

Section 9



Nottingham Trent
University

Quality Handbook

Part C: Assuring and Enhancing Quality

Section 9: External Examining - Requirements

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1. Appointment Principles and Process

The University has internal quality assurance procedures that are subject to external input and scrutiny; as part of this, the University makes scrupulous use of external examiners, who are independent of the University and appropriately qualified.

- 1.1 All taught courses must have an external examiner(s) approved on behalf of Academic Board.
- 1.2 The University appoints one or more external examiners to carry out the role defined in this Quality Handbook (QH) section for all taught provision (including Validation Service) that leads to an academic award.
- 1.3 The University also appoints one or more external examiners to carry out the role defined in this QH section for phase one of all Professional Doctorate courses.
- 1.4 External examining in relation to PhD awards and for phase two of Professional Doctorate courses is covered in QH Section 11.
- 1.5 The course team is responsible for nominating an external examiner at least six months before the intended commencement of their appointment. A replacement external examiner should be appointed in time to take up their duties before the retirement of the predecessor, in order to provide continuity of external examiner activity. For Validation Service provision the course team / Centre should nominate new and replacement external examiners in liaison with the relevant link School.
- 1.6 For new courses, an external examiner must be in place for the start of the course.
- 1.7 The course team should ensure that potential external examiners are provided with sufficient information to enable them to identify whether they can carry out their responsibilities effectively and meet the appointment criteria before commencing the nomination process. As part of this, the proposed external examiner should be advised to consult the external examiners' area of the Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) website and provided with details of the University's Right to Work requirements for new appointees.
- 1.8 Each nomination for standard NTU and School-based collaborative provision should be initially scrutinised and approved by the appropriate School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC) or the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) for Professional Doctorate courses.
- 1.9 For Validation Service provision, scrutiny of the nomination should be by the University's External Examiner Appointments Panel (EEAP), following discussion of the nomination between the Centre and the University academic liaison tutor who provides written comments on the nomination form.
- 1.10 School-approved external examiner nomination forms, signed by the Chair of SASQC or URDC, are forwarded to CADQ. Schools and Validated Centres must use the standard University nomination forms.
- 1.11 CADQ ensures that EEAP considers the nomination. Nominations are approved by the panel and ratified by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC).
- 1.12 The name, position and institution or employer of the approved external examiner(s), along with the most recent external examiner report(s) for the course

and the course team's response, are published on the relevant course pages of the University's virtual learning environment (NOW). For Validated Centres this information is published on their own webpages. Students are cautioned against attempting to contact the external examiner, and external examiners are requested to refer any such correspondence to the course leader.

- 1.13 External examiners appointed by Nottingham Trent International College (NTIC) are approved by Kaplan. The nomination is then forwarded to CADQ to ensure there is no conflict of interest. The nomination is then submitted to the Joint Academic Advisory Board (JAAB) for consideration and approval. The EEAP is informed of the appointment for information.
- 1.14 The same external examiner may have responsibilities for a group or cluster of courses.

2. Appointment Criteria

The University applies a UK-wide set of criteria for appointing external examiners to ensure that the individuals are competent to fulfil their responsibilities. The criteria are also designed to ensure that potential conflicts of interest are identified and resolved prior to appointment.

- 2.1 Course teams, SASQCs, URDC and the EEAP are guided by the following criteria when considering external examiner nominations:
 - a. An external examiner's academic and / or professional qualifications, standing, expertise and experience should be appropriate to the course in terms of both level and subject. Academic or professional qualifications must equate to at least the level of the qualification being examined. Retirees may be considered if evidence of their continued involvement in the academic or professional area can be demonstrated.
 - b. An external examiner must have knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and the assurance and enhancement of student learning opportunities, e.g. the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ), Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements, etc.
 - c. An external examiner should have sufficient recent external examining or comparable related experience to indicate competence in assessing students in the subject. An external examiner may be appointed with no previous external examining experience provided they have sufficient internal examining experience or other relevant, recent experience or training. Where appropriate, the external examiner should join an experienced team or work initially alongside the current external examiner, or be subject to other special induction arrangements, for example, mentoring by an existing external examiner from a cognate course. The nomination form must include an appropriate supporting

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statement clarifying how inexperienced external examiners will be supported and/or mentored.

- d. An external examiner must be fluent in English, and where appointed to courses delivered and / or assessed in languages other than English, they must be fluent in the relevant language(s).
 - e. The appointment should secure an appropriately balanced external examining team with complimentary expertise and experience that is able to cover the academic and / or professional subject content. The Executive Dean of School or Head of the Validated Centre has a duty to ensure that the appropriate number of external examiners are appointed to ensure adequate expertise is available to cover the major subject areas of the course and cope with the volume of student work.
 - f. Where a course is delivered and / or assessed in a language other than English and an external examiner with fluency in the relevant language(s) cannot be appointed, secured arrangements must be put in place to ensure that the appointed external examiner is provided with all necessary information in order to enable them to make their judgements.
- 2.2 It is advantageous to phase appointments within an external examining team. The induction of new external examiners and the effective liaison between outgoing and incoming external examiners should be regarded as complementary to the principle of phasing.
- 2.3 The following restrictions on appointments apply at the point of initial approval and throughout the external examiner's tenure:
- a. A external examiner must not be over-extended by the duties they are nominated to undertake. They should not concurrently hold more than the equivalent of two substantial external examiner appointments of taught provision, which includes the one they are being nominated to undertake. If the proposed external examiner appears to exceed this norm, the course team must provide a supporting statement explaining how the effects of this are to be mitigated.
 - b. An external examiner is expected to be impartial in judgment and should not have any direct current ties with the School, including any close professional, contractual or personal relationships with its staff or students, or have had any in the last three years. This includes substantive collaborative research activities with any member of staff within the School and external examining of PhD awards and phase 2 of Professional Doctorate courses located within the School. For Validation Service provision, an external examiner should not have any of these ties with the Validated Centre or the relevant link School.
 - c. A member of the Board of Governors or a committee of the University (or one of its collaborative partners) cannot be appointed as an external examiner. Additionally, a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners cannot be appointed as an external examiner.
 - d. A former NTU student or member of staff cannot be appointed as an external examiner unless a minimum of five years has elapsed before the intended date of appointment and all students taught with or by the nominee have completed their course(s).
 - e. An external examiner cannot be appointed if they will be required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the course.

- f. An external examiner should not have acted as a consultant to the course team within the last three years. Prior to their appointment an external examiner may have been an external member of the University's course design and approval process or validation panel established to approve the course, however following their appointment they may not be a member of a panel established to review the course.
 - g. No external examiner may be appointed if by doing so a reciprocal arrangement for external examining would arise involving cognate programmes of study at another institution.
 - h. An external examiner should not be replaced by an individual from the same institution / employer.
 - i. Except in very large examining teams, there should be no more than one external examiner from the same institution.
 - j. Where a course team wishes to appoint an external examiner from business, industry or the professions but the nominee does not have the necessary academic qualifications and experience to fulfil all of the criteria of appointment, an academic external examiner must also be appointed to the course. Depending on the nature of the course and the size of the cohort, this might be an existing academic external examiner from a cognate course.
 - k. In the exceptional case of examiners to be re-appointed, five years must have elapsed since the end of their previous tenure.
 - l. A more detailed statement of criteria for the appointment of external examiners can be found on the external examiner nomination forms.
 - m. Exceptions to the appointment criteria will only be approved by the EEAP where there are compelling reasons set out in the nomination form.
- 2.4 CADQ maintains a register of external examiner appointments held by NTU staff, which Schools are required to formally update each academic year. It is the responsibility of the nominating School to ensure that a reciprocal arrangement is not created by the nomination of an external examiner to one of their courses. Validated Centres should keep a record of their own staff's external examiner appointments to prevent the creation of reciprocal arrangements in the same way.

3. Period of Appointment

The University places a limit on the duration of an external examiner appointment to ensure that objectivity is not compromised, and that fresh external insight and expertise is brought to bear upon the course of study.

- 3.1 The standard period of appointment for an external examiner is four annual reporting cycles.
- 3.2 For courses operating to the standard academic year, appointments should run from the September of the first year to December of the fourth year, e.g. from September 2023 to December 2027. For courses that do not operate to the

standard academic year, appointments should run from the standard intake date and cover any referral period.

- 3.3 Retrospective approval of external examiner appointments is not permissible. Where a nomination for an external examiner is approved after (or close to) the proposed start date on the nomination form, the EEAP will determine the actual start date of the appointment. This is to allow sufficient time for HR to undertake the required Right to Work check and issue a casual worker contract, which is a condition of the appointment.
- 3.4 An application to extend a period of appointment, or to add or reallocate duties, is considered according to the standard procedures using the separate nomination forms.
- 3.5 Extensions to the standard period of appointment are considered exceptional and any such requests must provide a strong rationale for doing so in the nomination form, for example, to cover the period of teach-out of a course.

4. Induction and Briefing

The University ensures that all external examiners are informed about relevant institutional procedures, practices and academic regulations, about their role, and about the courses and modules to which they are appointed.

- 4.1 CADQ sends general briefing information to each newly appointed external examiner via email as follows:
 - a. a letter of appointment;
 - b. a link to the external examining section of the Quality Handbook;
 - c. a link to the assessment section of the Quality Handbook and the relevant Common Assessment Regulations (where appropriate);
 - d. a link to the CADQ induction webpages;
 - e. a username and password to allow access to the online reporting system.
- 4.2 Each newly appointed external examiner is issued with a casual worker contract which they are required to sign and return to the University. In compliance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, the issuing of the casual worker contract and the commencement of tenure is subject to the external examiner undertaking a Right to Work check which will confirm whether or not the nominee is eligible to work in the UK. Following notification from CADQ that an external examiner has been approved by the EEAP, HR liaises with the external examiner regarding these requirements. HR also make arrangements for the external examiner to be provided with credentials enabling access to NTU applications including the virtual learning environment (NOW) for remote access of student work.
- 4.3 Schools are responsible for inducting newly appointed external examiners. Induction for external examiners for Validation Service provision is organised by the Collaborations and Partnerships Team in CADQ.

- 4.4 The School / Validated Centre is expected to brief and induct external examiners fully on all relevant aspects of the operation of the course and there is information on the University's quality assurance frameworks and the role and responsibilities of an external examiner on the CADQ webpages. The briefing should cover:
- a. the external examiner's responsibilities in relation to the course and, if relevant, the wider external examining team.
 - b. details of any mentoring arrangements put in place.
 - c. the conduct of the Board of Examiners meetings.
 - d. the confirmed or anticipated dates for on-site visits to undertake the review of assessment samples.
 - e. the confirmed or anticipated dates of the Board of Examiners meetings.
 - f. School / Validated Centre policies in relation to notification of extenuating circumstances, academic integrity and decision making at the borderline.
 - g. the requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) or approved deviations from the assessment regulations which impact on the decision-making process.
 - h. moderation procedures.
 - i. course aims and learning outcomes, and those of the modules.
 - j. assessment and teaching and learning strategies.
 - k. assessment methods and marking scheme.
 - l. assessment regulations including those for compensation.
 - m. opportunities for reassessment.
 - n. the extent of external examiners' discretion.
 - o. standards and quality reporting arrangements.
 - p. the University's requirements and conditions for awards as set out in the Quality Handbook.
- 4.5 Additionally, the following should be made clear:
- a. University policy on equal opportunities and its commitment to an inclusive and positive environment.
 - b. the contractual arrangements - including fees and expenses, term of appointment, etc.
- 4.6 As a minimum the external examiner should be provided with the following documentation:
- a. a link to (or an export of) the definitive course and module information in CourseLoop.
 - b. the course handbook.
 - c. external examiner reports for the past three years.
 - d. a copy (or relevant parts) of the most recent Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan, or Annual course health check and development plan for Validation Service provision.
- 4.7 CADQ periodically contacts existing external examiners to inform or consult with them about developments, as appropriate, in the University's academic standards and quality arrangements. The CADQ website also acts as a source of guidance to external examiners.

- 4.8 The course team keeps the external examiner informed about appropriate developments to the definitive course and module information in CourseLoop.

5. Role and Responsibilities of an External Examiner

The principal role of an external examiner is to monitor the academic standards of the University course(s) to which they are appointed, as well as the internal moderation and assessment processes.

- 5.1 The **role** of the external examiner is to consider:
- whether the standards set for the course are appropriate for its awards, award elements or subjects, by reference to published QAA Subject Benchmark Statements, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), the definitive course information (held in CourseLoop) and other relevant information.
 - the comparability of the standards with those of similar courses or parts of courses in other UK higher education providers.
 - the standards of student performance in the assessments for those courses or parts of courses to which they have been appointed to examine.
 - the extent to which the processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound, have been fairly conducted and have supported the intended learning outcomes.
 - whether the action points in previous external examiner reports have been acted upon, and standards and quality thereby enhanced.
 - strengths and distinctive / innovative features in relation to academic standards, the operation of the assessment process and the quality of learning opportunities.
- 5.2 In order to perform these roles, the external examiner is party to the internal moderation process, normally sampling work that contributes to the final award, through:
- Consideration, as requested, of the form and content of the assessment tasks that are used to assess students.
 - reviewing data related to student achievement at module and course level.
 - discussions with staff.
 - reviewing a sample of assessed work (the size of the sample should be agreed at the start of the course or module). A review of materials can be undertaken remotely as long as GDPR is adhered to at all times.
 - participation at the Board of Examiners meeting(s).
 - occasionally, and at the request of the course leader or the Chair of Board of Examiners, advising internal assessors on cases where they cannot agree marks (but not to arbitrate on differences).
- 5.3 External examiners can undertake remote inspection of assessed work. This must be conducted electronically; hard copies of work must not be sent to external

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examiners to access assessments remotely in this way, on-site scrutiny must take place instead.

- 5.4 Assessment samples remain the property of the University, external examiners must not copy or download the student work. However, in instances where student work is only accessible by electronically downloading the material (e.g. video presentation), this would be permissible only upon the written commitment from the external examiner that they delete the file(s) immediately following their review; the arrangement for which should be managed by the School. Should any claim of a subsequent infringement of copyright be received from a student arising from such a review this will be referred to the relevant external examiner with the University accepting no liability in this regard. Access for external examiners must be provided in such a way, so they are unable to add, amend or alter feedback given to students. If the School determines that this will not be achievable, the external examiner should review the work on-site.
- 5.5 The course leader must ensure that the opportunities are organised to allow an open discussion with the external examiner outside the Board of Examiners. Online exam boards and the remote accessing and reviewing of student assessments must not prevent such conversations. These opportunities may take place at a different time during the year when the examiner is able to visit the campus. At this time, the external examiner should meet with the course team and current students, where possible.
- 5.6 External examiners do not act as second markers and should not be used to reconcile differences between internal markers.

Further information

- The University's moderation policy provides indicative sample sizes (see Section 15 of the Quality Handbook).
- 5.7 Additionally, the external examiner is required to:
- a. engage with the NTU welcome and induction for newly appointed external examiners.
 - b. provide feedback to SASQC, where requested, on the mapping exercise undertaken for proposed articulation agreements, including Advanced Standing Agreements, to confirm the match between the course at the partner institution and the University at the point of entry.
 - c. provide feedback on proposed modifications or changes to the courses to which they have been appointed to examine.
 - d. assume the role of a mentor, if required, for new external examiners who join the external examining team (or that of a cognate course) and who have no or limited previous external examining experience. This may involve allowing the new external examiner to contact them should they require any guidance or advice concerning their role.
 - e. be present at a Board of Examiners meeting that agrees final awards (an external examiner need not attend progression boards). If exceptional circumstances result in the external examiner being absent from such a meeting, the external examiner should subsequently indicate by written notification – via the course leader – that they have been involved in the assessment process and agrees with the decisions made at the Board. In

the case of Referral Boards, at least one external examiner should be involved in the process but not necessarily through attendance.

- f. sign the conferment statement to confirm that they have been involved in the assessment of students and agree with the final recommendations reached.
 - g. submit an annual report in the format prescribed by the University on the standards and quality of the course(s) and awards for which they are responsible. This report is used in the production of the Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan (or Annual course health check and development plan for Validation Service provision) and for course monitoring and enhancement generally.
- 5.8 At the conclusion of a Board of Examiners meeting, an external examiner should raise verbally any concerns or good practice that are likely to lead to action points in their annual report.
- 5.9 In order to carry out the preceding responsibilities an external examiner may, by prior arrangement with the appropriate School or Validated Centre, meet groups of students to assist them to judge the overall quality and standards of the course(s). This does not give them the right to carry out viva voce examination of individual students.

6. Rights and Entitlements of an External Examiner

In order to carry out their role effectively the University recognises a set of rights and entitlements for external examiners.

- 6.1 The external examiner has a right to:
- a. be consulted in advance about proposed changes to course(s), particularly where they affect the course award(s), title(s), outcomes or the assessment scheme, major changes to modules or course closure. This allows the external examiner to comment on the changes from the perspective of their responsibilities.
 - b. contribute to discussions on the moderation of marks and on decisions concerning marks and awards to individual students. However, the responsibility for moderation and for agreeing marks and awards rests with the Board of Examiners.
- 6.2 For some courses, there are subject and award external examiners. Subject external examiners exercise the above rights and responsibilities in relation to a number of modules in a subject area and are expected to attend Subject Boards to consider the results for all students taking the modules for which they have responsibility. Award external examiners exercise these responsibilities in relation to a named course or award. They are expected to attend the Award Board.
- 6.3 Under specific circumstances, an external examiner also has the following entitlements:
- a. The external examiner may report directly to the Vice-Chancellor on matters of major concern that pose a serious risk to the quality and

standards of a University award, if serious issues are not satisfactorily addressed by the Executive Dean of School or Head of the Validated Centre (or nominee).

- b. If an external examiner continues to have serious concerns relating to the quality and standards of a University award and they have utilised all internal procedures, including reporting those concerns directly to the Vice-Chancellor, they have the right to invoke the QAA's concerns scheme and / or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB).
- c. In the event of an external examiner disagreeing with a recommendation for conferment, the matter should be decided by a vote of the Board of Examiners. If, following a vote, an external examiner does not support the majority decision the matter should be referred to Academic Board before the results are ratified. In such cases, the external examiner may withhold their signature from the conferment statement.
- d. If the external examiner has major concerns about the internal moderation of marks from the samples they receive, they have right of access to all student work that is assessed in their area of responsibility for the purposes of further monitoring and checking.
- e. The external examiner does not have the authority to alter individual marks. However, it may be appropriate for the external examiner to recommend a review of marks in a particular grade band.

7. External Examiner Reports

External examiners submit an annual report, using the University's online reporting system.

- 7.1 The external examiner report covers academic standards, the operation of the assessment processes, the quality of learning, reflection on action taken on points raised in previous reports, and the operation of the external examining process, and within it the examiner is:
 - a. Required to reflect on the level and appropriateness of the assessment procedures and standards of student attainment in the light of his / her experience of the subject provision nationally.
 - b. invited to comment on strengths and distinctive or innovative features.
 - c. invited to include comments and observations, which the team may wish to respond to outside the rubric of the Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan and within a reasonable timeframe.
 - d. The report must be submitted via the University's online reporting system within four weeks of the Board of Examiners meeting. The report is initially reviewed by CADQ and then forwarded to the relevant School or Validated Centre (and link-School).
- 7.2 The report must be submitted via the University's online reporting system within four weeks of the Board of Examiners meeting. The report is initially reviewed by

- CADQ and then forwarded to the relevant School or Validated Centre (and link-School).
- 7.3 The reporting system can be accessed using the login and password details sent to each external examiner by CADQ at the time of appointment.
 - 7.4 An annual report is required for each year of the external examiner's tenure. External examiners of new courses should still submit an annual report even when an award board has not taken place in a given academic year.
 - 7.5 External examiner reports are published on the relevant course pages of NTU Online Workspace (NOW) alongside the course team's response to the report(s). Validated Centres publish the reports and the course team's response on their own webpages.
 - 7.6 For courses that have multiple intakes and Board of Examiners meetings, the external examiner is only required to submit one annual report, unless agreed otherwise by the course leader and the external examiner. Where an external examiner is responsible for more than one course, the course team(s) should agree with them the number of reports they are required to submit.
 - 7.7 External examiners are free to comment on any issues affecting student performance on which they see fit, however the report must not refer to individual students or staff members by name, nor should it contain any quantitative or qualitative data, which could be used to identify individuals or groups of students within the cohort. Upon submission, CADQ review all external examiner reports to ensure they comply with this requirement and liaise as appropriate with external examiners whose reports need to be amended.
 - 7.8 A copy of the final Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan (or relevant sections of it), or Annual course health check and development plan for Validation Service provision, is sent by the Schools / Validated Centres to the external examiner, this contains responses to the action points, and recommendations raised in external examiner reports. Comments relating to institutional issues and areas of good practice arising from external examiners' reports are considered in an annual report that is considered by ASQC. Where appropriate, CADQ responds to external examiners on behalf of ASQC. Comments related to Professional Doctorate courses are considered in the URDC Annual Report, which is submitted to the University Research and Innovation Committee (UR&IC).
 - 7.9 Each year CADQ prepares one or more summary papers for ASQC providing an analysis of external examiner reports from across the institution. These reports include a summary of any negative responses to identified key quality indicator questions and the actions, which have been taken by the course team or institution in response to those comments.
 - 7.10 In some cases, the course committee may wish to have more time to fully consider action points and recommendations, in which case those outcomes are reported in the next Interim Course Report and Course Development Plan. However, the current Interim Course Report and Development Plan always contains an initial response to any pressing action points.
 - 7.11 Schools / Validated Centres are responsible for informing relevant external professional bodies of action taken in response to external examiner reports.

8. Chief External Examiners

A chief external examiner may be appointed from within the external examining team. The appointment of a chief external examiner is subject to the normal criteria set out above and the nominee is expected to have subject responsibilities within the team.

- 8.1 The additional responsibilities of a chief external examiner are decided in conjunction with the course leader but are expected to include the following:
- a. to confirm - by negotiation with other external examiners in the team - that a consistent and acceptable standard is being maintained across the course(s);
 - b. to coordinate the work of the team of external examiners and to liaise as appropriate with the course team(s);
 - c. to act as mentor for new and / or inexperienced external examiners;
 - d. to produce a summary report on behalf of the external examining team for the course.

9. External examining of collaborative courses

The external examining arrangements for all courses offered in collaboration with a partner institution(s) are equivalent to those that apply to courses offered internally. This includes the criteria for selection and appointment, the roles, responsibilities and powers of external examiners, and annual reporting.

- 9.1 The University recognises that other countries have equivalent means by which to assure the standards and quality of their higher education courses and awards. As part of the academic approval process, the collaborating School should identify the quality assurance mechanisms in place and, in line with established NTU practice, determine the appropriate level and type of scrutiny of that provision.
- 9.2 For joint or double degrees external examining arrangements that satisfy UK requirements and the requirements of other countries involved need to be agreed during the approval process. Where possible the University's standard external examining arrangements apply to the joint award. A joint external examiner may be appointed or dual appointments may be made. A joint Board of Examiners is held to determine progression and achievement of the students. For double degrees, separate boards may be held but should include representation from both partners at each board.
- 9.3 For dual degrees the University's standard external examining arrangements apply to its own award. The NTU external examiner must review the assessment undertaken by students from both institutions that contributes to the NTU award. Separate Board of Examiners are held by each institution for its own award. Members of the partner institution may attend the University's board and vice

versa. A joint, additional and subsidiary board may be established to determine progression through the joint programme.

- 9.4 Schools have responsibility for ensuring that the University's policy and procedures on external examining are clearly communicated to their collaborative partners. CADQ have the responsibility for ensuring that the University's procedures and policy on external examining are clearly communicated to Validated Centres.
- 9.5 In some forms of collaboration the precise external examining arrangement may be varied to meet the needs of the partnership, e.g. the requirement for on-site review of assessment samples can be more flexible, the partner institution may scrutinise external examiner nominations and reports before submission to the University or the partner institution may provide expenses payments or induction. Any such variations need to be clearly specified in the course documentation for approval and subsequently monitored and reviewed by the course team and School through interim course reporting and by CADQ through periodic collaborative review.
- 9.6 Where courses are delivered with an overseas partner, the course team must ensure that the external examiner has the necessary language skills where instruction and/or assessment is not in English or must ensure that translation arrangements are sufficiently robust. External examiners for collaborative arrangements are expected to meet the standard appointment criteria as set out in paras. 2.1 and 2.2 above.
- 9.7 For all collaborative arrangements the EEAP is responsible for the approval of external examiner nominations. The nominated external examiner must be independent of both the partner and the School and appropriate checks must be carried out by both partners to ensure against reciprocal arrangements being put in place.
- 9.8 To ensure the consistent application of standards, where a course is delivered at more than one delivery site the same external examiner should be appointed to cover all locations.

10. Premature Termination of an External Examiner Appointment and Resignations

ASQC may terminate the appointment of an external examiner not considered to be fulfilling their responsibilities, based on a recommendation from the Executive Dean of School or Validated Centre to which the external was appointed.

- 10.1 Grounds for the termination of appointment include:
 - a. failure to carry out properly the duties and responsibilities of an external examiner.
 - b. failure to produce an adequate annual report.
 - c. conduct contrary to that required and expected of an external examiner of the University.

- 10.2 The EEAP will consider the recommendation and the evidence provided by the School on these grounds. Termination of the tenure will not be considered where the recommendation is based on a difference of opinion about how the course should be run, on any perception that an external examiner is unreasonable in their professional opinions, or where the external examiner has been thought to be overly critical of the course or the course team.
- 10.3 Where the EEAP approves the recommendation, the external examiner will be provided with an opportunity to address the School's concerns within 10 working days. The EEAP will consider the external examiner's response, but if this response fails to satisfy the panel, it will recommend to ASQC that the external examiner's tenure be terminated.
- 10.4 An unresolvable conflict of interest may arise during the external examiner's period of tenure. In this case normal practice would be for the external examiner to resign but as a last resort the University can terminate the appointment in line with the processes outlined above.
- 10.5 Other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. serious illness), an external examiner is required to let the course team know as soon as possible if they intend to resign in order to protect students on the course and the quality assurance arrangements associated with it.
- 10.6 A resignation should normally take effect at the end of an academic year.

11. Fees and Expenses

The School (or the University for Validation Service provision) determines the amount of the fee payable to an external examiner.

- 11.1 Payment of the fee is contingent on receipt of a satisfactorily completed external examiner report. The relevant School or link-School for Validation Service provision processes payment of the fee.
- 11.2 Claims for expenses should be submitted directly to the School or Validated Centre.

12. NTU Staff undertaking External Examining Roles

The University recognises the contribution of, and mutual benefits gained from, the work of its staff undertaking external examiner appointments at other institutions.

- 12.1 The University recognises and supports the external examining activity undertaken by its own staff.
- 12.2 Schools are required to maintain a record of the external examiner appointments of their staff and any changes to this record are formally communicated to CADQ on a

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biannual basis. Validated Centres are expected to keep a record of their own staff's external examiner appointments.

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Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	Incorporates revised arrangements for external examining of Validation Service provision Additional requirement that an external examiner must be in place for the start of any newly approved course Includes changes to arrangements for Right to Work checks for newly appointment external examiners
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	None
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	Explanatory notes added to make it explicit that the electronic, remote review of student work is permissible, particularly where large pieces of work need to be considered, and in order to support the on-site review visit.
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.19	None
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	None
Sept 2021	07.09.21	01.10.21	None
March 2022	15.03.22	15.03.22	Added paragraph regarding NTIC appointed external examiners Amendment to the requirement that external examiners review samples of student work on-site - the remote access of student work is permitted as long as the GDPR are adhered to Reference to resignation updated to better correlate with the HR workers contract.
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Sept 2023	14.09.23	01.10.23	Updated to further clarify HR's responsibilities, the expectation that external examiners will submit an annual report during each year of their tenure, and the process for providing access to multimedia work. EEAP renamed to reflect the removal of responsibility for approval of assessor nominations for apprenticeships.
Sept 2024	19.09.24	01.10.24	None

Equality Impact Analysis		
<i>Version:</i>	<i>EA date:</i>	<i>Completed by:</i>
Feb 2016	26.10.2015	CADQ
Sept 2018	13.08.2019	CADQ