



# EXTERNAL EXAMINERS OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES – POLICY AND PROCEDURES

<b>Document Title</b>	External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures
<b>Role of Document Author and Department</b> <i>(no name)</i>	Quality Officer ( External Examiners and Information about HE Provision) Academic Quality and Development
<b>Role of Responsible person and Department</b> <i>(no name)</i>	Director of Academic Quality and Development
<b>Approving Body</b>	Senate
<b>Date of Approval</b>	20 June 2018
<b>Date Effective From</b>	1 September 2018
<b>Review Date</b> <i>(normally triennially)</i>	Annually
<b>Indicate whether the document is for public access or internal access only</b> <b>Indicate whether the document applies to collaborative provision?</b> <i>(Strikethrough text, as appropriate)</i>	<b>Public Access</b> <del>Internal Access Only</del> <b>Applies to Collaborative Provision</b>
<b>Description</b>	
This document details the criteria and procedures to be followed for the appointment of External Examiners and their responsibilities and duties.	

## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 1 September 2017. The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

1/09/18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Each External Examiner to receive a personal Canvas account (3.3)</li><li>2. Details of the samples to be reviewed via Canvas or in hard copy must be released to the External Examiner within 10 days of the marks being released to the student. External Examiner would raise any issues within 20 days (4.3)</li></ol>
01/10/2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Following advice given by UKVI to HR, External Examiners must provide eligibility to work in the UK and are ineligible if they have a Tier 2 visa (3.2.1 (e))</li></ol>

## EXTERNAL EXAMINERS OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES - POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Table of Contents

<b>EXTERNAL EXAMINERS OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES - POLICY AND PROCEDURES</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Introduction .....	2
2. Responsibilities and Role of External Examiners .....	2
3. Nomination and Appointment.....	3
3.1 Nomination .....	3
3.2 Appointment Criteria.....	3
3.3 Appointment.....	5
3.4 Change in circumstances of an External Examiner.....	5
3.5 Termination of appointments .....	5
3.6 Institutional Responsibilities in relation to External Examiners.....	5
4. Induction and Support for External Examiners.....	6
4.1 Induction.....	6
4.2 Support .....	6
4.3 Samples of Work.....	7
5. Duties .....	7
6. Exam Board Procedures and the Role of External Examiner.....	8
7. Reporting.....	9
8. Collaborative Provision .....	10
<b>APPENDIX 1: PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>11</b>
1. Introduction .....	11
2. Submission of Reports .....	11
3. Circulation of Reports .....	11
4. Serious Matters of Concern Raised by External Examiners.....	11
5. Consideration of Reports .....	12
<b>APPENDIX 2: GUIDELINES FOR THE MENTORING OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS</b>	<b>13</b>
1. Circumstances in which mentor support may be required .....	13
2. Role of the Mentor.....	13
2.1 Duties may include (the list is not exhaustive):.....	13
2.2 Commitment required.....	13
3. Process of appointing a mentor .....	13
4. Process of Appointment .....	14
5. Remuneration .....	14

## 1. Introduction

The University is responsible for the quality and standards of all academic awards made in its name. The function of External Examiners is to assist the University in discharging its responsibility for the quality and standards of the education it provides and the awards it offers.

The University regards external examining as an integral and essential part of quality assurance by:

- a) requiring External Examiners to provide informed, independent and impartial judgements and advice to the University;
- b) drawing upon their professional advice and expertise and giving serious and active consideration to their reports.

This Policy applies to undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision (including the taught elements of professional doctorates), wherever and however it is delivered.

## 2. Responsibilities and Role of External Examiners

2.1 The principal responsibilities of External Examiners are to ensure that:

- a) threshold standards are being maintained;
- b) assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented and decisions have been made after due deliberation;
- c) standards of awards and student performance are at least comparable with those in equivalent higher education institutions.

The formal responsibility of all External Examiners is to the University's Vice-Chancellor. External Examiners' annual reports are addressed to the Vice-Chancellor (although submitted electronically to the University) and External Examiners have the right to make a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor at any time.

The University requires its External Examiners:

- a) to report to the University on the appropriateness of the standards of its awards, by reference to published national subject benchmarks, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, programme specifications and other relevant information;
- b) to assist the University in the comparison of academic standards across higher education awards and institutions;
- c) to verify that standards are appropriate for the particular award for which the External Examiner takes responsibility;
- d) to ensure that the assessment process, including the conduct of Exam Boards, is fair, equitable, rigorous and fairly operated in the marking, grading and classification of student performance.
- e) to provide externality of opinion and objective advice on the processes involved in teaching and assessment.
- f) to identify good practice worthy of commendation/wider dissemination.

A detailed list of duties is outlined in Section 5.

2.2 External Examiners are not permitted, and shall not be asked, to undertake any of the following:

- a) setting or approving assessment tasks, whether coursework, examination scripts or other (with the exception of external examiners for collaborative provision, for which see Section 8);
- b) first or second marking of student output or adjudicating between markers;
- c) revising the marks awarded for the output of individual students

### **3. Nomination and Appointment**

The appointment of an External Examiner (including extensions to existing appointments) must be approved and confirmed by Senate Academic Development Committee (SADC).

A Programme External Examiner is appointed to each degree programme (or group of cognate programmes) and has specific responsibilities for that programme. Additionally, an External Examiner may be appointed to a subject area within an individual programme which is appropriate to their area of expertise.

A Faculty External Examiner is appointed to each Faculty and has ultimate oversight of awards and progression within a Faculty. Faculty External Examiners will also be programme-level externals and will engage with matters of standards and quality within their individual programme(s).

Faculties may also wish to appoint a Deputy Faculty External Examiner to share the responsibilities of the Faculty External Examiner, especially if the Faculty has a large number of Faculty Exam Boards each year.

#### **3.1 Nomination**

The Dean of Faculty, as Chair of the Exam Board, is responsible for ensuring that all programmes delivered by the Faculty or, in the case of collaborative provision, overseen by the Faculty, are subject to oversight by appropriately qualified External Examiners. It is their responsibility to ensure that a proposed External Examiner meets the criteria for nomination listed below (3.2). Where the criteria are not fully met, a written case for an exception must be submitted with the nomination form.

New and replacement External Examiners should be nominated by the relevant (University) Programme Leader and Head of Academic Department (for collaborative provision, in consultation with the relevant partner institution department) using the External Examiner Nomination Form and be subject to the endorsement of the relevant Dean of Faculty and the Faculty Academic Development Committee (FADC).

In deciding whether to approve the appointment of an External Examiner, SADC must have regard to the criteria stated below. Where an appointment does not adhere to the criteria, SADC must record this fact and the reason for the decision.

External Examiners should be appointed for a period of four years. Externals must not be permitted to serve for more than four years other than where the provision in question is running out and it would be inappropriate and ineffective to involve a new External Examiner.

#### **3.2 Appointment Criteria**

##### **3.2.1 Personal Specification**

- a) External Examiners are experienced Higher Education teachers, professionally committed to the student experience; conversant with assessment procedures and aware of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula. They will also have experience of assessing at the level they will be external examining.
- b) External Examiners have sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers.
- c) External Examiners have relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate;
- d) External Examiners have knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality. They are normally members of other publicly funded UK higher education institutions. Nominees from private sector providers with UK degree awarding powers or those which voluntarily seek the

Quality Assurance Agency's services and are, therefore, subject to the same review arrangements as publicly-funded higher education institutions, will also be considered. Exceptionally, External Examiners from outside higher education may be appropriate where particular professional expertise is required, however the expectation is that they also have some knowledge of the HE Sector. A rationale must be submitted by the Faculty with the nomination in such cases.

- e) External Examiners should normally reside in the UK, to meet UKVI obligations and will be required to provide eligibility to be employed by the University as an External Examiner without restriction. Academics who are employed by another HEI on a Tier 2 visa will normally be ineligible as the rules under which these are issued usually exclude secondary employment as an External Examiner.<sup>1</sup> Where appropriate, External Examiners must meet the criteria set out by professional and accrediting bodies.
- f) Where programmes adopt electronic marking, External Examiners are content to receive assessed work in an electronic format.

### 3.2.2 Conflicts of Interest

- a) Former students or members of staff of the University must not serve as External Examiners before a lapse of at least five years (or sufficient time for all the students taught by that member of staff to have left the University, whichever is longer). For collaborative provision, this same principle applies to former students and staff of the collaborating partner/s.
- b) The University will not normally appoint a candidate who is a member of staff at one of the institutions against which the University is benchmarking in the year the nomination is presented.
- c) The University will not normally appoint a candidate who has acted in a scrutineer role with regard to the programme's (or linked programme's) validation or revalidation within a period of three years of the proposed date of appointment.
- d) A Faculty (or Partner Institution) may not nominate an External Examiner from an institution where a member of staff of that Faculty (or Partner Institution) is currently serving as an External Examiner within the same subject area.
- e) External Examiners should have no conflict of interest with the University (or Partner Institution), arising from close professional or personal relationships, or from other direct ties to members of staff or students which might compromise their objectivity. For example, being a member of a supervisory team for a PhD student within the department would normally disbar approval.
- f) A team of External Examiners should not normally contain more than one person from any single institution.
- g) An External Examiner should not normally be appointed from the same institution as their predecessor.
- h) External Examiners should not normally hold more than two other substantial external examinerships at first degree level, except where an additional external examinership has an overlapping period of only one academic year. External Examining of individual students for research degrees is not counted for the purposes of this requirement.
- i) A nominee who has previously completed a term of office at the University should not be re-appointed unless a period of five years has elapsed.

Additional criteria is applied to External Examiner nominees for Collaborative programmes, see section 8.

The nomination form is available to download from the Quality Office Intranet pages.

---

<sup>1</sup> This criterion updated October 2017 to reflect advice given by UKVI to HR

### **3.3 Appointment**

Following confirmation of appointment, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will send a letter setting out the terms and conditions of appointment. Each newly appointed External Examiner will receive a Canvas account linked to their own institutional email address. An External Examiners Resources module contains as a minimum:

*External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures*

*Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and/or Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes*

*Assessment Regulations*

*Academic Misconduct Policy*

*Conduct of Exam Boards for Taught Programmes including Collaborative Partners - Guidelines*

All External Examiners will be alerted by email when these regulations, policies and guidelines are updated.

The Programme Leader is responsible for sending the Definitive Documentation for the Programme and other relevant programme specific information, including the Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) which will contain the final report of the previous External Examiner and the Programme's response, if applicable.

### **3.4 Change in circumstances of an External Examiner**

If the circumstances of an External Examiner change after they have been appointed (e.g. a change of job), they should notify the Department of Academic Quality and Development who will inform the Programme Leader. A Change of Circumstances form should then be completed and signed off by the Programme Leader, and forwarded to FADC. If FADC deems that the change of circumstances results in a conflict of interest, the form will be forwarded to SADC, and the decision may be taken to terminate the External Examiner's contract before the end of the term of office.

### **3.5 Termination of appointments**

If, for any reason, the University has cause to terminate an Examiner's contract before the end of the term of appointment, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will write to the External Examiner with an explanation of the reason(s).

Non-submission or continual late submission of reports and/or repeated non-attendance at Exam Boards may give cause for the termination of an External Examiner's appointment. In addition, if a conflict of interest arises midway through the term of office as a result of University of Winchester (or Collaborative Partner) staff taking up a reciprocal appointment, the decision may be taken to terminate the External Examiner's contract before the end of the term of office.

In the event that an External Examiner needs to terminate their contract before the end of the term of appointment, they should write to the Department of Academic Quality and Development.

### **3.6 Institutional Responsibilities in relation to External Examiners**

The Department of Academic Quality and Development maintains a central register of appointment and periods of tenure and is responsible for areas relating to the application of policy and procedures.

Faculties are responsible for the arrangement of the payment of fees which is conditional upon receipt of written annual reports.

Heads of Academic Departments are responsible for obtaining from the staff they line manage details of staff who are currently External Examiners. These details will be forwarded to FADCs who will maintain a log for cross referencing when nominations are first considered, to avoid conflicts of interest.

Programme Leaders are responsible for including the name, position and institution of the External Examiner in the programme details provided to students (for example in Programme Handbooks or on Programme Intranet pages) although they must clearly state that it is inappropriate for students to contact the External Examiner directly. Programme Leaders are also responsible for making the External Examiner's annual report accessible to all students.

## **4. Induction and Support for External Examiners**

### **4.1 Induction**

All newly appointed External Examiners will be offered the opportunity to attend an induction event at the University. For those examiners unable to attend, induction materials will be available electronically. The aims of the event are:

- a) To raise awareness of the University's External Examiner policy and procedures;
- b) To understand the duties of the External Examiner at the University of Winchester;
- c) To provide an opportunity for discussion on aspects of the External's role;
- d) To discuss External Examiner issues at a local programme level.
- e) To introduce External Examiners to the Programme's platform for eSubmission of assessed work, where appropriate.
- f) To introduce External Examiners to the distinctive aspects of the University's Learning and Teaching culture.

### **4.2 Support**

External Examiners can expect to receive annually from the Programme:

- a) details of any duties required of the External Examiner which are additional to the list of core duties specified in Section 5;
- b) a current Programme Specification for the relevant programme(s);
- c) Programme and/or Module Handbooks including module descriptions, learning outcomes and assessment methods;
- d) where appropriate, a description of the marking criteria adopted for each type of assessment;
- e) a selection of assessed student work (see 4.3 below)
- f) a full break-down of marks within the modules for which they are given a sample;
- g) instructions explaining the use of the Programme's platform for eSubmission of assessed work, where appropriate;
- h) the arrangements, where appropriate, for the External Examiner to meet with students on the programme they are appointed to examine;
- i) information concerning the dates and times of Exam Board meetings;

In addition, a newly appointed External Examiner who has not examined previously or within five years should be mentored in the role for one year. For further details, please see appendix 2, the Guidelines for the Mentoring of External Examiners. In addition to meeting the requirements below, where work has been moderated the sample should differ from the sample submitted for moderation in that it should include some work that is single marked as well as work submitted to each moderator.

### 4.3 Samples of Work

- a) As soon as the assessments received on the due date have been marked and moderated/double marked (where appropriate), a sample shall be sent to the External Examiner as follows: (ie the dispatch shall not be delayed for receipt of assessments with valid extensions). Details of the sample to be reviewed via Canvas must be sent to the External Examiner within ten days of the marks being released to the students
- b) The sample of submissions that can't be accessed via Canvas must be sent to the External Examiner within ten days of the marks being released to students

In addition to meeting the requirements below, the sample should differ from the sample submitted for moderation in that it should include some work that is single marked and work moderated by different moderators. External Examiners should be asked to raise any issues within 20 working days.

The sample should be accompanied by:

- a) a full break down of marks within the modules for which they have been given a sample;
- b) evidence of moderation

The sample shall include the following as a minimum:

- c) Levels 3, 5, 6 and 7 will normally consist of a selection across all grade categories, from failures to firsts/distinctions.
- d) Subject to meeting the criteria above, the size of the sample will not be less than 10% of the students who have taken the module for undergraduate programmes and 20% for postgraduate programmes. Where the number of students attempting an assessment is 7 or fewer, all the assessments should be sent.
- e) For Level 8 Taught modules, all student work will be sent to the External Examiner.
- f) There is no mandatory requirement for Programme-level External Examiners to engage with student work at level 4. However, in the case of new programmes, Foundation Degrees, Certificates of Higher Education and Diplomas of Higher Education, the sample should be the same as c) above.

When a Programme operates forms of assessment which are not immediately susceptible to external moderation (presentations, performances) then mechanisms must be put in place for capturing or recording such assessments (on a sampled basis similar to that operating across the programme as a whole). Alternatively, the External Examiner may be invited to attend performance elements in addition to their standard range of duties within the programme(s).

The scripts of all students who have been severely penalised because they have failed to obey instructions relating to the assessment should be drawn separately to the attention of the External Examiner.

During the academic year, External Examiners should have access to all assessments at Levels 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Additional sample requirements are applied to Collaborative programmes, see section 8.

Where a sample is sent (i.e. not the work of the entire cohort) this shall include both moderated and non-moderated work.

## 5. Duties

In order to report to the University on the soundness and fairness of the assessment process and on the standards of student achievement, the duties of External Examiners of taught programmes are as follows:

**Core:**

- a) comment upon the standard of University awards in relation to external referents, including the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, subject benchmarks and in relation to other UK Higher Education Institutions;
- b) review and evaluate examinations and all other forms of assessment which contribute to students' degree results;
- c) review and evaluate the assessment process;
- d) ensure consistency in the assessment process;
- e) comment on the structure, content, academic standards and teaching of the relevant programmes;
- f) Review the extent to which the assessment for a programme enables students to demonstrate that the Intended Learning Outcomes have been met.
- g) Request further detail on any assessment type and see any assessment type, including examination papers and coursework, as detailed in the Roles and Responsibilities form, sent upon appointment.

In addition, External Examiners may be asked to:

- h) fulfil the core duties for External Examiners (as listed above) in relation to any stand-alone modules taken for credit where the module is either part of, or in a discipline cognate with, a named programme for which the individual has been appointed as External Examiner.
- i) provide an independent external view on programme amendments (This only applies to Collaborative Provision or when SADC has determined that the Programme is to undergo Institutional Monitoring);
- j) provide, if appropriate, an independent external view on interim validation. In these circumstances a small additional fee will be paid.

Finally, External Examiners may be consulted by Programme Leaders about any aspect of the programme including the learning, teaching and assessment to inform practice as it occurs and develops.

Additional duties for collaborative provision external examiners are specified in Section 8.

## 6. Exam Board Procedures and the Role of External Examiner

The University operates a two-tier Exam Board process at the end of each academic year, at which the marks and grades are considered for all taught undergraduate programmes and some taught postgraduate programmes and decisions are made regarding student progression and award. This is followed by a Faculty Exam Board for resits and deferred results.

The role of the 'lower' tier is fulfilled by Departmental Exam Boards, which confirm the marks and grades for all modules in their subjects, completed within the academic year, and make recommendations regarding progression or award for each student, as appropriate.

The role of the 'upper' tier is fulfilled by the Faculty Exam Boards, which confirm the decisions regarding progression or award for each student.

When Exam Boards are held at other times of the year, the functions of the two tiers are normally combined and fulfilled by the appropriate Faculty Exam Board. Exceptions may exist where Collaborative Partner programmes operate outside the dates set for the University's academic year.

**Faculty External Examiners** are normally required to attend the Faculty Exam Boards, when they operate as the 'upper' tier and the 'resit' Exam Board, normally held in the summer. Where Faculties hold a number of Faculty Exam Boards over the course of the year they may either appoint a Deputy Faculty External Examiner, or ensure that one of their programme External Examiners attends in place of the Faculty External Examiner.

**Programme External Examiners** are normally required to attend all Exam Boards, at which the results of students on the relevant Programme are being considered, with the exception of:

- a) the Faculty Exam Boards, when they operate as the 'upper' tier of the Two-Tier Exam Board process; and
- b) the Faculty Exam Board for resits and deferred results.

The letter confirming the terms and conditions of appointment shall include details of the frequency and timings of the Exam Boards that an External Examiner will be required to attend.

Within the Board, External Examiners shall have the right to speak on any matter regardless of whether their opinion has been specifically invited. However, the Board is not obliged to defer to their judgement in taking decisions.

No member of the Exam Board, including the External Examiner, may alter the individual marks of students. In exceptional circumstances, and on the basis that it is a decision of the Board, cohort marks may be adjusted or recommended for remarking.

Programme External Examiners are asked to sign a form confirming they are content with the decision making processes of the Departmental Exam Board.

In normal circumstances, a decision on the award of a qualification to a student shall only be made by a Faculty Exam Board if the Faculty External Examiner is present. If an External Examiner, exceptionally, cannot attend a meeting where their presence is formally required, they should be available for consultation by other means.

Faculty-External Examiners are asked to sign a form confirming they are content with the decision making processes of the Faculty Exam Board.

In the event that the Faculty External Examiner is unwilling to endorse the decision making processes of the Exam Board, the Chair of the Exam Board should report the matter to the Director of Academic Quality and Development for resolution. The relevant results will be withheld by Registry until the matter is resolved.

Full guidance on the operation of Exam Boards can be found in the Conduct of Exam Boards for Taught Programmes including Collaborative Partners – Guidelines.

## **7. Reporting**

The University requires its External Examiners to submit annual written reports on a standard form and, at the end of their period of appointment, an additional section on the report, giving an overview of their experience as External Examiner. These reports are given serious and timely consideration.

The University requires the Programme External Examiner in their annual report:

- a) To report on the appropriateness of the standards of its awards, by reference to published national subject benchmarks, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, programme specifications and other relevant information;
- b) To report on the comparability of standards with those of similar programmes in other UK higher education institutions;
- c) To comment upon the appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes for the programme(s) and the extent to which the assessment diet enables students to attain these outcomes;
- d) To report on the extent to which its processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and have been fairly conducted;
- e) To report on the standards of student achievement;
- f) To comment upon examination and administrative procedural matters such as the provision of timely and sufficient information in order to fulfil their roles; the operation of the Exam Board;

- g) To comment upon specific areas where programme(s) are collaborative in nature;
- h) To identify, where appropriate, examples of good practice in teaching and learning.

An electronic report form is made available to all Programme External Examiners on an annual basis.

Further detailed information on the consideration of reports can be found in Section 5 of Appendix 1.

Additionally, the University requires Faculty External Examiners to report on the conduct of the Faculty Exam Board, the response to the previous report and examples of good practice evidenced at the Faculty Exam Board.

## 8. Collaborative Provision

This policy applies to all programmes and modules delivered in whole or in part by partner institutions leading to University of Winchester awards. Such programmes and modules are designated as 'collaborative provision' by the University.

The University remains responsible for the approval and appointment of External Examiners. In this it uses the same criteria for selection and appointment of Externals of programmes delivered on campus as set out in this policy. Additionally, it requires that:

- a) prospective External Examiners must not have been a member of staff within the partner organisation for a period of five years before appointment;
- b) prospective External Examiners must not have had any other close relationship with the partner organisation nor its staff which might compromise their objectivity;
- c) Prospective External Examiners should normally have recent (within the last five years) and relevant experience of external examining taught programmes, normally at the appropriate level.
- d) Prospective External Examiners who are responsible for examining overseas collaborations must be fluent in the language of delivery and assessment.

An External Examiner appointed to a collaborative provision programme will, upon appointment, be sent a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement which will detail the arrangements for external examining at the partner institution.

External Examiners of Collaborative programmes will wherever possible be sent a sample of work from similar or cognate programmes (especially where the same award title is shared with on-campus provision) at the appropriate level from the linked Academic Department. This enables External Examiners to report on the comparability of standards in relation to in-house provision and similarly titled awards.

External examiners for collaborative provision programmes shall be asked to review and comment on assessment tasks **before** delivery.

## **APPENDIX 1: PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES**

### **1. Introduction**

These procedures have been developed to:

- a) ensure that reports from External Examiners are received as soon as possible after the Exam Boards have met;
- b) ensure that matters of concern are identified and responded to promptly;
- c) identify any University-wide issues and examples of good practice.

### **2. Submission of Reports**

Programme External examiners are requested to submit their reports electronically within four weeks of the meeting of the Exam Board. Detailed instructions for accessing the electronic report and its submission, once complete, will be sent by the Department of Academic Quality and Development.

Following receipt of a report, the relevant Faculty Manager will arrange for the External Examiner's fee to be paid.

If a report has not arrived by two weeks after the appropriate deadline, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will contact the Chair of the relevant Exam Board to check whether there are exceptional reasons for the delay. If no such reasons are notified to the Department of Academic Quality and Development within a week of writing to the Chair of the relevant Exam Board, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will contact the External Examiner to remind them of the need to submit their report as soon as possible.

If a report has not been received within two weeks of a reminder being sent, the Director of Academic Quality and Development will contact the External Examiner to request that the report be submitted to the University as a matter of urgency.

If the report is not received after such reminders, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will inform the First Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

### **3. Circulation of Reports**

On receipt of an External Examiner's report, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will inform the following that the report has been published on the University's Intranet:

- the Vice-Chancellor
- First Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- the Director of Academic Quality and Development
- the relevant Dean of the Faculty;
- the relevant Faculty Manager;
- the Chair of the relevant Faculty Academic Development Committee;
- the relevant Head of Department
- the relevant Programme Leader

### **4. Serious Matters of Concern Raised by External Examiners**

If an External Examiner's report raises any serious matters for concern, the Department of Academic Quality and Development will bring the report to the attention of the First Deputy Vice-Chancellor and, where appropriate, the Vice-Chancellor.

Serious matters of concern are those which put academic standards at risk, for example:

- a) significant deficiencies in academic provision;
- b) substantial differences in the application of assessment criteria within the same programme;
- c) major irregularities or deficiencies in the examinations and assessment processes;
- d) serious concerns with regards to threshold standards

In addition to submitting their report, External Examiners may also send a confidential letter to the Vice-Chancellor, c/o the Department of Academic Quality and Development. When such a letter is received, the Vice-Chancellor will conduct such investigations as they deem appropriate, and reply to the External Examiner's confidential letter. The Vice-Chancellor's Office will notify the Department of Academic Quality and Development that a response has been sent to the confidential letter.

If an External Examiner has serious concerns about academic standards and has exhausted all internal procedures – including a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor – they have recourse to the QAA 'Concerns about standards and quality in higher education scheme'.

For further information about raising a concern with the QAA, please refer to their guide: *Raising concerns about standards and quality in higher education available at:*

[http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/qaa-concerns-scheme.pdf?sfvrsn=c13dfd81\\_6](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/qaa-concerns-scheme.pdf?sfvrsn=c13dfd81_6)

## 5. Consideration of Reports

All External Examiners' reports should be considered by the relevant Programme and reflected upon in the Annual Programme Evaluation (APE). The Programme Leader shall write to the External Examiner indicating the Programme's response to issues raised, and this response is also included in the APE. The timescale for consideration of APEs is as follows:

Undergraduate programmes	<b>September:</b> A team meeting of the programme <b>October:</b> First full programme committee (including student representatives)
Taught postgraduate programmes	The above process to commence no later than the end of January.

FADCs scrutinise and approve all APEs (including the External Examiner report and the Programme's response). When approved by FADCs, APEs are sent by the Programme to the External Examiner and are published on the University intranet.

A summary report on the issues raised by External Examiners is provided annually to Senate Academic Development Committee and actions are taken in regard to any significant issues or institutional matters. The summary report also enables dissemination of good practice within the Institution.

## **APPENDIX 2: GUIDELINES FOR THE MENTORING OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

### **1. Circumstances in which mentor support may be required**

The University will, at times, appoint an external examiner who is qualified in terms of subject standing, have a good reputation, and experience of managing a programme, but who has not examined previously, or within five years. It is a condition of their appointment that they are mentored in the role in the first instance and that such mentoring is in addition to the support provided by the Programme Leader.

### **2. Role of the Mentor**

Mentors are responsible for providing advice and guidance on the protocols of external examining to less experienced colleagues on a flexible basis according to the needs of the appointee. The duties would therefore be specific to the actual examining work and appointee.

Regulatory and procedural issues shall continue to be communicated as currently via documentation from AQD and the relevant Programme Leader and by the Induction Day for new External Examiners.

#### **2.1 Duties may include (the list is not exhaustive):**

- a) establishing contact with the mentee External Examiner and acting as the first point of contact;
- b) advising on the role and perspective of the External Examiner in Examination Boards;
- c) informing and advising on common current practice in HE;
- d) advising on the context of verbal and written reports;
- e) clarifying details, providing support, building confidence, etc

#### **2.2 Commitment required**

The commitment required will be flexible according to the needs of the mentee, but could include:

- a) an initial meeting between mentor and mentee;
- b) communication by e-mail or telephone;
- c) a shadowing experience of mentor by mentee in an exam board.

### **3. Process of appointing a mentor**

- a) If the nominee has not examined previously or recently, but is otherwise well qualified, the programme must provide a rationale in support of the nominee's appointment, together with details of the mentoring arrangements. Therefore, potential mentors should be approached during the appointment process, rather than after approval of the new examiner.
- b) If the appointment is a replacement, and is made in good time, the outgoing external can be asked to act in the role of mentor.
- c) If the appointment is to a new programme, or if the appointment is delayed for any reason, an existing experienced external examiner affiliated with the same Department should be designated as mentor during the first year of appointment. An experienced examiner will have examined at Winchester for more than two years. Departments should therefore look to ensure that a mix of experience is obtained when nominating external examiners.
- d) If a Department cannot provide a mentor, then the Faculty External Examiner should be approached or, following consultation with the Department of Academic Quality and Development (AQD), another external within the Faculty may be asked.

- e) Following approval by Senate Academic Development Committee (SADC), the programme shall confirm to Faculty Academic Development Committee (FADC) that the mentoring arrangements stated within the nomination form have been set in place.

#### **4. Process of Appointment**

The mentor examiner shall receive a formal letter of appointment from AQD together with a copy of these guidelines. The mentee examiner would be advised of the arrangement and the scope of the support available via the letter of appointment from AQD.

#### **5. Remuneration**

The mentor Examiner shall receive £75 per arrangement. AQD shall pay the fee.