

Department/School/LPO Induction of External Examiners (taught provision)

Responsibilities

The Head of Department/the appropriate Director of Teaching in the School of Management/the Learning Partnerships Office (LPO) is responsible for ensuring that External Examiners are adequately briefed for their role. In some Departments, the Head may delegate some or all of the task to Directors of Studies, Examinations Officers or other role-holders.

Following appointment by the Board of Studies, Academic Registry issues an appointment letter and the [External Examiners Handbook](#), and provides access to the External Examiners' Hub on SharePoint further guidance.

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.

Timing

Induction is probably best carried out as an on-going process with information provided at the time of need. For instance, basic course materials (course handbook and specification) should be provided at the beginning of the appointment period and some Departments invite their External 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/LPO
- 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
- expectations of the role - see details in QA12 and the Handbook for External Examiners
- responsibilities at the Board of Examiners - see details in QA35 (Assessment Procedures for Taught Programmes of study)
- QA Codes of Practice: in particular [QA12 External Examining \(Taught Provision\)](#), [QA16 \(Assessment, Marking and Feedback\)](#) and [QA35 Assessment Procedures for Taught Programmes of Study](#)
- assessment regulations for the course(s)

- Individual Mitigating Circumstances process
- how the assessment sample seen by the External is determined (see [QA16](#) section 10 and QA12 section 7)
- arrangements for involvement in assessment of placements, study year abroad etc.
- any relevant professional issues e.g. fitness to practise
- processes for making changes to units and programmes including role of External Examiner
- Exam Board reports and example decisions and outcomes

Documents to be provided

On appointment

- course specification(s)
- course handbook(s)
- unit descriptions for the course(s)
- 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/LPO are strongly encouraged to provide External Examiners with an opportunity to visit before the assessment period to familiarise themselves with the course, the institution and its procedures.

Meeting students

Many External Examiners welcome the opportunity to meet with a group of students as part of familiarising themselves with the programme and its academic standards. (It must be made clear to External Examiners and to students that such meetings are not viva voce examinations and do not contribute towards assessment.)

External Examiners Hub

The [External Examiners Hub](#) provides resources for institutional induction and continuing support for External Examiners.