



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Academic Services.  
and  
Student Services.

## Memorandum

**To:** Heads of Academic Departments  
Academic Departmental Administrators  
Examinations contacts in Academic Departments  
Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors  
Faculty Directors of Learning & Teaching / Research & Innovation  
Vice Principals for Teaching & Learning / Research (International Faculty)  
Prof. Paul White (Pro-VC for Learning & Teaching)  
Prof. Richard Jones (Pro-VC for Research & Innovation)  
Claire Baines (Academic Secretary)  
Andrew West (Director of Student Services)

**cc:** Sue Stephens (PGS), Sue Davison (LeTS), Helen Grindley (Taught Programmes Office), Joanne Rowlands (Research Degree Support), Lindsay Cooper (Research Services), Liz Hall (Registry Services), James Goldingay (LeTS), Simon Beecroft (LeTS), Angela Gascoyne (LeTS), Angela Marron (LeTS), Juliet Storey (LeTS)

**From:** See contact details on next page

**Date:** 14th July 2009

**Subject:** **Summary of changes to General University Regulations for 2009-10**

Please find attached a summary explanation of the changes to the University General Regulations for 2009-10. These Regulations changes were recommended by the University's Quality & Scrutiny Sub-Committee and Graduate Research & Development Committee and were forwarded for approval to the University Learning & Teaching Committee and University Research Committee and have subsequently now been approved by Senate. Also included in this summary are changes to the separate UG and PGT Examination Conventions.

This summary is being released in advance of the official publication of the University Calendar for 2009-10, so that departments can be aware of any changes they may need to consider when updating their Departmental Student Handbooks and other Departmental guidance/publications.

**In particular, your attention is drawn to amendments to the following Regulations which will have wider implications for changes required to procedures and systems both centrally and departmentally.**

General University Regulations for First Degrees:

- Regulation 30 and 39 – Definitions of a 'completed unit' and a grade of zero
- Regulation 43(ii) – Required number of credits/FHEQ Levels for Integrated Masters

The text of the University Regulations for 2009-10 is available at [www.shef.ac.uk/govern](http://www.shef.ac.uk/govern) from the Downloads box on this webpage. These Regulations can be viewed with amendments taking effect in 2009-10 highlighted, or in their finalised format, with the amendments incorporated.

The text of the Examination Conventions for 2009-10 is available to download from the relevant webpages (UG and PGT) linked from [www.shef.ac.uk/ssid/exams/conventions.html](http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid/exams/conventions.html).

If you have any queries arising from the changes to Regulations/Conventions please note the following main contact points:

**General Regulations-general and specific matters**

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## Summary of Changes to General University Regulations for 2009-10

The Regulatory texts (or relevant portions of Regulatory texts) given below show the text approved for 2009-10, and the Regulation paragraph numbers are those cited in the 2009-10 Calendar.

### 1. Changes relating to Assessment/Examinations

#### 1.1 General University Regulations for First Degrees

##### **Regulations 15, 43(i) and 43(ii) – FHEQ Level Descriptors**

Regulations updated to reflect the fact that the descriptors for QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) Levels have changed:

FHEQ Level M (Masters) now FHEQ Level 7  
FHEQ Level H (Honours) now FHEQ Level 6

##### **Regulations 15 and 43(i) – FHEQ Level 6 modules taken at Levels 2 and 3**

A situation may arise where an undergraduate student has correctly registered for 90 credits of FHEQ Level 6 [formerly H] modules, but these are spread over Levels 2 and 3. The Regulations have been amended to avoid the outcome where such a student is prevented from being recommended for the award of a degree because of the previous requirement to be registered for at least 90 credits of FHEQ Level 6 [formerly H] modules at **Level 3**:

15. A candidate shall register for units to the value of not fewer than 120 credits at each of Level 2 and Level 3, of which not fewer than 90 credits shall be at FHEQ Level 6 or above. A candidate at Level 4 shall register for units to the value of not fewer than 120 credits. Not fewer than 90 credits of those taken at Levels 3 and 4 shall be at FHEQ Level 7.

43(i) The Examiners may recommend that a candidate for a Degree other than that of MArch, MBiolSci, MBiomedSci, MChem, MComp, MEng, MEnvSci, MLA, MMath, MPhys or MPlan who is awarded not fewer than 200 credits at Levels 2 and 3, of which not fewer than 90 credits are at FHEQ Level 6 or above...etc...

##### **Regulation 43(ii) – FHEQ Level 7 modules taken at Levels 3 and 4 (Integrated Masters)**

Regulation amended for similar reasons to those given for Regulation 43(i) above, so that the requirement for not fewer than 90 credits to be at FHEQ Level 7 [formerly M] can be met by modules taken at Levels 3 and 4:

43(ii) The Examiners may recommend that a candidate for the Degree of MArch, MBiolSci, MBiomedSci, MChem, MComp, MEng, MEnvSci, MLA, MMath, MPhys or MPlan who is awarded not fewer than 320 credits at Levels 2 and 3 and 4, of which not fewer than 90 credits of those taken at Levels 3 and 4 are at FHEQ Level 7...etc...

Note however, that in order to ensure that Integrated Masters continue to be recognised as Masters awards at a European level, Senate requires that by 2010 all Integrated Masters offered by the University of Sheffield should, wherever possible, contain 120 credits at FHEQ Level 7 [formerly M]. These credits may be spread over Levels 3 and 4, and students would not necessarily be required to gain all 120 of these FHEQ Level 7 credits in order to be eligible for a Masters award. The Regulation will be changed in future years to reflect this requirement.

n.b. Senate has approved an exemption from this policy for the Faculty of Science until 2011, to allow changes to be made to its programmes without requiring students to retrospectively alter unit choices made at the end of Level 2.

### **Regulation 26 – Progression from Level 1 to Level 2 with at least 100 credits**

Regulation remains **unchanged**, i.e. Examiners have discretion to allow progression from Level 1 to Level 2 with not fewer than 100 credits and where a minimum grade of 30 has been achieved for the modules/units in which credits have not been awarded.

However, paragraph 3.5 of the separate document “Undergraduate Examination Conventions” is modified to allow the current discretion regarding the adjustment of the grade(s) of failed module/unit grade(s) to apply to modules other than just unrestricted modules:

3.5 Level 1 students obtaining at least 100 credits and less than 120 credits and who have failed module(s) with grade(s) of less than 30 cannot be recommended for a pass overall nor be allowed to progress, with the exception of the following:

The situation may arise where a student has obtained at least 100 credits but failed module(s) with grade(s) of less than 30 in a subject which they will not be required to carry on with at subsequent levels. In some of these cases the single/dual department may feel that the student's performance overall warrants recommendation to progress, in which case a request could be made to the department offering the module to consider returning an adjusted module grade of 30. Any agreed adjustment should normally include consideration as to whether the student has made a demonstrable effort to succeed in the failed module, evidenced by adequate attendance and participation and completion of the relevant assessed work and examinations, and confirmation that the department offering the module does not wish to hold the student back and prevent progression. The department offering the module may consider adjusting a grade in June after the end of the spring semester once a student's module grades for the whole year are known, or following resit in August. Any such adjusted grade should be returned in the normal way by the department offering the module, but the department should keep a record of any adjustment made. The student's home department should subsequently recommend a progression outcome taking into account any reported module grade adjustment if applicable.

Adjustment of module grades to 30 as described above should not be the norm, and this approach should only be taken in particular instances where a strong case can be made.

### **Regulation 30 – Completed units**

Regulation amended to reflect the fact that students need not only to 'complete units' in order to be able to progress to the next Level of study, but also in order to graduate:

30. A candidate shall complete units to a total value of not less than 120 credits at each of Levels 2, 3 and (where applicable) 4. For the purpose of this Regulation 'completed units' are those for which a candidate...etc...

### **Regulation 30 and 39 – Definitions of a 'completed unit' and a grade of zero**

The current definitions of a 'completed unit' and a grade of zero are too narrow within the Regulations to reflect the ways in which these terms are used and in some circumstances provide difficulties for determining whether a student should be judged to have 'completed' a unit/module and whether the student should be allowed to progress/be awarded a degree. Regulations 30 and 39 have been amended to clarify the definitions:

30. A candidate shall complete units to a total value of not less than 120 credits at each of Levels 2, 3 and (where applicable) 4. For the purpose of this Regulation 'completed units' are those for which a candidate has obtained

- (a) a pass grade or pass outcome
  - (b) a fail grade; *or*
  - (c) where formal exemption as a result of previous study has been approved.
- ...etc...

39. In respect of candidates commencing Level 1 or Level 2 of a programme of study in or after September 2000, the Examiners shall award in respect of each unit a grade expressed as a whole number on the following numerical scale:

70-100	work to a standard appropriate to Class I
60-69	work to a standard appropriate to Class II—Division 1

50-59 work to a standard appropriate to Class II—Division 2

45-49 work to a standard appropriate to Class III

40-44 work of a Pass standard

0-39 work in respect of which the candidate fails

Work not submitted, or work submitted deemed to be of no academic merit, or work submitted in respect of which credit is refused or denied may not normally be awarded a grade.

...etc...

These amendments make it clear that a unit/module awarded an overall grade of zero should be classed as 'completed' and thus Examiners can go on to agree whether or not to recommend progression/award. On the other hand, where for example, work is not submitted at all with no good reason or where credit is refused/denied (e.g. by a Discipline Committee on grounds of use of unfair means) then the unit/module may not be awarded a grade and would therefore clearly not be classed as completed and progression/award would not be possible.

These amendments resulted from careful and lengthy deliberations by Quality & Standards Sub-Committee over some months with input from the University Plagiarism Working Group.

These amendments will necessitate the introduction of a new unit/module Outcome code 'NC – Not Completed' for use when a unit/module will not be graded and the Outcome 'NA-Not Assessed' is not applicable. This change will require updates to procedures within the Corporate Information System (including DAS) for recording, uploading and reporting assessment data, and Departments will also need to review/update their standalone systems to accommodate this new Outcome code.

Further guidance for departments on circumstances when the use of a grade of zero may or may not be appropriate will be provided separately.

### **Regulation 35 - Eligibility for the award of a degree with Honours**

The Regulation as previously worded implied that a final year student who failed their degree was restricted to obtaining a Pass degree only when resitting units failed at Level 3, but not when resitting units failed at a previous level. The Regulation is amended to prevent final year students who subsequently resit Level 2 modules at Level 3 from obtaining an Honours degree:

35. A candidate for a Degree other than that of MArch, MBiolSci, MBiomedSci, MChem, MComp, MEng, MEnvSci, MLA, MMath, MPhys or MPlan who fails to satisfy the Examiners in respect of any unit(s) at Level 3 and who has not been recommended for the award of a Degree may (subject to the General Regulations as to Progress of Students) enter for a subsequent examination in respect of any failed unit(s) taken at Levels 2 or 3 on one occasion. A candidate satisfying the Examiners in a subsequent examination will be awarded a bare pass grade in respect of that unit and shall not be recommended for the award of Honours. In the event that the grade achieved following the subsequent examination is lower than that achieved on the first occasion, the higher grade shall be awarded.

## **1.2 General Regulations for Higher Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates**

### **1.2.1 Regulations for Higher Degrees by coursework (or coursework and dissertation)**

#### **Regulations 12 and 13 – Aegrotat Degrees**

New Regulations to specify provision for the award of Aegrotat credits and degrees. This is in line with similar provision in the General Regulations for First Degrees (Regulations 12 and 13):

#### **AEGROTAT CASES**

12. Where the Examiners are satisfied by appropriate medical evidence that a candidate was prevented by illness from completing an examination but are satisfied that the work done by the candidate shows beyond reasonable doubt that the candidate would have passed the examination, they may recommend that the candidate be deemed to have passed the examination and that the candidate be awarded the credits assigned

to relevant units but without the award of a grade. The credits awarded in respect of such units shall not be taken into account in determining the candidate's eligibility for the award of merit or distinction.

13. Where the Examiners are satisfied by appropriate medical evidence that a candidate was prevented by illness from completing a substantial part of the Examination for a Degree, and are satisfied that the work done by the candidate shows beyond reasonable doubt that the candidate would have passed the examination, they may recommend that the candidate be awarded an Aegrotat Degree.

### **Regulations 21, 22 and 23 – Award of merits/distinctions**

Clarification of existing Regulation and addition of two new Regulations to reflect the following:

- the fact that a grade for a single unit/module (as opposed to a weighted mean grade) is expressed as a whole number (e.g. 70 rather than 69.5);
- reference to the 'dissertation' has been removed, so that departments may decide whether credits associated with the dissertation should be included or not within the required number of credits to be eligible for consideration for the award of the mark of distinction or merit;
- discretion may be exercised to award the mark of distinction or merit to students registered for Postgraduate Diplomas;
- eligibility for consideration for the award of the mark of distinction or merit to be applicable to students initially registered for a Postgraduate Diploma, rather than to students recommended for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma as a result of not having obtained enough credits to be awarded the Masters degree for which they were originally registered (but see next bullet point);
- discretion may be exercised to recommend an award, i.e. Pass, Merit or Distinction, which best reflects a student's performance, whether or not the requirements for Regulation 21 and the new regulation 22 below have been met. It is expected that departments will only utilize the new Regulation 23 below to recommend an award higher than that indicated by Regulations 21 or 22 below, when a student's performance and circumstances particularly justify this. Departments are expected to record in Examination Board minutes the reasons for recommending a different award and Faculties will be asked to monitor the usage of this new Regulation.

#### **Distinctions and Merits**

21. The Examiners may in their discretion recommend the award of a mark of distinction or merit to a candidate registered for a Masters degree such that:

(a) A candidate who obtains a weighted mean grade of not less than 69.5 in the Examination as a whole and a grade of not less than 70 in units to the value of not less than 90 credits may be recommended for the award of the Degree with distinction; *and*

(b) A candidate who obtains a weighted mean grade of not less than 59.5 in the Examination as a whole and a grade of not less than 60 in units to the value of not less than 90 credits may be recommended for the award of the Degree with merit.

22. The Examiners may in their discretion recommend the award of a mark of distinction or merit to a candidate registered for a Postgraduate Diploma such that:

(a) A candidate who obtains a weighted mean grade of not less than 69.5 in the Examination as a whole and a grade of not less than 70 in units to the value of not less than 60 credits may be recommended for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma with distinction; *and*

(b) A candidate who obtains a weighted mean grade of not less than 59.5 in the Examination as a whole and a grade of not less than 60 in units to the value of not less than 60 credits may be recommended for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma with merit.

23. The Examiners may in their discretion recommend the award, which having regard to all the evidence before them, best reflects the overall performance of the candidate notwithstanding Regulations 21 and 22 above.

## **1.2.2 Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research**

### **Regulations 40 (Theses) and 54 (Failure)**

Regulations amended to reflect changes to the Degree of DEdCPsy, allowing the submission of the thesis at a date prescribed by the Head of Department in the final year of the course, and to include the Degree in the remit of the Regulation relating to failure of research degrees:

40. A thesis may not be presented before the completion of the minimum period of the programme of research specified in the Regulations for the relevant Degree, unless otherwise stated in the Regulations for the relevant Degree’.

54. A Candidate for the Degree of PhD, PhD with Integrated Studies, DEdCPsy, EdD, DBA, DDSc, EngD or MD who fails to satisfy the Examiners may, on the recommendation of the Examiners...etc...

## **1.3 General Regulations as to Examinations**

### **1.3.1 Use of Unfair Means in the Assessment Process (non invigilated exams)**

#### **Paragraph 3 - Double submission (or self plagiarism)**

Definition of double submission amended to include work that has been submitted rather than solely work that has been assessed:

3. Double submission (or self plagiarism) is resubmitting previously submitted work on one or more occasions (without proper acknowledgement)...etc...

#### **Paragraph 4 – Collusion**

Definition of collusion amended to include reference to work passed on to another student:

4. Collusion is where two or more people work together to produce a piece of work, all or part of which is then submitted by each of them as their own individual work. This includes passing on work in any format to another student...etc...

## **2. Changes NOT related to Assessment/Examination**

### **2.1 Changes arising from the Faculty Restructuring**

The General University Ordinances and Regulations have been amended throughout to reflect structural Faculty changes as follows:

1. ‘Dean’ is replaced by ‘Pro-Vice-Chancellor’ or in appropriate cases by ‘Pro-Vice-Chancellor or nominated representative’.
2. ‘Deputy Dean’ is replaced by ‘Faculty Director of Learning & Teaching’
3. ‘Faculty’ replaces ‘Board’ or ‘Faculty Board’.
4. Faculty names are amended as appropriate.

### **2.2 Changes arising from the change of status of CITY College, Thessaloniki from an ‘Affiliated Institution’ to a fully integrated ‘International Faculty’**

The General University Ordinances and Regulations have been amended throughout to reflect which Ordinances and Regulations apply to students registered in the International Faculty. Footnotes are also included in relevant sections of the Ordinances and Regulations to indicate where separate additional Ordinances and Regulations apply only to students registered in the International Faculty.

References in the Regulations to "Affiliated Institutions Staff" and "Affiliated Institutions Staff candidates" have been removed to reflect the fact that staff at CITY College, Thessaloniki are now members of the University's International Faculty.

## **2.3 General University Regulations**

### **Regulation 6 – Minimum Age for Admission**

Regulation amended to bring it in line with University policy which states that the University will not discriminate against applicants in terms of their age:

6. There is no minimum age for admission. Applicants who will be under the age of eighteen at the point of admission will, however, be required to demonstrate that they have the required level of maturity to study in an adult environment and that they have guardianship in the UK.

### **Regulation 17 – Registration**

Regulation amended to simplify text and remove references to specific timings:

17. A full-time undergraduate student is required to register each session at a time determined by the Registrar and Secretary.

### **Regulation 22 – Immigration**

New Regulation to assist the University in complying with its sponsor duties under the Home Office points-based system, to require all relevant students to inform the University of any change to their visa/immigration conditions:

22. A student in the UK subject to immigration regulations shall keep the Registrar and Secretary informed of information relating to their immigration conditions, in accordance with statutory requirements.

## **2.4 General Regulations for First Degrees**

### **Regulation 17 – Late amendments to registration**

Regulation amended to make it clear, and to reflect current practice, that any requests for late (post week 3 of semester) registration changes are dealt with by the relevant Faculty Officer and not by means of a Special Regulation:

17. A candidate may amend the registration in respect of any semester with the consent of the Head of Department but not after the end of the third week of the relevant semester. Amendment to registration after the end of the third week of the relevant semester shall be made only with the permission of the Faculty.

*(In practice Departments submit a statement of support for the late request, along with the student's completed Add/Drop Module Form, to the Taught Programmes Office who will present this to the relevant Faculty Officer).*

## **2.5 General Regulations for Higher Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates**

### **2.5.1 Regulations for Higher Degrees by coursework (or coursework and dissertation)**

#### **Regulation 10 – Late amendments to registration**

New Regulation to specify that requests for late (post week 3 of semester) registration changes are dealt with by the relevant Faculty Officer and not by means of a Special Regulation. This Regulation is in line with similar provision in the General Regulations for First Degrees (Regulation 17):

10. A candidate may amend the registration in respect of any semester with the consent of the Head of Department but not after the end of the third week of the relevant semester. Amendment to registration after the end of the third week of the relevant semester shall be made only with the permission of the Faculty.

(In practice Departments submit a statement of support for the late request, along with the student's completed Add/Drop Module Form, to the Taught Programmes Office who will present this to the relevant Faculty Officer).

## 2.5.2 Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research

### Regulation 29 – Scope of these Regulations

The list of Degrees to which the Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research apply has been extended to include the 'Degree of PhD undertaken in a Doctoral Training Centre'.

## 2.5.3 Regulations for the Degree of PhD undertaken in a Doctoral Training Centre

Whole new section 'Regulations for the Degree of PhD undertaken in a Doctoral Training Centre' added to include the following Regulations 1-8:

1. A person may be admitted as a full-time student candidate.
2. The programme of study and research shall be pursued for not less than three years.
3. A candidate shall be admitted initially as a candidate for an MPhil leading to PhD or as a candidate for a Postgraduate Diploma.
4. A candidate admitted initially for a Postgraduate Diploma approved for this purpose and who has obtained not less than *one hundred and twenty* credits may be permitted additionally to become
  - (a) a candidate for the Degree of MPhil leading to PhD; and where applicable also
  - (b) a candidate for the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Skills.
5. A candidate for the Degree of MPhil leading to PhD and, where applicable also for a Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Skills shall
  - (a) pursue the programme of research for not less than three years on a full-time basis; and
  - (b) pursue the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Skills on a part-time basis; and;
  - (c) successfully complete the relevant departmental upgrading procedure before progressing to the third year of study and becoming a candidate for the Degree of PhD; and
  - (d) present a thesis for examination in accordance with the General Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research.
6. A candidate who successfully completes the requirements of the programme of study and research for the Degree of PhD may be awarded that Degree, and a candidate who successfully completes the requirements of the programme of study for a Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Skills may be awarded that Diploma.
7. A candidate for the Degree of PhD undertaken in a Doctoral Training Centre shall complete either the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Skills or *forty-five* credits of the Research Training Programme, as appropriate to the individual Doctoral Training Centre.
8. The time-limit for the presentation of the thesis for the Degree of PhD shall be five years from the date of initial registration as a candidate, this period to include some or all of the time spent as a candidate for the Degree of MPhil.

## 2.6 General Regulations as to Academic Appeals

### Regulation 2 – Grounds for appeal

Regulation amended to incorporate text of 2(iv) into 2(i) to give the Appeals Committee more flexibility to exercise judgment, e.g. to prevent a situation where a student for a higher degree by research submits an academic appeal solely on the grounds of Examiner negligence/misconduct, but the Academic Appeals committee finds only that procedural error has been committed and thus the appeal subsequently has to be disallowed:

2. For these purposes, 'new evidence' is defined as:
  - (i) procedural error either by the Examiners or during the recording, transcription and reporting of the examination results and additionally in the case of Higher Degrees by Research, evidence of negligence or misconduct on the part of an Examiner;
  - (ii) extenuating circumstances which the student was unable to place, or for valid reasons did not place, before the Examiners;

(iii) evidence of a failure of supervision which significantly affected the candidate's performance and which could not reasonably be expected to have been the subject of complaint by the student to the Head of Department or the Dean of the Faculty before the examination.

#### **Regulation 5 – Academic Appeals Committee membership**

Amended Regulation regarding membership of Academic Appeals Committees, taking into account the fact that the Faculty of Law no longer exists.

### **2.7 General Regulations as to the Discipline of Students**

#### **Regulations 2(i), 16(c) and 20(c) – Use of unfair means**

Minor wording changes to match terminology used elsewhere which refers to the use of unfair means in the 'assessment process' rather than in 'examinations'.

#### **Regulations 2(v) and 8 – University accommodation arrangements**

Minor wording changes to describe more accurately current accommodation arrangements by referring to premises 'owned and managed' by the University.

#### **Regulations 22-27, and 32 – Clarification of the remit of Accommodation and Campus Services (ACS)**

Amended Regulations to provide clarification concerning the remit of ACS in exercising their powers under the Discipline Regulations.