



PUBLISHED INFORMATION POLICY

These guidance notes and procedures have been prepared to ensure consistency with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, and guidance for higher education institutions about consumer protection legislation (the CMA: Competition and Markets Authority). Their aim is to ensure that the University of Buckingham publishes accurate, trustworthy and fit for purpose information about itself to staff, prospective and current students, external regulatory bodies and other parties.

Principle and Scope

The University recognises the importance of publishing accurate, trustworthy and fit for purpose information about the learning opportunities available for a number of different audiences. This policy covers published information for prospective and current students about the learning opportunities and curriculum available, including curriculum information, marketing information and public data returns; and arrangements for the review and publication of academic and non-academic University policies, procedures and regulations, including the publication of University Handbooks.

DEFINITIONS:

The University Policy Matrix: The University Policy Matrix lists all regulations, policies, procedures, codes of practice and strategies in place, with information on the definitive version publication point (for example, the relevant Handbook or Intranet page), the responsible manager, the committee approval route, the review cycle and the date for next review.

University Handbooks: The definitive reference point for the majority of University level policies, procedures and regulations. The University Handbooks are currently structured into core Handbooks: The Governance Handbook, the Regulations Handbook, the Quality Handbook, the Research Degrees Handbook, the Collaborations Handbook and seven Curriculum Handbooks which are organised by School. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the content that can be expected in each Handbook.

Departmental/Programme Handbooks: These contain an introduction to programme level information for students about their School of Study, including key people, School level policies, assessment guidance, signposting to support services such as Academic Skills, language support and the personal tutor system, networking events and information about student representatives.

PART A - PUBLIC DATA RETURNS

1. The University makes a number of public data returns each year, as part of its obligations to statutory and regulatory bodies. These include:
 - Statistical Data Returns: HESA Returns – staff, student, and financial returns; Key Information Sets (Unistats), Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE), Higher Education Alternative Providers Early Statistics Return (HEAPES)
 - Written Returns – for the Teaching Excellence Framework, Prevent duty, the Office for Students and the Quality Assurance Agency
2. Members of staff responsible for the collation of data submitted as part of public data returns are all provided with the necessary training to ensure information is accurate and submitted correctly. Arrangements for the collation and formal sign off for the data returns is as follows:

Return	Accountable Officer/Committee	Responsible Person
HESA Staff return	Vice-Chancellor	Human Resources Manager
HESA Student return	Vice-Chancellor	Registry Manager
HESA Finance return	Vice-Chancellor	Director of Finance
HESA Key Information Sets return	Vice-Chancellor	Quality Assurance Manager
Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey	Executive Committee	Head of Alumni and Graduation
Higher Education Alternative Providers Early Statistics Return (HEAPES)	Vice-Chancellor	Registry Manager
Teaching Excellence Framework return	Executive Committee	Quality Assurance Manager
QAA Review returns	Executive Committee	Quality Assurance Manager
Office for Students return	Executive Committee	Quality Assurance Manager
Prevent Duty return	Council	Registry Manager

PART B - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT – THE WEBSITE, PROSPECTUS AND MARKETING LITERATURE

- i. No content is published on the University website without the approval of the Web Content Manager, who should be satisfied that the content has been properly approved before publication by the relevant committees or senior managers.
- ii. Printed materials for prospective students including the prospectus require the approval of the Director of Admissions and Recruitment, who should be satisfied that the content has been properly approved before publication by the relevant committees or senior managers.
- iii. The wording for taglines, mottos and slogans relating to league table performance, rankings and awards requires the approval of the Director of Admissions and Recruitment, in consultation with the Quality Assurance Office.

Content	Accountable Officer/Committee	Responsible Person
Website	Executive Committee	Webcontent Manager
Prospectus	Executive Committee	Director of Marketing
Printed Marketing Literature	Executive Committee	Director of Marketing
Taglines and Slogans	Executive Committee	Director of Marketing

PART C – POLICIES, PROCEDURES, REGULATIONS AND CURRICULUM INFORMATION

1. APPROVAL

- i. Proposers for new University policies, procedures and regulations should seek the advice of the Quality Assurance Office as to the appropriate committee route for approval. Once the new policy is approved it will be added to the University Policy Matrix.
- ii. Proposers for new School level policies, procedures and regulations should consult the Quality Assurance Office who will advise about consistency with University policy, appropriate consultees across the University, and the correct committee route for approval. Once new School level policies are approved they should appear clearly in Departmental/Programme Handbooks. The definitive version of Departmental/Programme Handbooks should appear on N/Quality Assurance/Programme Handbooks. Reviews of Departmental Handbooks should occur annually and be conducted by the School Learning and Teaching Committees.

2. REVIEW

- i. Changes to University policies, procedures and regulations are all approved in accordance with the review cycle and approval lines stipulated in the University Policy Matrix.
- ii. All policies and procedures are on a minimum two yearly cycle of review. Where the review point arrives and no change is required, senior managers are permitted to provide a sign off confirmation of 'No Change'. Where the review point arrives and change is required (for example, in response to internal or external demands or requirements), these changes must be submitted (in tracked form where appropriate) to the relevant committees; or seek Chairs Action for urgent changes.
- iii. All changes or amendments made must follow the agreed reporting lines shown in the Matrix to ensure that proper communication channels, approval record keeping, version control and publication points are maintained.
- iv. Curriculum matters (i.e new, changed and closed programmes and modules) are all approved following the procedure and policy outlined in the New Programmes and Modules Procedure, Changes to Programmes and Modules Procedure, and Closure of Programmes Procedure.

2. COMMUNICATION AND RECORD KEEPING

- i. The termly Handbooks Bulletin (circulated during the vacation period) records which regulations, policies and procedures have been updated, and what curricula has been introduced or changed across all the Handbooks.
- ii. The Curriculum Summary Reports to ULTC records changes, additions and removals to the Curriculum Handbooks. These Curriculum Summary Reports are used to form the mid term Curriculum Bulletin (circulated by the QA Office in Week 5 of term).

3. IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

- i. Changes to policies and procedures are only to be implemented following agreement by the relevant committees in accordance with the approval lines shown in the University Policy Matrix.
- ii. Following the completion of termly committees, the Quality Assurance Office is responsible for updating the definitive versions of policies and procedures on the N Drive, ensuring publication on the University website and circulating the Handbooks Bulletin.

- iii. Changes to the Curriculum Handbooks are made following agreement of the relevant SLTC/Board/ULTC. School Quality Administrators are responsible for updating the definitive version of the Curriculum Handbooks on the N drive, and the Quality Assurance Office is responsible for ensuring publication on the University website and circulating the Curriculum Bulletin in Week 5 of term.

3. STORAGE AND VERSION CONTROL

- i. Most policies and procedures are organised into 'Handbooks' for ease of use; and all Handbooks appear externally on the University website. The N drive/Quality Assurance is the place for definitive versions of all policies and procedures to be stored, from which the upload to the website is made. The definitive version of some policies and procedures only appear internally on the University's Intranet - as outlined in the University Policy Matrix.
- ii. Departmental drives in the QA Office/Secretariat/Registry are used only for development work/drafting of policies and procedures to avoid version control issues.
- iii. Schools of Study and other departments should not copy and paste regulations into Departmental Handbooks, the VLE (Moodle), the Intranet or printed documentation. They should instead provide weblinks to the relevant Handbook as appropriate to ensure version control.
- iv. Back copies of all policies and procedures are stored termly by Handbook on the U(Secretariat) drive under Archive folders, named clearly with the term and date.

4. HANDBOOK FILE STRUCTURES AND FORMATS

- i. Handbooks should be arranged in one folder for each Handbook, and with individual files for policies, procedures and regulations.
- ii. Electronic files names should be begin with a number in such a way that files are then are shown in the appropriate order as appears in the contents, named clearly with the title of the document, with version numbers. This ensures that policies are easily accessible and updated within each of the Handbooks.
- iii. Where appendices and forms are included, these should remain in Word/Excel format for staff and students to use.
- iv. Full PDF merges should also be provided at the termly publication for staff who wish to print whole copies of the Handbook easily. These PDF merges should include a disclaimer on the cover that the website version provides the most up to date version of procedures and regulations.

Regulations Handbook

The Regulations Handbook is the University's definitive reference point for all academic and non-academic regulations and policies. It includes the University's assessment framework, including regulations for taught first and higher degrees, academic misconduct, mitigating circumstances, complaints and appeals, and examinations. It also includes general regulations relating to students of the University including admission and registration, the library and IT resources, student welfare, equality and diversity, data protection, and the environment.

Governance Handbook

This includes the University's Royal Charter and Statutes, upon which our governance structures are based; our academic, management and committee structures; the Standing Orders of the two statutory bodies (Council, Senate), and the terms of reference and membership of all committees.

Research Degrees Handbook

This handbook is for use by postgraduate research students and staff involved in delivery research provision. It covers regulations for the award of research degrees, and arrangements for postgraduate research students and their supervisors relating to admissions, supervision, progress monitoring, annual review, student feedback, external examining, vivas, and appeals.

Quality Handbook

The Quality Handbook provides academic and administrative staff with an essential summary of the main quality assurance procedures in place at the University of Buckingham. It includes the key procedures and guidance for the approval of new and revised taught academic provision, the annual and periodic review of programmes, the external examining procedures and Code of Practice, information on collecting student feedback and good practice and enhancement.

Curriculum Handbooks

These Handbooks are arranged by School and are the University's definitive record of its curriculum portfolio. They include the calendar entries and programme specifications for all taught programmes of study.

Collaborations Handbook

This outlines the key procedures and guidance for the management of the University's collaborative provision arrangements, including partner approval and due diligence, validation, monitoring and review of provision.