

External Examining

An External Examiner is appointed to assure the quality of the learning experience for students. They will ensure that students are assessed fairly in relation not only to other students on the same course but also to students on comparable courses in other Higher Education Institutions nationally.

At least one External Examiner must be appointed for each course offered by the University

Process for the appointment of an External Examiner

At the earliest opportunity the Course team identifies the requirement for an External Examiner following new course approval, the approaching end of tenure or the resignation of an existing External Examiner.

Course Director (or equivalent) identifies and approaches potential new External Examiner to discuss the role, responsibilities and fees.

- Course Director (or equivalent), in conjunction with proposed External, completes a proposal form
- Dean of School authorises proposal
- Form is submitted to QAS for institutional approval with CV and fee form
- A Mentor will be required for proposed External Examiners who have no prior experience of such a role (mentors would normally be the retiring External Examiner or member of the current examining team – candidates who have not been a recent External Examiner for the University will not be considered). Mentors should be approached by the Course Director (or equivalent) and agree to undertake the role. Mentor proposal form is submitted to QAS.
- Specialist Externals may be appointed for modules delivered collaboratively i.e. Hong Kong Tax Law.

Proposal is scrutinised by QAS and is either sent back to the School contact for amendments and then re-submitted to QAS, or is endorsed by QAS Scrutiny Group.

Outcomes will be disseminated from QAS following approval. The School will then contact the External Examiner to establish the specific requirements of the role.
Approved External Examiners are sent a contract and appointment pack, by QAS, confirming their appointment, usually within two weeks.

Final University approval of external examiners/advisers rests with Academic Quality and Standards Committee, acting on behalf of Academic Board.

The Configuration of External Examiners is the responsibility of the Dean of School. Where a Progression and Award Board is being held a Chief External Examiner must be in attendance.

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Period of Tenure

The period of tenure for an external examiner will normally be four consecutive years running from the 1st November to the 31st October. The tenure will normally allow an external examiner to assess four successive cohorts of full-time students

In certain exceptional circumstances, for example in the case of a new award, to ensure continuity within an examining team, or where a course is running out and has only a further year to run, the period of appointment of an external examiner may be extended by a period of one year only. The external examiner must be consulted and should consent to the extension of tenure.

The appointment of an external examiner will normally cease at the end of their appointed tenure. In certain circumstances it may be necessary for the appointment to cease before the completion of the approved period of tenure. Examples of reasons for the early cessation of an appointment may include:

- resignation
- changes in course structure
- non-fulfilment of duties
- failure to provide an annual report within the required timescale
- unprofessional conduct
- breakdown in relationship with staff teams or
- other cause which may disadvantage students

If such early cessation is thought to be necessary, the appropriate University process must be followed.

Reporting

External examiners are required to report annually in writing to the University and **within four weeks** of the date of the Progression and Award Board and/or Module Board for the award they examine.

External examiners should expect to receive a response to their report from Course Directors **within 30 working days** of confirmed receipt of report (please note the 30 Working days does not include days in August when many Academic Staff take annual leave).

Please note if a negative report is submitted the Dean or Nominee is asked to ensure that the course director in agreement with themselves respond fully to the external examiner on the issues raised **within ten working days of the date the report is sent to the faculty by QAS** and that the Dean (or Dean's nominee) also produces a follow up action plan to ensure that any issues are dealt with appropriately at a School level.

Contacts and Further Information

Academic
Regulations

External Examiners
Guidance and
Templates

Quality Assurance
Services
qas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk