



Quality Enhancement &  
Standards Team  
(QuEST)  
External Examiner  
Handbook

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## 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 and Standards 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 Quality Handbook, in particular Chapter 6, the University's Regulatory Framework, in particular Chapter 3 – Assessment, and the University's Assessment Handbook, all of which can be found on the University's website <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>.

Our online induction 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 resource.

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

The UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA), supported by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), launched a set of [Principles for Effective External Examining](#) in August 2022. There are 12 principles identified as being critical to External Examiner effectiveness and are directed at the two main stakeholders in the system: individuals performing the role, and the institutions that appoint them.

To be effective, external examiners should:

- Protect standards and ensure comparability and consistency
- Act as an expert in providing independent critical review, performing the role with integrity and supporting enhancement
- Ensure fairness and transparency in assessment
- Maintain the currency of their knowledge
- Support inclusivity and equity in teaching, learning and assessment

To promote an effective external examining system, institutions should:

- Appoint the right examiners, ensuring that conflicts of interest are avoided
- Provide adequate training to enable external examiners to fulfil the role
- Ensure the role is fully understood

- Enable students to understand the value and purpose of external examining
- Engage with and support the external examiners they appoint
- Engage with and support their own staff acting in the role elsewhere
- Review their policies and practices against these principles on a regular basis

UWS external examiner practice will be reviewed frequently to ensure it aligns with this guidance.

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 is 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 an individual basis.

The remit and membership of the SAB, SBE and DAB can be found within the University Senate Committees document available here

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

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 SAB 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 usually 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 an SBE will be held at the end of term 1 or at other appropriate junctures and this will be communicated by the School following appointment. No 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. No award decisions can be confirmed for our validated programmes without the **written approval** of the DAB external examiner.

### **Appointment and Induction**

As part of the appointment, process, external examiners must provide evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Home Office. Most right to work checks can be conducted online and the process used will depend on the documentation provided by the external examiner. External examiners will be informed of the current process to be undertaken at the time of their appointment. Please note that EU Passports alone can no longer be accepted as proof of right to work in the UK and additional documentation and online checks will be required. For further information on right to work checks and acceptable forms of evidence please see the [Home Office website](#). In addition, the University is required to have had sight of official documentation which confirms the external examiner's National Insurance number, such as a National Insurance card or payslip.

**External Examiners cannot commence their appointment or receive any payments without the necessary checks being completed.**

Before taking up your formal external examining duties, we recommend that you familiarise yourself with this Handbook and the following documents, which can be viewed here <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>:

- **Assessment Handbook**
- **Quality Handbook**
- **Regulatory Framework**

In addition to Institutional guidance, External Examiners are reminded of the guidance and principles provided by [UKSCQA](#).

On appointment all external examiners receive details of the online induction and link to the External Examiners Handbook.

This general induction produced by QuEST, provides an introduction to the institution, an overview of the Quality Enhancement Framework in Scotland, the operation of exam boards and role and responsibilities of external examiners, including completion of the annual report.

The School/Partner 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 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 and Social Sciences contact will make the day-to-day arrangements regarding



assignments and school visits, which are required to be undertaken by the SAB external examiners.

### **Change in Circumstances**

External Examiners should notify their related School and QuEST of any changes in circumstances which may impact their appointment, such as changes in employment or new professional connections with UWS staff. The appointment will be reviewed to ensure the criteria as detailed within this Chapter continues to be met.

### **Reciprocity of Examining and Number of Appointments**

Please note that our Quality Handbook prohibits reciprocal external examining between the same or closely related 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 typically 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 that the external has made at the SAB, acknowledging also that they now have a greater understanding of the University's assessment processes and systems. Typically the external examiner will take on a dual appointment, continuing as a SAB external examiner as well as taking on the SBE role. 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. Retiring external examiners 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 (Regs 3.16 & 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.

### 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.

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 undertake their role and reduce the need for physical attendance at the University. The external examiner's approval of marks and grades for each module (including resubmissions and resits **and not just those at L9 or above**) will therefore normally be sought electronically. It is recognised, however, external examiners may still want the opportunity to attend campus, in order to meet with staff and students, allowing for wider quality enhancement discussions and activities to take place. The external examiner should discuss this with the School in order to make the necessary arrangements and agree an appropriate frequency for such visits, usually a maximum of once per academic year. If overnight accommodation is required **this is normally within student residences**.

## Meeting with Students

External Examiners may wish to meet informally with students to discuss their experiences on a programme or modules. Arrangements for this should be made with the School. While discussion might relate to assessment experiences, the meeting should not be used to discuss individual assessment outcomes.

## Assessment

SAB external examiners will be invited to approve all coursework and examination question papers 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, campuses and collaborative franchise partners. External examiners should review samples of student work for **all** the modules that they have been allocated, **this includes the lower SCQF levels**. Schools will provide SAB external examiners with appropriate material for all the modules to which they have been appointed. While there are no firmly established sector norms for sampling, the University provides guidance on sampling methodology for the purposes of internal moderation, which is also a useful guide for external examiner sampling and can be found within section 5.3.3 of the Assessment Handbook: <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>. 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 of 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 School Assessment Boards (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 assessments, 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 is 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/media/6338/extenuating-circumstances-procedure-2021.pdf>

### **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 Registry 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 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 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.**

##### 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;
- 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.

An attendance fee of £100 per visit is payable to the DAB external examiner for attendance at the Degree Assessment Board. The payment of attendance fees will be processed on the claim form, which must be endorsed by the Panel Chair following the Board. Any queries regarding this process should be raised with the School.

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 coursework and examination question papers 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.

While there are no firmly established sector norms for sampling, the University provides guidance on sampling methodology for the purposes of internal moderation, which is also a useful guide for external examiner sampling and can be found within section 5.3.3 of the Assessment Handbook:

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>.

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 will 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 board. 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.

### **Meeting with Students**

External Examiners may wish to meet informally with students to discuss their experiences on a programme or modules. Arrangements for this should be made with the Partner. While discussion might relate to assessment experiences, the meeting should not be used to discuss individual assessment outcomes.

### **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 WBL/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.

The remit and membership of the DAB can be found within the University Senate Committees document available here <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

## **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. Should you not receive the email, please contact QuEST on [external-examiner@uws.ac.uk](mailto:external-examiner@uws.ac.uk) and we will be able to retrieve the link for you.

If you would prefer to use a report form in Microsoft™ Word format, blank forms are available from [external-examiner@uws.ac.uk](mailto: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 be required complete 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 that 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](mailto: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 an appropriate platform, normally Microsoft Teams, 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 School's annual monitoring activities and to advise the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) 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 A](#).

### **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 [helen.mclean@uws.ac.uk](mailto:helen.mclean@uws.ac.uk).

If there is any matter that 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 typically to publish School's external examiner reports in full on Microsoft Teams. These can then be accessed by relevant staff. They are also appended to the Programme

Monitoring Reports that are completed by Programme Leaders as part of the Enhancement and Annual Monitoring process. Should any additional members of staff require access, they should contact QuEST.

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, 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 the VLE platform. 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.

The previous year's external examiner report will also be made available to new external examiners in order for them to see the points raised and ensure they have been adequately addressed.

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.

### **Conclusion 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 Chair of the Divisional Programme Board. 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 <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>.

## 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 HM Revenue and Customs

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. The University's Expenses Procedure can be viewed here: <https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/6280/staff-expenses-procedure-2023.pdf>.

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/Partner 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, as detailed in the Appointment and Induction section of this Handbook.

Payment is made through the University's payroll system which is normally paid on the 28<sup>th</sup> of each month. Payment is made direct to bank accounts and we request bank details prior to each payment. Your School contact will ask you 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 2023/24, 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

On rare occasions it may be necessary to send physical copies of assessment material to external examiners. 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 (Business)	Laura Cairney	<a href="mailto:laura.cairney@uws.ac.uk">laura.cairney@uws.ac.uk</a>	0141 848 3839
Business & Creative Industries (Creative)	Mark Thomson	<a href="mailto:mark.thomson@uws.ac.uk">mark.thomson@uws.ac.uk</a>	0141 848 3860
Education & Social Sciences	Therese Allan	<a href="mailto:therese.allan@uws.ac.uk">therese.allan@uws.ac.uk</a>	0141 848 3766
Computing, Engineering & Physical Sciences	Michelle Taylor	<a href="mailto:michelle.taylor@uws.ac.uk">michelle.taylor@uws.ac.uk</a>	0141 848 3470
Health and Life Sciences	Hazel Shepherd	<a href="mailto:hazel.shepherd@uws.ac.uk">hazel.shepherd@uws.ac.uk</a>	(0)1698 283100 ext 8462

## **SECTION B – INFORMATION ABOUT THE SECTOR AND UWS**

### **7 EXTERNAL EXAMINING: THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT**

#### **Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) [Fol]**

The Freedom of Information Act Scotland (2002) (Fol) provides important rights of access to information held by Scottish public authorities, including UWS. The University's publication scheme can be found here <https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/6251/freedom-of-information-procedure-january-2022.pdf> 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](mailto: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.

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/](http://www.sqa.org.uk/)

SCQF: [www.scqf.org.uk](http://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**

UWS works in partnership with its students to deliver world-ready graduates who will design, shape and build a new future. We are pioneers in developing effective interactions with global business, industry and the public and voluntary sectors.

**Truths**

- 1 We are here for our students.
- 2 We are a global University
- 3 We are a knowledge-rich organisation
- 4 UWS graduates are world-ready
- 5 We value our people and UWS is a great place to work

**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, Lanarkshire 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.

UWS is an international university with over 6000 international students drawn from more than 136 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 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 <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

## 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**

- the involvement of student members in review teams within the new QAA Institutional Review process;
- the systematic representation of students at all levels within institutions;
- 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));
- 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Developing and Supporting the Curriculum, Student Transitions and Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience.

The most recent Enhancement Theme was Resilient Learning Communities, Further information regarding QAA Enhancement Themes can be found here:

<https://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 2019/20. The ELIR report confirmed that the University of the West of Scotland has effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience. This is a positive judgement which means that the University meets sector expectations in securing the academic standards of its awards and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience it provides, currently and into the future..

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

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/University-of-the-West-of-Scotland#>

While the sector prepares for the transition to a new tertiary quality framework, an interim process for enhancement led institutional review has been implemented. UWS underwent phase one of this process in 2022/23, consisting of a Quality Enhancement and Standards Review. Phase 2 will commence in 2024-25, coinciding with the implementation of the tertiary quality arrangements, which are being developed with the Scottish Funding Council and will be agreed in 2023-24.

## **University of the West of Scotland approach to Quality and Enhancement**

### **The Learning and Teaching Committee**

Quality assurance and enhancement in the University is overseen on behalf of Senate by the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), which is chaired by the Vice Principal of Learning Teaching and Student Success. The Committee's remit is to make recommendations to Senate on the University's strategic direction for learning and teaching and to support and monitor the realisation of the Strategy. The Committee supports this through a range of activities, including, the development of enabling plans, frameworks and policy that supports the realisation of the Learning and Teaching strategy, the implementation and review of internal and external quality assurance and enhancement arrangements, and the delivery of teaching excellence, scholarly activities and pedagogical innovation through academic support and development.

### **The Academic Quality Committee**

The Academic Quality Committee (AQC) is a sub-committee of LTC, which advises and makes recommendations to LTC 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.

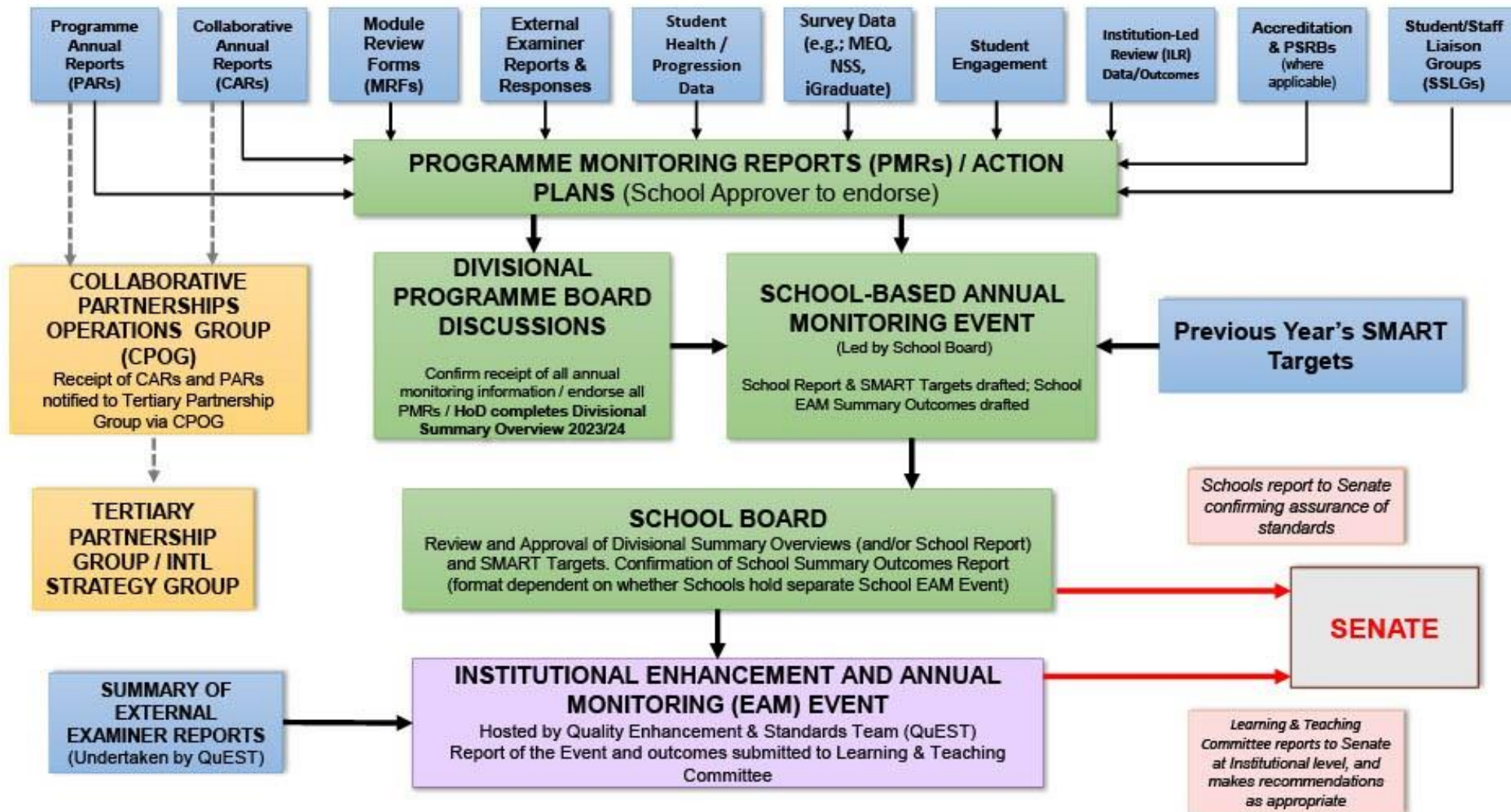
Many of our programmes are also subject to accreditation by professional bodies, such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and for registration with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC). A full list of accredited programmes for your School can 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, external examiner reports and student survey data, including NSS. The School confirms standards are appropriate.

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

**APPENDIX 1 – SCHOOL ENHANCEMENT AND ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS 2023/24**



### **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. 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 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 annually updates the University's quality assurance and enhancement procedures in a number of handbooks. As well as the External Examiner 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 and Regulatory Framework can be downloaded via <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

**APPENDIX A**

## UWS External Examiner Report Form 2022/2023

External Examiner reports are an integral part of the University's quality assurance and enhancement arrangements and are an important component of the University's internal and external quality processes. Your report is fundamental to the process of assuring academic standards and awards of the University. Therefore we ask you to complete your report as fully as possible and answer each question.

External Examiners may report direct to the Principal & Vice Chancellor, in confidence if appropriate, if they have serious concerns about standards of assessment and performance. External Examiners may also invoke the QAA's Concern Scheme, further information is available at

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/reviewing-higher-education-in-scotland/how-to-raise-a-concern-in-scotland>

External Examiner Reports are due to be submitted by 15 September. External Examiners' fees are only paid on receipt of this annual report. Please see the following website for further information on the role of the External Examiner at UWS: <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/learning-and-teaching-enhancement/quality-enhancement-standards-team-quest/external-examiner/>

Your report will be made widely available to staff within the institution and will also be made available in full to students. Student and staff names MUST NOT appear in the report.

Thank you very much for your time and support.

Name		E-mail	
School / Partner	School of Literature	Date Completed	23/06/2023
Type of Examiner	<del>School Assessment Board (SAB) / School Board of Examiners (SBE) / Dual / Degree Assessment Board (DAB)</del>		
Areas Examined: Literary Classics			
1. Programme Materials (these are typically provided electronically via the VLE or public website)			
Were you given access to..?			
a. Programme handbook(s)			Y
b. Programme regulations (these may be in the programme handbook?)			Y
c. Programme Specification (this may be in the programme handbook?)			Y
d. Module Descriptors (these may be in the programme handbook?)			Y

e. Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?	Y
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to the programme materials you have received. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice: <b>All the module descriptors are available to me and to the students via Aula. All module descriptors, teaching plans, assessments and assessment criteria are clearly and transparently set out.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
2. Coursework/Continuously Assessed Work	
a. Does your remit require you to review Coursework/Continuously Assessed Work?	Y
b. Were you given an opportunity to review coursework questions / briefs prior to their use?	Y
c. Was sufficient coursework made available to you for assessment?	Y
d. Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?	Y
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to any coursework or continuously assessed elements that you have reviewed. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice: <b>I was given the opportunity to review coursework briefs prior to them being issued to students and I provided some minor comments, which were taken on board by the team. Colleagues have gone to great efforts to make sure that I have had access to all the coursework completed by students, by giving me access to hidden sites on AULA where I was able to see marked work. I was comfortable with the standard of marking but advised the team I would like to see more consistency in the depth of feedback provided to students.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
3. Dissertations & Projects	
a. Does your remit require you to review dissertations / projects?	Y
b. Was the choice of subjects for dissertations / projects appropriate?	Y
c. Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?	Y
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to the dissertations or projects you have reviewed. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice: <b>There was a good range of project topics, which resulted in some very interesting submissions.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
4. Draft Examination Papers	



a. Does your remit require you to review draft examination papers?	Y
b. Did you receive all the draft papers for approval?	Y
c. If not, was this at your request?	NA
d. Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate?	Y
e. If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	NA
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to the draft examination papers you have received. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice: <b>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.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
5. Moderating Examination Scripts	
a. Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts?	Y
b. If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?	Y
c. Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	Y
d. Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Y
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to the examination scripts you have received or the approach to marking. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice: <b>Scripts have always been meticulously marked and I have seen clear evidence of internal moderation.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
6. Oral Assessment / Performance / Professional Placements	
Does your remit require you to review Oral/Performance/Professional Placements?	Y
Were suitable arrangements in place for you to conduct orals and/or moderate performances/appropriate professional placements?	Y
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
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to any oral examinations /performance elements or professional placements that you have reviewed. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice: <b>While all the students' oral work is available to me on AULA, this year I was particularly pleased to be able to attend some live presentations online. This was particularly valuable at the higher level, where I was able to observe student interactions with the lecturer. 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.</b>	

School Response (if appropriate):	
7. Recognition of Prior Learning	
a. Were you asked to review any claims for Recognition of Prior Learning?	N
b. Were you given appropriate support to examine the claim(s) e.g. criteria for award, guidance on RPL at UWS?	N/A
Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to any claims for Recognition of Prior Learning that you have reviewed. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice:	
School Response (if appropriate):	
8. Module-specific Observations	
Please use this box to provide any additional comments on specific observations that you have regarding individual modules. You may wish to use this space to copy and paste your comments from module reports provided directly to the School.	
Comments:	
<p><b>Policy and Organisation</b>  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, there was, however, some variation in the standard of feedback and more detail could have been provided for some submissions.</p> <p><b>Literary Practice</b>  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><b>Media essay</b>  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><b>Creative Research Project</b></p>	

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.

School Response (if appropriate):

#### 9. Module Parity

If the modules that you review are delivered across different campuses and or partners, we would appreciate your feedback on the parity of the provision:

Comments:

Some of the modules I examine are also offered through the University's partnership with the local college. The team ensured that I was provided with assessment samples from the partner, which I reviewed and can confirm they were comparable, in terms of the standard of marking and feedback, with those from the UWS campus. The standard of student work was also comparable.

School Response (if appropriate):

#### 10. Results Processing and Board Operation (SAB / SBE / DAB)

a. Were the processes for the approval of module results conducted to your satisfaction (SAB and DAB externals only)	Y
b. Were processes for determination of awards and honours conducted fairly? (SBE and DAB externals only)	Y
c. If you engaged with any boards, either in person or online, were you satisfied with the operation and final recommendations of the board(s)?	Y
d. Were you satisfied that the operation of the Degree Assessment Board was in line with UWS Regulations? (DAB externals only)	N/A

Please use this box to provide any additional comments with regard to the operation of the Boards and processes for approval of module results, programme progression and award. This could include opportunities for improvement or to identify examples of good practice:

The boards were conducted online and I was impressed by the smooth organised process. The documentation was very clear and carefully explained. Colleagues were 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.

School Response (if appropriate):

11 a. Comparability of standards – subject level	
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?	Y
Please expand on your answer: <b>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.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
11 b. Comparability of standards, programme level (SBEs & DABs only)	
Your contact within the School can provide you with access to programme level data to assist with this question. In your role as a School Board of Examiners 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 Providers as indicated by the distribution of results, honours classifications and other cohort analysis. Please comment on any identifiable trends in the data. For example, what observations can be made in relation to the spread of marks? Is there a particular module that impacts on the students' overall performance?	
<b>The spread of awards is definitely comparable with my own institution. I note there has been a slight increase in the award of first class honours over the past couple of years but this is to be expected with the continued enhancements to the programme and the increase is not above what is seen across the sector.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
12. Programme Learning Outcomes	
Are the objectives of the programme still appropriate for the subject area and relevant to the students?	Y
Please expand: <b>Yes they are - the presentational, analytical and critical thinking skills are well-developed in the modules and are fundamental to a degree level education.</b>	
School Response (if appropriate):	
13. Are you satisfied that the points raised in last year's external examiner report have been addressed or appropriately responded to?	Y
If no, please expand:	
School Response (if appropriate):	

14. Are you content that the workload assigned to you in your current role is appropriate and manageable?	Y
If no, what would be your recommendation?	
School Response (if appropriate):	
15. Did you feel that you were adequately engaged and supported to fulfil your role?	Y
Please expand: The programme team and support staff within the School communicated well with me and provided me with any information I required or requested in a timely manner.	
School Response (if appropriate):	
16. Recommendations	
If you have any additional recommendations or comments 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.	
Comments: 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.	
School Response (if appropriate):	
17. 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.	
Comments: With regard to my comment about some inconsistencies in feedback for the Policy and Organisation module, I would like to hear how the team will address this.	
School Response (if appropriate):	
18. For Retiring External Examiners Only	
If you are now concluding your appointment, please provide a brief summary of your overall experience and any recommendations you have for the future development of the subject:	
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 Aula 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	

<p>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.</p>	
<p>School Response (if appropriate):</p>	
<p>19. Form Review</p>	
<p>Please provide any comments you would like to offer on the usefulness and appropriateness of this form.</p>	
<p><b>This form is very user-friendly and efficient.</b></p>	
<p>Signed and dated by External Examiner: <i>(Digital signatures are acceptable provided that they are sent from your recognised e-mail address).</i></p>	
<p>Author (on behalf of the Programme Team):</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>Approved (on behalf of the Divisional Programme Board):</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>Date sent to External Examiner by School:</p>	<p>Distribution following signature by Dean of School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School Business Manager</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School Service Delivery Officer</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Divisional Programme Board Chair</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Donna MacAlister (QuEST) for uploading</li> </ul>

External examiners are asked, wherever possible, to complete the online version of the report as it helps with the data analysis process. However, should you need to use the Word version, please return the completed form to [external.examiner@uws.ac.uk](mailto:external.examiner@uws.ac.uk) by 15<sup>th</sup> September.

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

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

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<b>CoWA</b>	Commission for Widening Access
<b>CPOG</b>	Collaborative Partnerships Operations Group
<b>CSC</b>	Committee of Scottish Chairs
<b>CUC</b>	Committee of University Chairs
<b>Direct Entrants</b>	Students, usually from FE Colleges, who start in 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of their programme (see also Articulation)
<b>DAB</b>	Degree Assessment Board
<b>E&amp;D</b>	Equality & Diversity
<b>ECR</b>	Early Career Researcher; anyone within 5 years of their first academic position
<b>ECS</b>	Extenuating Circumstances Statement
<b>EDI</b>	Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate
<b>EIA</b>	Equality Impact Assessment
<b>ELIR</b>	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
<b>ESS</b>	School of Education & Social Sciences
<b>ESS</b>	Employee Self Service (iTrent)
<b>External Examiner</b>	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.
<b>FE</b>	Further Education
<b>FOI</b>	Freedom of Information
<b>FTE</b>	Full-Time Equivalent
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulations
<b>GNC</b>	Governance & Nominations Committee – a sub-Committee of the University Court
<b>GPA</b>	Grade Point Average



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<b>Governor</b>	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
<b>GuildHE</b>	Representative Organisation – similar to US and UUK
<b>HAC</b>	Honorary Awards Committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate
<b>HEA</b>	Higher Education Academy Fellowship – recognition of teaching practice and/or support of learning by AdvanceHE across 4 categories from Associate to Principal
<b>HEAR</b>	Higher Education Achievement Report
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institution
<b>HEPI</b>	Higher Education Policy Institute
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education Statistics Agency
<b>HESPA</b>	Higher Education Strategic Planers Association
<b>HLS</b>	School of Health & Life Sciences
<b>HSS</b>	Health, Safety & Sustainability Committee – a sub-Committee of the University Court
<b>IoD</b>	Institute of Directors
<b>ILO</b>	Intended Learning Outcome
<b>ILR</b>	Institution-Led Review
<b>ITDS</b>	Information Technology and Digital Services
<b>JISC</b>	Joint Information Systems Committee
<b>JPP</b>	Joint Programme Panel
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>Leadership Forum</b>	Membership consists of VCEG/ULT plus Heads of Functions
<b>LGPS</b>	Local Government Pension Scheme
<b>L&amp;T</b>	Learning and Teaching
<b>LT</b>	Learning and Transformation Team (formerly UWS Academy and an Academic development unit)

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

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<b>RPL</b>	Recognition of Prior Learning
<b>RTU</b>	Registered Teacher of the University
<b>RuK</b>	Students from “rest of UK”
<b>Russell Group</b>	Research Intensive Universities
<b>SAB</b>	School Assessment Board
<b>sALTIRE</b>	Academic Learning and Teaching Routes for Excellence (formerly known as the UWS Fellowship Scheme)
<b>SAR</b>	Staffing Authorisation Request
<b>SAUWS</b>	Students’ Association of the University of the West of Scotland
<b>SBE</b>	School Board of Examiners
<b>SCQF</b>	Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework – UWS use Levels 7 to 10 to refer to different levels of study – Level 7 1 <sup>st</sup> year – Level 10 Honours year
<b>SEC</b>	Student Experience Committee
<b>Senate</b>	The University’s academic authority
<b>SFC</b>	Scottish Funding Council
<b>STARS Awards</b>	Staff Awards and Recognition Scheme
<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
<b>SU</b>	Students Union (England)
<b>SUFDG</b>	Scottish Universities Finance Directors Group
<b>T1/T2/T3</b>	Term 1/Term 2/Term 3 – the University’s academic year
<b>TEF</b>	Teaching Excellence Framework
<b>THE</b>	Times Higher Education
<b>TRAC</b>	Transparent Approach to Costing
<b>UCAS</b>	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
<b>UCEA</b>	Universities & Colleges Employer Association
<b>UEC</b>	University Ethics Committee – a sub-Committee of the Senate

<b>UG</b>	Undergraduate
<b>UKVI</b>	UK Visas and Immigration
<b>ULT</b>	University Leadership Team – senior operational team
<b>University Alliance</b>	Champions technical and professional education in UK Universities
<b>US</b>	Universities Scotland
<b>USS</b>	Universities Superannuation Scheme
<b>UUK</b>	Universities UK
<b>VC</b>	Video Conference (in relation to meetings)
<b>VCEG</b>	Vice-Chancellor’s Executive Group
<b>VLE</b>	Virtual Learning Environment
<b>Webex</b>	System for video conferencing and online meetings
<b>WonkHE</b>	Higher Education Policy Website
<b>WBL</b>	Work-based Learning

**QuEST**  
**Oct 2023**