

EXTERNAL EXAMINING OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK

2. The Appointment of External Examiners

2.1 Criteria for Appointment of External Examiners

2.1.1 To be appointed as an External Examiner for a taught programme(s) and to externally examine modules of that programme, the following criteria **must** be met:

- i. The External Examiner's academic and/or professional qualifications **should** be appropriate in level and subject for examining the allocated programme(s) and module(s) and:
 - a) where the programme is externally accredited, **should** meet any criteria set out by the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body or Bodies (PSRBs).
 - b) where the programme is a Degree Apprenticeship, **should** have relevant industry knowledge and experience, understanding of Degree Apprenticeships and meet any additional criteria set out in the relevant apprenticeship standard and assessment plan as published by Skills England.
- ii. The External Examiner's expertise and experience **should** be such as to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities as set out in Chapter 3 of this Handbook, with such experience to be demonstrated only by individuals with Senior Lecturer (or equivalent) status or above.
- iii. The External Examiner **should** have had significant recent experience as an internal assessor and moderator at the required academic level and on a relevant programme at their past and/or present institution(s).
- iv. The External Examiner and the associated University Department **should** ensure that there is no reciprocal external examining between Departments at the University and the External Examiner's Department in their own current institution.
- v. The External Examiner **should not** be appointed for any one programme consecutively from the same institution as their predecessor, nor **should** more than one External Examiner be appointed from any one Department of another institution.
- vi. The External Examiner **should not** usually hold more than two External Examining appointments for taught programmes, whether undergraduate and/or

postgraduate taught at the same time; this includes their appointment for the University and any appointment at another institution. Exceptions may, however, be considered where more than two programmes share a number of modules or where programmes have smaller cohorts, thereby reducing the External Examiner's workload (see section 2.1.2 below)

- vii. The External Examiner **should not** be a former member of staff of the University, unless there has been a lapse of at least five years since the end of their employment. This included honorary staff, members of staff at Academic Partner institutions and those who become University employees during their External Examiner appointment.
 - viii. The External Examiner **should not** usually have acted as an External Assessor for the same programme during the initial programme approval process but may advise on subsequent amendments to the programme or its constituent modules. Exceptions **may** be permitted (see section 2.1.2 below) to allow an External Assessor to progress to the role of External Examiner where the academic and/or professional benefit of doing so can be evidenced.
 - ix. The External Examiner **must** not be registered for an award at the University.
- 2.1.2 Any exceptions to the above criteria, **must** be approved by the Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students. Requests should be submitted to Education Policy, Quality and Standards via externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk in the first instance.
- 2.1.3 To avoid potential conflicts of interest, the External Examiner **should not** be appointed if they fall within any of the following categories:
- i. They are a Council or Senate member.
 - ii. They have a close professional or personal relationship with a member of staff directly involved in the teaching and assessment of the programme, or any of its constituent modules.
 - iii. They have a close professional or personal relationship with a student on the programme of study, including having been involved with their supervision when on placement or in professional training.
 - iv. They are in a position to significantly influence the future of any of the students on the programme of study, or its constituent modules.

- v. They are currently involved in collaborative research and/or publication activities with a member of staff directly involved in the teaching and assessment of the programme, or any of its constituent modules.
 - vi. In case of Degree Apprenticeship programmes, they have a close professional or personal relationship with the apprentice's employer.
- 2.1.4 The Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students, are responsible for resolving any conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to the appointment of External Examiners, or at any time during their period of appointment. Requests for consideration of potential conflicts of interest should be submitted to Education Policy, Quality and Standards via externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk in the first instance.

2.2 Period of Appointment of External Examiners

- 2.2.1 In accordance with [Ordinance 5](#), an External Examiner **should** usually be appointed for a **maximum of four years**. Only under exceptional circumstances, and where academic and/or professional value can be evidenced, may an External Examiner be appointed for a further fifth year.
- 2.2.2 After completing their period of appointment, an External Examiner **should not** be re-appointed for the same programme(s) before a period of **five years or more has elapsed**. Only under exceptional circumstances, and where academic or professional value can be evidenced, may an External Examiner be reappointed at an earlier date.
- 2.2.3 Exceptional arrangements for extending an External Examiner's period of appointment or making an earlier reappointment **must** be approved by the Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students. Requests for consideration of extensions or reappointments should be submitted to Education Policy, Quality and Standards via externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk in the first instance.

2.3 Termination of Appointment of External Examiners

- 2.3.1 The appointment of an External Examiner **may** be terminated early under the following circumstances:
- i. Failure to attend Programme/Department Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees (P/DAPAC) meetings without reasonable explanation or the prior agreement of the Faculty Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education (APVCE) or their nominee.

- ii. Failure to submit an annual report within the specified time.
 - iii. Failure to fulfil roles and responsibilities as set out in Chapter 3 of this Handbook.
 - iv. Cessation of, or non-recruitment to, the programme(s) and/or constituent modules.
- 2.3.2 The appointment of an External Examiner **may** also be terminated early by mutual agreement if it has been identified that for personal or professional reasons, they no longer meet the criteria for appointment or are unable to fulfil the roles and responsibilities as set out in Chapter 3 of this Handbook. Should such circumstances arise, Education Policy, Quality and Standards should be contacted via externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk in the first instance.
- 2.3.3 The early termination of the appointment of an External Examiner **must** be approved by the Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students. Requests for early termination should be submitted to Education Policy, Quality and Standards via externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk in the first instance.