of an information sheet for potential participants. You will need to adapt it for your own study.

My name is Sam Student and I am an undergraduate student from the School of xxxxxxxxxx at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. As part of my degree course, I am undertaking a research project for my Honours dissertation. The title of my project is: xxxxxxxxxx

This study will investigate / is about / is looking into xxxxxxxxxx.

[*If applicable:* The findings of the project will be useful / valuable because xxxxxxxxxx.]

[*If applicable:* This research is being funded by xxxxxxxxxx.]

I am looking for volunteers to participate in the project. There are no criteria (e.g. gender, age, or health) for being included or excluded – everyone is welcome to take part. [*If there are inclusion / exclusion criteria then these should be stated.*]

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to xxxxxxxxxx. There is a risk that xxxxxxxxxx / The researcher is not aware of any risks associated with xxxxxxxxxx. The whole procedure should take no longer than xx minutes. You will be free to withdraw from the study at any stage and you would not have to give a reason.

[*If applicable:* Since your participation will involve you travelling to Queen Margaret University especially, you will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses.]

All data will be anonymised as much as possible, but you may be identifiable from tape recordings of your voice / *or* xxxxxxxxxx. Your name will be replaced with a participant number, and it will not be possible for you to be identified in any reporting of the data gathered.

The results may be published in a journal or presented at a conference / *or* xxxxxxxxxx.

All of your personal information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Processing your personal information is necessary for the performance of a public task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in us as the Data Controller (GDPR Article 6 (1)(e) and for statistical and research purposes (Article 89 GDPR).

Appropriate security measures including anonymisation will be put in place to protect your data at all times. Your personal data will be treated with confidentiality and will not be shared with any third

party or transferred out with the EEA without your express permission or without ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place. Your data will only be retained for as long as is necessary. You have the right to withdraw your consent to us processing your personal data at any time. In order to do so, please contact [name and contact details]. Please note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs before you withdraw consent, therefore it is advisable to contact us as soon as possible if you wish to withdraw your consent. We will destroy your identifiable data upon request, where possible, however in some situations we will require to use the data collected up until your withdrawal of consent. If you have any questions relating to the processing of your data which are not resolved by contacting [your name/researcher] please contact the QMU Data Protection Officer -LKerr2@qmu.ac.uk

If you would like to contact an independent person, who knows about this project but is not involved in it, you are welcome to contact Dr Chris Lecturer. Her contact details are given below.

If you have read and understood this information sheet, any questions you had have been answered, and you would like to be a participant in the study, please now see the consent form.

Contact details of the researcher

Name of researcher: Sam Student

Address: Undergraduate Student, Division, School
                        Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
                        Queen Margaret University Drive
                        Musselburgh
                        East Lothian, EH21 6UU

Email / Telephone: sstudent@qmu.ac.uk / 0131 474 0000

Contact details of the independent adviser (note that the independent adviser cannot be a member of your supervisory team)

Name of adviser: Dr Chris Lecturer

Address: Post, Division, School
                        Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
                        Queen Margaret University Drive
                        Musselburgh
                        East Lothian, EH21 6UU

Email / Telephone: clecturer@qmu.ac.uk / 0131 474 0000

Note: You should give only QMU (not home) contact details.

Restriction on Publication

a) Clauses which give the funder the right to restrict publication of results are sometimes sought by private companies who are intending to fund university research. They are also sometimes sought by government departments. Restrictions are usually (but not always) time limited and they may be more or less draconian in nature. For example, an agreement which requires the funder to provide written justification for turning down a request to publish obviously presents less of an obstacle than a right to veto in the absence of such a requirement.

b) The impact of a delay in publication will vary from one instance to another. In a rapidly developing field, a delay of two years might render the results out-of-date and therefore unpublishable. In another case, such a delay might have little effect on the publishability of the results.

c) The reasons behind demands for restrictions on publication include military security, commercial advantage and risks to third parties. Research on a communication system between fighter pilots might be an example of the first; the wish to have time to patent a walking aid might be an example of the second; reporting the opinions of a respondent who is thereby put in peril might be an example of the third. An instinct for secrecy on the part of a government department, or the desire to withhold neutral or adverse results on a product in order to sell off existing stock, would be examples of obviously insufficient (indeed illegitimate) reasons for restrictions.

d) Universities normally resist restrictions on publication, for reasons of principle and for material reasons. The principle is that of 'freedom of speech', or in this case freedom to publish. Universities have a historical and continuing role in asserting freedom of speech and the principle that academics have the right to reveal the results of their research to society at large. The material reasons concern the university's income, its reputation, Research Integrity and the career opportunities of academic staff. The university derives income from the RAE Research Excellence Framework (REF). The University is committed to maintaining the highest standards of research integrity and therefore complies with the Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. This concordat seeks to provide a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance. The Concordat sets out five commitments, laying out expectations upon researchers and the institution. The Concordat will also provide assurances to government, the wider public and the international community that research in the UK continues to be underpinned by the highest standards of rigour and integrity. All researchers should be familiar with the principles found within the Concordat and take advantage of opportunities provided by the university to further enhance and embed these skills into day-to-day teaching and research activities.

e) Special consideration is needed for research leading to a PhD or MSc award. The necessity for external involvement in the examination process may lead to a technical breach of an agreement on restriction on disclosure. In such cases, the agreement of all parties should be established, to ensure that the restrictions do not lead to a conflict with the requirement for adequate external scrutiny of theses.

QMU policy on restrictions on publication:
- any research project proposal which contains a restriction on the researcher's freedom to publish must be considered at a meeting of the Research Ethics Panel, and the decision recorded in the minutes;
- demands for restriction on publication should be resisted as far as possible;

- the reasons behind a request for a restriction should be ascertained and an assessment of the justification for any restrictions should be assessed, along with an estimate of their practical effects;
- due regard should be given to different effects of restrictions on different areas of research;
- where restrictions are agreed, they should be precisely defined, including specification of beginning and end points of the time scale involved and the procedure and time scale for reaching a decision between funder and researcher on submission for publication;
- where restrictions are agreed, the University should protect itself against the possibility of being legally restrained from disclosing results which ought urgently to be disclosed for the public good;
- where restrictions are agreed, a level of funding which reflects their financial impact should be negotiated;
- in the case of research leading to a post-graduate award, for which restrictions are agreed, the arrangements for external examination of the thesis should be agreed in advance;
- QMU will not accept any contract which contains restrictions on publication which cannot be justified on ethical grounds.

13. EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

Contents

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This Section refers to all summative examinations that form part of a student's assessment for an award or for determining progression. These regulations do not refer to class tests or other formative assessments.

2.0   RUBRIC OF EXAMINATION PAPERS

The rubric on the front sheet of each examination paper will provide, in standard format, the following details:

a)   name of institution
b)   home Division
c)   Programme(s) using this examination paper
d)   level at which assessed
e)   module / subject title
f)   module / subject code
g)   examination title (if different from module / subject title)
h)   academic session
i)   date of examination
j)   duration of examination (and indication of allocation of reading time)
k)   instructions to candidates
l)   clear instructions as to the allocation of questions per answer book
m) paper setter

3.0   CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

3.1   Examinations are conducted according to the published diet of examinations timetable. The confirmed timetable will be published for each diet of examinations at least three weeks before the start of the diet and displayed on the University website.

3.2   An examination pack, containing the appropriate examination papers, script books and other materials, as well as a list of candidates eligible to take the examination, will be prepared by the Registry Examinations Officer, for collection by the Senior Invigilator thirty minutes before the start of the examination.

3.4   The responsibilities of candidates undertaking examinations offered by Queen Margaret University are detailed in Section 5 below

4.0   ARRANGEMENT OF EXAMINATIONS OUTWITH THE UNIVERSITY

4.1   Except in cases of extreme difficulty, students are required to be available for every diet of examinations, including retrieval examinations. The following procedure is applicable to all students and all diets of examination. Requests for special arrangement of examinations outwith the University should be considered only if exceptional circumstances apply. Senate has agreed that being an international student (broadly defined to include an EU citizen domiciled at distance from the UK) may be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

4.2   The procedure for special arrangement of examinations to be held outwith the University is as follows:

4.2.1   Any request for an examination outwith the University requires to have the written approval of both the Programme Leader and the Head of Division/Dean of School:

- Approved requests for examinations outwith the University should be forwarded in writing to the Registry Examinations Officer, who shall make all subsequent arrangements. The Registry Examinations Officer should normally be informed of any approved requests for special arrangements at the earliest opportunity and **no less than six weeks** before the relevant diet of examinations is due to take place.
- Students are asked to nominate a local centre willing to undertake the examination and to conform to the University's examination procedures and regulations, but this has to be confirmed as suitable by the Registry Examinations Officer. In addition, the Registry Examinations Officer will act as the official contact point for arrangements with the local centre and with the student.
- Any examinations organised at a designated local centre should normally take place at the same date and time (GMT) as the same examination at the University. Where this is not possible, and there is a possibility of contact between students, Registry may require the relevant paper setter to set an alternative examination paper.
- The Registry Examinations Officer will notify the student of all finalised arrangements in writing at least ten days before the scheduled date of the examination(s) in question.
- There will be an administration charge made by the University (currently set at £75) which will normally be payable by the student. This is intended to cover the costs of the arrangements. Where Programme requirements (such as placements) necessitate such arrangements, this charge will be waived. In addition, the local centre may make a further charge to cover any incurred costs, for which the student may be liable.

4.3   Further advice regarding the arrangement of examinations outwith the University is available from the Registry Examinations Officer.

5.0 INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES FOR EXAMINATIONS

5.1 GENERAL

5.1.1 Candidates must ensure that they are aware of the published examinations timetable for both first and second diet examinations and their requirement to attend.

5.1.2 Candidates **must** notify any change of permanent address through the Student Portal. This is essential for mailing of assessment results (student academic transcript) and information about graduation.

5.1.3 Candidates must arrive at the examination venue at **least** 15 minutes before the published start time. The examination timetable (published on the Registry website) should be checked to confirm the location.

5.1.4 Candidates must complete and sign the signature sheet and/or an attendance slip, as directed by the Senior Invigilator.

5.1.5 A candidate who is unable to attend an examination because of illness, or another valid reason, must submit an extenuating circumstances form with relevant documentary evidence.

5.1.6 A candidate who requires provision of additional examination arrangements must inform their Programme Leader as soon as possible and normally not later than four weeks before the first examination.

5.1.7 Candidates are referred to the Programme Regulations for specific details relating to their Programme assessment procedures, and to the general Assessment Regulations.

5.2 LATE ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES

5.2.1 A candidate who arrives late will be admitted without question during the first half hour of an examination.

5.2.2 Admission after the first half hour may be allowed with the prior permission of the Senior Invigilator **and** the Registry Examinations Officer.

5.2.3 No extra time will normally be allowed to a candidate who arrives late for an examination session, unless extenuating circumstances are accepted by the Senior Invigilator and the Registry Examinations Officer.

5.3 CONDUCT IN THE EXAMINATION ROOM

5.3.1 Candidates must retain only authorised materials on their desks during each examination. All other belongings should be placed either at the front or the back of the room. The use of

hand held personal technology, including smartwatches, personal organisers, electronic dictionaries and mobile phones is not permitted. All mobile telephones must be switched off prior to entrance into the examination room and retained in candidates' bags at the front of the examination room. The use of programmable calculators and those with text, symbolic or graphic capabilities is not permitted unless their use is expressly authorised by the examiners, as stated on the front cover of the examination paper.

5.3.2   Candidates are advised that they should complete the front cover(s) of examination answer book(s) before the start of the examination. Candidates should ensure that they have completed and sealed the fold-down edge to maintain anonymity. You must also ensure that your name is not shown anywhere else on the examination answer book.

5.3.3   Candidates should ensure that they have been issued with the correct question paper and note the duration of the examination.

5.3.4   Once the examination has started, communication or any other irregular practice is not allowed between candidates.

5.3.5   For the duration of reading time (where allocated this will normally last 5 minutes), candidates should not commence writing in the answer books, but may be permitted to write on the question paper (unless they are required to answer on this paper) or on scrap paper. The invigilator will instruct candidates when to commence writing in the answer books.

5.3.6   Questions on the content or presentation of the examination paper may only be asked during the specified reading time. The answer to any question asked will be repeated to all candidates taking the examination.

5.3.7   If a candidate wishes to attract the attention of the invigilator at any time during the examination s/he should do so by raising her/his hand.

5.3.8   No candidate should leave the examination room during the first 30 minutes or the last 15 minutes of the examination, other than for personal reasons. Any candidate wishing to leave the examination room temporarily must be accompanied by the invigilator.

5.3.9   Candidates will be reminded of the time 30 minutes and 15 minutes before the end of the examination.

5.3.10 A candidate who becomes ill during an examination must inform an invigilator who should record the details on the invigilators report. Candidates should submit an extenuating circumstances form as soon as possible thereafter.

5.4   END OF THE EXAMINATION

5.4.1   Candidates **must** obey the Senior Invigilator's instructions either to remain in their seats until answer books are collected or to leave books on desks.

5.4.2   All answer books and other relevant material to be submitted should be clearly marked with the candidate's name.

5.4.3   It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that all relevant material for marking is submitted to the invigilator.

5.5   PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF NETWORK DISRUPTION

5.5.1   In the unlikely event of network disruption that affects an examination completed on a computer, the University will put in place alternative arrangements for the examination. The precise nature of these arrangements will be determined on a case by case basis. In all cases, the priority will be not to disadvantage students.

5.5.2   In the event of network disruption, the examination will be handwritten, where possible and appropriate. Students with Individual Learning Plans who would normally use a computer to take an examination will be given the option of handwriting the examination. They will also be given extra time to complete the examination. Should this not be appropriate, attempts will be made to reschedule the examination.

5.5.3   Should a network disruption coincide with an examination on the HUB, the examination will be rescheduled.

5.5.4   Students are expected to check the University's Facebook page and Twitter feeds for updates in the event of network disruption. Should there be a need to identify an alternative room for an examination affected by network disruption, physical signage at reception will provide details of the location.

5.6   PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF AN EVACUATION DUE TO A FIRE ALARM ACTIVATION OR OTHER EMERGENCY

         In the event of the fire alarms being activated and candidates for an exam being evacuated during an examination, the following action will be taken in line with QMU Fire Regulations:

5.6.1   Invigilators will act as temporary fire wardens responsible for the orderly evacuation of the examination room.

5.6.2   Without delaying the evacuation of the candidates unduly, the candidates will be:

   a) instructed to stop writing;
   b) informed that the examination has been suspended and that further instructions will be given on re-admittance to the examination room;

c) Informed that examination regulations still apply, and that candidates should not communicate with one another.
d) asked to check that her/his name is on at least one answer book;
e) instructed to evacuate the room, leaving question papers, answer books and personal belongings in the examination room
f) asked to proceed as a group to the nearest the assembly point.

5.6.3   The invigilator will be the last person to leave the examination room and will record the time of the fire alarm activation and evacuation of the examination room.

5.6.4   Invigilators will return to the examination room when authorised by the Security Wardens and will re-admit the candidates.

5.6.5   If the alarm is activated at a point up to two-thirds of the way into the published time provided for the examination, the examination will re-start, and the period the examination will be extended by the period of disruption.

5.6.6   If the alarm is activated at a point within the last third of the examination period, the examination will not be re-started. The examiners will take the extenuating circumstances into account in determining the performance of candidates.

5.6.7   The period of disruption is from the time the alarm sounds until candidates are re-seated in the examination room. Should the period of disruption extend beyond one hour, then the examination will be considered null and void, and rescheduled at a time to be notified by the Registry Examinations Officer.

5.6.8. On re-admittance to the examination venue, the Senior Invigilator will instruct candidates as to whether or not the examination will be re-started, or has been declared null and void [in line with paragraphs 9.6.6 and 9.6.7 above].

5.6.9   The Senior Invigilator will record the disruption on the Senior Invigilator Report so that the examiners can be advised to take this into account when assessing performance.

5.6.10 During the period of evacuation the Regulations for Examinations should be considered to be upheld until the examination is re-started or ended. Conversation between candidates may mean that the examination has to be rescheduled.

14. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

This document provides guidance to students and staff on the definition and consideration of claims for 'extenuating circumstances', and on the procedures for submitting a claim under these guidelines.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the QMU Academic Appeals Procedures and the section on 'Assessment' contained within the University Governance and Regulations Handbook. Copies of both are available at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

1 INTRODUCTION – SOME IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES

The University's procedures for the consideration of extenuating circumstances seek to ensure that all students are treated fairly, are not disadvantaged by circumstances **beyond their control,** and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained.

It is accepted that, from time to time, circumstances **beyond a student's control** may affect her/his ability to undertake assessment on time, or may affect her/his performance in assessment. It is also recognised that assessment periods can be stressful. However, students need to be able to plan and manage their time and their workload, to meet deadlines, to cope with a certain level of stress, and to manage their University studies alongside other responsibilities in life.

All students have a responsibility to manage their learning, revision and assessment activities throughout each semester or assessment period. It is essential that students plan carefully and manage workloads throughout this time, and do not leave too much coursework, learning, revision or similar activities to be undertaken late in the semester or assessment period. Similarly, when examinations are to be taken at the end of a semester or assessment period, students should conduct revision throughout the semester, and not limit it to the period shortly before sitting examinations.

It is also essential to recognise that illnesses and difficult life events do occur, and that it is a normal part of life to have to manage these and continue with work or study.

2 WHAT WOULD BE ACCEPTED AS 'EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES'?

Extenuating circumstances are defined as:

"circumstances beyond the student's control which either prevent the student from submitting a piece of coursework or sitting an examination, or cause the student to perform less well in his or her coursework or examinations than he or she might otherwise have been expected to do (on the basis of other work).'

The term is used to describe those circumstances that cause exceptional interference with academic performance, and which are over and above the normal difficulties experienced in life.

In general, though not exclusively, extenuating circumstances will be of a medical or personal nature affecting the student for a period of time and/or during the assessment period. These are normally circumstances that have prevented the student from demonstrating, or acquiring, the skills, knowledge or competencies associated with a particular module(s). This would include circumstances preventing attendance at an examination, or adversely affecting performance at an examination, or preventing work from being submitted by the deadline set. Examples would include, but would not be limited to, illness, accident, or bereavement.

The University does not normally consider medical certificates for long-standing controlled conditions, or self-limiting illness, as evidence in support of extenuating circumstances affecting performance. Students in this category would normally have had the benefit of experience, medical knowledge or help to control the condition or illness, and would normally have registered with the Disabled Student Coordinator, the Disability Adviser, and be working to an agreed Learning Plan. It follows that such students should contact the Disability Adviser at an early point so that these circumstances can be recorded and appropriate arrangements put in place, in line with QMU's disability policy statement. Further information may be found in the Student Handbook and on the University's website at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/disability-service/

The University normally disregards circumstances which students are expected to cope with as part of a properly managed workload, or as part of the normal issues and difficulties that arise as part of life. Circumstances which would not be acceptable are those where a student could reasonably have avoided the situation, or acted to limit the impact of the circumstances.

The following are examples of circumstances which would NOT fall within the University's definition of "extenuating circumstances":

- completing coursework too late and missing deadlines because of computer; difficulties, or transport difficulties;

- general pressure of work;

- normal work commitments on behalf of an employer;

- having more than one examination on the same day or on consecutive days (unless the student was already suffering from illness or injury)

- missing an examination due to misreading the timetable or oversleeping;

- losing work not backed up on computer disk, or failure of a floppy disk/CD Rom;

- theft of home computer – students are expected to make a back up copy of all work on, which should be stored separately from the computer.

- failure to make alternative travel plans when disruptions were advised in advance;

- a short-term problem or illness which has occurred during the year and which is deemed not to have had an overall effect on the student's performance; e.g common colds

- where extenuating circumstances have affected the student throughout their time at QMU [on the basis that it would be difficult to determine what her/his marks might have been like otherwise];

- Insufficient computers/printers to do the work [a claim submitted upon this basis would not be supported on the grounds that it indicated lack of advance planning].

Failure of IT would be accepted only in limited circumstances. There may be occasions when, due to unforeseen circumstances, the University's own computer/IT equipment is unavailable for use. If this happens students may request confirmation from Information Services of this, including the time period and the date(s) of its unavailability. However, it would be reasonable to expect a student to submit the latest draft of their work from a few days prior to the deadline to support their claim.

3 WHEN SHOULD A CLAIM FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES BE SUBMITTED?

It is important that students report in advance any circumstances that they anticipate will affect their performance in assessment.

Students who know that they will be unable to meet the deadline for coursework, or attend an examination – due to circumstances beyond their control – should submit a completed Extenuating Circumstances Claim, with supporting evidence, via the QMU Portal in good time, so that the potential implications can be considered.

The claim for extenuating circumstances will be considered at this stage by the Programme Leader. If the circumstances are deemed valid and there is time to redeem the situation (e.g. through an extension to deadline for submission of coursework), the authority to agree this rests with the Programme Leader.

It follows therefore, that the only claims for extenuating circumstances which can normally be considered after the assessment date – either the date of the examination or the deadline date for submission of coursework – are those where it can be demonstrated that the student was affected by an accident or sudden illness, or other circumstances which occurred on or immediately before the day in question and which were entirely beyond the student's control.

If it is not possible to redeem the situation [e.g. where the examination was part of a time-table diet of examinations], then the Programme Leader will advise the student concerned, and the claim for extenuating circumstances will be put forward to the relevant Extenuating Circumstances Panel [see section below].

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their claim is submitted to the Programme leader in sufficient time for the appropriate Extenuating Circumstances Panel, normally no later than one week before the meeting. The dates of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel together with details on how to submit a claim/evidence will be notified to students each semester via the Moderator email message system.

Failure to submit a form in advance of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, without valid cause, will mean that the student may not subsequently appeal against their results on the grounds of extenuating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to explain fully the impact of extenuating

circumstances on their work/performance. If this is not explained sufficiently, then the student may not subsequently appeal and ask the Board to consider additional information.

4   WHAT EVIDENCE SHOULD BE SUBMITTED WITH THE CLAIM

A claim for extenuating circumstances must be submitted via the QMU Portal.

The claim form should be accompanied by supporting evidence, in writing, from an appropriate authority. A claim is unlikely to be upheld without appropriate supporting evidence. Individual circumstances will dictate the nature of the evidence required to support a claim.

Examples of Evidence (this list is for illustrative purposes only and is not exhaustive)

Extenuating Circumstance	Examples of the type of evidence that are likely to support an EC request
Bereavement	The EC application must state the student's relationship to the deceased. It is unlikely that further professional evidence detailing the effects on the student will be required.
A serious short term illness (physical or mental) or accident	Letter from a health professional such as a GP, psychiatrist or mental health counsellor confirming the diagnosis and stating an opinion as to the nature and duration of any impact on the student; medical certificate; prescription; hospital admissions record; photographs of injuries (ideally identifying the student with the photograph). Evidence such as a photograph, prescription or admissions record, does not necessarily specify the negative affect on the student's ability to complete their assessment(s), where possible and relevant, evidence from a suitable health professional detailing these effects should also be submitted. Any evidence that only records the student's self-reporting of the health problems will normally be deemed insufficient.
Unforeseen recent illness of dependents or close family members	Medical certificate or GP's letter relating to the dependent/family member confirming the recent sudden or severe nature of the illness.
A long-term health condition worsening	Medical certificate or GP's letter reporting the specific deterioration or sudden change and the time period it applies to. The evidence should refer to how the change in conditions has impacted on the student. Evidence simply confirming the long-term condition without mentioning recent deterioration will be normally deemed insufficient.
Health condition where reasonable adjustments are not yet in place	Letter or e-mail from the University's Student Support Services confirming that the delay in support was beyond the student's control.
Victim of a serious crime	Police crime number, legal letters, crime report from the police or other investigating authority; an insurance claim.

	Since such evidence does not refer to the impact of the event on the student, further evidence may also be required for ECs claimed to have affected the student for more than a week. Claims relating to injuries or trauma suffered as a result of a motor traffic accident would normally be considered as a medical circumstance and require suitable medical evidence as outlined above.
Legal proceedings requiring court attendance	Letter from a solicitor/legal officer or official court communication.
Representative participation in a national or international cultural or sports event	Formal notification from the relevant official body or bodies involved. Although independent professional third party evidence outlining the impact on the student's preparation and completion of the assessment may be supplied, it is likely that impact on the student may be reasonably inferred.
Exceptional and unforeseeable transport difficulties	Evidence of a major transportation incident from a relevant and appropriate source (including media reports). Evidence will also need to demonstrate that the student was both affected and that there was no reasonable means of foreseeing or overcoming the difficulties.
Significant adverse recent personal/family circumstances	Independent professional third party evidence describing the circumstances, time period affected and the impact on the student. Where this is not possible, sufficient detail should be submitted so that the likely effects can be reasonably inferred.

Normally, students should seek corroborating information from an independent person, organisation or support service that could provide verification. Acceptable supporting evidence would normally be an original (not photocopy) document written and signed by an appropriate third party, giving details of the circumstance, its duration, and, where possible, its impact. An appropriate third party would be one who knows the student in a professional capacity or one who can verify the circumstance from a position of authority (e.g. police officer, solicitor, GP, University Counsellor) and who is in a position to provide objective and impartial evidence. Letters from family members and fellow students are not normally accepted. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member of the academic staff to provide a supporting statement.

Dates of evidence must correspond with the extenuating circumstances detailed.

If a student has missed an assignment through ill health, then the illness must coincide with the preparation, writing or deadline of that assessment.

Students, who miss an examination or an invigilated test due to illness or are claiming to have been affected by medical problems during examination, should seek medical attention at the time of their illness where possible. For periods of illness lasting more than 5 days, the student should submit a medical certificate [see below].

Self certification (short illness lasting 1 - 5 consecutive days) may be accepted to support absence from lectures, classes and examinations. It is not normally accepted in respect of failure to complete coursework by its due date, as coursework schedules normally allow more than five days - often a period of weeks - for the coursework to be completed.

In periods of illness lasting more than 5 days, a medical certificate must be provided. The certificate must relate specifically to the dates and duration of the illness, contain a clear medical diagnosis or opinion and not merely report a student's claim that they were unwell.

Doctors are entitled to charge for any medical certificates or notes they provide, and may not always provide certificates for short periods of illness. A doctor's note must be on headed paper and/or stamped by the surgery.

Medical certification must normally be submitted within 7 days of the assessment due date.

If a student has an extenuating circumstance of an unusually delicate or personal nature that they do not wish to document in detail, then the student may elect to discuss with his/her Personal Academic Tutor or Student Counsellor who will confirm to the Programme Leader that the student has submitted a valid claim. This will ensure that the Programme Leader can consider the claim without knowing all the details.

5 WHAT MIGHT THE OUTCOME BE?

A claim for extenuating circumstances submitted in advance of an assessment is not an alternative to undertaking the necessary assessment, but, if successful, will normally result in the student being provided with an opportunity to undertake the assessment at a future date. The option remains for students to submit coursework up to one week after the published deadline date, without a claim for extenuating circumstances, on the basis that the maximum mark which can then be awarded is 40% for undergraduate or 50% for postgraduate modules.

Where a claim has been submitted after an assessment deadline, or where an examination has been missed, and there is no opportunity to redeem the situation [e.g. by an extension to a deadline] or where a claim is submitted on the basis of diminished performance in an exam or assessment, the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will come to a judgement.

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will try to ensure a fair result based on overall performance. It may take a number of actions.

For example, if a student has missed an examination, and the Extenuating Circumstances Panel considers the reasons to be valid, it can treat the absence in a number of ways.

Where the claim is in respect of diminished performance as a direct result of the extenuating circumstance, the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will try to determine whether, and to what extent, extenuating circumstances have affected a student's academic performance, and determine

what action, if any, can be taken. In assessing the significance of extenuating circumstances the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will normally take into account:

- the severity of the problem and the length of time involved;

- any supporting documentary evidence;

- whether all work in the same period appears to have been equally affected;

- whether it is possible to gauge the effect of the extenuating circumstances upon academic performance;

- whether achievement is consistent with past performance;

- the type of assessment affected, and how the student had to complete the work (i.e date when work set and deadline for submission).

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will not give extra marks because a student's work has been affected by extenuating circumstances, nor will they amend marks from previous years of study, or annotate the statement of results/transcripts with comments about the existence of extenuating circumstances.

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel may decide that the student is given the opportunity to submit for further assessment in the module (or component of module) against which they have claimed extenuating circumstances. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel may also decide not to uphold the claim on the basis that the student has not made a case, that the supporting evidence does not support the claim, or that the student had no good reason for not advising of the circumstances prior to the assessment or examination for which extenuating circumstances are sought.

A claim for extenuating circumstances, which has been considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, may not be submitted again under the academic appeals procedures. If a claim for extenuating circumstances forms the basis of an academic appeal, the student will need to demonstrate why they did not follow the procedures for submitting a claim for extenuating circumstances in advance of the Board of Examiners.

6 FALSE CLAIMS

The submission of a false claim may be regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage, which would be an academic offence and could be dealt with under the QMU Disciplinary Procedures.

7 DATA PROTECTION

In submitting an extenuating circumstances form, students agree to the University holding this personal data for the purposes of processing their claim. The University will hold this data in accordance with its notification under the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Updated August 2019

15.   FITNESS TO PRACTISE POLICY

1   Principles

1.1   The University has a duty to the public to use its best endeavours to ensure that students and graduates of its professional healthcare programmes are fit to practise.

1.2   In the context of this policy, fitness to practice has been interpreted to mean that a person has the skills, knowledge, character and health to undertake their professional role safely and effectively.

1.3   The University seeks to promote entry to its healthcare programmes to as wide a range of individuals as possible, in so far as consistent with the above principle.

1.4   The University will not discriminate on the grounds of health or of disability where it can be demonstrated that an applicant or student undertaking a healthcare programme is capable of practising safely and effectively without supervision.

1.5   The University recognises that individuals in an early stage of their healthcare career need to be supported to develop a full understanding of the standards of professional conduct, performance and ethics that apply to the health profession which they are seeking to register. Fitness to Practise procedures should provide for support to students to enable them to learn from mistakes, but must also identify those who give cause for concern.

1.6   Cases will be treated on an individual basis, and with due consideration for fairness and equity.

1.7   The University will comply with its statutory duties in relation to Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults, Rehabilitation of Offenders and Single Equality Legislation.

1.8   References within these regulations to any University officer shall include his or her properly appointed nominee.

2   Procedures for considering Fitness to Practise

2.1   The University will seek information about character, health and disability prior to admitting students. Clear information about this will be published in the prospectus.

2.2   In seeking information on character, the University will consider information provided in the character reference and will also seek information about criminal conviction or caution at the point of application.

2.3   All students of the University are required to declare whether or not they have a conviction or caution as part of the annual student matriculation process. Additionally, healthcare programmes may require students to self-certify annually their continuing fitness to practise.

2.4   Wherever possible, issues relating to fitness to practise will be dealt with as part of the University's standard procedures, or at the programme level. However, where a judgement is made that such consideration is not appropriate, there is provision for referral to the Fitness to Practise Panel. The Panel will be convened on the advice of the University Secretary. The secretary to the panel will be appointed by the University Secretary.

2.5   The Panel will consider cases relating to fitness to practise where a student or applicant's fitness to practise may be affected due to factors, including, but not limited to:

- A criminal conviction that is outwith the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Allegations of unprofessional or unethical conduct including conduct outwith the University
- A declared disability
- A health condition with the potential to affect fitness to practise

2.6   The Panel will have delegated authority to consider, and come to a judgement   on:

- the admission of students with criminal convictions, disabilities or health conditions that might affect fitness to practise;
- continued progress of students for whom a criminal conviction is disclosed during the course of their programme;
- continued progress of students who acquire a disability or potentially chronic health condition during the course of their programme;
- continued progress of students who are found to have acted unprofessionally or unethically during the course of their programme.

The Panel may also, as a result of its operation, identify and remit particular issues for discussion and/or review by the Student Experience Committee or School Academic Board as appropriate.

2.7   Only suitably trained people will act as Panellists. A pool of potential Panellists will be maintained and regular training arranged.

2.8   Membership of the Panel will be in line with professional body guidance and will include at least one person from the applicant or student's intended registered profession.

2.9   Records of the Panel's proceedings will retained by the University Secretary and processed in line with Data Protection legislation.

3   Consideration of Fitness to Practise at the stage of admitting an applicant to a healthcare related programme

Applicants declaring a disability

3.1   The application will first be considered on its academic merits, in line with the University's Admissions regulations.

3.2   Where applicants meet the academic criteria, staff of the Admissions department will discuss with the Admissions Tutor whether the applicant's support needs can be met.

3.3   If additional support is identified as being likely to be required, the Admissions Tutor will discuss the application with the Academic Disabled Students Co-ordinator and the Disability Service.

3.4   If there is any concern that the applicant's support needs cannot be met, this must be discussed with the applicant. In the majority of cases, it is expected that dialogue with the student will establish what adjustments can or cannot be made.

3.5   More difficult cases will be referred to the Dean of School who should consult the University Secretary. The University Secretary will decide whether to refer the matter to the Fitness to Practise Panel.

Criminal conviction or caution

3.6   Where an applicant has declared a criminal conviction or caution, staff in the Admissions department will ask the applicant for further details about the conviction/caution and forward these to the Head of Admissions and Recruitment.

3.7   The Head of Admissions and Recruitment will consult with the University Secretary to assess whether the conviction is one that would affect the applicant's fitness to practise as defined the regulating body. If the conviction is judged to have the potential to affect the applicant's suitability for registration as set out in the professional body's Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics, the University Secretary and Head of Admissions and Recruitment will discuss the matter with the Head of Division and Dean of School. Following the outcome of that discussion the University Secretary will decide whether to convene a Fitness to Practise Panel. Written records of the reasons for decisions will be retained.

3.8   Where a caution or conviction is revealed through the Disclosure Scotland process or the PVG Scheme, the counter-signatory will consult the Head of Admissions and Recruitment, who will consult in line with provisions of paragraph 3.7 above. The University Secretary will judge whether the matter is referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel.

3.9   In considering the matter, the Panel may consider:

- The number and nature of offences or misconduct
- The seriousness of the offence or misconduct
- When the offences or misconduct occurred
- Any information provided by the applicant in mitigation
- The applicant's character and conduct since the offence occurred.

3.10   The Health and Care Professions Council ("HCPC) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council ("NMC") produce standards of conduct, performance and ethics which provide information on behaviour of applicants and students that is likely to affect their admittance to the profession concerned as well as standards of proficiency for these professions. The following, while not an exhaustive list, provides guidance on the type of behaviour that is likely to lead to an applicant or student being rejected or required to withdraw from a programme:

- Violence
- Abuse
- Sexual misconduct
- Supplying drugs illegally
- Child pornography
- Offences involving dishonesty
- Offences that carried a prison sentence

Decision not to admit

3.11   In line with the principles and procedures set out above, a range of decisions may be taken in relation to admitting a candidate to a healthcare programme of the University, namely:

- Admit the applicant
- Admit the applicant, subject to provision of specified adjustments and / or support or conditions
- Defer entry for one year (where this would provide additional information relevant to the decision making process)
- Not admit the applicant

3.12   An individual who has been the subject of a decision not to admit for reasons of fitness to practise may appeal that decision.

3.13   Should an individual be admitted subject to conditions, the individual must comply with those conditions. Should the student be in breach of those conditions at any point during their academic career, the student will be referred back to a Fitness to Practise Panel immediately.

4   Referral of issues relating to conduct on a programme of study

4.1   All students of the University are subject to the jurisdiction of the Principal in respect of their studies and their conduct. It is a condition of entry to the University that each student shall conform to the published rules and regulations.

4.2   Students on healthcare programmes should be aware that their conduct outside the clinical environment, including their private lives, may have an impact on their fitness to practise, as set out in the requirements of the professional body governing their programme of study. Such requirements are designed to ensure that their behaviour justifies the trust that patients and the public place in their profession.

4.3   A student may be referred to the University's Fitness to Practise procedure through a number of routes which include by a Programme Committee, by a Disciplinary Committee or directly following a complaint to the University Secretary. Should a student be on placement or just about to go on placement when a matter is raised under this Section of the Fitness to Practise proceedings, the Head of Division may prevent or remove the student from placement with immediate effect if deemed appropriate.

4.4   Where it is judged that the matter does not fall under the terms of the Regulations governing Discipline, but nevertheless constitutes a concern in terms of professional practice, the Programme Leader will be informed. Where possible allegations in this category will be dealt with by the Programme Leader.

4.5   Where a Programme Committee has persistent concerns about a student's conduct which have not been satisfactorily resolved at local level by the Programme Leader, the Programme Leader may ask the University Secretary to convene a Fitness to Practise Panel.

4.6   A referral or an allegation of concern about conduct must be made in writing, signed by the complainant and submitted to the University Secretary.

4.7   Anonymous allegations will not normally be considered. In considering the allegation, the University Secretary may withhold the identity of the individual making the allegation if maintenance of confidentiality is considered appropriate.

4.8   Where the conduct that is the subject of the complaint would constitute a breach of the disciplinary code, the University Secretary will refer the allegation to the Principal. The Principal may dismiss the allegation immediately if he or she believes that there is no case for the student to answer, or that it is for some other reason appropriate to do so.

4.9   If the allegation is not dismissed, and the offence does not lead the Principal to suspend or exclude the student under the provisions outlined in section 4 of the University's Regulations governing Discipline, the matter will be referred to the Dean of School. The Dean of School will consult with the University Secretary on whether or not the matter should be dealt with

summarily or referred to a Disciplinary Committee or referred directly to a Fitness to Practise Panel.

4.10   If the finding of the disciplinary procedure, either summary or Panel, is that the student has breached expected standards of conduct, including professional conduct, then the matter will be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. That will include those cases where it has been judged that there are mitigating factors, such as a diagnosed health condition.

4.11   In those cases where the conduct reported as giving rise to concern is linked to a mental health condition, the case will normally be referred to the Fitness to Practise Panel as a health matter.

4.12   Where a matter has been referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel, the Panel will be constituted as set out in Section 2 above. The proceedings of the Panel will be governed by the procedures set out in Section 6 of this procedure.

4.13   Legal representation will not be permitted at the Panel hearing.

4.14   The standard of proof applied in considering the case will be the civil standard of proof, ie the balance of probabilities.

4.15   A Fitness to Practise Panel has delegated authority to reach the following decisions, ie that:

   i)   The student continues on the programme
   ii)   The student continues on the programme but is cautioned, meaning that if any further fitness to practise issues arise in the following twelve months, the student will be dealt with for both matters
   iii)   The student continues on the programme subject to fulfilment of certain conditions as specified by the Panel (which conditions can include the requirement to attend specified courses or counselling if deemed appropriate)
   iv)   The student is required to suspend study to allow time for medical investigations (for cases where unacceptable behaviour is linked to a mental health condition)
   v)   The student is required to suspend study for a period up to twelve months
   vi)   The student is advised to transfer to an alternative programme
   vii)   The student is asked to exit with an alternative award which does not permit the student to register with a regulatory body
   viii) The student is required to withdraw

4.16   Should the student not comply with any conditions specified under Section 4.15(iii) above, a further Fitness to Practise Panel may be convened immediately to review the case and impose any further conditions or reach a different decision as the Panel deems necessary.

5   **Issues relating to health and physical ability on a programme of study**

5.1   In the context of this policy statement, the requirement for an individual to be in good health does not mean that they do not have a disability or health condition. Many disabled people and those with long term health conditions are able to practice safely with or without adjustments to support their professional practice.

5.2   It is recognised too that a disability may emerge after admission to a programme, that an existing health condition may worsen or that a student on a programme may acquire a disability.

5.3   In considering whether or not a disability has the potential to affect a student's fitness to practise, the Programme Leader should first discuss the student's individual needs with the student and the Academic Disabled Student Co-ordinator to explore what extra support may be required from both the University and/or placement providers. Students with suspected disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties will be advised to contact Student Services to arrange to meet the Disability Advisor for further assessment, for example by an external agency e.g. Royal National Institute for the Blind or an Educational Psychologist.

5.4   Where there is doubt about whether effective support can be provided by both the University and/or the placement provider, the matter will be discussed by the Programme Committee under Reserved Business. The Programme Committee may refer the case to the Fitness to Practise Panel, via the University Secretary.

5.5   Health conditions may develop that affect fitness to practise. Short term conditions will be dealt with by the Programme Leader through the normal extenuating circumstances procedures. Where a student has missed periods of placement due to ill-health, the Programme Leader will discuss a revised programme of study with the student to allow him or her to catch up on missed work. In some cases, it may be necessary to defer study for up to a year.

5.6   It is essential that students notify staff immediately should they contract a communicable disease. Normally, arrangements will be put in place in line with NHS, NMC or HCPC protocols. This will be discussed between the Programme Leader, student and placement supervisor.

5.7   Mental health conditions may be short or long term. The primary responsibility of the University is to support the student to ensure the best chance of recovery. However, a decision may be taken that it is advisable to postpone periods of placement until the student's condition has stabilised.

5.8   While it is expected that the Programme Leader will attempt to support the student informally if possible, if it is judged that the student may not be safe to go on placement; or if a placement supervisor raises such a concern during placement, a referral will be made to the Fitness to Practise Panel.

5.9 In the interests of a student's and/or patient safety, the University may act to suspend a student temporarily pending the outcome of Fitness to Practise proceedings in order to remove the student from placement or prevent him or her from starting a placement.

5.10 If the Student Counsellor becomes aware that a student's medical condition may pose a risk to patient safety the Programme Leader should be informed. The terms of the University's Counselling service client confidentiality agreement will state clearly that this is a possibility.

5.11 In all the above cases, the University may require independent medical reports and / or occupational health assessments. Students may be temporarily suspended while reports are sought.

5.13 A Fitness to Practise Panel will not normally be convened until reports are available. However, where a student refuses to attend an occupational health assessment, the Panel may proceed on the basis that the student has refused to provide evidence of his or her fitness to practise.

5.14 The following decisions are possible:

i) The student continues on the programme
ii) The student continues on the programme with suitable adjustments made to accommodate the student's needs
iii) The student continues on the programme under supervision with a time period set for review
iv) The student is required to suspend study to allow time for a health condition to improve or to allow time for suitable arrangements to be put in place to accommodate the student's needs
v) The student is advised to transfer to an alternative programme
vi) The student is asked to exit with an alternative award which does not permit the student to register with a regulatory body
vii) The student is required to withdraw

6 Fitness to Practise Panel

6.1 A Fitness to Practise Panel may be convened to consider issues of health or character concerning an applicant to, or a student studying on, a healthcare programme leading to professional registration.

6.2 The University Secretary will appoint the members of the Fitness to Practise Panel, and invite one of them to act as Convener. The University Secretary will appoint a secretary to the Panel and will arrange for a note of the proceedings to be taken. The Panel may seek advice from a qualified lawyer.

6.3 The Panel will include at least one person from the profession to which the applicant or student is seeking professional registration.

6.4   Normally, a Panel would include the following:

- One senior academic member of staff (convener)
- One NMC or HCPC representative
- One non-academic member (patient or lay representative)
- Programme Leader/designated signatory for the professional outcome or a suitable substitute suggested by the Programme Leader

6.5   The Panel will rely only on evidence presented at the hearing. If the hearing concerns a student who has previously been the subject of a disciplinary investigation in relation to the same matter, the confirmed report of that investigation shall be provided as evidence.

6.6   The standard of proof will be the civil standard, i.e the balance of probabilities. If the members of the Panel cannot agree, the verdict of the Panel will be that of the majority of its members. In cases where the Panel is split evenly, the Convener shall have the casting vote.

6.7   The Panel may ask for additional enquiries to be undertaken where it considers that this will aid its consideration of the case.

6.8   If two or more students are involved in related misconduct, the Panel may at its discretion deal with their cases together.

6.9   The evidence presented at the hearing will normally be written evidence which will be provided to the Panel no fewer than 7 days before the Panel is due to meet. The person who is the subject of the hearing will be advised of the date of the hearing no fewer than 14 days prior to the scheduled date of the hearing. She/he will be provided with copies of the documents being provided to the Panel, and will be invited to provide the Panel with any further information that he/she would wish the Panel to consider.

6.10   The Panel will refuse to admit evidence that is in its opinion irrelevant to the matter under discussion.

6.11   The Panel shall have power to adjourn a hearing to another date, as it thinks fit.

6.12   At the termination of the proceedings, the Convener of the Panel will write a short report, summarising the discussion and setting out the Panel's decision and reasoning. A copy of the report will be sent to the applicant/student and to the Principal.

6.13   The Principal has the power to suspend the activity of the Fitness to Practise Panel at any time should he or she believe it appropriate to do so.

7   Right of appeal

7.1   An individual may appeal against the decision of a Fitness to Practise Panel.

7.2 An appeal must be made to the University Secretary within twenty-eight days of the conclusion of the proceedings. The appellant must set out in writing the grounds on which the appeal is based.

7.3 There will be no entitlement to a rehearing of the case, which will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances.

7.4 The appellant must submit the appeal in writing to the Principal, who will judge whether or not a prima facie case exists on the basis that:

- there has been demonstrably an irregularity in the Fitness to Practise procedure;
- evidence has become available that it was not reasonable to present during the original hearing.

7.5 In the event that a re-hearing is judged appropriate, an appeal panel will be convened.

7.6 The University Secretary shall appoint an appeal panel and the appeal panel shall consist of members drawn from the following:-

- the Deputy Principal (to act as Convener)
- the Dean of School
- a non-academic member
- a senior NMC or HCPC representative

The appeal panel shall conduct its proceedings according to the principles of natural justice in that it will it will seek to act fairly, no person may be a judge in his or her own case and the appellant shall have access to all the evidence used by the panel in reaching its decision.

7.7 The appellant shall have the right to appear before the appeal panel and to be accompanied by one other person of his or her choice. Representation external to the University will not be permitted in the context of this procedure.

7.8 The Convener of the Fitness to Practise Panel concerned with the case shall be invited, prior to the meeting, to submit to the appeal panel comments relevant to the case under discussion and may be invited to attend part or all of the meeting of the appeal panel at which the case is being considered.

7.9 Any person called to give evidence to the appeal panel will be given at least 72 hours' notice of the time and place of the hearing. Copies of written submissions will also be made available to all parties prior to the hearing.

7.10 In the event that the appellant is unable to attend the appeal panel due to illness, the meeting will be rescheduled.

7.11 The appeal panel shall meet, normally within one calendar month (excluding University vacations) of the referral from the Principal, and communicate its conclusions to appellant and the subject area concerned within one calendar month of its being convened. The University Secretary will keep all parties informed of progress and will advise of any necessary extension of the timescale, for example, if an adjournment in the proceedings is necessary.

7.12 The appeal panel hearing the appeal may overturn the finding of the original Fitness to Practise Panel. In particular, a finding may be overturned in the light of new evidence; or where it is found that the original hearing was not conducted fairly; or where the finding was unreasonable in the light of the findings of fact. The appeal panel may impose any additional sanction they deem necessary.

7.13 The decision of the appeal panel shall be final within the University.

8   Independent review

8.1 The University's internal procedures having been exhausted, an individual may seek review of his/her case by an independent person, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman [SPSO].

8.2 The Ombudsman is independent and her staff will advise whether or not the complaint is one that they can investigate. Normally the student will have to tell the Ombudsman about his/her complaint within 12 months of first knowing about the problem about which they are complaining, although the Ombudsman may look at complaints outside this limit if she thinks there is good reason to do so.

8.3 There are some restrictions on what the Ombudsman can investigate. If the complaint is appropriate to her office and is investigated, the Ombudsman's staff will send details of how this will be done.

8.4 The complaint should be submitted in writing to the Ombudsman, and should include any relevant documents including correspondence with the University and the University's response to the complaint. This can be sent to the Ombudsman without cost at the freepost address given below. A student may discuss the complaint with an Investigator at the SPSO before deciding to submit.

8.5 The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman has an online complaint form accessible through the website although papers in support of the complaint would still have to be supplied to the Ombudsman by post or other means. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman can also supply paper complaint forms direct to complainants.

8.6 Further information may be accessed through the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman website or by calling her office for advice. Contact details are:

Freepost SPSO, SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9am‑5pm, Tuesday 10am‑5pm

SPSO freephone **0800 377 7330**

Website **www.spso.org.uk**

Online contact form **www.spso.org.uk/contact-form**

You can fill in the complaints form online at **www.spso.org.uk/complain/form**

Fax **0800 377 7331**

16. FITNESS TO STUDY

This policy is currently being finalised and will be available on the Quality website at:

https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

18. GENERAL ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS AND POLICY
   ## (including Grade Descriptors)

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS: REVISED ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS AND POLICY

1. The following assessment regulations and policy were approved by Senate in July 2018 and will operate for all programmes in Academic Year 2019/20 with the exception of the programmes listed under item 2 below.

2. Regulations 14.2, 14.3, 17.12, 18.2 and 18.4 will not apply to the following programmes in 2019/20:

   MSc Art Psychotherapy (International)
   MSc Music Therapy
   MSc/PgDip Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration)

   The programmes listed above will continue to follow the regulations dated August 2017 in terms of reassessments.

ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS AND POLICY

PART A POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

1.0   General provision for assessment and awards

2.0   Context

3.0   Purpose of assessment

4.0   Principles of assessment

5.0   Fairness, reliability and validity of assessment

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PART B AWARD REGULATIONS

7.0   Marks, grades and levels of performance

8.0   Award

9.0   Decision on award classifications and distinctions in borderline cases (undergraduate degrees)

10.0   Decision on distinctions in borderline cases (postgraduate degrees)

11.0   Decision on an award in absence of complete assessment information

12.0   Withdrawing from a module and transfer between modules

13.0   Transcripts

PART C ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

14.0   Terminology

15.0   Programme specific regulations

16.0   Assessment of a module

17.0   Decisions on student progression

18.0   Reassessment of a module

19.0   Assessment of disabled students and of students whose first language is not English

20.0   Penalties for word limits and late submission of assessment

PART D RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

21.0   Student responsibility in assessment

22.0   Responsibility of other individuals and bodies in assessment

23.0   Project supervision

24.0   Academic dishonesty and plagiarism

PART E APPENDICES

Undergraduate Grade Marking Criteria

Postgraduate Grade Marking Criteria

PART A POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

1.0   General provision for assessment and awards

1.1   The authority for approving programmes and granting awards rests with the Senate of Queen Margaret University. Senate is also responsible for maintaining the academic standards of these awards. One of the major mechanisms for the assurance of academic standards is the assessment of students. These regulations and policy provide the structure within which students shall be assessed and whereby their assessment contributes to the achievement of the award.

1.2   These regulations and policy shall govern all taught programmes which lead to a University award except where Senate shall determine otherwise.

1.3   Within the regulations and policy levels one, two, three and four refer to the full-time year of undergraduate study. SCQF levels refer to the academic level of study (for undergraduate programmes this is typically SCQF level 7 to 10 and for postgraduate programmes SCQF level 11). Levels one, two, three and four do **not** map directly onto SCQF levels, but the following will apply to the majority of modules:

Level one (first year of undergraduate study)	SCQF level 7
Level two (second year of undergraduate study)	SCQF level 8
Level three (third year of undergraduate study)	SCQF level 9
Level four (fourth year of undergraduate study)	SCQF level 10
Postgraduate	SCQF level 11

 For a part-time undergraduate student, a level typically spans more than a single academic year.

1.4   Each student is enrolled on a programme and is subject to the regulations of that programme, which in its turn is subject to the University's overall regulations and policy.

1.5   Students are subject to registration periods which stipulate the minimum and maximum periods that they may be registered on a programme. These are detailed in the University's Registration Regulations which are detailed at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/

1.6   An award will be conferred upon satisfaction of the following conditions:

- the candidate was a registered student of the University at the time of their assessment and has fulfilled all financial obligations to the University;
- the candidate has completed a programme approved by the University as leading to the award being recommended;
- the award has been recommended by a Board of Examiners convened, constituted and acting under regulations approved by Senate.

1.7   Senate is the ultimate authority in the University for the ratification of academic decisions and may, in extreme circumstances, over-rule a Board of Examiners. It will normally refer matters of concern back to the Board of Examiners for reconsideration.

1.8   Acting within the above principles, a Board of Examiners will exercise its judgement in reaching decisions on individual candidates. It is responsible for interpreting the assessment regulations for the programme, in the light of the University's requirements and good practice in higher education and its academic judgement should not lightly be questioned or overturned.

1.9   Appeals by students against the decisions of Boards of Examiners shall be subject to University procedures and practices, as set out in section of the Governance and Regulations dealing with Academic Appeals and Student Complaints and published on the University's website at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/

2.0   Context

2.1   The Student Experience Strategy is the key strategy for the delivery of taught programmes of study at QMU and these assessment regulations and policy should be read in conjunction with that Strategy.

2.2   Assessment is integral to the design of programmes of study leading to the award of academic credit and to the award of degrees and diplomas. Programme content is specified through regulations governing Programme Development, Modification, Monitoring and Review at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/

2.3   Assessment is the process of forming a judgment about the quality and extent of learning in relation to the intended learning outcomes of a student's programme of study. In view of the variety of programmes, it is recognised that there is a need for a variety of forms of assessment, which should reflect the aims of that programme of study and the mode of study. Whatever the type of assessment, it should be fair, valid, reliable, useful and transparent.

2.4   In addition to its role in relation to the maintenance of academic standards, an equally important function of assessment is to develop effective student learning. In this context, it is essential that assessment is both integrated into the learning experience and that it motivates the learner.

3.0   Purpose of assessment

3.1   Assessment satisfies a number of related requirements, namely that it:

- is integrated with the process of student learning;
- demonstrates that a student has achieved the learning outcomes for their programme of study;

- justifies the award of academic credit based on actual student achievement;
- provides confidence in the maintenance of academic standards both internally and to external stakeholders;
- supports the evaluation and enhancement of programme design and delivery;
- provides meaningful feedback and feedforward to students on their performance on a programme of study which promotes learning and encourages reflection;
- provides meaningful information to employers, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and other organisations on the knowledge and competencies of a graduate;
- supports the enhancement of programme design and programme delivery.

3.2   Additionally, assessment may be used as a diagnostic tool to determine the current knowledge and skills of a student and to assist in the formulation of a programme of future study.

4.0   Principles of assessment

4.1   Assessment regulations and policy establish a framework for the conduct of assessment across all taught programmes.

4.2   Assessment regulations and policy establish sound procedures for the advanced communication of assessment requirements (including assessment criteria), the submission, conduct of examinations, marking and moderation of assessments, the progression of students, the remediation of failure and the conduct of meetings of Boards of Examiners. The regulations and policy ensure that academic standards are maintained and that there is a retention schedule for copies of assessments and feedback on assessments.

4.3   Assessment regulations and policy are reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

4.4   As part of the procedures for the validation and review of awards, programme teams are required to develop an assessment strategy which demonstrates a close alignment with the full range of intended learning outcomes (including knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills and transferable skills) and mode(s) of study of that programme, including the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

4.5   Programme assessment strategies are designed to assess all intended learning outcomes but should reduce the extent of assessment to the minimum required to demonstrate the above and should avoid duplication.

4.6   QMU is committed to principles of best practice in assessment, as established by the Advice and Guidance within the QAA Quality Code's Assessment Theme, and any subsequent updates to that publication.

4.7 QMU is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity. Assessment regulations and procedures are designed to actively promote equality of opportunity, and to be compliant with all relevant equality legislation.

4.8 QMU subscribes to the principle of anonymous marking. Anonymous marking shall be used in assessments wherever practicable. Proposals for exemption for modules that cannot be anonymously marked will be considered through the University's validation and review process or committee structure as appropriate.

4.9 QMU supports the principles of the award of credit and of credit transfer, as specified by the SCQF, in all of its assessment procedures.

4.10 QMU supports the recognition of, and the award of credit for, prior accredited and experiential learning as set out in the University's Guidance on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) found at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/

4.11 QMU recognises the need for transparency in the assessment of students.

4.12 QMU recognises the need for a detailed student transcript, in accordance with the European Diploma Supplement, as a means of communicating the achievement by a student.

4.13 All modules which are designed to lead to the award of academic credit are expressed in terms of learning outcomes that are capable of assessment and include details of the assessment and of the assessment criteria to be employed.

4.14 All modules which lead to the award of academic credit come under the purview of a Board of Examiners and are assigned, as appropriate, to an External Examiner.

4.15 The normal language of assessment is English, but exceptionally other languages may be used where this is described as part of the definitive document for a programme and, in these cases, the language of instruction and assessment will be clearly shown on the student transcript.

4.16 Module descriptors specify the format of assessment but, as a minimum requirement, QMU requires a student to submit a digital copy of all assessments, wherever this is practicable. This digital copy acts as the archive copy of that assessment.

4.17 Feedback

Staff must make every effort to meet the QMU requirement of disseminating assessment marks and feedback to students within the following timeframe:

- Undergraduate level one and two assessment: within a maximum of 20 working days of the assessment submission.

- Undergraduate level three and four assessment (with the exception of Honours projects and dissertations): within a maximum of 15 working days of the assessment submission.
- Undergraduate Honours projects and dissertations: within a maximum of 20 working days of the assessment submission.
- Postgraduate assessment: within a maximum of 20 working days of the assessment submission.

Working days equates to Monday to Friday, excluding University closure days. The maximum of 15/20 working days includes all stages within the marking process and applies to all staff. Only in exceptional circumstances should staff exceed the 15/20 working days requirement. Where this occurs, students must be informed of the extension at least seven calendar days before the original deadline for receipt of feedback.

QMU requires staff as a minimum to submit feedback and grading for each assessment component on an appropriate pro forma (except where appropriate alternatives are provided (e.g. audio feedback). This applies to coursework and examinations. Feedback on course work will normally be individual. A digital copy of this pro forma will act as the archive copy of the feedback and grade awarded for that assessment. Pro formae *a*re usually completed electronically and must be scanned instead, if handwritten. Standard feedback may be provided to the full cohort for an examination. However all students also have the right to request individual feedback from the Module Co-ordinator.

4.18   A copy of student assessments and the related feedback pro formae will be kept during the time that a student is matriculated, or as specified by the University's Records Retention Schedule.

5.0   Fairness, reliability and validity of assessment

5.1   Assessment can take many different forms, as dictated by the variety of programmes and learning outcomes but, in all cases it should be:

- Fair, in that there should be equality of treatment across all programmes and that there should be a consistent approach to equality and diversity;
- Valid, that is the assessment can be shown to be relevant to the intended learning outcomes;
- Reliable, in that there should be consistency of processes and standards across the institution and that there should be comparability of both the volume and complexity of assessment in relation to credit and SCQF level;
- Useful, in that it contributes to the knowledge and competencies and employability of the learner;
- Transparent, in that the requirements of the assessment in terms of intended learning outcomes and assessment criteria are made clear to the student.

5.2   To maximise accuracy and fairness of assessment, programme teams are expected to follow the procedures for marking, moderation and blind double marking set out below. The terms 'marking', 'moderation' and 'blind double marking' are defined as follows:

Marking
The process of assessing students' work, taking into account QMU guidelines for assessment feedback and the relevant criteria/mark schemes as devised by programme and/or module teams.

Moderation
The process of confirming the consistency of the mark and feedback provided by the original marker(s).

Blind double marking
Marking conducted without access to marks, annotations or comments from any other marker. Both markers must use the relevant criteria and provide feedback to students in the agreed format.

5.3   Where there are differences between first and second markers, these should be resolved through a process of discussion and negotiation. On occasions where such differences cannot be resolved through this method, the case will be referred to a third marker. A single agreed mark is provided to the student as an outcome of the above procedures.

5.4   If appropriate, Examiners may adjust the raw marks attained by students in individual subjects, but the basis of the scaling must be reported to the Board of Examiners who will be asked to endorse the scaling.

5.5   All assessed work should have associated marking criteria. These guides to marking should be developed simultaneously with assessment instruments and, where practicable, be approved by the External Examiner. Sharing of approved marking criteria with students is a required feature of good practice. All feedback given to students should relate to the agreed marking criteria.

5.6   Internal moderation

5.6.1   All elements of assessments for Honours projects and postgraduate dissertations (or equivalent) at SCQF levels 9, 10, 11and 12 must be blind double-marked for the whole cohort.

5.6.2   All summative assessments for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that are not blind-double marked must be moderated on a sampling basis as a means of verifying the accuracy of marking. The size of the sample to be moderated must be at least the square root of the total number of students (rounded to the nearest whole number) taking the assessment plus all borderline fails (those that are within 2% below the pass mark). The

sample should include a range of performance and the minimum size should be six pieces of assessed work.

5.7   External Examiner moderation

5.7.1   A sample as outlined above will be reviewed by External Examiners for assessment leading to a named award.

5.7.2   External Examiners will normally only be required to moderate samples for an individual module once per academic year. They will not normally be required to moderate samples for reassessments or multiple occurrences of the module provided the mode of assessment and marking team remain unchanged from the original assessment. The Board of Examiners will determine whether the External Examiner will be required to moderate additional samples for reassessment or an additional occurrence of the module.

5.7.3   It is the responsibility of the Module Co-ordinator to select the sample to be reviewed by the External Examiner. This need not be the same sample used for internal moderation.

5.7.4   Further information on External Examiner arrangements for collaborative programmes can be found in the Collaborations Manual.

5.7.5   In circumstances where an External Examiner has concerns about the submitted marks for a sample of assessments, the External Examiner may not modify one or more marks of the sample group of students but must review the marks of the whole cohort. External Examiners may make recommendations only on the adjustment of marks. It is the responsibility of the Programme Team to consider these recommendations and take a final decision on the student mark.

5.8   Responsibility for assessment

5.8.1   In all cases Module Co-ordinators have responsibility for the conduct and quality control of assessment in their own module(s). Programme Leaders are deemed responsible for the quality of assessment across programmes and are accountable to the Head of Division through the Programme Committee. Deans of School have responsibility for assessment regulations and policy and staff development (as it affects assessment) within the parameters set by the University and any relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. It is expected, however, that this responsibility will be delegated to Heads of Division.

5.8.2   School Offices are responsible for the maintenance and retention of records of all provisional marks. The Student Records Office and the School Office under the direction of the Assistant Secretary, Registry and Academic Administration, will maintain a central archive of approved final marks.

6.0   Forms of assessment

6.1   The form and balance of assessment for each module should be such as to provide the most accurate assessment of the student's achievement of the module's aims, objectives and learning outcomes. Assessment may be by end-of-module assessment; or by intermittent or periodic assessment undertaken during the course of the module.

6.2   The module descriptor specifies the relative assessment pattern, including weightings across components. The assessment pattern must be based on the intended learning outcomes of that module.

6.3   Normally assessment will relate to some or all of the learning outcomes of a single module. Where an assessment covers learning outcomes from two or more modules, this must be clearly described in the module descriptors and the method of attributing marks to each module should be clearly defined.

6.4   At the commencement of each module the Module Co-ordinator must advise the enrolled students of the form of the assessment and the timing of the components which make up the assessment. This will be consistent with the overall framework established for the programme's assessment, as specified in the module descriptors.

6.5   At the start of each programme, Programme Leaders will refer students to the assessment regulations for the programme governing progression and award, and of any changes thereto.

6.6   The University operates a Student Attendance Policy which can be found at:

https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

Additional attendance and participation conditions may be in place for some programmes, but must be made clear to students. Implications of non-attendance in terms of eligibility to undertake assessments must also be made clear. These must be approved through the University's validation and review process or committee structure as appropriate.

PART B AWARD REGULATIONS

7.0   Marks, grades and levels of performance

7.1   Assessment is primarily a matter of academic judgement, and the computational structure is designed to facilitate consistent judgements.

Thefull range of marks should be used in accordance with the grade descriptors in Appendix E.

7.2   A student's overall performance on an undergraduate module will be given marks within one of eight grades as follows:

Grade	Mark	Corresponding level in an Honours degree classification
A*	80% - 100%	first class
A	70% - 79.9%	first class
B	60 – 69.9%	upper second
C	50 – 59.9%	lower second
D	40 – 49.9%	third class
E	30 – 39.9%	fail
F	20 – 29.9%	fail
G	19.9% or below	fail

7.3   A student's overall performance on a postgraduate module will be given marks within one of eight grades as follows:

Grade	Mark	Award classification
A*	80% - 100%	distinction
A	70 – 79%	distinction
B	60 – 69%	merit
C	50 – 59%	pass
D	40 – 49%	fail
E	30 – 39%	fail
F	20 – 29%	fail
G	19% or below	fail

7.4   These grades should be used in a consistent fashion at all levels of assessment whether it is judging a student's overall performance; a cohort's performance, a module grade, or a piece of assessed coursework.

7.5   The criteria for each of the grades above are listed in the Appendices.

7.6 Normally subjects will be assessed using marks and grades. However, in exceptional circumstances subjects may be assessed using grades only. This will be recorded in programme specific regulations.

7.7 If an undergraduate subject is assessed using a grade only, then the following grade-to-mark conversion scheme shall be used for the purposes of computation:

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Mark	85	77	65	55	45	35	25	10

7.8 If a postgraduate subject is assessed using a grade only, then the following grade-to-mark conversion scheme shall be used for the purpose of computation.

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Mark	85	75	65	55	45	35	25	10

In most cases, the mark is set at the midpoint of the band. However, the mark at Grade A* is limited to 85 to reflect the comparatively few marks likely to be awarded over 90%.

8.0 Award

8.1 To gain an undergraduate award, a student must normally be a registered student at the University for at least one academic year. Minimum registration periods for postgraduate awards are set out in the University's Registration Regulations.

To qualify for the following awards the student must fulfil the subject specific requirements for the name of the award and also:

Cert HE	120 credit points of which a minimum of 100 are at SCQF level 7 or higher
Dip HE	240 credit points of which a minimum of 100 are at SCQF level 8 or higher
Degree	360 credit points of which a minimum of 100 are at SCQF level 9 or higher
Honours Degree	480 credit points of which a minimum of 220 are at SCQF level 9 and 10, including at least 100 at level 10
Graduate Certificate	60 credit points, at minimum of SCQF level 9
Graduate Diploma	120 credit points, at minimum of SCQF level 9
Postgraduate Certificate	60 credit points of which a minimum of 40 are at SCQF level 11 and no credits below SCQF level 10
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credit points of which a minimum of 100 are at SCQF level 11 and no credits below SCQF level 10
Masters Degree	180 credit points of which a minimum of 160 are at SCQF level 11 and no credits below SCQF level 10

Integrated Masters 600 credit points of which a minimum of 120 are at SCQF level 11

Students may take credits from the SCQF level directly above or directly below subject to the guidance set out above and as defined in relevant documentation.

Ten SCQF Credits are equivalent to five European Credits (ECTS) therefore 120 SCQF credits equal 60 ECTS.

8.2   The classification of the award of the Degree with Honours will be based on the marks obtained in SCQF level 9 (20%) and SCQF level 10 (80%). Weighted aggregate scores will be rounded to one decimal place. The classification will be based upon the average mark obtained by combining the weighted results of all modules studied at SCQF levels 9 and 10. Any modules undertaken below SCQF level 9 and any modules taken whilst on an exchange arrangement will not be counted towards the Honours calculation.

Where a student has accumulated more than 120 credits at SCQF level 10, a maximum of 120 credits will be counted at SCQF level 10 for the purpose of the Honours calculation. All core modules at SCQF level 10 will count towards the Honours classification. The optional modules in which the student achieved the highest marks will be included in the calculation of the Honours classification. Additional optional modules at SCQF level 10 with lower marks will be counted towards SCQF level 9.

70 and above	First Class
≥60% and <70%	Second Class: Upper division
≥50% and <60%	Second Class: Lower division
≥40% and <50%	Third Class

8.3   The award of an Ordinary Degree can include an award with distinction, in cases where the average mark for the 120 credits (or equivalent) at SCQF level 9 or above is 65% or higher. Any modules undertaken below SCQF level 9 and any modules taken whilst on an exchange arrangement will not be counted towards the distinction calculation.

8.4   The award of taught Masters Degrees and Postgraduate Diplomas may include an award with distinction or merit. The award of Postgraduate Certificate is without distinction or merit.

A distinction is granted automatically if the weighted average mark (each module being weighted in relation to its size) - is 70% or over.
A merit is granted automatically if the weighted average mark (each module being weighted in relation to its size) - is 60% or over.

Only modules undertaken at SCQF level 11 will be used in the calculation for distinction or merit.

8.5   When granted an award a student will automatically be de-registered and must reapply if they wish to proceed to a higher or different award.

8.6   Where a student is admitted to the University at level four the classification will be based entirely on grades achieved during level four studies.

8.7   Where a student is admitted to a level and given additional credit at that level gained externally, the grades from that credit may contribute to the classification where the credit is at the appropriate SCQF level and where marks are available. Otherwise the classification will be based on grades gained entirely within the University. Any modules taken whilst on an exchange arrangement will not be counted towards the classification.

9.0   Decision on award classifications and distinctions in borderline cases (undergraduate degrees)

9.1   All weighted average marks falling 0.5 per cent or less below the classification or distinction boundary are automatically reclassified at the higher level.

9.2   All weighted average marks falling between 0.6 per cent and two percent below the classification or distinction boundary are deemed borderline cases.

9.3   For Honours degrees the final classification is determined by the marks across all SCQF level 10 credits. Borderline cases where any 60 or more credits (core or elective modules) are achieved in the classification above the boundary will be awarded the higher classification of degree.

9.4   For Ordinary degrees the final award is determined by the marks across SCQF level 9 credits. Borderline cases where any 60 or more credits (core or elective modules) are achieved in the distinction category (65% or above) will be awarded the degree with distinction.

9.5   Additional viva voce examinations involving the External Examiner should not be used in the consideration of borderline cases.

10.0   Decision on distinctions in borderline cases (postgraduate degrees)

10.1   All weighted average marks falling 0.5 per cent or less below the distinction/merit boundary are automatically reclassified at the higher level.

10.2   All weighted average marks falling between 0.6 per cent and two percent below the distinction/merit boundary are deemed borderline cases. In these cases the award of distinction/merit is determined by consideration of marks across all SCQF level 11 credits contributing to the Programme.

10.3   For standard 180 credit Masters programmes, borderline cases where 90 credits or more (core or elective modules) at SCQF level 11 are marked at 70% or above will be awarded the distinction.

For standard 180 credit Masters programmes, borderline cases where 90 credits or more (core or elective modules) at SCQF level 11 are marked at 60% or above will be awarded the merit.

10.4   For standard 120 credit Postgraduate Diploma programmes, borderline cases where 60 credits or more (core or elective modules) at SCQF level 11 are marked at 70% or above will be awarded the distinction.

For standard 120 credit Postgraduate Diploma programmes, borderline cases where 60 credits or more (core or elective modules) at SCQF level 11 are marked at 60% or above will be awarded the merit.

10.5   For non-standard Postgraduate Diploma and Masters programmes, i.e. Postgraduate Diploma Programmes rated at more than 120 credits, or Masters programmes rated at more than 180 credits, borderline cases where 50% or more of the total credits at SCQF level 11 are marked at 70% or above will be awarded the distinction. Exceptionally, programme specific regulations may be defined for such programmes, to be agreed at the point of validation or review.

For non-standard Postgraduate Diploma and Masters Programmes, i.e. Postgraduate Diploma programmes rated at more than 120 credits, or Masters programmes rated at more than 180 credits, borderline cases where 50% or more of the total credits at SCQF level 11 are marked at 60% or above will be awarded the merit. Exceptionally, programme specific regulations may be defined for such programmes, to be agreed at the point of validation or review.

10.6   Additional viva voce examinations involving the External Examiner should not be used in the consideration of borderline cases.

11.0   Decision on an award in absence of complete assessment information

11.1   Boards of Examiners have discretion to make an award in the absence of complete assessment information where it is established to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners that:

- such absence is due to a valid documented cause, which would include, but not be limited to, a student's illness;
- there is enough evidence of the student's achievement at the level at which they are being examined, which would normally equate to two thirds of the assessable work at that level, or evidence is subsequently obtained.

Where Boards of Examiners use their discretion to make an award in the absence of complete assessment information, the justification for this action should be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Awards may be recommended with or without Honours or distinction as appropriate. In order to reach such a decision the Board of Examiners may assess the candidate by any appropriate and reasonable means. Any such assessment will for the purpose of these regulations be deemed a first assessment.

The Board of Examiners has a duty to gain as much information about the candidate's ability and performance as possible before making decisions.

Decisions made in the absence of complete information must aim to ensure consistency of standard and equality of opportunity for the student under consideration as compared with his/her peers. The student must not be put in a position of unfair advantage over other candidates for the award.

12.0   Withdrawing from a module and transfer between modules

12.1   A student withdrawing from a module up to the point at which 25% of the taught duration of the module has been delivered may provide the Module Co-ordinator with a written explanation of reasons for withdrawal. If the Module Co-ordinator accepts these as valid reasons, the student will suffer no academic penalty, i.e. the withdrawal will not count as a fail. The student will receive a transcript showing them as withdrawn and will receive no credit.

12.2   A student withdrawing from a module after 25% of the taught duration will be recorded as a fail.

12.3   A student wishing to transfer from one elective module to another will normally be permitted to do so within the first 25% of the taught duration of the module subject to the consent of both Module Co-ordinators. Only exceptionally will students be permitted to transfer between elective modules after this period.

13.1   **Transcripts**

13.1   The student's assessment record or academic transcript shall specify for each module taken:

- the title;
- the credit points and the level;
- the academic year in which most recently taken;
- the grade and mark most recently obtained;
- the name of the University together with, if appropriate, the name of any other institution sharing responsibility for the student's programme of study or research;
- the location of study;

- the language of instruction/assessment;
- decision on progress/award.

Academic transcripts are issued online following Boards of Examiners. They are issued on secure paper to exiting students.

The University's transcript meets the requirements of the European Diploma Supplement.

Guidance on European Credit Points is provided for all students receiving transcripts in the accompanying Guidance Notes.

PART C ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

14.0   Terminology
For the purposes of these regulations the following definitions shall apply:

14.1   Component
A component is defined as an individual piece of assessment, for example an examination or an essay. Some modules will have one assessment component only. Others may have multiple components.

14.2   Reassessment
Reassessment means the opportunity to be reassessed in an assessment component which has been failed. The timing of the reassessment is at the discretion of the Board of Examiners but must allow the student sufficient time to prepare. Normally reassessment (as a second attempt) happens within the same academic year or shortly thereafter.

A student will be permitted a maximum of three attempts at any module. i.e. attempt one plus two reassessment attempts. Attempt three may be undertaken in the following academic year subject to progression regulations.

14.3   Condonement of a module
Condonement of a module may occur where a student has not achieved a minimum pass mark in an undergraduate module at SCQF level 7 or SCQF level 8 and there are no programme specific assessment regulations that require the student to be reassessed.

15.0   Programme specific regulations

15.1   It is expected that programme specific regulations will be consistent with the University's general assessment regulations.

Programmes may only apply more specific regulations where it is an explicit requirement of a professional body or where an explicit justification has been given as part of the formal validation process . Any exceptions must be approved through the validation or committee approval process and be clearly recorded in the programme document or relevant module descriptor.

Programme specific regulations for progression and award are written in the context of the University's general assessment regulations; they should be interpreted in that context and, where they are silent, the University's general assessment regulations are taken to apply. Programme specific regulations may cover the following points:

- the requirements for passing a module;
- modules which are not eligible for condonement
- the requirements for progression;
- the conditions and limits to the provision for reassessment of modules;

- the conditions and limits to the provision for repeating a level;
- the conditions under which a student shall be required to withdraw from the programme.

16.0   Assessment of a module

16.1   To pass an undergraduate module, a student must obtain at least 40% overall, and at least 30% in each component of assessment unless otherwise specified in the programme document or module descriptor. To pass a postgraduate module, a student must obtain at least 50% overall, and at least 40% in each component of assessment unless otherwise specified in the programme document or module descriptor. This regulation applies to the first attempt at the module only. Regulations for reassessment of modules are detailed below and in 14.2 above.

16.2   Where a student has achieved an overall mark of 40% or above (50% for postgraduate modules) but has fallen below the minimum permitted mark in an individual component, this will be shown as a qualifying fail on the academic transcript with a grade of Q.

16.3   Where a student is reassessed in an undergraduate module at a second or third attempt, the maximum mark that can be achieved for the module is 40%. Where a student is reassessed in a postgraduate module at a second or third attempt, the maximum mark that can be achieved for the module is 50%.

The nature and extent of the failure will not affect the student's right to be reassessed.

17.0   Decisions on student progression

17.1   Student progression from one level of the programme to the next is at the discretion of the Board of Examiners taking into account the student's performance in all modules and the amount of academic credit accrued during the year.

17.2   The main Board of Examiners is responsible for determining:

- whether the student remains in registration;
- the conditions governing the student's progression;
- the award for which the student is eligible.

17.3   Where there is a tiered system of Boards of Examiners, the Module Board will have the authority to moderate and confirm marks and grades for each of the modules for which it is responsible, and determine the form and timing of any reassessment offered. The decision of the Module Board of Examiners may be overturned by the Progression/Award Board of Examiners following consideration of the full student profile.

17.4.   Boards of Examiners may condone one failed 20 credit module per level at the first attempt for students at level one and level two (SCQF level 7 and 8) of an undergraduate

programme, provided that a minimum overall mark of at least 37% has been achieved in the failed module and no individual component of assessment within the module falls below the minimum compensation level. The result will show as a condoned fail on the academic transcript and the student will be given credit for the module. Students who have failed more than 20 credits must undertake reassessments of all failed modules in the first instance. Once reassessment results are known, condonement may still be applied to one 20 credit module, provided that a minimum overall mark of at least 37% has been achieved in the failed module and no individual component of assessment within the module falls below the minimum compensation level and the student has no further failed modules on their profile.

Programme specific regulations may exempt some modules from eligibility for condonement.

A condoned fail will not affect any subsequent module selections.

17.5   Decisions on a student's continued registration will be made at the end of each academic year, after reassessment results are known. The main Board of Examiners will take account of the following guidelines in making their decisions.

17.6   For undergraduate full-time students:

a) Pass modules rated to a total of 80 or more credits – continue in registration as a full-time student

Normally full-time students undertake 120 credits in an academic year. Exceptionally, full-time students can take a maximum of 160 credits in any academic year. This regulation is intended to support students carrying forward modules and not to facilitate completion of studies in a shorter time than the usual minimum period of registration or to allow students to undertake additional optional modules in an academic session.

b) Pass modules rated to more than 50 credits and less than 80 credits – continue in registration as a part-time student but may not register for modules rated at more than 70 credits in the next year of study

c) Pass modules rated at 50 credits or less – required to discontinue registration

17.7   A part-time student allowed to continue in registration, wishing to transfer to full-time study, will have her or his application considered by the programme's admission tutor. Transfer is not at the student's discretion.

17.8   The only decisions available to the Board of Examiners on progress and award shall be:

- Continue – passed all assessments
- Required to be reassessed in the failed module(s) before continuing

- Continue – but required to be reassessed in the failed/deferred module(s) in next academic year
- Offered opportunity to repeat the entire level in next academic year before continuing
- Offered opportunity to be reassessed in next academic year as a part-time student before continuing
- Continue in part time registration (applies to part-time students only)
- No reassessment allowed – required to withdraw from course
- Decision deferred – outstanding assessments as a first attempt
- Decision deferred – outstanding reassessments
- Progress to placement
- Recommendation to Senate for specific awards

17.9   Undergraduate programmes of study are designed on four levels, normally corresponding with Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework levels 7, 8, 9 and 10, with conceptual and material progression being designed into the structure from level to level. Thus, it is expected that students will progress from level to level, and the structure of the programme and the timetables are developed accordingly. Although the above regulations may allow a full-time student to stay in full-time registration albeit without a completed level of study, it may not be possible to construct a programme around the timetable available which is academically coherent and which makes best advantage of the student's time. In most cases students will be expected and advised but not required to complete a level of study before progressing to the next level.

17.10   Full-time undergraduate students may not normally proceed to level four study unless they are eligible for the award of an Ordinary Degree. Exceptionally, a student may be able to progress to level four study when falling short by only 20 credit points.

17.11   A student may cease to be registered for a postgraduate award if he or she:

a) fails to register on any module in two successive semesters without prior approval (unless enrolled on a dissertation)
b) is granted the award of PgCert, PgDip, MSc, MA, MBA, Executive Masters or MFA
c) fails to have the dissertation proposal approved after two submissions
d) accumulates fails as specified in regulations 17.12 and 17.13
e) fails the dissertation on two attempts

17.12   A postgraduate student will normally be permitted a reassessment attempt in up to two thirds of the taught modules on a programme. Should a student be unsuccessful at attempt two, they may be permitted a further reassessment attempt in a maximum of one third of the taught modules on a programme. Should a student breach these reassessment thresholds, they will be required to withdraw from the programme. A maximum of two attempts will be permitted for the Masters project/dissertation.

17.13 Individual postgraduate programmes with a non-standard structure may define programme specific regulations under which a student may be required to withdraw. These regulations should be broadly in line with the above principle. Programme specific regulations defined to meet the requirements of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies should be approved by the validation panel, or through the relevant committee.

18.0   Reassessment of a module

18.1   Reassessment is permitted in order to allow a student to make good an initial failure. This affords the student an opportunity to demonstrate the standard required to pass modules, and ultimately to gain an award. A student who has passed a module at the first opportunity shall not be entitled to a further assessment in order to obtain a higher grade.

18.2   The Board of Examiners may at its discretion allow an undergraduate student to be re-assessed in up to 80 credits in any one academic year. The Board of Examiners may at its discretion allow a postgraduate student to be re-assessed in up to two thirds of the taught modules on a programme as a second attempt, and one third as a third attempt.

18.3   The Board of Examiners shall decide on the form of the reassessment (e.g. written examination, viva voce, or an additional assignment), taking into account the nature of the failed module and the nature of the failure. This may differ from the format of the first assessment and need not be the same for all students provided equity of experience is maintained. The Board of Examiners can allow for full or partial reassessment of the components as appropriate. Reassessment can take the form of a reworking or a new assessment, as determined by the Board of Examiners.

18.4   Normally, a student may not be given more than three attempts at any module.

18.5   A candidate for reassessment is not entitled to be reassessed in components that are no longer part of the programme. A Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, make such special arrangements as it deems suitable in cases where it is inappropriate for students to be reassessed in the same elements, or by the same methods as at the first attempt.

18.6   All second attempt assessments shall normally take place before the commencement of the next session of the programme. They should be late enough to allow the students time to prepare themselves, and to avoid overload of assessment shall normally take place in the summer/autumn. Students cannot request an extraordinary exam sitting. Third attempt assessments may be required to be undertaken in the following academic year.

18.7   A student who is reassessed for a module failure in an undergraduate module, where there are no clear extenuating circumstances, shall be awarded no more than 40% on passing the reassessment. A student who is reassessed for a module failure in a postgraduate module, where there are no clear extenuating circumstances, shall be awarded no more than 50% on passing the reassessment.

18.8   All reassessment results shall be based only upon performance in reassessments; no marks may be carried forward from a student's first attempt at the assessments. To pass an undergraduate module at reassessment, a student must achieve at least 30% in each reassessed component and a weighted average of at least 40%. To pass a postgraduate module at reassessment, a student must achieve at least 40% in each reassessed component and a weighted average of at least 50%.

18.9   A student who has been absent from an assessment, or who has performed badly due to illness or other cause, shall be allowed to take the assessment, and it shall be treated as a first assessment, subject to the reason for absence or poor performance being acceptable to the Board of Examiners or the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

19.0   Assessment of students with a disability and of students whose first language is not English

19.1   Students with a disability

19.1.1 If, through disability, a student is unable to be assessed by the prescribed method for the module, reasonable adjustments (as agreed by the Academic Disabled Student Co-ordinator) will be detailed within an Individual Learning Plan.

19.1.2 Arrangements for the assessment of students with a disability will be made prior to, or at the point of assessment. Further allowance or compensation for disability will not be made in the marking of assessed work.

19.1.3 Further information can be found about the Disability Service on the University's website.

19.2   Students whose first language is not English

All students whose first language is not English will normally be permitted to use language-only dictionaries in examinations. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted (please refer to Exam Regulations section). No extra time will be allocated for students whose first language is not English.

20.0   Penalties for word limits and late submission of assessment

20.1   In each piece of written work where a word limit is identified, students are required to include and clearly state the total number of words used. The number of words counted should include all the text, references and quotations used in the text, but should exclude abstracts, supplements to the text, diagrams, appendices, reference lists and bibliographies.

20.2   A piece of written work which exceeds the specified word limit by 10% or more will receive a maximum mark of 40% for undergraduate or 50% for postgraduate programmes.

20.3 Any student who submits work to be assessed after the assessment submission date and time, without the prior agreement of the Programme Leader, or without good or agreed cause, will have marks deducted according to the following criteria:

- if submitted, as a first attempt, after the deadline but up to and including six days after the deadline) a maximum mark of 40% can be achieved for undergraduate programmes and a maximum mark of 50% for postgraduate programmes
- if submitted, as a first attempt, seven days or more (including on the 7th day after the submission deadline) a mark of 0% will be awarded

Example (first attempt)

Friday 4pm submission		
Day 1	Saturday 4pm	A maximum mark of 40% can be achieved for undergraduate programmes and a maximum mark of 50% for postgraduate programmes
Day 2	Sunday 4pm	
Day 3	Monday 4pm	
Day 4	Tuesday 4pm	
Day 5	Wednesday 4pm	
Day 6	Thursday 4pm	
Any later than this		A mark of 0% will be awarded

- if submitted after the submission deadline in a second or third attempt assessment, a mark of 0% will be awarded.

PART D RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

21.0   Student responsibility in assessment

21.1   It is the responsibility of students to:

- familiarise themselves with the regulations for their programme. Students should consult their Programme Handbook and/or their Academic Tutor;
- recognise the role of assessment in the achievement and recognition of their learning;
- familiarise themselves with the examination periods (both first attempt and reassessment and make themselves available for the examination period);
- attend written examinations and observe the University's Instruction to Candidates in Examinations (to be read out to students prior to the start of examinations). In brief, these require candidates to attend in good time, to bring their matriculation card, not to communicate with other candidates, not to cheat, not to disrupt the event, to complete the answer paper as instructed, not to bring into the hall any unauthorised material and not to remove any part of an answer paper from the hall;
- attend all other types of assessment, for example, practical examinations, class tests and presentations;
- submit all work for assessment in accordance with the requirements for their programme;
- provide evidence, in advance of the Board of Examiners, of any extenuating circumstances. This evidence is normally written by an independent source such as a medical practitioner and should be forwarded to the School Office in the first instance. Students should be aware that Boards of Examiners will take account of all certificated or verified evidence submitted on behalf of students in their deliberations on individual performance.

21.2   If a student fails to attend examinations or submit work for assessment without good cause, the Board of Examiners has the authority to deem the student to have failed the assessments concerned.

21.3   Students are not permitted to substantially reproduce the same piece of course work for more than one assignment, except where they are explicitly required to do so by the assignment specification.

21.4   If a student is found to have cheated, or attempted to gain an unfair advantage, the Board of Examiners, following a recommendation from the Dean or Disciplinary Panel, has authority to deem the student to have failed part or all of the assessment and to determine whether or not the student shall be permitted to be re-assessed. Students must ensure the proper acknowledgement of the borrowings from other sources, whether published or unpublished. Divisions should provide guidance on how such borrowings should be acknowledged in a manner appropriate to that discipline.

21.5 Fraudulent practices such as copying, cheating, collusion, plagiarism (i.e. the presentation by an individual of another person's ideas or work, in any medium, published or unpublished, as though they were their own) are serious academic offences and will incur appropriate penalties. Students must not submit work obtained from an essay bank or website essay writing service. Students are urged to seek advice from academic staff or the Effective Learning Service if in any doubt about the foregoing practices. All students are expected to seek clear guidance on the form and manner in which assessments are to be completed.

21.6 Serious cases of cheating and plagiarism will be referred for consideration through the University's disciplinary procedure. Undertaking fraudulent practices can result in a student being required to leave the University.

21.7 QMU has a policy to use the TurnItIn UK plagiarism detection system, or other equivalent systems, to help students avoid plagiarism and improve their scholarship skills. This service is available to all matriculated students at QMU. Academic staff may submit student work to TurnItIn UK or another equivalent system.

22.0 Responsibility of other individuals and bodies in assessment

22.1 **Senate**, through its Student Experience Committee, has responsibility for:

- the development of assessment regulations and policy;
- monitoring the use of these regulations and policy by the Schools;
- periodically reviewing and revising these regulations and policy.

22.2 The **Deans of School** have responsibility for ensuring that:

- programmes within that School conform to these regulations and policy;
- assessment processes are approved and reviewed;
- assessment processes are secure;
- through the annual monitoring process, there is reflection on student performance in assessment and in relation to programme learning outcomes;
- periodic review of assessment strategies are conducted;
- staff are supported in the development of assessment strategies and practices;
- students are involved in the evaluation of assessment strategies;
- External Examiners are briefed on these regulations and policy;
- issues arising through the implementation of these regulations and policy are conveyed to the Student Experience Committee.

22.3 **Programme Leaders** have responsibility for:

- assuring that academic standards are maintained through the effective use of this policy and its local implementation via the programme definitive document;
- monitoring the outcomes of assessment and reporting these outcomes to the School.

Programme Leaders have delegated authority from Deans, and work in partnership with Heads of Division, to oversee the management of their programmes.

22.4   **Module Co-ordinators (with appropriate academic staff)** have the responsibility for:

- designing assessments that both conform to these regulations and policy and which assess the specified learning outcomes and which make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of all learners;
- ensuring that feedback is provided on student performance in relation to assessment outcomes;
- providing feedback on summative assessment in accordance with the timescales specified in regulation 4.17. Staff should note that 'working days' equates to Monday to Friday, excluding University closure dates, i.e. part-time working or periods of annual leave should not result in an extension to the 15/20 working day maximum. The maximum of 15/20 working days includes all stages within the marking process (i.e. marking, cross-marking, collation of marks and feedback, sending marks and feedback to the School Office, dissemination of marks and feedback to students by the School Office) and applies to all staff, including Visiting Lecturers.
- clearly specifying the date by which a student can expect to receive feedback on each summative assignment. This date must be communicated to the student at the same time as the assessment deadline. Where a student has been granted an extension, the timescale for receiving feedback will be adjusted accordingly. In exceptional circumstances, the original date communicated to students for receipt of feedback may be extended. Any such extension must be communicated to students at least seven days before the original deadline for receipt of feedback.
- attending Boards of Examiners for the presentation of their module results.

23.0   Project supervision

23.1   All project supervision meetings with undergraduate and taught postgraduate students must be documented, signed by both student and supervisor, and filed as a record of the supervisory process. Documentation should include the date and duration of the meeting and a summary of the discussion. Arrangements for doctoral candidate supervision records are set out in the University's [PhD and Professional Doctorate Regulations](#).

23.2   The time allocated to supervision of Honours projects and dissertations should normally be no less than three hours and not more than five hours per student. These minimum and maximum time allocations apply only to supervisory meetings with students and do not include time taken to read draft work. Guidance on the time allocation for postgraduate project and dissertation supervision is available in the relevant programme documentation.

23.3   Early in the academic year all supervisors should hold an initial meeting with their supervisees to discuss key elements of the process, including expectations, regulations, terms of reference and operational procedures. This meeting could be held as a joint meeting between a supervisor and all of his/her supervisees. A record of all meetings between a student and their supervisor should be lodged in the student file at the time of submission of the project or dissertation.

23.4   Staff members should normally read and give feedback on one draft only and should not mark or re-write this work.

24.0   Academic dishonesty and plagiarism

24.1   Introduction

24.1.1 The University's degrees and other academic awards are given in recognition of the candidate's achievement. Plagiarism is therefore, together with other forms of academic dishonesty such as personation, falsification of data, computer and calculation fraud, examination room cheating and bribery, considered an act of academic fraud and is an offence against University discipline.

24.1.2 Plagiarism is defined as follows:

The presentation by an individual of another person's ideas or work (in any medium, published or unpublished) as though they were their own.

24.1.3 In the following circumstances academic collusion represents a form of plagiarism:

Academic collusion is deemed to be unacceptable where it involves the unauthorised and unattributed collaboration of students or others work resulting in plagiarism, which is against University discipline.

24.1.4 QMU has a policy to use the TurnItIn UK plagiarism detection system, or other equivalent systems, to help students avoid plagiarism and improve their scholarship skills. This service is available to all matriculated students at QMU. QMU tutors may submit student work to TurnItIn UK, or another equivalent system.

24.2   Referencing

Students' attention is drawn to the guide to referencing available at:
http://libguides.qmu.ac.uk/referencing

24.3 Prevention

24.3.1 All members of staff should explain to their students at the start of each session that plagiarism and academic fraud are unacceptable forms of cheating, which will be penalised severely. Such warnings should be repeated during the session and are especially necessary where dissertations, projects or coursework are substantial elements of the curriculum. Every opportunity should be taken to reinforce this message by incorporating it in published material such as Programme or scheme guides and, in the case of postdoctoral candidates, by its inclusion in the Research Degrees Code of Practice/Doctoral Student Handbooks (PhD and Professional Doctorate).

24.3.2 These warnings should be accompanied by specific advice from Divisions about what constitutes plagiarism and academic fraud. For example, such advice should indicate where a particular discipline makes the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate use of acknowledged or unacknowledged sources; what is regarded as acceptable collaboration between students undertaking joint project work; and what is expected of a dissertation or thesis. Dissertations should clearly indicate whether it is an original contribution to knowledge or a critical survey of published material. Training students to make such distinctions is part of the academic process and should be formally and publicly acknowledged as such. This is particularly significant since some of the cases arising stem from genuine ignorance on the part of the students who have never received guidance on how to acknowledge sources properly.

24.3.3 Scrutiny of academic work should be sufficient to ensure that signs of plagiarism or unacceptable levels of co-operation, whether intentional or not, are detected at an early stage and brought to students' attention through tutorial guidance and in some cases perhaps by written warning.

24.3.4 Dissertation supervisors and other academic staff responsible for assessment and guidance should be aware of cultural relativities that may affect some students' approach to referencing. In providing guidance, staff will be expected to acknowledge cultural differences and to exercise appropriate sensitivity.

24.4 Identifying, reporting and investigating

Procedures for identifying, reporting and investigating plagiarism are published separately in the University's Plagiarism Policy found at https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/

PART E APPENDICES

UNDERGRADUATE DESCRIPTORS

Grade A* 80% and above
Outstanding performance, exceptionally able – pass

- Articulates an outstanding and comprehensive understanding of the question or problem
- Includes all of the most relevant information and issues raised by the question
- Demonstrates outstanding in-depth knowledge of appropriate reading through extensive references to texts, including journal articles
- Shows outstanding originality in problem solving, critical thinking, analysis and evaluation
- Presents outstanding arguments in a fluent and convincing manner.
- Displays an outstanding ability to synthesise concepts, knowledge and theory
- Shows in-depth awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question

Grade A 70-79.9%
Excellent performance – pass

- Articulates an excellent understanding and interpretation of the question or problem
- Includes most of the relevant information and issues raised by the question
- Demonstrates an excellent in-depth knowledge of appropriate reading through references to texts, including journal articles
- Shows originality in problem solving, critical thinking, analysis and evaluation
- Shows an excellent understanding of theoretical/conceptual issues
- Presents excellent arguments in a balanced and coherent way
- Demonstrates excellent ability to analyse issues raised, synthesise materials and evaluate evidence presented
- Shows awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question

Grade B 60-69.9%
Very good performance – pass

- Articulates a very good understanding and interpretation of the question or problem
- Includes many of the most relevant information and issues raised by the question
- Demonstrates a very good knowledge of appropriate reading through references to texts, including journal articles
- Shows some elements of problem solving, critical thinking, analysis and evaluation
- Shows consistent understanding of theoretical/conceptual issues
- Present arguments in a balanced and coherent way
- Demonstrates a very good ability to analyse issues raised and evaluate evidence presented
- Shows some awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question

Grade C 50-59.9%
Good performance – pass

- Articulates a good understanding and interpretation of the question or problem
- Brings in several of the main points and issues raised by the question
- Demonstrates a good knowledge of appropriate reading through references to texts, including journal articles
- Shows some elements of problem solving, critical thinking, analysis and evaluation, but not consistently applied
- Shows good understanding of some theoretical/conceptual issues
- Presents most arguments reasonably clearly
- Demonstrates a good ability to analyse issues raised and evaluate evidence presented
- Shows good awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question

Grade D 40-49.9%
Satisfactory Performance – pass

- Articulates satisfactory but limited understanding and interpretation of the question or problem
- Discusses some of the main points/issues raised by the question
- Demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of appropriate reading through references to texts, including journal articles
- Shows some satisfactory but inconsistent attempts to problem solve, analyse and evaluate
- Shows partial understanding of theoretical/conceptual issues
- Presents some arguments with some clarity
- Demonstrates a satisfactory ability to analyse issues raised or evaluate evidence presented.
- Shows satisfactory but limited awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question
- Indicates that additional engagement may be required to sustain and enhance performance in subsequent modules and levels

Grade E 30-39.9%
Unsatisfactory performance - fail

- Articulates very limited understanding of the question or problem set
- Discusses few or none of the main points/issues raised by the question
- Demonstrates insufficient knowledge of appropriate reading through references to academic texts, including journal articles
- Shows narrow understanding of theoretical/conceptual issues
- Includes arbitrary or inaccurate factual information
- Presents arguments with little clarity
- Demonstrates very limited ability to analyse issues raised or evaluate evidence presented
- Shows limited awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question

Grade F 20-29.9%
Unsatisfactory performance- fail

- Articulates extremely limited or no understanding of the question or problem set
- Discusses mostly marginal or irrelevant points
- Demonstrates very limited or no knowledge of appropriate reading through references to academic texts, including journal articles
- Shows very narrow understanding of theoretical/conceptual issues
- Includes arbitrary or inaccurate factual information
- Presents arguments with very little clarity, or presents no argument at all
- Demonstrates little or no ability to analyse issues raised or evaluate evidence presented
- Shows very limited or no awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question.

Grade G < 20%
Unsatisfactory performance or non-submission- Fail

- Articulates little or no understanding of the question or problem set
- Discusses only marginal or irrelevant points
- Demonstrates virtually no knowledge of appropriate reading through references to academic texts, including journal articles
- Shows very narrow or no understanding of theoretical/conceptual issues
- Includes arbitrary or inaccurate factual information
- Presents arguments with very little clarity, or presents no argument at all
- Demonstrates virtually no ability to analyse issues raised or evaluate evidence presented
- Shows very limited or no awareness of value judgements and assumptions embodied in the question

POSTGRADUATE DESCRIPTORS

Grade A* 80%+
Outstanding performance, exceptionally able – pass

- Mastery of the specialist area that demonstrates exceptional insight and breadth of knowledge.
- Exceptional comprehension of scholarly techniques and / or the research-base.
- Presents extensive evidence of outstanding scholarship with exceptional critical analysis and consistent deep knowledge of the specialist and related areas.
- Demonstrates outstanding awareness of and sensitivity to the limitations of evidence
- Outstanding ability to challenge and develop existing theory and/or professional practice within the specialist area.
- Demonstrates outstanding originality, creativity or innovation in the application of knowledge and / or practice
- Demonstrates exceptional synthesis in development and inter-relationship between concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Displays outstanding potential to undertake research or be a leading practitioner within a specialist area.
- Demonstrates exceptional ability in synthesising knowledge from different disciplines.
- Outstanding ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical, visual)
- Meets the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade A 70- 79.9%
Excellent performance [distinction mark is 70%] – pass

- Mastery of the specialist area that demonstrates excellent insight and breadth of knowledge.
- Excellent comprehension of scholarly techniques and / or the research-base.
- Presents extensive evidence of excellent scholarship including critical analysis and deep knowledge of the specialist and related areas.
- Demonstrates excellent awareness of and sensitivity to the limitations of evidence
- Excellent ability to challenge existing theory and/or professional practice within the specialist area with some insight into potential developments.
- Demonstrates excellent creativity or innovation in the application of knowledge and / or practice with potential originality
- Demonstrates excellent synthesis in development and inter-relationship between concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Displays excellent potential to undertake research or be a leading practitioner within a specialist area.
- Demonstrates excellent ability in synthesising knowledge from different disciplines.
- Excellent ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical, visual)
- Meets the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade B 60- 69.9%
Very good performance [merit mark is 60-69.9%] – pass

- Very good insight and breadth of knowledge in specialist area.
- Very good comprehension of scholarly techniques and / or the research-base.
- Presents evidence of very good scholarship including critical analysis and some depth of knowledge of the specialist and related areas.
- Demonstrates very good awareness of and some sensitivity to the limitations of evidence
- Very good ability to challenge existing theory and/or professional practice within the specialist area with some insight into potential developments.
- Demonstrates some creativity or innovation in the application of knowledge and / or practice.
- Demonstrates very good synthesis in development and inter-relationship between concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Displays some potential to undertake research or lead practice within a specialist area.
- Demonstrates very good ability in synthesising knowledge from different disciplines.
- Very good ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical)
- Meets the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade C 50- 59.9%
Satisfactory performance – pass

- Satisfactory insight and knowledge in specialist area.
- Some comprehension of scholarly techniques and / or the research-base.
- Presents some evidence of scholarship including critical analysis but lacking depth or critique in some areas.
- Demonstrates some awareness of and some sensitivity to the limitations of evidence but these may not always be clearly articulated or understood
- Presents existing theory or comments on practice within the specialist area but with unsubstantiated claims or limited insight into alternative perspectives.
- Superficial understanding in the application of knowledge.
- Limited synthesis in development and inter-relationship between concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Some ability to synthesise knowledge from different disciplines.
- Satisfactory ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical)
- Meets the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade D 40-49.9%
Unsatisfactory performance – fail

- Unsatisfactory insight and knowledge in specialist area.
- Insufficient evidence of scholarly techniques and / or knowledge of the research-base.
- Lacks critical analysis or depth of argument in some areas.
- Limited awareness of the evidence with muddled understanding

- Presents some theory or comments on practice but highly descriptive and uncritical with unsubstantiated claims.
- Limited ability to apply knowledge.
- Limited synthesis of concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Limited ability to synthesise knowledge from different disciplines.
- Limited ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical)
- Does not meet all the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade E 30-39.9%
Unsatisfactory performance - fail

- Unsatisfactory insight and knowledge in specialist area.
- Lack of evidence of scholarly techniques and / or knowledge of the research-base.
- Lack of critical analysis or depth of argument.
- Lack of awareness of the evidence and muddled understanding
- Presents little theory or limited comments on practice with highly descriptive and unsubstantiated claims.
- Lack of ability to apply knowledge.
- Lack of synthesis of concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Lack of ability to synthesise knowledge from different disciplines.
- Lack of ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical)
- Does not meet all the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade F 20-29.9%
Unsatisfactory performance - fail

- Unsatisfactory insight or knowledge in specialist area.
- No evidence of scholarly techniques with minimal knowledge of the evidence or the research-base.
- Lack of analysis, depth of argument or attempts to apply knowledge.
- Presents minimal relevant theory or relevant comments on practice.
- Lack of attempt to synthesis concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- Very poor ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical)
- Does not meet the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

Grade G <20%
Unsatisfactory performance and non-submission – fail

- No insight or knowledge in specialist area.
- No evidence of scholarly techniques or knowledge of the research-base.
- No analysis or depth of argument.
- No awareness or understanding of the evidence.
- Presents no relevant theory or relevant comments on practice.
- No attempt to apply knowledge.

- No attempt to synthesis concepts, theories, policies and practice.
- No evidence of ability to synthesise knowledge from different disciplines.
- Extremely poor ability to communicate knowledge (written, verbal, practical)
- Does not meet the learning outcomes of the module or assessment.

18. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

SECTION 1 - GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the Policy of Queen Margaret University to protect and promote, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, students, visitors and others who may be affected by its activities in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The University considers that good health and safety performance is a fundamental prerequisite if the University's aims are to provide a first class working and teaching establishment.

In particular, it is the intention of the University where it is reasonably practicable to ensure:-

- The provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work which are, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe and free from risks to health by the careful identification, elimination or control of foreseeable hazards in the University Campus. This is seen as an essential part of offering quality education, training and research.
- That safety is considered in planning all activities as well as in day-to-day work.
- The provision of suitable information, instruction, training, equipment, safety devices and supervision to enable employees to perform their work safely and to understand the risks associated with their activities, the control measures in place and the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency or imminent danger.
- The provision and maintenance of a safe, risk free working and learning environment, along with suitable welfare facilities.
- That the University maintains a constant, continuing interest in all health and safety matters, and regularly consults with employees and students.
- That all levels of Management and Supervision lead by example continually promoting safe and healthy working practices in full compliance with this policy.
- All levels of Management and staff have responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and persons and facilities within their designated area of control.
- The day to day management of health and safety at each location will be managed by the Senior Management Team and Executive Board in their respective areas.

Guidance in support of the Policy Statement, detailing organisation, responsibility and arrangements is contained in sections 2, 3 and Appendix 1 of this Policy.

The University recognises the fundamental principles of the Scottish Funding Council's concept of the Safe Learner, and will envelop, support and promote their philosophy of 'promoting risk education, awareness and the learning of health and safety', especially in the preparation of 'Young Persons' to be safe and healthier workers.

The Court and the Principal of the University fully support this Policy Document and will ensure its implementation and monitor its application. They will also ensure it is reviewed periodically or as required, bringing any necessary changes to the attention of all University employees and students.

SECTION 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities for safety parallel the general management structure of the University: each level of management is responsible for those below, and accountable to those above; to the extent that who has control, has responsibility. This is so that responsibility for ensuring high standards of health and safety performance remains with those who design, arrange or direct the work of the University, which will lead to the development of a thriving safety culture throughout the University.

2.1   The Court of Queen Margaret University

The Court recognises that it has responsibility for health, safety and welfare matters. It will authorise and approve the Policy and support the efforts of the Principal and the Executive Board and managers in achieving policy objectives.

2.2   Principal/Vice Chancellor

The Principal shall have ultimate responsibility for all operational activities within Queen Margaret University. This will include: providing and maintaining adequate workplace health, safety and welfare provisions and standards to safeguard all employees, students and others; such as visitors, contractors, neighbouring companies and the public at large. The Principal in conjunction with the Court is responsible for approving the Policy Document and will:-

2.2.1   Monitor the overall effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy, ensuring the policy is reviewed at least annually and is revised where necessary.

2.2.2   Ensure adequate resources are made available to comply with health and safety requirements.

2.2.3   Delegate responsibilities both general and specific to appropriate staff as identified in the following sections, to ensure the above is effectively applied. The structure of health and safety responsibility is shown in the organisational chart at Appendix 1 to this policy.

2.2.4   The Principal will ensure the implementation of this policy by active management and review of health and safety within the organisation.

2.2.5   The Principal will actively promote good health and safety standards and set a good personal example.

2.3   Senior Managers – Deputy Principal, Deans, Directors

Responsible to the Principal of Queen Margaret University for health and safety issues in terms of implementation, monitoring, and review of the policy. This line of management will:-

2.3.1   Be responsible for the day to day health and safety management of all personnel and students within their areas of control.

2.3.2   Actively promote and encourage the development of a culture of health and safety awareness within their area of responsibility.

2.3.3   Make proper arrangements for the investigation, analysis and reporting of all notifiable accidents, incidents and near misses, with a view to preventing similar occurrences in the future.

2.3.4   Ensure regular health and safety inspections and any necessary remedial works identified are carried out where applicable.

2.3.5   Ensure managers/nominated employees carry out risk assessments, and where necessary, any remedial/preventative actions are completed. They should ensure that risk assessments are monitored and regularly reviewed when necessary.

2.3.6   Ensure safe systems of work are in place and adhered to by all employees and students.

2.3.7   Consult effectively with all employees under their control on health and safety matters.

2.3.8   Consider the health and safety implications of any materials, plant or equipment purchased by the department on behalf of the University, consulting with the Head of Estates and Facilities and/or the Health and Safety Advisor where necessary.

2.3.9   Set a good personal example on health and safety.

In addition to the above Managers who are responsible for all aspects of the day to day management of the Campus shall:-

2.3.10   Ensure that any premises and equipment under their area of control are suitable, safe and without risks to health.

2.3.11   Appoint a Nominee(s) who will be responsible for the day to day management of their areas of control in their absence.

2.3.12   Ensure that regular fire and emergency practice drills are carried out each term and they are recorded, with the assistance of the Head of Estates and Facilities and the Health and Safety Advisor where applicable.

2.4   Line Managers

This level of management has responsibility for the day to day management of the health, safety and welfare of all personnel and students within their department/areas of control.

They are responsible for the effective implementation and achievement of this policy in their specific areas of control, Managers will:-

2.4.1   Ensure that the organisation of health and safety responsibility within the department is clearly defined and documented.

2.4.2   Where applicable ensure health and safety training and supervision of students is an indispensable element of departmental teaching.

2.4.3   Ensure that all employees, students, visitors and contractors are made aware of any hazards, safety rules and/or procedures which may be encountered within their areas of control, including the precautions to be taken against these hazards and procedures to be followed in the event of a fire or emergency situation.

2.4.4   Empower members of the departmental staff to act, to suspend or stop any departmental activity that is not being carried out correctly and which could cause harm to others or damage to property etc.

2.4.5   Appoint suitable person(s) to select, purchase and issue Personal Protective Equipment/Clothing ensuring the equipment/clothing is maintained or replaced as necessary. This will be recorded.

2.4.6   Enforce the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment/Clothing in designated areas where applicable.

2.4.7   Ensure all equipment, plant and substances used are suitable for the task; handled, stored and distributed correctly and kept in good working condition through regular inspection, maintenance and servicing where required. This records to be maintained.

2.4.8   Ensure all equipment, plant and substances are correctly disposed of with the appropriate documentation kept on file.

2.4.9   Assess the health and safety training needs of employees under their control and provide all necessary instruction, training, information and supervision as appropriate to enable employee duties to be conducted safely. This includes ensuring that procedures are in place for the induction of new employees and students.

2.4.10   Ensure all accidents, incidents and near misses are properly recorded and reported and that they are effectively investigated where applicable to ensure that suitable preventative measures are put in place to prevent reoccurrence. (Where appropriate with the assistance of the Health and Safety Advisor.)

2.4.11   Familiarise themselves with the guidance on accident reporting to make themselves aware of what is a reportable accident to the HSE (Health and Safety Executive), and ensure that such accidents are reported immediately via the Accident Reporting system.

2.4.12   Enforce disciplinary procedures where appropriate when non-compliance with health and safety procedures have been identified.

2.4.13   Monitor and enforce the "Smoking Policy within their areas of responsibility.

2.4.14   Seek advice and guidance from the Health and Safety Advisor as appropriate on health and safety issues.

2.4.15   Ensure the needs of high risk/special needs workers and students (e.g. disabled, pregnant, lone workers, young/vulnerable persons, home workers) are assessed and adequate measures are taken to ensure their health, safety and welfare within their area of responsibility.

2.4.16   Ensure regular safety inspections are carried out and recorded within their area of responsibility where applicable.

2.4.17   Where applicable ensure safe systems of work are in place and adhered to by all.

2.4.18   Consult with employees under their control on health and safety matters and ensure that health and safety is a regular agenda item at departmental meetings.

2.4.19   Ensure all personnel they are responsible for complete the mandatory Workrite on-line training packages.

2.4.20   Promote a culture of health and safety awareness and set a good personal example on health and safety.

2.4.21   Consider the health and safety implications of any materials, plant or equipment purchased on behalf of the University. Consulting the Head of Estates and Facilities and/or the Health and Safety Advisor where applicable.

2.4.22   Nominate competent personnel to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments, which take account of all significant hazards inherent in the work/activities within their area of responsibility, ensuring they are recorded and any remedial requirements are addressed and acted upon. Also ensure the risk assessments database is maintained and that risk assessments are regularly monitored and reviewed as necessary.

2.4.23   Report to their immediate superior on a regular basis on the application and implementation of health and safety matters within areas under their control.

2.4.24   Nominate competent personnel within their area of control to train and act as fire marshals/wardens and evac chair operators.

2.4.25   Actively participate in fire drills, ensuring roll calls are carried out where applicable.

2.5 **All Employees**

All University employees are expected to comply with any health and safety arrangements that are in force within the University. Staff are under a legal obligation to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others. Anyone contravening these stipulations may be subject to University disciplinary proceedings. All employees must familiarise themselves with, and conform to the University Health and Safety Policy, and will:

2.5.1   Assist the University in fulfilling its health and safety obligations by taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others, who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

2.5.2   Promote a culture of health and safety awareness and set a good personal example on health and safety.

2.5.3   Observe all safety rules, codes of practice, safe systems of work or instructions devised for their health and safety. Co-operate fully with managers in the investigation of accidents, incidents and near misses and the management and implementation of health and safety within their working environment.

2.5.4   Work safely, and not remove any safety device or guard provided for the purpose of ensuring safety or interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health and safety.

2.5.5   Report all hazards, potential dangers, accidents and damage that may occur in the course of their work to their Manager and the Health and Safety Advisor without delay and where applicable to the Facilities department. This should include all 'near misses'. For all accidents resulting in injury, seek medical attention from a First Aider without delay.

2.5.6   Ensure that all safety/protective equipment is used/worn in the designated areas and that it is maintained as supplied and in line with manufacturer's recommendation and appropriate training, reporting any defects to their Manager.

2.5.7   Make suitable suggestions and recommendations with regards to improvements in areas of health, safety and welfare, to their Manager, Safety Representative or the Health and Safety Advisor, and assist in the risk assessment process wherever reasonably practicable or necessary.

2.5.8   Adhere to and enforce the "Smoking" Policy within the University Campus'.

2.5.9   Use any designated walkways, avoiding traffic areas where possible.

2.5.10   When bringing vehicles onto University property, adhere to and obey all speed limits, warning signs and other safety and traffic signs. At all times ensuring that vehicles are parked safely in designated parking spaces.

2.5.11   Ensure that their own areas of work are at all times kept clean, tidy and free from hazards that may cause poor posture, slips, trips or falls.

2.5.12   Actively participate in fire and emergency evacuations.

2.5.13   Take responsibility for any students, visitors or contractors etc., under their control, ensuring that they are made aware of the University's fire and emergency evacuation procedures. If safe to do so escort students, visitors and contractors etc. (under their control), to the Fire Assembly Points during evacuations.

2.5.14   Upon hearing the fire alarm follow the fire guidance on evacuating the building safely.

2.5.15   Ensure that they complete the mandatory Workrite on-line training packages.

2.6   Students

It is for the University and University Staff to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students. Students do however have a part to play, in particular they will:-

2.6.1   Follow any health and safety rules, which apply in their programme areas and in the University, and conduct themselves in a way that does not endanger themselves or others.

2.6.2   Ensure that where they are instructed to wear safety/protective equipment it is used and worn in the designated areas and that it is maintained as supplied and in line with manufacturer's recommendation and appropriate training, reporting any defects to their lecturer.

2.6.3   Not misuse any equipment provided in the interest of health and safety, i.e. fire alarms, fire extinguishers, personal protective equipment.

2.6.4   Report all accidents, incidents or anything they consider may be a risk to health and safety to their programme lecturer or a member of staff.

2.6.5   Adhere to the Smoking Policy within the University Campus.

2.6.6   Use any designated walkways, avoiding traffic areas where possible.

2.6.7   When bringing vehicles onto University property, adhere to and obey all speed limits, warning signs and other safety and traffic signs. At all times ensuring that vehicles are parked safely in designated parking spaces.

2.6.8   Students on professional programmes should be conversant and comply with the health and safety requirements of the relevant professional regulatory body.

2.7   Visitors, Contractors and Others

2.7.1   All visitors, contractors and others arriving on site are required to report to Reception where they will be required to sign in on arrival and out upon departure.

2.7.2   All visitors, contractors and others invited to or expected to work on University property are required to comply fully with both this University Policy and any other specific rules and conditions applicable to them throughout their period of engagement or visit.

2.7.3   On no account should any on-site work be conducted by a contractor, sub-contractor or self-employed person until they have received a copy of the University's "Rules and Conditions for Contractors".

All visitors, contractors and others, whilst on University premises, shall:

2.7.4   Comply with all relevant health and safety legislation appropriate to their area of work activity/equipment/substances used and service provided.

2.7.5   Comply and co-operate fully with all instructions, safe working practices and guidance as supplied by the University and its management.

2.7.6   Ensure positive co-operation and co-ordination with the University providing any health and safety documentation or information requested.

2.7.7   Where applicable report to the Contract Manager, the Health and Safety Advisor and Facilities Department any incident, accident, near miss or potentially dangerous situation, which could cause injury or ill health to persons or damage to property.

2.7.8   Ensure that any protective equipment identified as being required for the work activity is provided, used and enforced at all times.

2.7.9   Ensure sufficient information, instruction, training and supportive supervision as necessary is provided so that work and learning can be conducted in a safe and healthy manner, without risk to either University employees, students or others that may be affected.

2.7.10   Adhere to the Smoking Policy within the University Campus.

2.7.11   Use any designated walkways, avoiding traffic areas where possible.

2.7.12   When bringing vehicles onto University property, adhere to and obey all speed limits, warning signs and other safety and traffic signs. At all times ensuring that vehicles are parked safely in designated parking spaces.

Persons with Key Health and Safety Responsibilities

2.8 **Health and Safety Advisor**

The Health and Safety Advisor has a key responsibility for supporting the development of a safe and healthy working environment and shall act as the 'competent' person for advising on health and safety matters to the University by:

2.8.1 Assisting with the co-ordination of health and safety support services whilst giving advice and guidance to all. In addition, assist management with the monitoring and review of health and safety performance and documentation.

2.8.2 Assisting the Principal in periodically reviewing and improving the Health and Safety Policy Document.

2.8.3 Assisting with the investigation of accidents, incidents and near misses, in addition to the preparation and maintenance of formal reports and records e.g. RIDDOR.

2.8.4 Assisting with the co-ordination, organisation and monitoring of relevant health and safety training, fire drills and emergency evacuation procedures and ensure records of these activities are kept.

2.8.5 Promoting and giving advice on safe working practices including equipment, protective clothing, plant and machinery.

2.8.6 Advising the Principal, Senior Managers, Line Managers and staff on Health and Safety.

2.8.7 Representing the University in dealings with the enforcing authority.

2.8.8 Assisting nominated employees in the completion of risk assessments and inspections.

2.8.9 Ensuring Fire Risk Assessments and Safety Audits are carried out when required.

2.9 **Head of Estates and Facilities**

The Head of Estates and Facilities has a key role with regards to health and safety and will be responsible for the day to day maintenance of the Campus, and will:-

2.9.1 Ensure the safety and maintenance of building service systems, and site/building access and egress.

2.9.2 Select and vet the appointment of contractors used in the above operations to ensure competent and safe completion of work.

2.9.3   Ensure that maintenance and repair work is carried out in a way which does not put employees, students, visitors or others at risk.

2.9.4   Ensure the completion of risk assessments, method statements and safe working procedures for works to be carried out by contractors they appoint and for staff under their control, reviewing them when required.

2.9.5   Where applicable, assist with the investigation of accidents, incidents and near misses, ensuring that reports are compiled and appropriate remedial actions are completed.

2.9.6   Where applicable, assist nominated employees in the completion of risk assessments and inspections.

2.9.7   Ensure effective emergency evacuation procedures are in place and that fire drills are carried out at least once per term and that these are recorded.

2.9.8   Ensure that statutory inspections are completed and recorded accordingly.

2.10   Electrical Duty Holder

As the University appointed "authorised" person with specific responsibility for site electrical safety the Electrical Duty Holder (whether an employee or contractor) will:-

2.10.1 Take all reasonable steps and exercise due diligence in ensuring that all on-site electrical systems, fixed and portable tools or equipment are installed, operated and maintained in a safe condition and that suitable records are kept.

2.10.2 Ensure safe electrical working procedures and arrangements in line with legislative and University requirements, especially when working on or near live conductors. This includes the application of isolation procedures and permits to work for high-risk activities.

2.10.3 Co-operate with the University so far as is necessary to ensure that the duty placed upon them is adequately fulfilled.

2.10.4 Work strictly within their personal level of competence and in a manner that should not give rise to danger. Seek expert advice for issues outside of personal competency. Similarly, ensure that any person (electricians) working with them, or for them, are competent.

2.10.5 When using outside contractors for electrical work, ensure they are registered with an organisation which checks the work of its members, such as NICEIC.

2.10.6 Ensure that protective equipment is suitable, adequately maintained and properly used.

2.10.7 Ensure that statutory inspections such as 5 yearly fixed testing and annual PAT testing are carried out and that this is recorded.

2.11 **Information and Learning Services**

Information and Learning Services is responsible for IT within the University and will:-

2.11.1   Support the application of safe working procedures relating to the safe use and operation of Display Screen Equipment etc.

2.11.2   Ensure the safe operation, installation and maintenance of all on-site IT equipment and multi-function devices using contractors where applicable.

2.11.3   Ensure all purchased IT equipment complies fully with all relevant legislation.

2.11.4   Assist with general ergonomic considerations when positioning and installing equipment.

2.11.5   Consult with the Facilities Department when planning work which may affect the buildings electrical systems or give rise to electrical hazards.

2.11.6   Ensure that employees under their control isolate (by disconnecting the power lead) and earth the equipment (due to stored energy in the circuit board) prior to working on it.

2.11.7   Ensure that all computer equipment is correctly disposed of in accordance with statutory requirements and that the appropriate documentation is kept.

2.12 **Human Resources Department**

The Human Resources department will ensure:-

2.12.1   That accurate records are kept in relation to training, medical, and personnel matters.

2.12.2   That University HR policies comply with current Health and Safety legislation.

2.12.3   That all new employees are fully inducted with regards to health and safety policies and procedures.

2.12.4   That all employees complete the mandatory Workrite training courses which include Health and Safety, Fire Safety, Manual Handling and Display Screen Equipment.

2.12.5   That Managers carry out risk assessments for pregnant workers as soon as the University is made aware and that any remedial actions are completed, and that the assessments are regularly reviewed throughout the course of the pregnancy and upon return to work where applicable.

2.13   Security

2.13.1   The Senior Security Guard will act as Senior Fire Marshal and will co-ordinate any emergency evacuations from the building. In their absence the appointed nominee(s) from Security will take on this role. They will coordinate the activities of the Fire Team and First Aiders in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation of the Campus, and act as point of contact for the Emergency Services. They will also carry out the following:

- Ensure the site is regularly checked for breaches in any fire precautions or requirements and arrange for these to be corrected as necessary.

- Ensure that fire-fighting equipment is regularly inspected, maintained, and kept in its correct position.

2.13.2   Ensure all visitors check/sign in at Reception upon arrival, and sign out on departure.

2.13.3   Check Student and Staff ID badges where applicable.

2.13.4   Conduct patrols of the University Campus where applicable.

2.14   Fire Marshals and Fire Wardens

A suitable number of employees will be appointed and trained as fire marshals and fire wardens. In the event of an evacuation of the building becoming necessary fire marshals and fire wardens will have the following responsibilities.

2.14.1   Attend appropriate training course as necessary to fulfil duties of a fire marshal/warden.

2.14.2   If safe to do so assist employees, students and visitors from the building and check the area of the building for which they have responsibility, including toilets, storage areas etc., checking that the area is completely cleared where possible, ensuring they never put themselves at risk.

2.14.3   If safe to do so, close any windows or doors which are open when leaving the building.

2.14.4   Attack small fires with extinguisher provided, if safe to do so, and within their own capabilities as instructed through appropriate training sessions.

2.14.5   Proceed, without delay, to the nearest Fire Assembly Point, carry out roll calls where applicable and then report immediately to the Assembly Point Fire Marshal.

For further details please refer to the University's Fire Strategy.

2.15 First Aiders and Appointed Persons

A suitable number of employees will be appointed and trained as First Aiders and appointed persons, and their responsibilities will be to:-

2.15.1 Administer first aid treatment to those in need, in line with their training, and assist the emergency services if called upon to do so.

2.15.2 After treating the patient ensure the Accident/Incident form is completed without delay on the electronic form and then emailed to the Health and Safety Advisor. If using a paper version, they must ensure it is passed without delay to the Health and Safety Advisor to ensure it is recorded on the system.

2.15.3 All First Aiders must keep a log of first aid treatment/assistance given and a list of supplies used in their logbook. They must ensure that they arrange for the replacement of any items used from the first aid box.

2.15.4 Where hospital treatment is deemed necessary First Aiders are required to arrange for the patient to be taken to hospital and report back to the appropriate Manager and the Health and Safety Advisor on their condition.

2.15.5 For further details please refer to the guidance document for First Aiders.

2.16 Off-Site Workers

Off Site workers, those engaged on work in premises not controlled by the University must exercise a particularly high level of self-discipline and safety awareness and will:-

2.16.1 Inform their Manager of any unsafe conditions, customer requests, working practices, accidents, incidents or near miss situations encountered.

2.16.2 Comply fully with the host employer's policy/rules and conditions for safe working when working on non-University premises (in addition to University policy directions).

2.16.3 Whilst working at non University premises, ensure an understanding of the procedures for fire, serious or imminent danger and on-site hazards and precautions, in addition to being aware of the responsible person for Health and Safety on the site.

2.16.4 Where applicable carry out a risk assessment for the work activities to be undertaken by themselves.

2.17   **Young Person(s)**

The University has an especially high duty of care towards employees, who have reached school leaving age (around 16 years of age) but have not reached 18 years of age. The University will show a higher duty of care towards the 'Young Person', and emphasis will be on ensuring that the Young Person's level of interpretation and understanding of their own responsibilities is in line with the requirements expected under law, and in regards to this policy. Young Persons shall:-

2.17.1   Comply with the requirements identified by any relevant 'Young Persons' risk assessments.

2.17.2   Comply fully with this Policy document and any other health and safety guidance given by their appointed manager or lecturer.

2.17.3   Whenever in doubt, stop the work/learning activity immediately and seek advice from their appointed line manager or lecturer.

2.18   **Pregnant Employees and Students**

2.18.1   In order for the University to fulfil its legal obligations and in line with individual's legal obligations, any employee who knows they are pregnant should notify their Manager or HR Advisor as soon as possible. Students should advise their programme leader/lecturer as soon as possible.

2.18.2   Once notified, the University in conjunction with the pregnant employee/student will carry out an appropriate risk assessment of the employee's/student's tasks/activities to ensure she and her unborn child are not put at any unnecessary risk.

2.19   **Lone Workers**

Lone Workers are classified as persons who are required to work by themselves without close or direct supervision. All such persons are required to ensure that they are conversant with the Lone Workers guidance.

2.19.1   Lone Workers will ensure that the area they are working within is safe and that they follow the instructions set out by the safe system of work or risk assessment.

2.19.2   An employee who in the course of their work is required to work alone must advise their manager if they have any health problems which could put them at risk.

2.20   **Persons with Disabilities**

2.20.1   In order for the University to fulfil its legal obligations and in line with individual's legal obligations, any employee who has a disability are requested if they wish to do so, to notify their Manager or HR Partner of the disability and advise if they would like an

assessment carried out to identify if they require any additional support whilst at work.. Students should advise the Disability Advisors in Student Services.

2.20.2   Once notified, the University in conjunction with the employee/student will carry out an appropriate assessment of the employee's/student's tasks/activities to ensure they are not put any unnecessary risk and any support identify during the assessment is implemented.

SECTION 3 - GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS

3.1   Health and Safety Management

3.1.1   The University has a Health and Safety Committee, which meets quarterly. Minutes of the Committee meetings are reviewed by the Executive Board and the University Court, and are made available on the staff Intranet. In addition, the Committee produces an annual report which is reviewed by the University Court. For further details please refer to the guidance on Consultation and Communications with staff and students.

3.1.2   Health and Safety is regularly reviewed on various University management meetings and team meetings.

3.2   Health and Safety Audit, Monitoring and Review

3.2.1   Health and Safety is regularly reviewed by the Audit Committee (please refer to terms of reference), by departmental managers and the Health and Safety Advisor.

3.2.2   Health and Safety inspections will be carried out at the appropriate intervals as and when required by an appointed person.

3.3   Risk Assessment

3.3.1   It is the responsibility of all senior managers to ensure that risk assessments are carried out by competent personnel within their areas of responsibility. Copies of completed risk assessments will be added to the risk assessment database. Risk Assessments will be reviewed at regular intervals, or if there has been any significant change in the work/learning activity or environment.

3.3.2   Display Screen Equipment Users and Home Workers will complete the Workrite on-line training and will then complete a self-assessment.

3.3.3   Out Based/Off Site Workers will carry out self-assessment on the appropriate forms.

3.3.4   Risk assessments will also be conducted for all student related out of University activities including educational and residential visits and work placements. Assessments will also be completed for students with special needs etc., for further details please refer to the relevant guidance.

3.3.5   The risk assessment process will take into consideration the different age groups within the University, especially taking into consideration the higher duty of care required for Young Persons and the elderly and safeguarding policy and procedures. They will also consider the needs of high risk workers and persons with a disability.

3.3.6   For further details please refer to the guidance on Risk Assessment.

3.4   Health and Safety Induction

3.4.1   All new employees will receive appropriate induction from the Senior Manager or Line Manager regarding health and safety relevant to their area of employment, including instructions on the University's fire and emergency procedures, accident reporting. Details of training provided will be recorded and made available on request.

3.4.2   New employees will also be provided with a copy of the Health and Safety Policy and any other policies or guidance relevant to their work by their line manager.

3.4.3   All new Students will receive appropriate induction regarding health and safety within their programme area to include fire and emergency procedures, accident reporting. Details of training provided will be recorded and made available on request.

3.5   Fire Safety Training

3.5.1   All employees are required to complete the mandatory Workrite fire safety training provided on the University Intranet.

3.5.2   Fire Extinguisher training will be provided at regular intervals when appropriate for nominated employees.

3.5.3   Procedures for fire evacuation will be regularly displayed in suitable locations throughout the University Campus and on the Health and Safety page on the University Intranet.

3.5.4   Practice evacuation drills will be carried out each term at the University Campus.

3.6   General Safety Training

3.6.1   All employees are required to complete the Workrite health and safety training provided on the University Intranet.

3.6.2   Employees will receive basic health and safety guidance and training in the course of their employment, which will give them an appreciation of the fundamentals of good health and safety practices.

3.6.3   Training for employees who require specialist training to enable them to carry out their work safely and within the confinements of the law will receive this training in conjunction with their Manager and HR.

3.7   Accident Reporting and Investigation

An accident is defined as any unplanned event that results in causing injury or ill health to people, damage to property or the environment

3.7.1   All accidents/incidents, however slight, must be reported, without delay, on the appropriate Accident/Incident report form on the Intranet or if this cannot be accessed then it should be reported on the accident form which is available from Reception or Human Resources. A copy of the completed form should be sent to the Health and Safety Advisor.

3.7.2   Accidents will be investigated to the extent necessary to identify their underlying cause(s) and to enable these to be remedied. The primary responsibility for the investigation rests with the Senior Managers and/or Line Managers of the area in which the accident/incident occurred. The results of the investigation should be recorded on the accident/incident form, or on an accompanying report.

3.7.3   The University is under a legal obligation to report some accidents/incidents to the authorities, by telephone, immediately it becomes aware of them. Therefore staff should familiarise themselves with what is a reportable accident and ensure that these are reported as soon as possible to the Health and Safety Advisor. Staff must ensure that any serious accident/incident is recorded and where applicable take witness statements (taking photographs where possible). For these purposes a serious accident/incident can be considered to be any accident resulting in hospital treatment or an occurrence reportable under the 'Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995' (please refer to guidance on accident reporting).

It is, therefore, important that all reportable accidents are reported without delay to ensure that this obligation can be met. If in doubt consult your Manager or the Health and Safety Advisor.

3.7.4   The Health and Safety Advisor will review all accident/incident forms and will carry out further investigations were deemed necessary.

3.7.5   For further details please refer to the guidance on Accident Reporting.

3.8 **Near Miss Reporting**

A 'Near Miss' is defined as an incident that has the potential to cause harm or damage even though no harm or damage is caused.

3.8.1 Near misses must be reported, without delay, on the Near Miss report form which is available on the University Intranet. If this cannot be accessed forms can be obtained from the Reception or Human Resources; the completed form should be sent to the Health and Safety Advisor.

3.8.2 Near Misses will be investigated to the extent necessary to identify their underlying cause(s) and to enable these to be remedied. The primary responsibility for the investigation rests with the Senior Managers or Line Managers of the area in which the near miss occurred. The results of the investigation should be recorded on the appropriate form or in an accompanying report.

3.9 **Hazard Reporting**

A hazard is anything (article, substance or situation) with the potential to cause harm, injury to people or damage to the environment e.g. electricity, slippery floors, spillages, dangerous parts of machinery etc. The risk is the probability or likelihood of the hazard being realised and the severity of its consequences.

3.9.1 Any hazards identified must be reported immediately to the appropriate manager, Facilities Helpdesk or the Health and Safety Advisor either verbally or via email, to ensure that remedial action is taken.

3.10 **First Aid**

3.10.1 The University has appropriate First Aid provisions relevant to the work activity carried out and also the number of employees located on the site. First Aid boxes are located with Security and where applicable First Aiders, First Aid Appointed Persons and the First Aid room.

3.10.2 A duty rota for first aiders will be agreed and implemented. The duty first aiders will be provided with a radio and grab bag which they will collect from and sign for at Reception at the start of their session.

3.10.3 A regularly updated list of trained and qualified First Aiders and First Aid Appointed Persons will be held by the Receptionist showing the name, department and extension of the First Aider and who is on duty; this will also be available on the University Intranet.

3.10.4 First Aiders and Appointed Persons will re-sit their First Aid Qualification every three years with an approved training provider and will receive annual refresher training.

3.10.5   First Aiders trained in the use of defibrillators will be provided with refresher training annually.

3.11   Occupational Health

3.11.1   The occupational environment and health of employees will be monitored where appropriate so as to ascertain that their well-being is not impaired by the working conditions.

3.11.2   The University's Occupational Health provider will carry out routine referrals, health checks, assessments etc.

3.11.3   Managers wishing to refer employees to Occupational Health should contact HR to make an appointment.

3.11.4   The University offers the facility for employees who use Display Screen Equipment to have their eyes tested every twelve months with an approved Optician. Where employees are required to wear glasses that are DSE compliant they are entitled to receive a contribution from the University towards the cost of these glasses. Please refer to guidance on DSE.

3.11.5   The University has separate guidance for Health and Wellbeing and Infectious Diseases.

3.11.6   The University also provides employee support via an independent confidential Employee Assistance Programme. For further details contact the HR department.

3.12   Fire/Evacuation Warning Systems

Fire Warning Systems will be tested weekly at each building. Details will be recorded and made available on request. Employees need take no action on these occasions unless the warning system continues beyond the test stage. Staff will familiarise themselves and their students as to the sound of the alarm(s) and when the system is scheduled to be tested at the building they are based at.

3.13   Escape Routes

3.13.1   Escape routes will be regularly checked by an appointed person.

3.13.2   Employees should familiarise themselves with the escape routes and fire exits which are clearly marked within and around their working area and, outwith hours, they should satisfy themselves that their escape routes are unobstructed.

3.14 **Fire Extinguishers**

3.14.1 Only employees trained in the use of fire extinguishers should attack small fires with the correct extinguisher provided, if safe to do so, and within their own capabilities as instructed through appropriate training sessions.

3.14.2 Fire Extinguisher training will be provided as and when required for nominated employees.

3.14.3 Fire extinguishers will be serviced annually by an approved contractor. This will be recorded and made available on request.

3.14.4 A member of the Security team will visually check the fire extinguishers once a month to ensure they are in situ, not damaged and are fully charged. This will be recorded and made available on request.

3.14.5 If fire extinguishers are used, damaged or missing the Facilities Helpdesk should be contacted to ensure a replacement is provided.

3.15 **Fire Marshals and Fire Wardens**

3.15.1 Fire Marshals and Fire Wardens have been appointed to co-ordinate evacuation efforts in the event of an emergency arising.

3.15.2 A regularly updated list of trained Fire Marshals and Fire Wardens will be held by the Health and Safety Advisor and Support Services Supervisor showing the Fire Marshal's/Warden's name, department and extension. This will also be available at Reception and on the University Intranet.

3.16 **Smoking**

3.16.1 Smoking is not permitted in any of the University Buildings.

3.16.2 Designated smoking area(s) have been provided and accordingly signposted. Smoking is not allowed in any other areas of the University grounds.

3.16.3 For further information and guidance please refer to the Smoking Policy.

3.17 **Advice and Consultancy**

3.17.1 The Health and Safety Advisor will act as the University's competent person on health and safety matters.

3.17.2 Where other outside health and safety consultancy or specialist advice is required, this should be done in conjunction with Human Resources and the Health and Safety Advisor where applicable.

3.18 **Safe Systems of Work**

3.18.1 Formal safe systems of work will be developed and published by managers, with the assistance of the Health and Safety Advisor where applicable, to cover potentially hazardous/dangerous operations in areas under their control.

3.18.2 Managers will be responsible for ensuring that work is carried out in accordance with these safe systems.

3.19 **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

3.19.1 PPE will be freely issued to employees as required, along with the appropriate level of training in its use. This will be recorded and made available on request.

3.19.2 Managers will ensure that the correct personal protective equipment is available to employees, that it is kept in a good condition and replaced as necessary.

3.19.3 Managers and employees will ensure that the appropriate personal protective equipment is worn.

3.19.4 Where students are required to wear PPE as a part of their programme activity, lecturers will ensure that the PPE is appropriate for the activity and that it is worn correctly by the student within the designated area.

3.20 **Waste Disposal**

3.20.1 All waste will be disposed of in accordance with the Duty of Care imposed by the Environmental Protection Act and the appropriate Waste Regulations.

3.20.2 Waste will be removed by registered, approved and competent contractors.

3.20.3 Copies of transfer notes will be retained by the department arranging the disposal of the waste to which the transfer note refers for a period of at least 3 years.

3.21 **Housekeeping and Storage**

3.21.1 Managers will ensure that good housekeeping practices are maintained within areas of their responsibility.

3.21.2 All material, whatever its location, will be stored in such a way as not to cause a hazard or harm to any employee, student or visitor, in line with the manufacturer's guidelines/data sheets where appropriate.

3.22   Restricted Access

3.22.1   All areas of high risk e.g. boiler and plant rooms, must be appropriately identified to prohibit unauthorised entry.

3.22.2   Areas identified as restricted access must be adhered to at all times, and only those persons authorised may enter these areas.

3.23   Fluids and Gases under Pressure

3.23.1   All pipe work i.e. water (hot and cold), compressed air, and gas must be identified and clearly marked.

3.23.2   Pipe work containing water (hot and cold), compressed air, and gas must be isolated and drained before any work is undertaken.

3.23.3   Compressed gases must be used and stored as laid down in the manufacturer's guidelines and current legislation.

3.24   Electrical Equipment

3.24.1   Employees who purchase portable electrical equipment will ensure it is suitable for the task and conforms to current British or E.U standards and should be 'CE Marked'. All equipment must be submitted for logging, inspection and testing before it is put into service within their school/department and where applicable with the facilities department.

3.24.2   Periodic inspection and testing of the electrical installation will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Institute of Electrical Engineers Wiring Regulations 17th edition by appointed contractors.

3.24.3   An appointed contractor will carry out a periodic inspection and testing of Portable Electric Equipment.

3.24.4   All portable electrical appliances need to be checked before they are used in the building. Staff and students should ensure that if they bring electric equipment such as laptops into the building that they are in a suitable safe conditions, Facilities Services should be contacted if there is any doubt with regards to the suitable of any electrical equipment. There are facilities in the main atrium tiers and LRC computer space for staff and students to plug laptops in if they need charging etc., whilst at the University.

3.24.5   Floor sockets in seminar rooms, offices and other areas are not for general use. The use of the sockets inside the floor-boxes can present a health & safety hazard i.e. if used incorrectly can become a tripping hazard causing injury to individuals and badly damaging the floor box. If you need to plug a laptop or other electrical device in when using a classroom and there is not a wall mounted socket in a suitable safe place please contact

Facilities Services to assist you, please do not use a floor box. Seminar room control desks are provided with a socket outlet for laptop use when connecting to the AV system for presentation purposes. They are not to be used for charging laptops or mobile phone devices. If in doubt please contact Facilities Services for clarification.

3.25   Machinery and Equipment

3.25.1   Employees should only use machinery or equipment for which they have been trained and must do so in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and any formal safe system of work and/or procedures in place or experiments.

3.25.2   Machinery designed to be used in conjunction with any guard must not be operated unless that guard is in place.

3.25.3   All guards, interlocks and other safety devices will be checked by the user of the equipment and/or the room technician prior to its use.

3.25.4   Where machinery and equipment is required to be inspected, serviced or maintained under statutory/legislative this must be done by a nominated insurer/contractor. Where machinery and equipment does not fall within this requirement, where applicable a programme should be put in place to ensure that they are inspected, serviced or maintained within an agreed timescale.

3.25.5   User of machinery and equipment will ensure that daily safety checks are carried out before use and these checks are recorded.

3.25.6   Only competent and qualified personnel should operate ride on machinery. All drivers shall only be permitted to drive such equipment if they have been selected, trained and authorised to do so.

3.26   Substances Hazardous to Health

3.26.1   Managers whose departments purchase hazardous substances will ensure that a Material Safety Data sheet is obtained from the manufacturer or supplier for the product prior to first purchase. A copy should be retained on file in the department. (If any doubt exists as to whether the product is classified as hazardous please contact the Manufacturer or the Health and Safety Advisor for guidance.)

3.26.2   Substances identified as hazardous should not be used until a CoSHH risk assessment has been carried out, and appropriate training and information has been provided.

3.26.3   Managers will be responsible for ensuring that this information is brought to the attention of employees required to use, handle or transport the substance, and that the recommended safety precautions are followed.

3.26.4   It will be the duty of all employees who use/handle/transport hazardous substances to ensure that they comply with the safety requirements outlined in the above documents and in any formal safe system of work in place.

3.26.5   Substances should be kept in their original containers with the correct label clearly visible. When the need arises for a substance to be transferred from one container to another, the new container should be suitable and clearly labelled with details of its contents.

3.26.6   Managers are required to keep an up to date inventory of all substances held or used within their departments.

3.26.7   For further details please refer to the guidance on Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH).

3.27   Visitors, Contractors and Others

3.27.1   The person responsible for receiving visitors to site/or the Receptionist will ensure that the visitor enters their details in the visitors' book.

3.27.2   The appropriate member of staff, or their deputy, where applicable will escort the visitor(s) from reception to their office or meeting room. Known and approved Visitors, Contractors or Suppliers are permitted unaccompanied access after an appropriate member of staff has received them into the building.

3.27.3   When leaving the premises where applicable visitors must be escorted back to reception where the staff member/receptionist should ensure that departure details are entered into the visitors' book.

3.27.4   Employees are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of their visitor(s) whilst on site, therefore they should ensure that their visitor(s) are made aware of:-

- University's emergency evacuation procedures.
- The location of fire routes, fire exits and assembly point(s).
- Any hazards they may encounter during their stay.
- Any safety rules they must follow if they need to carry out work on site.

3.27.5   In the event of an evacuation from the premises the staff members responsible for visitors must ensure that they are escorted to a fire assembly point, if safe to do so. If the visitor is missing then the Senior Fire Marshal should be made aware of this.

3.28   Vehicles, Mobile Phones and in-vehicle technology

3.28.1   All employees driving vehicles on University business must have a valid UK driving licence and must exercise proper control of the vehicle at all times, please refer to the QMU Driving Policy.

3.28.2   You must exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. You must not use a hand-held mobile phone, or similar device, when driving except to call 999 or 112 in a genuine emergency when it is unsafe or impractical to stop. Never use a hand-held microphone when driving. Using hands-free equipment is also likely to distract your attention from the road. It is far safer not to use any telephone while you are driving - find a safe place to stop first or use the voicemail facility and listen to messages later[1].

3.28.3   There is a danger of driver distraction being caused by in-vehicle systems such as satellite navigation systems, congestion warning systems, PCs, multi-media, etc. You must exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. Do not rely on driver assistance systems such as cruise control or lane departure warnings. They are available to assist but you should not reduce your concentration levels. Do not be distracted by maps or screen-based information (such as navigation or vehicle management systems) while driving or riding. If necessary find a safe place to stop[1].

3.28.4   Mobile Phones should not be used when undertaking a task which has been identified as high risk, due to their distracting nature.

3.29   Workplace Transport

It is the University's aim to ensure a safe vehicle and driver environment, as appropriate across its campuses. In particular, the University where reasonably practicable will ensure:-

3.29.1   That there are adequate management controls in place to carry out suitable and sufficient assessments for all vehicle operation types, that control measures are put in place where required and that these are continually monitored and reviewed in order to minimise or where possible eliminate foreseeable transport related hazards in the workplace.

3.29.2   That suitable arrangements are in place for the safe operation of vehicles, specifically those related to the separation of vehicles and pedestrians. In addition, campuses should be appropriately laid out in respect of internal traffic routes, warning signage, parking for various vehicle types, pedestrian routes, lighting, traffic control etc.

3.29.3   Pedestrians use any designated walkways, avoiding traffic areas where possible.

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[1] Refer to Highway Code

3.29.4   Persons bringing vehicles onto University property adhere to and obey all speed limits, warning signs and other safety and traffic signs, at all times ensuring that vehicles are parked safely in designated parking spaces.

3.29.5   That all drivers of University vehicles are adequately trained (i.e. have completed the MIDAS training course), licensed, authorised, physically fit and generally competent to carry out their driving duties.

3.29.6   That all vehicles purchased by the University are properly specified prior to purchase and adequately maintained and insured afterwards.

3.30   Legionella

3.30.1   The Head of Estates and Facilities will ensure that a suitable and sufficient assessment will be completed to identify and assess the risk of exposure to legionella bacteria from work, learning, leisure activities and water systems on the premises and any necessary precautionary measures, control measures and procedures are implemented where applicable.

3.30.2   The assessment will be regularly reviewed, and will also be reviewed when there is reason to believe that the original assessment may no longer be valid.

3.31   Young Person(s)

Young Person(s) will be provided with a higher level of training, information and supervision taking into account their inexperience, lack of awareness of existing and potential risks and their immaturity. A Risk Assessment will be completed for activities/tasks carried out by young persons.

3.32   Pregnant Employees and Students

3.32.1   An Expectant Mothers' risk assessment will be completed once the employee/student has advised the University that they are pregnant. The risk assessment will be reviewed at appropriate intervals throughout the pregnancy and upon their return to work/learning after their maternity leave.

3.32.2   Facilities will be made available for pregnant employees/students if they are feeling unwell or need to rest.

3.33   Lone Workers

3.33.1   The Lone Workers Guidance should be reviewed whenever there is an occasion that an employee may have to work alone and a risk assessment produced. From the risk assessment a Safe System of Work should be implemented. The system should include

checks on the lone worker at regular intervals either by telephone, email or other appropriate means.

3.33.2   Employees with known health problems should be assessed before being allowed to work alone.

3.34   Abrasive Wheel Operators

Only competent employees should operate abrasive wheels. Employees should hold the appropriate qualification for dressing or replacing abrasive wheels. These employees will be responsible for:-

3.34.1   The correct selection, storage, setting and periodic redressing of abrasive wheels.

3.34.2   The secure mounting of machinery and guarding.

3.35   Welfare Facilities

The following facilities are provided for the welfare of employees and students:-

- Drinking Water
- Rest area for eating away from the workstation/classrooms
- Facilities for changing clothing where required
- Storage facility for work and personal clothes where required
- Sanitary Conveniences
- Washing Facilities

3.36   Intoxicants and Drug Abuse

3.36.1   The University may refuse admission to the premises to any employees or students where there is reasonable suspicion that they are incapable of performing their duties/studies as a result of intoxicants or drugs.

3.36.2   If an employee's doctor has prescribed drugs which may influence their ability to perform their duties, then they are required to register this with their Line Manager or the HR department. The employee may be required to undertake an Occupational Health assessment.

3.36.3   For further guidance please refer to the University's Policy on Substances and Alcohol Misuse.

3.37   **Working at Height**

3.37.1   Working at Height is defined as work in any place where a person could fall from a distance which is liable to cause personal injury.

3.37.2   Where working at height cannot be avoided a risk assessment should be completed on the activity to be undertaken, the equipment to be used and the ability of the individual(s) carrying out the task. A safe system of work should then be implemented and adhered to.

3.37.3   Roof Access – No access is permitted to any roof area without the authorisation and agreement of the Facilities Manager who will agree a "Safe System of Work" and will issue a Permit to Work.

3.38   **Display Screen Equipment (DSE)**

3.38.1   All employees who use display screen equipment will be required to complete the Workrite DSE training provided on the University Intranet.

3.38.2   After completing the training employees will be required to complete the self-assessment, which is provided on the University Intranet.

3.38.3   For further details please refer to the guidance on Display Screen Equipment.

3.39   **Manual Handling Operations**

3.39.1   All Employees will be required to complete the Workrite manual handling training which is provided on the University Intranet.

3.39.2   The University will provide appropriate mechanical handling equipment to reduce or eliminate risks where possible.

3.39.3   For further details please refer to the guidance on Manual Handling.

3.40   **Hot Work Operations**

The definition of hot work at the University is a temporary operation with a tool at such a high temperature that could create a fire, irrespective of whether the work is done by an employee or by a contractor. Examples are: welding, brazing, soldering, 'hot' cutting (e.g. Oxy-Acetylene Cutting) or grinding.

3.40.1   Only trained competent personnel are permitted to carry out 'Hot Work'.

3.40.2   Hot-works carried out by Contractors will be done so under the control of a Permit to Work issued by the Facilities Department.

3.41   **Issue of Health and Safety Policy to Employees**

3.41.1   All employees will be provided with an electronic copy Health and Safety Policy, and are required to read it.

3.41.2   The Health and Safety Policy is available on the University Webpage and also the staff Intranet.

3.42   **Specific Work related Health and Safety Guidance**

3.42.1   The University will produce separate guidance for the following areas:

- Accident and Incident Reporting
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- Consultation and Communications with Staff and Students
- Control of Contractors
- Construction Work
- Display Screen Equipment
- Electrical Safety
- Fire
- First Aid
- Infectious Diseases
- Manual Handling Operations
- Risk Assessment
- Safety In Staff and Student Inductions
- Violence and Violent Incidents
- Work Placements for Students

The above guidance will be available on the University Intranet.

19. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

1.   Intellectual Property Policy and Regulations

"QMU aims to be a university of ideas and influence; characterised by translational research that informs policy and practice, making a difference to everyday life." [University Strategy, 2015 -2020]

QMU is committed to generating new ideas, supporting their development and translation, and making them widely available for adoption by practitioners to provide solutions addressing real world problems. Our ambition is that QMU research and knowledge is translated by the people and organisations most able to influence policy and inform practice, to make a positive difference to everyday life.

Whilst in UK law the University owns legal title over intellectual property (IP) produced by its staff in their work, QMU recognises that staff and their collaborators are often best placed to develop their research into new products and applications which offer solutions to prospective end-users. Intellectual Property is also an asset class that is valuable to the University and individual researchers in their designated University role, and it may have commercial value. QMU believes that researchers should have free, uninhibited access to the IP they have generated during their research except in specific circumstances which might disadvantage the University – these are set out below in Section 2. The University aims to support both staff and the University's use of University-generated IP and promote access for other parties use of that IP to help develop practical, user-centric, beneficial applications.

"Intellectual property" covers all IP, including but not limited to all inventions, designs, information, specifications, formulae, improvements, discoveries, know-how, data, processes, methods, techniques and the IP rights therein, including but not limited to patents, copyrights, database rights, design rights (registered and unregistered), trademarks, trade names and service marks and the right to apply for any of the above as recognised in any country in the world. For the avoidance of doubt, IP shall not include any personal data (as defined in the General Data Protection Regulations 2018) of which the University is the data controller ("Personal data"). The University will retain ownership of all Personal data and this Policy is not intended to authorise any other party to process such Personal Data without the consent and authorisation of the University.

2.   Intellectual Property Ownership

The general rule in relation to IP created by an employee during the course of their employment is that, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, the first owner is the employer. This position arises due to statutes governing intellectual property. In the case of inventive products and processes, the Patents Act 1977 confers first ownership of an invention created by an employee to the employer. In relation to copyright works and registered and unregistered design rights (copyright works being literary, musical, dramatic and artistic works), the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988, the Registered Designs Act 1949 and the Regulation on Community Designs (6/2002/EC) all operate to confer ownership of copyright works and UK and EU designs created by an employee to the employer. Similarly, the first owner of database rights in a database will be the employer pursuant to the Copyright, Rights in Databases Regulations 1997.

Whilst the de facto legal position is that the University owns the IP arising from work undertaken by its employees, this University Intellectual Property Policy modifies the position of IP ownership at QMU for staff and students as follows.

a. Staff

All IP generated by staff during the course of their employment by the University and/or using University resources ("Staff IP") will be owned by the inventor (the member of staff who creates the IP), except:

- Where as a condition of support an external funder providing funding or other support requires that Staff IP is assigned to that external sponsor; or
- Where the Staff IP has been developed in the production of a course or teaching materials, in which cases the Staff IP will be owned by the University.
- Exceptionally, and only at the point at which potential IP is disclosed (see Section 5), the University identifies that the commercial opportune would be best realised by a traditional model of IP exploitation led by the University. *In such cases, after the University has recovered the direct costs incurred by it for any registration of IP rights and all costs incurred for exploitation, remaining revenues will be shared equally between the University and the inventors (50% each)*

In the event where any of the exceptions above are considered by the University to apply, the staff member shall execute and deliver such documents and perform such acts as may reasonably be required in order to ensure that ownership of Staff IP is assigned to the correct party, as set out above. In certain cases, the University may require the staff member to sign an agreement formally assigning IP to the University.

b. Students

All IP generated by students during the course of their studies at the University and/or using University resources ("Student IP") will be owned by the inventor (the student who created the IP), except:

- Where as a condition of support an external funder providing funding or other support requires that Student IP is assigned to them (for example projects involving 3rd parties and work requiring use of pre-existing University-owned IP); or
- Where the Student IP has been developed in the production of an MSc or PhD thesis or in the production of course or teaching materials, in which cases the Student IP will be owned by the University.

In the event where any of the exceptions above are considered by the University to apply, the student shall execute and deliver such documents and perform such acts as may reasonably be required in order to ensure that ownership of Student IP is vested in the correct party, as set out above, and the University may require the student to do so at any time.

Joint ownership

Where multiple inventors are responsible for the creation of IP using the University's resources, and at least one inventor is a University staff member or student, the IP shall be owned jointly by the inventors ("Joint IP"), unless the IP falls into one of the exceptions relating to Staff or Student IP in section 2(a) or 2(b) above. Joint ownership requires more ongoing management and should only apply where the contributions of each inventor are not distinct and cannot be separated. Joint inventors are best placed to agree between themselves how Joint IP should be protected and how any revenue generated be shared, and the University would not normally expect to be involved in any negotiations between the inventors on the issues surrounding Joint IP.

3. University responsibilities for Intellectual Property

The University shall not give any warranties or assume liability for any uses of, or dealings in, Staff IP or Student IP which has been created at the University but assigned to any staff member or student under this policy.

The relevant staff member or student shall be solely responsible for any protection, commercialisation and exploitation of Staff IP or Student IP respectively and must make clear that:

- the University has no ownership interest in the relevant IP; and
- he or she is not authorised to act or incur obligations and/ or liability on the University's behalf.
-

As noted in Section 2, the University will retain ownership of IP in relation to course or teaching materials generated by students and staff. The University will also register its IP where appropriate through trademarks, patents and/or registered designs to protect its IP, trading names and teaching & research objectives where this is deemed appropriate. The University will monitor the use of this and any other IP belonging to the University and reserves the right to defend its IP in circumstances where their misuse or infringement would, or is likely to create reputational, financial or other damage to the University.

The University shall continue to store and make publicly available data generated by research, in line with evolving policy on this issue. The University shall also continue to make research publications by staff accessible to a wide audience through use of the institutional repository of publications and requires that staff place their publications on this repository.

In relation to any grant of rights, licences, warranties or undertakings sought by any person in relation to IP owned by or licenced to the University, these shall only be granted subject to the University's approval procedures. No member of staff or any student is authorised to give or purport to give any such grant, licence, warranties and/or undertakings on the University's behalf.

4. Staff and Student's Responsibilities for Intellectual Property

The University has provided support to staff and students in the development of both Staff and Student IP and has a responsibility to promote new research and knowledge exchange. Therefore, staff and students shall grant to the University a perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to any Staff IP and Student IP for teaching, publishing and research purposes. If Student IP or Staff IP includes confidential information belonging to the inventor, the University shall not unreasonably refuse to enter into a non-disclosure agreement to protect that confidential information if so requested by the inventor.

When undertaking University work from which IP may be expected to arise all persons bound by this policy must:

- keep the nature of and matters relating to IP confidential until the fact and manner of disclosure is agreed with the University;
- assist in protecting the University's rights to the IP by keeping suitable records of creation wherever possible.

5. **Reporting and Disclosure of Intellectual Property**

All persons bound by this policy are responsible to the University for disclosing to their Head of Division at the outset of the work or as soon as they become aware of it:

- any potentially exploitable IP arising from their work
- the ownership by a third party of any IP referred to or used for their work
- any use to be made of existing University IP during their work
- any IP which they themselves own which is proposed to be used by the University

The Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Unit (RKEDU) will keep a register of reported IP and any decisions regarding ownership covered by Section 2.

6. **Use of Intellectual Property by University, Staff and Student owners**

The owners of IP property arising from the University have a responsibility to protect, translate and use it for both public good and commercial purposes, whichever is most appropriate.

All persons bound by this policy are responsible to the University for such use, and upon reasonable request from the University will provide the University with such reports and information from time to time e.g. University requests for impact reports, for information for use in University PR, Website and promotional material, and for other University purposes which might arise.

Intellectual Property owners will respond to appropriate University requests in a timely manner.

7. **Disputes**

Any person disputing the coverage, administration or effect of this policy must address their concern in writing in the first instance to the Director of Operations and Finance who shall within 20 working days of receipt give either an initial ruling or reasons for not so doing together with an indication of process (e.g. further information required, reference to another person/body for decision or opinion) including where a right of appeal would lie.

8. **On leaving the University**

Persons bound by this policy shall continue to acknowledge and attribute the University's IP rights created during the period of their employment or other contractual obligation at the University in a clear manner and to avoid misleading future employers or collaborators or other material third parties as to the interests in the IP concerned.

9. **Breach of the Policy**

Breach of this policy is a disciplinary matter for University staff and students under the normal procedures.

The University shall consider all avenues available to it, including legal action by injunction or for damages or otherwise, in respect of persons bound by this policy acting in breach of them.

6. Amendments to the Policy

This policy may only be amended through recommendations submitted for approval by the Research Strategy Committee.

Further Information

Student and Contractual IP Matters
Lorraine Kerr, Legal Adviser and Data Protection Officer: lkerr2@qmu.ac.uk

Externally funded research and grants/contracts
Research Grants and Contract Unit: rgcu@qmu.ac.uk

Research and Innovation Ideas creation and company formation
Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Unit: rkedu@qmu.ac.uk

Further information on Intellectual Property can be found on the UK Intellectual Property Office website at: https://www.gov.uk/intellectual-property-an-overview

This Intellectual Property Policy, including appended Assignation Agreement template is available in full here (under the Policy tab): https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/

20. LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC) REGULATIONS

1   Introduction

1.1   The LRC Regulations have been endorsed by University Senate for the benefit of all users.

1.2   Please read these regulations carefully, as ignorance of them cannot be accepted as an excuse for non-observance.

1.3   The LRC Regulations are supported by the University Code of Conduct and the "Acceptable use of information and communication technology and electronic resources at Queen Margaret University" Policy.

1.4   For the purpose of these Regulations, "the LRC" means Learning Resource Centre (incorporating the Library) within Queen Margaret University. Also for the purpose of these Regulations the term 'Head of Learning Services' refers to the Head of Learning Services or any other member of LRC staff acting on behalf of the Head of Learning Services.

1.5   For the purpose of these regulations "QMU Smart Card" refers to the student matriculation card or for staff, the staff card.

2.   Use of the Learning Resource Centre

2.1   Use of Queen Margaret University LRC is free and available to all. Borrowing rights are available to the following:

- Members of the University Court during their term of office
- All University staff
- All matriculated University students and researchers
- Students of other institutions as specified by reciprocal agreements and by the Head of Learning Services.
- University collaborative partners
- External members, of such categories and subject to such conditions and fees as the Head of Learning Services may determine

2.2   Conditions of use, borrowing privileges, and access to electronic and audio-visual resources are dependent on the category under which the user is registered with the LRC.

2.3   Members of the public, who are not registered as external members, may freely use the LRC for consultation and reference only. Members of the public may access some electronic resources on designated terminals, as prescribed by the licence agreement for the individual resource.

2.4   Use of the LRC, or access to its facilities, implies an undertaking to observe these Regulations.

3.   **Regulation of Borrowing**

3.1   Users must produce a valid QMU Smart Card whenever they wish to borrow.

3.2   QMU Smart Cards are not transferable.

3.3   No items may be removed from the LRC without first being formally issued as a loan. Any removal or attempted removal of an item without complying with this procedure constitutes an offence and renders the user liable to disciplinary action.

3.4   Users will be held responsible for all items issued on their QMU Smart Card until they are returned to the LRC and duly discharged.

3.5   Books and other items of LRC stock which have been issued on a QMU Smart Card may not be transferred from one LRC user to another.

3.6   Current loan periods must be observed at all times, and items returned by the date and time specified.

3.7   It is the responsibility of the user to return all items by dates and times specified. Reminder notices are a courtesy, not an entitlement *(see Appendix 1)*.

3.8   Email will be the standard means by which communications from the LRC are delivered. Email will only be sent to a QMU email address.

3.9   When returning items, these must be discharged at the Self Service facility or handed to a member of LRC staff during staffed hours. Users returning LRC materials, issued on their QMU Smart Card, must not leave them unattended in the LRC, whether at the LRC Service Desk, or anywhere else in the LRC. LRC materials remain the responsibility of the user until they are duly discharged and it is the responsibility of the user to check the screen and make sure that items are discharged from their record.

3.10   Fines are levied on all users for the late return of items. Users who fail to return items will be invoiced for the accumulated fines, the cost of replacement and an administration charge. Users who have such an 'account' on their QMU Smart Card will have their borrowing privileges suspended until all accounts are cleared to the satisfaction of the Head of Learning Services.

3.11   University users who are in debt to the LRC, due to non-payment of fines or through failure to clear accounts on their LRC record, by the end of their programme may have their degree certificate withheld and/or will not be allowed to graduate.

3.12   If not required by other users, most items may be renewed for a further period. Items can be renewed at the Self Service facility, in person at the Service Desk, by telephone or electronically via the LRC online catalogue. Please note that, under the Data Protection Act,

telephone renewals can only be carried out by the person who originally borrowed the items.

3.13   A reservation or 'hold' may be placed on most items that are currently on loan. Users will be notified when the item becomes available and it will be held for 'pickup' for 7 days.

3.14   Users will be notified if any item issued on their QMU Smart Card is required by another user. These items will no longer be eligible for renewal and must be returned by the date and time specified.

3.15   Any user who fails to return a book, knowing that it is in demand, may be required to pay the costs of replacing it and will be liable to suspension of further borrowing privileges.

3.16   Lost or stolen QMU Smart Cards must be reported to Security and to the LRC immediately. There is a £20 charge for the replacement of lost cards.

4.   **Conduct**

4.1   The LRC Regulations are supported by the University Code of Conduct. In line with the General Principles of the University Code of Conduct, all LRC staff are empowered to enforce the Code of Conduct for the duties and operation of LRC facilities and services, and are entitled to be treated with courtesy and respect, when discharging these duties.

4.2   Users must comply with the provisions of any relevant legislation e.g. laws relating to intellectual property rights including copyright, data protection; and also any licence agreements between the University and a third party e.g. the Shibboleth authentication system, which govern the use of software and access to data.

4.3   Users should carry their QMU Smart Card with them at all times and be prepared to show this identification at the request of LRC staff. Failure to produce a valid QMU Smart Card may result in the user being asked to leave the LRC.

4.4   For health and safety reasons, children under 12 will only be admitted to the LRC if they are kept under the close supervision of an adult.

4.5   Silence in areas designated as Silent or Quiet Study Areas must be observed. Mobile phones and other devices must be switched to silent in these areas.

4.6   LRC staff are empowered to remove unattended bags to the LRC Workroom. Users will be able to reclaim such property from the LRC Service Desk.

4.7   Damage or defacement of books and other items of LRC stock is prohibited. Any damage to, or loss of, LRC materials must be made good to the satisfaction of the Head of Learning Services.

4.8   Any defect or damage to a book or other item should be reported immediately to the LRC Service Desk.

4.9   Users should report any accident, theft or other incident to a member of LRC staff immediately.

4.10   It is the responsibility of the owners of mains-powered equipment e.g. laptops, to have it tested for electrical safety, and their use is conditional upon the owners' acceptance of responsibility for damage to University property caused by their equipment. No floor boxes are to be used, only the designated extension units provided by the University. The University accepts no responsibility for such equipment or for data stored.

4.11   The University accepts no responsibility for loss or theft of, or damage to, personal belongings left anywhere in the LRC.

4.12   No book or other item of LRC stock may be removed from the LRC unless it has been issued via the Self Service facility or at Service Desk.

4.13   The LRC has electronic security systems to prevent the unauthorised removal of LRC materials. Users must comply with the requirements of their operation.

4.14   LRC staff can ask that bags, briefcases and all other containers be opened, to check for LRC materials being taken out of the LRC, whether or not the security system has been activated.

4.15   Users must leave the LRC immediately on hearing the fire alarm or when required to do so in any emergency. LRC users must comply with directions given by Fire Wardens and Fire Marshals.

5.   Inter-Library Loans

An item borrowed from another Library will be subject to the conditions imposed by the lending library.

6   Copyright and Licences

6.1   Any photocopying, or scanning, of material or downloading of electronic data must comply with the appropriate copyright legislation, and/or appropriate University or LRC licence agreements.

6.2   Some audio-visual materials, software and data are licensed for educational use only; unless otherwise indicated, they may not be copied or used for commercial purposes. The licensing terms and conditions of some software may mean that it is unavailable to external members and other categories of users.

7. **Breach of LRC Regulations**

7.1 The University views very seriously any abuse or misuse of the LRC facilities or services. Any abuse of the LRC facilities or services may be dealt with under the appropriate University Regulations Governing Discipline.

7.2 In terms of paragraph 1.4 of the University Regulations Governing Discipline, the LRC Management Team are empowered to deal with minor breaches of the LRC Regulations. Serious breaches will be dealt with under the University Regulations Governing Discipline.

7.3 Any LRC user found to be in breach of LRC Regulations will be asked, in the first instance, to show their QMU Smart Card. Details of the person and the offence will be recorded for future consultation, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

7.4 In the case of any breach of LRC Regulations, the Head of Learning Services is authorised to suspend the LRC privileges of any user, for a period which could continue in force up to 3 months after which the breach occurred, and also to impose any other appropriate penalties. Any action taken under this Regulation will be reported summarily to, and taken in agreement with, the appropriate Head of School.

7.5 External members who commit a major breach of LRC Regulations will have their membership cancelled and will forfeit fees paid to the University. Re-admission to membership will be at the discretion of the Head of Learning Services.

LRC Regulations:
Appendix 1 Overdue reminder notification and Accounts

Please note that all overdue returns will incur a fine. The current fine rates are displayed on the Library webpages. Overdue notices, for University users, will be sent by email to QMU mailboxes. Overdue notices for other users, external to the University, will be sent via email or through the post to their home address.

1.1   Overdue Reminder notices for 21-Day and 7-Day Loans

7 days after expiry of loan: First overdue notice will be sent.
21 days after expiry of loan: Second overdue notice sent.

Failure to return or renew the items, where allowed, results in an account being placed on the user's LRC record and borrowing privileges suspended. An account notice will be duly dispatched for the replacement cost of any overdue items plus an administration cost.

1.2   Overdue 1-Day Loans and DVDs. Overdue 1-day loan materials and DVDs are charged at a higher rate of fines.

Failure to return 1-day loans or DVDs on time is seen as a serious abuse of the LRC service. Overdue notifications and accounts will be sent to users as outlined in 1.1 above.

1.3   Overdue Inter-Library Loans. An item borrowed from another Library through the Inter-Library Loan service will be subject to the conditions imposed by the lending Library. This may ultimately result in the LRC user being invoiced for the replacement cost of the item, plus any administration fee in accordance with the lending library's own regulations. The LRC may also impose a fine in the event of late returns.

1.4   Accounts. All users will be sent accounts for LRC items that are 21 days or more overdue. The University may take further steps to recover items which become seriously overdue. Users must return the item(s), pay any fines due (where applicable to the category of user), and pay an administration cost to clear the account.

If any item(s), issued on a QMU Smart Card have been lost or stolen, the user must pay the replacement cost of the item(s), any fines (where applicable) and the administration cost. If the item(s) are subsequently found, the replacement cost only will be refunded

21. PhD AND PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE REGULATIONS

These regulations can be found in full on the Quality website at:

https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/postgraduate-research-study/graduate-school-and-doctoral-research/current-students/

22. REGISTRATION

Contents

1   MATRICULATION

1.1   Matriculation is the process of registering with the University as a student. Students must register for each academic year of their programme, i.e. they must matriculate annually.

1.2   To be permitted to matriculate, students must produce:

a) **originals** of certificates passed and on the basis of which, admission to the University is being sought;

b) evidence of financial support, e.g. a letter of award confirmation from the Students' Award Agency for Scotland, from a Local Education Authority, or from a sponsor. Students are expected to have a reasonable expectation of financial support to allow them to complete their programme.

1.3   Any false or materially misleading statement made in a student's application for entry to the University, or through the annual matriculation process, may result in that student being required to leave the University.

2.   DECLARATION OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

2.1   To safeguard the welfare of staff, students, visitors and the general public, Queen Margaret University will scrutinise any criminal convictions declared on the part of applicants for entry or by matriculating students.

2.2   Continuing students will be required to declare, as part of on-line matriculation, whether they have had any criminal conviction in the last 12 months. In the event of a positive response, the process set out in 2.3 below will be followed.

NOTE: Any student who is subsequently found to have falsified his/her self declaration will be subject to disciplinary action.

2.3   Where an applicant or a matriculating student has declared a criminal conviction, identified staff of the University Secretary's Group will contact the applicant or student to ascertain the nature of the conviction, requesting further information, including the nature of the conviction, date of conviction, nature of sentence etc. The Head of Admissions and

Recruitment, the relevant School Manager and the relevant Head of Division will review this information and carry out a risk assessment using an established classification taken from the Health and Care Professions Council. The following criteria will be considered:

- Programme requirements
- Potential risk to other students and staff
- Responsibilities to employers and the public
- The rights of the individual and entitlement to rehabilitation

Serious cases may also be referred to the Dean for academic consideration.

2.4   The University Secretary will consider the recommendation from the risk assessment and will make a decision on admittance to, or continuation on, a programme.

2.5   Students will not be permitted to commence placements until the investigation into the criminal conviction has concluded.

2.6   Any appeal against a decision in this matter will be conducted through the established University procedures. In certain circumstances, the institution may have to refer cases to the relevant statutory body.

2.7   All Professionally qualifying programmes at QMU have a requirement for students to   be screened through the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) process, via Disclosure Scotland. The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme delivers on the provisions outlined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007.

Below is a list of the QMU programmes which require a Disclosure Scotland check. The type of check will be determined on application and will be undertaken after an offer to study at the University has been made.

> BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary)
> BA (Hons) Education Studies (Primary)
> BSc (Hons) Podiatry
> BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
> BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography
> BSc (Hons) Therapeutic Radiography
> BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
> BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy
> BSc (Hons) Dietetics
> BSc (Hons) Nursing
> DipHE in Hearing Aid Audiology
> MSc/PgDip Dietetics (Pre-registration)
> MSc/PgDip Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration)
> MSc/PgDip Physiotherapy (Pre-registration)
> MSc/PgDip Speech and Language Therapy (Pre-registration)
> MSc/PgDip Audiology (Pre-registration)
> MSc/PgDip Diagnostic Radiography (Pre-registration)
> PgDip Radiotherapy & Oncology
> MSc Art Psychotherapy (International)
> MSc Music Therapy

MSc Person Centred Practice (professional pathways only)
PGDE Secondary (Home Economics)

BA (Hons) Drama and Performance/ Theatre and Film Studies students may also require a PVG Scheme Record for working with Children, depending on their specialism/dissertation projects. These are normally applied for during the second year of study (for specialisms) or third year for Honours projects.

BSc (Hons) Physical Activity, Health & Wellbeing and BSc (Hons) Nutrition students may also require a PVG Scheme Record for working with Children, depending on their placement experience, and this will be advised by the Programme Leader when required.

At the time of writing (September 2017), the standard fee is £59. If an applicant is already a PVG member (for both Children and Adult) then the update fee is £18.

2.8 **International and EU students**

International and European Union applicants and students are required to provide comparable information in English from their own country. While it is recognised that the process is likely to be difficult, depending on nationality, students are nevertheless asked to investigate the availability of alternative forms of evidence of their personal record. In the normal course of events, students will be required to apply for "Standard Disclosure" before entry to a programme. The existence of a criminal record itself does not mean that a student is unable to join a programme, but admission to particular programmes may be precluded by certain types of convictions.

3 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

3.1 Individual students may be admitted to an advanced stage of a programme, provided that they have demonstrably reached the same general standard of educational development as achieved through earlier level(s) of the programme. There should also be a reasonable probability that prospective students will complete the programme successfully within its normal duration. Where other studies are used as the basis for selection, the Programme Leader or Admissions Tutor will have discretion to determine if it is necessary for each component in the omitted level(s) of the programme to be shown to have been covered.

3.2 Where admission to a level has been granted, students may further apply for specific credits as set out below. However, any credit approved under RPL and based on a specific episode of prior learning can be used only once on any programme of study.

3.3 The **R**ecognition of **P**rior **L**earning (RPL) describes the use of prior learning, either as a formative tool as part of personal development or as a summative tool for the award of credit. The learning may have taken place either as part of a formal educational course or as part of an informal life or work experience outside formal educational settings. This acknowledges that there may be a stage of discussion, reflection and formative assignments, prior to any formal application for the accreditation of prior learning.

3.4 The **A**ccreditation of **P**rior **L**earning (APL) refers to the process whereby students are awarded credit towards an award on the basis of previous learning, which may be either certificated learning or experiential learning.

3.5   APL can be used either as a means of demonstrating the achievement of entry level or for gaining credit that can be transferred as either general or specific credit towards a programme of study.

3.6   The application will be assessed by the University in terms of its:

- authenticity - that the applicant actually completed what is claimed.
- directness - that the learning was specific and can be identified and categorised.
- sufficiency - that learning reached a level to allow the applicant to fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme.
- currency - that the learning is sufficiently recent to allow the applicant to fulfil learning outcomes of the programme. Where experience from some time previously is referred to in a substantial way, e.g. more than five years has elapsed, the application will be assessed to determine whether the applicant has kept up to date with recent developments in the intended field of study.

3.7   The Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) refers to the recognition of prior learning gained from a formal course that has been previously assessed and/or accredited at higher education level.

3.8   The Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) refers to the process of assessing and credit-rating learning achieved outside formal education settings.

3.9   The usual minimum credit that can be awarded is 10 credits in the case of undergraduate Programmes, and 15 credits for postgraduate programmes. For the purpose of awarding credit, smaller volumes of learning may be incorporated into a single summative assessment submitted for the award of credit.

3.10   The University will grant specific credit to students by matching evidence provided by the student which demonstrates that they have fulfilled the learning outcomes of specified full modules in a validated programme on which they are registered.   Students given specific credit for a module will then be exempted from this module and prohibited from undertaking a similar module.

3.11   Students may possess general credit awarded by other institutions for previous studies. Part of these studies may be specifically recognised and given specific credit towards a programme of the University on the basis that they meet the requirements of a Queen Margaret University award.

3.12   The level and volume of general credit should be assessed based on the relevant level descriptors of the SCQF. Although the volume of credit is not a simple mathematical judgement, one credit point is approximately equivalent to 10 hours of learning, including all learning activities, application through work based activity, reflection and assessment.

3.13   Students may be exempted from attendance in respect of part of a module where they can demonstrate prior learning of some but not all of the learning outcomes of that module. In such circumstances, students will be summatively assessed against the learning outcomes of the full module.

3.14   The only exception is where a programme option or elective exists. Specific credit can be given on the basis of previous learning without precise matching of module learning outcomes, provided that students achieve the overall outcomes for an award.

3.15   The student's claim for credit for a specific module may be assessed in a number of possible ways, and in the following order of preference. The student can:
- provide evidence of passing an equivalent module elsewhere;
- undertake the normal module assessment;
- undertake an oral examination;
- undertake another form of assessment, e.g. a challenge essay;
- complete an approved learning contract;
- submit a portfolio of evidence.

3.16   Where credit is awarded, it should be for evidence of the achievement of learning arising from the experience and not for the experience alone.

3.17   A student's claim for credit for a specific module should be assessed by the same staff member who would normally assess performance on that module, unless that member of staff has previously acted as academic advisor to the student.

3.18   The record of the assessment of prior learning should be open to independent scrutiny by the same external examiners who assess performance on the specific modules or academic award. The evidence submitted by students of prior experiential learning in support of a claim must be available for scrutiny by external examiners. Boards of Examiners should be notified of those credits on student transcripts arising from APL.

3.19   At least 50 per cent of the level at which a student enters a programme must be completed at Queen Margaret University in order to gain an award from the University. Classification of awards may make use of grades given for prior learning: for APCL, those grades are those given by the institution where the prior learning was accredited (adjusted to allow for differences in marking criteria); for APEL, those grades may be given by Queen Margaret University.

3.20   As part of its programme review and annual monitoring processes, QMU may require programme teams to monitor, review and report on their use of the policies and procedures for APL.

3.21   An approved learning contract may be used by a student to gain credit, based on an agreed piece of current independent learning. The credit gained may be general or specific. Learning contracts may be incorporated into individual or independent study modules.

3.22   Where a learning contract is used for the award of specific credit, the contract should indicate how the specific learning outcomes of the module(s) are to be demonstrated.

3.23   Where a learning contract is used for general credit, the choice of learning outcomes, together with the volume and level of credit should be made with reference to the SCQF framework.

3.24   A learning contract should include statements of: the level and volume of credit, the aims and learning outcomes, a plan of activities, details of evidence to be submitted by the student (report, essay, video, portfolio etc.), a marking scheme and a time plan.

3.25   The contract should be dated and signed by the student, the lecturer supervising the student and the programme leader (plus the representative of any external body in the case of work-

based learning). A copy of the learning contract, together with the student work and marking sheet, should be made available to the External Examiner.

3.26 Boards of Examiners should be made aware of any marks/grades arising from learning contracts.

3.27 General credit may be awarded to students who can demonstrate learning through their fulfilment of a formal representative role in QMU, such as that of a student representative, or as a participant in a programme planning committee or review / validation event.

3.28 In order to gain credit for a representative role, students must agree a learning contract with the relevant Programme Leader or Head of Division and completed in accordance with section 3.21-3.26 above.

4. REGISTRATION

4.1 The maximum time for which a student may be registered on an undergraduate programme shall be two years longer than the planned duration of the programme, except in the case of a programme of one year's planned duration, when the total maximum period of registration shall be two years. Any extensions to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes will be subject to approval by the Assistant Secretary (Registry and Academic Administration).

4.2 The minimum and maximum registration periods for standard taught postgraduate programmes are as follows:

Programme		Maximum period for completion	Minimum period for completion
Masters	FT	4 calendar years	1 calendar year
	NFT	7 calendar years	2½ calendar years
PgDip	FT	3 calendar years	1 calendar year
	NFT	5 calendar years	2 calendar years
PgCert	FT	2 calendar years	1 semester
	NFT	4 calendar years*	1 calendar year

* For example, if modules run in Semester 2 only and student takes one module a year, or if modules run in alternate years.

However the **Professional** PgDips may take between 12 and 24 months depending on the requirements of the programme. Therefore suggested periods are:

Programme		Maximum period for completion	Minimum period for completion
Professional Masters	FT	5 calendar years	2 calendar years
	NFT	7 calendar years	4 calendar years
Professional PgDip	FT	4 calendar years	18-24 months
	NFT	6 calendar years	3 calendar years
Professional Dissertation	FT	18 months	3 months
	NFT	3 years	1 year

Principles: Students are allowed 1 year out and then 1 further year to complete.
No programme may take longer than 7 years in total.

Students should refer to the individual Programme Specification for details.

4.3 A student's registration shall lapse if it is no longer possible for him/her to obtain an award within the maximum period of registration. The fact that the student has not yet completed the maximum period of registration shall not, in itself, entitle him/her to remain registered.

4.4 An award may be conferred subsequent to the expiry of the period of registration.

4.5 A student may apply for deferment of study either prior to entry, or after commencement of studies. Application should be made to the Programme Leader.

4.6 Once a student commences studies, deferment of studies will be permitted only where it remains possible for the student to obtain the relevant award within the maximum period of registration (see paragraph 4.1).

4.7 Only in exceptional circumstances will a student be permitted to re-enrol on the programme. This includes students who have been required, or have chosen, to withdraw from a programme, and who have not been granted a deferment of study. Students who have voluntarily withdrawn may be re-admitted for a higher award through the University's normal admissions procedures. Students who have been required to withdraw may be re-admitted through the University's normal admissions procedures a minimum of one year after the decision of the Boards of Examiners. Students who indicate that they wish to exit with an Ordinary degree should apply directly to the Head of Division if they subsequently wish to proceed to an Honours degree.

4.8 Where the period of deferment of study begins during a level for which fees have been paid, no refund of such fees will normally be made.

5. CONTINUATION OF REGISTRATION

5.1 Full-time undergraduate students are expected to register on modules rated to a total of 120 Scottish degree credits in any academic year. They may with the agreement of the Programme Leader register on modules rated to a total of 100, 110, 130, 140 credits in one academic year. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Examiners may recommend registration on up to 160 credit points in cases where a student is required to carry forward modules. Further, with the additional agreement of the funding body, they may register on modules rated to a total of 80 or 90 credits. Students registering on modules rated to a total of 70 credits or fewer will for all purposes be considered as part-time students.

5.2 The selection of an individual programme of study is the ultimate responsibility of the student subject to:

- the rules determining pre-requisites and co-requisites for modules;
- the availability each year of modules, and their time-tabling;
- the advice provided by staff.

5.3 The choice of a student's programme of study is determined by the regulations set out in the programme definitive document in terms of the compulsory modules and the pre-requisites. Boards of Examiners may advise on, but may not determine, a student's subsequent programme of study.

5.4 A part-time student allowed to continue in registration and wishing to transfer to full-time study will have her or his application considered by the programme's Admissions Tutor. Transfer is not at the student's discretion.

6. CHANGE OF STUDY PROGRAMME

6.1 Students may change their agreed programme of study. Such change requires the approval of the Programme Leader(s) and Module Co-ordinators. This acts as a check that the student has a good reason for the change, the revised programme is still coherent, the necessary prerequisite qualifications are fulfilled, and that the registration period is still within the minimum and maximum allowed period.

6.2 If a student withdraws from a module before 25% of the taught duration has elapsed, he or she will be treated as never having been on the module. No fee will be charged.

6.3 If a student wishes to withdraw from a module after 25% of the taught duration has elapsed he or she will be treated as having registered on the module and will be charged a fee.

6.4 A student withdrawing from a module after 25% of the taught duration has elapsed may provide the module co-ordinator with a written explanation of reasons for withdrawal. If the module co-ordinator accepts these as valid extenuating circumstances, the student will suffer no academic penalty, i.e. the withdrawal will not count as a fail. The student will receive a transcript showing them as withdrawn and will receive no credit.

6.5 A student withdrawing from a module after 25% of the taught duration without providing evidence of extenuating circumstances will be recorded as a fail.

6.6 A student wishing to transfer from one elective module to another will normally be permitted to do so within the first 25% of the taught duration of the module subject to the consent of both Module Co-ordinators. Only exceptionally will students be permitted to transfer between elective modules after this period.

6.7 For the purpose of these regulations the term "module" is understood to cover all integrally assessed programme components, whether designed in a modular format or not, i.e. it includes projects and placements where these are assessed.

6.8 Applications from students wishing to follow a programme of study leading to a general award of MSc, MA, MBA, MFA, PgDip or PgCert will be vetted by the School Academic Board or by the Programme Committee to ensure that the chosen programme exhibits relevance, academic coherence, and has the potential to lead to a dissertation in an area suitable to the level of award, appropriate to the interests and expertise of staff.

7. CHOICE OF STUDY PROGRAMME – POSTGRADUATE STUDY

7.1 Within the regulations set down for the Masters Programme overall and for particular awards, it is intended that the student will choose her/his own programme.

7.2 A student's choice of dissertation is subject to the agreement of the Programme Committee/Subject Area Panel and the dissertation supervisor. This agreement is given on the authority of the School Academic Board.

7.3 The specific agreement of the School Academic Board is needed by a student who designs a study programme which is undefined in subject area content and which leads to the award of a general Masters degree (MFA, MSc or MA).

7.4 It is expected that students will choose programmes and modes of study appropriate to their own particular needs. Students may register on individual modules without necessarily being required to register for an award, and they will be eligible for assessment and for an academic transcript of performance on the individual modules.

8. ATTENDANCE

8.1 Undergraduate full time students are expected to register on 120 credits, in any one academic year. (See 5.1 above for further detail and exceptions.)

8.2 Undergraduate students studying 70 credits or less, or equivalent, will be governed by such of the University regulations as affect part time students.

8.3 Students are expected to attend all timetabled events associated with their programme of study and must comply with the requirements of the University Student Attendance Policy.

8.4 Individual programmes may require a more detailed attendance policy. Attendance requirements for the satisfaction of a professional or registration body and on any modules should be clearly identified in the programme's student handbook. Programme attendance policies should be developed in consultation with module co-ordinators, where modules are accessed by students from various programmes. Students must acknowledge all attendance policies.

9. ASSOCIATE STUDENTS

9.1 Students may be admitted to a module or modules or to a part of a programme as an Associate Student, without registering for an award. As with all other students their matriculation is undertaken by the University Secretary's Group.

9.2 Where associate students are supplementary to an existing class and can be taught without the need for additional resources, approval for their admission will normally be given by the Head of Division responsible for the modules for which the students wish to register. However, where the number of associate students registered on a particular module is large, a special arrangement covering fees and additional resources for teaching and defined access to facilities on campus should be negotiated and agreed by the Dean of School. Such arrangements will apply where a separate class is provided or where special provision is made for teaching off-campus.

9.3 It will normally be the responsibility of the module co-ordinator to ensure that associate students fulfil the pre-requisites of any module on which they are registered.

9.4 Associate students will follow the same curriculum and, if they wish to be assessed, they will be assessed in the same way as (and usually together with) students taking the module who are registered for an award. The same Board of Examiners shall, at the same meeting, consider the results of all students assessed for a given module. The grades achieved in the assessment will be recorded and students will be eligible for an academic transcript.

9.5   Associate students have access to the same appeals, disciplinary and complaints procedures as other students.

9.6   The standard of the teaching will be assessed through the use of QMU teaching staff and the QMU Board of Examiners. Should students use facilities in another establishment, the Programme Leader responsible for the module in QMU should lodge an affirmation with the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement to the effect that the conditions and facilities are conducive to the proper pursuit of the module.

9.7   Associate students will normally be charged the fee for the module taken or a pro-rata fee in relation to the portion of a programme being followed, and have access to all the University facilities.

9.8   A student can study as an 'associate student' for a maximum period of 2 years, or for 2 modules.

23. SMOKING POLICY

1. Introduction

Queen Margaret University aims to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees, students and visitors to its campus and to raise environmental standards. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all employees, students and visitors to the University are aware of its position on smoking.

2. Principles

Smoking is damaging to health and harmful to the environment. The University aims to provide a smoke-free environment for employees, students and visitors.

The University as an employer has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. It has a duty to do all that is reasonably practicable to provide and maintain a working and learning environment that is safe for all, without risk to health and is adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work. It also has a duty to control the risks to people not in its employment which arise from the operation of its business. The University shall protect non-smokers from the risks to health from passive smoking and protect all users of the University's premises and property from increased risk of fire. Reducing the number of potential sources of ignition can only assist in achieving this goal.

As of the 26 May 2006 smoking was prohibited in all workplaces, in terms of the Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005.

The law prohibits smoking in certain public places which are 'wholly or substantially enclosed', including the majority of workplaces. It is an offence to smoke in no smoking premises or to knowingly permit smoking in no smoking premises. The University faces a fixed penalty fine of £200 for allowing anyone to smoke on the premises and individuals can face a personal fine of £50 for smoking. Failure to pay or repeated offences can result in prosecution and a fine of £2,500. Vehicles used for business purposes are also be affected by the law.

For the purpose of clarity the use of e-cigarettes is included in the definition of smoking

3. Objectives

This Policy has been developed with the following objectives in mind:-

i.   To protect all employees, students and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke;
ii.   To assist compliance with the Smoking Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005;
iii. To reduce the risk of fire within the University;
iv.   To reflect a renewed emphasis on fire risk assessment in respect of potential harm caused by fire in the workplace as per the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

4.   Scope

This Policy applies to all employees, students and visitors to the University.

5.   Restriction on Smoking

Smoking is only permitted within the designated smoking area.
Smoking is prohibited in all other areas of the University and for the avoidance of doubt includes such areas as:

- Within buildings
- University Square
- 10 metres of any QMU building,
- Paths, decking and grassed areas within the University grounds
- The car park
- University vehicles

6.   Breaches

Persistent breaches of this Policy by staff and students could result in a disciplinary offence and may amount to misconduct in terms of the University's disciplinary policy which could render the employee/student liable to a disciplinary.

Any breaches of the policy by employees and students will be dealt with in accordance with the University's disciplinary policy and procedures.

Visitors in breach of this policy will be asked to leave the campus.

7.   Further Information

You can find more about smoking and obtain support if you are trying to give up from:

- Your local GP
- The Public Health Department and or your local NHS boards
- Smokeline 0800 848484, this is a freephone counselling service provided to give help and advice to smokers who are trying to give up, or your can look on their web page http://www.canstopsmoking.com

N.B. It is important to note that failure to comply with the Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005 is a criminal offence. Any individual in breach of the Act, including employees, students and visitors may be liable to a fixed penalty fine. Such fines are imposed by Environmental Health Officers who may conduct spot checks on the University premises.

24. STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Providing a student experience of the highest possible quality is a priority for Queen Margaret University. Promoting and encouraging student engagement with all aspects of their learning experience is a key aspect of this. This policy has been developed to provide a supportive learning environment of which student attendance is one aspect of overall engagement. The University needs to be able to record the attendance of students at timetabled teaching sessions for the following reasons:

a. To aid the retention of students by allowing early identification of those students at risk and allow timely interventions to be made in terms of academic and personal support.

b. To comply with the requirements of the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) under our Tier 4 licence that requires us to record the attendance accurately of those students subject to visa restrictions so that an attendance return can be made within specified timescales required by the agency.

c. To comply with the requirements of the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) who require attendance confirmations to be made on a regular basis for those students who are in receipt of SAAS financial support.

d. To enable timely notifications of withdrawals and deferrals to external stakeholders (e.g. UKVI, SAAS).

e. To meet the demand placed on the University to report absences to employers, Professional Statutory Bodies, or other sponsors where they are funding/partially funding programme tuition fees.

Key Principles

a. Students are active participants in their learning experience and must take responsibility for achieving their potential through successful completion of each stage of their studies.

b. Recording attendance can provide an indication of student commitment, motivation and highlight any difficulties which need to be addressed.

c. Student welfare is a priority for Queen Margaret University. Schools will ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to both identify students considered to be at risk and offer appropriate academic and pastoral support and guidance. This may include advising students of alternative options for successful completion of their studies.

d. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who regularly attend classes are more likely to enjoy a rewarding experience in which core skills and abilities, such as team-working, are developed.

e. Attendance is a key component in student retention, progression and achievement.

f. Attendance develops attributes for employability – e.g. timekeeping, professional behaviour and responsibility

g. The University has a dual duty of care for Tier4 sponsored students in terms of providing appropriate support to international students studying here in the UK and fulfilling the reporting requirements of our UKVI licence.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

a. Attending all timetabled learning/teaching sessions associated with their programme of study and ensuring they have their attendance recorded by swiping their student card against the card reader outside the relevant room.

b. Notifying in advance (e.g. using the Student Absence Form within the Portal) that they expect to be absent from timetabled classes. Reasons may include authorised absence involving representation at University events or Students' Union related activities. (Please see Appendix 1 – Absence Policy)

c. Notifying any unforeseen absences from classes as soon as practically possible.

d. For absences lasting more than 5 days, submitting a medical certificate to the School Office (or other relevant evidence).

e. Ensuring that they check their Queen Margaret University email account on a regular basis for any formal notifications/communications.

f. Ensuring that they maintain up-to-date contact details via the Student Portal.

g. Making full use of any support mechanisms within the University which may help facilitate successful completion of their programme e.g. Personal Academic Tutor, Student Services, Effective Learning Service, Stay on Course

Academic Staff Responsibilities

Academic staff are responsible for:

a. Reminding students of the importance of attendance at learning and teaching sessions through induction and longitudinal induction activities.

b. Signposting 'at risk' students to support services available within the School or University e.g. the student's Personal Academic Tutor, Student Services, Stay on Course, Effective Learning Service or International Office.

Programme Leaders, Personal Academic Tutors and School Manager Responsibilities

Programme Leaders, Personal Academic Tutors and School Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

a. Regular reviews are taken of attendance/absence data and communications are made to 'at risk' students in a timely manner.

b. Appropriate systems are in place at School level for students to provide notification of planned absences or report any unexpected absences.

c. Authorised periods of absence should not exceed 4 weeks in total across the academic year. Students who request extended absence beyond 4 weeks may be required to defer their studies. Any requests for extended periods of absence will be subject to Programme Leader approval and will depend on the nature of the programme delivery.

d. Data is reviewed for patterns of non-attendance and where appropriate referring students to their Personal Academic Tutor for discussions on reasons for pattern.

e. Students are informed in writing of the importance of regular attendance at learning and teaching sessions, and through Programme Handbooks of any approved programme or module specific attendance requirements.

f. All students have access to a Personal Academic Tutor.

g. There are regular reviews of students' progress on their programme, including attendance, completion of assessment requirements and academic achievement, and that appropriate action is taken either to help students achieve their academic aims or, where students are failing to engage with the programme, provide appropriate guidance.

h. Students are advised of the support available to them, whether provided by the School or central support.

i. In the case of the absence of a member of teaching staff, students are informed at the earliest opportunity of the alternative arrangements for the class.

j. Review the absence notification lists provided by the Administrator, and alert them to any students who may have provided confidential information to the Programme Leader or PAT as a reason for their absence.

Action taken due to unsatisfactory attendance – Full-time and Part-time Undergraduate

a. A green-amber-red system is utilised in assessing the attendance percentage of each student.

b. Check points will take into consideration a 3 week period of attendance and reviewed in Academic Weeks 5, 8 and 11 in Semester 1; Weeks 22, 25, 28 in Semester 2.

c. The attendance percentage for each student calculated at these check points will align with either a green, amber or red communication. The PAT and/or Programme Leader will be alerted to student with potential attendance concerns and students will be contacted depending on the severity of their apparent non-attendance. In particular:

- o Green – mild lapse of attendance. Students falling into this category will be sent a communication recommending that they speak to their PAT, Stay on Course, or other source of pastoral support, if they deem this necessary or helpful.

- o Amber - more serious lapse of attendance. Students falling into this category will be sent a communication directing them to speak to their PAT, and recommending other alternative sources of support.

- o Red – Serious lapse in attendance. Students falling into this category will be sent a communication requiring that they speak to their PAT; they will be referred directly to Stay on Course and be required to improve their attendance before the next check point or be at risk of withdrawal.

- o Students falling below any of these categories (i.e. those students who have 5% or less attendance) at the first check point will be investigated to ascertain their overall engagement. This will include looking into their Hub access, their contact with Academic Staff, etc. If there is no satisfactory reason for their non-attendance, they will be withdrawn at that stage.

- o Level 4 students will not be contacted unless this is specifically requested by their Programme Leader or PAT.

- o Conversely, beginning study on a new Programme is a crucial time for students adjusting to University; this is particularly true for new Undergraduate students. As such, particular attention is paid to these students during their initial weeks at QMU. These students will be subject to additional weekly attendance reviews in the run up to the first check point.

d. Registry will inform relevant stakeholders of the student withdrawal.

e. Student IT accounts and Smartcards will be deactivated at this point.

f. All relevant communications and notes relating to attendance concerns must be maintained within the student's record.

Action taken due to unsatisfactory attendance –Taught Postgraduate

Postgraduate students are required to register their attendance by swiping their student card against the card reader outside the relevant room of each timetabled teaching session. While the same check-point system will apply to Postgraduate students, they will only be communicated with if their Programme Leader (PL) or Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) feels that this is necessary for the purpose of highlighting continued non-attendance. In some cases, students may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss their attendance with either their PAT or PL, and will be offered a range of support mechanisms to help them return to the expected level of attendance. As with Undergraduate students, extremely low or continued non-attendance and a failure to engage with communications or any other aspect of their Taught Programme may result in withdrawal from the institution.

Programme Specific Requirements

Due to the diversity of programmes delivered at QMU, there will be a number of Professional/Statutory body requirements with respect to attendance. Where programmes must conform to such requirements, these should be clearly communicated to students. Where programmes implement their own timeframes, these must not be longer than the timeframes detailed within this policy.

Tier 4 Sponsored Students

In addition to attending classes, International Students who do not have indefinite leave to remain within the UK (e.g. on a Tier 4 student visa) must attend on a monthly basis, sign-in sessions at the Registry Information Point, during which a student's contact details and address will be confirmed. When considering an application for a CAS extension, or a CAS in cases where international students with a non-Tier 4 visa wishes to switch to Tier 4, a student's attendance record may be taken into account when a decision is made about whether a CAS will be issued or not.

Placement Activities

Students who undertake a placement as part of their programme are responsible for ensuring that their attendance matches the requirements of the placement provider. Placement providers will inform the University if a student is failing to maintain a good attendance record, which may lead to the students being withdrawn from the placement activity and potentially from their programme of study. Additionally, Professional Bodies may specify requirements for placement attendance which must be adhered to. Any Professional Body requirements will be detailed in the relevant Student Programme Handbook.

Formal Examinations and Coursework

Students are expected to attend all necessary formal examinations and submit coursework by published submission dates. Students who fail to attend a scheduled formal examination or submit a piece of coursework (where no approved extension has been granted), will be marked as a non-submission.

Student Fraud

Student must only record themselves as present at a learning/teaching session. Where students are identified as having fraudulently recorded the attendance of another student in their absence, then both parties will be subject to the University's student discipline procedure.

Appeals Process

Any student who has been required to withdraw due to non-attendance is entitled to appeal the decision through the normal University academic appeals procedure. Students who wish to appeal must do so within 21 days of receiving notification of withdrawal.

updated August 2018

25. STUDENT ABSENCE POLICY

This Policy on Student Absence applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students. The University considers student welfare as a priority and recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to their academic progression and wider university experience. This policy has been developed to provide clear guidance on student absence with a view to reduce the impact of absence on academic study.

1.   Definitions

1.1   Students are absent if:

a.   they do not attend a teaching session that is on their personalised timetable
b.   they do not attend an examination
c.   they do not attend any part of a placement
d.   they do not attend planned activity relating to the learning experiences of the module, for example fieldtrips, site visits, rehearsals and conferences.

1.2   A Teaching Session is any timetabled learning and teaching session. It includes lectures, seminars, practical and computer workshops.

1.3   Notified Absence. The reasons for absence can include the following:
      a. Illness
      b. Personal (including Compassionate Leave)
      c. Sport
      d. Adverse Weather
      e. Study Leave

1.4   Unauthorised Absence is where the reason for non-attendance is unknown.

1.5   A Self-Certified Absence is a period of absence that is no longer than seven consecutive days[2], excluding periods of assessment or examinations. No supporting documentation is required.

2.   Attendance Requirements

      The Attendance Policy states the University's attendance requirements.

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[2] Seven consecutive days includes weekends (for example Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday)

2.1.   Students are responsible for:

a.   Attending all timetabled learning/teaching sessions associated with their programme of study and ensuring they have their attendance recorded.

b.   Notifying absence in advance using the automated on-line absence form in the Student Portal. Reasons may include authorised absence involving representation at University events or Students' Union related activities.

c.   Notifying any unforeseen absences from classes as soon as practically possible using the automated on-line absence form in the Student Portal. Notification of absence will only be recorded up to 5 working days after the last date of absence.

d.   For absences lasting more than 5 working days, attach a medical certificate to the automated on-line absence form in the Student Portal.

2.2.   In relation to Formal Examinations and Coursework the following applies:

a.   Students are expected to attend all necessary formal examinations and submit coursework by published submission dates.

b.   Students who fail to attend a scheduled formal examination or submit a piece of coursework (where no approved extension has been granted), will be marked as a non-submission.

2.3.   Programme Specific Requirements

a.   Due to the diversity of programmes delivered at QMU, there will be a number of Professional/Statutory body requirements with respect to attendance.

b.   Where programmes must conform to such requirements, these should be clearly communicated to students.

2.4.   Placement Activities

a.   Students who undertake a placement as part of their programme are responsible for ensuring that their attendance matches the requirements of the placement provider. Placement providers will inform the University if a student is failing to maintain a good attendance record, which may lead to the students being withdrawn from the placement activity and potentially from their programme of study.

b.   Professional Bodies may specify requirements for placement attendance which must be adhered to. Any Professional Body requirements will be detailed in the relevant Student Programme Handbook.

3.   **Notification of Absences**

3.1.   Students must provide notification of their absence using the automated on-line Student Absence Form in the Student Portal and provide evidence where necessary, as detailed below:

a. Absent for a period of **more than seven consecutive days**, a Medical Certificate[3] or other appropriate documentation[4] must be provided.

b. Absent for **less than seven consecutive days covering periods of assessments/examinations,** a Medical Certificate[5] or other appropriate documentation[6] must be provided.

c. Absent for **less than seven consecutive days** and teaching events have been missed, the student can self-certify the absence.

3.2. Planned Absence

a. The notification of absence should be provided in advance where the absence is planned, for example to attend a funeral or represent the University in an official event. Notification of absence will only be recorded up to 5 working days after the last date of absence.

b. The student is expected to complete the automated on-line Student Absence Form in the Student Portal; this will be forwarded to the Programme Leader.

3.3. Unexpected Absence

a. Where advance notification is not possible, for example in the event of illness, it is expected that the student will inform the University as soon as practically possible. Notification of absence will only be recorded up to 5 working days after the last date of absence.

b. Where the University does not receive notification of the reason for unexpected absence then the absence will be recorded within the attendance monitoring process and may trigger a notification to be sent as detailed in the attendance policy.

3.4. Absence from Placement

a. Students must inform both the Placement provider contact and the University of any absences whilst on placement.

b. There are a number of programme specific requirements regarding placement hours, some programmes require hours to be made up at another time. Please refer to the relevant programme handbook.

4. Recording of Absences

4.1. Student absences will be logged within the Student Record System.

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[3] Students should note that, in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Executive Health Department, medical practitioners may charge a fee for the provision of medical certificates.

[4] Appropriate documentation includes, a medical report, a note from a hospital, a formal notification of a hospital or clinic appointment, evidence from a member of staff who was alerted to the circumstances at the time, a letter from the student counsellor or other professional that the student consulted during the period when difficulties occurred or a note from the police.

[5] See 2 above.

[6] See 3 above.

4.2.   Approved absence will be recorded as authorised with one of the following reasons:
a. Illness
b. Personal (including Compassionate Leave)
c. Sport
d. Adverse Weather
e. Study Leave

4.3.   The absence is recorded as unauthorised where there is no advanced notification or known reason.

4.4.   The attendance monitoring system will log any absence from a scheduled teaching/learning event and record this in the student record system as an unauthorised absence.

4.5.   Absence whilst on placement will be logged by the placement provider and the University. The placement provider will send notification of the total attendance hours to the University for logging.

4.6.   A record of Placement Hours, including any absence, will be held electronically in the placement database and a hard copy in the Student File.

5.   Periods of Absence

5.1.   Student absence will be monitored as part of the attendance monitoring process. When minimum attendance requirements are breached, as stated in the attendance policy, the student will receive correspondence from the University highlighting their absence and any necessary action required.

5.2.   Authorised periods of absence should not exceed 4 weeks in total across the academic year. Students who request extended absence beyond 4 weeks may be required to defer their studies. Any requests for extended periods of absence will be subject to Programme Leader approval and will depend on the nature of the programme delivery.

5.3.   The student has the responsibility to contact the appropriate staff members (usually the Module Coordinator) as soon as possible to determine:

a. If there are any alternative arrangements to compensate for missed work or assessment
b. If any remedial work is required

5.4.   Patterns of absence will be reviewed by the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) and Programme Leader, as stated in the Attendance Policy. Students who have breached the minimum attendance levels will be asked to meet with their PAT or Programme Leader to discuss the absences.

6.   Support Available

The University understands that students may benefit from support and guidance to help them deal with any issues contributing to low level of attendance. There are a number of support services available to assist students.

6.1.   **Effective Learning Service (ELS)** provides guidance and support for all students wishing to develop their study and learning skills.

6.2.   **Personal Academic Tutors (PATs)** will act as a facilitator and 'mentor' to the student whilst at the University, encouraging the student to optimise their learning opportunities. The PAT is expected to refer students to other appropriate agencies and fully trained staff either within the University or elsewhere for support and resolution of issues of concern.

6.3.   **The School Office** is responsible for supporting staff and students, administering programmes of study, placements, and clinics.

6.4.   **Student Services** is a professional support department working to ensure students have the information, advice, guidance and opportunities necessary to support their successful experience and achievement whilst studying at QMU.

   a.   Counsellor, counselling@qmu.ac.uk
   b.   Student Finance Adviser, studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk
   c.   Disability Adviser, disabilityadvisers@qmu.ac.uk
   d.   Jobshop Co-ordinator - jobshop@qmu.ac.uk
   e.   Wellbeing Adviser wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk

6.5.   **The Students' Union** is a volunteer lead organisation specialising in enhancing the student experience providing advice and support, union@qmu.ac.uk

6.6.   **Thinking of Leaving?** If you are considering transferring to another programme, taking a year out or perhaps leaving university altogether, it is very important that you are able to understand and consider all of your options before you make a decision. Information is available on the following website https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/thinking-of-leaving/

May 2014
Updated January 2016
Updated September 2017

26. STUDENT DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

Introduction

This procedure relates to all fees and charges payable to the University by current and former students for the use of its facilities and the provision of its services. This includes monies owed in respect of tuition, accommodation, assessment, graduation, library and other miscellaneous fees and charges.

The University will at all times seek to be sympathetic to, and understanding of, each individual student's financial circumstances. However, to enable the University to do so, students must engage in dialogue with officers of the University if financial difficulties are being experienced. Students who are experiencing financial difficulties may seek help and advice from the Students' Union or from Student Services at studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk .

Action to enforce settlement of debt for outstanding fees and charges will be taken in respect of all current and former students who have failed to engage with the University to find a solution to any outstanding debt, or who have failed to honour agreements to pay.

Student Tuition Fees

- Tuition fees are due at the start of the programme. Tuition fee payment options are as follows:-

  (i)   in full on commencement of study (or earlier).
  (ii)   by 8 monthly direct debit payments, normally from October to May (incl).
  (iii) by 8 monthly debit/credit card recurring payment from October to May (incl).
  (iv)   in full 21 days from the date of invoice

  If for any reason the amount of fees is not known at the time of commencement of study, payment is due in full 21 days from the date of invoice, or by direct debit/recurring payments provided payments are completed by May.

  All returning students are reminded that they must set-up a new direct debit/recurring payment arrangement for each Academic Year.

- Tuition fees may be paid by direct debit or recurring payment instalments over a maximum of eight months from the commencement of the programme. For students commencing programmes at the start of the academic year, instalment payments will normally be due from October to May inclusive. Late direct debit/recurring payment arrangements still require all payments to be completed by May. For students who commence programmes at other points during the academic year, details of payment dates will be advised. Failure to keep direct debit/recurring payments continuing will result in the remaining balance being due for immediate payment.

- Self-funding students who have a net tuition fee amount payable of £9,000 or more are eligible for a 5% discount on the fee payable, provided they settle in full prior to 31 October or within 7 days from the date of invoice, whichever is the later. The discount will be calculated at 5% of the net fee payable (i.e. after any scholarship).

- A debt is deemed overdue when at the expiry of 21 days from the date of invoice, no payment has been received in full nor have direct debit/recurring payment arrangements been put in place.

- When a tuition fee debt becomes overdue, Finance staff will instigate a series of actions as follows :

  (i) 1st reminder letter asking the student to contact the Finance Office immediately to pay the fee due or to make arrangements to pay.

  (ii)   if there is no response to the 1st reminder letter within 7 days of issue, a 2nd reminder letter is sent giving the student 7 days to contact the Finance Office.

  (iii)   if there is no response to the 2nd reminder within the 7 days provided for response, the student's Smartcard will be deactivated, thus removing the student's ability to access the building and its facilities/services.

  (iv)   at the same time as the Smartcard is deactivated, a third letter, headed FINAL DEMAND will be sent, advising the student that their Smartcard has been deactivated and that failure to contact the Finance Office within a further 7 days will result in the debt being referred to a debt recovery agency (which incurs additional recovery charges that will be charged to the student). Where a student's debt requires to be sent to a debt recovery agency, the student may be required to withdraw from their programme.

  (v)   Should a direct debit/recurring payment be cancelled prior to the expiry date or no payment received on the due date, the full remaining debt becomes immediately due. Smartcards will be disabled after 7 days until the debt is either (a) paid in full or (b) alternative payment arrangements put in place. After a further 7 days if the debt remains unpaid or no alternative arrangements have been put in place the full debt will be passed to our Debt Collectors for action.

- *It should be noted that academic tutors are not empowered to vary fees nor to agree payment schedules with students on behalf of the university. All questions regarding payment of fees must be addressed to the Finance Office in the first instance.*

- As the main object of the reminder letters is to make contact with the student, in addition to these hard copy reminder letters, Finance staff will also send e-mail reminders and/or text messages and will also attempt to make telephone contact with the student as appropriate. The University reserves the right to use all contact details provided by the student. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that the University is provided with current contact details.

Student Accommodation Fees

Accommodation fee deposits are payable when reserving the room.

Payment options for accommodation fees are as follows:-

(i)   in full on arrival, or at any time prior to arrival;
(ii)   1st Semester on or before arrival, with 2nd Semester by first week in January;
(iii)   by 8 monthly direct debit payments from October to May (incl);
(iv)   by 8 monthly debit/credit card recurring payments October to May (incl).

An accommodation debt is deemed overdue when, at the expiry of 21 days from the date of invoice, no payment has been received, either in full or for the first semester, or no direct debit/recurring payment has been set-up.

When an accommodation debt becomes overdue, Finance staff will instigate a series of actions as follows:

(i)   1st reminder letter asking the student to contact the Finance Office immediately to pay the fee due or to make arrangements to pay.

(ii)   If there is no response to the 1st reminder letter within 7 days of issue, a 2nd reminder letter is sent giving the student 7 days to contact Finance.

(iii)   If there is no response to the 2nd reminder a letter will be issued to the student's Guarantor requesting the money be paid immediately. The student will also receive a FINAL DEMAND and may be served notice to vacate their room, in accordance with the provisions of the lease agreement.

(iv)   If no response is received to the final demand or from the guarantor, the debt will be referred to a debt recovery agency.

(v)   Should a direct debit/recurring payment be cancelled prior to the expiry date or no payment received on the due date, the full remaining debt becomes immediately due.

(vi)   Guarantors will be written to after 7 days requesting the balance to be paid in full. After a further 7 days if the debt remains unpaid or no alternative arrangements have been put in place the full debt will be passed to our Debt Collectors for action

Accommodation deposits will be used to off-set any room damages and/or existing debts.

Other debts

Other debts include (but are not restricted to) Library debts and fines, late payment charges, sports membership fees, assessment fees and graduation fees. Similar procedures relating to the issuing of reminders and, ultimately if necessary, referral to a debt recovery agency, will apply to these types of debt.

Student Progression and Graduation

No student will be allowed to progress to the next year of his or her programme nor be allowed to attend any Graduation Ceremony if they have any outstanding tuition fee debt to the University. This is in accordance with the Student Regulations. Also in accordance with the Student Loan Company regulations, loan cheques are not able to be released for the following year's loan until the student has matriculated (i.e. all prior year tuition fee debts have been settled).

Director of Operations and Finance
April 2010
(Updated July 2012)

27. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Submissions

The following procedure applies to the submission by students of work for assessment or re-assessment.

You are required to submit one electronic copy of all assessment and reassessment work. The electronic copy should be submitted through the Assignment Dropbox in the module site on HUB@QMU. Any alternative submission arrangements will be communicated to you by the module co-ordinator.

Hard copies of assessments will be required for dissertations, artefacts and group based work. The hard copy should be submitted to the designated School submission box (located opposite the School Office reception desk) and should be accompanied by a cover sheet (which can be found on the QMU Student Portal).

Submissions must be received on or before the required deadline. The date and time of your electronic copy submission will be used to ensure your work is submitted on time.

28. WITHDRAWAL & DEFERRAL

How to Withdraw

If you decide to leave, you will need to complete a withdrawal form. This is used to formally record your withdrawal and update your student record. The date of withdrawal is recorded as the date the form is submitted. This can be important if you receive any funding for your programme or pay any fees.

You can complete the form electronically and return it to thinkingofleaving@qmu.ac.uk. Remember to save a copy of the form on your computer first before filling it in.

A member of staff of the Registry will then update your student record. The Programme Leader, the School Office and any other relevant departments are notified.

Take a Break from Study (Deferral)

Students can submit a request to defer their studies. This means leaving the programme and returning at a later date, normally the start of the next academic year. Deferrals must be approved by the Programme Leader and are normally granted for a maximum period of 12 months.

If you decide to apply for a deferral you should read the Student Deferral Procedure and discuss your request with your Programme Leader. Once you have done this, you should complete the Deferral Request Form. Remember to save a copy of the form on your computer first before filling it in.

If you have any questions about the withdrawal or deferral process you can also contact the Thinking of Leaving team.