

## UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH – MAPPING TO THE UK QUALITY CODE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

### Theme – External Expertise

#### Expectations for standards

- The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.
- The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

#### Core practices for standards

- The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.
- The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.
- Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.
- The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.

#### Common practices for standards

The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.

#### Expectations for quality

Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

#### Core practices for quality

- The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.
- Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.

#### Common practices for quality

The provider's approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/external-expertise>

The guiding principles given here are not mandatory for any provider. They are a concise expression of the fundamental practices of the higher education sector, based on the experience of a wide range of providers. They are intended as a framework for providers to consider when establishing new or looking at existing higher education provision. They are not exhaustive and there will be other ways for providers to meet their requirements.

Guiding Principle	Mapping to the University's policies and/or practices	Additional notes
1. Providers use one or more external experts as advisers to provide impartial and independent scrutiny on the approval and review of all	<b>External Examining</b> External Examiners contribute to course and programme design. They highlight good practice and make recommendations leading to ongoing programme enhancement.	

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<p>provision that leads to the award of credit or a qualification.</p>	<p>External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Programme Approval</b>            Schools seek external expertise when proposing new credit-bearing programmes.            Programme and Course Approval and Management policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/prog_course_approval.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/prog_course_approval.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Internal Periodic Review</b>            External expertise is integral to the internal periodic review process.            External review team members highlight good practice and make recommendations for ongoing enhancement to academic provision and student experience:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/iprhandbook.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/iprhandbook.pdf</a></p>	
<p>2. Degree-awarding bodies engage independent external examiners to comment impartially and informatively on academic standards, student achievement and assessment processes for all provision that leads to the award of credit or a qualification.</p>	<p>The External Examiner’s role in providing independent and impartial assurance of academic standards, student achievement and assessment processes is set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a></p> <p>Conveners of Boards of Examiners are responsible for ensuring External Examiners contribute to and comment on provision as set out in Taught Assessment Regulations:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf</a>            Additional guidance on roles and responsibilities of members of Boards of Examiners are provided in the Board of Examiners Handbook:  <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf">http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf</a></p> <p>External Examiners are integral to the assessment processes for doctoral degrees as set out in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for</p>	

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	<p>Research Degrees:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf</a></p>	
<p>3. Degree-awarding bodies have processes for the nomination, approval and engagement of external examiners and other independent external experts.</p>	<p>Colleges are responsible for appointing External Examiners and must have robust documented approval mechanisms in place.          External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a></p> <p>Appointment processes for External Examiners of postgraduate research degrees are set out in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf</a></p> <p>Additional guidance is published in the Handbook for External Examining of Research Degrees:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgreexternalexamininghandbook.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgreexternalexamininghandbook.pdf</a></p> <p>Colleges work within the institutional policy framework for nomination, approval and engagement of External Examiner and manage their own processes. Nomination forms for External Examiners for Taught Programmes are available for each College:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/external-examining/policy-regulations">https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/external-examining/policy-regulations</a></p> <p>And a separate University form is available for nominations for External Examiners for Research Degrees:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgrexaminernominationform.docx">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgrexaminernominationform.docx</a></p>	
<p>4. Providers ensure that the roles of those providing external expertise are clear to students, staff and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Roles and responsibilities for course and programme External Examiners of taught programmes are set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a></p> <p>Additional online guidance on external examining roles is available on the public website:</p>	

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	<p><a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/external-examining">https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/external-examining</a></p> <p>Programme handbooks are available to all students and contain details of External Examiners:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/progcoursehandbooks.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/progcoursehandbooks.pdf</a></p> <p>Postgraduate research External Examiner roles are set out in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees. Colleges must specify responsibilities to examiners:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf</a></p> <p>Additional guidance on roles and responsibilities is provided in the Handbook for External Examining of Research Degrees:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgrexternalexamininghandbook.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgrexternalexamininghandbook.pdf</a></p>	
<p>5. Providers ensure that external experts are given sufficient and timely evidence and training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.</p>	<p>Schools are responsible for briefing External Examiners, providing appropriate information to enable them to carry out their responsibilities at appropriate times as set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a></p>	
<p>6. Providers have effective mechanisms in place to provide a response to input from external examiners and external advisers.</p>	<p><b>External Examining</b></p> <p>Academic response coordinators in Schools are responsible for responding to External Examiner reports as set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a></p> <p>All External Examiner reports for taught provision must be submitted through the online External Examiner Reporting System. This provides the mechanism for responding to input from External Examiners:  <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/external-examining/external-examiner-reporting-system">https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/external-examining/external-examiner-reporting-system</a></p> <p>Quality Assurance Committee receives a thematic report from Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught external examiner reporting</p>	

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	<p>annually. The Committee identifies any institutional actions – Committee agendas and papers: <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance/agendas-papers">https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance/agendas-papers</a></p> <p><b>Internal Periodic Review</b> Schools provide 14 week and one year on responses to Internal Periodic Review reports. These report progress on recommendations, which include input from external panel members. Reports and responses are published at: : <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/internal-review/reports">https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/internal-review/reports</a></p>	
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