

FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCIAL SCIENCES

External Examiners Procedure and Reports

1- Introduction

External examiners play an essential part in the quality assurance of a university. They are fundamental to maintaining academic standards nationally across subjects. The University is expected to demonstrate that external examiners reports are considered at the highest level and when necessary that appropriate action is taken to address any issues raised.

2- General guidance

The report is intended to allow the examiner to raise any issues concerning assessment of the subject concerned, ranging from procedural matters in the conduct of the assessment to syllabus content and levels of student ability. The examiner should also include any comment on the judgments arrived at by a Board of Examiners with which he or she has disagreed. Annual comments from external examiners give departments the opportunity to make revisions to any parts of the assessment process in time to affect the next cohort of students.

The examiner's final report is intended to provide an overview of the examiners experience during the term of office and is an opportunity for him/her to comment on the University academic standards in the relevant subject. In particular, the report should comment on any significant changes in standards over the three or four year period.

3- Content and scope of reports – checklist

- a. It is considered important that external examiners comment on the following as part of their report.**

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- The range and depth of the assessment methods used, including assessment of practical work.
- Coverage of the programme/unit content in the assessment as a whole.
- Opportunity for you to comment on the appropriateness of examination papers and other forms of assessment (e.g. instructions for projects, coursework, etc.).

- The number and range of examination scripts and other samples of assessed work made available to you.
- Overall impressions of the assessment process, including the marking scheme(s) used by the department, the faculty guidelines, the criteria used for degree classification, and administration of the process.
- Opportunity to discuss the assessment process with staff.

THE STANDARD OF STUDENT WORK

- The general quality of the candidates work and how it compares with their level of study.
- The quality of work associated with the various degree classification including borderline judgments), and its comparability to that of other institutions with which you are familiar.

b. External examiners are also invited to comment on any of the following, on the basis of their involvement in the assessment process and their visits to the University:

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

- Programme structure and content , and unit content, including currency
- Suitability of programme and unit aims and learning outcomes and the extent to which they were achieved.
- Opportunity to comment on any proposed changes to the programme during the year/term of office and the outcome of any consultation.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

- Range and suitability of teaching and learning methods experienced by students.
- Staff expertise.
- Level of general and learning resources available in the subject you examined (including the standard of accommodation and equipment for teaching and learning).

4. Procedures for External Examiner reports

Some External Examiners during the last semester felt the need to comment on the response, or lack of response that had been received to their report. It is therefore proposed a procedure dealing with External Examiner reports to ensure that all reports are received and read by the Dean of the concerned Faculty and that all External Examiners receive a response to their report.

5. Proposal

The procedures for External Examiners reporting to the University will essentially remain the same. It is proposed however , that the pathway of the external examiner reports should be as follows:

- I. The External Examiner will be asked by the Faculty to report by a specified date.
- II. The reports will continue to go first to the Faculty, who will then authorize payment for the External Examiner.
- III. The Faculty will be responsible for forwarding reports to:
 - The Head(s) of the Department for action
 - The Chair of the relevant Faculty Quality Assurance Team for information .
 - The Programme Director(s) for information.
- IV. The reports received by the Head of Department will be accompanied by a pro-forma within which the Head of the Department will note any issues, the actions required and any actions taken. The report, the pro-forma and a copy of the correspondence with the external examiner advising him/her of action taken should be returned to the Teaching Support Unit, following discussion within the department , by the 1st of November or an appropriate specified deadline. (This information is also a requirement of Departmental annual Programme Review, as noted in section 2. 1a of the Notes of Guidance for Departmental Annual Programme Review).