



UNIVERSITY<sub>OF</sub>  
WINCHESTER

## **EXTERNAL EXAMINERS OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES POLICY**

<b>Document Title</b>	External Examiners of Taught Programmes Policy
<b>Role of Responsible person and Department</b> <i>(no name)</i>	Academic Registrar and Head of Quality – Registry & Academic Quality
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<b>Indicate whether the document is for public access or internal access only</b>  <b>Indicate whether the document applies to collaborative provision (partner delivered awards)?</b>  <i>(Strikethrough text, as appropriate)</i>	<b>Public Access</b> <del>Internal Access Only</del>  <b>Applies to Collaborative Provision (Partner Delivered Awards)</b>
<b>Description</b>	
This document details the criteria to be followed for the appointment of External Examiners and their responsibilities and duties.	



Equality Impact Assessment	
Summary of process undertaken to determine equality impacts:	Assurance of access and inclusivity and that no principal or required procedure would place an unfair advantage or disadvantage for any person possessing, associated with or perceived to be possessing any of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010.
University Committee (name/ date) where equality impacts discussed (may be Committee of approval, or another):	Academic Regulations, Policies & Procedures (ARPP) Committee and Senate
<b>Identified equality impact(s) on colleagues and students</b> (i.e. any specific impacts related to this policy that may cause disadvantage for people due to one or more particular protective characteristic)	
Protected Characteristic	Impact(s) identified and any action(s)/mitigation(s) to address these impact(s), as necessary.
Age	No impacts identified.
Disability	No impacts identified.
Gender Identity	No impacts identified.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	No impacts identified.
Pregnancy and Maternity	No impacts identified.
Race (incl. nationality)	No impacts identified.
Religion and Belief	No impacts identified.
Sex	No impacts identified.
Sexual Orientation	No impacts identified.

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## **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
- c) receiving a report on the University's compliance with the B Conditions and other applicable sector expectations..

This Policy applies to undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision (including the taught elements of professional doctorates), delivered both at the University and through the University's Collaborative Academic Partnerships.

## **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 implemented and decisions have been made after due deliberation;
- c) standards of awards and student performance are both valid and credible and meet sector benchmark standards
- d) For integrated degree apprenticeships, act as the External Assessor for the End Point Assessment (EPA), where possible (see Section 9).

2.2 The formal responsibility of all External Examiners is to the University's Vice-Chancellor. 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.

2.3 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, OfS Sector Recognised Standards, 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 professional and/or regulatory requirements are being met (where appropriate);
- e) to ensure that the assessment process, including the governance of assessment grade and award confirmation, is effective, valid and reliable, fair, equitable, rigorous and fairly operated in the marking, grading and classification of student performance;
- f) to provide externality of opinion and objective advice on the processes involved in

teaching and assessment;

- g) to identify good practice worthy of commendation/wider dissemination.
- h) to undertake to adhere to the principles of Academic Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression in the undertaking of their duties

A detailed list of duties is outlined in Section 5.

For degree apprenticeships, please see details regarding the External Assessor role in Section 9

**2.4** 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 (Partner Delivered Awards), 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. Management of External Examiner Tenure**

#### **3.1 Nomination**

**3.1.1** External examiners are nominated by Heads of Department to their Dean of Faculty as per the criteria for appointment determined by Senate

**3.1.2** External examiners' appointments are confirmed by the Dean of Faculty following Quality Office benchmarking and, if required, a risk assessment and appointments notified to the relevant College Education Committee by the Head of Quality.

**3.1.3** A Programme External Examiner is appointed to each degree programme (or group of cognate programmes) and has specific responsibilities for that programme.. Where it is not possible to appoint a single examiner to an apprenticeship programme with the required balance of subject and practice expertise, an additional examiner may be appointed.

**3.1.4** A Faculty External Examiner is appointed to each Faculty and provide the Faculty with reviews on governance of progression and awards. Faculty External Examiners will also be programme-level externals and will engage with matters of standards and quality within the individual programme(s). In the absence of a Faculty External Examiner, the role shall be fulfilled by an existing programme level External Examiner for assurance of confirmation of grade assessments and awards.

**3.1.5** 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 Progression and Award Boards each year.

**3.1.6** The Dean of Faculty, as Chair of the Progression and Award Board, is responsible for ensuring that all programmes delivered by the Faculty or, in the case of Collaborative Academic partner programmes , overseen by the Faculty, are subject to oversight by appropriately qualified External Examiners.

**3.1.7** New and replacement External Examiners should be nominated by the relevant Head of

Academic Department and for (for Collaborative Academic Partner provisions, this is done in consultation with the partner institution and approved by the relevant Dean of Faculty)

In support of the nomination, proposed External Examiners should submit a summary CV, which provides details about their learning and teaching experience, such as module/programme leadership, and also their experience of quality assurance processes, such as annual monitoring, programme (re)validation and external examining.

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

**3.1.9** External Examiners are 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**

### **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.
- b) External Examiners will have experience of assessing at the level they will be external examining.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) 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 UK higher education institutions:- English institutions registered with the Office for Students, Scottish institutions funded by the Scottish Funding Council, Welsh institutions funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), or publicly funded institutions in Northern Ireland. Exceptionally, External Examiners from outside higher education may be appropriate where particular professional expertise is required, however the expectation is that they also have extensive knowledge of the HE Sector and be able to demonstrate the ability to meet the responsibilities set out in section 2.1 above. A rationale must be submitted by the Faculty with the nomination in such cases. It may also be the case that a second examiner with a current role in the HE Sector will be required.
- f) External Examiners appointed to apprenticeship provision should have appropriate level of practice based experience and wherever possible appointed with both subject and practise based experience.
- g) External Examiners are required to reside in the UK, to ensure compliance with HMRC regulatory obligations. To meet UKVI obligations they will be required to provide eligibility to be employed in the UK by the University as an External Examiner without restriction. Proof

of 'Right to Work' in the UK, as well as confirmation of UK Tax domicile, must correspond with Government guidance. 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.

- h) External Examiners must be content to receive assessed work and submit reports in an electronic format.
- i) Where appropriate, External Examiners must meet the criteria set out by professional and accrediting bodies.

### **3.2.2 Criteria and Conditions of Appointment**

#### **i. 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 shall not appoint a candidate who has acted in a scrutineer role with regard to the programme's (or linked programme's) validation or revalidation activity within a period of three years of the proposed date of appointment.
- c) 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.
- d) 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 disbar approval.
- e) A team of External Examiners shall not contain more than one person from any single institution.
- f) An External Examiner shall not be appointed from the same institution as their predecessor.
- g) 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.

#### **ii. Other Conditions**

- a) The University shall not appoint a candidate who it is deemed, subsequent to a benchmarking process or appropriate risk assessment, could be a risk to commercial sensitivity or other strategic risk without the approval of the Academic Registrar or Executive Leadership Team
- a) External Examiners shall not 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.

Additional criteria are applied to External Examiner nominees for Collaborative programmes, see



section 8 and Apprenticeship programmes, see section 9.

### **3.2.3 Confirmation of Appointment**

Following confirmation of appointment, Registry and Academic Quality (RAQ) will send a letter setting out the terms and conditions of appointment and providing links to the key documents and sources of information and details of the plan for their induction.

## **4. Conditions of Appointment for External Examiners**

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

- 4.1.1** External Examiners should notify the Programme Leader promptly of any change to contact email address. The Programme Leader must then inform the Department of Registry and Academic Quality.
- 4.1.2** External Examiners should notify [payroll&pensions@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:payroll&pensions@winchester.ac.uk) directly of any change to their bank details for payment.
- 4.1.3** If the circumstances of an External Examiner change after they have been appointed (e.g. a change of job or institution, or the appointment to additional responsibilities, paid or otherwise, including that of another external examining role), they should notify the Programme Leader. The change in circumstance will be reviewed against criteria set out in section 3.2.2 to ascertain if the External Examiner can continue with their tenure.

### **4.2 Parental leave**

- 4.2.1** If an External Examiner plans to take parental leave where they do not wish to engage in their External Examining work during a specified time period, they should notify the Programme Leader as soon as possible.
- 4.2.2** Where possible, the University will look to continue the tenure of the external examiner despite a leave of absence for parental leave. This will be possible for leaves of absence no longer than one year and:
  - a) if there are other External Examiners within the External Examining team available, and with appropriate expertise, to take on the additional duties.And/or
  - b) If the parental leave occurs outside of the key months when student work must be sampled, and the annual report written.
- 4.2.3** Parental leave will not be a reason to extend an external examiner's tenure.

### **4.3 Termination of Appointments**

- 4.3.1** If, for any reason, the University has cause to terminate an Examiner's appointment before the end of the term of appointment, Registry and Academic Quality will write to the External Examiner with an explanation of the reason(s).
- 4.3.2** Reasons for early termination of appointment may include:
  - a) Non-submission of the External Examiner annual report three months after the initial

deadline;

- b) Continual late submission of reports; or submission of more than one inadequate report;
- c) Non-engagement with review of student work;
- d) Repeated non-attendance at Progression and Award Boards (for Faculty External Examiners);
- e) Any change that affects an External Examiner's right to work in the UK or change in UK tax domicile status;
- f) Any change in domicile status where the external examiner is no longer resident in the United Kingdom
- g) Any conflict of interest as detailed in section 3.2.2 arising within the term of office
- h) Conflict of interest arising within the term of office as a result of University of Winchester (or Collaborative Partner) staff taking up a reciprocal appointment;
- i) Withdrawal of or non-recruitment to the assigned programmes;
- j) Identified risks to commercial sensitivity or other competitive strategic risk that arise from a change in employment status at a UK higher education provider subsequent to an appropriate risk assessment
- k) Strategic Institutional changes which require re-allocation of External Examiner duties.

**4.3.3** In the event that an External Examiner needs to terminate their appointment before the end of the term of appointment, they should write to [quality@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:quality@winchester.ac.uk).

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

**4.4.1** Registry and Academic Quality maintains a central register of appointment and periods of tenure and is responsible for areas relating to the application of policy and procedures. Registry and Academic Quality is also responsible for providing induction materials for new External Examiners, making annual reports available for completion and publishing of received internal annual reports

**4.4.2** Heads of Academic Departments are responsible for obtaining from the staff they line manage details of staff who are currently External Examiners.

**4.4.3** Programme Leaders are responsible for the day-to-day management of the relationship with the External Examiner and ensuring that the External Examiner is appropriately involved in the quality assurance of the programme, including sampling of student work (see section 4.3 Samples of Work for more detail). More details about specific tasks Programme Leaders must undertake are available on the Quality Office Canvas pages.

**4.4.4** The University will provide External Examiners with access to all policies, procedures and regulations as they pertain the University's statutory and regulatory obligations including, but not limited to, Academic Regulations, Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression and Quality Assurance standards.

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

#### **5.1 Induction**

**5.1.1** All newly appointed External Examiners will be expected to engage with induction materials provided by Registry and Academic Quality. As part of their induction, External Examiners will be provided with an opportunity to meet with members of the department. The aims of the induction materials are:

- a) To understand the duties of the External Examiner at the University of Winchester;
- b) To provide an opportunity for discussion on aspects of the External's role;
- c) To meet the Programme Leader, learn about the programme and understand what the External Examiner can expect from the Programme Team;
- d) To introduce External Examiners to the University's Virtual Learning Environment (Canvas).
- e) To raise awareness of the University's External Examiner policy and procedures;
- f) To introduce External Examiners to the distinctive aspects of the University's Learning and Teaching strategy.

## **5.2 Support from the programme**

**5.2.1** External Examiners can expect to receive access to the following annually from the Programme Leader (usually in the form of access to the relevant areas on Canvas):

- 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, as well as Module Descriptions, including learning outcomes and assessment methods;
- c) Programme and/or Module information as published on the VLE (Canvas);
- d) where appropriate, a description of the assessment 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;  
instructions explaining the use of the VLE (Canvas) for submission of assessed work, where appropriate, the arrangements, where appropriate, for the External Examiner to meet with students on the programme they are appointed to examine;
- g) a copy of the subject area's Continuous Monitoring Plan for each programme;
- h) information concerning the dates and times of Progression and Award Board meetings, as appropriate;

**5.2.2** For Apprenticeship programmes, there are additional supportive documents that Programme Leaders must provide access to, see Section 9.

### **5.2.3 Providing Samples of Work**

**5.2.4** A key part of an External Examiner's role is to review a sample of student work in advance of Progression and Award Boards, to allow them to confirm they are content that quality standards have been met and they endorse the governance of marking and grading, and/or to allow them to note any concerns or areas for further discussion.

**5.2.5** Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring External Examiners are provided access to the appropriate sample of student work for review alongside evidence of moderation for each module as well as access to a full break down of marks within the module. The Programme

Leader may choose to curate a sample for the External Examiner (in which case the sample must include both moderated and non-moderated work), or to provide the External Examiner access to all student work and allow the External Examiner to choose their own sample (in which case the Programme Leader must advise the External Examiner of the sampling requirements outlined below).

**5.2.6** The sample, as chosen by the Programme Leader or External Examiner, must include:

<p><b>Levels 3 (Foundation Year) and 4</b></p>	<p>Student work need only be sampled at level 3 for newly validated programmes that are in their first year of delivery or for Foundation Degrees, Certificates of Higher Education and Diplomas of Higher Education.</p> <p>Where a sample is required, all summative assessments across all modules must be sampled. Within each assessment a selection should be chosen across all grade categories, from failures to firsts/distinctions.</p> <p>The size of the sample will be 10% or 7 assessments whichever is larger. Where the number of students attempting an assessment is seven or fewer, all the assessments should be reviewed by the External Examiner. The scripts of all students who have been penalised in accordance with policy because they have failed to obey instructions relating to the assessment should also be drawn separately to the attention of the External Examiner.</p> <p>For Level 4, all summative assessments across all modules must be sampled. Within each assessment a selection should be chosen across all grade categories, from failures to firsts/distinctions as detailed above.</p>
<p><b>Levels 5, 6 and 7</b></p>	<p>All summative assessments across all modules must be sampled. Within each assessment a selection should be chosen across all grade categories, from failures to firsts/distinctions.</p> <p>The size of the sample will be 10% for undergraduate and 20% for Level 7 or 7 assessments, whichever is larger. Where the number of students attempting an assessment is seven or fewer, all the assessments should be reviewed by the External Examiner.</p> <p>The scripts of all students who have been penalised in accordance with policy because they have failed to obey instructions relating to the assessment should also be drawn separately to the attention of the External Examiner.</p>
<p><b>Level 8 Taught modules</b></p>	<p>all student work will be sent to the External Examiner to review. The scripts of all students who have been penalised in accordance with policy because they have failed to obey instructions relating to the assessment should also be drawn separately to the attention of the External Examiner.</p>

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

- 5.2.8** External Examiners must be provided with access to the student work for review at the end of each teaching block for the programme (i.e. usually at the end of each Semester for programmes operating on the standard academic year) and in advance of the Progression and Award Board. External Examiners are asked to raise any issues within 10 working days of receiving the sample.
- 5.2.9** When a Programme operates forms of assessment which are not immediately susceptible to external moderation (presentations, performances), 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).

## **6. Duties**

- 6.1** 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 Duties are:
- a) comment upon the standard of University awards in relation to external references, including the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, OfS Sector Recognised Standards, subject benchmarks and in relation to other UK Higher Education Institutions;
  - b) review and evaluate all 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) Completion of annual External Examiner report as directed by Registry and Academic Quality.
- 6.2** In addition, External Examiners may be asked to:
- a) For an additional fee, fulfill the role of Faculty External Examiner at Progression and Exam boards.
  - b) provide an external view on programme amendments for Collaborative Academic Partner provision or when Education Committee has identified a strategic need to amend a programme as a result of Continuous Monitoring and to monitor the completion of integrated apprenticeship end point assessments (EPA), confirming that the EPA measures student achievement fairly and rigorously against the requirements of the apprenticeship standard;
  - c) provide, if appropriate, an independent external view on major curriculum modification that does not require a validation as well as revalidation/validation oversight. In these circumstances an additional fee will be paid.
  - d) 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.

- 6.3 Additional duties for Collaborative Provision and Degree Apprenticeships External Examiners are specified in Sections 8 and 9, respectively.

## **7. Progression and Award Boards and the Role of External Examiners**

### **7.1 Progression and Award Boards**

- 7.1.1 The University operates a single-tier Progression and Award Board process, at which the marks and grades are considered for all taught undergraduate programmes and taught postgraduate programmes and decisions are made regarding student progression and award. This is followed by further Progression and Award Boards for resits and deferred results.

- 7.1.2 The role of the Progression and Award Boards is to confirm the marks and grades for the year and make recommendations regarding progression or award for each student. In normal circumstances, a decision on the award of a qualification to a student shall only be made by a Progression and Award Board subsequent to External Examiner scrutiny.

### **7.2 Role of External Examiners**

- 6.2.1 Prior to the Board Programme External Examiners are asked to confirm that they are content that quality standards have been met and/or note any concerns or areas for further discussion. Marks should not be considered at the Board until any concerns have been discussed with the External Examiner.
- 6.2.2 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.
- 6.2.3 No member of the Progression and Award 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.
- 6.2.4 Programme External Examiners are not required to attend Progression and Award Boards. However, an invite will still be extended if they wish to observe. Prior to the Progression and Award Boards, they are asked to confirm that they are content that quality standards have been met and/or note any concerns or areas for further discussions.
- 6.2.5 Faculty External Examiners are required to attend all Progression and Award Boards where students' outcomes are considered for the relevant Faculty. Where Faculties hold a number of Progression and Award 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.
- 6.2.6 Faculty External Examiners are asked to confirm at the end of the Board that they are content with the decision-making processes of the Progression and Award Board. In the event that the Faculty External Examiner is unwilling to endorse the decision-making processes of the Progression and Award Board, the Chair of the Board should report the matter to the Academic Registrar for resolution. The relevant results will be withheld by Registry until the matter is resolved.

- 6.2.7 Full guidance on the operation of Progression and Award Boards can be found in the Conduct of Progression and Award Boards for Taught Programmes including Collaborative Partners – Guidelines.

## **7. Reporting**

### **7.1 General**

- 7.1.1 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.
- 7.1.2 The University requires the 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, OfS Sector Recognised Standards, 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 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 Progression and Award Board where attended;
  - g) To comment upon specific areas where programme(s) are delivered via a Collaborative Academic Partnership arrangement;
  - h) To identify, where appropriate, examples of good practice in teaching and learning.
- 7.1.3 For Apprenticeship programmes, see Section 9 for additional areas that External Examiners will be required to report on.
- 7.1.4 An electronic report form is made available to all Programme External Examiners on an annual basis.
- 7.1.5 Additionally, the University requires Faculty External Examiners to report on the conduct of the Progression and Award Board, the response to their previous annual report and examples of good practice evidenced at the Board.

### **7.2 Submission of Reports**

- 7.2.1 Programme External examiners are requested to submit their reports electronically within four weeks of the meeting of the Progression and Award Board. Detailed instructions for accessing the electronic report and its submission will be provided by Registry and Academic Quality.

- 7.2.2 Following receipt of a report, the relevant Director of Faculty Operations will arrange for the External Examiner's fee to be paid.
- 7.2.3 If a report has not arrived by the appropriate deadline, Registry and Academic Quality will regularly contact the External Examiner to remind them of the need to submit their report as soon as possible.
- 7.2.4 Non-submission of the report three months after the initial deadline may give cause for the termination of an External Examiner's appointment, as per section 3.5.

### **7.3 Circulation of Reports**

On receipt of an External Examiner's report, Registry and Academic Quality will circulate the report as required.

### **7.4 Serious Matters of Concern Raised by External Examiners**

- 7.4.1 If an External Examiner's report raises any serious matters for concern Registry and Academic Quality will bring the report to the attention of the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and, where appropriate, the Vice-Chancellor.
- 7.4.2 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;
  - e) serious concerns with regards to issues relating to Academic Freedom of Speech or Freedom of Expression.
- 7.4.3 In addition to submitting their report, External Examiners may also send a confidential letter to the Vice-Chancellor, c/o Registry and Academic Quality. 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 Registry and Academic Quality that a response has been sent to the confidential letter.

### **7.5 Consideration of Reports**

- 7.5.1 All External Examiners' reports should be considered by the relevant Programme Leader as part of Continuous Monitoring processes. The Programme Leader shall write to the External Examiner indicating the Programme's response to issues raised.
- 7.5.2 The Programme Leader must add relevant actions arising from the External Examiner's Report to the Programme's Continuous Monitoring plan. The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring the actions added to the Continuous Monitoring plan cover all necessary areas as raised in the External Examiner's Report.
- 7.5.3 College Education Committees closely monitor Continuous Monitoring plans. The Continuous Monitoring plans are sent by the Programme to the External Examiner.



- 7.5.4 A summary report on the issues raised by External Examiners is provided annually to Education 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.

## **8. Collaborative Academic Partnership provision**

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 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 who are responsible for examining overseas collaborations must be fluent in the language of delivery and assessment.
- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 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.
- 8.5 External examiners for Collaborative Provision programmes shall be asked to review and comment on assessment tasks **before** delivery.

## **9. Apprenticeship Programmes**

### **9.1 Role of the External Examiner**

- 9.1.1 Apprenticeship programme External Examiners will require to have additional support and duties to ensure they are able to fulfil their responsibilities.
- 9.1.2 Programme Leaders must include the following details to the External Examiner as part of their induction:
- a) A list of employers that are involved with the Apprenticeship;
  - b) Details about whether the End Point Assessment (EPA) is integrated or non-integrated and this affects their role<sup>1</sup>;
  - c) The assessment format or specific requirements for delivery of the EPA as specified in the apprenticeship standard;

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<sup>1</sup> For non-integrated Apprenticeships, the EPA is separate to the academic award and is overseen and assessment by an independent End Point Assessor. The External Examiner of a non-integrated programme will not be involved in the assessment of the EPA.

- d) The cohort numbers and delivery patterns;
- e) Whether the External Examiner will be working with another External Examiner for the programme (e.g. where there is an appointed External Examiner that has particular responsibilities for the work-place practice aspects of the Apprenticeship).

9.1.3 Where possible, opportunities should be made for Apprenticeship programme External Examiners to meet apprentices (e.g. as part of their induction, placement/work visits or prior to Progression and Award Boards). This will help the External Examiner report on the support the apprentices are receiving at both the workplace and at the University.

## 9.2 Report specificities

9.2.1 The annual External Examiner report for Apprenticeship programme will require feedback on the delivery of the Apprenticeship. They will be expected to comment on the following areas:

- a) That the Apprenticeship meets the relevant standard, and that it meets the QAA Characteristic Statement for Apprenticeships;
- b) That there is evidence of development of Maths and English;
- c) There is evidence that the curriculum includes coverage of Safeguarding, Prevent and British Values;
- d) There are links to the EPA within modules and it is clearly explained to the apprentices;
- e) Apprentices are supported in both their workplace and at University.

## 9.3 Role of the EQA External Assessor

9.3.1 Integrated degree apprenticeships are required to appoint an EQA External Assessor for the End Point Assessment (EPA) to comply with the External Quality Assurance of EPAs (EQAP) for Integrated Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. The External Examiner for the associated degree apprenticeship programme may also be the External Assessor. Where this is the case, that individual will need to comply with the duties and responsibilities of that role (as set out in the Section 5 above) in addition to the requirements set out below.

9.3.2 Where the External Examiner is unable to fulfil the EQA External Assessor role, a nomination for a separate External Assessor will be required to oversee the EPA aspect of the integrated apprenticeship programme only, not the whole degree qualification, nor the training aspect of the apprenticeship.

9.3.3 The main responsibilities of EQA External Assessor are to ensure that:

- a) The assessment practice and procedures for the EPA meet the requirements of the specific Standard and is delivered and conducted in line with the EPA assessment plan and to relevant policies and regulations.
- b) The EPA measures the apprentices' achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the EPA plan and that the EPA assessment meets both the employers and apprentices' occupational needs.
- c) The assessed evidence is valid, authentic, current, sufficient and reliable.
- d) The assessment is comparable with previous cohorts, and across different EPAOs that the EA is familiar with.
- e) Independent Assessors demonstrate relevant knowledge, occupational competence and understanding of the occupation and assessment criteria.
- f) Standardisation processes work effectively and facilitate Independent Assessors

## 9.4 Additional criteria

9.4.1 There are extra criteria requirements for the EQA External Assessor:

- a) Nominees will ideally have experience and expertise of the following:
  - i) Practice-based/vocational settings in relation to apprenticeships programmes
  - ii) Experience and understanding of apprenticeship standards and assessment plans
- b) Be independent of the apprentice, End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) (the University of Winchester) and employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship.
- c) Able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and experience required of an EA, as outlined in the EPA plan and meets all the external regulatory requirements.

## 9.5 Additional requirements

9.5.1 To ensure the EQA External Assessor is able to comment on assessment practice and procedures for the EPA and fulfil the required EQA monitoring of EPAs, the following activities are expected to be undertaken annually:

- a) Review documentation relating to the EPA, including the EPA assessment instruments/materials and internal quality assurance documentation
- b) Review a sample of EPA assessed work
- c) Observe live assessments – in person or online
- d) Observe Independent Assessor standardisation/moderation meetings
- e) Meet with Independent Assessors and other EPAO staff
- f) Meet with apprentices and, where possible, employers
- g) Observe the meeting at which the final decision on the EPA is confirmed (Apprenticeship Assessment Board)

9.5.2 The EQA External Assessor will be expected to conduct at least one visit to the University for each cohort completing the EPA. The purpose of the visit is to assess the performance of the programme's delivery of the EPA but can also be used to monitor progress against previous actions identified to improve delivery via the EQAP monitoring process

9.5.3 As part of the External Quality Assurance of EPA (EQAP) a separate report must also be produced for each year that the EPA delivery occurs at the University. The report will be submitted to the Centre for Degree Apprenticeships.

9.5.4 The report should comment on activities and findings of the EQA External Assessor and should:

- a) detail the work conducted, including observations meetings and sampling;
- b) provide commentary and feedback on the EPA delivery;
- c) identify areas of good practice and provide developmental advice;
- d) identify any issues or activities within the context of the delivery of EPA that do not meet with the requirements of the Standard or pose a risk to the effective EPA delivery and/or the achievement of occupational competence;
- e) Comment on progress with any items for improvement previously raised and/or DQB Officer.

**END OF POLICY**