External Examiner Role at University of Leeds
This guidance provides a summary of the External Examiner Handbook and the expectations of the role.

The Quality Assurance Team is available at qat@leeds.ac.uk to provide support and answer any questions. Please do let us know if your contact details (i.e. email address) and/or home institution need to be updated.
University Resources

Materials Provided by Schools

- Relevant programme and module specifications (including guidance on accreditation if necessary)
- Relevant handbooks (including school handbook and/or programme handbook)
- School Code of Practice on Assessment (including marking criteria)
- Guidance on school marking practices (including second and check marking)
- Previous external examiner reports and responses
- Timeline of assessment activity/communications (including dates of meetings and date report is expected)
Sector Resources

Quality Assurance Agency (Advice and Guidance on External Expertise)

Advance Higher Education (Fundamentals of External Examining)
Appointments
Appointment Periods

Appointments are for four academic years.

1 November: Standard Start Date

31 October: Standard End Date

Semester 1 Assessment Period

Reassessment Period

Semester 2 Assessment Period

Progression and Awards Board
Programmes

External examiners are appointed to programmes and may be appointed to more than one programme. External examiners should not normally be asked to take sole responsibility for (a) programme(s) with a total of more than 150 full-time equivalent (FTE) students in a cohort.

Modules

If required due to the specialist nature of the subject, external examiners may be appointed to modules that require particular knowledge.
Appointments  
Mentors and Mentees

Nominees without experience of the role will be appointed a mentor.

- Mentors answer any questions that mentees may have about their role in order to help support them in undertaking their responsibilities.
- Questions may vary based on programme and school structures so a formal set of requirements for mentorships are not currently issued by the University.
- Advice on approach and recommendations or limitations of the role may be helpful.
- Mentorships are for a period of one year and mentors will receive a standard fee of £100 per annum.
Appointments
Amendments to Appointments

Amendment of Duties
Remits may be amended throughout the appointment period with external examiner agreement.

Extension of Appointment Period
Appointment periods may be extended for an exceptional fifth year with external examiner agreement.
External examiners may resign from their roles with three months’ notice. External examiners should contact the Quality Assurance Team if they wish to resign from their roles.

Following receipt of a resignation, the Quality Assurance Team will confirm if further duties will be required. Programme Teams may accept a resignation effective immediately if no duties require prompt completion.
Terminations

Acceptable Reasons for Termination

- Non-attendance at the relevant School Progression and Awards Board without prior agreement
- Non-submission of reports within the specified timescales
- Non-fulfilment of other duties outlined in the procedures
- Where in the University’s judgement a situation arises compromising either the University’s reputation or the good standing of the External Examiner
- Where the University no longer requires the services of the External Examiner for academic reasons
Role of External Examiner

Ensure the comparability of the University's standards with those in peer institutions and national benchmarks.

Provide assurance for the University that its assessment system is fair and operated equitably.

Provide assurance that the assessment process measures student achievement against the intended learning outcomes for the programme/module.

Provide advice on the content, balance and structure of programmes and modules of study and on assessment processes.

Provide recommendations for enhancement and comment on good practice.
Duties of the Role

- Participate in Assessment Procedures
- Review Programme Design
- Review Curriculum and Assessment

Annual Report
Duties of the Role

Assessment Procedures

- Approve relevant assessment per University policy
- Review a representative sample of work, marking and feedback (Semester 1 and Semester 2 Assessment Period)
- Adjudicate between markers to determine an individual mark if required (exceptional circumstances)
- Attend relevant School Progression and Awards Board
- Confirm appropriateness of change of marks if required
- Provide assurance of assessment procedures and School Progression and Awards Board procedures (referred to as external examiner approval)
Duties of the Role
External Examiner Approval

External Examiner approval is confirmation of the fairness and appropriateness of the assessment and marking practices and processes. External examiners are not approving each module mark (i.e. double/third marking).

Outcomes Requiring External Examiner Approval

- All module marks contributing to final degree awards and classifications.
- All module marks contributing to Certificate or Diploma awards (including for fallback awards).
- All module marks arising from reassessment.
If an external examiner does not agree with any of the marks given to assessed work within a sample, external examiner may request the remedies described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remedy</th>
<th>Not a Remedy</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Additional marking of all the student work within the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Additional marking of an element of assessed work of all the students within the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Moderation of the marks of all the students within the group</td>
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<td>• Adjustments of marks within a sample</td>
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Duties of the Role

Causes for Concern

External examiners should liaise with the appropriate School contact and/or contact the Quality Assurance Team if they have comments that should be considered immediately in advance of the annual report.

External examiners and/or Chair of the relevant School Progression and Awards Board should immediately contact the Head of Quality Assurance if the external examiner feels unable to provide assurance of the University’s standards and assessment procedures.
Duties of the Role
Timeline for Annual Reports (Undergraduate)

**Semester 1**
- Assessment Period: January
- Annual Report: August

**Semester 2**
- Assessment Period: May/June
- Progression and Awards Board: June
- Reassessment Period: August

External examiners should complete an annual report for each year of the appointment using the standard report form. Reports should be submitted within six weeks of the relevant School Progression and Awards Board to the Quality Assurance Team.
Duties of the Role
Timeline for Annual Reports (Taught Postgraduate)

External examiners should complete an annual report for each year of the appointment using the standard report form. Reports should be submitted within six weeks of the relevant School Progression and Awards Board to the Quality Assurance Team.

The timeline for annual reports for taught postgraduate provision may differ for 2020/21 due to exceptional measures.
Duties of the Role

Annual Reports

External examiners should list all programmes that they are appointed to on the report form. External examiners should not list modules within the programme or modules that they have sampled work from.

If an external examiner is not appointed to a programme due to the specialist nature of the expertise, the external examiner should list all modules that they are appointed to on the report form.

External examiners should contact the Quality Assurance Team if they require clarification of their remit.
Duties of the Role

Annual Reports

Comments should include observations about programme design, assessment strategy and assessment procedures.

Reports should not include identifiers (i.e. staff names, student names or dissertation titles).
Duties of Role
Responses to Reports

Reports are responded to by the appropriate School contacts.

Reports are considered at School Taught Student Education Committees.

Reports are considered through review activities (including programme reviews and Annual School Reviews).

Reports are monitored by the Taught Student Education Board via the Quality and Standards Committee.
Duties of the Role

Payments

Fees are paid following the receipt of the annual report and based on the Schedule of Payments. A maximum payment of £1500 applies to each academic year.

Fees for external examiners of programmes consists of a basic fee and per capita element.

- **Basic Fee**: £180
- **Per Capita**: £0.70 per candidate per 10 credit modules (Contributing to Award)

Payment for Undergraduate Programmes

- **Basic Fee**: £180
- **Per Capita**: £1.70 per candidate per 15 credit modules

Payment for Taught Postgraduate Programmes