



ICHAS

Section 7 – Teaching, Learning & Assessment

Subject:	Policy on External Examining		
Applicable Standard	QQI Core	Assessment of Learners	
Date Approved by Board of Directors:			July 2019
Policy Version	1/2019	Date due for Revision	February 2024

CONTEXT

The QQI document On Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining (Rev. 2015) defines the main functions of the external examiner as follows:

- Review the appropriateness of the minimum intended programme learning outcomes (i.e. the programme’s basic educational goal), and other programme objectives. These should accord with the relevant awards standards and any other standards the programme is designed to satisfy, e.g. professional standards.
- Probe the actual attainment of learners (actual programme learning outcomes) using information agreed with and supplied by the provider.
- Compare and contrast both the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and the actual attainment of learners with the relevant awards standards, with the National Framework of Qualifications, and with corresponding data from other programmes in the same discipline in other higher education institutions in Ireland and beyond.
- Determine whether or not the applied procedures for assessment are valid, reliable, fair and consistent.
- Review the appropriateness of the programme assessment strategy and the assessment procedures and, flowing from this, consider subsidiary module assessment strategies.
- Review key assessment tasks prior to their assignment in light of the programme and module assessment strategies and learners’ prerequisite (prior) learning. Where key tasks include key continuous assessment tasks, it might not be feasible to review them prior to assignment, but they should still be reviewed by the external examiner.
- The External Examiner is required to acknowledge receipt of all assessment material from the College.

- Report findings and recommendations to the provider.

POLICY STATEMENT

External examining is a quality assurance mechanism employed by providers that supports confidence in academic qualifications; supports the maintenance of academic standards; facilitates fair and consistent assessment procedures: and supports the maintenance of equivalence and sectoral norms. External examiners are viewed as a central component of providing independent monitoring of assessment adequacy to reflect national and international norms.

SCOPE

Applies To	Staff	Students	Both	
			✓	
Responsible for Implementation	Registrar			
Responsible for Monitoring & Review	Vice President (Corporate Affairs)	Vice President (Academic Affairs)	Registrar	Quality Assurance & Enhancement Officer
		✓		

DEFINITIONS

An external examiner is an independent expert who is a member of the broader community of practice within the programme's field of learning and whose accomplishments attest to his/her likelihood of having the authority necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the role. For the purposes of quality assuring assessment, external examiners are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate standards are applied with regard to the various award levels and that the standard of assessment and consequent results is of a comparable standard to other higher education institutions (nationally and internationally).

RELEVANT GUIDELINES/ POLICIES INFORMING THIS POLICY

- Assessment and Standards (QQI, Revised 2013)
- QQI (Revised, 2013) Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines for Providers
- Common Awards System Restatement of Policy and Guidelines (2014)
- Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and Learning (Draft 2018)
- European Standards & Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ENQA, 2015)
- Effective Practice Guideline for External Examining (QQI, 2015)
- HET Core Validation Policy and Criteria (2013)

- The International Center for Academic Integrity (2012). The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity (2nd Edition)
- European Network for Academic Integrity (2018) Glossary for Academic Integrity Report
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines Developed by QQI for use by all Providers
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) et al (2015) Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016) Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines Developed by QQI For Independent/Private Providers Coming To QQI On A Voluntary Basis
- Government of Ireland (2012) Qualifications & Quality Assurance (Education and Training Act).

Linked Policies or Procedures

Linked Policies	
Linked Procedures	Procedures associated with External Examining