

Appointment of Mentors for External Examiners new to external examining

Guidance notes

Introduction

The University's criteria for appointment of External Examiners allow for examiners to be drawn from a wide variety of institutional, professional/industrial contexts and from PSRBs so that, where appropriate, there is an appropriate balance between academic and professional practitioners. In approving the appointment of External Examiners, Senate will be seeking to ensure that they are competent to undertake their duties and have enough recent external examining or comparable related experience to indicate competence in assessing students in the subject area.

The Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter on External Expertise indicates that where an inexperienced External Examiner is appointed institutions may wish to consider appointing an experienced External Examiner as a **mentor** to provide advice and guidance.

Appointment of inexperienced External Examiners

A mentor will be allocated to an inexperienced External Examiner normally for the first twelve months of their tenure. The mentor will typically be the Awards Board External Examiner, if this is not possible an appropriate mentor should be identified from a different subject area.

Guidance on the nomination of mentors is given below.

Nomination of mentors

When nominating inexperienced External Examiners, Schools should give due consideration to the identification of satisfactory mentoring arrangements, including the nomination of an appropriate mentor.

A mentor should:

- currently be an examiner at the University;
- have submitted at least one annual report to the University;
- have recent experience of working in Higher Education in the UK.

Experienced External Examiners who have agreed to be mentors should be nominated through completion of the form EE2 which, following signature by the proposed mentor, should be submitted via the Standards and Enhancement Senior Officer to the External Examiners Nomination Sub- Committee for consideration.

Duties of mentors

While the precise details of what will be covered during the mentoring period may differ depending on individual circumstances the provision of advice and guidance is

the general role of the mentor. The list of key topics given below should not be regarded as exhaustive but discussions may centre around:

- the role of external examiners
- assessment board processes
- the approaches to moderation
- requirements for annual reporting and approaches to this
- sharing of previous reports/drafts for current academic year
- current issues in HE and/or in the subject area which may be relevant
- common scenarios.

There is no requirement for face-to-face meetings of the mentor and the mentee, other than at the time of visits to the University for the assessment board(s) and it is envisaged that most contact will be via e mail, telephone etc.

A fee of £50 is payable on completion of the mentoring duties and should be claimed on the External Examiners' claim form.

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