
Quality Enhancement
Support Team (QuEST)
External Examiners
Handbook

Session 2019/20

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Version 2.3

Updated: 221019 SC – new assessment board structures, revised fees and web links

FOREWORD

The University is pleased to welcome you to the academic community at University of the West of Scotland. The role of the external examiner is central to our own internal arrangements for monitoring academic standards and enhancing quality. Your annual report is an essential document in our internal monitoring and review of University academic standards.

We are mindful of the commitment of time and effort made by our external examiners. I would like to thank you for sharing your expertise with the University of the West of Scotland. I hope you will enjoy your association with the University.

This handbook has been produced by the Quality Enhancement Support Team (QuEST) at the University of the West of Scotland to provide guidance on your role as external examiner. It should be read in conjunction with the University's Regulatory Framework, in particular Chapter 3 – Assessment, and the University's Assessment Handbook both of which can be found on the University's website <http://www.uws.ac.uk/regulatoryframework/>

In 2018/19 UWS undertook a review of assessment results processing and a number of enhancements are being introduced for 2019/20. Paragraphs marked with a ★ indicate new or significantly amended information as a result of this review.

An online briefing for external examiners is available on the UWS website via: <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/academic-life/quality-enhancement-support-team-quest/external-examiner/>

This online briefing replaces our previous induction events and has the advantage of being accessible at a time of your choosing. It will provide you with guidance regarding the University Regulations, result processing methods and the operation of the University's boards for taught programmes. We would welcome your feedback on this briefing.

The University of the West of Scotland seeks to adopt the positive practice set out in the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). UK Quality Code for Higher Education which is available from the QAA website www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code.

This handbook is primarily for appointed external examiners, but will also be useful for those considering taking on the responsibility of external examining for the University, and for University staff involved with external examiners.

Any suggestions for the improvement of this handbook or the general induction process for external examiners are also welcome. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

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SECTION A - INFORMATION FOR OUR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

1 THE ROLE OF THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education requires that ‘degree awarding bodies engage external examiners to provide impartial and independent advice, as well as informative comment on the degree awarding body’s standards and on student achievement in relation to those standards. External examiners confirm that the provider consistently and fairly implements their own policies and procedures to ensure the integrity and rigor of assessment practices. They also comment on the quality and standards of the courses in relation to the national standards and frameworks and comment on the reasonable comparability of standards achieved at other UK providers with whom the examiner has experience...’

★ The Role of the External Examiner at UWS

The University operates a two-tier system of assessment boards: School Assessment Boards (SABs) which confirm the mark, grade and decision for each student on each module and to which School Assessment Board external examiners are appointed; and School Boards of Examiners (SBEs) to which a School Board of Examiners external examiner is appointed and considers the eligibility of students on a group of programmes to progress or gain an award.

In addition to SABs and SBEs the University also operates Degree Assessment Boards (DABs) to which a Degree Assessment Board external examiner is appointed. It is normally the responsibility of DABs to provide an overall judgement on student performance and the quality and standard of validated programmes delivered by the University’s collaborative partners. In some circumstances, however, such as for newer collaborative partners, it may be agreed with the partner to implement a SAB and SBE system, as detailed above, until both parties are comfortable that the University’s academic standards are being upheld. The system to be implemented for each collaborative partner will be decided on a case by case basis.

The remit and membership of the SAB, SBE and DAB can be found here <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/academic-life/quality-enhancement-support-team-quest/>.

The role of the SAB external examiner is to help the University confirm the academic standards for the modules which make up our awards. The University’s Regulations and structure of academic awards, through use of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) means that there is the potential for any approved module of the University at any level to contribute to a final award of the University. The Subject external examiner will have access to student assessment material for all modules to which they have been appointed to enable them to fulfil their role.

The University operates a term system where modules are normally assessed at the end of each term in December, April and August. School Assessment

Boards (SABs) are held following each assessment diet and SAB external examiners are required to engage with the SAB which considers the modules to which they have been appointed. The University is keen to ensure that external examiners can undertake their responsibilities in the most efficient and sustainable way, using technology where appropriate to reduce the need for physical attendance at the University. External examiners should agree with the SAB Chair the approach he/she wishes to take.

The overall responsibility of the SBE external examiner is to ensure that each candidate for a particular award is considered impartially and fairly in accordance with University Regulations and guidance, and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained.

School Boards of Examiners (SBEs) are usually convened two or three days after the SAB and the majority are held twice per session, at the end of terms 2 and 3. Occasionally there will be a SBEs held at the end of term 1 or at other appropriate junctures and this will be communicated by the School following appointment. No progression or award decisions can be confirmed without the **written approval** of the SBE external examiner. SBE Chairs should ensure that the SBE external examiner signs off the paperwork for all boards. If the external examiner is not present at the board, then the Chair is responsible for ensuring approval through other appropriate communication approaches, students will not be entered onto the graduation roll until this has been obtained. This approval is for all awards of the University.

Degree Assessment Board external examiners ensure that the standards of the University's awards are maintained and, where applicable, the University Regulations are applied on our validated programmes with external partners. The role is a hybrid of SAB and SBE external examiner as they review individual student's work and oversee progression and award decisions.

Appointment and Induction

No person may act in any capacity as external examiner until their appointment has been confirmed by the Academic Quality Committee (AQC) on behalf of the Education Advisory Committee (EAC) and a formal letter provided by the Quality Enhancement Support Team (QuEST).

If you are appointed to one of our UK campuses, you will have been asked to provide evidence of your eligibility to work in the UK to ensure compliance with the requirements of the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI). It is important that you bring the original documentation, such as a passport or biometric residency permit with you to your first visit to the University. We also require to see an official document / card detailing your National Insurance number. **We will not be able to continue your appointment or process any payments without seeing the originals.** Please see [Appendix A](#) for documents which are acceptable as evidence of your right to work in the UK.

Before taking up your formal external examining duties, we recommend that you familiarise yourself with this Handbook and the following:

- **Assessment Handbook** <https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/5472/assessment-handbook-19-20.pdf>
- **Quality Handbook** <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/academic-life/quality-enhancement-support-team-quest/>
- **Regulatory Framework** <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/your-rights-responsibilities/regulatory-framework/>
- **Online Induction** <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/academic-life/quality-enhancement-support-team-quest/external-examiner/>

The School will also make arrangements for you to visit the University or participate in a video conference to acquaint yourself with the staff and learning environment associated with the programmes.

As part of your induction the School / Partner will provide information on the following:

- the approval history of the programme / module areas for which you've been appointed;
- the design and delivery characteristics of the module / programme as set out in the module descriptors / programme specification and associated student handbooks;
- your role in the approval process for examination question papers and coursework assignments;
- marking protocols (question and assignment setting; model answers; double marking; blind marking; moderation; marking rubrics);
- discussion of sampling and selection of student work to provide the evidence base for your review and report;
- requirements, particularly in practice – and studio-based subject areas, to attend demonstrations of practice (eg exhibitions, performances, presentations) or, where appropriate, to review this work through virtual or electronic media;
- opportunities for meeting students on a more informal basis;
- access to predecessors' reports;
- contact protocols and details for key staff.

For Initial Teacher Education programmes, the School of Education contact will make the day-to-day arrangements regarding assignments and school visits which are required by the SAB external examiners in addition to attending Panels.

Should there be a change in circumstances to your external examiner appointment, the criteria for appointment will be re-considered. The criteria is detailed in chapter 6 of our Quality Handbook.

Reciprocity of Examining and Number of Appointments

Please note that our Quality Handbook prohibits reciprocal external examining between cognate subject areas in the University and those in other institutions or organisations. If a member of University of the West of Scotland staff from the area in which you externally examine was to be considered for appointment as external examiner in your department at your University it would not be possible for both appointments to continue. If you become aware of such an arrangement, the University would be grateful if you would draw this to the attention of the Head of QuEST.

As the arrival of student work for scrutiny and the timing of boards often overlaps with very busy periods of examination in the external examiner's home institution, the Quality Handbook and the QAA Quality Code require that normally an external examiner should not hold more than two appointments at any one time.

★ Programme Grouping

SBEs consist of groups of programmes within a School. New appointments should normally be based on the requirement that there is a single SBE external examiner associated with each such group of programmes. Once a SAB external examiner has served at least one year as an external examiner at UWS, they may be invited to become a SBE external examiner. This approach aims to recognise the contribution which the external had made at the SAB, acknowledging also that they now had a greater understanding of the University's assessment processes and systems. It is likely, depending on the volume of progression and award decisions to be considered by the SBE, that the external examiner would also continue in their role as a SAB external examiner. The school will consult with the external examiner in relation to workload when making a new appointment.

Period of Office/Extension of Appointment

Your term of office will normally be four years (October - September) to enable you to consider four successive cohorts of students. Exceptionally, you may be asked to act as external examiner for one further year for reasons of continuity.

Newly appointed external examiners should take up their appointments on or before the retirement of their predecessors. They should remain available until after the last assessments with which they are to be involved to deal with any subsequent reviews of decisions that arise.

Resignation of an External Examiner/Termination of Appointment

As the external examiner appointment process can be lengthy, should you choose to conclude your role as external examiner earlier than the confirmed period of the appointment, we would request that you advise the Head of QuEST by no later than the end of December of the year in progress. This will allow the School sufficient time to arrange a replacement. Should you for any reason (e.g. workload, conflict of interest, ill health etc.) need to conclude your

role with minimal notice, please advise the Head of QuEST who will make the necessary arrangements.

The University may also seek the early completion of a period of appointment in exceptional circumstances, for example, where the programme or module portfolio has changed significantly since the original arrangement or where there has been demonstrable persistent failure to meet the requirements of the role of external examiner, for example through repeated non-engagement with boards or non-submission of external examiner reports.

If an annual report that is due for submission on 15 September has not been received without due explanation by 20 November, or if the report has not been received after a comparable interval in the case of another due date, you may be deemed by the Chair of the Education Advisory Committee to have resigned your appointment and will be advised accordingly.

Where you have notified the Head of QuEST that illness or other personal reasons have prevented you from meeting requirements of the role, the School will in the first instance seek to agree appropriate revised arrangements such as a revised timescale for submission of an outstanding report.

Powers

No University award shall be granted without the written consent of the SBE external examiner, or DAB external examiner in relation to collaborative partners (Reg 3.47).

All student marks and grades are confirmed by SABs, to which SAB external examiners are appointed, following consideration of the performance of students on the modules assigned to the Board (Reg 3.44).

In keeping with the QAA Quality Code, the University requires its external examiners to report on:

- (i) whether the academic standards set for its awards, or part thereof, are appropriate;
- (ii) the extent to which its assessment processes are rigorous, ensure equity of treatment for students and have been fairly conducted within organisational regulations and guidance;
- (iii) opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities provided to students;
- (iv) where appropriate, the comparability of the standards and student achievements with those in some other higher education providers;
- (v) positive practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment.

External examiners on programmes with professional accreditation may be required to comment on additional areas. For example, NMC external examiners should provide comment on clinical practice.

2 SCHOOL ASSESSMENT BOARD EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

As a School Assessment Board (SAB) external examiner you will be responsible for a number of modules, and the School will make appropriate supporting documentation available to you.

Module descriptors can be accessed via <http://psmd.uws.ac.uk>. Please check with your School contact if these are not available.

Your Role during the Academic Year

★ Engagement with School Assessment Board

SAB external examiners will be expected to engage with the SABs for the modules to which they are appointed. These are normally held in January, May and July each session, however, this may vary depending on the delivery of programmes and schools will make you aware of any programmes and subsequent boards that fall outside of the normal cycle.

In order to approve the results from a SAB, external examiners are expected to assure themselves that marking and moderation of assessment has been carried out appropriately, in line with the University's regulations and procedures and that academic standards have been maintained.

The **SAB** is responsible for **confirming** the marks and grades for modules assigned to it, and in line with the Quality Handbook, **there is flexibility in how the SAB external examiner confirms their approval**. If the external examiner is not present at the SAB, the SAB Chair is responsible for obtaining the approval of the examiner for confirmation of results.

Although there is no requirement for external examiners to physically attend SABs, it is recognised, that you may wish to attend at least one per academic session in order to meet with staff and students, allowing for wider quality enhancement discussions and activities to take place. If you wish to attend the SAB in person the School will make the necessary arrangements. If overnight accommodation is required **this is normally within student residences**.

★ Assessment

SAB external examiners will be invited to approve all examination question papers/appropriate coursework at all levels. Schools should make all forms of assessment available to external examiners prior to their being distributed to students. Where this involves sending exam questions or unseen tests outside of the University, schools should ensure appropriate encryption is deployed.

SAB external examiners have the right to review student work (exam scripts and coursework) to confirm the standards of marking and the performance of candidates. The sample of student work considered by external examiners should include material from part-time students and all modes of delivery and campuses. External examiners should review samples of student work for **all**

the modules that they have been allocated, **this includes the lower SCQF levels**. In their External Examiners Handbook published in 2019, Advance HE acknowledges that there are no firmly established norms for sampling and offers recommendations on commonly applied sampling tactics: <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/external-examining> Please liaise with colleagues in the School to agree what method of sampling is acceptable to you and to request any other evidence you deem necessary to discharge your responsibilities.

The reassurance of due process and procedure having been followed may come from sampling work from some, but not all cohorts who have taken a particular module in a particular year. The external examiner has the right of access to all students' assessments, but there is no expectation that you will sample work from multiple cohorts studying a module in the same year unless you wish to do so. If you are content that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the proper operation of the SAB, and that assessments are being marked and moderated consistently, then you may sign off the results for a cohort without necessarily having sampled work from that same cohort.

Schools are encouraged, wherever possible, to utilise electronic submission of student work. This will facilitate easier and quicker access, allowing you to fulfil more of your role at a distance and making the process more efficient and sustainable.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Regulation 2.16 states "APEL assessments shall be open to external examination and confirmation by Subject Panels (see Regulation 3.44) on the same basis as the formal assessment and examination of students."

As a SAB external examiner you may be asked to review APEL assessments and student submissions as appropriate. As with any other assessment, you will have the opportunity to approve the method and marking rubric to confirm that the process of assessment is robust. APEL student submissions must be seen by an external examiner and go through an appropriate SAB. Whilst APEL claims can be infrequent, we acknowledge that they can be time consuming to review. Schools are reminded to provide you with early notification, adequate time and appropriate supporting documentation to assist you in your review.

Work-based Learning / Work-Related Learning / Placement Learning Arrangements

Where a programme contains elements of WBL/PL experience, the instruments of assessment must still be approved by the external examiner. The award of credit for WBL/PL will be confirmed by SABs and will involve external examiners who should comment on WBL/PL in their annual reports. On appointment, Schools will apprise you of the extent of WBL/PL within the portfolio of modules that you have been assigned to and what your input into these modules is expected to involve.

Module Amendments

In addition to confirmation of standards and comparability of awards, external examiners are also invited to comment on areas for enhancement. For example, it is common for schools to seek the opinion of external examiners on proposed changes to assessment structure/format within a module or programme and particularly when there are professional body requirements. You may also occasionally be invited to contribute to postal approvals.

Extenuating Circumstances

The University operates a self-certification process 'Extenuating Circumstances Submission' (ECS), which applies to all students. If a student has been affected by extenuating circumstances and are either; not in a position to submit a piece of coursework or attend an exam or class-test; or have submitted an assessment or attended an exam or class test but have decided that extenuating circumstances affected their performance, they have up to 48 hours after the date of submission of the assessment, or attendance at the exam/class test, to submit an ECS. Students are not required to submit any evidence in support of their ECS claim.

Before confirming their ECS claim students are made aware that any mark related to the coursework, examination or class test for which they are making the submission (even if it's a pass) will not stand. They will receive a mark of zero and will be given the opportunity to resit the assessment at the next available opportunity.

Further information on ECS can be found here:

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/exams-assessment-appeals/academic-appeals-extenuating-circumstances/>

Collaborative Provision for Franchise Partnerships

The University has a number of collaborative franchise arrangements where partner providers deliver UWS programmes leading to a UWS award. SAB external examiners are responsible for ensuring the modules offered on the collaborative provision are assessed fairly and impartially, irrespective of the mode and location of delivery or assessment. You may be asked to attend the site of delivery to confirm standards during your period of appointment.

★ School Assessment Boards

School Assessment Boards (SABs) consider and approve the results from a group of subject-related modules and submit these to Student Administration for consideration at School Boards of Examiners (SBEs). The allocation of the modules to the SAB is the responsibility of the School Board.

Each module is assigned to one SAB external examiner, who is appointed to consider the results for a group of related modules.

SAB external examiners are required to engage with the SAB at the end of each term in order to approve the results for each module to which they are assigned (not just those at L9 or above).

SABs will take account of any Extenuating Circumstances Submissions forwarded to them when recording the student's module decision.

Results are communicated to students after each SAB electronically via Self Service Banner as final approved results.

★ Rights and Responsibilities of External Examiners

The overall responsibility of each SAB external examiner is to ensure that each module is assessed impartially and fairly and that the standards of the University's awards (or parts of awards) are maintained.

Each SAB external examiner will:

- have the opportunity to review and approve the form, content and standard of the assessment instruments and, where appropriate, the distribution and balance of coursework and other assessments. These should be in accordance with published module descriptors;
- provide electronic approval of marks, grades and decisions and attend meetings of the SABs as appropriate
- moderate the marks awarded by the internal examiner(s);
- have the right to inspect the work of all students and to call for such papers as he or she thinks necessary when sampling the work of students;
- be entitled to modify the marks proposed by internal examiners provided that such modifications should be applied to all students undertaking the module unless all scripts have been reviewed by the SAB external examiner.

3 SCHOOL BOARDS OF EXAMINERS EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

'No award can be granted without the approval of the External Examiner appointed to the School Board of Examiners'. University Regulation 3.16

At the time of your School Board of Examiners (SBE) appointment you will be provided with a list of programme titles for which you will be responsible. The School should then provide you with access to the programme specifications and supporting documentation for more detailed information on the programmes. Please contact the School if you have not received this information.

Your Role during the Academic Year

★ Attendance

In order to effectively fulfil your duties, you will be required to engage with the SBEs at level 9, 10 and 11 where awards are confirmed for each programme to which you are appointed. Boards normally take place at the end of term in June and August and less frequently in January, however this may vary depending on programme delivery and schools will make you aware of the scheduling specific to the SBE to which you have been assigned. **In executing your duties, an external examiner must be confident that academic standards have been maintained.** Since no progression decision or award of the University (including intermediate exit awards) may be conferred without the approval of the appointed SBE external examiner, the examiner in absentia should liaise with the School to ensure that other means of review and approval can be established. **It is the responsibility of the SBE Chair to ensure that panel paperwork is approved by the appropriate SBE external examiner.**

If you wish to attend the SBE in person the School will make the necessary arrangements. If overnight accommodation is required **this is normally within student residences.**

★ Assessment

SBE external examiners do not review student work and cannot change marks – they confirm progression and award decisions based on outcomes of the SAB.

The overall responsibility of each SBE external examiner is to ensure that each candidate for a particular award is considered impartially and fairly in accordance with University Regulations and guidance and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained.

Programme Amendments

The prime role of external examiners relates to the standards of awards and the quality of assessment processing. However, you may also be invited from time to time to contribute to postal approvals, comment on amendments to the programme content or changes proposed to the assessment structure/format.

★ School Boards of Examiners

School Boards of Examiners (SBE) consider the performance of students on a programme and determine a student's eligibility to progress to the next stage of their programme or to gain an award. The SBE apply University Regulations on progression/awards but do not have the authority to alter marks or grades.

Results from the SBEs are communicated to students in writing.

Rights and Responsibilities of External Examiners

The overall responsibility of each SBE external examiner is to ensure that each candidate for a particular award is considered impartially and fairly in accordance with University Regulations and guidance and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained. The role of the SBE external examiners also involves the overview of the analysis of trends and the comparison of standards across different cohorts and campuses.

Each SBE External Examiner will:

- attend meetings of the SBE as appropriate and, in light of information received from the SBE, approve award and progression decisions
- be consulted about, and have the right to approve or prevent, any proposed changes in the assessment regulations which will directly affect students currently on a particular programme of study;
- otherwise participate, as necessary, in reviews of progression and award decisions with respect to individual candidates;
- comment as required on aspects of cohort performance, honours classification distribution and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the University's assessment board processes.

4 DEGREE ASSESSMENT BOARD EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

The overall responsibility of each Degree Assessment Board (DAB) external examiner is to ensure that the standards of the University's awards are maintained and, where applicable, the University Regulations are applied on our **validated programmes with external partners**. The role is a hybrid of SAB and SBE external examiner as they review individual student's work and oversee progression and award decisions.

Degree Assessment Boards combine the functions, responsibilities and authority of School Assessment Boards and School Boards of Examiners. The DAB confirms the mark, grade and decision for each student. The DAB also considers the performance of students on a validated programme and determines whether the student is eligible to progress to the next stage of their programme or to gain an award.

During your tenure you will have a named contact at both the Partner Institution and the University.

Rights and Responsibilities of DAB External Examiners

Degree Assessment Board external examiners will normally attend all DAB meetings. These usually occur at the end of terms 2 and 3. Additional meetings may be required for programmes where results, progression and award points occur at other times in the academic session. The partner will liaise with external examiners regarding the dates of the boards and will arrange overnight

accommodation if required. Expenses incurred by the DAB external examiner in carrying out their duties are normally met by the University but DAB external examiners should refer to their letter of appointment for variations in arrangements.

Each Degree Assessment Board external examiner will:

- Attend meetings of the Degree Assessment Board as appropriate, and moderate the marks awarded by the internal examiner(s) and make award and progression decisions;
- Have the right to inspect the work of all students;
- Comment as required on aspects of cohort performance, honours classification distribution and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the DAB.

The determination of awards shall be subject to the written consent of the external examiner.

Where an external examiner identifies a particular concern as a matter of principle, the external examiner's decision either shall be accepted as final by the Degree Assessment Board or be referred to the Senate.

★ Assessment

DAB external examiners will be invited to approve all examination question papers/appropriate coursework at all levels. Partners should make all forms of assessment available to external examiners **prior** to their being distributed to students. Where this involves sending exam questions or unseen tests outside of the partner institution, partners should ensure appropriate encryption is deployed.

DAB external examiners have the right to review student work (exam scripts and coursework) to confirm the standards of marking and the performance of candidates. The sample of student work considered by external examiners should include material from part-time students and all modes of delivery and campuses. External examiners should review samples of student work for **all** the modules that they have been allocated, **this includes the lower SCQF levels**. Partners in collaboration with the appropriate UWS School, must ensure that they provide DAB external examiners with appropriate material for all the modules to which they have been appointed.

In their External Examiners Handbook published in 2019, Advance HE acknowledges that there are no firmly established norms for sampling and offers recommendations on commonly applied sampling tactics:
<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/external-examining>

Please liaise with colleagues at the Partner and UWS to agree what method of sampling is acceptable to you and to request any other evidence you deem necessary to discharge your responsibilities. Where possible, external

examiners may be offered electronic access to student samples, enabling some of the work to be carried out offsite, making the process more efficient and sustainable. Otherwise arrangements are normally made for examiners to come to the partner the day before/morning before the board to review student work and meet with staff. Please liaise with the Partner in order that arrangements can be made as time may be limited on the day of the panel. If you wish to meet with students you should indicate this to the partner at an early stage.

The reassurance of due process and procedure having been followed may come from sampling work from some, but not all cohorts who have taken a particular module in a particular year. The external examiner has the right of access to all students' assessments, but there is no expectation that you will sample work from multiple cohorts studying a module in the same year unless you wish to do so. If you are content that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the proper operation of the Degree Assessment Boards, and that assessments are being marked and moderated consistently, then you may sign off the results for a cohort without necessarily having sampled work from that same cohort.

Any queries about dates of meetings and arrangements for moderation should be raised with the Partner in the first instance.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Regulation 2.16 states "APEL assessments shall be open to external examination and confirmation by Subject Panels (see Regulation 3.44) on the same basis as the formal assessment and examination of students."

As a DAB external examiner you may be asked to review APEL assessments and student submissions as appropriate. As with any other assessment, you will have the opportunity to approve the method and marking rubric to confirm that the process of assessment is robust. APEL student submissions must be seen by an external examiner and go through an appropriate Degree Assessment Board. Whilst APEL claims can be infrequent, we acknowledge that they can be time consuming to review. Partners are reminded to provide you with early notification, adequate time and appropriate supporting documentation to assist you in your review.

Work-based Learning / Work-Related Learning / Placement Learning Arrangements

Where a programme contains elements of WBL/PL experience, the instruments of assessment must still be approved by the external examiner. The award of credit for WBL/PL will be confirmed by Degree Assessment Boards and will involve external examiners who should comment on WBL/PL in their annual reports. On appointment, Partners will apprise you of the extent of WRL/PL within the portfolio of modules that you have been assigned to and what your input into these modules is expected to involve.

Programme and Module Amendments

In addition to confirmation of standards and comparability of awards, external examiners are also invited to comment on areas for enhancement. For example, it is common for external examiners to be asked their professional opinion on proposed changes to assessment structure/format within a module and/or programme and particularly when there are professional body requirements.

Details of the remit and membership of Degree Assessment Boards, can be found in the following document <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/academic-life/quality-enhancement-support-team-quest/>.

5 ANNUAL EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORTS

The following information provides guidance on what the University expects in terms of annual reports from external examiners.

External Examiner Reports

Each external examiner is required to report annually to the University on the conduct of the assessments concluded during the year and on issues relating to those assessments, in a form determined by the Senate.

An online survey platform is used for the reporting, which allows the questions to be tailored depending on your external examiner role(s). The survey can be accessed from a variety of platforms including smart phones and tablets. A link will be sent to you at the end of term 2. **When using the online survey platform please do not use the back button in your browser as your completed responses on subsequent pages may not save.** You can, however, use the 'save and continue later' option, which will email you a link to continue the completion of the survey.

If you would prefer to use a report form in Microsoft™ Word format, blank forms are available from external-examiner@uws.ac.uk

When is the Report required?

Reports should be submitted to the University as soon as possible after the final School Board of Examiners or Degree Assessment Board of that academic year and by 15 September at the latest. Fees are only paid on receipt of annual reports.

How many Reports are required?

Most external examiners will only require to fill out one report form. To avoid duplication, the form has been updated to allow those with a dual role to answer all the questions in one form rather than filling out two separate reports. If you are appointed in a dual SAB and SBE role, please ensure you choose this option when completing the report online.

There is no need to submit a report for both degree and honours years or produce a separate report for each module that you oversee (as there is room to note specific module observations within the report), but if you have been appointed to more than one University SBE grouping you should submit one report for each SBE grouping. You will be invited to the SBEs which consider the programmes to which you have been appointed to, as indicated in your appointment letter.

To whom should the Report be directed?

Please submit your completed report via the survey website or alternatively return your completed Word version to the following email address: external-examiner@uws.ac.uk. External examiners are asked not to e-mail reports to any other staff in the University. QuEST will arrange its prompt availability on the staff website where it can be accessed by relevant staff.

How long should my Report be?

The University is mindful of the significant contribution made by external examiners throughout the academic year. Without wishing to add to the duties of examiners, we recognise that external examiner reports are fundamental to academic quality assurance and enhancement. In cognisance of this, it is imperative that reports are robust and strongly evidence-based and we do ask that your report gives as much detail as possible in order to inform the Schools' annual monitoring activities and to advise the Education Advisory Committee (EAC) of any issues in need of urgent action. Short and sketchy reports are unhelpful to everyone: in strong programmes, there will be a lack of evidence to support claims for high quality and standards, and in programmes where there are issues to be addressed, these will be allowed to continue to the detriment of students. To this end we have adopted a structured report form with focused questions.

The reports take the form of a series of yes/no questions and boxes for free text. We appreciate it can be a lengthy report but it is key for our evaluation and monitoring processes and we would ask you to be comprehensive in your responses to offer as much enhancement opportunity to the teaching team as possible.

An exemplar of a report is provided in [Appendix B](#).

What should my Report cover?

External examiners' reports are widely circulated. Please ensure that individual students and, where appropriate, individual staff are **not** identified in your report.

Positive issues should be highlighted alongside negative ones, and it is useful to suggest ideas for consideration in the future. The report form is intended to facilitate this.

External examiners appointed to Nursing and Midwifery programmes jointly approved by the University and NMC must report on practice-based learning and assessment.

Raising Concerns

The Head of QuEST is your first point of contact out with the School. Should you wish to raise an issue of concern, please email nina.anderson-knox@uws.ac.uk or call on 0141 849 4217.

If there is any matter which you feel should be brought immediately to the attention of Senate you may address your report directly and confidentially to the Vice-Chancellor of the University as Chair of Senate.

In line with QAA guidance, where you have a serious concern relating to the academic standards of a programme or programmes and have exhausted all applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, you may invoke QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body. Further information on the appropriate action can be found on QAA Scotland's website at: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/en/reviewing-higher-education-in-scotland/how-to-raise-a-concern-in-scotland>

Who reads my External Examiner Report?

Our practice at the University of the West of Scotland is to put each School's external examiner reports in full onto the staff website. These can then be accessed by all staff and are appended to the Programme Monitoring Reports that are completed by Programme Leaders as part of the Enhancement and Annual Monitoring process.

External examiner reports will also be viewed by reviewers (including externals) at the Institution Led Review (ILR) of each subject.

In line with the QAA Quality Code we need to ensure that external examiner reports are made available in full to students, with the sole exception of any confidential reports made directly and separately to the Vice-Chancellor of the University. To facilitate this, external examiner reports are published annually on a Moodle site. Students are instructed not to contact any external examiner directly; should you be contacted by any student, please do not respond but forward any correspondence to the Head of QuEST who will address any concerns.

From time to time we may use examples of reports to assist in training new external examiners. These are always anonymised and we will as a courtesy contact you should we wish to use your report as an example of positive practice.

In terms of the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, please be aware that a wide range of staff in the University and for Internal Review

purposes, external reviewers, will have access to your external examiner reports. The Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) applies. Members of the public are entitled to request to see documents held by the University, including external examiner reports. In addition, a list of names of external examiners will be published by the University.

If you have any queries about this, please discuss with the Head of QuEST.

At the Conclusion of Your Period of Appointment

At the conclusion of your period of appointment the annual report form invites you to provide some feedback on the overall development of the programme/subject during the period of appointment. The University would appreciate you providing these concluding remarks.

Response to External Examiner Reports

You can expect to receive a formal, written response to your external examiner annual report from the School by December at the latest. This is normally provided on a proforma countersigned by the Dean of School. Degree Assessment Board external examiners can expect a combined response from the School and Partner institution. If you have any concerns about lack of feedback/or the quality of feedback on your report, please contact the School in the first instance or thereafter, the Head of QuEST.

Assessment Handbook

External examiners should take cognisance of the procedures set out in the UWS Assessment Handbook. This is available via the UWS website at <http://www.uws.ac.uk/regulatoryframework/>.

6 EXPENSES AND FEES

External examiners working with partner institutions should refer to their individual arrangements with the partner for further information.

The following section is intended to answer your questions on matters of payments and expenses. Further clarification on details issues relating to tax etc is available from the University's Finance Department. The guidelines concerning travel and subsistence have been developed in accordance with the following principles:

- The need for efficiency and effectiveness
- The importance of ensuring that individuals are fully reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred at the most cost-effective rate
- The need for administrative effort to be the minimum compatible with adequate accountability
- The need for individuals to travel and be accommodated in safety
- Compliance with the regulations of the Inland Revenue

These guidelines will be kept under review by the University and may be revised.

Claiming Expenses

Claims may be made only for expenses properly incurred in the course of making visits to the University and to placement sites (including schools for the PGDE and BA Education programmes). All claims will be dealt with according to the University's procedures, together with any offer letter you have accepted for specific work.

All claims should be shown in detail on an expenses claim form. A claim form will be provided by the School. **Supporting receipts must be attached to meet the requirements of the University's auditors.**

Claims for travel and subsistence should be returned to the School/Partner **within 3 months** of the expense being incurred. Claims submitted after the 3 month period will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances (eg long term illness).

Travel (Domestic Arrangements)

Consideration should be given to the most practical, efficient and cost-effective mode of travel to the University. Private car mileage will be reimbursed at the current car mileage rate of 45p for the first 180 miles of a return journey and 25p per mile thereafter.

Overnight Accommodation

If you require overnight accommodation for your visit, please contact the School and they will arrange local accommodation on your behalf. For campus-based visits, this is normally within our student residences. The University will reimburse the accommodation provider for bed and breakfast only. All additional charges incurred by individuals during their stay must be met by the individual on departure.

Subsistence

The University will pay for an evening meal for the external examiner only, the night before or night after the board he/she is attending at the University up to a **maximum of £30**.

Please note that the University will **not** reimburse any claims for tea/coffee or newspapers.

Payment of Fees

Payment of your fee will be authorised when your annual report is received, which is due by **15 September** each year. Please be aware that we will not be able to pay you without having confirmed your eligibility to work in the UK and National Insurance number. This requires that we see original appropriate evidence (see [Appendix A](#) for appropriate forms of evidence).

Payment is made through the University's payroll system which is normally paid on the 28th of each month. Payment is made direct to bank accounts and we request bank details prior to each payment. You will be asked to complete the relevant forms each session following receipt of your annual report to enable payment of your honorarium. All external examiners are subject to PAYE. A P60 can be supplied on request. Tax will be deducted at source from your fee. National insurance is not deducted from external examiner payments.

★ Scale of Fees (before tax)

For session 2019/20, the fee payment structure for annual reporting is as follows:

School Assessment Board external examiner	£500
School Board of Examiners external examiner	£300
Dual Role (SAB & SBE external examiner)	£600
Degree Assessment Board external examiner	£500

★ Placement Visit Fees

In addition to the fee for annual reporting, SAB external examiners who undertake placement visits, as required by a professional, statutory or regulatory body, such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), will be paid an additional £100 per day. All placement fees must be claimed on the appropriate form and authorised by the Board Chair. Any queries regarding this process should be raised with the School.

Postal Charges

When returning scripts to the University or the Collaborative Partner, they should be returned by the same manner in which they were forwarded. This would usually be through services offered by the Royal Mail. Couriers need not be used.

The School will reimburse Royal Mail postal expenses and all claims should be clearly detailed on the expenses claims form. Proof of payment must be submitted with your expense claims form.

School Contacts

School contacts for general operational queries are given below:

School	Name	E-mail	Direct Telephone
Business & Creative Industries	Laura Cairney	laura.cairney@uws.ac.uk	0141 848 3839
Education & Social Sciences	Therese Allan	therese.allan@uws.ac.uk	0141 848 3766
Computing, Engineering & Physical Sciences	Michelle Taylor	michelle.taylor@uws.ac.uk	0141 848 3470
Health and Life Sciences (Health)	Hazel Shepherd	hazel.shepherd@uws.ac.uk	(0)1698 283100 ext 8462
Health and Life Sciences (Science & Sport)	Elaine Beattie	elaine.beattie@uws.ac.uk	0141 848 3370

SECTION B – INFORMATION ABOUT THE SECTOR AND UWS

7 EXTERNAL EXAMINING: THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT

Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) [Fol]

In 1 January 2005, the Freedom of Information Act Scotland (2002) (Fol) came into effect which required the University to publish a wide range of information concerning teaching and learning and quality. The publication scheme can be found on the University's website at <http://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/compliance/information-records-management/freedom-of-information/> QuEST will continue to liaise with the Fol and Records Manager in this regard.

The main implication for external examiners is that the University will publish the current list of external examiner names within the publication scheme.

If you have any questions or queries about the Fol please contact the Legal Services Team legal@uws.ac.uk in the first instance.

The Scottish Education System

The Scottish tradition of a broad general secondary education normally entered at 11 or 12 years of age still holds. Scotland has its own qualification framework that is separate from the one set for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but each one is recognised around the UK. The Scottish Education System follows the Curriculum for Excellence (also known as the CfE) for nursery, primary and secondary schools.

Children in Scotland complete seven years of primary school, starting in P1 (the equivalent of Reception classes in England), going up to P7 (the equivalent of Year 6 in England). After this, they do six years of secondary school from S1 to S6 (equivalent to Y7 to Y12 in England).

The ordinary or unclassified three year degree remains prominent in the Scottish university and higher education college system. An honours degree in Scotland is normally of four years duration and frequently includes some breadth of study beyond the subject specialism. Consequently the honours sandwich award is of five years duration. The HE, FE and School sectors have committed to embedding the SCQF.

In Scotland, the professional aspects of any programme leading to a teaching qualification (in primary, secondary or further education) are by statute a matter for the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). The GTCS is responsible for ensuring that such programmes meet all criteria for registration without which a teacher may not hold a post in a primary or secondary school under an education authority. The GTCS advises the Scottish Government on the acceptability of teacher education courses.

School Education

Children normally enter the Scottish school system about the age of 4 or 5 and the majority attend co-educational schools.

The numbers attending schools in the private sector in Scotland are very small and secondary education in the schools maintained by local authorities is organised on comprehensive lines.

The Curriculum for Excellence is a major educational reform with the aim of providing a wider, more flexible range of courses and subjects. As the Scottish government only sets guidelines about the school curriculum, schools need not stick to rigid learning paths and can make their own decisions on what to teach pupils.

There are three core subjects that schools must ensure are taught: health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Other than that, they are free to:

- introduce projects that use skills and knowledge from more than one subject, leading to joined-up learning
- teach about people and places from their local area
- ask pupils about areas they are interested in studying

SQA is one of three partner organisations responsible for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), the 3-18 curriculum in Scotland. One of the roles of the SQA is to design and develop new National Qualifications that support the principles and aims of CfE. The SQA also works closely with Education Scotland and the Scottish Government on wider CfE developments.

The National 1 to Advanced Higher qualifications are now being taught in schools and colleges across Scotland and have been designed to help young people develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they will need to succeed in the 21st century.

All of the current National Qualifications have been benchmarked against the previous National Qualifications on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). This ensures that they are set at the same level of demand and difficulty as their predecessors, and that national standards are maintained.

Between 2013 and 2016, three new qualifications have been introduced: Nationals, Highers and Advanced Highers. The following table shows how the current National Qualifications replace the previous National Qualifications you may already be familiar with.

SCQF Level	Current National Qualification	Replaces	Previous National Qualification
1	National 1	>	Access 1
2	National 2	>	Access 2
3	National 3	>	Access 3 Standard Grade (Foundation level)
4	National 4	>	Standard Grade (General level) Intermediate 1
5	National 5	>	Standard Grade (Credit level) Intermediate 2
6	Higher (new)	>	Higher
7	Advanced Higher (new)	>	Advanced Higher

Further information is available on the following website(s):

SQA: www.sqa.org.uk/

SCQF: www.scqf.org.uk

Before teaching in an Education Authority school in Scotland, teachers must be registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland in respect of the stage of education in which they intend to teach. There are three teaching qualifications, in primary, secondary and further education respectively. The teaching qualification (Secondary Education) is awarded in a specific subject and teachers are entitled to registration only in subjects in which they have qualified.

Post-school Education

Further and Higher education qualifications in Scotland range from Higher National Certificates (lasting one year and usually taught in a further education college), through four year honours degrees to doctoral qualifications.

Further Education (FE) is central to lifelong learning in Scotland. Scotland's Colleges promote wider access for all and work with employers and partners to deliver innovative learning and training opportunities to help individuals, communities and employers maximise their potential, develop and grow.

The FE curriculum spans much of the range of learning needs, from general educational programmes through to highly specialised vocational education and training. The level of provision ranges from essential life skills and provision for students with learning difficulties through to degree level and post-graduate work.

The courses are mainly vocational in nature and include both theoretical and practical work. Courses are mostly composed of units tailored to the needs of particular employment sectors or to individual student needs.

The HE Sector in Scotland

The Higher Education sector in Scotland is diverse. It is made up of 15 universities, the Open University in Scotland, an Art School, a Conservatoire and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

Scotland's universities developed in three stages, each with a different legal basis. The ancient universities (St Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh) date from the 15th and 16th centuries. Four other institutions (Dundee, Strathclyde, Heriot-Watt and Stirling) achieved university title in the 1960s. A further 5 institutions (Glasgow Caledonian, Edinburgh Napier, University of the West of Scotland, Robert Gordon and Abertay) became universities in 1992. In January 2007 Queen Margaret University College was awarded full university status, becoming Queen Margaret University and in 2011 university status was awarded to the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Both ordinary and honours programmes may include a 'sandwich' or work-based learning year in professional or industrial placement which extends the period of the degree by one year.

8 UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND CORPORATE STRATEGY

UWS Purpose

Our purpose is to change lives, transform communities and encourage enterprise through outstanding, distinctive and progressive higher education. Our focus is on personalised learning experiences supported by internationally recognised research. UWS graduates will be work-ready and contribute locally and globally.

Truths

- 1 We are here for our students.
- 2 Our Teaching is our passion, and it reaches to the future.
- 3 We understand that a graduate career is important to our students.
- 4 We are a knowledge-based organisation.
- 5 We believe in partnership with business (private, public and global).
- 6 We are an international university.
- 7 UWS is a great place to work and study.
- 8 We are an inclusive organisation that welcomes and values diversity.
- 9 UWS is a university that dares to be different.

Background information about the University of the West of Scotland

Since its inception in 1897 the University has been providing distinctive higher education with the highest standards in teaching and learning. It has developed over the years in response to individual needs and the needs of the regions we serve.

The University of the West of Scotland is one of the country's largest modern universities, and aims to have a transformational influence on the economic, social and cultural development of the West of Scotland, and beyond.

The university provides relevant, high quality, inclusive higher education and innovative and useful research.

We aim to make the communities we serve more successful, and to create opportunities for all to participate.

UWS has a distinctive and important regional role, with four campuses across the west and south-west of Scotland: Ayr, Dumfries, Hamilton and Paisley. To help extend our international reach, appeal and objectives we also have a fifth campus in London which acts as a dynamic delivery hub for international students to study Bachelor, Masters or Doctorates in Business or Health disciplines.

UWS is an international university with over 1600 international students drawn from more than 112 countries across the globe, and we work with over 100 international partners.

The student population at UWS reflects the aim of providing accessible higher education to a wide range of students, with a number of key features that make UWS unique in the Scottish HE sector. These key features include significant proportions of part time students (17%) and students who are in the 30+ age band.

School Structure

The University operates a School-based structure; each School under the direction of a Dean. There are four Schools:

- School of Business & Creative Industries;
- School of Education and Social Sciences;
- School of Computing, Engineering & Physical Sciences
- School of Health & Life Sciences;

Modular Framework

Students, by virtue of the allocation of their programme, are normally attached to one of the Schools. Staff, by virtue of involvement in more than one programme, may work with more than one School.

The table below notes the various awards available at the University, The awards are rated for general credit against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

Summary of UWS Awards and SCQF Credit rating

The University offers the following programmes and awards. The awards are rated for general credit against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

International Foundation Programme
120 credits at SCQF level 6

Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)
120 credit points at SCQF level 7 or above

Diploma of Higher Education DipHE
240 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF level 8 or above

Scottish Bachelor's Degree
360 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF level 9 or above

Scottish Bachelor's Degree with Honours
480 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF level 10 or above

Graduate Certificate (Grad Cert)
60 credit points at SCQF level 9 or above

Graduate Diploma (Grad Dip)
120 credit points at SCQF level 9 or above

Professional Graduate Diploma (PGDE)
120 credit points at SCQF level 10 or above

Postgraduate Certificate (PgC)
60 credit points of which a minimum of 40 are at SCQF 11 and none less than SCQF level 10

Postgraduate Diploma (PgD)
120 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF 11 and none less than SCQF level 10

Masters
At least 180 credit points of which a minimum of 150 at SCQF 11 and none less than SCQF level 10

Integrated Masters
600 credit points of which a minimum of 120 are at SCQF level 11

Professional Doctorate At least 540 credit points of which a minimum of 420 credit points at SCQF level 12 with a maximum of 120 taught credit points at SCQF level 11 and no credit lower than SCQF level 11.

The full Regulatory Framework is available on the UWS website at <http://www.uws.ac.uk/regulatoryframework/>

9 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

UK Quality Code for Higher Education

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education sets out the expectations all providers of UK Higher Education are required to meet further information can be found on the QAA website <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>.

The Quality Framework in Scotland

In addition to the above UK wide framework, an enhancement-led quality assurance system is in operation in Scotland. This has been developed in partnership between the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), QAA Scotland, Universities Scotland, NUS Scotland and the institutions themselves.

There are five integrated elements in this system:

- **A comprehensive programme of institution-led reviews**

The nature of the review process is decided by the institution, incorporating agreed features as outlined in SFC guidelines including the use of external peers and a cycle of all provision being reviewed not more than every 6 years. At the University of the West of Scotland, Institution-Led Review (ILR) and Annual Monitoring are key elements of internal review.
- **Improved forms of public information about quality**

SFC has published guidance on what it expects institutions to provide in this regard. The funding council's view is that public information about the quality of educational provision should provide assurances about the quality and standards of provision and provide information to inform student choice and to assist employers and others to understand the nature of Scottish HE.
- **A greater voice for student representatives in institutional quality systems, supported by a national development service**
 - a the involvement of student members in review teams within the new QAA Institutional Review process;
 - b the systematic representation of students at all levels within institutions;
 - c the effective training and support for student representatives through both internal mechanisms, existing external structures and through a new national Student Development Service (Student Participation in Quality Scotland (sparqs));
 - d better information on the student experience through national surveys of student and graduate cohorts.
- **A national programme of Enhancement Themes**

The Enhancement Themes initiative aims to enhance the student learning experience in Scottish HE by identifying specific areas (themes)

for development. Selected by the sector, aimed at delivery and sharing positive practice in learning and teaching in HE, previous themes have included: Assessment, Responding to Students' Needs, Employability, Flexible Learning, Integrative Assessment, The First Year, Research Teaching Linkages, Graduates for the 21st Century, Developing and Supporting the Curriculum and Student Transitions

The current Enhancement Theme is '*Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience*'. Further information regarding QAA Enhancement Themes can be found here:

<http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk>

- **Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)**

An enhancement-led peer review process which, while providing information on the security of the institutions' management of quality and standards, is focused on the institution's strategic management of quality enhancement. ELIR is also charged with reviewing the effectiveness of student learning and the use made of the academic infrastructure described at the start of this section.

The University of the West of Scotland was reviewed under the ELIR methodology during 2014/15. The ELIR report confirmed that there was confidence in the University's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards and in the quality of the student learning experience it provides. This is a positive judgement indicating that UWS has secure arrangements for managing academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of the student experience.

The report and follow up can be found on the QAA website at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/provider?UKPRN=10007800#.WV0Dhk0zXVg>

UWS will undergo ELIR again in November 2019.

University of the West of Scotland approach to Quality and Enhancement

The Education Advisory Committee

Quality assurance and enhancement in the University is overseen on behalf of Senate by the Education Advisory Committee (EAC) which is chaired by the Vice Principal (Academic). The Committee's remit is to give advice, make recommendations and report to Senate on all matters relating to the evaluation and development of new programme proposals, the monitoring and review of existing programmes and the maintenance of academic standards and the enhancement of the student experience.

The Education Advisory Committee oversees the implementation of the University's [Education Enabling Plan](#) and the University's [Assessment Handbook](#).

The Academic Quality Committee

The Academic Quality Committee (AQC) is a sub-committee of EAC which advises and makes recommendations to EAC on the operation and development of the University's quality assurance framework. AQC approves external examiner nominations on the recommendation of Schools' Divisional Programme Boards and receives an annual review of external examiner reports which considers key themes and informs future staff and programme development.

Programme Approval Procedures

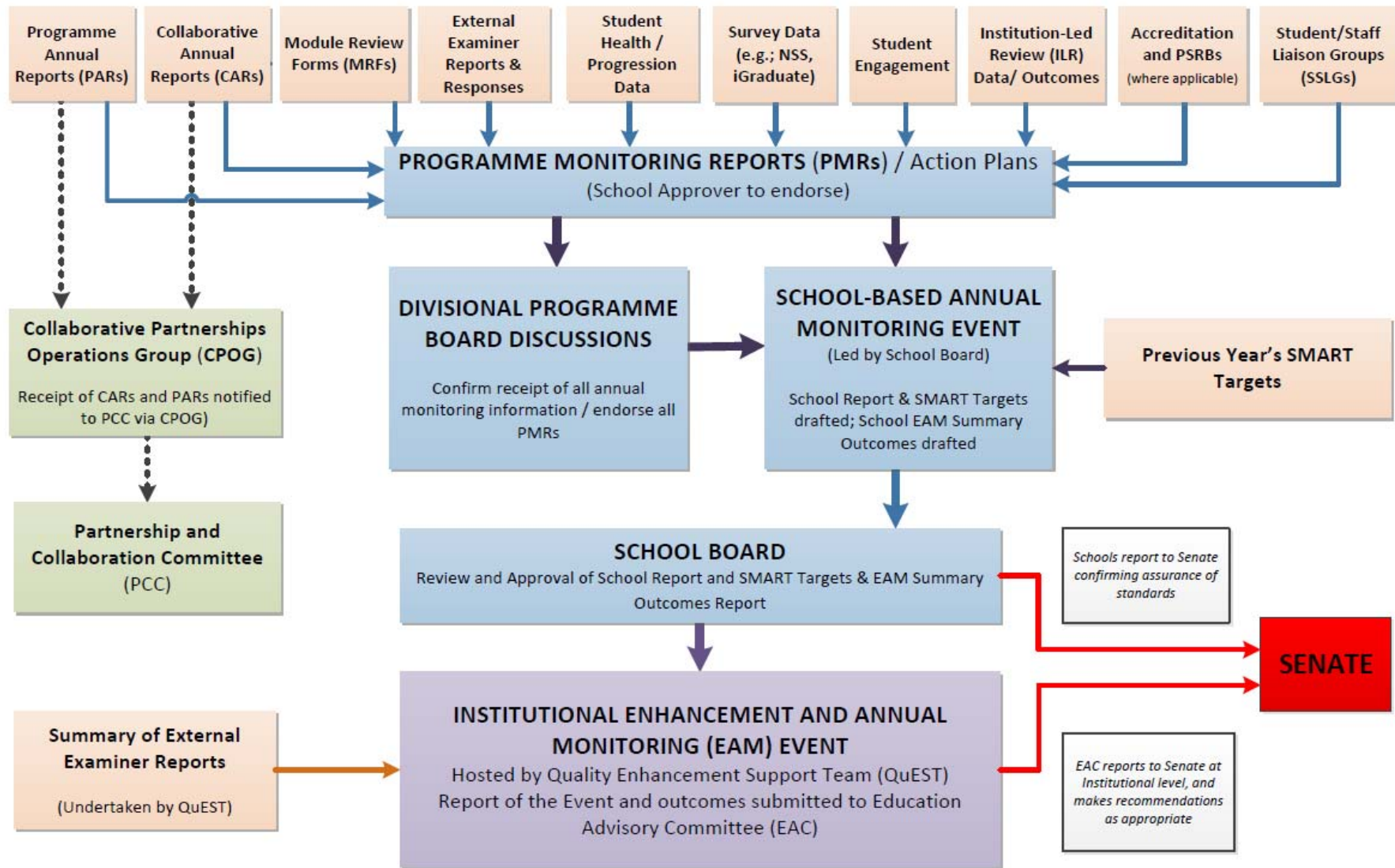
The overall purpose of programme approval procedures is to secure for students a high quality education and to ensure that awards are comparable with those awarded throughout Higher Education in the United Kingdom.

Many of our programmes are also subject to accreditation by professional bodies, such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and for registration with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC). A full list of accredited programmes for your School can be requested directly from the School.

Annual Monitoring and External Examiners

The University undertakes annual monitoring of its provision where Schools are responsible for reviewing module and programme reports, student progression data and external examiner reports. The School confirms standards are appropriate.

An annual University-wide Annual Monitoring event will thereafter consider the Schools' SMART Targets and identify concerns and positive practice. The report of this seminar is then provided to the Education Advisory Committee which oversees the necessary action points arising.



Monitoring and Update of Modules and Subject External Examiners

Ongoing responsibility for quality of modules is carried out by the Divisional Programme Boards within each School. Comment on modules by SAB external examiners is a key element in the ongoing review of modules by Divisional Programme Boards. Where possible, Divisional Programme Boards have responsibility for all modules that fall under the remit of a single SAB. SAB external examiners may be asked to comment on new and amended modules during the academic year as improvements are proposed in response to student needs.

Institution-Led Review (ILR)

ILR (previously referred to as Subject Health Review) is the key periodic internal review process. External examiner reports form key evidence for the University process of ILR which is held for each subject in the University every six years – all University programmes are reviewed within ILR.

Quality Assurance & Enhancement Handbooks and Regulatory Framework

QuEST produces an annual update of the University's quality assurance and enhancement procedures in a number of handbooks. As well as the External Examining Handbook, QuEST produces a Quality Handbook which provides information and guidance on a range of processes, such as Enhancement & Annual Monitoring, Institution-Led Review, Student Involvement in Quality Enhancement, Approval & Accreditation and Collaborative Provision. A copy of the Quality Handbook can be downloaded via <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/academic-life/quality-enhancement-support-team-quest/> The University's Regulatory Framework is also updated annually and can be accessed here <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/your-rights-responsibilities/regulatory-framework/>

APPENDIX A**Lists of acceptable documents for manual right to work checks**

List A	
Acceptable documents to establish a continuous statutory excuse	
1.	A passport showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
2.	A passport or national identity card showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
3.	A Registration Certificate or Document Certifying Permanent Residence issued by the Home Office to a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
4.	A Permanent Residence Card issued by the Home Office to the family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
5.	A current Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder indicating that the person named is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
6.	A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
7.	A current Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the named person is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
8.	A birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
9.	A birth (short or long) or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
10.	A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

List B	
Group 1 – Documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts until the expiry date of leave	
1.	A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is currently allowed to do the type of work in question.
2.	A current Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder which indicates that the named person can currently stay in the UK and is allowed to do the work in question.
3.	A current Residence Card (including an Accession Residence Card or a Derivative Residence Card) issued by the Home Office to a non-European Economic Area national who is a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland or who has a derivative right of residence.
4.	A current Immigration Status Document containing a photograph issued by the Home Office to the holder with a valid endorsement indicating that the named person may stay in the UK, and is allowed to do the type of work in question, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
Group 2 – Documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts for 6 months	
1.	A Certificate of Application issued by the Home Office under regulation 18(3) or 20(2) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006, to a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland stating that the holder is permitted to take employment which is less than 6 months old together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
2.	An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office stating that the holder is permitted to take the employment in question, together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
3.	A Positive Verification Notice issued by the Home Office Employer Checking Service to the employer or prospective employer, which indicates that the named person may stay in the UK and is permitted to do the work in question.

(Home Office 2019, An Employer's Guide to Right to Work Checks)

APPENDIX B**EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT - EXEMPLAR**

External Examiner Report 2017/2018			
Name	Tove Jansson		
School / Partner	School of Literature	Date Completed	29/06/18
Type of Examiner	SAB external examiner - I review student submissions and attend Subject Panels		
Areas Examined: Literary Classics			
1. Programme Materials			
Did you receive:			
a. Programme handbook(s)			Yes
b. Programme regulations (these may be in the programme handbook?)			Yes
c. Programme Specification (this may be in the programme handbook?)			Yes
d. Module Descriptors (these may be in the programme handbook?)			Yes
e. Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?			Yes
Comments: All the module descriptors are available to me and to the students via Moodle. All module descriptors, teaching plans, assessments and assessment criteria are clearly and transparently set out.			
2. Examination Papers & Scripts			
a. Does your remit require you to review draft examination papers?			Yes
b. Did you receive all the draft papers?			Yes
c. If not, was this at your request?			N/A
d. Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate?			Yes
e. If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			N/A
Comments: I have received all exam papers in advance of the exam with full marking criteria. I have had the opportunity to comment on rubrics, appropriateness of content and typos in the text, although I have only rarely felt the need to make minor comments, e.g. on the wording of rubrics. Papers and marking criteria are always meticulously prepared.			
3. Marking Examination Scripts			
a. Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts?			Yes
b. If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?			Yes
c. Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			Yes
d. Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			Yes
Comments: Scripts have always been meticulously marked and I have seen clear evidence of internal moderation.			
4. Dissertations & Projects			
a. Does your remit require you to review dissertations / projects?			No
b. Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate?			
c. Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?			
Comments:			
5. Coursework/Continuously Assessed Work			
a. Does your remit require you to review Coursework/Continuously Assessed Work?			Yes
b. Was sufficient coursework made available to you for assessment?			Yes
c. Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?			Yes
Comments: Colleagues have gone to great efforts to make sure that I have had access to all the coursework completed by students, either by sending me scans or by giving me access to hidden sites on			

Moodle where I was able to see marked work. While all the students' oral work is available to me on Moodle, this year I was particularly pleased to be able to attend oral presentations in person on two occasions. This was particularly valuable at the higher level, where I was able to observe student interactions with the lecturer.	
6. Recognition of Prior Learning	
a. Were you asked to review any claims for Recognition of Prior Learning?	No
b. Were you given appropriate support to examine the claim(s) e.g. criteria for award, guidance on RPL at UWS?	
Comments:	
7. Oral Assessment / Performance / Professional Placements	
a. Does your remit require you to review Oral/Performance/Professional Placements?	Yes
b. Were suitable arrangements in place for you to conduct orals and/or moderate performances/appropriate professional placements?	Yes
c. If you are reviewing an NMC approved programme, and appropriate to your role, were you give the opportunity to visit students on practice?	N/A
Comments: As noted above, oral work was made available via Moodle and I was invited to attend and participate in two sessions. Colleagues are to be commended for the care and empathy with which they encourage students to give the best possible account of themselves on these occasions.	
8. Module-specific Observations	
Please use this box to provide any additional comments on specific observations that you have regarding individual modules.	
Comments:	
<p>Comments: Policy and Organisation This module allows students to look at literature in its social context and within an academic framework, and the range of topics offered ample scope for some interesting work. There was some good work at the higher end, and the self-plagiarism was well spotted and sensitively dealt with. I found the marking scheme and rubric useful, the marks fair and the feedback detailed and supportive.</p> <p>Literary Practice Placements of this kind undoubtedly add an important practical element to these courses and to prepare students for work after graduation. There is evidence here of some excellent work produced under pressure in an industry environment. There was a good range of marks, but as so often happens in all universities, the reflective commentary mark tended to bring down the overall mark and in some cases work rightly awarded a First was pulled down by the commentary mark to the 2:1 level, which is a pity. Perhaps more guidance could be given to help students boost their performances in this equally important element of the assessment.</p> <p>Media essay As in previous years, the essays cover a wide range of subjects, some of them (in the sample I saw) rather unusual. The higher marks rightly go to those which are underpinned by rigorous academic reference. The PowerPoint presentations offered students an opportunity to exercise their abilities to use a quite different form of communication, and again the best marks go to those able to combine a high standard of content with user-friendliness. A good range of marks has been awarded in both tasks.</p> <p>Creative Research Project This is a challenging project which produced an impressive variety of responses with a strong social flavour, from rugby fans to benefit claimants. Having two components and a compulsory written/practical split makes it a demanding test of overall competence while offering students a wide range of areas in which to work. The requirement for a detailed pitch forces them to focus clearly on their stated objectives, and I was impressed by the marking criteria, which is clear and detailed and leaves students in no doubt as to why their work received the mark it did. Feedback from both first and second markers was detailed and positive. The reflective essay is of a manageable length but also requires students to think about the working decisions they took. The marks were fair and there was a good spread across the cohort. Some of the work at the top end of the range was exemplary.</p>	

9. Subject Panel / PAB / DAB Operation	
a. Were you able to attend the meetings?	Yes
b. Were the meetings conducted to your satisfaction?	Yes
c. Were processes for determination of awards and honours conducted fairly? (PAB and DAB only)	Not Applicable
d. Were you satisfied that the operation of the Degree Assessment Board was in line with UWS Regulations? (DAB only)	Not Applicable
e. Were you satisfied with the final recommendations of the panel/board?	Yes
Comments: I have always been very impressed by the smooth and careful conduct of the boards I have attended. The paperwork is very clear and carefully explained. Colleagues have been able to discuss in the detail the profile of the students and any general issues encountered in the delivery of the module in the current session and during my time at UWS I have seen that the feedback from these deliberations feeds into the delivery of the modules in the next session.	
10 a. Comparability of standards	
From the evidence available to you, are the standards of student performance in programmes or parts of programmes examined comparable with the standards of similar programmes or parts of programmes in other UK higher education institution with which you are familiar?	
The best students' work is of a very high standard indeed and the performance achieved in all aspects of student performance is fully comparable with other institutions I am familiar with. Colleagues are to be commended for maintaining such high standards.	
10 b. Comparability of standards (PABs & DABs)	
Student Performance Comparability of Standards. In your role as a Progression and Awards Board or Degree Assessment Board External Examiner, please comment on the overall performance of candidates in relation to their peers on comparable programmes of study in other UK Higher Education Institutions as indicated by the distribution of results, honours classifications and other cohort analysis.	
n/a	
11. Programme Learning Outcomes	
Are the objectives of the programme still appropriate for the subject area and relevant to the students?	
Yes they are - the presentational, analytical and critical thinking skills are well-developed in the modules and are fundamental to a degree level education.	
12. Recommendations	
If you have any recommendations on any issue which has come to your attention as an External Examiner that you would like to draw to the attention of the School/ University please detail them here.	
As above, it is pleasing to see that the university continues to support and facilitate this provision. Colleagues have been very resourceful in ensuring that relevant provision is available to as many students as possible and I hope this will be maintained.	
13. Positive practice	
Please note any examples of positive practice that you have identified over the last session	
As ever, the meticulous teaching and assessing of students over the range of modules I assessed. All the skills are fully taught and assessed and the students achieve a high degree of competence. Lecturers are very supportive and the students respond well to this. All coursework and exam papers are fully internally moderated and meticulously prepared. The content is authentic, current and appropriately challenging. The opportunity for students to visit France, and take part in an educational trip to Norway are also to be highly commended. At the most recent board there was some discussion about the use of Erasmus interns in supporting lecturers during classes. This appears to have been very successful, and since there are no cost implications for the university it is to be hoped that it can be extended where appropriate.	

14. For Retiring External Examiners Only	
If you are now concluding your appointment, please provide any final observations on your experience.	
I have thoroughly enjoyed my period as External Examiner for this programme. Colleagues have contacted me timeously with draft papers and exam scripts. Access to Moodle has been of huge benefit to me in my role as examiner and has always worked very smoothly. This access is not available at other institutions have worked with and UWS is to be congratulated on making it work so effectively. Over the period of my appointment I have been aware of the difficulties caused by the loss of specific programmes and have also been impressed by the ingenuity and tenacity by which colleagues and the university as a whole have worked to maintain the provision. You have developed a range of ways in which students can access these modules and the university is to be commended on this. I hope that this can be continued and enhanced, given that these skills will be even more key in post-Brexit UK.	
15. School Response	
Schools are responsible for providing External Examiners with a written response to this report. If there are any particular issues which would specifically wish to see addressed in their response please detail them here.	
There are no issues which require a specific response. Colleagues are to be congratulated on the continued success of their modules.	
16. Form Review	
Please provide any comments you would like to offer on the usefulness and appropriateness of this form.	
This form is very user-friendly and efficient. The only change I would suggest would be the ability to go back over earlier pages or to see a final overview to ensure that the information is complete before pressing 'send'.	
17. Any Further Comments	
If you have any further comments or recommendations, please use the space below to detail them.	
As this is the end of my period as External Examiner, I would like to thank all the admin staff at UWS, both in the School and within the Quality department, who have been exceptionally efficient, responsive and helpful throughout my time working with UWS. It has been a pleasure to work with you.	
The following section is for the School response:	
Response to be Completed via Programme Board	
External Examiner Comments:	Response by Programme Board
Signed (on behalf of the Programme Board):	Date:
Signed (Dean of School on behalf of the School):	Date:
Date sent to External Examiner by School:	Distribution following signature by Dean of School: <input type="checkbox"/> School Executive Manager <input type="checkbox"/> School Service Delivery Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Programme Board Chair <input type="checkbox"/> Donna MacAlister (QuEST) for uploading

APPENDIX C**GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND**

AdvanceHE	Supports strategic change and continuous improvement through individual and organisational development
Agresso	Finance System
Articulation	The process whereby students spend one or two years studying in FE College, then progress to 2 nd or 3 rd year to complete degrees. (See also Direct Entrants)
Athena SWAN	Charter advancing gender equality; representation, progression and success for all
Awaken	Staff Training Portal
AL	Associate Lecturer
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group
AQC	Academic Quality Committee – a sub-Committee of the Education Advisory Committee
ARC	Audit & Risk Committee – a sub Committee of the University Court
Banner	Student Records System
BCI	School of Business & Creative Industries
BUFDG	British Universities Finance Directors Group
Celcat	Room Bookings/Timetabling System
CEPS	School of Computing, Engineering & Physical Sciences
CoD	The University's Calendar of Dates
CoD	Change of Decision Form
COG	Compliance Oversight Group
Court	The University's governing body

CoWA	Commission for Widening Access
CPOG	Collaborative Partnerships Operations Group
CSC	Committee of Scottish Chairs
CUC	Committee of University Chairs
Direct Entrants	Students, usually from FE Colleges, who start in 2 nd or 3 rd year of their programme (see also Articulation)
DAB	Degree Assessment Board
E&D	Equality & Diversity
EAC	Education Advisory Committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate
ECR	Early Career Researcher; anyone within 5 years of their first academic position
ECS	Extenuating Circumstances Statement
EDI	Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ELIR	Enhancement-Led Institutional Review – evidence based method of peer review – staff and students from other institutions join team of reviewers to assess what each HEI does
ESS	School of Education & Social Sciences
ESS	Employee Self Service (iTrent)
Education Futures	Professional service to support innovative practice
External Examiner	An academic or professional expert in the area of study who acts as a member of the Progression & Award Board or Subject panel or both.
FE	Further Education
FOI	Freedom of Information
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
GNC	Governance & Nominations Committee – a sub-Committee of the University Court

GPA	Grade Point Average
Governor	A member of the University Court. Membership of Court is made up of a majority of Lay Governors (external members) plus staff and student governors
GuildHE	Representative Organisation – similar to US and UUK
HAC	Honorary Awards Committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate
HEA	Higher Education Academy Fellowship – recognition of teaching practice and/or support of learning by AdvanceHE across 4 categories from Associate to Principal
HEAR	Higher Education Achievement Report
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEPI	Higher Education Policy Institute
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HESPA	Higher Education Strategic Planers Association
HLS	School of Health & Life Sciences
HSS	Health, Safety & Sustainability Committee – a sub-Committee of the University Court
IoD	Institute of Directors
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
ILR	Institution-Led Review
ITDS	Information Technology and Digital Services
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
JPP	Joint Programme Panel
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
Leadership Forum	Membership consists of VCEG/ULT plus Heads of Functions
LGPS	Local Government Pension Scheme
L&T	Learning and Teaching
MEQ	Module Experience Questionnaire

Million+	Association for Modern Universities
MyContribution	Staff Performance Review Process
MyDay	Student Portal
NSS	National Student Survey
OfS	Office for Students
P&OD	People & Organisational Development Department
PgCAP	Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice – teaching qualification offered to all UWS lecturers, especially those new to teaching
PG	Postgraduate, eg Masters
PGR	Postgraduate Research, eg PhD, DBA, ProfDoc etc
PRG	Programme Approval and Review Group
PRC	Policy & Resources Committee – a sub-Committee of the University Court
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
PSRB	Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the UK
QAA Scotland	Quality body for HE in Scotland ; runs the Enhancement Themes and other quality enhancement activities
QuEST	Quality Enhancement Support Team
Regulatory Framework	Covers all aspects of the provision of programmes of study including admissions, progression and assessment of students
RDF	Researcher Development Framework; linked to the Vitae professional development network
REAC	Research & Enterprise Advisory Committee – a sub-Committee of Senate
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTU	Registered Teacher of the University

RuK	Students from “rest of UK”
Russell Group	Research Intensive Universities
sALTIRE	Academic Learning and Teaching Routes for Excellence (formerly known as the UWS Fellowship Scheme)
SAR	Staffing Authorisation Request
SAUWS	Students’ Association of the University of the West of Scotland
SCQF	Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework – UWS use Levels 7 to 10 to refer to different levels of study – Level 7 1 st year – Level 10 Honours year
Senate	The University’s academic authority
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
STARS Awards	Staff Awards and Recognition Scheme
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
SU	Students Union (England)
SUFDG	Scottish Universities Finance Directors Group
T1/T2/T3	Term 1/Term 2/Term 3 – the University’s academic year
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
THE	Times Higher Education
TRAC	Transparent Approach to Costing
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UCEA	Universities & Colleges Employer Association
UEC	University Ethics Committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate
UG	Undergraduate
UKVI	UK Visas and Immigration
ULT	University Leadership Team – senior operational team
University Alliance	Champions technical and professional education in UK Universities
US	Universities Scotland

USS	Universities Superannuation Scheme
UUK	Universities UK
UWS Academy	Academic Development Unit
VC	Video Conference (in relation to meetings)
VCEG	Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
Webex	System for video conferencing and online meetings
WonkHE	Higher Education Policy Website
WBL	Work-based Learning

**Court Office
August 2019**