



GUIDELINES FOR EXTERN EXAMINERS

PRIMARY DEGREE AND TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE COURSES

1.	<p>PROGRAMME DETAILS AND MARKS & STANDARDS</p> <p>On appointment, the Head of the School/Department (or other academic unit) is expected to send Extern Examiners full information on the programmes/modules which are to be examined including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme/module aims and objectives, syllabi Details of methods of assessment including the way in which the results of individual papers or other units of assessment are aggregated, averaged or profiled to produce an overall result Proposed dates for meetings of the Examination Board
2.	<p>EXAMINATION PAPERS</p> <p>Examination papers must be approved by the Extern Examiner(s). Draft examination papers must be sent in sufficient time to the Extern Examiner(s). Draft papers should be accompanied by model answers or solutions and a marking scheme for each paper.</p>
3.	<p>EXAMINATION SCRIPTS AND OTHER MATERIAL</p> <p>All examination scripts and other course work should be available to Extern Examiners in advance of the Examination Board by the Head of the School/Department (or other academic unit)</p> <p>Normally, Extern Examiners shall review a sample of scripts drawn from the top, middle and bottom of the mark range, including all scripts of borderline candidates.</p>
4.	<p>PRACTICAL AND CLINICAL EXAMINATIONS</p> <p>Extern Examiners, where possible, will have an involvement in practical examinations where specified in programme assessment requirements.</p>

5.	<p>ORAL EXAMINATIONS</p> <p>Extern Examiners may be required to participate with Intern Examiners in oral examinations.</p>
6.	<p>EXAMINATION BOARD MEETINGS</p> <p>Notification of the proposed dates for meetings of the Examination Board(s) will be provided to the External Examiner by the Head of the School/Department (or other academic unit) where appropriate. The External Examiner is required to attend the School/Departmental Examination meeting in advance of the Examination Board(s).</p> <p>The procedures governing Examination Board meetings are contained in the Guide to Examinations available http://www.ucc.ie/en/academicgov/policies/exam-policies/</p>
7.	<p>REPORTS OF EXTERN EXAMINERS</p> <p>Completed Report Forms must be returned via email, within six weeks of completion of examining duties to externexaminers@ucc.ie.</p>
8.	<p>REMEDIAL ACTION, WHERE REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED</p> <p>The Head of School/Department (or other academic unit) is obliged to provide a written response to the Registrar and Senior Vice President Academic and to the Extern Examiner to recommendations arising from the Extern Examiner's Report. The response shall include information on how the academic unit intends to respond to any issues raised by the Extern Examiner.</p> <p>Where the Extern has significant concerns they may provide a confidential report to the Deputy President and Registrar. The Head of the relevant academic unit is obliged to provide a response to the Deputy President and Registrar and Extern Examiner in a timely manner indicating what actions if any are being taken in response to the report of the Extern Examiner. The University will advise the Registrar of the National University of Ireland where such a circumstance arises.</p>
9.	<p>THE ROLE OF THE EXTERN EXAMINER</p> <p><u>Quality</u></p> <p>The fundamental role of the Extern Examiner is to assure academic standards and advise on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.</p> <p>The Extern Examiner confirms that the academic standards of programmes, modules and the awards to which they lead are consistent with the academic outcomes specified, and are comparable to those achieved in the subject area in equivalent universities internationally.</p> <p><u>Equity</u></p> <p>The Extern Examiner helps to assure the fairness, validity and rigor of assessment at the University.</p>

	<p><u>Enhancement</u></p> <p>The Extern Examiner provides feedback on the quality of programmes and modules and the overall learning experience in the subject area, and on how teaching, learning and assessment may be enhanced.</p> <p><u>Assessment</u></p> <p>The role of the Extern Examiner is to review and enhance the assessment process. They will not routinely act as an additional examiner. The conduct of assessment and the determination of marks, grades and awards is a matter for the internal examiners acting with the support of and the advice of the Extern Examiners. Nonetheless, in particular circumstances and in accordance with the policies of the individual University, Extern Examiners may be involved in the assessment process as second or additional examiners.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>THE DUTIES OF EXTERN EXAMINERS</p> <p>(a) Reviewing curricula and outcomes of courses, modules and programmes.</p> <p>The Extern Examiner shall receive full information on the programmes and modules under examination, including any relevant materials describing the aims, objectives and/or outcomes and descriptors, syllabi and/or curricula.</p> <p>(b) Reviewing assessment strategies and assessment instruments.</p> <p>The Extern Examiner shall receive full information on the assessment strategies and methods of assessment including the way in which the results of individual papers or other units of assessment are aggregated, averaged or profiled to produce an overall result. The Extern Examiner shall be provided with copies of any relevant assessment procedures, guidelines or statutes. The Extern Examiner may require copies of assessment strategies and instruments from previous year. The Extern Examiner shall review and approve major assessment instruments such as end of year exams. However, given the complexity and variety of assessment instruments in use, it is often not practicable for Extern Examiners to approve in advance each and every instrument. The Extern Examiner shall agree with the School/Department (or other academic unit) which other assessment instruments are to be reviewed in advance and which may be reviewed in retrospect.</p> <p>(c) Auditing a sample of graded assessments to confirm standards and to make any relevant recommendations on learning outcomes, assessment and grading practices.</p> <p>The sample of graded assessments audited by the Extern Examiner shall be sufficient to assure all student work that contributes to the overall final assessment is made available on request to Extern Examiners.</p>

(d) Auditing, where appropriate, the distribution of grades for courses or modules.

(e) Advising on enhancements to assessment and grading practices or aspects of course, module or programme development.

(f) Reviewing the content of courses and modules and, where relevant, the subject or programme, to ensure appropriateness and enhance quality.

(g) The Extern Examiner may be invited to participate in practical, clinical or oral assessments and will normally review the assessment of major projects, dissertation or theses.

While the Extern Examiner will not routinely act as a second or additional examiner and will not normally be involved in the assessment of individual students, there are circumstances under which externs may be directly involved in the determination of marks or grades for individual students. These include the examination of major projects, theses or dissertations, or major practical, oral, clinical or professional assessments. Furthermore, the Extern Examiner may, on the basis of their participation in such assessments, or grades for individual students or cohorts of students, recommend the award of particular marks or grades where there is a difference of opinion between internal examiners. Where the Extern Examiner is involved in the assessment of a subset of the student cohort, it is important to ensure that those students are assessed against the same overall standards and criteria as other students. The final decision in relation to the award of marks or grades rests with the Examination Board and Academic Council of the University in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the University.

(h) Extern Examiners must attend at least one year of their initial 3-year term (or 4-year term if extension is granted). Attendance will normally be during the first year with subsequent visits to be decided with the academic unit.

External examiners have the option to visit the university every year (with the agreement of the hosting Academic Unit); this may of relevance for academic units with many/large in-person examinations, programmes/modules which have a strong emphasis on continuous assessment or practical elements such as labs, etc.

In the case of **remote external examining**, the following will apply:

- External examining will be facilitated through videoconferencing and/or through delivery of sample papers to the External Examiner in digital or physical format. Schools or Departments

may, in some cases, arrange for videoconferencing between External Examiners and students. Programme Coordinators should confirm with their External Examiner which format they wish to use, considering efficiency of operations and the maintenance of academic standards. Secure transfer of information is paramount.

- Payments for External Examiners will be processed as usual on receipt of the Examiner Report. Please note, while External Examiners will not be incurring any expenses, External Examiners *must still* complete the [Fee & Expenses Claim Form](#) and submit the same to the relevant Head of Department for approval and processing. Any expenses related fields can be left blank.

- (i) Extern Examiners may engage in discussions with Schools or Departments or key committees within Departments or Schools at any time during their appointment.

- (j) Following completion of the aforementioned activities, the Extern Examiner is required to provide a report on their findings to the University via email to externexaminers@ucc.ie. Reports from Extern Examiners shall be received by the designated officer in the Academic Secretariat who will forward the relevant reports to each Head of School/Department (or other academic unit). The designated officer shall forward the Extern Examiner report to the National University of Ireland and to the relevant Head of College. The Head of School/Department (or other academic unit) is obliged to provide a written response to the Registrar and Senior Vice President Academic and to the Extern Examiner to recommendations arising from the Extern Examiner's Report. The response shall include information on how the School/Department (or other academic unit) intends to progress any issues raised by the Extern Examiner, or why, having reflected on the issues raised, a decision is made not to take any action.

Where the Extern Examiner has significant concerns they may provide a confidential report to the Deputy President and Registrar. The Head of Department/School (or other academic unit) is obliged to provide a response to the Deputy President and Registrar and Extern Examiner in a timely manner indicating what actions if any are being taken in response to the report of the Extern Examiner. The University shall advise the Registrar of the National University of Ireland where such a circumstance arises.