

University compliance with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B7: External Examining
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B7.aspx>

	University Compliance
Indicator 1 Awarding institutions appoint one or more external examiner(s) to carry out the role(s) defined in this Chapter for all provision that leads to a higher education award of the institution.	Yes (Handbook introduction 13.10)
Indicator 2 Awarding institutions expect their external examiners to provide informative comment and recommendations upon whether or not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an institution is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements³ • the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s) and is conducted in line with the institution's policies and regulations • 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. 	Yes (External Examiner Report)
Indicator 3 Awarding institutions expect their external examiners to provide informative comment and recommendations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment observed by the external examiners • opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities⁵ provided to students. 	Yes (External Examiner Report). Revise no 12(a) 'Good practice <i>and innovation</i> '. Revise no 9 to comment on 'quality of teaching and learning methods <i>and learning opportunities</i> .'
Indicator 4 Institutions have explicit policies and regulations governing the nomination and appointment of external examiners. Institutions can terminate an external examiner's appointment at any time, subject to approved institutional procedures, for failure by the external examiner to fulfil his/her obligations or if a conflict of interest arises which cannot be satisfactorily resolved.	Yes (Handbook section B). Yes (Handbook section B10).

<p>Indicator 5 (criteria set out below)</p> <p>Institutions apply the following UK-wide set of criteria for appointing external examiners and make every effort to ensure that their external examiners are competent to undertake the responsibilities defined by the institution. Institutions use the criteria to ensure that potential conflicts of interest are identified and resolved prior to appointing external examiners or as soon as they arise.</p>	<p>Yes (Handbook Section C). Some revision required to include in C12, <i>knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality</i>; in 13.1 <i>'normally be academically qualified to the level of the award being examined'</i>; 13.1 include reference to PSRB requirements; 13.3 revise to reflect maximum of two external examiner appointments (UG/PG).</p>
<p>Indicator 6</p> <p>Institutions ensure that all external examiners they appoint are informed about organisational procedures, practices, and academic regulations, and the crucial value of external examiners' feedback to the institution as part of the broader system of quality assurance and enhancement.</p>	<p>Yes (Letter of appointment and reference materials).</p>
<p>Indicator 7</p> <p>Institutions communicate clearly in writing to all concerned the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modules, programmes and/or award(s) to which each external examiner is appointed • various roles, powers and responsibilities assigned to their external examiners, including the extent of their authority in examination boards. 	<p>Yes (Handbook Section C).</p> <p>Yes (Handbook Section A and Examination and Assessment Regulations Handbook).</p>
<p>Indicator 8</p> <p>Institutions include the name, position and institution of their external examiners in module or programme information provided to students.</p>	<p>Yes (course handbooks produced by Schools).</p>
<p>Indicator 9</p> <p>Prior to the confirmation of mark lists, pass lists or similar documents, institutions expect external examiners to endorse the outcomes of the assessment processes they have been appointed to scrutinise.</p>	<p>Yes (attendance at Progression and Award Boards).</p>
<p>Indicator 10</p> <p>Institutions provide external examiners with sufficient evidence to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.</p>	<p>Yes (Handbook Section D).</p>
<p>Indicator 11</p> <p>Institutions recognise the importance, and mutual benefit, of the work undertaken by many of their staff as external examiners for other institutions and agree with staff the time they need to fulfil these duties.</p>	<p>Not specified in Handbook.</p>
<p>Indicator 12</p> <p>External examiners submit a report annually, at a time determined by the institution, to the head of the institution or to one or more named individuals</p>	<p>Yes (External Examiner Report and Handbook Section E).</p>

that he/she designates.	
<p>Indicator 13</p> <p>External examiners' annual reports provide clear and informative feedback to the institution on those areas defined for the role in Indicators 2 and 3 (the core content).</p> <p>In addition, their reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirm that sufficient evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled (where evidence was insufficient, they give details) • state whether issues raised in the previous report(s) have been, or are being, addressed to their satisfaction • address any issues as specifically required by any relevant professional body • give an overview of their term of office (when concluded). 	<p>Yes but some additions to External Examiner Report:</p> <p>10. add <i>(if not please give details)</i>.</p> <p>11. add <i>(please consider if issues raised in previous reports have been addressed satisfactorily and/or if you are required to comment on any issue related to a PSRB)</i>.</p> <p>12(c) add <i>Conclusion of tenure (please give an overview of your term of office if this is your final report)</i>. (update 18.1 of Handbook accordingly).</p>
<p>Indicator 14</p> <p>Institutions make external examiners' annual reports available in full to students, with the sole exception of any confidential report made directly, and separately, to the head of the institution.</p>	<p>Currently External Examiner Report only available to STLC student representatives.(Handbook Section E). Consider how to make reports available to students generally and what guidance may be required to enable them to benefit from reading the reports.</p>
<p>Indicator 15</p> <p>At both institutional and subject/programme level, institutions give full and serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiners' reports. The actions taken as a result of reports, or the reasons for not taking action, are formally recorded and circulated to those concerned.</p> <p>Institutions ensure that student representatives are given the opportunity to be fully involved in this process, enabling them to understand all the issues raised and the institution's response.</p> <p>At institutional level the general issues and themes arising from the reports are reviewed.</p>	<p>Yes (process set out in Handbook Section G). School issues: action plans are approved at STLC and strategy for action sent to External Examiners for information; issues raised in External Examiner Reports are also considered as part of annual monitoring.</p> <p>STLC and UTLC student representatives are involved.</p> <p>University issues: process states that an overview report is sent to External Examiners and submitted to UTLC annually. This process needs to be considered.</p>
<p>Indicator 16</p> <p>Institutions provide external examiners with a considered and timely response to their comments and recommendations, outlining any actions they will be taking as a result or the reasons for not taking action.</p>	<p>Yes (see above).</p>

<p>Indicator 17</p> <p>Institutions inform external examiners, in writing at the beginning of their term of office, that they have a right to raise any matter of serious concern with the head of the institution, if necessary by means of a separate confidential written report.</p> <p>Institutions provide a considered and timely response to any confidential report received, outlining any actions they will be taking as a result.</p>	<p>Yes (Handbook Section E 18.2)</p> <p>No (to be added to Handbook Section E 18.2).</p>
<p>Indicator 18</p> <p>Where an external examiner has a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of a programme or programmes and has exhausted all published applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the head of the institution, he/she may invoke QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body.</p>	<p>No (to be added to Handbook Section E 18).</p>

Indicator 5: Person specification

a. Institutions appoint external examiners who can show appropriate evidence of the following:

- 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, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline 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.

Conflicts of interest

b. Institutions 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
- v) 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
- vi) 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)
- vii) a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution
- viii) the succession of an external examiner by a colleague from the examiner's home department and institution
- ix) the appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution.

Terms of office

c. The duration of an external examiner's appointment will normally be for four years, with an exceptional extension of one year to ensure continuity.

d. An external examiner may be reappointed in exceptional circumstances but only after a period of five years or more has elapsed since their last appointment.

e. External examiners normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time.