

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**  
**TAUGHT PROGRAMME EXTERNAL EXAMINER**  
**(Undergraduate and Master's Level Programmes)**

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- 1.1. This document outlines the typical duties expected of the post-holder. The descriptions of the post cannot be exhaustive and the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties, normally these will be broadly in line with the listed key responsibilities. Roles and responsibilities may also be subject to change.
- 2. Appointment**
  - 2.1. Taught programme External Examiners are from outside the College. They are appointed in accordance with specified criteria by the Vice Provost (Education) on behalf of the Senate.
  - 2.2. External Examiners should not normally be from a department in an institution where a member of the College is currently acting as an External Examiner and they should not normally be appointed in succession to an External Examiner from the same home department and institution. A period of five years should normally lapse before a member of academic staff, or a former student of the College, can be appointed as an External Examiner to the College.
  - 2.3. External Examiners are appointed normally for a period of four years only. In exceptional circumstances, an External Examiner may be re-appointed to serve a fifth and final year where a suitable case can be made for the appointment to be extended (e.g. to ensure continuity where a programme has been withdrawn and is being taught out or in situations where a subject is only taught in a small number of institutions and the pool of potential examiners is therefore limited).
  - 2.4. External Examiners appointed by the College should not normally hold more than two taught course external examiner appointments at any one time (inclusive of their appointment with the College).
- 3. Summary of post:**
  - 3.1. The primary duty of an External Examiner is to ensure that the standard of the degrees awarded by the College in the field of study concerned is consistent with that of the national university system.
  - 3.2. External Examiners shall have regard to the totality of the degree in respect of both syllabus and examination and will be provided with sufficient briefing documentation to enable them to carry out their duties.
  - 3.3. External Examiners should advise the Chair of the Board of Examiners if they have any connections (e.g. a close professional or personal relationship) with

any member of staff involved with the programme they are appointed to or candidate being examined.

3.4. The Chair of the Board of Examiners shall determine the distribution of duties between External Examiners appointed for a programme. Normally, for sampling and moderation purposes, External Examiners will see a sample of scripts from the top, middle and bottom of the range and normally all scripts of borderline candidates and those that have failed. When examining Master's level programmes, Examiners should also view distinction level material. However, External Examiners have the right to intercept and inspect any examination material they wish.

3.5. External examiners are required to preserve absolutely the secrecy of examination papers at all stages until the papers have actually been worked by the candidates. In the course of their duties, examiners will receive information that can be considered the personal data of students of the College. External examiners are expected to keep such information (including, for example, scripts, dissertations, marks, and comments from other examiners) confidential and secure at all times. External Examiners may also receive student work for moderation which includes research undertaken between students and private companies/organisations. External Examiners are also expected to keep such material, and the information contained within it, confidential.

4. Duties and Key Responsibilities:

- Familiarity with the following key documents:
  - [The QAA Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
  - [The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland \[FHEQ\]](#)
  - [Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements](#)
  - [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System \(ECTS\) – Bologna Declaration, ECTS User's Guide and Dublin Descriptors](#)
  - [The College's academic and examination regulations and examination and assessment procedures](#), in particular:
    - [Conduct of Board of Examiners' Meetings](#)
    - [Mitigating Circumstances procedure](#)
    - [Protocol for Marking and Moderation](#)
    - [Conduct of Oral Assessments, including viva voce examinations, for undergraduate and Master's level programmes](#)

- Programme Specific information: Programme Specification, syllabus, marking scheme/scheme for the award of honours, past examination questions and model answers.
- To provide commentary on whether the College is maintaining the academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the national Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and, where relevant, national subject benchmarks and the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.
- To provide feedback on whether the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended learning outcomes of the programme(s) and is conducted in line with College policies and regulations.
- To comment on whether the academic standards and the achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK Higher Education Institutions of which the External Examiners have experience.
- Participate in the setting of examination papers (each paper should be considered and approved by at least one External Examiner).
- Advise on whether internal marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent (and report instances where a programme/module is in breach of the College's or programme specific regulations).
- In some cases, External Examiners may be asked to comment upon borderline cases or where there is disagreement between first and second markers (though in the latter case this would normally be the responsibility of a College Examiner).
- Attend meetings of the Board of Examiners, or Joint Board of Examiners, where recommendations on the results of individual examinations are being considered and at which significant decisions are being taken.
- Where modules are shared across more than one programme, to liaise, with other External Examiners, as appropriate, to ensure that appropriate information is shared.
- To liaise with all departments concerned where modules for which an External Examiner is appointed to, form part of service teaching.
- To approve the agreed list of marks.
- Take part in viva voce examinations as required.
- To comment on proposed changes to programmes of study

- Submit an annual report on the standard of examinations and an overview report at the end of their term of office.

Approved by QAAC  
January 2012

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<b>Cross References:</b>	<a href="#">The QAA Quality Code for Higher Education</a> <a href="#">The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies [FHEQ]</a> <a href="#">Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements</a> <a href="#">European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) – Bologna Declaration, ECTS User's Guide and Dublin Descriptors</a> <a href="#">The College's academic and examination regulations</a> <a href="#">examination and assessment procedures</a> <a href="#">Conduct of Board of Examiners' Meetings</a> <a href="#">Mitigating Circumstances procedure</a> <a href="#">Protocol for Marking and Moderation</a> <a href="#">Conduct of Oral Assessments, including viva voce examinations, for undergraduate and Master's level programmes</a>		
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