Departmental Induction of External Examiners (Apprenticeship Courses)

Responsibilities
The Head of Department/the appropriate Director of Teaching in the School of Management is responsible for ensuring that External Examiners for the period of on-programme training and assessment and/or External Examiners for EPA are adequately briefed for their role.

In some Departments, some or all of the tasks may be delegated to Directors of Studies, Examinations Officers or other role-holders.

Following the appointment by the Board of Studies, Academic Registry issues an appointment letter and the External Examiner together with the Handbook for External Examiners (Apprenticeship Courses), a copy of QA12(A) External Examining (Apprenticeship Courses) and provides access to the External Examiners' Hub on SharePoint.

Aim
The induction briefing should enable the External Examiner to appreciate the aims and philosophy of the course(s) and to contribute in an effective and appropriate manner to the assessment process.

The briefing should clearly distinguish between the role of the External Examiner for the period of on-programme training and assessment and External Examiner for EPA.

Timing
Induction is best carried out as an on-going process with information provided at the time of need. Basic course materials such as Course Handbook, Course Specification, Apprenticeship Standard, EPA Assessment Plan (where applicable) and External Examiner Handbook should be provided at the beginning of the appointment period and some Departments invite their External Examiner to the University for a preliminary visit at this time. It may be more appropriate to provide, or repeat, detailed information on assessment processes prior to the Board of Examiners meeting(s).

The induction briefing
This should cover:

- key contact details in the Department/School
- the membership of the Boards of Examiners for Courses and Units
- the names and subject areas of other External Examiners
- the schedule for assessment procedures including:
    - deadlines for external review of assessment setting
    - deadlines for external review of marking
    - dates of meetings of Boards of Examiners for Courses and Units

- the way in which access will be provided to assessed parts of the course (e.g., where the final assessment involves placements or online learning)
- whether or not the External Examiner will have the opportunity to meet students
- annual cycle of work and key dates
- expectations of the role - see details in QA12(A) and the Handbook for External Examiners – Apprenticeship Courses
- responsibilities at the Board of Examiners - see details in QA35 (Assessment Procedures for Taught Courses of study)
- QA Code of Practice: in particular QA12(A), QA16 (Assessment, Marking and Feedback) and QA35
- assessment regulations for the course
- Individual Mitigating Circumstances process
- how the assessment sample seen by the External is determined (see QA16 section 10 and QA12(A) section 8)
- arrangements for external examination of End Point Assessment for integrated standards (where applicable)
- external quality assurance arrangements for End Point Assessment
- Department/School policy on confidentiality relating to matters of commercial sensitivity, e.g., in relation to assessment of work-based learning
- any relevant professional issues e.g., fitness to practise
- processes for making changes to units and courses including role of External Examiner
- Exam Board reports and example decisions and outcomes

Briefing of first-time External Examiners

If the External Examiner has not previously acted in this capacity, additional support mechanisms should be put in place. Where the individual is part of a team of External Examiners ask one of the other more experienced team members to act as mentor.

Documents to be provided

On appointment

- Apprenticeship Standard and EPA Assessment Plan
- course Handbook(s)
- EPA Handbook
- course Specification(s)
- unit descriptions
- generic grade descriptors
- assessment regulations for the course
- report(s) of the outgoing External Examiner(s)
- responses of Heads of Department to the report(s) of the outgoing External Examiner(s)
- any department policy on confidentiality relating to matters of commercial sensitivity (which may arise in relation to assessment of placement and work-based learning)
- feedback policies
- links to any relevant Department/School web pages

It may be useful to provide

- any recent professional body submission and response
- annual monitoring data

- Degree Scheme Review report or equivalent

During appointment
- all draft summative exam papers, and other summative assessment tasks which make a significant (more than 7%) contribution to degree classification, with marking criteria and model answers appropriate to the discipline, for comment
- samples of students' scripts and coursework which make a significant contribution to degree classification
- proposed changes to units and courses, particularly those relating to assessment.

Visits

Departments/the School are strongly encouraged to provide External Examiners with an opportunity to visit before the assessment period to familiarise themselves with the course, the University and its procedures.

Good Practice

One Department invites new appointees to come to Bath for a day, well ahead of the first Board of Examiners meeting, for a detailed induction with the Director of Studies followed by a shorter meeting with the Head of Department.

External Examiners Hub

The External Examiners Hub provides resources for institutional induction and continuing support for External Examiners.