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UNIVERSITY

# Academic Regulations Structure, Purpose and Principles

## Section 1

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## Structure, Purpose and Principles

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# Section 1: Structure, Purpose and Principles

## 1.1 Structure of University Academic Regulations

Our University Academic Regulations set out our institutional approach to the setting and maintenance of academic standards and the assurance of the academic quality and continuous and systematic enhancement of our awards and student learning opportunities.

These Academic Regulations apply to all awards and courses of study of the University including undergraduate, postgraduate, professional, short course and continuing professional development provision and research degrees.

Our Academic Regulations reflect national and international higher education expectations and legislation and constitute our policy for quality assurance as required by the European Education Area's Standards and Guidelines.

These regulations and related processes and procedures are reviewed annually and in response to external sector policy or regulatory expectations. Approval of the Academic Regulations is the responsibility of Academic Board (see Section 1.4).

University staff and collaborative partners implement the university's regulations. Students also accept that they are bound by these Academic Regulations when they enrol. The Academic Regulations are made available to students, staff and collaborative partners and it is the responsibility of the Dean of School to put in place arrangements for their development and support.

Exceptionally, variations to our Academic Regulations may need to be approved. The reasons for this may be as a requirement of a professional, statutory or regulatory body, an external awarding body, international and in-country requirements (for example where the delivery is at a location other than Leeds Beckett University campuses), or as a result of the particular type or nature of the provision. All variations to our Academic Regulations are approved by Academic Board or its Committees.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the University Academic Regulations is to provide:

- a) the framework within which courses of study leading to awards of the University are designed, validated and approved; and

- b) the means through which the academic standards of University awards are assured and the quality of learning, teaching and assessment is enhanced.

### 1.3 Principles

The principles of the Academic Regulations are:

- a) Primacy of University Academic Regulations

All credit bearing courses and pathways are subject to the University's Academic Regulations which have been approved by Academic Board. The University Academic Regulations take precedence over any other regulations, including those of external or professional bodies, unless variation is specifically permitted and approved.

Exceptionally, Academic Board has the authority to adapt or suspend regulations.

- b) Parity

All awards of the University are subject to the overarching principles of the University outlined in Section 1 of the Academic Regulations.

- c) Consistency, Fairness, Equity and Inclusivity

The University will apply its regulations fairly, equitably, consistently and inclusively to all.

- d) Rigour and Standards

The University will ensure that the academic standards of assessment are rigorous, of comparable standing with the rest of the sector and meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework. Students have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level.

- e) Academic Judgements

The academic judgements of examiners cannot, in themselves, be questioned or overturned.

f) Ratification and Recording of Credit

The University will have sound provisions for the ratification and recording of credit (see Section 6 of the Academic Regulations).

g) Feedback

The University will ensure students have the opportunity to receive feedback, timed appropriately, that promotes learning and facilitates improvement. The University will ensure that students will have the opportunity to discuss their academic work with staff.

h) Information to Students

All students will be provided with appropriate information in respect of:

- i) The university requirements for completion of modules, level and award
- ii) Assessment requirements of their modules
- iii) Information about their course of study
- iv) Provisions for submitting extenuating circumstances
- v) Provisions for publication of results
- vi) Provisions for requesting an appeal hearing
- vii) Provisions for making a complaint
- viii) A Course Handbook.

i) Responsibilities of Students

Students are responsible for maintaining awareness of:

- i) The University's General and Academic Regulations
- ii) Information contained in their Course Handbook
- iii) Complying with the assessment requirements of their modules
- iv) Their standing in respect of progression and award
- v) Their standing in respect of reassessment provisions and arrangements.

j) Confidentiality

The University's Academic Regulations will provide for due and appropriate confidentiality.

k) Language

All awards of the University must be studied and assessed in English.

## 1.4 Responsibility of Academic Board

In approving the University Regulations, Academic Board has delegated the responsibility for the detailed operation, monitoring and review of these Regulations to its Committees. Final approval of the University Regulations is the responsibility of Academic Board.

## 1.5 Alignment with Sector Expectations

Our University Regulations and the standards of our awards are informed by and align with national and European higher education expectations including the UK Quality Code (incorporating the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies) and the Higher Education Credit Framework for England within that Code, Qualifications Characteristics Statements, the European Credit Transfer System and the European Higher Education Area Standards and Guidelines.

These external higher education expectations are supplemented by internal University requirements and reference documents, relevant sector benchmarks, professional and statutory body requirements and are informed by sector benchmarking and externality.

The UK Quality Code articulates principles that should apply to higher education across the UK including the role providers play in assuring the quality of the student experience offered, supporting student engagement and referencing externality in assuring the integrity of awards and the quality of provision. Our Regulations and approach align with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and encompass the following characteristics:

- a) Every student is treated fairly and with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- b) Every student has the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of their learning experience.
- c) Every student is properly and actively informed at appropriate times of matters relevant to their course of study.
- d) All policies and processes relating to study and courses are clear and transparent.
- e) Strategic oversight of academic standards and academic quality is at the highest level of academic governance of the provider.
- f) All policies and processes are regularly and effectively monitored, reviewed and improved.
- g) Sufficient and appropriate external involvement exists for the maintenance of

academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.

- h) All staff are supported, enabling them in turn to support students' learning experiences.
- i) Information we produce about the learning opportunities we offer is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

## 1.6 General Educational Aims of the University

The aims for our courses will align with the University's distinctive general educational aims and our University's Education Strategy which supports the development of graduates who are critical thinkers and independent learners, and who have been given an opportunity to demonstrate a practical application of knowledge that will give them a head start in the world of work. This reflects the concept of capability by developing students':

- a) intellectual and imaginative powers
- b) confidence and ability to take effective and appropriate action
- c) problem solving and decision-making skills
- d) ability to communicate and explain their actions
- e) ability to work with others and to continue to learn from their experience
- f) ability to see relationships within what they have learned
- g) ability to relate their studies to a wider context.

In support of the University's general educational aims, approved frameworks, courses or pathways of study will stimulate an enquiring, analytical and creative approach, encouraging independent judgement and critical self-awareness. (See Section 3 of the Academic Regulations)

## 1.7 Aims and Objectives of Courses

Courses validated by the University shall have aims, objectives and learning outcomes which the curriculum, teaching/ learning methods and forms of assessment are designed to fulfil.

## 1.8 Student Charter

Leeds Beckett University and the Students' Union are committed to working in partnership with our students to ensure that our University is an inclusive, safe and engaging learning environment which is conducive to study for its students and work life for its staff.

Our Student Charter, alongside the University's Academic Regulations for Engagement and Partnership with Students, Section 12, sets out how we aim to achieve this by working



together to understand and fulfil our commitments to one another. Our Student Charter has been produced jointly with the Students' Union and is reviewed regularly.

## **1.9 Powers of Academic Board – Academic Standards and Quality**

The University has a Board of Governors and an Academic Board. Academic Board has responsibilities defined in the University's Articles of Association. Academic Board (and its committees) is responsible for overseeing academic matters relating to research, scholarship, teaching and courses. It advises the Vice Chancellor in the related activities and resources required to support and enhance the quality of educational provision. The University committee structure is provided in Section 21 of the Academic Regulations.

These committees provide institutional oversight of academic standards and quality, contribute to the formulation, review and enhancement of policy and practice, and provide a forum for broader consultation involving staff and student representatives.

The primary responsibility for academic quality and standards rests with the Vice Chancellor, with primary responsibility for institutional oversight via Academic Board with the Vice Chancellor as Chair of this Board and of our University Executive Team.

Academic Board will take any reasonable action it considers necessary to protect the quality of courses of study and the academic standard of the University's awards.

## **1.10 Roles and Responsibilities**

The responsibility for adherence to our Regulations rests with all staff, students and collaborative partners in accordance with the specific regulations, roles and responsibilities defined in our Regulations and supplemented by our University's associated policies and procedures.

Subject to 1.9 above, the Dean of School retains formal management responsibility for the operational standards, quality and delivery of all a School's courses (including collaborative provision) and the execution of all matters contained within the University's Regulations. Where appropriate the enactment of day-to-day activity may be delegated to a nominee.

The Dean of School is supported in this role by academic staff who have responsibility for a defined area of academic provision and staff teams.

The Dean of School is responsible for the effective operation and oversight of quality processes and School deliberative and executive governance structures.

The responsibilities of Heads of Subject and Course Directors are agreed by our University. Heads of Subject and Course Directors provide academic leadership and oversee the course organisation, management and delivery and arrangements for the education and assessment of students. They are responsible with the wider course team for the overall academic standards and quality of the provision and its monitoring, annual review and systematic enhancement.

Roles in relation to collaborative provision partners (i.e. those organisations which contribute to the teaching, assessment or support of students studying on courses which lead to Leeds Beckett University awards) are in Section 15 of the Academic Regulations.

## **1.11 Regulatory Sections**

Our University's Academic Regulations will be delivered in line with our purpose and principles and will be reviewed and enhanced in accordance with the individual sections. These include:

### Section 2. Admissions

The Admissions section sets the standard and framework by which decisions will be taken on applications for all taught courses or pathways.

### Section 3. Education and Assessment

This section sets the University's framework and structure for taught courses, learning outcomes and the manner in which these will be assessed and credit achieved.

### Section 4. Progression and Award

This section defines the regulations for the progression of students from one level of a course to the next and for students' award eligibility and achievement. Additionally, it covers reassessment and repeat study for those students who fail to meet the criteria for progression or award at their first attempt.

### Section 5. Examinations

This section details the regulations governing examinations, including the drafting and approval of papers, timetabling, invigilation, security and

confidentiality and the conduct and responsibility of students (*referred to as 'candidates' for the purposes of this section*) undertaking the examination.

#### Section 6. Progression and Award Boards and Module Boards

This section defines the purpose and operation of Progression and Award Boards and Module Boards for taught courses and pathways leading to an award of the University that will reach decisions on students' suitability for progression or award.

#### Section 7. Disabled Students

The purpose of this section is to outline our duty under the Equality Act (2010) to anticipate the needs of disabled students and the way in which our university manages and implements individual reasonable adjustments.

#### Section 8. Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation

This section defines the regulations for the application of extenuating circumstances and mitigation.

#### Section 9. Academic Appeals

To provide the requirements for students who have valid grounds to appeal against the decision of Progression and Award Boards, Module Boards, Research Degrees Sub-Committee or an Academic Misconduct Board and to set out students' rights and responsibilities in the appeal process, how the University will deal with student requests for an appeal hearing, and possible outcomes of the process.

#### Section 10. Academic Integrity

This section defines the University's approach to maintaining the academic integrity of students' work and safeguarding against breaches of academic integrity.

#### Section 11. Research Awards

To set the framework of regulatory requirements for all research awards of the University.

## Section 12. Engagement and Partnership with Students

This section defines how the University provides a framework within which student consultation and partnership working contributes to the provision of an excellent education for all our students.

The university actively engages students, individually and collectively in the development, quality assurance and enhancement of their education and experience.

## Section 13. Approval, Validation, Monitoring and Review

This section defines the regulations for the validation of courses and subsequent monitoring, annual and cyclical review activities which ensure appropriate academic standards are set and maintained and which make available learning opportunities enabling the intended learning outcomes to be achieved.

## Section 14. External Examiners and Advisors

This section sets out the University's requirements for external examining of all validated courses leading to an award, to provide assurance that the academic threshold standards of our taught awards are appropriate in light of UK reference points, that the achievement of our students is comparable to that on similar courses elsewhere, and that students are treated equitably in assessment. It sets out the University's processes for appointing external examiners and advisors, the duties expected of them and their annual reporting obligation to us.

## Section 15. Collaborations and Partnerships

This section sets out the University's general provisions on the approval, monitoring and review of Collaborations and Partnerships and the duties, roles and responsibilities of the University and Collaborations and Partnerships.

## Section 16. Academic Audit

This section provides details of the University's approach to Academic Audit for the assurance of academic standards and quality.

## **1.12 Review of our University's Academic Regulations**

University Academic Regulations are reviewed on an annual basis and in response to external sector policy or regulatory expectations in accordance with our Academic Regulations review process. The review schedule is updated annually to take account of changing external developments and reference points. Approval of the Academic Regulations and the period for their review cycle is the responsibility of Academic Board.