

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER SYSTEM FOR AWARDS
(TAUGHT PROGRAMMES)**

1 Purposes and Functions

1.1 The purposes of the external examiner system are to ensure that:

- the academic standards for each award are at the appropriate level and that student performance is judged against this;
- assessment processes measure student achievement against intended learning outcomes and are fair and fairly operated;
- standards at UEA are comparable with those of other higher education institutions.

1.2 In order to achieve these purposes external examiners are expected:

- to participate in assessment processes for University awards (taught programmes) as described below, including *viva voce* examinations and the deliberations of Boards of Examiners considering academic performance, including reassessment and the outcome of academic appeals;
- to arbitrate or adjudicate on problem cases;
- to contribute to the evaluation and consideration of the impact of extenuating circumstances upon students' performance;
- to evaluate assessment policies and procedures, including those with regard to professional practice, where relevant;
- to comment and give advice on the design of courses, on module content, balance and structure, on the appropriateness of learning

outcomes, on standards of achievement and on professional practice placements, where relevant.

2 **Selection, Appointment and Period of Service**

- 2.1 External examiners are appointed by Senate, which authorises the award of all qualifications.
- 2.2 Boards of Schools of Studies recommend to Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee the appointment of Boards of Examiners, including external examiners. The Learning and Teaching Service, on behalf of Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees, recommend to Senate, via the Learning and Teaching Committee the appointment and membership of the Boards of Examiners.
- 2.3 External examiners are appointed on an annual basis. An external examiner will normally be appointed in four successive years, with an extension of one year to ensure continuity in exceptional circumstances, approved by LTC on behalf of Senate
- 2.4 Appointment is for an academic year (or its equivalent) and covers all assessed and reassessed work completed by the cohort of students in an academic year (or its equivalent).
- 2.5 Where an external examiner is recommended for appointment for the first time, they will be asked to provide a copy of their *curriculum vitae* and a completed External Examiner Record form to assist the University in confirming their suitability with reference to the criteria set out below.
- 2.6 Each external examiner will be sent a letter of appointment by the Director of Learning and Teaching covering each year of their appointment.
- 2.7 The University will not appoint external examiners for four years in the first instance. Schools are required to recommend reappointment for a second, third or fourth year. The University may decline to reappoint an external examiner for a second, third or fourth year where there has not been satisfactory fulfilment of responsibilities in preceding years, such as attendance at Boards and completion of reports.
- 2.8 In making recommendations for appointment of external examiners, Schools should ensure that the number and subject expertise of the external examiners is sufficient to cover the volume and range of the courses being examined and the associated assessments (noting that some functions may be undertaken by External Assessors).

- 2.9 On behalf of Senate, and the Learning and Teaching Committee, the designated officer shall scrutinise the recommendations for appointment in order to ensure that the following criteria are met:
- (a) only persons with sufficient standing, creditability and experience within the discipline to command the respect of academic and professional peers, and who can show appropriate competence in the fields covered by the programme of study or parts thereof will be appointed;
 - (b) only external examiners who can evidence knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality will be appointed;
 - (c) only external examiners who can show evidence that they are familiar with the standard expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed will be appointed;
 - (d) only external examiners who can evidence relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined will be appointed;
 - (e) External examiners must be able to evidence awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula, including competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks and procedures appropriate to the subject;
 - (f) External examiners must be able to show competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience;
 - (g) external examiners must have fluency in English;
 - (h) External examiners must be able to demonstrate that they are able to meet any criteria applicable by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies;
 - (i) in order to have sufficient time for the proper performance of their duties, External Examiners will normally be expected to hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any one time;
 - (j) retired academics will not normally be appointed, particularly if the retirement took place more than three years previously. If it is proposed to nominate a retired academic, evidence must be submitted that the nominee has kept up not only with the subject of study but also with University standards, for example by examining elsewhere, regular undergraduate/postgraduate teaching etc.
 - (k) External examiners who can evidence extensive practitioner experience from outside the university system, for example from industry or the professions, may be appointed in certain circumstances
- 2.10 On behalf of Senate, and the Learning and Teaching Committee, the designated officer shall scrutinise the recommendations for appointment in order to ensure that there is no conflict of interest arising from the following:
- (a) an external examiner must not be a member of a governing body or committee or be a current employee of the appointment institution or one of its collaborative partners;
 - (b) an external examiner will not be appointed from a department in a university where a member of the inviting UEA department is serving as an

examiner, or where this would result in a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution;

(c) a Board of Examiners may not include more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution, nor will an external examiner be appointed from the same institution as the previous external examiner for the same course(s). Exceptions may, however, occasionally be unavoidable in the case of subjects or specialisms taught in only a very small number of institutions;

(d) External examiners must not share a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study they are required to examine, nor must they be required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study

(e) External examiners must not be in a position to influence the future of students on the programme of study, or who is or has been involved in recent or current collaborative research activities with any member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme of modules;

(f) Former staff or students of the institution will not be appointed as external examiners unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme;

(g) An external examiner may hold a simultaneous appointment in respect of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes;

(h) An external examiner shall not be appointed sequentially in respect of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes where the total period of appointment would exceed four years. Therefore, it is not permissible for an external examiner to be appointed for four years in respect of an undergraduate programme and then be reappointed to a taught postgraduate Board for a further period;

(i) An external examiner may be reappointed only in exceptional circumstances and only after a period of five years or more has elapsed since their last appointment;

3 Provision of Information

3.1 On appointment, and in addition to the letter of appointment, the external examiner will be sent an information pack including Degree Regulations, relevant University policies and other information as set out in the appendix. Schools will additionally provide course specific information as set out in the appendix.

3.2 New external examiners will be offered an opportunity to visit the University for a briefing by the relevant School or Faculty to discuss the role, responsibilities of the external examiner and to map out a plan for the moderating cycle. It is recognised that work demands may make such an arrangement difficult. All external examiners, but particularly new ones, are therefore strongly encouraged to contact the relevant School of Studies or Faculty by other means if they have any queries or need further information.

- 3.3 External examiners may request copies of the reports of previous external examiners in respect of the programmes for which they are responsible.
- 3.4 External examiners will find it helpful to refer to national subject benchmarks, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications published by the Quality Assurance Agency, and relevant professional and statutory bodies.
- 3.5 On appointment external examiners will agree with the Chair of Examiners the sample of students' assessed work, covering coursework, projects / dissertations and examinations, to which they will have access for moderation, with reference to the minimum requirements set out in 3.5.1 below and any requirements set out by a PSRB.

3.5.1 Moderation Sample

An external examiner has the right to see the assessed work of all students on any of the modules / programmes for which they are responsible. However, Schools will normally make available a sample of assessed work, sufficient to ensure that an external examiner can reach a judgement on the appropriateness of marking and other academic standards.

The following sets out the minimum requirements for the sample seen by an external examiner.

- (i) The University has adopted two approaches to moderation: external examiners may either review a range of assessed work at UEA or be sent a sample of assessed work through the year.
- (ii) External examiners shall review
 - written assignments, ○ course tests ○ examination scripts ○ projects or dissertations ○ other assessments required to meet PSRB requirements (e.g. OSCEs)
- (iii) External examiners may review
 - Copies of student presentations
 - Portfolios relating to practical work
 - Recordings of presentations or oral examinations (if not present)
- (iv) Where an external examiner reviews a range of assessed work at UEA, all work contributing to final classification / final award will (where available) be made available to the external examiner.

The external examiner shall pay particular attention to a volume of work equivalent to that set out in 3.5.1(vii) and 3.5.1(viii) below.

Assessed work may be reviewed by module or by student.

- (v) Where an external examiner is sent a sample of work during the year / in advance of the meeting of the Board of Examiners, the sample shall be selected in accordance with the guidance set out in 3.5.1(vi), 3.5.1(vii) and 3.5.1(viii) below.
- (vi) The assessed work reviewed by the external examiner may cover all or a proportion of modules as set out below
 - (a) A proportion (as specified in 3.5.1(vii) and 3.5.1(viii)) of all types of assessed work (as set out in 3.5.1(ii) and 3.5.1(iii)) for all modules delivered in the year;
 - OR
 - (b) A proportion (as specified in 3.5.1(vii) and 3.5.1(viii)) of assessed work (as specified in 3.5.1(ii) and 3.5.1(iii)) for a proportion of the modules delivered in the year, such that over a four-year term of appointment an external examiner will have the opportunity to review assessed work on every module.
 - (c) In agreeing the method of sampling, Schools of Studies and external examiners are asked to give particular consideration to new modules or modules where there have been substantial amendments or which are being delivered and/or marked by a new or different member of staff.

It is anticipated that all types of assessed work (with reference to 3.5.1(ii)) from a new module or from a module where there have been substantial amendments to the mode of assessment or content, will be moderated by the external examiner in the first year.

- (vii) The external examiner shall review 10% of each item of assessed work or ten pieces of assessed work (as specified in 3.5.1(ii) and 3.5.1(iii)), whichever is the greater.

(For example, 10% of written assignments and 10% of examination scripts for a WW module with two items of assessment, or 10% of essay 1 and 10% of essay 2 for a CW module with two items of assessment).

In some professional subjects, the PSRB may require a higher proportion of students' work to be reviewed by the external examiner.

- (viii) The moderation sample shall include 10% of assessed work falling into each of the classification ranges (undergraduate and integrated masters) or mark bands (taught postgraduate).
- 3.5.2 The sample shall be accompanied by the comments of the internal markers on the assessed work, indicating the criteria according to which marks have been determined.
- 3.5.3 The Chair of Examiners and external examiner shall agree whether or not assessed work from reassessment and deferred assessment will be reviewed. It is assumed that an external examiner will have formed a sufficiently robust opinion on marking and other academic standards during initial assessment to have confidence in the standards applied during reassessment or deferred assessment.
- 3.6 The School or Learning and Teaching Hub will keep a record of the sampling arrangements that are agreed with an external examiner.
- 3.7 In addition to a moderation sample, the external examiner will be provided with all the provisional marks for the modules under consideration.
- 3.8 As members of the Board of Examiners, external examiners will have access to all student marks relevant to the assessment.

4 **Participation in Assessment Processes**

- 4.1 The key role of the external examiner in the assessment process is to confirm that:
 - Internal marking is consistent, fairly applied and of an appropriate standard;
 - Assessment has enabled learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated;
 - Academic standards are appropriate for the level of the award; ○ Recommendations for awards and for classification of awards are consistent, fair, fairly applied and of an appropriate standard.

Marking and Confirmation of Marks

- 4.2 The process for marking, moderating and confirming marks at UEA is as follows:
 - All assessed items of work are marked by an internal marker; ○ Specified items of assessed work are then subject to a process of internal

- verification / moderation by a second marker (examination scripts relating to Level 2, Level 3 and Masters modules, Undergraduate projects and dissertations, Masters dissertations, other written assignments);
- Other items of assessed work may also be subject to internal verification / moderation by a second marker;
 - Marking standards are reviewed by the external examiner (either before or after confirmation by a Module Assessment Board);
 - A Module Assessment Board confirms all marks relating to a module (marks may not be amended once confirmed, unless there has been an administrative error in recording or transcribing the mark or following an academic appeal);
 - A Stage Board (Undergraduate and Integrated Masters) / Intermediate Board (Taught Postgraduate) reviews the performance of individual students across modules and makes decisions in respect of progression and reassessment;
 - A Final Assessment Board makes recommendations for the award of degrees (and classification in the case of Bachelors and Integrated Masters Degrees).

Prior to Assessment

- 4.3 All draft (University) examination papers contributing to a final award, including reassessment papers, will be sent to the external examiner for comment. In particular, external examiners are asked to scrutinise examination papers for accuracy and to confirm that intended learning outcomes are being appropriately assessed.
- 4.3.1 External examiners may suggest revisions, which will either be incorporated into the final version or the Chair of the Board of Examiners will provide a written explanation to the external examiner of the reason(s) why suggested revisions have not been adopted.
- 4.3.2 Schools may additionally discuss the content of other assessment tasks, such as coursework, with the external examiner, but this is not a University requirement.
- 4.3.3 In reviewing examination papers and other assessment instruments external examiners are asked to comment on the coverage and emphasis of individual assessments and of the assessments for a module or course as a whole. These comments shall be taken into account in future planning.
- 4.3.4 Where appropriate, the external examiner may be invited to set some questions or complete examination papers.

- 4.3.5 The external examiner will also be invited to comment on model answers where these are prepared. Again, the comments of the external examiner on the model answer will be given serious consideration by the School and a written explanation given where suggestions for amendments are not adopted.

Moderation

- 4.4 The external examiner's role is to moderate marking standards, not to mark assessed work.

External examiners will moderate assessed work (examinations, coursework, projects and dissertations) as follows:

- 4.4.1 Assessed work shall be made available to the external examiner, as set out in 3.5.1 above.
- 4.4.2 The external examiner will review the marks awarded and will use this sample to validate and comment on the academic performance of UEA candidates, on marking standards and on academic standards in general.
- 4.4.3 Where marking standards are judged to be acceptable the external examiner will confirm this and no further action is required.
- 4.4.4 Where marking standards for a module as a whole are judged to be inappropriate the external examiner shall draw this to the attention of the Board of Examiners.
- (i) If the marks have not yet been confirmed by a Module Assessment Board, the Board shall review and amend as appropriate the marks of all candidates taking the module or item in question in consultation with the external examiner. This may require either the remarking of all items of work or the scaling of marks based on a representative sample that has been remarked.
 - (ii) If the marks have been confirmed by a Module Assessment Board, the Board will not amend the marks, but will take appropriate action to ensure that the classification of students is not compromised. This will normally involve a consideration of the position of all borderline candidates who have taken the module or item in question. It may be necessary to undertake a review of further samples of work to ascertain an appropriate allowance to be made in the consideration of such borderline candidates.

4.4.5 Where overall marking standards are judged to be appropriate, but an individual mark appears to be inappropriate the external examiner shall be invited to draw this to the attention of the Board of Examiners.

- (i) Where the mark has not yet been confirmed by a Module Assessment Board the comments of the external examiner shall be drawn to the attention of the internal markers. Where there is a significant difference between the mark given by the internal marker(s) and the view of the external examiner, it may be appropriate to review the marks of all students for the module or item in question and to make appropriate amendments. Individual marks cannot be changed but the views of the external examiner will be noted and taken into consideration where the mark concerns a borderline candidate.
- (ii) Where a mark has already been confirmed by a Module Assessment Board it will not be amended, but the views of the external examiner will be noted and taken into consideration, particularly where these relate to borderline candidates. Again, where there is a significant difference between the mark given by the internal marker(s) and the view of the external, it may be appropriate to review the marks of all students for the module or item in question.

4.5 In addition, external examiners may be asked to arbitrate in cases where the internal markers have been unable to reach agreement on a mark.

Arbitration takes one of the following forms:

4.5.1 Where internal markers have been unable to agree a mark, the external examiner may be consulted in order to assist with resolution of the matter. The external examiner shall be supplied with all relevant information (the disputed marks, the comments of both markers on the work in question and marking criteria). The views of the external examiner will be influential in resolving the final mark.

4.5.2 The external examiner may be asked to read or re-read specific items of work produced by borderline candidates in an effort to resolve doubts. Equally these doubts may be resolved in a viva voce examination (see paragraph 4.9 below).

Boards of Examiners

4.6 External examiners are full members of the Board of Examiners.

4.7 As full members of the Board of Examiners, external examiners have the right to be present at all examiners' meetings, including Module, Stage

(Undergraduate and Integrated Masters) /Intermediate (Taught Postgraduate) and Final Assessment Boards and Reassessment Boards, and to participate in the discussions of the Board.

- 4.8 External examiners are required to be present at all relevant Final Assessment Boards, defined as the examiners' meetings at which University awards are recommended.
- 4.9 At least one external examiner shall be present where a viva voce examination is held to assist the Board in determining degree classification or where a viva voce examination is held to resolve a disputed mark in accordance with the Instructions to Examiners for the awards for which they have responsibility and paragraph 4.5.2 above.
- 4.10 The views of an external examiner shall be particularly influential, for example in the case of the final classification to be derived from the array of marks of a particular candidate at the relevant examiners' meetings, but within the framework set out in 4.4 – 4.9 above and in the Instructions to Examiners for the award.
- 4.11 The signature of the full Board of Examiners, including the relevant external examiner(s) must be appended to the sheet making recommendations to Senate on the conferment of awards. No University qualification will be awarded without the participation in the assessment process of at least one examiner external to the University.
- 4.12 External examiners shall be consulted as members of the Final Assessment Board where an Academic Appeal is referred to the Board in respect of recommendations for awards and/or classification.

5 Annual Reports and Quality Enhancement

- 5.1 External examiners are encouraged to comment on the assessment process and the schemes for marking and classification. In some subjects participation in the devising of such schemes is essential. External examiners are often able to give valuable advice to internal examiners, either directly or through the Chair of the Board of Examiners or the Head of the School of Studies.
- 5.2 External examiners also provide an invaluable source of ongoing advice on the structure, design and content of both modules and courses. Schools and external examiners should use the opportunity afforded by the visits of external examiners to discuss the structure, content and learning outcomes of modules and degree programmes, and the assessment procedures.

The sample of student work provided to external examiners under 3.5.1 should be sufficient for them to gain an informed view of module content, assessment design etc., but additional material should be provided as appropriate.

Current external examiners and those who have been appointed as external examiners on taught programmes within the past three years are not permitted to be members of Programme Review Panels.

- 5.3 All external examiners are required to submit an annual report to the ProVice-Chancellor (Academic) c/o the Learning and Teaching Service Assessments Office. A standard proforma will be provided for this purpose.

The proforma specifically requests that external examiners comment on the following issues:

- academic standards as they relate to the award or award element under consideration
- the standards demonstrated by students
- the appropriateness of learning outcomes set and their achievement by students
- course structure and design and module content
- assessment methods and processes
- marking (and classifications in the case of Undergraduate and Integrated Masters degrees)
- academic standards measured against those in other research-led institutions
- the standard of student work compared with that in other research-led institutions

- 5.4 External examiner reports are considered by **all** members of relevant committees, including student representatives. External examiners should not refer to individual members of staff or students by name or student number.

- 5.5 External examiners should submit reports within six weeks of the meeting of the Board of Examiners or by the annual deadlines outlined in the report form.

- 5.6 Payment of fees will be authorised once the formal report has been received. The Learning and Teaching Service Assessments Office will send reminders to any external examiner who has not submitted their report within this

timeframe. If a report is not received, the University will not authorise the payment of the fee and may decide not to reappoint the external examiner.

- 5.7 It is the responsibility of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) to ensure that external examiners' reports are considered and acted upon.
- 5.8 The Learning and Teaching Service Assessments Office will provide copies of external examiners' reports to Schools via the Secretary to the relevant Faculty Learning Teaching and Quality Committee, with a request that Schools consider and respond to issues raised.
- 5.9 Feedback to external examiners is important. External examiners should therefore receive a formal response from the relevant School of Studies, on what action (if any) has been taken as a result of their comments and if no action has been taken, the reason(s) for this.
- 5.10 A draft of the School's response to the external examiner and any other comments must be presented to the relevant Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee prior to its being sent to the external examiner. It is the role of the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee to confirm that all issues have been appropriately addressed and to monitor reports for common themes that may warrant further consideration or action. It is also the role of the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee to highlight examples of good practice and consider mechanisms for its dissemination.
- 5.11 The Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee will report annually to the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate, confirming that the process has been completed and identifying themes and issues for wider consideration and discussion. The Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee will also provide the Learning and Teaching Service with a copy of the School's response to the external examiners' reports.
- 5.12 The Learning and Teaching Committee will prepare an annual overview report to Senate on all external examiners' reports. This report will normally be made available via the University's web pages and is, therefore, publicly available.
- 5.13 In addition to the formal reporting mechanisms, external examiners may comment on issues of assessment design or course content during the year or during meetings of examiners. These comments should be recorded and fed into the School's quality assurance and enhancement processes, for example through annual Course Update.
- 5.14 Schools and/or Faculty Offices should ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to maintain and promote links between Boards of Examiners, School Boards and any other relevant bodies on matters of principle and policy etc.

- 5.15 External examiners are invited to raise any matters of a serious or confidential nature that they believe should be addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, by submitting a separate report to the Vice-Chancellor's Office. Such reports will be treated confidentially and an individual response will be provided, outlining any resulting actions.
- 5.16 Where an external examiner has serious concerns relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of a programme that have not been resolved through the University's published internal procedures or by submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, the external examiner may invoke the Quality Assurance Agency's concerns scheme or, where relevant, report concerns to the professional, statutory or regulatory body.

This Code of Practice is based upon:

- (1) the code published by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (now Universities UK) in July 1985.
- (2) the Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education: Section 4: External Examining - January, 2000 and August, 2004 published by the Quality Assurance Agency.

Approved by the Senate of the University of East Anglia: 9 June 1993.

Amendments approved by the Chairman on behalf of the Teaching Committee of Senate: 12 September 1995

Amendments approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Learning, Teaching and Quality as Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee: June 1999, June 2001, November 2002, October 2003

Amendments approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) as Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee: October 2004

Amendments approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) as Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee: September, 2005, October 2006 and October 2007

Revisions approved by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) as Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate: October 2008

Amendments approved by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) as Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate: October 2009

Amendments approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate: October 2014

APPENDIX 1

**INFORMATION PACK FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS
& EXTERNAL ASSESSORS**General Information to be provided with Letter of Appointment

- *Code of Practice for the External Examiner System for Awards (Taught Programmes)* at UEA
- Notes for the Guidance of External Examiners
- Relevant Degree Regulations and Instructions to Examiners
- Individual Arrangements in University Examinations

General Information available electronically via the University web site / email

- Programme specifications
(<http://www.uea.ac.uk/ltq/programmeSpecs/programmeSpecs.html>)
- External examiners report proforma
(<https://www.uea.ac.uk/ltqo/exams/extexamnrs/exexrep>)

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/ltqo/calendar> [listed under Regulations (General)]

- University policy on Accreditation of Prior Learning
- University statement on Equal Opportunities for Students
- University Policy on Plagiarism and Collusion
- University policy on the Submission of Work for Assessment (including policy relating to penalties for late submission)

Information to be provided by the School of Studies

- module details
- assessment/marking criteria
- details of the dates of meetings of Boards of Examiners
- any other information deemed relevant by the School

APPENDIX 2:

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR SCHOOLS AND FACULTIES

1 Appointment of Boards of Examiners

- 1.1 Boards of Examiners are appointed on an annual basis.
- 1.2 Each year the Learning and Teaching Service shall initiate the process for the appointment of Boards of Examiners and will ask Schools to make recommendations for appointments of Boards of Examiners, including nomination of external examiners, for the coming academic year.

The memorandum initiating the process will contain a deadline for the approval of Boards and the reporting of details to the Learning and Teaching Service.

- 1.3 A designated officer in each School shall prepare the recommendations for appointment of the Board of Examiners, including external examiners, using the standard proforma.

Where the recommendations for the appointment of the Board of Examiners include the nomination of a new external examiner, Schools should submit an External Examiner's Record Form and *curriculum vitae* for the new examiner (in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the Code of Practice).

- 1.4 Faculties shall have in place arrangements for the approval of Boards of Examiners and will notify Schools to whom recommendations should be submitted.
- 1.5 The budget for the payment of external examiners' fees is set on an annual basis as part of the University's routine budget setting procedures. Any increase in the number of external examiners will have implications for this budget. Whilst it is a matter of academic judgment to determine the appropriate number of external examiners to cover the range and volume of assessment associated with a course, Schools are asked to discuss with the Learning and Teaching Service any planned increase in the number of external examiners, either as part of a new course proposal or to take account of changed course profiles or increased volume of assessment.
- 1.6 As set out in the Regulations, Boards of Examiners must include a Chair and at least one external examiner. Schools are responsible for ensuring that the number and subject expertise of the external examiners is sufficient to cover the volume and range of the courses being examined and the associated assessments. It is also recommended that Schools seek as far as possible to phase the period of service of their external examiners so that a Board of Examiners benefits from the perspective of external examiners who are new to the University, combined with those with more experience.

- 1.7 Under arrangements agreed by the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate in June 2009, the Committee has delegated the appointment of Boards of Examiners, including the appointment and reappointment of external examiners in most circumstances, to Faculties.

Where recommendations for the appointment of Boards of Examiners include the reappointment of an external examiner for a fifth year or a potential conflict of interest (including a reciprocal arrangement between UEA and the external examiner's home department), the approval of the Academic Director of Taught Programmes on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate, is required.

Recommendations for a fifth year of appointment or for the appointment of an external examiner involving a potential reciprocal arrangement or other potential conflict of interest should be submitted to the Learning and Teaching Service in accordance with the procedure published on an annual basis.

- 1.8 Notification of the appointment of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Boards of Examiners (including Integrated Masters courses) should be sent to the Team Leaders, Assessments Office, Learning and Teaching Service.
- 1.9 The Learning and Teaching Service will send a letter of appointment to external examiners on behalf of the Academic Registrar in the autumn semester. External examiners will also be sent a pack of information as described in Appendix 1 of the Code of Practice.
- 1.10 Learning and Teaching Hubs are notified of the appointment of Boards of Examiners via a copy of the letters of appointment for the external examiner(s).

2 Liaison Between Schools and External Examiners

- 2.1 In accordance with paragraph 3.1 of the Code of Practice, Schools will provide external examiners with relevant information, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Code.
- 2.2 In addition, new external examiners should be invited to visit the University for a briefing by the School to discuss the role (3.2 of the Code).
- 2.3 Chairs of Boards of Examiners are responsible for liaison between the School and external examiners, although in practice this may be delegated to Course Directors or other members of the teaching team.

3 Moderation Sample

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 3.2 of the Code of Practice, the Chair of Examiners should agree with the external examiner the approach to the selection of the moderation sample, noting the minimum requirements set out in paragraph 3.5.1.
- 3.2 Specifically, the Chair of Examiners should agree whether the external examiner will
- Moderate every module in every year, or will adopt a moderation cycle such that each module is reviewed once during a four-year term of appointment;
 - be sent a sample of assessed work during the year, or will review a sample of assessed work at UEA;
 - review a sample of assessed work as set out in 3.5.1(iii)

4 Reports, Responses and Feedback

- 4.1 The timetable for the consideration of external examiners' reports by Schools and Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees will be published annually by the Learning and Teaching Service on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate.
- 4.2 On receipt in the Learning and Teaching Service Assessments Office, external examiners' reports will be sent to the relevant Secretary to the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, who will arrange for their distribution to relevant members of Schools.
- 4.3 Schools are responsible for considering and responding to external examiners' reports and for taking action as appropriate. The University has introduced a proforma for responding to issues raised by external examiners and to facilitate the monitoring of resulting actions.
- 4.4 It is important that Schools show that they have carefully considered any issues raised by the external examiner. The use that the University makes of external examiners' reports is a key instrument for quality assurance and enhancement. There are four interconnected strands in the University's procedure for responding to external examiners' reports:
- 4.4.1 Having considered the comments made by external examiners, course teams may wish to make amendments to assessment design or to course structures and content (either via annual Course Update, or where more significant and/or extensive changes are made, via the appropriate New Course Approval process). Similarly, Faculty Managers may make amendments to administrative procedures in the light of comments made.

- 4.4.2 In considering the comments of external examiners, Schools may identify areas of good practice or issues of a more general nature that require dissemination and discussion across the School and/or the Faculty.
- 4.4.3 Course teams are required to demonstrate to the University (and specifically the relevant Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee) that they have considered the comments made by external examiners and addressed where appropriate any issues of quality enhancement raised in the reports, using the proforma to assist with this task (see 4.3 above).
- 4.4.4 Schools are expected to inform external examiners in writing of the actions they have taken in response to the report and clarify any issues of confusion. Where it has been decided not to take action in response to an issue raised in an external examiner's report the reasons for this should be explained. (The written response must be endorsed by the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee before it is sent to ensure that all issues have been considered.)
- 4.5 Schools should ensure that actions arising from external examiners' reports are monitored. The proforma for responding to external examiners' reports may be helpful in this task.
- 4.6 Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees are responsible for ensuring that responses to external examiners are appropriate and have addressed all issues raised. A draft of the formal response should be reviewed by the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee prior to it being sent to the external examiner.
- 4.7 With effect from 2006/7 full external examiners' reports will be considered by all members of relevant committees, including student representatives, and will no longer be considered to be confidential and reserved items of business.
- 4.8 Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees should additionally identify opportunities for the dissemination of good practice highlighted in external examiners' reports and/or Schools' responses.
- 4.9 The Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee will confirm annually to the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate that consideration of external examiners' reports has been undertaken. In so doing, the FLTQC will draw the attention of LTC to examples of good practice, any major issues of concern and/or issues of University-wide application.
- 4.10 The Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee will forward copies of the completed proformas (summarizing the issues raised by external examiners and the Schools' response to them, and including confirmation that the response was appropriate) to the Learning and Teaching Hubs. The

Learning and Teaching Service will pass the external examiners' reports and response proformas to the Academic Director of Taught Programmes.

- 4.11 The annual confirmation from Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees regarding their consideration of external examiners' reports and the Academic Director of Taught Programmes' review of the completed proformas will form the basis of the Learning and Teaching Committee's report to Senate.

APPENDIX 3

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSORS

1 Definitions

- 1.1 An assessor will normally have responsibility for only one part of an assessment (for example, a dissertation, an examination paper / question or a specialist module) to ensure subject expertise. (In contrast, an examiner will generally have a wider responsibility for a range of modules or courses.)

- 1.2 Assessors are not members of the Board of Examiners and are not involved in making decisions on progression or recommendations for awards or classification.

1.3 Internal Assessor

Someone employed by the University (on a part-time or full-time contract) to teach on a module and who is required to mark student work shall be appointed as either an internal assessor or an internal examiner.

Postgraduate Research students who are employed to assess student work may not be members of a Board of Examiners and must, therefore, be appointed as internal assessors and not as internal examiners.

- 1.3.1 Internal assessors are employed to contribute to modules which form a minor component of a course profile. They may be involved in first marking and in internal moderation.
- 1.3.2 Alternatively, a School may employ an Internal Assessor for the purposes of internal moderation, with no requirement that they teach on the module in question.
- 1.3.3 An internal assessor is not a member of the Board of Examiners and does not make decisions in respect of progression or recommendations for awards (whereas an internal examiner does).

1.3.4 The appointment of internal assessors is a matter for the Head of School (see 2.1 below). There is no limit on the number of academic years for which an internal assessor may be appointed.

1.3.5 An internal assessor is not paid a fee for assessing student work, which is assumed to be part of their contract.

1.4 External Assessor

Someone external to the University who has been appointed solely for the purpose of assessing student work. Circumstances in which the appointment of an external assessor might be appropriate are where there is a specialist module within a course profile, that falls outside the expertise of the external members of the Board of Examiners (for example, a statistics module within a social sciences degree).

1.4.1 An external assessor is not a member of the Board of Examiners and does not make decisions in respect of progression or recommendations for awards.

1.4.2 An external assessor shall be consulted in respect of examination questions. They may also be asked to comment upon model answers or coursework tasks.

1.4.3 An external assessor may be asked to externally moderate marking standards, but this will not be so in every case and the School should define the role when seeking appointment.

1.4.4 An external assessor is appointed on an annual basis and may be appointed for no more than four academic years (or equivalent).

1.4.5 The rules governing the appointment of external examiners set out in paragraph 2.9 of the Code of Practice, shall also apply to external assessors.

1.4.6 An external assessor will receive a fee in accordance with the approved scale.

2 Appointment

2.1 It is not necessary to seek approval from the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate for the appointment of members of academic staff as internal assessors (Senate, 13 June 1990). The appointment of

members of academic staff as internal assessors is a matter for the Head of School.

- 2.2 The approval of the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate is required for the appointment of external assessors. Recommendations for the appointment of external assessors should be made at the same time as recommendations for appointments of Boards of Examiners and will be considered by the designated officer in the Faculty. A recommendation for appointment of a new external assessor should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae.
- 2.3 Details of approved external assessors shall be sent annually to the Learning and Teaching Service, who shall write formally to appointed external assessors. The letter of appointment shall include details of the particular role that the external assessor has been appointed to fulfill.

3 Provision of Information

- 3.1 On appointment, and in addition to the letter of appointment, external assessors will be sent an information pack as specified in Appendix 1 of the Code of Practice.
- 3.2 Where an external assessor moderates assessed work, the sample made available to them shall be selected in accordance with paragraph 3.5.1 of the Code of Practice.

4 Reports

External assessors are invited to submit a brief annual report to the Pro-ViceChancellor (Academic) using the proforma provided.

Where an external assessor submits an annual report, this shall be considered through the normal quality assurance and enhancement procedures, firstly by the School of Studies and subsequently by the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.

Where an external assessor submits an annual report, the School of Studies should respond in writing, once the FLTQC has approved the response.