

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the **circumstances** in which the College may make changes to its published module/programme information and regulations, and its **processes** for doing so.

The aim is to maintain an appropriate balance between the College's commitment to the continual enhancement of its provision and the reasonable expectations of:

- **Applicants who have been offered a place** on a College programme on the basis of its published information; and
- **Registered students** who are already enrolled at the College and are progressing through one of its programmes.

All of the College's programmes are reviewed with Middlesex University (hereafter 'the University') every six years as part of the normal programme (re-)validation cycle. Outside of that normal pattern, changes will occasionally be made to modules and programmes in order to:

- Keep the curriculum **current** (e.g. content, resources, relevance for ministry)
- Respond to student **feedback** on the quality of their learning experience
- **Enhance** learning, teaching and assessment in accordance with sector best practice
- Respond to changes **required** by the QAA, the University, the Church of England etc.

In addition changes may occasionally be made to College regulations - normally in response to wider changes in the higher education sector or with a view to ensuring that our regulations remain aligned with those of the University.

All changes to modules and programmes which are approved by the College's own Academic Board will subsequently be referred to the Quality & Curriculum Committee of the University Law School for review and final ratification and will **not** come into effect until the approval of the Quality & Curriculum Committee has been received.

Similarly, all changes to regulations which are approved by the Academic Board will be referred to the University Academic Registry and will **not** come into effect until Registry approval has been received.

This policy applies to **all registered students** (whether full-time, part-time, crediting or auditing) on any of the College's validated provision. It also applies to **applicants who have been offered a place** at the College based on its published programme information.

2. Changes at Programme Level

The following should normally be guaranteed throughout a student's normal period of enrolment on a College programme:

- The **title** of the programme and the **qualification** to which it leads;
- The programme **aims** and **learning outcomes**;
- The **structure** in terms of years of study, exit qualifications, overall credit structure;
- **Fees** and **additional costs** (including planned increases, announced ahead of time).

There are three possible exceptions to this:

- a) Where changes are **required** to meet **external obligations** placed on the College by the QAA, University, Church of England or UK Government (for example the Office for Students);
- b) Where a programme is currently undergoing regular **programme (re-)validation**;
- c) Where a student **withdraws temporarily** from a programme: depending on the length of the withdrawal, the College cannot guarantee that the programme will be exactly the same when the student chooses to recommence their studies.

2a: Changes Required to Meet External Obligations

In situations where change(s) to provision are required in order to meet obligations placed upon the College by **external bodies** (such as the QAA), in particular changes to any of the items listed above, **registered students** and **applicants who have been offered a place** will be given as much notice as possible of the required changes and all reasonable steps will be taken to minimise disruption.

2b: Changes Made as Part of Programme (Re-)validation

In situations where the **College itself** is considering changes to its provision as part of the process of programme (re-)validation, in particular changes to any of the items listed above, a period of formal consultation will normally be arranged. At a minimum, consultation will take place by email; ideally, face to face meetings will be arranged as well. Progression and completion routes for existing students will be carefully considered as part of this process.

If more than 25% of **registered students** object to the changes proposed, the College will undertake to review its proposals in the light of the feedback received; however, the College reserves the right to proceed with the changes if it genuinely believes that these are in the best interests of students present and future and are appropriately aligned with the training needs of the denominations that the College serves. Wherever possible, the College will offer existing students the opportunity to remain on their current programmes rather than transferring to the new provision; if this proves impossible for any reason, then the College will support students who wish to transfer to a similar programme offered by another institution (such as another theological college).

During periods of programme review, **applicants who have been offered a place** will be kept informed of any changes made. **Applicants who have already accepted a place** at the College (for example, through deferred entry from a previous year) will be released from their obligation if they conclude that the amended programmes will no longer fulfil their training requirements.

2c: Programme Closure/Withdrawal

The College is committed to delivering all of the provision it has offered and publicised. However if, due to **extreme and unforeseen circumstances**, College and University agree that a programme needs to be cancelled or withdrawn, the College will give as much notice as possible to **applicants who have been offered a place** and will provide support as they seek alternative provision elsewhere. All **registered students** will be offered the opportunity to complete their programme (or at least achieve a recognised exit qualification) as part of the College's Contingency Planning arrangements with the University and under the terms of the College's Student Protection Plan.

3. Changes at Module Level: Compulsory Modules

The **compulsory** modules offered for students at each level of study will normally be those listed in the relevant Programme Specification, as approved by the University at programme validation. The following elements of compulsory modules **may** be subject to change as part of the College's commitment to the continuing enhancement of its provision:

- Module Tutor(s)/Coordinator(s)
- Brief Module Content/Learning Teaching & Assessment Strategy
- Assessment Tasks and Weighting
- Learning Materials

Changes which go **beyond** these limits (for example changes to the Threshold Learning Outcomes for a compulsory module) will be subject to consultation: students who will be affected by the change will be invited to share their views by email and will be given at least one week to respond (not including holiday periods): in such cases, the nature of the proposed changes will be explained in full, along with the rationale behind them. If **more than 25%** of affected students **object** to the proposed changes, the College will undertake to review the proposals in the light of the feedback received and may re-submit them for further consultation at a later date.

4. Changes at Module Level: Optional Modules

The **optional** modules offered for students at each level of study will be drawn from those listed in the relevant Programme Specification, as approved by the University. It may not always be possible to deliver optional modules during every academic year for a variety of reasons (for example, viability due to (lack of) demand, teaching staff availability and so on). As such, Programme Specifications and other published information will always make it clear that the optional modules offered during any given year may be subject to change.

The following elements of optional modules **may** be amended as part of the College's commitment to the continuing enhancement of its provision:

- Module Tutor(s)/Coordinator(s)
- Brief Module Content/Learning Teaching & Assessment Strategy
- Assessment Tasks and Weighting
- Learning Materials

Changes which go **beyond** these limits (for example changes to the Threshold Learning Outcomes for an optional module) will be subject to consultation: the nature of the proposed changes will be explained in full, along with the rationale behind them.

Where it is possible to identify which students will be affected by the change (for example, if students have **already registered** for the next module run), they will be invited to share their views by email and will be given at least one week to respond (not including holiday periods): If **more than 25%** of affected students **object**, the College will undertake to review the proposals in the light of the feedback received and may re-submit them for further consultation at a later date.

In cases where it is **not** possible to identify which students will be affected by the change (for example, if the proposal relates to a module run in a future year, or if the change is being proposed before students have submitted their next round of module choices), the proposals will be discussed with the current team of **student representatives** instead. Again, if **more than 25%** of the team (currently two out of the seven student representatives) object to the change, the College will undertake to review the proposals and may re-submit them at a later date.

5. Changes to College Regulations

Changes to regulations will normally be implemented **in between years of study** rather than during an academic year, and students will be consulted as far as possible (bearing in mind that not all students will be available or contactable during College breaks). Where an **in-year change** is necessary for any

reason, students will be consulted and given an opportunity to feed into the discussion. A new regulation will **not** be imposed on a current student if it places them at a significant disadvantage compared to the terms of the previous set of regulations.

6. Information about Fee Increases

Details about **planned increases in tuition and other fees** (e.g. for rental accommodation) are clearly set out in the annually-published Fees Information document, which is available both to registered students and to applicants who have been offered a place. Once the fee structure and any planned fee increases have been agreed, the College will commit itself to those figures for the period set out in the fee documents. In the event that there is a need to increase fees **over and above** the annual increases already outlined in the Fees Information document, the College will provide clear, specific and timely information about the change to both current registered students and to applicants who have been offered a place.

7. Who to Contact for More Information

Please contact the following individuals at any time for further information:

- **Prospective students and applicants with queries about their intended programme of study** should contact Rosie Cowan (Admissions Officer) who can be reached on (020) 8449 0467 ext. 206 or at admissions@oakhill.ac.uk.
- **Registered students with queries about contingency planning arrangements with the University or about College regulations** should contact Caroline Hinch (Senior Registrar) on (020) 8449 0467 ext. 204 or at carolineh@oakhill.ac.uk.
- **Registered students with queries about proposed changes to modules or programmes** should contact Anne Andrews (Quality Assurance & Enhancement Manager) on (020) 8449 0467 ext. 207 or at annea@oakhill.ac.uk.

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