MANUAL OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS
AND PROCEDURES 2018-19

INTRODUCTION

(APPLICABLE FROM OCTOBER 2018)

Academic Standards and Quality
MARP 2018-19
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MANUAL OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES (MARP):
INTRODUCTION

SCOPE OF MARP

The Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures (MARP) contains the University’s academic regulations, policies and procedures - non-academic policies, regulations and procedures are published elsewhere on the University’s website. In its entirety, MARP provides the main reference point for both staff and students on the academic regulations and the University’s procedures and processes for managing, assuring and enhancing the quality and standards of its programmes and the student academic experience.

MARP applies to all categories of student, all academic programmes, and all types of award. It covers the following range of awards validated by the University, including those delivered on a collaborative teaching basis with partner institutions:

(a) undergraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates (including foundation degrees)
(b) postgraduate taught degrees, diplomas and certificates
(c) postgraduate research degrees.

Programme/partner-specific regulations which vary from the University’s standard regulations may be approved, and will be referenced in MARP.

MARP is divided into separate sections covering different aspects and separate sets of regulations; with a broader division between regulations and procedures which govern the student academic experience, including those for assessment and award, and quality assurance and enhancement processes and procedures designed to secure the quality of that experience. The main sections are as follows (click on the links to navigate to the individual sections):

- Introduction to the Manual
- Portfolio of Awards
- Admissions
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Study Regulations
- General Regulations for Assessment and Award
- Undergraduate Assessment Regulations
- Medical Degree Assessment Regulations
- Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations
- Postgraduate Research Regulations
- Plagiarism and Malpractice Regulations
- External Examiner Procedures for Taught Programmes
- Academic Appeals
- Student Complaints
- Management of Standards and Quality
- Course Design, Development and Approval
- Course Evaluation and Review
- Collaborative Teaching Partnership Provision
STATUS OF MARP AND COMPLIANCE

The autonomy of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with degree awarding powers is enshrined in legislation, and mediated by external regulations, codes of practice and guidelines. Lancaster University regulations and procedures, including those contained in MARP, are therefore informed by, and comply and align with, the following:

(a) principles of good practice, including those in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education;
(b) national legislation, including advice provided by the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA);
(c) higher education agency requirements, including those of funding bodies;
(d) professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRBs) requirements.

The University’s policy on compliance with the CMA guidance on consumer law as it relates to students is published here.

MARP must be complied with at institutional, faculty, departmental and individual levels. Where there is any flexibility in the implementation of a regulation or procedure, this will be indicated within, or be apparent from, the text, and the procedures for approving any variation will be stated. Failure to comply with MARP may result in actions which:

(a) put the University at unacceptable risk;
(b) significantly threaten the quality and standards of University programmes and awards;
(c) run counter to principles of natural justice;
(d) are in breach of external legislation; or
(e) jeopardise the quality of the student experience.

In certain places MARP contains references to policies, procedures and codes of practice which, whilst not a part of MARP, are relevant to particular sections. Links to such related documents and information are provided within MARP at the appropriate points.

LOCAL PROCEDURES

Working procedures may also be devised and implemented at local level by professional services units, faculties, departments, institutes, and colleges. Where these pertain to academic matters, such local procedures must be consistent with standard practice and the overarching regulations and principles as described in MARP.

SENATE SCHEDULE OF DELEGATIONS

In certain places MARP contains references to decisions taken by “the body or officer/s with delegated authority from Senate”. The Senate Schedule of Delegations details the body or officer with delegated authority to approve specific matters on behalf of Senate. The Schedule is available on the Strategic Planning and Governance website.

MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW OF MARP

The Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) has oversight of MARP and is responsible, on behalf of Education Committee, for the development, implementation and review of institution-wide quality assurance policies, and procedures. ASQC is also responsible for the approval of the University’s academic regulations governing all taught and research programmes leading to
Lancaster University awards, whether delivered in Lancaster or elsewhere. The Standing Committee on Academic Regulations (SCAR) is a sub-committee of ASQC and is responsible for the detailed consideration of proposals for new and revised regulations, making recommendations to ASQC as appropriate.

A designated administrative officer (currently the Head of Academic Standards and Quality) is responsible for ensuring that MARP is updated annually, and reflects any changes that have been approved during the previous academic year, and that it continues to meet the requirement that MARP is accurate, fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Significant new regulations, policies and procedures are generally reviewed one operational year after they are implemented and thereafter at intervals to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose. In addition, on occasions, a major development or project undertaken by the University may result in a requirement to review and amend associated regulations, policies and procedures contained in MARP through SCAR.

**APPLICATION OF MARP TO APPLICANTS AND STUDENTS**

MARP is published on an annual basis, and the regulations and procedures contained in it apply to all students currently registered with the University or with a collaborative teaching partner where the programme of study leads to an award of the University. Where changes to the regulations have been approved as being applicable to only particular cohorts of students, this will be indicated in the relevant section(s) of MARP. MARP also has contractual status for applicants who have accepted an offer from the University.

The University’s Academic Regulations Management Protocol provides details of how approved changes apply to applicants and registered students, and is contained in the Appendix to this Introduction.
APPENDICES TO THE MANUAL OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES (MARP): INTRODUCTION

APPENDIX 1: ACADEMIC REGULATIONS MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

This protocol covers both the University’s standard academic regulations for programmes of study and regulations for specific programmes of study which are approved variations to the standard regulations. Changes to the University’s academic regulations are approved by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) on behalf of Education Committee. Programme-specific regulations are approved as part of the programme approval process for new and amended programmes (Major Amendment). Where these programme regulations are part of a new category of award these will be also approved by ASQC.

VERSIONS OF MARP: NAMING, PUBLICATION AND ARCHIVING

1. MARP is updated and re-published on an annual basis on 1 September. Publication is via the University web site. For the sake of the integrity of the regulations, there is one published version of MARP only (called the “Current Version”). All previous versions (called “Annual Versions”) are unpublished.

2. Each Annual Version is named and archived according to the academic year for which it was published; so that on 31 August each year the Current Version reverts to its annual publication reference (e.g. “MARP 2018-19”). The Annual Versions are archived as .pdf files and kept by Academic Standards and Quality for reference purposes only.

APPLICATION OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS: APPLICANTS AND STUDENTS

3. The Current Version of MARP has a contractual status in relation to:
   a) all students currently registered with the University, irrespective of year of course, year of entry and their registration status;
   b) all applicants who have accepted a formal offer by the University (and are therefore potential students).

4. The University formally enters into a contract with an applicant as a potential student as part of the application process from the point at which an offer of a place has been accepted. The University’s academic regulations contained in MARP and published on the web at the time as the Current Version form a part of this contact.

5. The regulations applicable to new and continuing students will be those published at the time of entry to, and continuing registration on, the programme. These regulations are the Current Version.

6. Normally, new or amended academic regulations are applied to the next and subsequent cohorts of students entering the programme, and not to currently registered students.

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1 1 September represents the first date for (online) registration by new entrants to the programme.

2 ‘Cohorts’ here also refers to all postgraduate research students entering in a particular academic year irrespective of the month of entry.
Exceptionally, such changes may be applied to current students (whether to all current students or to a particular cohort of current students) where:

a) they are deemed to be to the advantage of students and where not to apply them would be manifestly unfair;

b) they are required for the purposes of continuing PSRB accreditation for the programme;

c) not making an amendment could be deemed to threaten the standards of the University’s award(s).

Amended regulations, which are applicable to different cohorts of students, will be differentiated within MARP at the appropriate place.3

AMENDMENTS TO THE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS – RELATED PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

7. Amendments to the academic regulations which impact on applicants between the offer and admission stage, and which represent a change to the University’s terms and conditions and therefore the contract with the applicant/potential student, may be made. However, in accordance with the CMA guidance on consumer law in relation to Higher Education,4 the University will inform applicants of any major changes5 to the academic regulations since they first applied.

8. Irrespective of when a new/amended academic regulation is introduced, current students are consulted on these amendments in the same way as they are consulted on amendments to modules and programmes. The University’s procedures for this are set out in the guidance document: Procedures for Revisions to Modules, Programmes and Academic Regulations.

9. The application of new/amended regulations to particular cohorts of students will be agreed as part of the approval for the change, through inclusion in the recommendation from the Standing Committee on Academic Regulations to Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

10. Notwithstanding paragraph 7 above, new/amended academic regulations should, preferably, have been approved by 1 September in the year prior to 1 September the following year (i.e. by 1 September 2018 for October 2019 entry). This is to ensure that, as far as possible, applicants are provided with the version of the academic regulations which will apply when they enter the programme.

REFERENCING PAST VERSIONS OF MARP

11. Whilst the student is a registered student with the University, the Current Version of MARP published on the web will apply as this will always reflect the regulations applicable to them regardless of year of entry, including any regulations which apply only to specific cohorts. For

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3  Separate regulations applying to different cohorts will be removed from MARP as and when the differentiation between cohorts has been worked through in terms of students’ progression through the programme.


5  Major changes are defined in the guidance document: Procedures for Revisions to Modules, Programmes and the Academic Regulations.
students who have graduated, and where reference to the version of MARP which applied to them whilst on course is required, the Annual Version of MARP applicable at the point of graduation should be referenced. This will reflect the regulations applicable to them over the course of their registration with the University. Annual Versions are available from Academic Standards and Quality on request.

ANNEX – SUMMARY OF TIMINGS AND REQUIREMENTS

The attached Annex provides a summary of this protocol in a table for ease of reference.
# ACADEMIC REGULATIONS MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

## ANNEX: SUMMARY OF TIMINGS AND REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant/Student stage</th>
<th>Version of MARP which applies</th>
<th>Relevant period</th>
<th>Amendments to the regulations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicants – pre-offer stage</td>
<td>Current Version as published on the University’s web site. MARP is available for information.</td>
<td>Any time prior to the formal offer being made.</td>
<td>The University may change the regulations without any impact on its relationship with the applicant and without informing applicants at the pre-offer stage. However, the University may wish to inform these applicants of any substantive changes which may influence their choice of programme/institution.</td>
<td>There is no formal contract with the applicant at this stage. MARP is part of a set of ‘pre-contract information’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants – at and following the offer stage</td>
<td>Current Version as published on the University’s web site. MARP has a contractual status for these applicants.</td>
<td>1 September onwards prior to the next academic year of entry, e.g. September 2018 for 2019-20 entry.</td>
<td>Applicants who have been made an offer must be informed of any substantive amendments made to the academic regulations since they first applied.</td>
<td>1 September is the earliest potential point at which offers may be made for entry in the following academic year. Once an applicant has accepted an offer, the University has entered into a contractual relationship with the applicant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant/Student stage</td>
<td>Version of MARP which applies</td>
<td>Relevant period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration stage</td>
<td>Current Version as published on the University’s web site. <strong>MARP has a contractual status for these new students.</strong></td>
<td>At the point of entry to the University when the student registers on the programme of study and explicitly signs to confirm that they accept the rules and regulations of the University</td>
<td>Amendments may not be made to the version of MARP published on 1 September except in exceptional circumstances.</td>
<td>Exceptionally, amendments may be made where: a) they are deemed to be to the advantage of students and where not to apply them would be manifestly unfair; b) they are required for the purposes of continuing PSRB accreditation for the programme; c) not making an amendment would be deemed to threaten the standards of the University’s award(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study stage</td>
<td>Current Version as published on the university’s web site. <strong>MARP has a contractual status for these students.</strong></td>
<td>Maximum period of study permitted for the programme</td>
<td>Amendments may not be made except in exceptional circumstances.</td>
<td>Ditto as above for Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-study</td>
<td>The Annual Version of MARP published for the academic year of study in which the student graduated</td>
<td>Following completion of study</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Annual Version at the point of graduation would reflect the regulations as they were applied to the student throughout their period of study. Any changes made over this period which are applicable to different cohorts are differentiated within the Annual Version.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>