

DETAILED SUMMARY OF CHANGES FOR 2026/27

Area of Focus	Summary of change				
REGULATION CHANGES					
Award Classification Changes (coming into effect for awards issued from October 2028 onwards) *	In response to a report published by The Office for Students (the Regulator for HE in England), and a specific request for action from the Regulator, the University has reviewed its award classification regulations and, from October 2028 onwards, awards will be calculated using the mean of the marks for all contributing modules . There will be no discounting of the weakest 20 credits after this time.				
	Additionally, from October 2028, boundaries for award classifications will change as follows:				
	Percentage	Foundation Degree / Target DipHE / Grad Diploma	Honours Degree	Masters Degree	HND/HNC
	69.50%+ Will change to 70%+	Distinction	First	Distinction	Distinction
	59.50-69.49% Will change to 60 - 69.99%	Merit	Upper Second	Merit	Merit
	49.50-59.49% Will change to 50 - 59.99%	Pass	Lower Second	Pass	Pass
	39.50-49.49% Will change to 40 - 49.99%	Pass	Third	Fail	Pass

Attendance Monitoring *	Section D.5 has been updated to refer to the new Attendance and Academic Engagement Policy. (Separate staff and student communications on the detail of the new Policy have been implemented.)
Registration *	The following new statement has been added to Regulation D1.1 (which sets out the requirement for continuing students to re-register annually): <i>“Failure to complete re-registration within 21 days of commencement of delivery in the academic year may result in the imposition of restricted access to IT and other University systems, and could ultimately result in termination from programme.”</i> The focus in 2026/27 will be on communication and awareness raising. Academic staff will be asked to remind returning students of their obligations to re-register annually, as is set out within existing regulations.
Intercalation	The term ‘intercalation’, which is used to describe an agreed interruption of study, will be replaced with ‘Break in Learning’. This is felt to be clearer language and aligns terminology across apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship programmes. APPROVED CHANGE: This change will see the term ‘intercalation’ replaced with ‘break in learning’ throughout the Regulations and associated Procedures and Processes.
Reassessment Regulations (replacement of a retake module with a 2 nd reassessment opportunity)	At present, when a student fails their first assessment and their reassessment, they are able to re-register to retake the module they have failed the assessment in. This is the only option for continuation of study unless extenuating circumstances have been approved. From 2026/27 this is to be replaced by a 2nd reassessment opportunity. This change is considered to be in students’ best interests as: ➤ There is no charge for the 2nd reassessment opportunity (retake modules incur a fee where the student has to step off programme to retake) ➤ It provides an opportunity for students to retrieve their assessment failure more quickly, increasing students’ likelihood of progression with their cohort.

- Linked to the above, it means that students are more likely to complete in the planned period of study, with financial advantages (not having to step off the substantive programme to retake a module and rejoin a year later, and graduating and securing graduate employment sooner).

A failure in the 2nd reassessment will result in a Confirmed Failure and any student in this position would be withdrawn from the programme for academic failure.

(The provision of a retake module will be preserved for occasional use in when approved by the assessment board.)

Whilst regulation changes normally come into effect for the next academic year, this change will come into effect for assessment boards operating in June-September 2026 (the University's main assessment boards period). This means that any student whose academic results are presented to a University Progression and Award Board in this period will have the new regulations applied i.e. if a student has failed their reassessment, they will be offered a 2nd reassessment opportunity and not a retake module. However, students in this position will be advised in their formal board outcomes that if they would rather have a module retake in place of the 2nd reassessment, this may do so. This optionality will only be offered to students whose profiles are going to board June-September 2026, recognising that this is an in-year change which we feel to be in students' best interests.

The new regulation will apply to all students from 2026/27 i.e. all assessment submitted (or taking place) on or after 1 August 2026 will be under the new regulations.

Note: A number of programmes are, by virtue of operating under the regulatory requirements of their professional body, already operate the 2nd reassessment (where the retake module option is not permitted by the PSRB). So not every student will feel affected by this change. Academic teams operating in this context should ensure that their students understand that they are not affected by this change.

APPROVED CHANGES:

F8.1 Unless prohibited by professional statutory and regulatory body regulations, undergraduate and postgraduate students have a right to one reassessment opportunity for any failed component of assessment in each module. [A further reassessment opportunity may be granted by the assessment board subject to the conditions at F8.6 below.](#)

F8.2 General

Reassessment is required in the *component element* of failure only *only (that is, a student will be reassessed on a failed assignment, practical exercise or examination and not on any other components of the module that they have passed)* and will be by **the same method of assessment as the first attempt**. Where it is not practicable for a student to be reassessed using the original method or mode of assessment, the Module Confirmation Board may approve an alternative **method of assessment** ~~or timescale~~.

An assessment contract should be drawn up in the following cases

- Students with more than 40 credits of assessed work to be recouped (first reassessment and deferred assessment);
- Students who have had a confirmed case of malpractice that has resulted in reassessment.

F8.3 Where the student passes all reassessment elements, credit for the module(s) is awarded. The pass mark is recorded for any module in which reassessment has been successful (a maximum of 40% for undergraduate and a maximum of 50% for postgraduate). For programmes which involve PSRB accreditation, the pass mark will be 'capped' at the PSRB pass mark.

F8.4 Where the student fails to improve on the original assessment performance via reassessment the final mark for the module will be the highest mark obtained.

F8.5 A student who fails their reassessment may be considered for compensation in that module within the limits outlined in F14.1.

F8.6 Where a student has attempted a reassessment and has not passed, a further and final reassessment opportunity will be offered subject to the following conditions:

1. Any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) associated with the programme permits this
2. The student engaged with all previous opportunities for assessment and reassessment.

Module Re-registration

F8.7 Re-registration for a module is highly exceptional and will only be offered as an alternative to a further and final reassessment (F8.6).

F8.7 Permission to retake a module will only be granted in cases where all the following criteria are met:

- 1) Any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) associated with the programme permits this
- 2) The student engaged with all previous opportunities for assessment and reassessment

	3) <i>The student will not be permitted to progress to the next stage of study until the retaken credit is passed – meaning that the student will be a part-time student for the academic year of retakes</i> 4) <i>A student who retakes a module is required to re-enrol for the module, where appropriate pay any tuition fee required for such enrolment, follow the course of tuition offered and attempt all the items of assessed work, including any which he or she may previously have passed.</i> 5) <i>A student whose enrolment is subject to the provisions of a Student Visa and who is required to undertake reassessment in a second registration of a module, may be required to take that final reassessment opportunity outside the UK.</i> F8.8 <i>The first attempt in the retaken module will be uncapped, the reassessment will be capped at the pass mark.</i>
Exam arrangements (F7)	This section of the regulations refers to unseen examinations (of which there are very few within the university). The following change will clarify that these requirements do not apply to ‘seen’ / open book examinations. APPROVED CHANGE: F7.1 <i>An unseen examination is defined as a formal, timed assessment of any duration that is subject to continuous invigilation and has been identified as such through the validation process.</i>
Collaborative Provision B6	Changes to the Collaborative Provision section of the Academic Regulations have been approved to align to the University’s approach to the management of Collaborative Provision arrangements, including a new internal Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedures. The changes reinforce the need for compliance with agreed University quality assurance arrangements, recognising the need for the University to increase its level of oversight of collaborative provision, given its responsibilities as the awarding body. Other changes include removal of the ‘Accredited Institution’ category of Collaborative Provision (not used) and ‘Progression Agreements’ being removed as these are not consider Collaborative Provision but are managed via admissions policy and procedures. ‘Credit Recognition’ has been removed as this covered through the University’s credit recognition and the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) regulations and procedures. APPROVED CHANGES: B6 <i>Academic Collaborative Provision</i>

B6.1 The University may form a variety of academic collaborative relationships with other bodies in the UK or overseas to offer or deliver/taught programmes of study which may lead to the awards of the University. The forms of academic collaboration provision the University may engage in are listed in the Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedures.

B6.2 The University retains overall responsibility for the academic standards and quality of such programmes and awards which are subject to the University Academic Regulations. The delivery of programmes of study must meet the required academic standards, and **comply with** the quality assurance arrangements specified in the Quality Handbook and the **University's Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedures** ~~Procedures and Processes for Approval and Management of Academic Collaborative Provision~~.

B6.3 Each academic collaborative arrangement is underpinned by a formal signed **contractual** agreement specifying the nature of the collaboration and each party's respective rights, **roles** and responsibilities. This ~~In addition~~, a formal legal contract, signed by all parties involved and setting out how the programme will be delivered and how academic standards will be maintained, will be executed for each programme or part of a programme offered by partner under a collaborative arrangement.

B6.4 Institutional Partnerships

Links with other bodies can include:

~~(i) — **Accredited Institution:** In this case, the partner institution is given delegated authority by the University for the design, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of programmes leading to the University's awards. The partner's own systems for assuring academic standards and quality are accredited as equivalent to the University's but the University retains ultimate responsibility for the standards and quality of its awards. The relationship is underpinned by an Accreditation Agreement which sets out the respective rights and responsibilities of the partners.~~

~~(ii) **Associate Institutions:** In this case, a~~Another body may be permitted to operate either validated, or franchised, **joint or dual/double award** programmes (see B6.5 below). ~~The relationship is underpinned by an Institutional Agreement which sets out the respective rights and responsibilities of the partners.~~

~~(iii) **Articulation Agreements:** These arrangements are where~~ The University agrees to recognise specific qualifications offered by students of a partner institution for **advanced entry** to specific University programmes. The relationship is underpinned by an Articulation Agreement which sets out the respective rights, **roles** and responsibilities of the partners.

(iv) — **Progression Agreements:** ~~These arrangements are where the University agrees to recognise specific qualifications offered by students of a partner institution for entry to specific University programmes. The relationship is underpinned by a Progression Agreement which sets out the respective rights and responsibilities of the partners.~~

(v) **Credit recognition:** ~~Credit recognition recognises prior learning and experience (specific qualifications and/or work-based learning or training) as having academic value. The activity can qualify for certificates of credit or credit equivalence which can count towards an appropriate University award. (Note that credit recognition can be given in cases where there is no formal link between the University and other bodies.) (See G6).~~

B6.5 Collaborative Programme arrangements

Programmes may be:

(i) **Validated Programmes:** These are designed, delivered and assessed by the partner and validated by the University as leading to one of its awards.

(ii) **Franchised Programmes:** These are validated University programmes (or part of a programme) designed, delivered and assessed by the University that are also delivered and assessed in the partner institution, and by the staff of the partner.

(iii) **Joint Programmes:** These are programmes in which the University collaborates with other HE partners to design and deliver a common programme which is validated by all partner institutions and which leads to a recognised award of the collaborating institutions. Special regulations, which stand outside the University's Regulations, may be required and would need to be approved by Academic Board in advance of programme validation.

(iv) **Dual/Double Awards:** An arrangement where the University collaborates with one or more other awarding bodies to provide a single jointly delivered programme that leads to separate awards (and separate certification) being granted by each institution.

B6.6 Where a programme is offered overseas the following additional requirements apply:

(i) the University will, [through its formal approval processes](#), secure written confirmation [from the relevant authority](#) that delivery of the programme has the approval of the government or other relevant authority of the country concerned before delivery of the programme starts;

(ii) all programmes, wherever delivered, are taught and assessed in English. If however the learning outcomes specifically relate to competence in a language other than English or if the acquisition of competence in English is a declared outcome, teaching and support work may be in the specified [local](#) ~~native~~ language.

Readmittance following confirmed failure (G4)	Whilst it is implicit within existing regulations that students whose registration has been terminated due to academic failure should not be readmitted to the programme, this has been made clearer. APPROVED CHANGES: <i>E The Admission of Students</i> <i>E2.5 (new) A student whose registration on a University of Cumbria award has previously been terminated due to academic failure may not be permitted to re-register for the same award unless specific professional body requirements necessitate this and this has been approved through validation. They may may be permitted to re-register for an alternative award subject to the admission requirements for that award.</i> <i>G4 Failure to Progress</i> <i>G4.3 A student whose registration has been terminated due to academic failure who has failed may be permitted to re-register for an alternative award subject to the admission requirements for that award. Students may only be re-registered to an alternative award with the agreement of the ‘exiting’ and ‘admitting’ Programme Leader.</i> <i>G4.4 (new) A student whose registration has been terminated due to academic failure may not be permitted to re-register for the same award unless specific professional body requirements necessitate this and this has been approved through validation.</i>
Housekeeping changes	Housekeeping changes (no changes of principle) have been made, including changes Institutes to Faculties from 2026/27.
PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES	
Appendix 3b Marking and Moderation	APPROVED CHANGES: Formal Module Mark Confirmation [To add to flowchart in 3b (final box)] <i>Mark Confirmation Process confirms that internal and external moderation (by EEs) has been carried out in line with the academic regulations and assessment procedures, and confirms that no standards issues have been identified before confirming marks and determines what high failure reports (and any other reports deemed necessary) are required to be provided.</i>

Appendix 3f Conduct and Operation of Assessment Boards	3f Conduct and Operation of Assessment Boards <i>1.7 Module marks are confirmed through the University’s formal mark confirmation processes, which require confirmation of a) internal and external moderation in line with University regulations and b) satisfaction with marking standards (including the provision of high failure rate reports within defined criteria).</i> It is also proposed to change the title of 3f to Conduct and Operation of Mark Confirmation and Assessment Boards.
Appendix 3d Malpractice Procedures	Malpractice outcomes should only be referred into Fitness to Practice processes (where there are PSRB implications), they should not be then referred to Disciplinary Procedures as this would represent double jeopardy. Additionally a statement that Malpractice Panels are not working to legal basis of proof but work on the premise that decisions are made on the balance of probability has been added, in line with sector practise. APPROVED CHANGES: 1.2 Cheating is considered to be a deceitful attempt to convey the impression of acquired knowledge, skills, understanding, or credentials. Such behaviour represents a contravention of the award regulations, which also undermines the academic standards of the University. The University regards any form of academic malpractice as a serious matter. Where the incident has implications for fitness to practise or study, an academic malpractice incident may lead to the adjudication or progress review procedure being initiated (or Fitness to Practise, Fitness to Study or Student Disciplinary meeting as appropriate). Where the incident has implications for fitness to practise or fitness to study, an academic malpractice incident may lead to one of these procedures being initiated. 7.1.7 (New) The Malpractice Panel will work on the premise that decisions are made on the balance of probability, i.e. based on all the evidence presented to the Panel, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The Panel will not work to a legal basis of proof.
Appendix 4 External Examiner Procedures and Processes	Chief External Examiners attend University Progression and Award Boards and at present these are drawn solely from the University’s appointed the pool of Subject EEs. The scope has been broadened to enable Chief EEs to be appointed externally, as well as from from the pool of Subject EEs (continuing to meet existing criteria. This enables a wider pool of Chief EEs to be appointed, including appointments from experienced senior academic and registrar equivalent roles. APPROVED CHANGES:

	1.4.2 The Chief External Examiner is selected from the pool of Subject Examiners and is expected to: i. attend the University Progression and Awards Board. ii. ensure there is an experienced and objective input into the exercise of discretion by the UPAB through their understanding and knowledge of applying Regulations and experience of managing comparable situations elsewhere (including PSRB requirements). Additionally, responsibility for the following activities will move from the academic team to the Quality and Standards Team, with this information to be sent out with the appointment letter. As such iii and iv below will move to the Q&S responsibilities section: 1.5.3 The Dean of Institute (through appropriate delegation to Programme and Module Leaders), is responsible for ensuring: iii. that the Subject External Examiner is provided with relevant definitive documents for the programme(s). iv. that the incoming External Examiner is provided with the last External Examiner's report.
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April 2026