 **APPENIDIX GA2e**

**External Examiner Guidance**

**for**

**Institute Quality Teams, Collaborative Partnerships Office, Academic Directors and Programme Managers**

# External Examiner guidance for Institute Quality Teams, Collaborative Partnerships Office, Academic Directors/Programme Managers

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## Guidance on Nomination and Appointment of External Examiners (EEs)

### Essential Documents

* **External Expertise Protocol:** Academic Directors (AD), Programme Managers (PM) and Institute Quality Teams (IQT) and the Collaborative Partnerships Office (CPO) should familiarise themselves with the [External Expertise Protocol](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/misc-forms/Exterrnal_Expertise_Protocol_2022-23.pdf), to understand the requirements in relation to the role of the external examiner, the person specification and conflicts of interest and impartiality.
* **Appendix GA2 Module EE Nomination Form**
* **Appendix GA2a Module EE Nomination Checklist**

### Timeline for appointing EE

EEs should be nominated 6-12 months or a minimum of 2 months prior to the date the appointment is due to commence.

Appointments **must not** be made retrospectively, other than under exceptional circumstances e.g. the unexpected withdrawal of the current EE.

EEs for programmes delivered in a language other than English or Welsh are sourced by the Collaborative Partnerships Office (CPO), who will advertise the vacancy via the JISC External Examiners Forum.

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| **When? (recommended)** | **What?** |
| 6-12 months before tenure starts | The AO will liaise with IQTs/CPO annually regarding posts to be filled within the next 12 months. The process for identifying potential nominees will vary across the Institutes with some undertaking the process centrally, whilst others may ask their ADs/PMs to identify potential nominees. IQTs/CPO may use the JISC External Examiners Forum to advertise for EEs if necessary.  |
| 6-12 months before tenure starts | Once a potential nominee has been identified and there are no obvious conflicts of interests, the AD/PM or IQT should liaise with the nominee to obtain a copy of the nominee’s CV. The proposer should then undertake a more detailed conflict of interest against Appendix GA2a to ensure that the nominee meets the person specification and the conflict of interest and impartiality checks, as outlined in the [External Expertise Protocol](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/misc-forms/Exterrnal_Expertise_Protocol_2022-23.pdf). Once the proposer is content that the nominee is appropriately qualified and suitable for the appointment, they should complete the following documentation with input from the nominee, where required:* [Appendix GA2 Module EE Nomination Form](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/ga/GA2_Module_External_Examiner_Nomination_Form_12-2022.docx);
* [Appendix GA2a Module EE Nomination Checklist](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/ga/GA2a_Module_External_Examiner_Nomination_Checklist_12-2022.docx)\*;

obtain an email from the nominee confirming that they wish to be nominated.\* For EEs for Partners, the Partner will need to be consulted regarding Appendix GA2a to ensure that any potential conflict of interests relating to the Partner or its staff are identified. |
| 6 months before tenure starts | The nomination paperwork, including the CV, will then be considered by the Academic Director followed by the Dean or Assistant Dean (Quality). Person specification and conflict of interest checks should be verified as part of this process. If the nomination is for an EE for a partner institution, a Partnership Team Leader (PTL) or Assistant Dean may sign instead of the University Academic Director, but the nomination must be approved by the University Dean or Assistant Dean. |
| Minimum 2 months before tenure starts | Once approved at Institute level, the nomination documentation (see 5 above, including CV) should be submitted to the Academic Office (AO) via aoexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk. The nomination will be considered by the Head of Academic Office, who will make a recommendation to the Chair of the Academic Standards Committee to approve or approve with conditions (such as mentoring), or to reject the nomination. |

### Approval Or Rejection of Nominated EE

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| **Approval** | **Rejection** |
| If the nomination is **approved**, the AO will write to the nominee to confirm their appointment. The letter will include details of the induction process, links to key chapters of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH), a brief summary of their responsibilities, confirmation of the number of approved visits, and details of the fees and expenses. A copy of the email will be forwarded to the relevant Assistant Dean, the IQT and the CPO if relevant. If the appointment is made subject to mentoring, as outlined by the Institute on the GA2a, the AO will record this on the central file. The Institute will ensure that arrangements are in place to support the EE during the first year of their tenure. | If the nomination is **rejected**, the AO will inform the IQT, and CPO if relevant, and they or the person in contact with the nominee will be required to inform the nominee and the reason for the rejection, if appropriate. The most common reason for rejection relates to conflict of interest issues. |

## Guidance on Extension of Duties requests

### Essential Documents

[Appendix GA2b Extend Duties of EE Form](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/ga/GA2b_Extend_Duties_of_Module_External_Examiner_Form_12-2022.docx)

### Reasons for Extension

Where necessary, it is possible to request an extension of duties for an existing EE. For example, this might be to cover a new programme added to a portfolio or a microcredential, or to cover the duties of another EE temporarily.

**Any extension of duties will end at the same time as the end of tenure for the main appointment.**

### Process of Extension

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| --- | --- |
| **When?** | **What?** |
| As soon as need for extension is identified | In these circumstances, the AD/PM/IQT/CPO or Partner staff should liaise with the EE to ensure that they are willing to undertake additional duties, and obtain an email from them to this effect.  |
| As soon as EE agrees to extension of duties | [Appendix GA2b Extend Duties of EE Form](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/ga/GA2b_Extend_Duties_of_Module_External_Examiner_Form_12-2022.docx) should be completed. The extension will then be considered by the Academic Director (or in the case of Partners, the PTL or Assistant Dean) followed by the Dean or Assistant Dean (Quality). |
| Once approved at Institute level | The GA2b and email from the EE should be submitted to the Academic Office (AO) via aoexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk. The nomination will be considered by the Head of Academic Office, who will make a recommendation to the Chair of the Academic Standards Committee to approve or approve with conditions (such as mentoring), or to reject the nomination. |

### Approval or Rejection of Extension of Duties

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| **Approval** | **Rejection** |
| If the nomination is **approved**, the AO will write to the nominee to confirm their appointment. The letter will include links to key chapters of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH), a brief summary of their responsibilities, confirmation of the number of approved visits, and details of the fees and expenses.  | If the nomination is **rejected**, the AO will inform the IQT, and CPO if relevant, and they or the person in contact with the nominee will be required to inform the nominee and the reason for the rejection, if appropriate. The most common reason for rejection relates to conflict of interest issues. |

## Guidance on Extension of Appointment requests

### Essential Documents

[Appendix GA2c Extend Appointment of EE Form](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/ga/GA2c_Extend_Appointment_of_Module_External_Examiner_Form_12-2022.docx)

### Reasons for Extension of Appointment

EEs are appointed for a period of 4 years. Under exceptional circumstances (such as a programme being in the final year of teach-out), it may be possible to request an extension of appointment for an additional year.

### Process of Extension

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| **When?** | **What?** |
| 6-12 months before end of original tenure | The AD/PM/IQT/CPO or Partner staff should liaise with the EE to ensure that they are willing to undertake an additional year, and obtain an email from them to this effect.  |
| 6-12 months before end of original tenure | [Appendix GA2c Extend Appointment of EE Form](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-appendices/ga/GA2c_Extend_Appointment_of_Module_External_Examiner_Form_12-2022.docx) should be completed, including a detailed rationale for requesting the extension. The extension will then be considered by the Academic Director (or in the case of Partners, the PTL or Assistant Dean) followed by the Dean or Assistant Dean (Quality).  |
| Minimum 2 months before end of original tenure | Once approved at Institute level, the GA2c and email from the EE should be submitted to the Academic Office (AO) via aoexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk. The nomination will be considered by the Head of Academic Office, who will make a recommendation to the Chair of the Academic Standards Committee to approve or to reject the nomination. |

### Approval or Rejection of Extension of Appointment

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| **Approval** | **Rejection** |
| If the nomination is **approved**, the AO will write to the nominee to confirm the extension to their appointment. The letter will include links to key chapters of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH), a brief summary of their responsibilities, confirmation of the number of approved visits, and details of the fees and expenses. A copy of the email will be forwarded to the relevant Assistant Dean, the IQT and the CPO if relevant.  | If the nomination is **rejected**, the AO will inform the IQT, and CPO if relevant, and they or the person in contact with the nominee will be required to inform the nominee and the reason for the rejection, if appropriate. The most common reason for rejection relates to conflict of interest issues. |

## Providing central information to External Examiners (Academic Office)

Copies of the communications identified below are shared with Assistant Deans (Quality), IQTs and the CPO.

## Essential Resources

[External Examiners’ webpage](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/external-examiners/)

### New External Examiners – upon approval of appointment

1. Letter to confirm appointment and the number of visits approved (which may be an online engagement instead of a face-to-face visit) together with location for the visit, where relevant.
2. Invitation to University-wide induction session (or link to recording and slides).
3. Links to Chapters 6 and 7 of the Academic Quality Handbook and the External Expertise Protocol, together with Chapter 9 for EEs for Partner programmes.
4. Guidance on fees and claiming expenses, where relevant.
5. Guidance on requirements in relation to completing an annual report.
6. Guidance on the period of notice for withdrawing from an external examiner contract, and circumstances under which the University may terminate the appointment.
7. EE reports and PV11c responses for the previous 3 years, if relevant.

### All External Examiners

#### Start of year letter

* Link to new Academic Quality Handbook for the year.
* A list of key changes since the previous year.
* Confirmation of the date of the induction session and an open invitation to attend for any existing EEs wishing to attend for a refresher.
* Any other relevant information.

#### Summer term letter

* A reminder regarding forthcoming Examining Boards.
* A reminder of the annual deadline of 31 July to submit the GA3 reports, together with a link to the online template on the [External Examiners’ webpage](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/external-examiners/).
* Overview Report of External Examiner Reports for the previous academic year.
* Copy of the expenses claim form, for face-to-face visits.
* Any other relevant information.

#### Additional Communications

Occasionally, additional communications will be shared with EEs, such as sharing contingency regulations during the pandemic.

## Checklist for providing programme-specific information to External Examiners (Institute/CPO/Academic Discipline/Programme Manager)

At the start of each academic year, the AD/PM/IQT/Partner and/or CPO should ensure that the following information is provided to the EE (the responsibility for sharing various documentation varies across Institutes, so please liaise with your IQT or Institute Administration Team (IAT) for advice):

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| --- | --- |
| **Name of the document** | **Person responsible** **(IQT or CPO to complete)** |
| **New External Examiners** **(any revisions to be highlighted to existing External Examiners, such as changes in key staff or information re: additional duties)** |  |
| 1. Basic Academic Discipline information e.g. contact details for Academic Director and Programme Manager(s).
 |  |
| 1. Introduction to modules/programmes being examined. This should include details of any PSRB accreditation. The EE should also be informed if they need to report on distinct parts of the provision e.g. if the programme is offered collaboratively at a partner location, or if it is a degree apprenticeship programme.
 |  |
| 1. For collaborative externals, Partnership Operations Manual (POM), if necessary.
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| **All External Examiners (annually)** |  |
| 1. Proposed schedule of work for the academic year to be provided at the start of the year, with timelines for sending work to the EE for review, arrangements for their visit (see Section F below), date of the Examining Board etc.
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| 1. Programme of Study Handbook(s) and Module Directory for the year to be provided at the start of the year.
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| 1. GA15 External Examiner Agreement for the year – these should be completed and signed by all parties at the start of each academic year and submitted to the IQT. The IQT is required to submit the signed GA15s and GA15a Institute Confirmation Checklist to the AO by the end of November annually, for approval by ASC in December.
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| 1. Assessment briefs and/or marking criteria for approval **before** they are issued to students (see Appendix GA34) – please ensure that any feedback from the EE is acknowledged and revisions implemented if necessary.
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| 1. Draft exam papers for approval (see Appendix GA34) – please ensure that any feedback from the EE is acknowledged and revisions implemented if necessary.
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| 1. Setting-up the arrangements for accessing work e.g. Moodle, GoogleDrive, Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive etc. Moodle access must be re-activated annually for EEs.
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| 1. A response to the EE report for the previous year (if relevant), using Appendix PV11c, to be submitted to the IQT within 4 weeks of receiving the GA3 report for central oversight by the Institute. The IQT will email the response to the EE by the end of November annually, together with a copy to the Academic Office.
 |  |
| **Assessment periods** |  |
| 1. Share samples of work\* with the EE for moderation via the agreed platform. Inform the EE that the work is available, ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the EE to undertake the work and provide a reminder of the deadline (as per the schedule of work and timelines provided at the start of the year). Provide the following:
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| 1. A sufficient number of exam scripts, where relevant\*.
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| 1. Coursework/continuously assessed/dissertation work samples\*.
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| 1. Information related to students’ oral, performances and professional placements, where relevant. Oral presentations and performances must be recorded for viewing by the EE. Ensure in advance that the method of recording and sharing the recordings is suitable for the EE.
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| 1. GA28 Moderation of Marked Assessment for internal and external moderation provided with samples.
 |  |
| 1. Provide the QE1a Module Review forms (or by the end of the year) (optional for Partners).
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\* See Section 2.3.20 of the External Expertise Protocol for details of the Process of External Examination for Taught Awards, which defines the required sampling protocols.

## External Examiner Attendance/Visits

### Number and Format of Visits

All external examiners **normally** visit (which may be online rather than face-to-face) the University **once a year**. The purpose of the visit could be to attend the examining board or to meet with the programme team and students (see below). One visit per year is included in the EE’s basic fee.

**Additional** visits (normally up to a maximum of three additional visits per year) may be required for programmes with a performance, practical or professional element or for cohorts with variable/multiple or non-standard completion times. Additional visits must be identified on the GA2/b/c form, together with the reason for the visit and proposed location, and approved during the nomination/extension process.

External examiners of **practice-based programmes**, typically in Initial Teacher Education, may be required to visit placement settings (schools) to meet with students and mentors. Otherwise, there is no general expectation that examiners will meet with students although they may do so on request. Institutes will determine the arrangements by which examiners may engage directly with students, and ensure that examiners are aware of them.

There are no set guidelines for **optional meetings between examiners and students** and examiners may discuss any relevant issues with students, but they may wish to consider:

* how useful students have found feedback on assignments;
* comments and discussion relating to placements, work-based learning, exchange opportunities;
* what the students are particularly enjoying or finding challenging;
* whether students feel they have opportunities to apply what they have learnt;
* whether they feel that the curriculum is inclusive.

It should be made clear to students that non-academic issues (such as parking or accommodation) should not be raised with examiners, and that the examiner cannot be influenced to change individual assessment marks or to become involved in academic appeals or complaints.

### Planning on Visits

Additional visits must be identified on the GA2/b/c form and approved during the nomination/extension process.

Physical visits to any University campus or collaborative partner location must be identified on the GA2/b/c form and authorised in advance as part of the external examiner appointment process. Visits to collaborative partners are not required in general, other than for a small number of programmes with e.g. performance or practical elements. The AO will liaise with the CPO regarding any visits to partner locations requested on the GA2/b/c forms.

### Exam Board Attendance

Module examiners contribute to Examining Boards and must be given the opportunity to attend the Examining Boards, although it may be agreed with the EE that they will attend for a different purpose, such as meeting with staff or students. Currently, most Examining Boards for University programmes are held online, and all Examining Boards for collaborative partners are held online; therefore, attendance at an Examining Board would normally be online.

### Expenses and Visit Payment

EEs may claim **expenses** for authorised physical visits to campuses/partner locations. An expenses cap is set for each EE upon appointment. The Academic Office will advise the EEs of their individual expenses cap, together with the process for claiming expenses and the financial regulations relating to expense claims. The expenses cap is either £300 or £400 and is based on the mileage between the EE’s preferred contact address and the University campus identified for the visits, or furthest location if more than one visit is identified. The expenses cap includes travel, accommodation and refreshments and any other expenses; any expenditure over the agreed cap will not normally be reimbursed.

EEs who are required to undertake authorised **additional** visits (i.e. in addition to the one standard visit included in their annual fee) will be paid an additional fee of £100 per visit, together with expenses.

**Please direct any queries to the Academic Office:** **aoexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk**