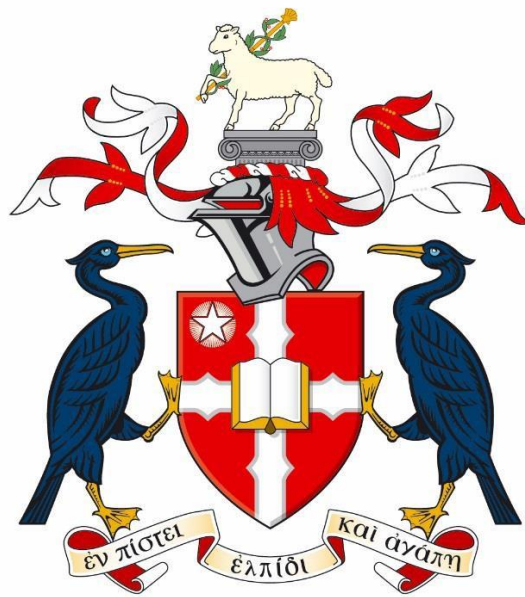


# Liverpool Hope University



## External Examining Handbook (QH12) Taught Programmes

2022/23

## Foreword

External Examiners play a key role in helping the University maintain the academic and professional standards of all its awards and are an essential part of its quality assurance and enhancement framework. In addition to providing an opinion of whether the assessment framework and practice in place for a programme are robust and whether the standard of the award is appropriate, External Examiners also provide advice to academic teams on the content, balance and structure of programmes, on developments in assessment and other processes and are also asked to comment on matters such as proposed major modifications to programmes.

The observations provided by External Examiners, together with suggestions for enhancement, form a key part of our programme review and improvement activities. External Examiner's annual reports are, for example, disseminated and discussed within programmes and more widely across the University, as well as being shared with students and, where appropriate, with our collaborative partners.

This Handbook has been designed to be a point of reference for both University staff and all External Examiners of taught programmes. For ease of reference, the Handbook has been produced in two parts:

- **Section A** provides an overview of Hope's framework for External Examiners;
- **Section B** contains links to key information for those who are appointed as External Examiners to **Undergraduate Programmes** and for those appointed as External Examiners to **Postgraduate Taught Programmes**.

If you are an External Examiner, may I extend my thanks to you for the significant contribution that you make to the University, and please do let us know if you require any additional information or assistance to support you in carrying out your duties.



Dr Penny Haughe  
Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost

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## SECTION A: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

### KEY CONTACTS

*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES*

*SCHOOL OF EDUCATION*

**University Executive Manager**

Mr. Chris Leyland

[leylanc@hope.ac.uk](mailto:leylanc@hope.ac.uk)

*SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES*

*SCHOOL OF BUSINESS*

*SCHOOL OF LAW and CRIMINOLOGY*

*FOUNDATION LEVEL*

**University Executive Manager**

Mrs Sarah Meir

[meirs@hope.ac.uk](mailto:meirs@hope.ac.uk)

*SCHOOL OF CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS*

**University Executive Manager**

Ms Natalie Dermott

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*DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE*

*DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY*

*SCHOOL OF HEALTH and SPORT SCIENCES*

*SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE & ENGINEERING*

**University Executive Manager**

Ms Jane Blackmore

[blackmj@hope.ac.uk](mailto:blackmj@hope.ac.uk)

External Examiners in the Science Schools and Departments should note that, whilst their Examiner's report should be submitted to the University Executive Manager (who confirms receipt and the fee) any/all expenses claims, fee claims, and any other administration is carried out by the individual Departmental or School offices. We request External Examiners deal with the offices for such support in the first instance.

**University Registrar**

Dr Cathy Walsh

[walshc@hope.ac.uk](mailto:walshc@hope.ac.uk)

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Liverpool Hope University is responsible for the standards of all awards made in its name. In order to assist the University to discharge that responsibility, the University appoints External Examiners who have professional expertise and experience in designated areas of study which will enable them to offer informed, independent, and impartial judgements about the appropriateness and comparability of the standards of awards.

The External Examiner system within UK higher education is one of the principal means for assuring the maintenance of threshold academic standards, and the quality of the evidence produced by External Examiners is crucially dependent on their 'externality'<sup>1</sup> and subject expertise.

All University programmes of study leading to an award of credit at undergraduate or postgraduate (taught) level must have one or more External Examiner(s) appointed to them.

The information contained in this Handbook also applies to External Examiners appointed to programmes of the University delivered through collaborative provision arrangements. Schools/Departments<sup>2</sup> should ensure that, where they have a collaborative provision arrangement in place, staff from partner organisations are aware of their responsibilities (as appropriate and in line with any collaborative agreement) with respect to External Examining.

This Handbook also draws on and includes key information about:

- the University's framework and regulations for undergraduate programmes;
- the University's regulations for taught postgraduate programmes;
- the University's policies and procedures for assessment.

All of these documents and other useful information for External Examiners, together with electronic versions of all forms, can be accessed in full via the University's [online resource collection](#) for External Examiners.

## 2. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

At least one External Examiner must be appointed for each award/programme made by the University. The number of External Examiners appointed to each programme of study should be sufficient to ensure that appropriate expertise is available to cover all areas of the syllabus under assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> External Examiners should be independent of the University and not compromised by a prior association with the programme team or by some reciprocal arrangement with their own department

<sup>2</sup> Or equivalent

The University only appoints examiners who are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities without conflict of interest. In line with recent guidance from UK Standing Committee for Quality Assurance (2022 'External Examining Principles'. Examiners must be able to 'comment impartially and informatively on academic standards, student achievement and assessment processes.

University Executive Managers (UEMs) are responsible for alerting academic Schools/Departments to the requirement for External Examiner nominations which (for new provision) should be submitted and approved either in advance of the first year of delivery to be examined, or (for existing provision) during the final year of the current examiner's term of office. All External Examiner nominations should normally have been approved **before** the start of the academic year in which the appointee is due to commence their duties. Each School/Department is asked to consider inclusive recruitment of examiners to ensure that the examining pool reflects the diversity of the sector.

Having identified a potential candidate and determined an 'in principle' willingness on the part of the nominee to act in this capacity, Subject Leads/Programme Leads should complete, and submit to Head of School/Department (via the UEM), the Nomination Form for a New External Examiner (EXN1 FORM), accompanied by the nominee's full academic curriculum vitae detailing their employment history, roles and responsibilities and levels of research and scholarly activity. Nominations should be supported by the relevant School/Department Academic Committee before being submitted to Academic Committee for consideration. The essential requirement of an External Examiner nomination is that it provides sufficient information to enable a judgement to be made against the Criteria for Appointment (listed in Appendix 1). Where insufficient information has been supplied, a request for further details will be made which may delay the process of approval.

If, in exceptional circumstances, a nomination is put forward which does not meet all the criteria for appointment then the School/Department should provide a detailed statement in support of the nomination.

Academic Committee is responsible for considering all External Examiner nominations and making a formal recommendation to Senate regarding their appointment. Academic Committee has a responsibility to ensure that the criteria set for the identification, nomination and appointment of candidates are upheld, that nominations are consistently and rigorously assessed and that the University's framework for External Examining is routinely monitored.

Once Senate has approved a new appointment, each External Examiner will receive a confirmation of appointment letter from the relevant School/Department specifying the programme(s) to which the External Examiner is assigned and details of the fee to be paid together with induction information and contact details.

Each School/Department must ensure that the External Examiners are fully aware of their role and duties. Where more than one External Examiner is assigned to a programme, their individual responsibilities should be made clear.

The annual fee paid to External Examiners will be determined by the relevant HOD/S, in line with the University norms for payment of External Examiners (see Section A14). Any exceptions to this must be approved by the Chair of Academic Committee.

External Examiners are appointed for a fixed term of 4 years. Schools/Departments may, in exceptional circumstances, request an extension of the appointment for one additional year using the EXN2 FORM. All requests for an extension of appointment must go through the same approvals process as described above.

The Head of School/Department, or their nominee, should also hold information regarding where current Liverpool Hope staff hold appointments as External Examiners. In order to ensure there is no potential reciprocity in the nominations made, this list should be considered at School/Department Academic level when considering nominations for new External Examiners.

The University may terminate an External Examiner's appointment at any point if they fail to fulfil their roles and responsibilities or if there are wider concerns about their fitness for the role. This is discussed fully in Section A13 below. If an External Examiner wishes to resign from their appointment, it is expected that they will give 6 months' notice, to allow for a successor to be appointed in advance of the main assessment/examination period. The resignation should be in writing to the Head of School/Department, and copied to the UEM

Academic Committee should receive, on an annual basis, a complete list of all External Examiners from each School/Department, together with a list of all External Examiner appointments held by Liverpool Hope's own academic staff.

### **3. INDUCTION**

All External Examiners (and particularly those who are newly-appointed) are trained in order to be able to fulfil their role. Examiners are required to view the University training [PowerPoint presentations](#) and are expected to confirm to UEMs that they have done so, and that they understand the contents. They will also be given an opportunity to raise queries with the University Registrar.

In line with the 2022 sector wide guidance, Liverpool Hope requires External Examiners to be 'sufficiently knowledgeable about national reference points such as the threshold standards expressed within the [Frameworks for HE Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#), and, where appropriate, the relevant [Subject Benchmark Statements](#)'. Examiners are encouraged to undertake the [Advance HE training for External Examiners](#).

On appointment, External Examiners should receive:

- a copy of this Handbook;
- a link to briefing slides for induction and annual update;
- guidance on claiming fees and expenses;
- and should be directed to the University's web-pages for External Examiners.

In addition, Departments/Schools should supplement this information with documentation appropriate to the External Examiner's appointment including, for example:

- current student handbooks (available through Moodle)
- marking and assessment criteria;
- guidance on marking and moderation practices;
- links to relevant QAA subject benchmark statements<sup>3</sup>;
- details of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements where appropriate.

The Head of School/Department should also make the report of (an) outgoing External Examiner(s) and the response(s) to this available to the incoming External Examiner(s). The School/Department is advised to check with the incoming External Examiner when (s)he wishes to receive the previous report(s) and response(s) as some External Examiners prefer to have submitted their own independent initial assessment before having access to the views of their predecessor(s).

Departments/Schools should ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are in place for External Examiners, particularly in the case of less experienced External Examiners who may benefit from some form of mentoring or working within a team of External Examiners. External Examiner/s may also be asked to provide mentoring and support.

Departments/Schools should inform External Examiners of the dates of meetings they are required to attend (e.g. Board of Examiners meetings) at the earliest opportunity. The requirements for attendance at Board are detailed in Section 4 (B) below.

Departments/Schools should also provide, in advance of the assessment period, the process and timescale for the moderation and return of students' work, with clearly stated deadlines. It would be useful to alert the external to this as early in the academic year as possible.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **(A) EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

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<sup>3</sup> A full list of subject benchmarks can be accessed at [QAA.ac.uk](http://QAA.ac.uk)



The 2022 UKSCQA paper on External Examining Principles informs the role of an External Examiner at Hope.

External Examiners are appointed to provide the University with impartial and independent advice and informed comment on its academic standards and student achievement in relation to those standards, through oversight of the assessment process across programmes/awards. They are 'critical peers'.

In line with the policy document External Examiners should:

1. Protect Standards and Ensure Comparability and Consistency – challenging the institution on achievement of threshold standards and ensuring comparability with other institutions.
2. Act as an expert in providing independent critical review, performing the role with integrity and supporting enhancement – this relies upon timely submission of comments and reports and declaring any conflicts of interest. A focus on enhancement of provision is key.
3. Ensure fairness and transparency in assessment – advising on assessment process and application of regulations.
4. Maintain the currency of their knowledge – using their research/scholarship or industry experience to remain relevant to the discipline including remaining currency in assessment practices. Engagement with relevant data on student achievement is important.
5. Support inclusivity and equity in teaching, learning and assessment – advising on whether the provision reflects the diversity of the student body and supports inclusion. This includes advising on enhancement measures to close achievement gaps.

These 5 principles are adapted from the UKSCQA document. This can be read in full [here](#).

External Examiners will normally visit the University **at least** once a year to review assessed student work (unless other arrangements have been made) and to attend the relevant Boards and/or Meetings of Examiners. Further visits may be required for programmes with a performance, practical or professional element, or where cohorts are completing at different times during the year. External Examiners are required to produce an annual report to the University on the provision for which they are responsible.

Whilst all awards have at least one External Examiner, there may be instances where more than one examiner is attached to a programme. For example, the number of student registrations may make it unreasonable for a single individual to manage the volume of work, or the subject content of dissertations or the combination of post-graduate modules may vary significantly, and make it appropriate that student work is examined by a range of subject specialists. In such circumstances, it is important that

Departmental/School processes permit and facilitate communication between examiners and the co-ordination of their comments so that a general and consistent overview may be obtained, discussed and reported on.

In all circumstances, External Examiners are required to comment on the extent to which the University's Academic Regulations are applied fairly and consistently by Boards and/or Panels of Examiners, that discretion has been used appropriately and that mitigating circumstances and academic misconduct have been handled in accordance with the University's regulations.

In addition to the standard requirements of an External Examiner detailed above, External Examiners are also expected to assist programme teams and the University by being available to:

- Be consulted about any proposed changes in the approved continuation and assessment regulations that will directly affect students currently on the programme(s) for which they have responsibility;
- Comment on proposed major modifications to programme(s) and modules within existing programmes/awards for which they have responsibility;
- Comment on work other than for final award assessments, examination papers and continuously-assessed work;
- Comment and give advice on the content and structure of programmes and assessment practices and on teaching and learning methods.

The University's quality assurance system provides for the commissioning of reports on particular aspects of academic provision to which External Examiners may occasionally be asked to contribute, advising on the implications of developments within the sector, regulatory environment or the wider academic community within which the provision is situated

## **(B) SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

In addition to the appointment of External Examiner at Major/Programme level, each School/Department may appoint an experienced External Examiner to the role of **School/Department External Examiner**. This is dependent upon the scale of the provision and in some Departments with limited provision this appointment is not appropriate. The position of School/Department External Examiner (where appropriate) is a 2-year appointment. When making an appointment, candidates should be either an existing External Examiner in the last year of their appointment or an External Examiner who has just completed their term of office.

In addition to the standard requirements of an External Examiner detailed above, the School/Department External Examiner is required to:

- ensure that Continuation and Award Boards across the School/Department 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 Head of School/Department, any common issues, concerns, and good practices in the reports of External Examiners in the School/Department for which they are responsible. This includes considering relevant data and identifying trends contained within.
- where appropriate, act as mentor for new or less experienced External Examiners.

In order to carry out their role, the School/Department External Examiner must, each year:

- attend at least one meeting of a Continuation and Award Board for their School/Department, together with any meetings of other Continuation and Award Boards as allocated by the Registrar;
- consider all External Examiner reports for their School/Department;
- submit a written report in early September of each year based on the two activities listed above. This report, and associated responses, will be considered by University Academic Committee at its first meeting of the academic year.

Note there may be instances where the Head of School/Department looks to appoint a/other experienced External Examiners to this role due to the scale of provision within the School. In such cases the Head of School/Department shall agree the division of responsibilities between the School Examiners and require School Examiners to provide a collective overview regarding provision in the School.

## **5. MODERATION**

External Examiners are appointed to act as moderators of academic standards, and to comment on the quality of academic provision and comparability of standards and student performance.

For programmes of study with only one appointed External Examiner, the examiner should have oversight of all assessments that contribute to the final award classification. Where a team of External Examiners is appointed to a programme, the Head of School/Department should allocate tasks to individual External Examiners by agreement on the basis of their subject expertise.

External Examiners should be provided with all draft examination papers for comment and suggested improvement, together with model answers if the Schools/Department thinks it appropriate. Where suggestions for amendment are provided by an External

Examiner, Schools/Departments should reply to the External Examiner to confirm how their advice has been acted upon.

External Examiners are required to consider the consistency and accuracy of marking standards for a programme of study, through reviewing the marking within each assessment, and between assessments of the same level. They should be provided with the marking criteria used in relation to the assessments, a list of all the marks allocated (including anywhere the work itself is not being presented) and the mark and feedback sheet as given to the student.

Schools/Departments will reach an agreement in advance with examiners on the volume and range of student work to be externally moderated. This must provide sufficient evidence for the External Examiner to determine that internal marking is of an appropriate standard. All examination scripts and coursework contributing to assessment should be available to examiners on request<sup>4</sup>. Where cohort sizes are small it is good practice for the entire cohort's work to be moderated.

Where examiners only visit the University for the Boards and/or Panels of Examiners, they will need to make arrangements with the programme team to conduct their sampling and moderation of assessed work prior to the meeting(s) so their views may be considered before grades are confirmed.

External Examiners should **not** normally be expected to adjudicate between internal markers. Disagreements between internal markers should be resolved before the sample of work is seen by the External Examiner. This may be through the use of a third marker, or consultation with senior colleagues within the School/Department. In all cases the work should be included in the sample, and it should be transparent to the External Examiner how the final mark was decided. If, in exceptional cases, a mark has not been agreed internally, the views of the External Examiner can be taken into account in determining the final mark.

An External Examiner who does not agree with the marks awarded within a sample of work may propose further moderation (additional to that already undertaken) or re-marking. This action must apply to all students who undertook the unit of assessment. External Examiners **are not** permitted to alter the mark of an individual student's work from a sample sent for scrutiny.

Where required by a PSRB, External Examiners may, as agreed with the School/Department, complete further duties in respect of the assessment process as necessary. This may involve, for example, as in the case of Education, assessment of the internal judgements made in terms of recommendations against the Teaching Standards (QTS), or, within Social Work, assessment against the requirements of Social Work England (SWE). In such instances the extended remit of the External

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<sup>4</sup> Note that where assessment involves a presentational activity (i.e. the format of the assessment is not written) this must be recorded and made available to the External Examiner for moderation purposes.

Examiner must be clearly documented with appropriate sampling strategies in place and remuneration for such.

## **6. MEETINGS OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS**

(Guidance from the University Registrar)

The University operates subject meetings, School/Department Continuation and Award Boards and an oversight University Continuation and Award Board. The role of each of these is detailed in the [University Regulations](#).

### **Role of External Examiners in Meetings**

- [a] External Examiners are regarded as full and equal members of School/Department Boards, whose key role is to provide advice and guidance, and to give an external perspective. While External Examiners do not have a right of veto, Boards should pay careful attention to any recommendations made by them
- [b] As full members of Boards, External Examiners should attend relevant meetings, including supplementary meetings where appropriate.
- [c] Where an External Examiner is unable to be present at the relevant meeting this should be agreed with the Head of School/Department in advance. A mechanism should be put in place for obtaining the External Examiner's agreement with the marks and awards confirmed at the meeting. Where possible, telephone or video conferencing may be utilised.
- [d] External Examiners attend meetings to scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of the assessment processes, whether confirming a set of results or the overall continuation or award decisions taken at programme-level.
- [e] The endorsement of the decisions taken by the Board of Examiners should be given through the signature of the relevant External Examiner (s) on the cover sheet attached to Board transcripts
- [f] External Examiners do not normally have a role in dealing with Mitigating Circumstances or Academic Misconduct other than by virtue of being a member of a Board of Examiners.

## **7. REPORTING**

As part of their duties all External Examiners are required to complete a written annual report, using the [template](#) provided by the University<sup>5</sup>. External Examiner's reports

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<sup>5</sup> This can be found on the University website

provide an important source of direct evidence of academic standards and indirect evidence of the quality of students' learning opportunities.

External Examiners are required to submit their reports, via email, directly to the relevant University Executive Manager according to the deadlines set by the University (typically for undergraduate, end of July and postgraduate taught, end of November).

If an External Examiner is appointed to programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate taught level separate reports are expected to be submitted by the respective deadlines.

In their annual report, External Examiners are expected to provide comment on:

- The academic standard of the University's awards in accordance with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and any applicable subject benchmark statements, and in comparison, with other similar HE institutions of which the External Examiner has experience;
- The rigour of the assessment process which measures student achievement against the intended learning outcomes of the programme (in line with the University's policies and regulations);
- Any instances of good practice observed and opportunities to enhance the learning opportunities of the students;
- Any issues specifically required by any relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB).

External Examiners are also expected to confirm whether:

- sufficient evidence and information was available to them in order to fulfil their role;
- issues raised in previous reports have been addressed satisfactorily;
- and may also be asked to comment on wider matters regarding quality enhancement.

The University reserves the right to request additional information from an External Examiner if the report submitted is considered to be of insufficient detail to assess their opinion of the academic standards of the programme(s) or module(s) concerned.

Payment of the annual fee to External Examiners is conditional upon the timely receipt of a detailed annual report.

External Examiners in their final year of appointment are requested to give an overview of their term of appointment at the end of the report form.

Following submission of all reports, the School/Department External Examiner is required to provide an Annual Report to the School/Department (via the Head of School/Department for discussion at School Academic Board) which highlights key,

generic or recurring issues as well as features of good practice noted by examiners (for quality enhancement). These, together with an accompanying report by the Head of School/Department/ are received by Academic Committee for institutional oversight, assurance and action, as appropriate.

The University reserves the right to terminate an External Examiner's appointment if a report is not received within a reasonable timeframe of the deadline of mid-September.

## **8. CONSIDERATION OF EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORTS**

All External Examiner reports should be received by the University Executive Manager (or designee) who will then forward these to the Head of School/Department and School/Department External Examiner/s.

Departments/Schools should consider any issues raised in the report through the appropriate forum (for example the Annual Monitoring and Enhancement meetings, Departmental/School meetings), and construct a response detailing how appropriate actions will be taken. Where an External Examiner's suggestion is not to be acted on a detailed explanation should also be given. Any local enhancement actions should be managed and monitored via School/Department meetings.

Responses, in the form of a letter from the Head of School/Department, should be sent to the External Examiner, ideally within 6-8 weeks following receipt of the report. Where, for good reason, it is not possible to inform the External Examiner of the resulting actions within a reasonable timeframe, an initial response acknowledging that this issue is under discussion can be given, provided a follow-up communication is sent.

Where an External Examiner raises an issue at University-level (e.g. relating to the academic regulations) it will be the responsibility of the Chair of Academic Committee to provide a response. In these cases, a copy of the response will be forwarded to the Head of School/Department for information.

Academic Committee will consider separate UG and PGT summary reports of External Examiner comments (as captured by the School/Department External Examiner/s and reported via the Head of School/Department's Annual Monitoring Report) in order to identify, and where necessary act upon, any common themes emerging at School/Department or University level.

A summary for students of the External Examiner/s reports, together with details of the response/agreed actions in accessible language, should be made available to:

- all students on the relevant major/programme, usually via Moodle and,
- partner organisations, where such provision is provided in partnership.

External Examiner reports and responses will also be used to inform the University's annual review and periodic review processes.

## **9. STUDENT INVOLVEMENT**

Schools/Departments should provide students with details (name and home institution) of the External Examiner(s) appointed to their programme(s) of study. This may be via the relevant Moodle.

The University encourages the provision of opportunities for External Examiners and students to meet (either in person or by electronic means) to discuss the programme of study and its assessment. Such meetings provide the External Examiner with a rounded overview of the quality and standard of the programme, as experienced by current students. Schools/Departments should be encouraged to provide External Examiners with the opportunity, normally once per academic year, to informally meet a representative groups of students to gather their views of the programme.

Where a meeting is arranged with an External Examiner, clear guidance should be given by the School/Department about the purpose of that meeting and its limitations, particularly with regard to individual assessment outcomes.

Examiners of practice-based assessments (e.g. in teacher training/social work) may be required to visit placement settings to meet students and mentors. However, there is no general requirement for examiners to meet with students although they may do so on request. Schools/Departments will determine the processes by which such engagement takes place, notifying them formally to Academic Committee and making sure that examiners are aware of them.

Under no circumstances should students attempt to contact an External Examiner directly, and External Examiners are not permitted to respond to contacts made by third parties including students or their representatives. If any such contacts are attempted, the External Examiner should report the details immediately to the University, through the Head of School/Department. If a student is found to have contacted an External Examiner they may be subject to action under the University's disciplinary procedures.

External Examiner reports and the School/Department responses should, as a matter of course, be discussed with Student Representatives as part of Student Voice Committee meetings. The minutes of these discussions, together with the report, should be published and available for all students on the programme to access.

A Sabbatical Officer of the Students' Union will be present at meetings of Academic Committee, where summaries of issues raised by External Examiners and responses at School, Departmental, and University level will be discussed.



## **10. DATA PROTECTION/ FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, regulates the processing of personal data, both as electronic and paper records. The University requires all staff and agents to abide by the provisions of GDPR.

All personal information supplied by the External Examiner for the purposes of their appointment will be held securely and for no longer than is necessary, and in accordance with the retention schedule designed by the University for compliance with GDPR. As stated in Section 9, the name and home institution of External Examiners will be included in programme information made available to students (e.g. via Moodle).

It should be noted that External Examiner reports will be disclosable upon receipt of a request. Therefore, the University would not expect any identifiable reference to individual staff or students (by name or ID number) in the report.

The University has been designated a Public Authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Upon receipt of a request for copies of External Examiner's reports, the University has a statutory obligation to consider their release subject to any applicable exemption under the provisions of the Act.

## **11. CAUSES FOR CONCERN**

Through processes laid out in Section 7 of this Handbook, the University should respond to any concerns an External Examiner may raise in relation to their duties or which may arise during their tenure.

In exceptional cases External Examiners may have serious concerns about academic standards and quality of provision which cannot be resolved through the normal reporting process and/or following discussion with the relevant Head of School/Department. In such an instance an External Examiner may write, in confidence, directly to the Vice-Chancellor.

If an External Examiner still has a serious concern about academic standards or quality of provision, and has exhausted all internal procedures, including writing to the Vice Chancellor and Chair of Governing Council, they can invoke the Quality Assurance Agency's Concerns scheme or inform any relevant professional body.

## **12. CHANGES IN PLACE OF WORK/EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Where an External Examiner leaves their employment in an academic institution (or in the case of practice-based programmes, exits professional practice\*) during their term

of office, that examiner may only continue in the role for a maximum of one year if they do not resume permanent employment or practice in the meantime.

\*it may be necessary for an external examiner to leave their role with immediate effect if the requirement of a PSRB states that any External Examiner must be currently in practice or registered.

### **13. DISCONTINUATION OF CONTRACT**

An appointment may be terminated with six months' notice on either side or exceptionally within an earlier period in the circumstances described below. While neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, the following are indicative of what may be considered appropriate grounds for termination:

- Failure to disclose a relationship, contractual or otherwise, which may impair the integrity of the moderation process and the independence of the External Examiner;
- Persistent failure to attend meetings and/or present the required reports, and/or the submission of identical reports and/or failure to return students' work;
- Dismissal by the examiner's main employer for improper conduct in relation to their employment which may either impair the integrity of the examination process and/or the independence of the examiner and/or bring the University into disrepute;
- On programmes where there is a clinical or professional element, disbarment from being able to practise, as this may compromise the integrity of the moderation process or the independence of the examiner;
- Failure to maintain professional body membership or a professional registration where this is a requirement of being an examiner for the programme concerned;
- Where there are other grounds for termination these must be stated in the written communication from the School/Department to the DVC and Company Secretary who shall inform the examiner in writing of the University's decision which is also notified to the Academic Committee.

It is expected that, should you need to resign your position prior to the completion of your contract, you provide a minimum of six months' notice in order to maintain continuity of assessment and to ensure that the University is able to complete specific assessment/examination cycles.

### **14. FEES AND EXPENSES**

Subject to agreement all External Examiners to be paid according to the schedule below unless a local agreement currently in force pays more.

PROVISION TO BE EXAMINED	PROPOSED FEE*
New Undergraduate Provision (both Full Single Honours and Major) (for first & second years only)	First year of provision £150.00 (if sole external) Second year of provision (i.e. 2 levels being moderated) £250.00 Thereafter as below
Full Single Honours Programme	£400.00 (if sole external) £350.00 (if shared)
BA Primary Teaching (QTS)	£600.00 (if sole external or other combination) £550.00 (if shared)
Full Single Honours Programme <b>AND</b> Major	£500.00 (if sole external or other combination) £450.00 (if shared)
Major Only PGCE (Primary or Secondary)	£350.00 (if sole external) £400.00 (if sole examiner) £300.00 (if shared)
Masters Programme (MA or MSc)	£300.00
EdD	£500.00
School External Examiner	An additional £200.00 on top of their normal fee as programme External Examiner.

\*Alternative fees may be devised for special cases by agreement with the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost. Such cases may include, for example, remuneration for External Examiners appointed to programmes delivered in collaboration with other organisations in the UK / Internationally or credit bearing PLD programmes. Note that the appointment of more than one External Examiner to a programme would normally only be required in cases where cohorts are unusually large and thus the scope and scale of the role remains broadly equivalent. Where a second External Examiner is required to ensure appropriate subject expertise, but the cohorts are relatively small (and thus the scale of work more modest) the DVC may approve a reduced joint fee of £250.

## Expenses

The University will reimburse expenses incurred in the course of carrying out duties as External Examiner for Liverpool Hope, in accordance with the maximum rates specified. The University reserves the right to amend this policy at any time, at the discretion of the University Senior Executive Team (USET).

All expenses claims are subject to the University's normal audit procedures in accordance with its financial regulations. The University requires its External Examiners to provide some personal data on expenses claim forms in order to process the claim. The University processes all personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act and UK GDPR.

Expenses claims will only be reimbursed on production of receipts giving details of the expenses incurred. In most cases, credit card slips do not contain this information and are therefore not acceptable. With the exception of car mileage claims, specific receipts for all goods or services being claimed for must be supplied. All claims must be submitted using the External Examiner Expenses Claim Form Link and forwarded to the University Executive Manager or named contact within the School/Department.

Additional guidance and information can be found at:

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/staff/governance/academicquality/>

## SECTION B: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

External Examiners should familiarise themselves with the regulations governing the programmes for which they have oversight. These can be found at:

[Understanding Liverpool Hope Degrees](#)

Please note that key information will be provided as part of the Annual External Examiner update and if an examiner has queries these should be discussed with the appropriate assessment co-ordinator in the first instance. The University Registrar is also available to support External Examiners in their role.

### APPENDICES

#### APPENDIX 1: UNIVERSITY CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

##### Person specification

a. Institutions appoint External Examiners who can show appropriate evidence of the following (reflecting the expectations of the QAA Quality Code):

- i) knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;
- ii) competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study, or parts thereof;
- iii) relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate;
- iv) competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures;
- v) sufficient standing (normally holding a position of Senior (Clinical) Lecturer or higher), credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline/professional field to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers;
- vi) familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed;
- vii) fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other

- secure arrangements are in place to ensure that External Examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements);
- viii) meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
- ix) awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula;
- x) competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

b. The nominee's standing, credibility and breadth of experience may be indicated by:

- i) Their present post and place of work;
- ii) The range and scope of their experience across higher education/professions;
- iii) Their current and recent active involvement in research/scholarly/professional activities in the field of study concerned.

This does not, however, preclude the nomination of appropriately-experienced individuals who do not hold senior positions in their home institutions and where this is the case. the School/Department is asked to provide information to clarify the nominee's suitability for the role. Nominees without previous External Examiner experience should, where possible, join an experienced team of examiners or work initially alongside an experienced current examiner on a related programme. If the individual has no previous External Examiner experience at the appropriate level, their nomination should be supported by:

- iv) Other evidence of 'externality' or extensive experience of internal examination, i.e. assessment moderation and verification procedures; or other relevant and recent experience likely to support the examiner's role e.g. involvement in programme validation and quality monitoring processes;
- v) Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate;
- vi) Meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
- vii) An External Examiner's academic and/or professional qualifications should be appropriate and equivalent to the course being examined. Both the level and subject of their qualifications and, where appropriate, their practitioner experience should broadly match what is to be examined so that comparability of standards can be maintained.

External Examiners are, in the majority of cases, most appropriately appointed from other institutions in the higher education sector. However, in some circumstances nominations for appointments from outside the sector may be appropriate, for example from industry or the professions. Where the nominee is not from the HE sector the nominating School/Department is required to provide details of the relevance of the nominee's expertise, their recent experience of standards in higher education and how the individual will maintain the currency of their knowledge and experience.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The University do not appoint as External Examiners anyone in the following categories or circumstances:

- i) a member of a governing body or committee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners;
- ii) anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study;
- iii) anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study;
- iv) anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study.

Other restrictions include:

- i) A reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution;
- ii) The succession of an External Examiner from an institution by a colleague from the same department in the same institution;
- iii) The appointment of more than one External Examiner from the same department of the same institution;
- iv) External Examiners should normally hold no more than two External Examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time. The normal term of office is September to September although other annual appointment periods are also permitted. Where the nominee already holds two External Examiner-ships at other institutions, the proposing School/Department must provide supporting arguments to Academic Committee; for example, the addition of a third examiner-ship may be mitigated by the (small) volume of student work to be examined and its distribution (timing) during the year.
- v) Former staff and students of an institution can only be appointed as External Examiners for the same institution after a period of not less than five years has passed since leaving the institution or when all students taught by or with the proposed External Examiner have completed their programme(s), whichever is the longer.

Where, in exceptional circumstances, any of these terms needs to be varied – for example, in the case of discipline areas that are very small and specialist and where the pool of potential External Examiners is therefore restricted – this will be on submission of a proposal to Academic Committee which makes the case for exception and includes an account of the measures already taken to recruit a suitable individual.

## Document Control Note

Reviewed by	Rectorate Team	16/12/13
Received and Endorsed by	Academic Committee	5/3/14
Approved by	Senate	19/3/14
AUTHOR	Senior Academic Quality Advisor	
VERSION	1.0	
DATE	January 2014	
Links to <a href="#">QAA Quality Code</a>	Predominantly Chapter B7, Chapter B6, also B3, B8, B10	
Version Updates V2	Summary of Minor Revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Details regarding regulations removed and replaced by live links</li><li>• Guidance note included about the number of Faculty External Examiners</li><li>• Minor Modification regarding termination of appointments</li></ul>	Endorsed by Academic Committee March 2016
V3	Summary of Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- updated links and corrected colleague details</li><li>- clarification of the role of APABs and IECs in line with University regulations</li></ul>	TBC
V4	Summary of Minor Revisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Error messages in Contents list removed</li><li>- Broken links updated</li><li>- Wording under Induction “a copy of “induction and update form for external examiners” added</li></ul>	TBC
V5	Summary of Major Revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Document amended to incorporate the key guidance from <a href="#">UKSCQA</a> in 2022. Specifically, to detail the responsibilities of External Examiners and of Liverpool Hope University in defining and supporting the role.</li><li>- Other less significant changes to update the document in light of current provision at Hope.</li><li>- Recourse to VC and then Chair of Governing Council for External Examiners who have serious concerns before reporting to external bodies.</li></ul>	Proposed consideration 14/12/22 for