

EXTERNAL EXAMINING OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK

3. The Roles and Responsibilities of External Examiners

3.1 General Requirements

- i. External Examiners **should** ensure that they are available, capable, eligible and have sufficient time to undertake the roles and responsibilities, as set out in this Chapter and subsequent Chapters 3,4,5 and 6, throughout their period of appointment.
- ii. External Examiners should ensure that they meet the Criteria for Appointment, as set out in Chapter 2, throughout their period of appointment.
- iii. In the event of an External Examiner no longer being able to undertake their roles and responsibilities, or no longer meeting the Criteria for Appointment, they **should** declare it as soon as possible by contacting Education Policy, Quality and Standards (EPQS), at externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk, so that either an exemption can be considered by the Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students, as required by Chapter 2, or a replacement found.
- iv. External Examiners **should** ensure that during their period of appointment they do **not hold more than two** external examining positions for taught programmes at the same time, whether at the University or another Higher Education Institution, unless an exemption has been granted by the Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students, as required by Chapter 2.
- v. External Examiners **should** ensure that during their period of appointment they do not undertake any additional activities or accept any other engagements, whether personal or professional, that lead or might lead to a conflict of interest between the External Examiner and the best interests of the University.
- vi. External Examiners **should** participate in any induction activities or training and development opportunities provided by the University and familiarise themselves with any induction materials or information, advice and guidance provided to enable them to fulfil the roles and responsibilities as set out in this Chapter and subsequent Chapters 3,4,5 and 6.
- vii. External Examiners **should** familiarise themselves with the requirements of the University's [Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes](#)

[Handbook](#) and any additional Departmental or programme specific policies and processes in relation to teaching, learning and assessment.

- viii. External Examiners **should** familiarise themselves with the content and delivery of the programme(s) and constituent modules that they will provide external academic and/or professional assurance for, with particular reference to the teaching, learning, assessment, marking and moderation strategies utilised.
- ix. External Examiners **should** familiarise themselves with all teaching, learning and assessment information and materials provided to students on programmes and constituent modules that they will provide external academic and/or professional assurance for.

3.2 Specific Responsibilities

- i. External Examiners **should** provide assurance that the academic standards and, where relevant, professional standards of the University's modules, programmes and awards are maintained, adhere to recognised sector standards and are comparable with similar awards made by other degree awarding Higher Education Institutions in the UK.
- ii. External Examiners **should** examine and triangulate a range of evidence to provide assurance of academic and, where relevant, professional standards, including, but not limited to: Programme Specifications; Module Records; Programme and Module Data; examination papers and coursework briefs; marked and moderated coursework and examination scripts; and feedback from academic staff and students.
- iii. External Examiners **should** be core members of the Programme/Department Assessment Progression and Awarding Committee (P/DAPACP) for the programme(s) for which they provide external academic and/or professional assurance, attending **a least one** meeting virtually or in person each academic year.
- iv. External Examiners **should** submit an annual report, and any other required reports, in the prescribed format, via the designated system, by the date specified by Education Policy, Quality and Standards. This is usually within four weeks of the main meeting of the P/DAPAC covering the programme(s) for which they provide external academic and/or professional assurance.

- v. External Examiners **should** identify best practice in assessment, marking, feedback and moderation and make recommendations for enhancement to the University's policy, processes and practices, including for progression and awarding, whether for the programme(s) under consideration or for wider application within the Department or Institution.
- vi. External Examiners **should** contribute, when invited, to the review and revision of Programme Specifications and Module Descriptors for which they provide assurance of academic, and where relevant, professional standards.

Further detail on these roles and responsibilities can be found in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this Handbook.

3.3 Exclusions to External Examiner Responsibilities

- i. The External Examiner **should not** be responsible for reviewing individual student coursework, examination scripts or other forms of assessment, except where those these form part of a representative body of work from the programme(s) and/or module(s) under review.
- ii. The External Examiner **should not** act as a second marker or a internal moderator; their responsibility is to independently assure themselves that academic and professional standards are being upheld by reviewing the overall approach to assessment, marking, feedback and moderation.
- iii. The External Examiner, following their review of a representative body of work from the programme and/or module, should **not** expect or encourage a Programme/Department APAC (P/DAPAC) to raise or lower marks for individual students, on the basis that such a practice would be unfair to those not included in the representative body of work reviewed. However, as a member of the P/DAPAC they may contribute to decision-making on the scaling of marks for all students in the cohort (see [Ad Hoc Scaling Guidance for P/DAPACs](#))
- iv. The External Examiner **should not** be involved in individual cases relating to mitigating circumstances or academic conduct. Such decisions are the responsibility of the Mitigation Committee or an Academic Misconduct Panel who will inform the P/DAPAC, of which the External Examiner is a member, of decisions affecting a module result or a progression or awarding decision.

- v. The External Examiner **should not** be required to review examination papers, assessments briefs, examination scripts or marked coursework, in respect of formative or summative student work, for stages of a programme that **do not** contribute to their final award. This would include the first stage/year of undergraduate programmes where 120, Level 4 credits must be passed but where the credit weighted mean for the stage/year is not used to calculate the final degree classification. The following exceptions should, however, be applied:
 - a. It is a new programme in its first year of delivery and only stage/year 1 student work is available for review; or
 - b. Major amendments have been made to the first stage/year of an existing programme; or
 - c. The External Examiner has requested to review a representative body of work from the first stage/year of a programme.