# Writing amendments to *Examination Regulations*

# for publication in the *University Gazette* and online

All changes to the text of the *Examination Regulations* require a notice to be published in the *Gazette*. All changes must be approved by the appropriate divisional board and in some cases (e.g. new courses, course name changes, discontinuation of courses, changes that affect on course students, other major changes to courses) by Education Committee. For further information on the approval process and on change types, please read Annex H and Annex I of the *Policy and guidance on new courses and major changes to courses* ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/)).

All notices of changes should include the information given below. Notices should be prepared in MS Word in plain text. Please do not use automatic numbering, track changes, and excessive formatting as these make the updating of the *Examination Regulations* more difficult and can cause difficulties when converting the notice to a PDF. Notices should not include any comments or drafting queries but only information that is suitable for distribution to the general public. The *Gazette* team will convert all documents to a PDF and will not proofread or check the document for additional or superfluous information.

Any changes notified to the *Gazette* for publication should have been approved by **all** necessary authorising bodies, and are considered to be valid providing that no objection has been received from Congregation during the 14 days following the appearance of the notice in the *Gazette*. The use of the terms ‘proposal’ or ‘’subject to approval by X’ are not appropriate at the stage of publication and should not appear on notices.

Each regulation has its own ‘version log’ which is used to provide information on changes as published in the Gazette and any changes made during the annual update and publication of the new edition of the *Examination Regulations*. It is available on the right-hand side of all regulation pages in all views.

A template is available to help in the preparation of notices for the *Gazette* ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/information/publishingchangestoregulations/)). Alternatively an untabulated MS Word document may be used provided it includes all of the information given below. If using the template please remove guidance material in square brackets.

**Information to be included in notices to the Gazette**

[**NB** Joint schools/programmes will be listed under **each** appropriate divisional/OUDCE heading in the *Gazette* listings.]

***General information***

* **Name of approving Board/body(ies)** e.g. Medical Sciences Divisional Board
* **Date of approval by Board/body(ies)**
* **Reference number of approving Board/body(ies)** (optional, for divisional use)
* **Title of Programme or the name of the regulation** (e.g. Master of Philosophy in Management Studies, Regulations for the First and Second Public Examinations)
* **Brief note about nature of change** (e.g. ‘change to submission date’, ‘clarification of thesis requirements’ or similar). Do not use ‘revision to text’ as this does not provide any useful information about the change. The phrase will appear alongside the programme title in the main *Gazette* entry.
* **Location of the change:** Give the URL of the regulation. Use the citation numbering function to reference clauses within the regulation. This numbering is visible on the regulation page when you select ‘Show Citation Numbering’
* **Effective date** The template requires *two* dates for forthcoming changes:

(1) the term and year that the first cohort of students, to whom the regulation change will apply, will start on course e.g. ‘**For students starting from MT 2017’**. In the case of undergraduate programmes, ‘Course’ means the degree overall e.g. if a change to an FHS is being described the effective date should be given as the first term of the **FPE** for the first cohort of students to whom the regulation change will apply. In the case of Second Public Examinations that are taken in parts, please give the effective date as described above, and additionally state the term in which they will start the relevant part (if applicable) e.g. **For students starting course from MT 2016 (Part B of FHS MT 2018)**]. The formulation of ‘students starting from…’ will not work in cases where the course is modular and all students on course during a particular academic year will be subject to the new regulations. In these cases use ‘**For all students on course from MT 2017**’.

(2) The academic year in which the first examination to which the change will apply, will take place e.g. **For first examination from** **2017-18.**

These dates will make it clear to the copy editor what formulation is required to ensure the correct regulations are retrieved by the correct cohort and by the correct examiners.

Changes should not be labelled as being ‘with immediate effect’. Where approval has been exceptionally granted for a change that affects on-course students, the date of effect should be expressed as above and the explanatory notes should include confirmation that the relevant consultation has taken place.

Changes should be made well in advance of the cohort’s starting date. Some category of changes are permissible after the start of a course, and Education Committee’s policy on vested interests should be read. See *Policy and Guidance on new courses and major changes to courses* Section 6 and Annex I ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgnewcourses)). For further guidance on changes that were previously made ‘with immediate effect’, please contact examregs@admin.ox.ac.uk.

* **Explanatory note**: This should be brief and give the rationale for the change. Where permission has been granted for a change affecting students already on course, this should include confirmation of the required consultation. This information will be used for the version log of the regulation.

***Content of change***

* **Number of changes**: If more than one change in a programme or section is being notified, these should be separately numbered. Changes to different programmes or with different dates of effect should appear on separate sheets and will be published separately, and must have a full set of information as above.
* **Detail of the change**: Give the citation reference of the section to be amended. Citation numbering is visible on the regulation detail page when you select ‘Show citation numbering’. Copy and paste the identified sections for amendment. Additions and replacements should be underlined, and deletions struck-through. Where there are multiple changes to a paragraph, it is best to delete the paragraph and insert the new paragraph in its entirety. It is not necessary to copy the whole of the regulation; copy sufficient of the text so that the regulation change is comprehensible. Use a numbered list if there is more than one change to a programme within the same URL.

For example:

*Example 1:* Amend citation reference. 1.23 as follows (new text underlined, deleted text struck through):

‘~~Candidates will take four core options and submit a 5,000 word essay.~~

Candidates will take three core options and submit a 6,000 word essay on a subject to be determined by the examiners.’

*Example 2:* Amend citation reference 1.23 as follows (new text underlined, deleted text struck through):

‘Candidates will take ~~four~~ three core options and submit a 5,000 word essay.

* **Consequential changes**: Effects on joint schools or linked subjects should be considered, and any necessary changes agreed and also published in the *Gazette*. The form of words for the *Gazette* notice may be truncated to refer to the main entry identifying the change in regulations (e.g. ‘As for the Honour School of xxx’). Amendments to numbered lists should clearly state any adjustments required to numbering order, especially those where a later date of effect is required.

**Corrigenda**

Corrections should normally be treated very similarly to changes, as above, as this helps to provide clarity. Any erroneous change already published in the online version must be treated exactly as an original change, with reference to the URL and citation numbers of the online version in question.

**General notes on drafting regulations:**

Confine the content of regulations to that which cannot more appropriately be published or notified to students elsewhere. Regulations should be the immutable framework of study and assessment to which students must adhere.

Please avoid footnotes and tables wherever possible, as they do not lend themselves to online publication.

Maintain as simple as possible numbering conventions in lists. Avoid use of the Greek alphabet and other unusual characters wherever feasible.

Please feel free to contact **Education Policy Support** (examregs@admin.ox.ac.uk) for advice on preparing notices of amendments, drafting or making changes to regulations.

May 2020