



**Guide for External Examiners of
taught programmes at the
University of Bradford**

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the University of Bradford and to the role of External Examiner.

Within UK Higher Education, the use of external expertise remains one of the principal means for assuring the maintenance of threshold academic standards. The University of Bradford recognises and values the contributions that External Examiners bring to the setting and maintenance of academic standards, and the assurance and enhancement of learning opportunities.

This Guide outlines the key roles and responsibilities of the External Examiner at the University of Bradford, provides information on relevant regulations, policies & procedures and signposts the support available to External Examiners in the execution of their role.

If you have any queries regarding this Guide or would like to request the information here in a different format (e.g. Braille, E-text, digital audio), please contact the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Team at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk or +44(0)1274233025.

2. Overview of External Examiner Role

The input and contributions of External Examiners are of great importance to the quality management of the University of Bradford's programmes and are a key means of ensuring that:

- The academic standard for each award and its component parts is set and maintained by the University at the appropriate level and that student performance is properly judged against this.
- The assessment process measures student achievement appropriately against the intended learning outcomes of the programme, and is rigorous, fairly operated and in line with the University's policies and regulations.
- The University is able to compare the standards of its awards with those of other Higher Education Institutions and against the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales & Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and other appropriate external reference points.

External Examiners also play a key role in the on-going enhancement of the quality of the University's awards.

The main duties of an External Examiner at the University of Bradford are as follows:

- Reviewing and feeding back on proposed assessment tasks
- Reviewing samples of student work
- Reviewing samples of proposals/applications for Recognised Prior Learning (RPL), as required
- Endorsing the outcomes of module marking and moderation
- Attending Assessment Committees and/or Board of Examiners meetings
- Producing an annual report
- Providing ongoing feedback to Programme/Module Teams, as required
- Addressing professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements, where applicable

3. Appointment

At least one External Examiner must be appointed for each University of Bradford award/programme (including nested awards). External Examiners may be appointed to programmes or their component parts and such decisions will be based upon the academic constitution of programmes and/or the volume of assessed work requiring oversight.

External Examiners may be required to oversee the academic standards of programmes in partner institutions and/or may be required to address professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements within their responsibilities. These, and any additional roles/duties, will be made clear to External Examiners at the nomination and appointment stages. Any additional duties following the initial appointment must be agreed with the External Examiner and confirmed in writing.

Criteria for Appointment

It is vital that External Examiners have the appropriate qualifications, experience and expertise to fulfil the roles and responsibilities for which they are engaged. The University will appoint External Examiners who can demonstrate the following:

- Eligibility to work in the UK, in adherence with Home Office regulation (see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checklist>)
- Knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality.
- Competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study or parts thereof.
- Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate.
- Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.
- Sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers.
- Familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is being assessed.
- 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 information to make their judgements).
- Meeting applicable criteria set out by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.
- Awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula.
- Competence and experience in the enhancement of the student learning experience.

External Examiners should hold no more than two external examining appointments for taught programmes/modules at the same time, including the proposed University of Bradford appointment.

In cases where an application does not demonstrate evidence of the candidate meeting all of the criteria, the Faculty/Department may make an exceptional case for the appointment to be approved by the External Examiners and External Experts Sub-Committee.

Where an External Examiner has no previous external examining experience but meets the other criteria for appointment, they will be allocated a mentor who is an existing External Examiner at the University of Bradford. The mentor will have an initial conversation with the new examiner to confirm their understanding of the role and to answer any practical questions that have not been answered by the Faculty or at induction. Thereafter, the mentor will be available to discuss any unexpected matters that arise for the new examiner that cannot be answered by the Faculty or the Academic Quality & Enhancement team.

Upon appointment, experienced External Examiners may be asked whether they would be willing to be a mentor for less experienced examiners in the future.

Conflict of Interest

In order to avoid conflict of interest, the University is unable to accept External Examiner applications if any of the following criteria apply:

- They are a member of a governing body or committee of the University or one of its partners, or a current employee of the University or one of its partners.
- They are working for the University as a current External Expert for the validation and review of the programmes to be examined.
- They have a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study to be examined.
- They are involved in the assessment and/or recruitment of students to the programme of study.
- They are, or know they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study.
- They are significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) and/or modules in question.
- They are a former member of staff or student of the University - unless a period of five years has elapsed and, in the case of a former member of staff, all students taught by or with the proposed External Examiner have completed their programme(s).
- They are involved in a reciprocal arrangement involving related programmes at another institution.
- They are taking over the External Examiner role from a colleague in the same department in the same institution.
- There is already one External Examiner from the same department of the same institution examining within the same Department within the University of Bradford.
- They are deemed to have any conflict of interest in relation to commercial sensitivity.

Any potential conflicts of interest must be identified and resolved prior to appointment or, in the case of an existing External Examiner, as soon as they arise. If a conflict of interest does arise, existing External Examiners should contact their Faculty contact or the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

Contract/Appointment Letter

Following approval of an External Examiner, a contract/appointment letter will be sent, detailing the nature of the appointment and the period of tenure.

The contract/appointment letter will include the following information:

- Portfolio of modules/programmes for which the External Examiner has been appointed
- Period of appointment
- Annual fee(s) plus details of expenses
- University ID and password, with instructions for accessing University systems and wifi on campus
- Guidance relating to the expectations of the External Examiner role
- Details of induction and support arrangements
- Details of the publication of External Examiner information and reports

4. Induction and Information Provided

It is important that External Examiners are provided with adequate information to enable them and the University to proceed with a shared understanding of the role and the programme/modules to be scrutinised.

Induction of new External Examiners

New External Examiners will be asked to participate in an induction within the first 18 months of their appointment, involving the following activities:

- A session coordinated by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team, introducing new External Examiners to the role, performing administrative checks (e.g. right to work, IT access etc.) and answering any initial questions
- A visit to the relevant Faculty to meet members of the Programme/Module Teams

On appointment, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team will liaise with the External Examiner and members of the relevant Module/Programme Team to arrange attendance at an induction event and access to any required resources.

Information provided to the External Examiner

On appointment, and annually, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team will provide each External Examiner with the following information:

- Guide for External Examiners
- Relevant University regulations
- Fees and expenses information
- Access to previous External Examiner reports, where relevant
- Links to additional relevant information (e.g. regarding Board of Examiners)

Programme Teams should provide their External Examiners, upon appointment and annually, with the following set of core information:

- Key staff contact details and expected communication methods
- Programme specification(s) and module descriptor(s) for each programme/ module examined, including reading lists where appropriate
- PSRB accreditation information and/or any waivers from University regulations, as applicable
- Details of partnership provision, where applicable, and any variation from home provision for each programme
- Term dates and key hand-in dates for students
- Indicative schedule of External Examiner's work, including the dates and timing of Examiners' meetings and deadlines for the return of reviewed samples
- Information relating to any student meetings and/or any other scheduled meetings, as required

With proposed assessment tasks (assessment briefs and examination papers), Module Teams should also provide:

- Institutional grading criteria
- Module assessment timetable
- Module assessment criteria/marketing guidelines
- Indicative answers, where applicable

With samples of student work, Module Teams should also provide:

- Comments of internal examiners on the scripts
- Mark sheets for each module
- Comments on the module's performance

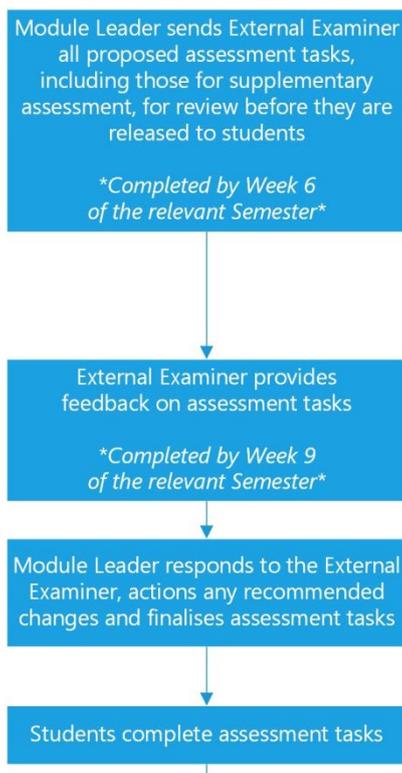
5. Assessment, Progression and Award

When discharging their responsibilities in respect of assessment, External Examiners are asked to determine whether:

- The type and content of assessments are appropriate for the subject, the students, the respective level of study and the expected outcomes.
- The marking scheme/grading criteria have been properly and consistently applied, and whether internal marking is therefore of an appropriate standard, fair and reliable.
- The assessment processes are carried out in accordance with the University's regulations and procedures.
- Procedures governing extenuating circumstances and academic integrity have been considered fairly and equitably, applying institutional regulation.

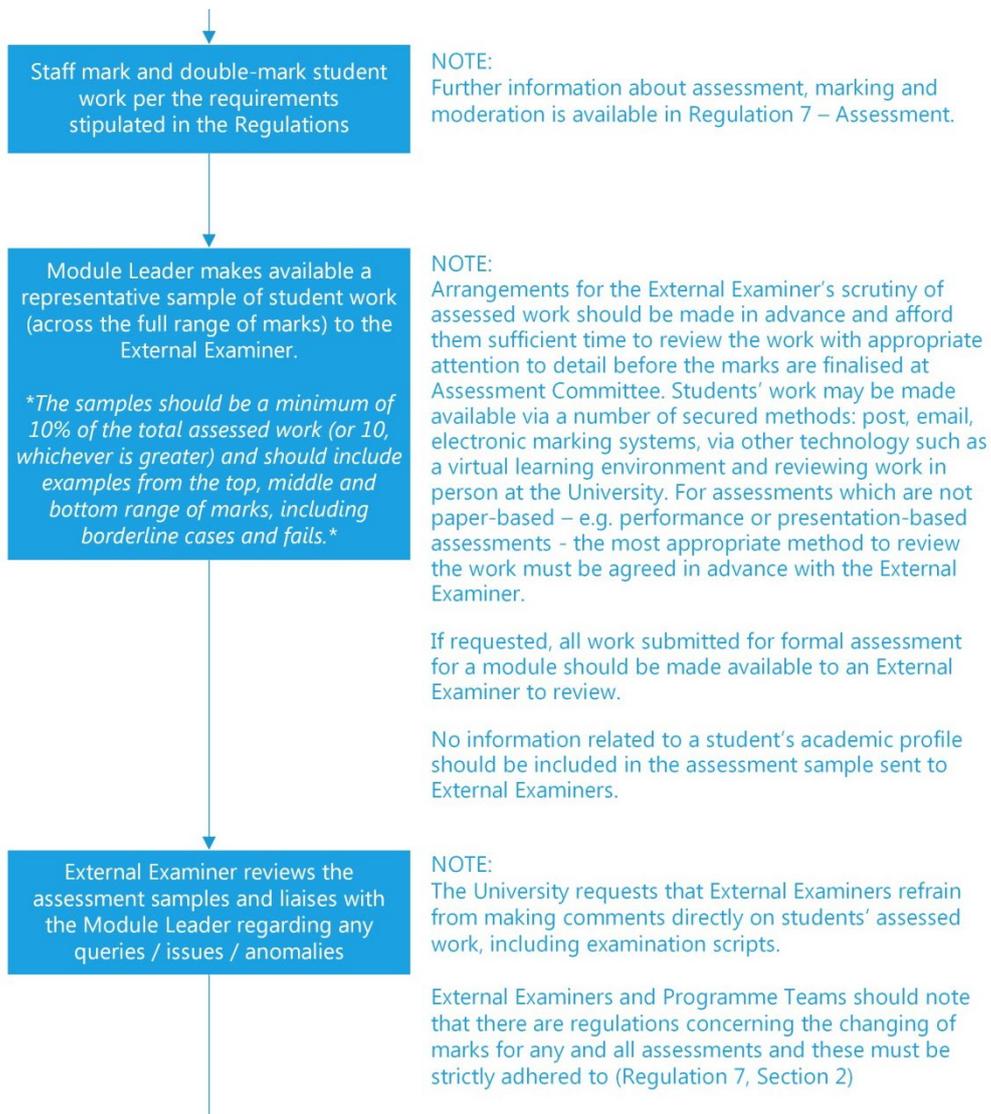
The External Examiner duties regarding the assurance of assessment, progression and award processes are outlined here:

1. Review of Assessment Tasks

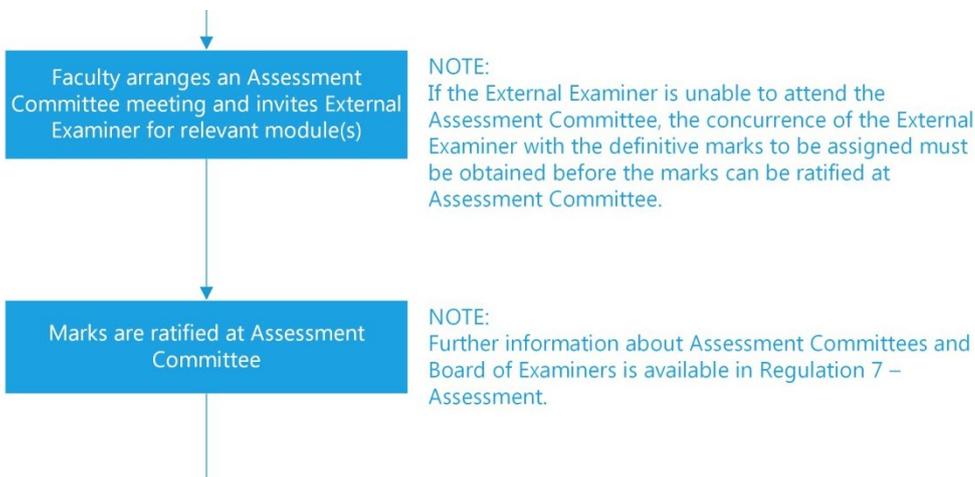


NOTE:
Indicative answers (where these are used) and marking schemes should be provided to External Examiners alongside the assessment tasks

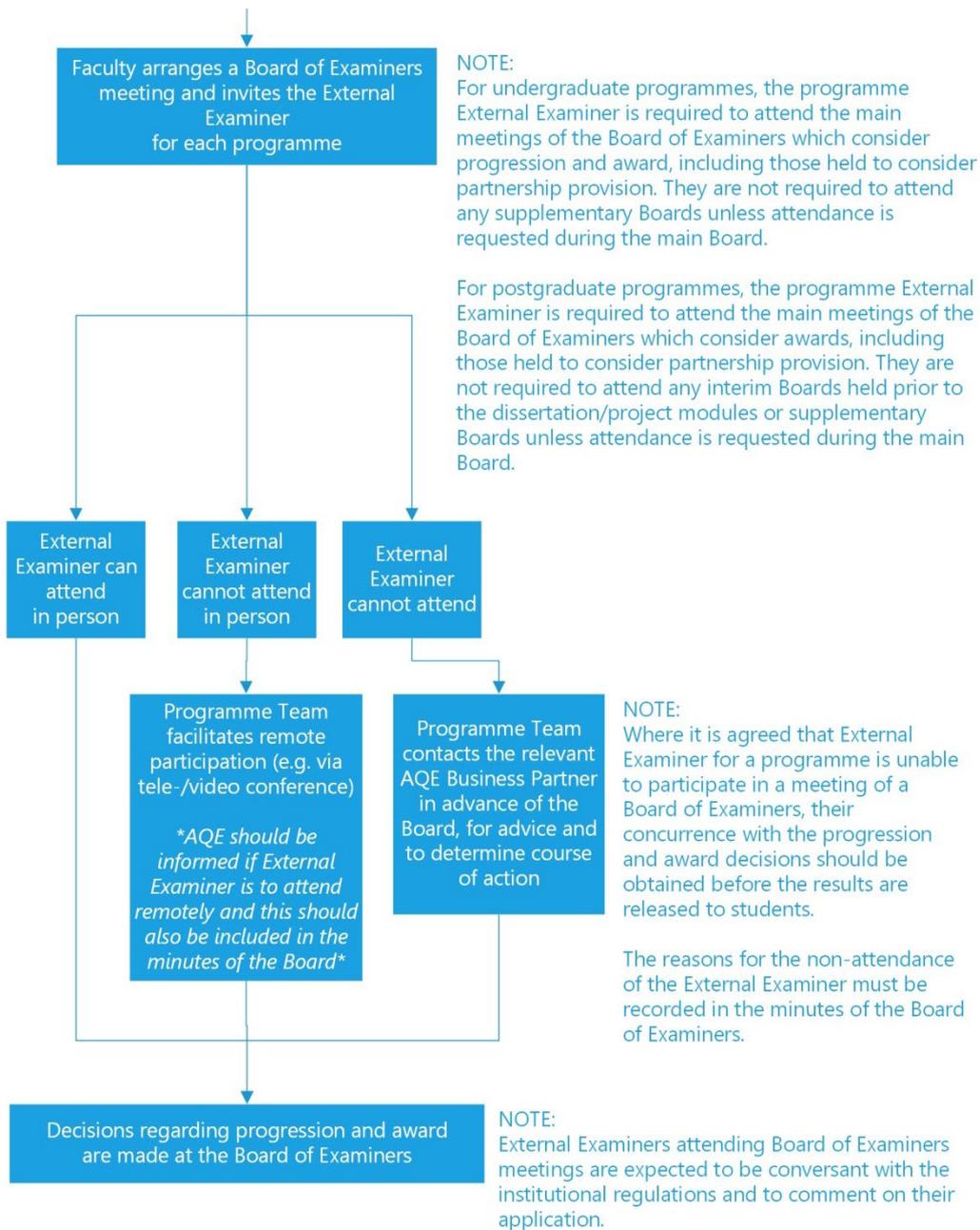
2. Marking, Sampling, Double-marking and Moderation



3. Assessment Committee



4. Board of Examiners



University regulations require External Examiners to indicate concurrence, either by signing a Board report or verbally (if participating remotely). This concurrence is taken as confirmation of the following:

1. The External Examiner has been able to input to, and is satisfied with, the assessment and exam board processes
2. The meeting was well conducted and fulfilled its obligations
3. Students were treated equitably
4. The Board report is an accurate and accepted reflection of the outcomes of the meeting
5. The decisions made are commensurate with equivalents at other institutions

Recognition of Prior Learning

As part of the marking, sampling and moderation processes outlined above, an External Examiner may be asked to scrutinise evidence relating to applications for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) prior to the ratification of any credit and/or marks at the Assessment Committee and Board of Examiners. Programme Teams will provide information and guidance to External Examiners on the process for this scrutiny, as required, and any queries can also be directed to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team via externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

University Regulations

As part of the Assessment Committee and Board of Examiners processes outlined above, External Examiners are expected to be conversant with the following relevant University regulations:

- Regulation on External Examiners for Award-Bearing Taught Programmes;
- Assessment Regulations;
- Regulation Governing Undergraduate Awards;
- Regulation Governing Postgraduate Awards;

A link to the regulations can be found at: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations/>

6. Reporting and Feedback

In addition to any feedback given during the course of their duties in the assessment and moderation periods, External Examiners are required to complete and submit an annual report to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team, detailing the extent to which the University is fulfilling its obligations and objectives in terms of:

- Maintaining threshold academic standards
- Measuring achievement, rigour and fairness
- Comparability of standards and student performance
- Enhancement of quality

In their report, the External Examiner should also:

- Confirm that sufficient evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled
- State whether issues raised in the previous report(s) have been addressed to their satisfaction
- When agreed in advance, address any issues as specifically required by any relevant professional body or with regards to partnership provision
- Give an overview of their term of office (when concluded)

This feedback is based on the External Examiner's experience of other institutions as well as their scrutiny of evidence provided by the Programme Team responsible for the delivery of modules/programmes/awards for which they have been appointed. For data protection purposes, the names of individual staff or students should not be included in the text of the report.

The report template and guidance will be sent to External Examiners at the beginning of each academic year and again around exam-board-time in the summer term. The areas for comment in the report are outlined in Appendix 2 for reference.

Submission of the Report

The deadlines for submission each year are as follows:

- For undergraduate programmes - **31st July**
- For postgraduate programmes - **30th November**

If External Examiners are responsible for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, they should complete their report by the later deadline.

The reports should be submitted to externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk by the relevant deadline above. If a report is not submitted within the relevant time period, External Examiners will be reminded by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement office to submit a report within an extended deadline. Subsequent failure to submit a report may lead to the University terminating an External Examiner appointment prematurely.

Response to External Examiner Reports

On receipt of an External Examiner report, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Business Partner will forward it to the relevant Programme Leader. The Programme Leader/Team will then use this report to inform the content and focus of their annual Programme Monitoring Report(s) and associated Action Log(s). These Programme Monitoring Reports will then feed into Faculty and University monitoring and enhancement planning.

External Examiners will be sent a copy of the Programme Monitoring Report relevant to their role each year and will also be able to view Faculty and University monitoring reports via the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement internal website (password-protected).

Communicating with Students

All External Examiner annual reports are made available to staff and students via the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement internal website (password-protected). The publication of these reports is in keeping with the general principles of engaging students in quality management processes and External Examiner comments are discussed as a regular agenda item at Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings. Programme Teams may provide additional External Examiner feedback to students via, for example, Module Monitoring Reports.

While students will be made aware of the identity of the External Examiner(s) for their programmes and modules, Programme and Module Teams should make it clear to students that it is inappropriate for them to make direct contact with External Examiners regarding, for example, their individual performance in assessments. Students are to be advised that there are other appropriate mechanisms available for this (e.g. student representatives, personal academic tutors, extenuating circumstances and complaints/appeals procedures).

Students who have been asked to meet with External Examiners must be given clear guidance by the Programme Team about the purpose of the meeting and its limitations (with regards to discussing individual assessment outcomes). If an External Examiner is contacted by a student, they should not respond directly; they should refer the matter to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

Confidential Reports and QAAHE Concerns Scheme

External Examiner may submit a separate, confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) acting under delegated authority) on matters of particular sensitivity. This may be, for example, if the External Examiner finds it necessary to name a member of staff and/or has serious concerns about academic standards. In this situation, the External Examiner should contact the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team initially at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk to ensure that any such report is sent to the correct individual and that the report is received and noted by the University in a timely manner.

The Vice-Chancellor (or nominee, acting under delegated authority) will inform the Faculty, the Programme/Module Team(s) and any student representatives concerned that a

confidential report has been received. After discussing the matters raised with relevant members of staff, the University will provide a considered response to the External Examiner about the concerns raised in the confidential report and will outline the proposed action to be taken to address the issues, as appropriate.

Any recourse to the QAA HE Concerns Scheme that External Examiners may wish to invoke should only take place in cases where all the University of Bradford's internal mechanisms for raising concerns have been exhausted. The QAA HE Concerns Scheme's focus is explicitly on systematic failings in an institution's management of standards or quality. The scheme must, therefore, not be used for one-off cases of ineffective practice or to raise a personal grievance. Further information regarding the QAA HE Concerns Scheme can be found here: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/qaa-concerns-scheme.pdf?sfvrsn=c13dfd81_6.

7. Payment and Data Protection

Fees

External Examiners' fees for taught programmes are paid on receipt of the annual report and are calculated according to a formula that takes into account both programme and module responsibilities:

Responsibility for one or more named awards = 50 points

Credit value of modules to which external examiner is appointed = k points

Weighted total of students registered for those modules = j points

Module examiners are paid for k + j points: those with responsibility for one or more named awards are paid for an additional 50 points.

Points	Fee
1-200	£130
201-500	£325
501-800	£520
801-1100	£715
1101-1400	£910
1401-1700	£1,105
1701-2000	£1,300
2000+ (capped)	£1,495

External Examiners will also be able to claim the following amounts as expenses, per piece of sampled work:

- Higher Doctorates = £150
- Doctor Philosophy = £140
- MPhil/PhD by Published Work = £140
- Master of Philosophy = £105
- Advanced Programme dissertations = £35

Any approved variations to the above fee calculation will be identified in the External Examiner's contract/appointment letter. Any change in fee resulting from subsequent changes in workload will apply from the session in which the extra workload first occurred.

Income tax will be deducted from all fees. If income from all programmes for any tax year does not exceed the lower personal allowance and External Examiners wish to claim a repayment, they must retain the University's pay notification for submission to HMRC. Those contributing at the maximum level may be able to defer payment of the NI contribution on secondary employment. Application to defer can be made on DSS form CA72A, and must be renewed annually.

As an employee of the University, External Examiners may be automatically enrolled onto either the University Superannuation Scheme or a workforce pension scheme with NEST in

line with Government legislation. Full details will be provided in the External Examiner's contract/appointment letter.

The University reserves the right to review and revise the current fees and expenses structure during the current term of office of an External Examiner.

Expenses

There is no additional fee for attendance at meetings of Assessment Committees or Boards of Examiners. However, attendance at induction, oral examinations, project presentations, placement/clinical practice visits etc., is paid at £55 per half day and can be claimed by completion of the expenses claim form which should be endorsed by the Programme Leader and Head of the relevant academic department. A claim form can be requested from externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

The following expenses are payable in accordance with the University Travel and Expenses Policy:

- **Travel** - the University will reimburse standard rail fare or equivalent. The Academic Quality & Enhancement office can arrange train travel on behalf of the External Examiner with at least two months' notice. Car journeys will be paid at the University current standard mileage rate of 45p per mile (first 100 miles) and 23p per mile (subsequent mileage) per return journey. Air travel will only be reimbursed by prior agreement.
- **Accommodation** - If an External Examiner requires overnight accommodation, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team will be able to arrange this on their behalf.
- **Miscellaneous expenses** - Taxi fares, refreshments en route etc.

External Examiners should ensure that they submit expenses claims on the claim form, with any copies of receipts, as soon as possible after the relevant event. Any queries or requests regarding payment, expenses or travel/accommodation should be directed to externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

Data Protection

In order to appoint and facilitate the duties of External Examiners, the University must collect and process certain pieces of personal data. The External Examiner Privacy Notice, included in Appendix 3, outlines the type of data that is collected, how it is processed and how this conforms to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as required by law. It also outlines the obligations of the External Examiner with regards to handling the data of staff and students.

Further general information about data protection at the University of Bradford can be accessed here: www.bradford.ac.uk/data-protection/

8. Change of Appointment

Change to Terms

The standard term of office for an External Examiner is four years; from 1 August to 30 September for undergraduate work and 1 August to 30 November for postgraduate taught work. There may be instances, however, when an External Examiner's appointment is extended and/or altered mid-tenure.

It is important to note that no appointments, extensions or changes of responsibility are confirmed until they have been approved by the Learning & Teaching Committee, via the External Examiners & External Experts Subcommittee, on behalf of Senate.

Exceptional Extension of Appointment

An exceptional extension of an appointment for a further year can be considered by the External Examiners & External Experts Sub-Committee on receipt of a rationale for the extension request and then a fully completed Extension of Appointment Form from the relevant Programme Team. The Faculty must confirm with the External Examiner that they are happy for the extension to be requested and this confirmation should be included on the form. The criteria for appointment (outlined in Section 3) should also be considered in preparing and reviewing an extension request.

Once approved, the External Examiner will receive a new contract/appointment letter and list of programmes and/or modules allocated to them for examination. A copy will be forwarded to the Faculty for information.

Changes to External Examiner Responsibilities

A change to an External Examiner appointment can be considered by the External Examiners & External Experts Sub-Committee on receipt of a completed Change of Responsibility Form from the relevant Programme Team. The Faculty must confirm with the External Examiner that they are happy for the changes to be requested and this confirmation should be included on the form.

Changes of responsibilities will usually commence at the start of the new academic session and any changes requested for the current session should be accompanied by a rationale for this.

Once approved, the External Examiner will receive a new contract/appointment letter and list of programmes and/or modules allocated to them for examination. A copy will be forwarded to the Faculty for information.

Termination/Resignation of Appointment

Grounds for the early termination of an External Examiner's appointment are based on the following criteria:

- Failure to attend Board of Examiners meetings without making alternative arrangements.
- Failure to submit reports, or the provision of incomplete reports.
- Failure to fulfil the role of External Examiner in contributing to the University's management of academic standards and quality.
- Failure to declare conflict of interest.
- Failure to maintain professional body membership or a professional registration where this is a requirement of being an Examiner for the programme concerned.
- For programmes where there is a clinical or professional element, disbarment from being able to practise which may impair the integrity of the examination process and/or the independence of the Examiner.
- Failure to participate in induction activities in the first 18 months in office.

The decision to terminate an External Examiner appointment must be made based on sound evidence and after all opportunities to remedy any issues have been exhausted. The exercise of the rights of an External Examiner to raise matters of serious concern with the Vice-Chancellor and/or invoke the QAA HE's Concerns Scheme is not deemed to be grounds for early termination of appointment.

The recommendation to terminate an appointment must be made by the appropriate Faculty Board and submitted, with any corresponding evidence, to the External Examiners and External Experts Sub-Committee who will approve or reject the recommendation on behalf of Senate.

If a conflict of interest arises during the External Examiner's appointment period which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by either party, the University, via the External Examiners and External Experts Sub-Committee, will require the External Examiner to resign his/her appointment with immediate effect.

Should an External Examiner wish to resign their appointment with the University of Bradford, they should contact the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team initially at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk. The External Examiner will then be asked to complete a Resignation Summary Report detailing any work completed (or due to be completed) prior to their resignation date and confirming the standards of any student work they have reviewed, where applicable.

Normally, External Examiners' fees for taught programmes are paid on receipt of an annual report at the end of an academic year and are calculated according to a formula that takes

into account both programme and module responsibilities. In instances where an External Examiner post is resigned and/or terminated mid academic year, a fee will be paid pro-rata based on work completed and/or work due to be completed prior to the post end date.

Any queries regarding the termination of, or change to, External Examiner appointments can be directed to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

9. Sources of Information and Support

Programme/Module Queries

External Examiners with any queries about their programme and/or module duties during the year should contact their designated Faculty contact in the first instance.

If this contact is unknown or fails to respond, External Examiners can contact the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Business Partner for the relevant Faculty at the following email addresses:

- Faculty of Engineering and Informatics - aqpo-fei@bradford.ac.uk
- Faculty of Health Sciences - aqpo-fohs@bradford.ac.uk
- Faculty of Life Sciences - aqpo-fls@bradford.ac.uk
- Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences - aqpo-foml@bradford.ac.uk

Support from Mentors

External Examiners with little or no previous external examining experience may be allocated a mentor who is an existing External Examiner at the University. This mentor will have an initial conversation with the new examiner, facilitated by the Faculty, to confirm their understanding of the role and to answer any practical questions that have not been answered by the Faculty or at induction. Thereafter, the mentor will be available to discuss any unexpected matters that arise for the new examiner which cannot be answered by the Faculty or Academic Quality & Enhancement team.

If an External Examiner thinks they should have been assigned a mentor and/or if their assigned mentor fails to respond to queries, External Examiners should contact the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement team at externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

General Queries

External Examiners with any general queries about, for example, their appointment or the submission of their report, should contact the Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement office by telephone on 01274233231 or by email to externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

Alternatively, examiners can write to the following address:

Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement office
University of Bradford
Richmond Building
Richmond Road
Bradford
BD7 1DP

Useful Websites

University of Bradford
www.bradford.ac.uk/external

Faculty of Engineering and Informatics
www.bradford.ac.uk/ei

Faculty of Health Sciences
www.bradford.ac.uk/health

Faculty of Life Sciences
www.bradford.ac.uk/life-sciences

Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences
www.bradford.ac.uk/mlss

Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement
www.bradford.ac.uk/aqpo

Quality Assurance Agency
www.qaa.ac.uk

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf

Higher Education Academy – External Examining Handbook
www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/external-examining

Appendix 1: Regulations on External Examiners for Award-bearing Taught Programmes

1. **Appointment of External Examiners**
 - 1.1. There shall be at least one External Examiner for each module at all Levels, including Level 3.
 - 1.2. There shall be at least one External Examiner for each named award of the University, irrespective of the academic level of the award, including Partnership Provision.
 - 1.3. An External Examiner for a programme of study shall also be an External Examiner for a reasonable proportion of the modules which comprise that programme of study.
 - 1.4. An External Examiner for a module may not necessarily be a member of every Board of Examiners for a programme of study in which that module may be taken.
 - 1.5. External Examiners, having been nominated in the first instance by the Faculty concerned, shall be appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the appropriate Faculty Board, via the External Examiner & External Expert Sub-Committee of the Learning and Teaching Committee.
 - 1.6. The University will appoint external examiners who can demonstrate evidence of the following:
 - 1.6.1. Knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;
 - 1.6.2. Competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study or parts thereof;
 - 1.6.3. Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate;
 - 1.6.4. Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures;
 - 1.6.5. Sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers;
 - 1.6.6. Familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is being assessed;
 - 1.6.7. 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 information to make their judgements);
 - 1.6.8. Meeting applicable criteria set out by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
 - 1.6.9. Awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula;
 - 1.6.10. Competence and experience in the enhancement of the student learning experience.
 - 1.7. Where a nominee has not previously served as an External Examiner the appointment should be made, wherever practical, to a team of External Examiners with agreement that a more experienced External Examiner will act as a mentor.
 - 1.8. In those cases where an application does not demonstrate evidence of the candidate meeting all of the criteria the Faculty/Department may make an exceptional case for the appointment to be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).
 - 1.9. The University will not appoint as its external examiners anyone in the following categories or circumstances: The following criteria will ensure that all potential conflicts of interest are identified and resolved prior to appointment or as soon as they arise.
 - 1.9.1. Member of a governing body or committee of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners;
 - 1.9.2. Anyone working for the University as a current External Expert for the validation and review of the programmes to be examined;
 - 1.9.3. Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study;



- 1.9.4. Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study;
 - 1.9.5. Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study;
 - 1.9.6. Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question;
 - 1.9.7. Former staff or students of the institution unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s);
 - 1.9.8. Normally, a reciprocal arrangement involving related programmes at another institution;
 - 1.9.9. The succession of an external examiner from an institution by a colleague from the same department in the same institution;
 - 1.9.10. The concurrent appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution examining within the same Department at the University of Bradford;
 - 1.9.11. Deemed to have other conflict of interest in relation to commercial sensitivity.
 - 1.10. It is the responsibility of the External Examiner to inform the University of any change in circumstances since their appointment which might compromise that appointment.
 - 1.11. External Examiners should normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time, including the University of Bradford appointment.
 - 1.12. The period of appointment of an External Examiner for a module and/or a programme of study shall be four years, with the exceptional possibility of an extension for one further year.
 - 1.13. A second period of appointment for an External Examiner shall be permissible, in exceptional circumstances, provided that a minimum of five years has elapsed between the two periods of appointment.
 - 1.14. An External Examiner shall not undertake more than two periods of office, except where in the view of the Senate there exist exceptional circumstances.
 - 1.15. The early termination of an External Examiner's appointment will be based on the following criteria:
 - 1.15.1. Failure to attend examination boards without making alternative arrangements;
 - 1.15.2. Failure to submit reports, or the provision of incomplete reports;
 - 1.15.3. Failure to fulfil the role of External Examiner in contributing to the University's management of academic standards and quality;
 - 1.15.4. Failure to declare a conflict of interest;
 - 1.15.5. Failure to maintain professional body membership or registration where this is a requirement to examine the programme;
 - 1.15.6. On programmes with a professional element, disbarment from being able to practice;
 - 1.15.7. Failure to attend the Induction in the first 18 months of office.
 - 1.16. The decision to terminate prematurely an appointment must be made by the appropriate Faculty Board and approved by the Senate.
 - 1.17. If a conflict of interest arises during the External Examiner's appointment period which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by either party it is in the best interest of the University for the External Examiner to resign his/her appointment with immediate effect.
- ## 2. Duties of External Examiners for Modules
- 2.1. An External Examiner for a module shall be responsible, jointly with the Dean of the Faculty which provides the module, for assuring the standard of the assessment and the quality assurance and enhancement of that module, including Partnership Provision.
 - 2.2. An External Examiner for a module shall be a member of the Assessment Committee which considers the assessments relating to that module.
 - 2.3. An External Examiner for a module shall, jointly with the Chairperson of the Assessment Committee, moderate and approve examination papers and all other assessment exercises, procedures and practices in relation to that module, including supplementary tasks.
 - 2.4. Faculties will send to External Examiners the following information:
 - 2.4.1. module/programme handbooks, information and reading lists
 - 2.4.2. marking schemes and grading criteria
 - 2.4.3. indicative answers, where used



- 2.4.4. assessment guidelines provided to students
 - 2.4.5. a separate mark sheet for each programme module (not a draft of the collated sheet that will be presented to the Board of Examiners)
 - 2.4.6. the comments of internal examiners on the individual scripts and on the overall performance of students in the assessment component
 - 2.4.7. module evaluation form
 - 2.4.8. information on relevant professional issues and features which relate to specific disciplines, as appropriate
 - 2.4.9. Dates of Board of Examiner and other relevant meetings. These should be negotiated with the External Examiner.
 - 2.5. External Examiners are not normally responsible for or involved in the assessment of individual students and should not routinely carry out marking of assessed work.
 - 2.6. It is not normal practice for an External Examiner to see all student scripts therefore a sample of student scripts should be sent to the External Examiner for review. A representative sample should be made available to review, at the first attempt for that cohort of students, plus any supplementary samples where the task is different from the original. The sample should be of sufficient size to enable the External Examiner to form a view as to whether the internal marking has properly assessed student performance against the appropriate standards. The sample sent should comprise a minimum 10% (or a minimum of 10 scripts) and would typically include examples from the top, middle and bottom range of marks, also including borderline cases and fails.
 - 2.7. All scripts and other pieces of work submitted for formal assessment for a module, however, shall be available to an External Examiner to review, if requested.
 - 2.8. If an External Examiner, having reviewed only a sample of scripts, wishes to recommend that the marks assigned to an individual student for a particular assessment be amended, this may be done in one of three ways:
 - 2.8.1. By referring the matter for re-consideration by Internal Examiners who have reviewed all the work for the module concerned. It is important that any changes are made with the concurrence of those internal examiners who have seen all the work.
 - 2.8.2. By recommending the scaling by an appropriate factor of all the marks for that assessment, again with the concurrence of those internal examiners who have seen all the work.
 - 2.8.3. By reviewing all the scripts himself/herself and with the concurrence of those internal examiners who have seen all the work.
 - 2.9. An External Examiner for a module shall consider the standard of marking of that module and, having consulted with the Internal Examiners concerned, may propose such revisions of the marking as they may consider necessary, in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Regulations Relating to Assessment.
 - 2.10. Where an External Examiner for a module is unable to attend a meeting of an Assessment Committee considering assessment results, the Chairperson of the Assessment Committee shall obtain the concurrence of that External Examiner to the definitive marks to be assigned to each student in the assessments relating to that module before those marks are approved at the Assessment Committee. No specific approval needs to be sought from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) if an External Examiner is not able to attend. If an External Examiner cannot attend, it is possible to facilitate this by use of technologies such as Skype, telephone or video conferencing. This should be done in such a way as to enable the External Examiner to participate in the meeting as if they were actually present. No approval is required for this.
 - 2.11. Should there be a fundamental difference of opinion between the Internal Examiners and the External Examiner(s) for a particular module, this shall be considered as set out under the provisions of section 10 of the Assessment Regulations.
 - 2.12. An External Examiner shall submit to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) acting under delegated authority from the Vice Chancellor, for consideration by the relevant Faculty Board (s) and the Senate, an annual report on the module(s) for which the External Examiner has responsibility.
- ### 3. Duties of External Examiners for Programmes Of Study
- 3.1. An External Examiner for a programme of study shall be responsible, in conjunction with the Dean of the Faculty responsible for the administration of that programme of study, for the standards for progression and for the awards of the University on that programme of



- study, including Partnership Provision. The External Examiner plays a key role in the assurance and maintenance of academic standards and enhancement of quality.
- 3.2. An External Examiner for a programme of study shall, jointly with the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners, moderate and approve all assessment procedures and practices relating to the programme of study overall.
 - 3.3. An External Examiner would be expected to be conversant with the institutional regulations and to comment on the extent of their correct application but would not normally be expected to comment on the institutional regulations themselves.
 - 3.4. An External Examiner for a programme of study is a member of each Board of Examiners for that programme of study which considers assessment results relating to the awards of the University.
 - 3.5. For Undergraduate Boards of Examiners, an External Examiner for a programme of study is required to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners which are considering for the first time for that cohort of students progression and award, including those held to consider Partnership Provision. If no issues have been identified with module assessments at the main Board of Examiners and none are anticipated in relation to supplementary assessments, then the Chair of the Board may decide and advise that External Examiner attendance is not required at the supplementary Board of Examiners. If, however, significant issues emerge in the supplementary assessment period, External Examiners will be expected to attend.
 - 3.6. For Taught Postgraduate Boards of Examiners, the attendance of the External Examiner for a programme of study is required for any Board considering awards for the first time for a cohort of students, including those held to consider Partnership Provision. Attendance is not required at any Interim Board of Examiners, providing it is only considering either the supplementary assessment required at the end of the taught element or making awards following reassessment in the project/dissertation. Again, if any issues were identified in the original assessments or significant issues are anticipated or emerge in the supplementary assessments then External Examiners will be expected to attend.
 - 3.7. In order to fulfil the requirements of the role and discharge their responsibilities effectively, it is critical that an External Examiner attends to contribute fully to discussion on student progression and achievement and academic standards.
- 3.8. An External Examiner for a programme of study shall confirm, by joint signature with the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners, the Board Report Signature Cover Sheet. Such endorsement indicates not only that the External Examiner agrees every individual assessment decision but that they are satisfied with the conduct of the assessment process.
 - 3.9. If an External Examiner cannot attend a meeting, it is possible to facilitate this, if appropriate, by use of technologies such as Skype, telephone or video conferencing. This should be done in such a way as to enable the External Examiner to participate in the meeting as if they were actually present. Whilst specific approval for this is not required, it should be noted in the minutes and the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office informed in advance for monitoring purposes. First preference remains that an External Examiner should be physically present and electronic means should only be used where this is not possible.
 - 3.10. The approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) must be obtained in advance for a Board of Examiners to take place if an External Examiner is unable to attend and cannot participate by electronic means.
 - 3.11. If an External Examiner for a programme of study is unable to attend a required meeting of a Board of Examiners their concurrence must be obtained before the results are released to students and the reasons for their non-attendance must be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.
 - 3.12. Should there be a fundamental difference of opinion between the Internal Examiners and the External Examiner(s) this shall be considered as set out under the provisions of section 10 of the Assessment Regulations.
 - 3.13. An External Examiner shall submit to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) acting under delegated authority from the Vice Chancellor, for consideration by the relevant Faculty Board(s) and the Senate, an annual report on the programme of study concerned
4. **QAA Concerns Scheme**
 - 4.1. In addition to the arrangements for reporting and feedback, an External Examiner may also submit a separate, confidential, report to the Vice Chancellor (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic) acting under delegated responsibility) on matters of particular



- sensitivity. This may be, for example, if the external examiner finds it necessary to name a member of staff and/or has serious concerns about academic standards.
- 4.2. The Vice- Chancellor (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic) acting under delegated responsibility) should arrange to inform the Faculty/Department concerned of any confidential report that has been submitted by an External Examiner so that they are aware of the situation.
 - 4.3. Should it be deemed necessary for the External Examiner to submit a confidential report to the Vice Chancellor (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic) acting under delegated responsibility) the staff and/or student representatives must be informed of any implications arising from the confidential report and/or any actions where these have implications for them.
 - 4.4. The University will provide a considered response to the External Examiner about the serious concerns raised in the confidential report and outlining the proposed action to be taken to address the issues as appropriate.
 - 4.5. The University will make it clear to its External Examiners that any recourse to the QAA's Concerns Scheme they may wish to invoke should only take place in cases where all our University internal mechanisms for following up concerns, including a confidential report to the Vice Chancellor (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic) acting under delegated responsibility), have been exhausted.
 - 4.6. The QA's Concerns Schemes focus is explicitly on systematic failings in an institutions management of standards or quality. Therefore, the scheme must not be used for one-off cases of ineffective practice, or to raise a personal grievance or issues relating to an External Examiner's appointment.

Appendix 2:

External Examiner Report Sections

Section 1 – External Examiner Details

- Name of External Examiner
- Date of submission
- Institution/workplace
- Current job title
- Current professional registration number (if applicable)
- Programmes examined
- Conflict of Interest declaration

Section 2 – Information and Support Provided to External Examiners

A series of Yes/No questions regarding the following:

- Programme, Module and Assessment Information
- Examination of Student Work
- Participation in Assessment Meetings
- University Responsiveness and Support

With space to comment on areas of good practice, areas for enhancement and areas of significant concern.

Section 3 – Academic Standards and Curriculum

A series of Yes/No questions regarding the following:

- Alignment of Programmes and Integrated Awards
- Comparability of Standards and Student Performance
- Quality of Learning, Teaching and Assessment

With space to comment on areas of good practice, areas for enhancement and areas of significant concern.

Section 4 – Assessment Processes and Feedback

A series of Yes/No questions regarding the following:

- Assessment Processes and Moderation
- Feedback

With space to comment on areas of good practice, areas for enhancement and areas of significant concern.

Section 5 – Working With Partner Institutions (where applicable)

Comments on partners' programmes/modules should be included throughout the report in the relevant sections, alongside comments relating to provision at Bradford. Additional space, however, is provided to comment on areas of good practice, areas for enhancement and areas of significant concern specifically in relation to partnership provision.

Section 6 – External Examiner Handover Comments (where applicable)

Outgoing External Examiners are asked to provide a brief overview of their term in office and any points which may be of use for the incoming External Examiner.

Claim Form

An Expenses Claim Form will be appended to the External Examiner Report template and this should be completed and submitted along with the annual report to externalexaminers@bradford.ac.uk.

Appendix 3: External Examiner Privacy Notice

The University of Bradford recognises and values the contributions that External Examiners and External Experts bring to the setting and maintenance of academic standards, and the assurance and enhancement of learning opportunities, in line with the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

In order to appoint and facilitate the duties of External Examiners and External Experts, the University must collect and process certain pieces of personal data. This document outlines the type of data that is collected, how it is processed and how this conforms to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as required by law.

Under what legal basis does the processing of personal data take place?

The GDPR, as enshrined into UK law by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), provides for a number of different legal bases under which processing of personal data may take place. In the case of this privacy notice, the following bases apply:

Necessary for the performance of a contract

The following documents are required to facilitate the duties of the External Examiner/External Expert and to ensure the timely and accurate payment following completion of those duties:

- Application Form
- Appointment Contract Letter
- Starter Checklist
- Bank Details Form
- Expenses Claim Forms
- Change of Responsibility Form (where applicable)

Necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject

The University of Bradford must collect certain pieces of data to comply with the following external legislation and regulations:

- Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006 (section 15, subsection 1) – to prove employee eligibility to work in the United Kingdom;
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Chapter B7, Indicator 8) – to provide students with key information relating to the External Examiner of their programme and/or modules;
- HM Revenue and Customs (Starter Checklist) – to ensure payments and expenses are processed and recorded correctly

Necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the exercise of the University's official authority

The University of Bradford's Charter, approved by the Privy Council in July 2015 makes provision for the University's official authority and documents the University's public task. External Examiners and External Experts contribute to the following elements of the Charter:

- Awarding of degrees and other academic awards - to ensure that the standard of the University's awards is maintained at the appropriate level and that the standards of student performance are properly judged against this
- Teaching – to identify opportunities for programme and/or module development and enhancement

What categories of personal data are used?

The University will only collect and use data required for both the University and the External Examiner or External Expert to carry out their duties as stipulated in the Appointment Contract Letter and further outlined in the Guide to External Examining for Taught Programmes. As standard, this will include:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Home Address
- National Insurance Number
- Gender
- Photographic Identification
- Signature
- Staff ID
- Payroll ID
- Telephone Number
- Fax Number
- Email Address
- Skype ID (or similar)
- Education and employment details
- Financial details
- Other External Examiner posts in the last 5 years
- Any association with UoB or its staff/students

Depending on the nature of the programme and/or modules for which the External Examiner or External Expert has been employed, additional pieces of data may be required. Any additional data collection requirements will be detailed in the University's correspondence with the prospective External Examiner or External Expert.

Where do we get the personal data from?

In the majority of cases, the personal data collected in the process of appointing External Examiners or External Experts comes from the prospective Examiner or Expert themselves.

In cases where the standard mechanism of advertising for External Examiners or External Experts is not successful (i.e. via online professional networks), Faculty staff may nominate appropriate candidates. In this instance, personal data may be obtained from the member of UoB staff nominating the candidate or from the prospective External Examiner or External Expert's publically-accessible online presence (e.g. from HE institution's website).

Who else do we pass this information on to?

As standard practice, data collected regarding External Examiners and External Experts will be processed for use internally within the University. In certain circumstances, however, data may also be provided to the following types of organisation:

- External Auditors commissioned by UoB
- Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)
- Office for Students and associated agencies (e.g. QAA, HESA)

Do we transfer the information overseas?

The information specified in this document will not be transferred overseas. The only exception to this would be if external regulatory bodies or partners (e.g. auditors or PSRBs) are based overseas and request information relating to External Examiners and/or External Experts. In this instance, data will only be transferred where adequate levels of protection, in line with GDPR, can be assured.

How long do we keep this information for?

In alignment with the UoB's Document Retention and Disposal Policy and the JISC Retention Schedule for Higher Education (2014), the following retention periods, where applicable, will be adhered to for External Examiner and/or External Expert data:

<i>Records relating to:</i>	<i>Retention period</i>
Recruitment – unsuccessful applications	Completion of recruitment process + 6 months
Selection/appointment of external examiners	Termination of appointment + 1 year
Application forms + supporting documentation Contract(s) Terms & conditions incl. changes Termination of employment	Termination of employment + 6 years
Payroll payments to employees	Current tax year + 6 years
Payment and/or reimbursement of employees' expenses	Current financial year + 6 years
Individual staff email	Date of leaving + 2 months
External accreditation/review of (modules of) programmes including external examiners' reports	Life of programme
The arrangements for, and conduct of, a committee and/or panel meeting (e.g. assessment and exam board, programme approval panels)	Current academic year + 6 years
Induction and/or other events	Date of event + 1 year
University committee papers (e.g. Senate and sub-committees)	Permanent

In limited circumstances, extending a retention period beyond those prescribed above may be required where an external partner or professional body requires University retention periods to map on to their own retention periods.

What are your rights as a data subject?

As a person whose personal data we are processing, External Examiners and External Experts have certain rights in respect of that personal data.

You have the right:

- To access your personal data that we process;
- To rectify inaccuracies in personal data that we hold about you if it is inaccurate or incomplete;
- To request the deletion or removal of your personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing;
- To restrict the processing of your personal data in certain ways;
- To obtain your personal data for reuse;
- To object to certain processing of your personal data;
- To complain to the Information Commissioner's Office about the way in which we process your personal data.

What are your responsibilities with regards to your data and the data of others?

External Examiners and External Experts have a responsibility to ensure that their personal details are up-to-date and accurate, and to notify the University of any changes via their Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement contact.

In performing their contractual duties at the University, External Examiners and External Experts will have access to the personal data of other individuals, e.g. University staff and students. This data should be accessed, processed and stored in line with the University's obligations under the GDPR and for the sole purpose of performing the tasks required of the External Examiner or External Expert. Any data received should be treated as confidential and should not be used for any additional purposes and/or shared more widely without the consent of the University (via the Data Protection Officer) and, where necessary, the data subject.

Unless explicitly agreed otherwise with University colleagues, External Examiners and External Experts should ensure that any staff or student data they have received, regardless of format (e.g. paper, electronic, via email), is disposed of in a secure manner upon confirmation from the University that their final report has been received.

Any breach of confidentiality and/or GDPR responsibilities will be taken seriously and External Examiners and External Experts should notify the University's Data Protection Officer if they suspect a breach has occurred, either in the course of their duties or the duties of other members of the University.

Where can you get more information?

For more information, please visit the University of Bradford's GDPR webpage (www.bradford.ac.uk/data-protection) or contact the University's Data Protection Officer, Matthew Stephenson at data-protection@bradford.ac.uk or University of Bradford, Richmond Road, Bradford, BD7 1DP.

