

## Annex H: Guidance on delegated responsibility for the approval of changes to the *Examination Regulations*

### Background

1. Under Council Regulation 15 of 2002 Section 2.4(1) Education Committee has the power 'to make, amend, and repeal regulations concerning the courses and examinations for undergraduates and graduate and other students (including Recognised and Visiting Students)' and to approve those proposed by the academic divisions (and OUDCE) in relation to examinations and courses for all types of students.
2. The committee has set out in *Annex I Vested Interests* of the *Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes (P&G new courses)* specific guidance about when changes can be made in relation to existing courses. The course change types referred to in this document are explained in *Annex I*.
3. Further information, including examples, is provided in *Annex N Guidance on types of course change* which contains more detailed information on expectations regarding consultation with students and notification of applicants of changes. All documents are available from the Education Committee website.<sup>1</sup>
4. Current practice in relation to changes to the *Examination Regulations* is set out in the Education Committee's Standing Orders (EdC(HT17)006) as follows:
  - Regulations for a new course, together with the course proposal itself, may be approved by the PVC (Education). Further minor amendments to regulations for a new course previously approved by the committee may be approved by the PVC (Education) or officers of Education Policy Support.<sup>2</sup>
  - Major changes to the special regulations for existing courses may be approved by the PVC (Education) or officers of Education Policy Support.
  - Minor changes to the special regulations for existing courses may be approved by divisional boards or individuals with delegated authority of the board.<sup>3</sup>
  - Changes to the general regulations may be approved by the PVC (Education), subject to prior discussion as appropriate with the relevant Panel of Education Committee and the Proctors.
5. This annex is intended to provide more detailed operational guidance on how changes to *Examination Regulations* relating to all types of course change should be managed.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses)

<sup>2</sup> In practice, draft *Examination Regulations* for a new course are provided by a division alongside the course proposal when it is submitted for consideration by or on behalf of Education Committee. The actual draft regulations are not presented to the committee or the PVC (Education), but scrutinised by EPS officers on behalf of Education Committee once the course proposal has been approved.

<sup>3</sup> This means departments and faculties must seek divisional approval for all changes to the *Examination Regulations*.

## Role of departments

6. Departments' role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is as follows:
  - Identification of the need for a change to a course.
  - Consulting effectively with existing students and staff as appropriate.<sup>4</sup>
  - Preparing proposals for the change and drafting revised *Examination Regulations* for divisional consideration.<sup>5</sup>
  - Communicating with applicants once a change has been approved.<sup>6</sup>
7. Departments need to be aware that all changes require a justification. Where the change relates to the academic delivery, content or assessment of the course then an academic rationale must be provided.

## Role of divisions

8. Divisions' role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is as follows:
  - Receiving requests for changes from departments.
  - Considering whether the rationale provided justifies the change.
  - Assessment of whether the vested interests of students and applicants have been adequately considered in accordance with *Annex I on Vested Interests*.
  - Assessment of whether the consultation with students has been adequate and that student views have been taken into account.<sup>7</sup>
  - Thorough proofreading of the proposed revised regulations.
  - Checking for consequential changes in related courses and regulations e.g. joint courses, general regulations etc.
  - Keeping track of course and regulation changes.
  - Approving very minor and minor course changes (Type 1 and Type 2).
  - Submitting changes for publication by the *Gazette*.

## Role of Education Policy Support

9. Education Policy Support's role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is to:
  - Provide advice to divisions if needed at any point in the course and regulation change process.
  - Consider cases where there is doubt as to what category of change is proposed between those that can be approved by divisions, and those that require Education Committee approval.

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<sup>4</sup> See *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.

<sup>5</sup> Guidance on drafting changes to regulations is available on the *Examination Regulations* website: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/)

<sup>6</sup> See *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.

<sup>7</sup> See *Annex N Guidance on types of course change*.

- Checking the regulations for major course changes (Type 2 expedited and Type 3) and new courses before publication.
- On occasion, approving some regulation changes on behalf of Education Committee.

### **Role of Education Committee**

10. Education Committee's role in the management of course changes and related changes to the *Examination Regulations* is to:
  - Approve major changes to courses (Type 2 expedited and Type 3) and new courses.

### **Publishing changes to regulations in the Gazette**

11. Any textual (rather than presentational) changes to regulations must be published in the *Gazette* in order to come into effect. Changes should only be submitted for publication after they have been approved by the appropriate body and, in the case of major course changes (Type 2 expedited and Type 3) and new courses, checked by Education Policy Support.
12. Publication of major course changes and new course regulations should take place as soon as possible after approval has been received. **Regulations should ideally be published before advertising takes place for a new course or a course subject to major changes, and must be published no later than one term prior to students commencing the course.**
13. For major changes to undergraduate courses involving changes to the FHS, FHS regulations must be published prior to students starting the FPE.