

Guidance for External Examiners

Academic Quality & Development (AQD)

[This summary guide should be read in conjunction with the University's [External Examiner Handbook](#)]

1. Appointment

Subject External Examiners and **Chief External Examiners** are appointed by the Director of AQD for a four-year period. Where Subject EEs are appointed with little previous experience, they will usually work alongside a mentor (ie a more experienced EE) in the first instance. More detail on the selection and appointment process and mentoring of new Examiners can be found in Appendix 4 to the Academic Regulations.

2. Key Roles & Responsibilities

Key contact:	Responsible for:	Timeline
<p><u>Academic Quality & Development (AQD)</u></p> <p>externalexaminers@cumbria.ac.uk</p>	<p>Providing appointment letter (detailing relevant modules within remit and agreed fee). In addition, links are provided to the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fee and subsistence information - External Examiner Handbook and EE Report Template - Academic Regulations - On-line University Induction presentations <p>Communicating any changes to Academic Regulations</p> <p>Coordinating circulation of the Programme Leader's response to the Subject External Examiner's annual report</p> <p>Providing responses to Chief External Examiner annual reports.</p> <p>Providing an annual Summary of External Examiner Reports to all</p>	<p>Following approval of appointment</p> <p>From end of July</p> <p>November/December</p>
<p><u>Assessment Team</u></p> <p>assessment@cumbria.ac.uk</p>	<p>EEThe Assessment Team will advise all External Exas to provide an overview of trends and themes rminers on dates for aised in annual assessment boards</p> <p>Chief External Examiners attend University Progressions and Award Boards</p> <p>Subject External Examiners attend Quality Enhancement Boards</p>	<p>At the beginning of the academic year</p>

	The Assessment Team will convene all Boards and invite External Examiners to attend as appropriate and will circulate paperwork	Start of academic year
<p><u>Fees and Finance</u></p> <p><u>Ordering</u> Ordering@cumbria.ac.uk</p>	<p>Fees and Finance are responsible for payment of expenses and annual fee (using the on-line expenses form).</p> <p>'Ordering' is responsible for arranging accommodation (where necessary) for all External Examiners attending QEBs/UPABs. Any travel arrangements should be made by the External Examiner themselves using the most economic mode and claimed via the online expenses form.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> EEs are not normally permitted more than one overnight stay per visit. All EE visits should aim to link in attendance at QEBs with other activities (eg meeting students, placement/school visits). Exceptional cases where an additional overnight stay may be warranted and approved by AQD might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where an EE is travelling from abroad (excluding N Ireland and Eire) - Where an EE is required to complete professional placement revisits to work based settings eg to assess QTS <p><i>[Any exceptional cases as above, would require a rationale to be presented and authorised by the Quality Assurance Manager and in any case, would be for a maximum of no more than 3 nights]</i></p>	
<u>Programme Leader</u>	<p>Providing initial documentation to Subject External Examiners (mostly available on the Blackboard site), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme Handbook - Programme Specification - Module Guides (relevant modules) - Module Descriptors (relevant modules) - Details of the assessment and moderation process (including details of deadlines for submission and when work will be available for external moderation) - Contact details of other relevant team members - Copy of the previous External Examiner Report - Programme Leader's annual monitoring report (AMR) <p>Providing Programme-level induction following the University-level induction briefing (see section 3 below).</p> <p><u>Student Engagement with Subject External Examiners</u> Opportunities should be made available for students to meet with Examiners where appropriate.</p>	<p>Initial communication between Programme Leader and External Examiner should take place by the end of September (or within first month of module commencing)</p> <p>ASAP following appointment</p> <p>At programme level induction and/or placement visits and/or prior to QEB</p>

<p>Module Leader</p>	<p>Agreed samples of work for EEs should be made available electronically through Blackboard and the Subject EE notified that this is available for them, prior to the QEB, and should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - letter detailing all work enclosed for scrutiny - provisional mark sheet for each assessment item - marking scheme and assessment criteria - mean and standard deviation marks for the module(s) - relevant Module Guide(s) - coursework /exam scripts (this must be a fully representative sample and where collaborative provision is included, this work should be in separate and clearly identified bundles, with separate mark sheets for each partner site). <p>Samples of recorded presentations should also be available for</p>	<p>At least one week prior to Assessment Board</p>
<p>IT Service Desk itservicedesk@cumbria.ac.uk</p>	<p>External Examiners to scrutinise as part of the external Queries relating to difficulties in accessing IT (eg access to Blackboard) should be directed to the IT Service Desk by email itservicedesk@cumbria.ac.uk or telephone 01228 888888.</p>	

3. Induction of External Examiners

University-level induction information is available on-line [here](#) and will provide External Examiners with the information they need to carry out their role in respect of the University's [Academic Regulations](#) and associated Procedures and Processes on external examining. For **Subject External Examiners**, the expectation is that programme-level induction will be followed up soon after appointment and this will be coordinated by the Programme Leader.

Programme-level induction should focus on the following aspects (for Subject External Examiners only):

- Check that EE has access to Blackboard sites for programmes and modules with their remit to enable external moderation to take place
- Programme team's approach to marking and moderation
- clarification on which modules are running during the next academic period
- module evaluation process
- process for sampling of student work (this should be electronic by default)
- providing Blackboard (and/or Pebblepad) access and advice on navigating Bb sites
- guidance on how electronic materials can be accessed (eg programme documentation)
- advising on QEB dates, timetable for assessment deadlines and availability of work for external moderation
 - opportunities for meeting with learners
- discussion on any changes with regard to the validated programme (eg impending validation/minor modifications)
- discussion of the out-going External Examiner Report
- agreement on protocols for routine communication between Examiner and Programme Leader
- any opportunities to meet other External Examiners (where relevant)

For Collaborative Provision programmes the Programme Leader should:

- provide an opportunity for the External Examiner to meet with Partner Programme Leader(s) via MS Teams or other means
- provide detail on the number of partners/sites involved in delivery
- provide clarification on modules which are run at different sites, and/or by collaborative partners
- provide clarification as to University/Partner Programme Leaders (UPL/PPL)

For Apprenticeship programmes the following areas will also require clarification by the Programme Leader in programme-level induction:

- Which employers are involved with the Apprenticeship?
- Whether the End Point Assessment (EPA) is integrated, or non-integrated (*) and how this affects your role
- Cohort numbers and delivery patterns (which might be different for different employers)

- Whether you will be working alongside another External Examiner for the programme (eg one of you may have particular responsibilities for the practice/vocational aspects of the Apprenticeship)

() For non-integrated Apprenticeships, the EPA is separate to the academic award and is overseen and assessed by an independent End Point Assessor. You will not be involved in assessment of the EPA for non-integrated Apprenticeships*

4. Student Engagement with External Examiners

Where possible, opportunities should be made available for **Subject External Examiners** to meet apprentices (eg on the programme-level induction day, placement visits, or prior to an Assessment Board visit. You will be asked to provide feedback in your annual report as to whether learners are receiving a good level of support in the workplace, together with a good level of support from the University.

5. Moderation Process

Provisional marks sent to **Subject External Examiners** will have been agreed by internal markers. Where relevant, work will have been double marked (eg dissertations or theses), second marked and moderated. Normally, unless the number of assessment items is sufficiently small for all work to be scrutinised, an agreed sample of work will be provided to the **Subject External Examiner** (including samples from each grade/class and fails or cases identified by staff of being of particular interest). Where there is significant difference between the first and second marker, it is expected that the matter will be resolved using a third marker before submission to the **Subject EE**. All exam scripts and coursework contributing to the final assessment must be available to **Subject EEs** if required. All exam papers, and any pre-release papers, will have been previously agreed with the **Subject EE**. Full detail on the University's marking and moderation procedure can be found in Appx 3b to the [Academic Regulations](#)

The main concern of the **Subject EE** will be the assessment of the module in its entirety rather than marks given to individual learners; however, where a **Subject EE** has concerns regarding the consistency of marking, then **all** work falling into the area should be re-marked. The final decision on marks lies with the QEB.

6. Viva voce examinations / oral tests

Where a viva-voce examination is compulsory it must be stated in the validated assessment scheme, otherwise these can only be used in exceptional cases to confirm or improve a result (eg to decide an appropriate degree classification or, during the module. We also permit Malpractice Panels to set a viva voce or exam to test a learners' knowledge of a piece of work where malpractice is suspected.

7. Minor Modification Validation

Subject EEs provide advice and approval of **minor modification** to modules/programmes eg:

- Indicative module content (not affecting the aims or learning outcomes)
- Assessment of module
- Module code or Module title
- Withdrawal of optional module
- Adoption of approved (existing) modules as options (up to 60 credits max)
- Credit rating or Level rating
- Approval of a new module
- Replacement of a core OR option module (with another core OR option module)
- Location (campus/site) of delivery of an individual module

8. External Examiner Reports

Reports should be submitted by 31 July or within six weeks of the Assessment Board. All **Subject EE** reports must be responded to by the Programme Leader and pdf versions of reports will be shared with learners on programme Blackboard sites. **Reports should not name individual learners or staff members.**

There is an opportunity (via a separate template, available on the website), to provide a separate, confidential report to the Deputy Vice Chancellor where the EE has significant concerns relating to the academic standards of the programme.

Collaborative Provision programmes

If your remit includes delivery of programmes with Collaborative Partners, please ensure that you make it clear which comments relate to which partner delivery site.

Practice Learning (eg NMC programmes)

If your remit includes Practice Learning, your annual report will also require specific feedback from you in respect of:

- The quality of learning opportunity afforded by the student placement
- Feedback from practice partners
- Feedback from students on placement

Apprenticeship programmes

If your remit includes an Apprenticeship programme, your annual report will also require specific feedback from you on the delivery of the Apprenticeship. You will be expected to comment on the following aspects:

- Is the Apprenticeship aligned to the QAA Characteristic Statement for Apprenticeships?
- Does the Apprenticeship provide evidence of development of Maths and English?
- Is there evidence that learning and teaching includes coverage of Safeguarding, Prevent and British Values?
- Does the teaching and learning fully cover the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the Apprenticeship Standard?
- Is it clear how the minimum 20% 'off-the-job' learning is relevant, of benefit to the Apprentice and Employer, and monitored?
- Is it clear where elements of assessment within modules are linked to the occupation and the End Point Assessment?
- Are apprentices receiving a good level of support in the workplace?
- Are apprentices receiving a good level of support from the University?

Further information:

TEMPLATES:

Templates for External Examiners are available from the AQD web pages at www.cumbria.ac.uk/externalexaminers

APPENDIX 4 TO THE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS contains additional information on:

- Roles & responsibilities of External Examiners
- Criteria for the appointment of External Examiners and the procedures of the termination of contract
- Guidelines for the selection and approval of potential External Examiners
- Procedures for appointing External Examiners
- Reporting procedures for External Examiners

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION:

[QAA Quality Code – External Expertise](#)

Advance HE [‘Fundamentals of External Examining’](#) (Mar 2019)