



# ICHAS

## Section 7– Policies and Procedures on Teaching, Learning & Assessment

<b>Subject:</b>	Procedures associated with External Examining		
Date Approved by Board of Directors:	July 2019		
Policy Version	1/2019	Date due for Revision	February 2024
Parent Policy	Policy for Assessment of Learners		

### INTRODUCTION

Procedures for external examination are developed to ensure compliance with *Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examination (QQI, 2015)* and *Assessment and Standards (QQI, 2013)*.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE/ PERSON	RESPONSIBILITY
Vice President (Corporate Affairs)	<p>The VP will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The external examiner shall be paid a fixed fee plus expenses, as agreed at the point of appointment.</li> <li>• The external examiner fee is reflective of the workload arising from stated roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Remuneration will be aligned with that of similar roles in other higher education institutions in Ireland.</li> </ul>
Registrar	<p>Acts on behalf of Academic Council in the offering of the external examiner post and arranges induction.</p> <p>The Registrar is the person primarily responsible for the support of external examiners and communication between the College and the External Examiner is channelled through the Registrar’s Office.</p> <p>The Registrar must provide to the external examiner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on the College, including details of assigned points of contact.</li> <li>• All relevant QQI documentation on Assessment and Standards.</li> <li>• All Quality Assurance procedures relating to assessment.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All relevant programmatic and modular descriptors outlining learning outcomes and assessment strategies.</li> <li>• All relevant assessment/grading criteria/rubrics.</li> <li>• All key assessment tasks and briefs to review before the assignment is finalised.</li> </ul> <p>The Registrar will also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a representative range of assessed material including a sufficient sample of work achieving high, middle and low grades and statistics relating to same.</li> <li>• Facilitate the external examiner's visit to the College</li> <li>• Provide external examiner's report guidelines and template.</li> <li>• Ensure that the findings and recommendations of the external examiner are systematically addressed by the College's quality assurance system and are considered as important inputs into programme's quality assurance cycles and related processes.</li> </ul>
Vice President (Academic Affairs)	Oversee the external examination process Brings nominations for consideration to programme board
Members of Faculty	Nominate suitable external examiners for consideration
Programme Boards	Make recommendation to academic council
Academic Council	Offers appointments
External Examiner	To perform the duties outlined below

## PROCEDURES

### Procedure on Appointment of External Examiner

- Any member of faculty may nominate an individual to the position of External Examiner.
- Such nominations are brought to the attention of the Vice President (Academic Affairs) who will present same to the relevant Programme Board for consideration.
- The Programme Board's decision-making process is criteria based to ensure:
  - required qualification and experience
  - independence and transparency
  - Identification of conflicts of interest
- Once a nomination has been approved, it is brought to Academic Council for approval.
- The Registrar makes initial contact with the nominee to discuss the proposed appointment and establish his/her availability for same.

- Once verbal agreement on the appointment and the nature of the roles and responsibilities is achieved, the details are formally confirmed in a letter from the Registrar to the external examiner.
- The role and function of the External Examiners are explicitly stated and formalised through written agreement.
- Thereafter, the point of contact with the College is the Registrar and relevant members of faculty including Directors of study, programme directors and or lecturers.
- External examiners are normally appointed for a period of three years.
- Where an external examiner wishes to terminate their tenure early, they are requested, except in exceptional circumstances, to notify the College not less than two months prior to the next semester's examinations
- In circumstances where prior notice is not possible the college will make every reasonable effort to replace the examiner with a suitably qualified person – in exceptional circumstances a previous external examiner may be appointed in a temporary capacity

### **External Examiner Induction**

The Registrar in co-operation with the QAE officer will arrange for the induction of the incoming external examiner. In addition to documents outlined above, the induction includes an overview of the following:

- Quality Assurance and enhancement Manual 2019.
- College academic and administrative structures.
- Clarification on conflict of interest.

### **Role of the External Examiner**

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). 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.
- Report findings and recommendations to the provider.

The external examiner is required to;

- Acknowledge receipt of examination and assessment material and to take steps to ensure the confidentiality of all material while in his/her possession.
- Communicate all sensitive information relating to assessment via a secure means of delivery.
- Review and approve drafts of all key examination papers, continuous assessment tasks, marking schemes and solutions and to make suggestions and amendments as they deem appropriate.
- Review a representative sample of examination material submitted by candidates, on the basis of a sampling strategy agreed with the College representatives, that will allow him/her to judge the appropriateness of the marking at all levels.
- Assessment of the marking associated with borderline cases, and to discuss same with the Registrar and arrive at a decision on grades for those students and amendment of assessment marks as he/she deems appropriate and decisions are later ratified at the Examination Board.
- Attendance at the College at least once in the academic year to review student assessment work
- Attendance at appropriate meetings of the Board of Examiners of the College and, in advance, to further review scripts and documentation provided as evidence of the assessment process.

### **External Examiners Report**

The external examiner is required to submit a written report, utilising the template provided by the College. The report is

- submitted within 3 weeks of the final Board of Examiners for the academic year.
- submitted to the Registrar, forwarded to Programme Directors & VP (Academic Affairs) and retained by the QAE Officer

- included as a component in the annual review of the programme, programme review and revalidation, and for consideration by the QA Committee to identify any institution level matters and inform the development of QA procedures.

**Linked Policies or Procedures**

<b>Linked Policies</b>	Policy on External Examining Policy on Teaching and Learning Policy on Assessment
<b>Linked Procedures</b>	Procedures associated with Teaching and Learning Procedures associated with Assessment