



# ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

## Universal Assessment Regulations

### *The University's External Examiners*

#### Document Control

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar
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#### 1 Implementation

These regulations apply with immediate effect.

#### 2 Introduction

- 2.1 Each External Examiner shall be appointed as a subject-based External Examiner for one or more specified undergraduate subjects, postgraduate routes or other programmes.
- 2.2 In addition, three subject-based External Examiners shall be appointed to a second post, as a School/Department Examiner.
- 2.3 These Regulations complement separate the Handbook on External Examining Process produced by the University.

#### 3. Subject-Based External Examiners

##### 3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1 It is the role of the external examiner to:

- ensure that assessment processes and standards are applied appropriately, consistently and fairly across all modules by all internal markers and in line with the University's regulations and guidelines;
- judge whether or not the learning outcomes have been met;
- ensure that the learning outcomes are appropriate in the light of national standards (c.f. the National Qualification Framework and its statements about levels) and benchmarks within the subject;
- measure the outcomes against the appropriate pathway/programme

specifications;

- [where a Continuation and Award Board has been attended], ensure that the procedures for determining students' entitlement to progress to the next stage of their course, or to receive an award, are applied appropriately, consistently, fairly and in line with the University's regulations and conventions.

3.1.2 In order to carry out the roles listed in 3.1.1 above, the external examiner must:

- ensure that the assessments are conducted within the approved regulations;
- be given the opportunity to consider the form and content of proposed examination papers, and to advise on the form and content of other summative assessments;
- have the opportunity to examine a range of students' assessed work, covering the full spread of achievement, for each assessment component and, on the basis of her/his scrutiny of such a sample, decide on the appropriateness of the standards that have been applied and the comparability of the standards that have been applied across assessments;
- have the opportunity, if she/he believes that the sample submitted has been inadequate to enable her/him to make sound judgements about standards within and across assessments, to request access to a wider range of assessed assignments and/or examination papers, potentially including all assessed work;
- where viva voce examinations play a part in the assessment process, agree the principles of selection of candidates and conduct the examinations, perhaps assisted by one or more internal examiners;
- be able to compare the performance of candidates with that of their peers registered for comparable programmes elsewhere;
- maintain close contact with the academic staff contributing to the pathway/programme;
- attend the meetings of the relevant School/Department Continuation and Award Boards, and ensure that the Board's decisions have been reached in accordance with the awarding body's requirements and normal practice of higher education;
- in the event of absence owing to exceptional circumstances from a meeting s/he would normally attend, certify their absence from the meeting, and notify the relevant Head of School in advance;
- sign a results list jointly with the Chair of the Board for all assessments in which they were concerned;
- make oral comments during the Board meeting about overall standards, examples of good practice, and, where appropriate, how the pathway/route and/or its assessment procedures might be enhanced;
- submit an annual written report.

3.1.3 In order to enhance the University's ability, as quickly as possible, to disseminate good practice and identify issues of University-wide concern, External Examiners who have attended an undergraduate Continuation and Award board are encouraged, before the meeting of the relevant University-wide Continuation and Award Boards, to send, to the School/Department External Examiner attending that Board, summary of any suggested issues and practices that could usefully be drawn to the attention of the Board.

3.1.4 In order to protect their independence, External Examiners should not be members of a panel established to review a major/programme they examine.

3.1.5 An external examiner has the right to:

- have access to records of earlier assessments;
- to address matters of serious concern directly to the Vice Chancellor and Rector of Liverpool Hope University.

3.1.6 Although an External Examiner is entitled, on the basis of their scrutiny of a sample of work, to propose that, overall, the marks should be raised or lowered, they should not normally adjust the marks awarded to individual candidates whose work was included in the sample.

### **3.2 Termination of an External Examiner's Contract**

3.2.1 The appointment of an external examiner may be terminated in the following circumstances:

- [a] failure to attend a Board meeting without the prior agreement of the relevant Head of School/Department;
- [b] failure to submit a full report within the specified time;
- [c] failure to carry out satisfactorily the roles and responsibilities listed in paragraph 3.1 above;
- [d] withdrawal of, or non-recruitment to, the relevant undergraduate subject, postgraduate route or other programme.

3.2.2 Whilst it is hoped that such a situation will not arise, an external examiner whose performance or general conduct is unsatisfactory, may be warned informally in the first instance and, if necessary, be advised on appropriate remedial action(s) which need to be taken. Where grounds for termination remain, these must be stated in the written communication from the School/Department to the DVC who shall inform the examiner in writing of the University's decision, this is also notified to the Academic Committee. This will have the effect of terminating the contract immediately.

## **4 The School/Department External Examiners**

### **4.1 Roles and Responsibilities**

4.1.1 It is the role of the external examiner to:

- ensure that Continuation and Award Boards apply procedures for determining students' entitlement to progress to the next stage of their course, or to receive an award, in an appropriate, consistent and fair manner, and in line with the University's regulations and conventions;
- identify, and draw to the attention of the relevant Dean, any common issues, concerns, and good practices in the reports of subject-based External Examiners in the School/Department for which they are responsible;
- where appropriate, act as mentor for new or lesser experienced external examiners.

4.1.2 In order to carry out these roles, the external examiner must, each year:

- attend meetings of Continuation and Award Boards, as allocated by the Registrar;
- consider all undergraduate External Examiner reports for their School/Department;
- submit a written report in September of each year based on the two activities listed above;
- offer support to new examiners.

4.2.3 A School/Department External Examiner has the right to address matters of serious concern directly to the Vice Chancellor and Rector of Liverpool Hope University.

### **4.2 Termination of a School/Department External Examiner's Contract**

- 4.2.1 The appointment of a School/Department External Examiner may be terminated in the following circumstances:
- [a] failure to attend a Board meeting without good reason;
  - [b] failure to submit a full report within the specified time;
  - [c]. failure to carry out satisfactorily the roles and responsibilities listed in paragraph 4.1 above.
- 4.2.2 Whilst it is hoped that such a situation will not arise, an external examiner whose performance or general conduct is unsatisfactory, may be warned informally in the first instance and, if necessary, be advised on appropriate remedial action(s) which need to be taken. In exceptional circumstances, however, the Registrar may authorise a letter of premature termination to be sent to the external examiner concerned without prior warning. This will have the effect of terminating the contract immediately.