



HIGHER EDUCATION

Chichester College Group Recruiting and working with External Examiners for Open University Validated Programmes 2018-2019



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Date Agreed	
Date for Review	01/09/2019

Quality Code Part A Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards (A2, A3), Part B Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality (B7, B8, B10), ESG Standards (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 1.9) as at June 2017.

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Higher Education

Working with External Examiners on Open University Validated Programmes

1. Aim and Objectives

- 1.1 Aim: to provide clear guidance for course teams working with External Examiners for each Higher Education programme delivered by Chichester College Group. The policy should be used as a guide only for Higher Education programmes validated by the Open University and in conjunction with the College's rules.
- 1.2 This guidance has been designed following the current Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code Part B Chapter B7 December 2011 to meet the expectation that higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners. Under current arrangements the college is not an awarding institution and therefore does not appoint external examiners, therefore the following indicators have been used in designing this guidance note: 2, 3, 9, 10, 14, 15 and 16. For detail please see Annex A.
- 1.3 Objective 1: to provide guidance to course teams on the role of the external examiner
- 1.4 Objective 2: to provide guidance on how the course team is expected to respond to guidance from the external examiner
- 1.5 Objective 3: to set expectations of how the feedback from the external examiner is communicated to students

2. The role of the external examiner

- 2.1 Once the nominated external examiner has been approved and appointed by the Open University, make contact and agree information to be provided for the current academic year. A new external examiner will want to see the programme specification, course handbook, module descriptors and assignments for the year. A continuing external examiner may just wish to see any changed or modified materials.
- 2.2 The external examiner will use the materials provided to give feedback on whether the threshold academic standards are capable of being achieved.
- 2.3 The external examiner will be sent a range of samples plus all borderlines of assessed work to assess whether student achievement is being fairly and rigorously assessed against the stated learning outcomes for the programme and is conducted in line with the College's assessment policies and procedures.
- 2.4 The external examiner will use her/his experience to compare academic standards and achievement for Chichester College Group students with that

of students following similar programmes in other UK higher education providers.

- 2.5 The external examiner will meet with students and staff to discuss how the programme is operating. It is helpful if the external examiner can view minutes of meetings between the teaching team and students.
- 2.6 The external examiner will provide comments on good practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
- 2.7 The external examiner will provide recommendations on opportunities to enhance learning opportunities provided to students.

3. The role of the course leader and course team

- 3.1 Once the external examiner has been appointed, the course leader should make contact to establish information and materials required as well as proposed visit dates.
- 3.2 The course leader should despatch materials requested to the external examiner.
- 3.3 When requested the course leader should securely despatch documents to facilitate the selection of a sample of student assessed work.
- 3.4 The course leader should organise any visits by the external examiner ensuring that s/he can meet with teachers, students and managers as agreed.
- 3.5 Once the external examiner report has been received the teaching team should complete an action plan covering each recommendation. This action plan should be returned to the external examiner and a copy should be sent to the HE Quality Manager with a copy of the external examiner report within 6 working weeks of the report being received.
- 3.6 If the teaching team are unhappy with the process or outcomes from an external examiner visit, these should be discussed with their Head of Learning and the HE Quality Manager who will jointly agree a response to the external examiner and/or the awarding body.

4 External Examiners Report

- 4.1 Once the external examiner report is accepted and an action plan has been agreed, the report and plan should be made available to students on the course. The report published should not include any confidential information such as evaluation of named student assessed work.
- 4.2 The external examiner report and action plan should be discussed with the students at the next staff student meeting and the outcomes of this discussion should be minuted.

5 Recruitment and selection of External Examiners is available in the OUVF Handbook

5.6 On appointment, the HE Quality Manager will support external examiners to access the following information and training,

- External Examiner Procedures

- Academic award regulations
- External examiner annual report form

Annex A

The following sections of the Quality Code Chapter B7 December 2011 have been used in preparing this guidance note:

2. Institutions expect their external examiners to provide informative comment and recommendations upon whether or not:
 - *Threshold academic standards are set in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable benchmark statements*
 - *The assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme and is conducted in line with the awarding institution's policies and procedures*
 - *The academic standards and achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the external examiners have experience*
3. Institutions expect their external examiners to provide informative comment and recommendations on:
 - *Good practice and innovation relating to teaching, learning and assessment observed by external examiners*
 - *Opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities provided to students*
9. Prior to the confirmation of mark lists, pass lists or similar documents, institutions expect external examiners to endorse the outcomes of the assessment processes they have been appointed to scrutinise
10. Institutions provide external examiners with sufficient evidence to enable them to discharge their responsibilities
14. Institutions make external examiners' annual reports available to students
15. At both institutional and programme level, institutions give full and serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiners' reports. The actions taken as a result of reports, or the reasons for not taking action, are formally recorded and circulated to those concerned.
16. Institutions provide external examiners with a considered and timely response to their comments and recommendations, outlining any actions they will be taking.

Annex B - Action Plan in response to external examiner report

Course Title	
Course Leader	
External Examiner	

Actions from previous report

Action	To be completed by	Responsibility	Outcome

Essential actions

Action	To be completed by	Responsibility	Outcome

Good practice - how this will be shared and enhanced

Action	To be completed by	Responsibility	Outcome

Date completed _____

Date returned to External Examiner and copied to HE Quality Manager
