

## EXTERNAL EXAMINING OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK

### 9. External Examining in Exceptional Years/ Circumstances

- 9.1 In Exceptional Years or under other Exceptional Circumstances, the policies for External Examiners and External Examining, as set out in this Handbook, **may** not be implemented in the way originally intended. This Chapter sets out exemptions to the usual policies where they have been impacted by localised or more widespread Exceptional Circumstances. The [Exceptional Circumstances Handbook](#) provides further information on procedures for Exceptional Years / Exceptional Circumstances.
- 9.2 These exemptions to the usual policies **should not** be used to remedy any errors or omissions in the nomination, appointment, review of assessment briefs/examination papers, review of assessed coursework/examination scripts, or the reporting of External Examiners in non-Exceptional Years, or where there are other non-Exceptional Circumstances.
- 9.3 In Exceptional Years or other Exceptional Circumstances, where an appointed External Examiner **is not able** to fulfil their roles and responsibilities, for example due to sudden ill health or short-term additional commitments beyond their control, an interim replacement External Examiner may be sought. In such circumstances, the following amended criteria should be applied to facilitate an interim appointment:
- The External Examiner and Department **should** ensure that there is no reciprocal external examining between departments at the University of Exeter and the External Examiner's home department.
  - The External Examiner **should not** be appointed for any one programme consecutively from the same institution, **nor should** more than one External Examiner be appointed from any one Department.
  - The External Examiner **shall** serve for the period required arising from the Exceptional Circumstances but for not more than a period of four years and **shall not** be re-appointed for the same programme(s) until after a period of five years or more has elapsed since their last appointment.
  - The External Examiner **should not** usually hold more than two External Examining appointments for taught programmes at the same time; this includes their appointment for the University of Exeter.

- e. Any exceptions **must** be considered and approved by the Dean for Taught Students or Associate Dean for Taught Students by contacting Education Policy, Quality and Standards (EPQS) at [externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk) in the first instance.
- 9.4 Prior approval for the absence of an External Examiner from a Programme/Department Assessment Progression and Awarding Committee (P/DAPAC) in Exceptional Years and other Exceptional Circumstances (including where absence cannot be approved in advance due to the sudden onset) will **not** be required. The External Examiner affected **should** submit their Annual Report as soon as practicable after the P/DAPAC and, if possible, in advance of the release of final marks.
- 9.5 Where absence can be notified and approved in advance, the requirements of [Chapter 7](#) of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook and this Handbook **should** be adhered to.
- 9.6 To allow for changes to be made to assessments briefs and/or examination papers at short notice in Exceptional Years or due to other Exceptional Circumstances, the relevant Faculty Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education (APVCE) (or their nominee) can provide final approval without reference to the External Examiner. All changes to assessments **must** be recorded and **must** be reported to the relevant P/DAPAC. Please also refer to the [Exceptional Circumstances Handbook](#) for further information on alternative assessments.
- 9.7 Any existing External Examiner who **is not able** to attend the P/DAPAC and/or **is not able** to submit an Annual Report during an assessment period for reasons associated with the designation of an Exceptional Year or during other Exceptional Circumstances, **shall not** be deemed to be in breach of their terms and conditions and will be expected to recommence their duties as usual during the next assessment period and/or academic year.
- 9.8 Where it is not possible to recruit an interim External Examiner under the amended criteria and/or where the Exceptional Circumstances have affected the External Examiner's ability to complete all of their roles and responsibilities in a given academic year, a process of Internal Externality **should** be adopted, where possible, An appropriate academic member of the University nominated by the relevant APVCE **should**:

- a. Act as an objective observer of the P/DAPAC to ensure that it is conducted in accordance with [Chapter 7](#) of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook; and/or
  - b. Independently review a representative body of assessed and moderated student work from any modules that have not yet been subject to a review of academic and, where relevant, professional standards.
- 9.9 Where the process of Internal Externality has been adopted this **must** be recorded and reported to the relevant P/DAPAC. The nominated academic member of the University fulfilling one or more of the roles set out in 9.8 above **must** submit an independent, written report in the advised format and via the advised system to EPQS at [externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:externalexamining-qs@exeter.ac.uk).
- 9.10 Where a P/DAPAC is found to not be quorate because advance notice of the External Examiner's absence has not been received due to Exceptional Circumstances, the P/DAPAC meeting **may** continue. However, this **must** be recorded and reported to the relevant Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (FAPAC) for consideration and confirmation of decisions made. The usual quoracy for meetings of a P/DAPAC is set out in [Chapter 7](#) of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook.