



EXAMINERS' HANDBOOK
(Internal Moderators and External Examiners)
for
Raffles University Degree Programmes

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Issued by the Office of Vice-President, Academic Services and Registrar

Please direct any queries relating to this handbook in the first instance to the Assistant Registrar,
Raffles University.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides information for External and Internal Moderators of degree programmes at Raffles University. It should be read in conjunction with the current version of the General Regulations Handbook for Raffles University.

The Examiners' Handbook relates to the assessment of the degree programmes of the University and covers:

- assessment at Raffles University
- Progression and Awards Examination Board
- internal and external moderation
- the appointment and role of the External Examiner
- the External Examiner's annual report.

2. ASSESSMENT AT RAFFLES UNIVERSITY

2.1. The module programme structure

- Raffles top-up degree programmes are composed of individual modules each of which bears normally 10, 20, 30 or more credit points.
- The undergraduate honours degree top-up comprises 120 credits, and will normally be undertaken by a full-time student in 12 months.
- The masters programmes comprise 180 credits (120 credits being the taught programme and 60 credits for the dissertation/project), and will normally be undertaken by a full-time student in not less than 12 months.
- The regulations covering progression and classification in the module framework are described in the progression and Awards Requirements RU document.

2.2. Two tier Examination Panel/ Board

The University operates a two-tier Examination Panel/ Board structure:

- The Assessment and Moderation Panel (AMP) is responsible for the internal moderation for a set of modules provided by an Associate College. This panel will confirm the marks awarded for each module.
- All marks from the AMP are supplied by the Academic Director to the Progression and Awards Examination Board which determines classification of awards and progression of students.

2.3. Authority of the Progression and Awards Examination Board

Only the Progression and Awards Examination Board has authority to recommend to the University the conferment of an award.

2.4. External Examiners

External Examiners are nominated by the discipline Dean in consultation with the Associate College Academic Director and appointed (subject to approval) by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLT). Information on the appointment of External Examiners is given in Appendix B.

External Examiners are appointed by Raffles University to verify the standards of the University's awards, and to ensure that its assessment processes are fair and fairly operated

in line with its regulations. Thus the primary role of the External Examiner relates to the assessment process, although comments are welcomed on any other aspects of the provision.

2.5. Student membership of Examination Panel/ Board

The compositions of the Assessment and Moderation Panel (AMP) and the Progression and Awards Examination Board (PAEB) are set out in sections 3 and 4 respectively. In normal circumstances, no student can be a member of an Examination Board or attend an examiners' meeting other than as a candidate for assessment. If, however, a person who is otherwise qualified to be an examiner for a module or programme (e.g. as a member of staff or as an approved External Examiner) is coincidentally registered as a student on another programme either in the University or elsewhere, that does not in itself disqualify that person from carrying out normal examining commitments.

2.6. Records

Detailed and accurate records of the proceedings of both the Assessment and Moderation Panel and the Progression and Awards Examination Board, including the marks submitted to and Board, are made by the Secretary to the AMP and the Board. The record contains a full and complete reference to each case involving the use of discretion, including a description of the evidence or other good reason relied on by the AMP and the Board for exercising discretion. A definitive file of the records of all Examination Boards (both AMP and the Progression and Awards Examination Board) is maintained by the Assistant Registrar, Raffles University.

2.7. Review of a decision of the Progression and Awards Examination Board

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee is authorized by Senate to act as a review group and may, in the following circumstances, require a Progression and Awards Examination Board to reconsider its decision(s):

- i) If a candidate requests a reconsideration and establishes to the satisfaction of SLT that his or her performance in the examination was adversely affected by illness or other factors which he or she was unable, or for valid reasons unwilling, to raise under the procedures for considering personal extenuating circumstances (section 4.4) before the Progression and Awards Examination Board. Medical certificates, or other documentary evidence acceptable to the SLT, must support the candidate's request.
- ii) If the SLT is satisfied on evidence produced by the candidate or any other person that there has been an internal administrative error, or that the examinations were not conducted in accordance with the regulations for the programme of study or that some other material irregularity relevant to the assessments has occurred that was not considered by the Progression and Awards Examination Board.

Disagreement with the academic judgement of the Progression and Awards Examination Board in assessing the merits of an individual piece of work or in reaching any assessment decision based on the marks, grades and other information relating to a candidate's performance does not in itself constitute grounds for granting a request for reconsideration by a candidate.

If, after reconsideration, the Progression and Awards Examination Board does not modify its decision, SLT has the power to annul that decision if, in its opinion, due and proper account has not been taken of the relevant factors. SLT also has the power to provide remedy if it deems it appropriate and the action taken is in the best interests of Raffles University.

3. ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION PANEL

3.1. Role of the Assessment and Moderation Panel

The Assessment and Moderation Panel (AMP) must satisfy the University, through the Academic Director, that appropriate arrangements are made for the assessment of students with reference to the learning outcomes of the modules for which the Associate College is responsible. AMP also determines that appropriate moderation of marking has taken place, such that the marks awarded for each module appropriately reflect attainment and are awarded consistently.

The Academic Director as Chair of the AMP determines when the committee should meet in order to fulfil its responsibilities; the Academic Director is responsible for appointing the Internal Moderator; the committee will normally meet once a term and the External Examiner(s) may be present.

3.2. Composition of the Assessment and Moderation Panel

The Panel comprises members as follows:

- Chair, Academic Director
- Programme Co-ordinator(s) for the modules under consideration.
- Appointed Internal Moderator
- External Examiner may attend (but is not required)

The Associate College student records administrator or nominee is Secretary to the AMP.

3.3. Approval of module for assessment purposes

The Chair of the AMP, through the appointment of an internal moderator ensures that appropriate arrangements are in place to approve overall assessment weighting, assignments and examination papers before they are given to students, and in particular that:

- assignments are aligned with the learning outcomes of the module
- the assignment instructions can be understood by the students
- there is a marking scheme (or criteria for assessment) which will produce marks at an appropriate standard.

The Chair, through the appointed internal moderator, will also ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for the marking and moderation of the work and the recording of marks.

The External Examiner will participate in this approval process: he or she will be invited to comment on and required to approve the assignments, examination papers and marking schemes. Exceptions to this external consultation may, in the case of a particularly small or routine assessment, be agreed with the External Examiner and the Chair of the AMP and this agreement reported to the full meeting of the AMP.

3.4. Approval and confirmation of marks

The AMP is required to meet to confirm module marks. It will confirm with the internal moderator that internal moderation has taken place, and also moderation by the External Examiner where required. Where a module mark is affected by a proven or admitted case of academic misconduct, the AMP is responsible for determining the mark which should be awarded.

As part of the marks confirmation process, the AMP will also consider and resolve any technical extenuating circumstances affecting the conduct of an examination or assessment,

which may have affected individual students or groups of students¹. It may not always be possible for the AMP to make a quantitative judgement and impute a mark to a student. If this is the case, then the AMP may be able to pass on a recommendation to the Progression and Awards Examination Board.

4. PROGRESSION AND AWARDS EXAMINATION BOARD

4.1. Role of the Progression and Awards Examination Board

The Progression and Awards Examination Board (PAEB) will be in receipt of module marks for each of the students on each of the programmes within its purview. It determines which students are eligible for progression to the next level (where applicable), and for award level students, it determines the award to be made, and any classification of that award. The Board will, with the aid of External Examiner and to the satisfaction of External Examiner, ensure the impartial judgment of students' performance on the basis of their module marks as determined by AMP, and in accordance with the RU General Regulations.

The Board receives the decisions of the personal extenuating circumstances that have been rendered by the AMP and takes these into account when making its own decisions.

The Board will take into account the decisions and recommendations of the AMP which submits one or more marks which have been determined according to the procedures governing academic misconduct.

No recommendation from the Board for the conferment of an award will be valid without the written consent of the External Examiners involved. An External Examiner has a final right of veto over any decision, in that he or she can refuse to confirm the recommendation of an award. In this case the matter will be referred to the SLT for resolution.

4.2. Composition of the Progression and Awards Examination Board

The Board comprises members as follows:

- Chair, Vice President, Academic Services and Registrar or nominee.
- Discipline Dean or nominee
- Academic Director for the Associate College
- Programme Leaders/Coordinators of all programmes to be considered at that meeting of the Board – as non-voting members
- Internal Moderator – as a non-voting member
- External Examiner(s) as a full voting member. If, on the day of the Board the External Examiner cannot attend due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, then the Board may proceed provided the appointed External Examiner can be consulted about the decisions made.
- at the discretion of the Chair of the Board, examiners or assessors of relevant professional bodies may be admitted to meetings of the Board as observers.

The RU Assistant Registrar or nominee is Secretary to the Board.

4.3. Role of Progression and Awards Examination Board Chair

The Chair of the Board is responsible for ensuring that the operation of and functioning of the Board is conducted in accordance with University regulations, including:

- determining the dates on which the Board will meet
- approving attendance of representatives of professional bodies at the Board.

¹ Instances of technical extenuating circumstances should be relatively rare but might include, for example, a disturbance at an examination due to a fire alarm or hardware/software fault occurring in an IT based examination.

4.4. Personal, extenuating circumstances review by AMP

Any approved grade appeal that involves personal, extenuating circumstances is reviewed by the AMP. It is chaired by the Academic Director and consists of a fixed membership of no more than 2 academic staff including the Internal Moderator and the Associate College records administrator (where applicable). The Academic Director ensures that a secretary to the Committee is appointed.

The AMP has the following functions:

- to receive evidence of all personal extenuating circumstances that students wish the Board to take into account when making decisions on their performance. Personal extenuating circumstances are defined as circumstances beyond the student's control that have significantly affected performance in any assessment designed to demonstrate skills, knowledge and competencies associated with any modules. Personal, extenuating circumstances will be of a medical or personal nature affecting the student for any significant period of time and/or during the examination period.
- to consider that evidence, to accept or reject the claim, and to inform the Board of claims that have been accepted.

APPENDIX A: MODERATION OF ASSESSMENTS

A1 Moderation

Moderation is the process whereby the marker of a set of work is enabled to confirm or modify his or her own judgment in the light of the experience of others. Moderation is concerned with the **standard** of marking of a set of work. It should also be concerned with the **consistency** of marking: to establish that all candidates have been treated in the same way.

A2 Anonymous marking

In the case of RU Examinations it is recommended that module instructors mark the work anonymously. In the case of the Internal Moderator the name of the student is revealed after moderation has taken place.

A3. Markers' comments

Markers will wish to comment on assessments, and these comments should be recorded. The comments will inform the moderation process, other than in those exceptional cases where second marking or moderation is to be 'comment concealed'. The same comments may also serve as the basis for formative feedback to students, an important part of the assessment process.

A3.1 Markers' comments on continuous assessment

The annotation of the submitted work is often the most effective and efficient way of providing detailed assessment information to moderators, and feedback to students. Such feedback requires that the work is returned to the students, and a copy must be taken by the Internal Moderator of those submissions which are to be retained as the standard sample for internal moderation.

In the case of examination scripts, the University retains all examinations for a period of 2 years. If students wish to see the examination script they may do so by making application to the Academic Director.

A3.2 Markers' comments on examination answers

Markers' comments on examination answers will often be made in order to inform internal and external moderators, rather than to provide feedback to students on examination performance. However, programmes that have chosen to provide individual feedback on examinations will be using the markers' comments to inform the feedback process as well as to aid moderation.

The annotation of students' work is again assumed to be the most efficient and effective way of providing evidence for internal and external moderation, and since examinations scripts are not normally returned to students (unlike coursework – see A3.1) examinations will not have to be photocopied in order to make them available for external moderation, it is expected that internal moderators will normally choose to write their comments on the examination papers.

A4 Moderation of dissertations

All dissertations/projects should be double marked on a mark-concealed basis.

A5. Alternative forms of moderation

A5.1 Moderation of participation and oral assessments

Some assessments, e.g. oral seminar assessments or module oral participation, produce particular difficulties for the moderation process. While recordings can be made in some cases, and the recordings presented to External Examiners, this is not always possible or appropriate. In the majority of cases the oral assessment in RU modules is 20% or less.

In cases where an oral portion of assessment of the students' work cannot be available for later moderation by an External Examiner, the Academic Director will ensure that both the internal moderator and the External Examiner is aware of the oral component of the module assessment.

A5.2 Moderation of practice placement assessments

Assessment of the professional competence of students in the workplace is commonly undertaken by practice supervisors, assessors or mentors, the terminology varying across different professional groups. For the purposes of this handbook such assessors will be referred to as *practice assessors*.

In order to demonstrate the reliability and validity of assessments conducted in the workplace it is important that practice assessments are subject to the same level of moderation as university-based assessments. Therefore, while one or more practice assessor may be responsible for determining the grade or mark awarded it is also necessary for academic link module instructors to co-ordinate regular moderation meetings with practice assessors where at least a representative sample of student profiles and grades are subject to internal moderation. As implementation may vary across programmes, each programme specification should include written details of the moderation of practice assessments within that programme. In addition, External Examiners must be satisfied with the rigor of the programme's internal moderation of practice assessments.

A5.3 Statistical inspection

Statistical inspection can play a role in moderation. A set of marks, mean and standard deviation, can be compared with some agreed norm (perhaps the performance of the same cohort of students across a range of other assessments) and statistically significant differences noted. More simply, it might be agreed that a mean which differs by more than x percentage points from a standard, or a standard deviation which differs by more than y percentage points from a standard, should be subject to further evaluation. There is no presumption that a set of marks which differs from the standard must be revised, but the first marker should be invited to assure the AMP that the original marks should stand.

A6. Completion of the moderation process

Module instructors and Internal Moderator are expected to agree a mark. If they cannot agree, then the Academic Director should be consulted. Only when it is impossible to reach internal agreement should an External Examiner be asked to arbitrate.

A7. Determination and confirmation of the module marks at the Assessment and Moderation Panel

Discussions with the External Examiner may take place before the formal meeting of the AMP, and it will often be possible to reconcile differences of judgment at this stage. It should be recognised however that the final judgment on the marks to be recorded lies with the AMP.

The External Examiner enjoys a special status at the AMP, as an independent and respected member of the peer group. The External Examiner has a final right of veto over any decisions

in that he or she can refuse to confirm the marks awarded by the AMP. In this case the matter will be referred to the Progression and Awards Examination Board for resolution.

Other than in these exceptional circumstances, the decisions made are decisions of the AMP. The advice of External Examiners will play an important part in helping the AMP to arrive at its decisions. In particular the External Examiner may wish to recommend, either formally at the AMP or informally in advance of it, that module marks are changed. The recommendations of the External Examiner should be governed by the following expectations:

- i It may be appropriate for an External Examiner to recommend that a set of marks be scaled, either upward or downwards. Recommendations will normally be for simple scaling, but if the size of the sample allows it, more complex scaling may be proposed.
- ii It will be appropriate for an External Examiner to recommend the correction of marks that have been determined incorrectly, where both module instructor and the internal moderator are in agreement.
- iii It will not be appropriate for External Examiners to recommend small adjustments to individual marks awarded in a sample of work. If however, the External Examiner believes that significant adjustments are necessary to individual marks the validity of the assessment process is called into question. It is anticipated that such an outcome will be extremely infrequent. If and when it occurs a re-evaluation of the marks of a whole cohort will need to be made, and details of the process negotiated to the satisfaction of the External Examiner.

The above does not preclude the advice of the External Examiner being sought by Internal Moderator or by the Progression and Awards Examination Board on specific cases arising in exceptional circumstances, and marks being determined or adjusted by agreement.

APPENDIX B: APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR RU DEGREE PROGRAMMES

B1. Requirements for External Examiners

In order to carry out their responsibilities, External Examiners will be as appropriate:

- i able to judge each student impartially on the basis of the work submitted for assessment, without being influenced by previous association with the module/programme, the staff or any of the students.
- ii able to compare the performance of students with that of their peers on comparable programmes of higher education elsewhere and/or assure professional relevance.
- iii competent in assessing students' knowledge and skills at higher education level.
- iv expert in the field of study concerned.
- v impartial in judgement.
- vi properly briefed in their role and the University's requirements.

B2. Principles for appointment

- B2.1 External Examiners will be appointed to the agreed criteria by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLT) on behalf of Senate.
- B2.2 Newly appointed External Examiners will take up their appointments on or before the retirement of their predecessors. External Examiners should remain available until after the last assessments, with which they are to be involved, have been completed in order to deal with any subsequent reviews of decisions.
- B2.3 Each External Examiner's normal term of office will be one which allows the Examiner to assess graduation cohorts of students per year over a three year period.

B3. Criteria for appointment

- B3.1 An External Examiner's academic/professional qualifications should be appropriate to the module/programme/subject to be examined, with the subject(s) of those qualifications consistent with that to be examined and the level at least equivalent to that being examined.
- B3.2 An External Examiner should have appropriate standing, expertise and experience to ensure the maintenance of academic standards by acceptable norms of attainment in the context of higher education. It is expected that External Examiners will normally be at an Associate Professor (or equivalent) or above within their own institutions. Those appointed for their professional expertise will have a similar high standing within their profession.
- B3.3 An External Examiner should have sufficient recent examining/assessment experience, preferably as an External Examiner of comparable related experience, to indicate competence in assessing students in the subject area concerned (someone without direct experience of acting as an External Examiner normally should be appointed only if there is an experienced External Examiner on the relevant External Examiner team).
- B3.4 External Examiners should be drawn from a wide variety of institutions/professional contexts and traditions in order that the module/programme/subject benefits from wide-ranging external scrutiny. SLT will seek to recruit External Examiners from institutions where the subject area to be examined has been assessed as being of high quality.
- B3.5 External Examiners should not have too heavy a workload in respect of external examining duties. As a norm, an External Examiner should not concurrently hold more than the equivalent of three substantial undergraduate external examining appointments.

B3.6 External Examiners are appointed to report on procedures and standards of assessment, and this role routinely should not be confused with other aspects of programme design and development. In order to protect their independence, External Examiners normally will not act as consultants to a programme team or programme design, or be members of any panel(s) established to review the module(s)/programme(s) they examine. External Examiners may volunteer, or be requested to provide, feedback and suggestions as to programme design through their annual reports to the Progression and Awards Examination Board.

B3.7 Bearing in mind that External Examiners should be impartial in making judgement and that they should not have previous close involvement with the University which might compromise their objectivity, over the five years prior to appointment a proposed External Examiner should normally not have been:

- i) a member of staff, a member of the Board of Governors or the Academic Advisory Council, a student, or a near relative of a member of staff teaching on the module/programme or a student enrolled on the module/programme.
- ii) re-appointed as an examiner to the same programme or subject area in the institution.
- iii) involved as an External Examiner for the module/programme when it was approved by an external validating body.
- iv) personally associated with individual members of staff connected with the module/programme.

Exceptions to this must be the subject of a case to be made in writing to the Chair of the SLT.

B4. Approval procedure

B4.1 External Examiner appointments are normally for a period of three years. Newly appointed External Examiners will normally take up appointment on or before the retirement of their predecessors. The completed application form should be received by the RU Assistant Registrar not less than six months prior to commencement of the appointment.

B4.2 The discipline Dean, after consultation with the Associate College Academic Director, will approach the proposed nominee, to ascertain his or her willingness to be put forward for the appointment (in certain cases the discipline Dean can delegate the nomination process to the Academic Director); if so willing, the form *Application for Approval of an External Examiner* must be completed. Part I should be completed by the nominating Dean or Academic Director and Parts II/IV by the nominee. Part III requires the signatures of both parties, together with the authorising signature of the Chair of the SLT.

B4.3 The RU Assistant Registrar will check the form for completeness and accuracy before forwarding to the SLT Committee for approval. The decision of SLT will be conveyed to the Academic Director of the Associate College.

B4.4 The RU Assistant Registrar will be responsible for informing the nominee of the decision of SLT and for issuing an appointment letter with details of tenure, areas of examining duty and related administrative matters. It will be accompanied by relevant University regulations and procedures and, where relevant, module descriptors, programme specifications and any subject benchmark statements.

B4.5 Raffles University will arrange for a briefing of a newly appointed External Examiner as soon as possible after appointment, preferably including a visit to the University to meet staff and students.

B5. Changes to an External Examiner appointment

B5.1 The agreed duties of an External Examiner can be varied by agreement of SLT. The rationale for such a proposal should be presented to SLT for approval.

B5.2 In exceptional circumstances, an External Examiner appointment may be extended by no more than one year, by the agreement of SLT.

B6. Premature termination of appointment

B6.1 Under certain circumstances, the appointment of an External Examiner may be terminated before the completion of his/her period of office. Premature termination may occur in the following instances:

- i) serious illness
- ii) resignation of the External Examiner
- iii) changes in module/programme or programme structure which renders the appointment no longer applicable
- iv) non-fulfilment of External Examiner's duties
- v) unprofessional conduct
- vi) irretrievable breakdown of relationship with module/programme teaching teams such as to disadvantage students on the module/programme.

In instance ii) it is expected that the External Examiner will normally give the University reasonable notice of intention to resign to allow sufficient time for a suitable replacement to be found. External Examiner resignations should be reported to the SLT Committee.

B6.2 In instance iii) the University will give the External Examiner reasonable notice as far as is possible. In instances iv), v) and vi) the University reserves the right to terminate the appointment immediately.

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL EXAMINER

C1. Role of External Examiner appointed to both the Assessment and Moderation Panel and the Progression and Awards Examination Board

It should be noted that when Raffles University approves an External Examiner he/she is appointed to both the Assessment and Moderation Panel and the Progression and Awards Examination Board. The role and functions of the AMP, the PAEB and the External Examiner as described in other sections of this document are summarised below.

- C1.1 External Examiners are employed by Raffles University to verify the standards of the University's awards, and to ensure that its assessment processes are fair and fairly operated in line with its regulations. Thus the primary role of the External Examiner relates to the assessment process, although comments will be welcomed on any other aspects of the provision.
- C1.2 An External Examiner is not required to attend AMP meetings but may be present if he/she deems it necessary.
- C1.3 An External Examiner is required to comment on and approve the assignments, examination papers and marking schemes considered by the AMP, and to formally agree with the Chair of the AMP any exceptions to this requirement. An External Examiner is required to approve any exceptions to the University's normal arrangements for moderation.
- C1.4 An External Examiner is required to double mark for each module a standard sample of students' work, or otherwise moderate the module marks. The External Examiner may ask to see a further set of marked scripts if this is necessary for effective moderation.
- C1.5 An External Examiner is required to participate in the moderation of dissertations/projects on the basis of a standard sample, and in addition to report to the AMP the observation of an effective and rigorous process of internal moderation of dissertations/projects.
- C1.6 An External Examiner is required to arbitrate, where requested, on cases where internal markers are unable to agree a mark for a piece of work.
- C1.7 An External Examiner is required to make recommendations to internal markers (informally) and to the AMP (formally) in cases where adjustments to module marks may be necessary to ensure comparability of standards and consistency of marking. The External Examiner enjoys a special status at the AMP, as an independent and respected member of the peer group. The External Examiner has a final right of veto over any decisions, in that he or she can refuse to confirm the marks awarded. In this case the matter will be referred to the Progression and Awards Examination Board for resolution.
- C1.8 An External Examiner is expected to attend two Board meetings per year (i.e. Progression and Award Examination Board) to coincide with RU graduation. In addition, the External Examiner may wish to attend selected meetings of the AMP and be available by mutual agreement to discuss moderation issues with the Academic Director and the Internal Moderator and other senior members of the RU management team.
- C1.9 An External Examiner is expected to assist the Board in the impartial judgment of students' performance on the basis of their module marks as determined by the AMP and generally to provide independent assurance that the University's regulations are applied consistently and fairly.

No recommendation from the Board for the conferment of an award will be valid without the written consent of the External Examiners involved. An External Examiner has a final right of veto over any decision, in that he or she can refuse to confirm the recommendation of an award. In this case the matter will be referred to the SLT Committee for resolution.

APPENDIX D: THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S ANNUAL REPORT

D1. The Annual Report

D1.1 The informal advice and assistance which External Examiners provide to academic staff concerning the development and delivery of their programmes forms an invaluable element in the ongoing process of quality improvement and critical self-analysis of the academic curriculum. External Examiners are also required to report in writing using a standard university template. The report must be submitted to the RU Assistant Registrar 2 weeks where prior to the meeting of the Progression and Awards Examination Board, in electronic format. The standard template is distributed to External Examiners.

D1.2 The report template is in two parts. Part A is common to AMP and Board reports and the External Examiners are asked to comment on:

- i standards of the awards
- ii standards of student performance
- iii the quality of knowledge and skills demonstrated
- iv the processes for assessment, examination and determination of awards
- v strengths or distinctive/innovative features in relation to standards and assessment processes that would be worth drawing to the attention of external audiences.

D1.3 The **External Examiner** is asked to report to the University on the AMP (Part B) under the following headings:

i The assessment process

- ii internal examination/assessment procedures and documentation
- iii the quality and range of assessments/examination papers
- iv clarity and consistency in interpretation of standards and regulations
- v quality of internal marking and moderation process; appropriateness of mark distribution
- vi general comments on the type, suitability and effectiveness of assessment.

Modules, with reference to:

- i structure and content
- ii learning, teaching and assessment methods
- iii any supervised work experience (noting that Professional Bodies may require External Examiners to comment on the quality of practice placement and assessment)
- iv organisation and administration.

Student performance, with reference to:

- i particular strengths and areas requiring improvement
- ii success and failure rates
- iii overall performance in relation to other institutions
- iv general comments regarding student performance including if there are any significant differences in the student performance on collaborative programmes (if applicable).

Specific comments on the application of the assessment regulations at module level (if applicable).

Areas to be commended.

Areas where there was any disagreement between the External Examiner and the Examination Board and how this was resolved.

Recommendations.

Progress on recommendations made in the preceding year.

Specific areas identified that require an early response from the institution.

Concluding comments.

- D1.4 The **External Examiner** is asked to report to the University on the Progression and Awards Examination Board (Part B) under the following headings:

Board operation

- i adherence to regulations (university and, where appropriate, professional body regulations) and any issues relating to their application
- ii correct exercise of discretion including for extenuating circumstances
- iii fairness and equity of judgements made.

Student performance with particular reference to:

- i overall performance of student cohorts in relation to their peers at other institutions including:
 - a. progression
 - b. distribution of grades and classification of award where appropriate
- ii significant differences in the performance of students on collaborative programmes if applicable
- iii matters related to student performance in credit-bearing practice placements.

Areas to be commended.

Areas where there was disagreement between the External Examiner and the Examination Board and how this was resolved.

Recommendations.

Progress on recommendations made in the preceding year.

Specific areas identified that require an early response from the Institution.

Concluding comments.

- D1.5 All reports are read carefully by relevant staff, including the Vice-President Academic Services and Registrar, and issues raised are progressed by formal mechanisms. This University values greatly the contribution of its External Examiners and gives serious consideration to all issues raised. The University seeks to ensure that appropriate action is taken and that the feedback/quality loop is closed.

- D1.6 The Chair of the SLT will ensure that action taken in response to External Examiner reports is fed back to the External Examiner concerned. The reports of annual reviews will provide a common vehicle for this, but External Examiners can also expect a written response to their reports within a reasonable period of time. Reports of actions taken will be provided to the SLT committee.

- D1.7 Notwithstanding their responsibility to submit annual reports to the University, External Examiners also have the authority to report directly to the Vice President Academic Services and Registrar where there is concern about standards and performance, particularly if it is perceived that assessments are being considered in a way that jeopardises either the fair treatment of individual students or the standards of the University's awards.

APPENDIX E: FURTHER INFORMATION FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

E1. At the beginning of the academic year, External Examiners should expect to be provided with a detailed schedule of the AMP and the Board processes, in accordance with the University's key dates, including:

- i Timescales for the provision of assignment information and examination papers for approval
- ii Timescales for the provision of samples for moderation and their return
- iii Board dates

E2. **Contact and enquiry points**

External Examiners should contact the RU Assistant Registrar for all queries concerning the administration of the process. Appropriate members of academic staff (Vice President Academic Programme, Academic Director, Dean and the SLT Chair) will be the contact for academic queries. Contact information is provided on the letter of appointment.

E3. **Claims for payment of expenses and fees**

Appointed External Examiners will be entitled to appropriate expenses and fees at the standard university rates. Information on External Examiners' fees and expenses is available from the RU Assistant Registrar.

Version Numbers

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