10 EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

10.1 Procedures


The University’s procedures for External Examiners are detailed in the Handbook on the policy and procedures for external examining of taught courses. This is the definitive document on external examining at the University and is updated annually. It is available at:

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/externalexaminers

10.2 Nomination of External Examiners

Nominations must be submitted on the ‘Nomination of External Examiners for Partnership Institutions’ form in Appendix 10. The form is also available from the ADQE office website (http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/documents/external-examiner-nomination-form.doc).

Nominations must be received at least four months before the expiry of the previous examiner’s tenure, see Calendar of Business for the final date for submission of nominations.

We welcome informal discussion of the suitability of an external examiner before completion of the form. Please be aware that the nomination procedure can be a lengthy one and that, occasionally, a candidate may be unsuitable.

The partner institution will be informed by ADQE once a nominee is approved and will contact the examiner to induct them into the role.

10.3 Appointment of External Examiners

External examiners are appointed by the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee. The principles underpinning the criteria for the appointment of external examiners require that:

- external examiners have knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;
- external examiners are sufficiently qualified and have sufficient expertise and experience in both discipline-specific and assessment matters;
- arrangements are avoided which result in undue reliance on the nomination of external examiners from any one university and arrangements where there is a known conflict of interest.¹

The University is unable to accept applicants from those who:

¹ Handbook on the policy and procedures for the external examining of taught courses, Academic Development and Quality Enhancement Office 2016-17.
have previously been appointed as an external examiner at the University of Sussex;
within the last five years, have been a member of staff or student within the University of Sussex or one of its partner institutions;
have any direct interest in or ties to the University or the partner institution;
hold more than one other external examiner position.

10.4 Reporting Process

External examiners submit an annual report to the University using a standard form.

Each report will be received by the ADQE office at the University and an acknowledgement sent to the external examiner. At this stage, a copy is sent to the partner institution. All reports will be seen by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning).

Upon receipt of the report, the partner institution then prepares an action plan that addresses each issue raised by external examiners; giving a clear reason where no action is proposed. The external examiner’s report and the proposed action plan is appended to the Annual Monitoring Report and submitted to Collaborative Provision Committee.

Collaborative Provision Committee considers the reports and associated action plans and either endorses them or requests further action.

The partner institution is responsible for writing to external examiners informing them of the action that has been taken or is planned. A copy of this letter is also sent to the ADQE (Partnership) Office.

ADQE is responsible for writing to external examiners informing them of actions taken or planned in response to institutional-level concerns raised in their annual report.

In the following year’s annual examination board report, the partner institution should confirm that all action has been implemented or progress of implementation is being monitored.

10.5 Fees and payment

Fee levels are set by each partner institution and we recommend that the University’s fee payment calculation is used, as described in the Handbook.

Partner institutions must confirm external examiners fees for 2016/17 by Friday 2nd September 2016.

The payment of external examiners’ fees is made by the ADQE office, and these are later recouped from the partner institution. We make this payment direct into external examiners’ bank accounts upon receipt of a satisfactory report.

Payment of expenses is the responsibility of the partner institution and external examiners should be informed of this when they visit.