

## External Examiner Procedures

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<b>Purpose</b>	The procedure outlines the role of the External Examiner at the Institute
<b>Policy Author</b>	Office of the Registrar
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Office of Registrar
<b>Intended Audience</b>	Registrar, Heads of Faculty, Heads of Department, External Examiners, Programme Chairs, all academic staff.
<b>Approved by Academic Council</b>	13 November 2023
<b>Commencement Date</b>	November 2023
<b>Related Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Framework</li> <li>• Marks and Standards</li> <li>• Examination Procedures</li> <li>• Equal Opportunities Policy</li> <li>• Mutual Respect Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Related Forms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Examiner Nomination Form</li> <li>• External Examiner Report Form</li> <li>• External Examiner Recommendation Form</li> </ul>

## Document Version History

Previous Version	Revisions Made / Notes	Replaced by
External Examiner Procedures 2008		External Examiner Procedures 2013
External Examiner Procedures 2013		External Examiner Procedures 2016
External Examiner Procedures 2016		External Examiner Procedures 2017
External Examiner Procedures 2017		External Examiner Procedures 2020
External Examiner Procedures 2020		External Examiner Procedures V7, 2021
External Examiner Procedures V7, 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amendment to Appointment Period from 3 years (with possibility of extension for a 4<sup>th</sup> and final year) to, 4 years – as proposed at AC June 2023</li> <li>2. Some updates suggested by SQO to clarify standard procedures, e.g. submission of HR commencement forms.</li> <li>3. Change to process related to claiming expenses (as per Finance Office notified changes)</li> <li>4. Updating Format of document, addition of Document Version History</li> </ol>	External Examiner Procedures, V8.0, September 2023 <b>EEP23 V8.0</b>

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. The external examining system assists the Institute in the comparison and benchmarking of academic standards across awards, ensures that the assessment process is fair and fairly operated in the marking, grading and classification of student performance and provides the Institute with informed and appropriate points for the comparison of academic standards.
- 1.2. Overall responsibility for implementing these procedures is the responsibility of the Registrar, working with the Faculties.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. External Examiners are appointed for all Ab Initio undergraduate and post graduate programmes. Short courses, certificates and programmes of less than 30 credits do not have external examiners appointed. However grades and student performance for these programmes are kept under review by programme boards and by the institute exam boards.

## **3. Nomination**

- 3.1. The responsibility for the selection and management of External Examiners rests with the Head of Faculty (HOF) and/or Head of Department (HOD). Nominations should be approved by the HOF.
- 3.2. The HOD may seek recommendations for nominations through a Faculty/Department board and/or a Programme Board committee
- 3.3. The HOD consults the person proposed for nomination to seek their consent to be nominated. Such consultation shall be without commitment to appointment as External Examiner. The HOD shall ensure that persons considered for nomination satisfy the criteria for appointment. (See External Examiner Nomination form, Appendix 1 and Criteria for Appointment, Appendix 2).
- 3.4. The President and Registrar may also nominate persons to act as External Examiners.
- 3.5. The Faculties submit nominations to Academic Council for persons to act as External Examiners/Assessors.
- 3.6. In line with the Institute's policy on promoting gender equality in the workplace, due cognizance should be taken of the desirability for gender balance when nominating External Examiners.

## **4. Approval**

- 4.1. The Academic Council approves the appointment of persons to act as External Examiners to programmes offered by the Institute, where appropriate. External Examiners are approved for a period of 4 years.

- 4.2. The Academic Council shall ensure that persons appointed to act as External Examiners satisfy the criteria for appointment (see Appendix 2)

## 5. Appointment

- 5.1. Following approval of nominations by the Academic Council of the Institute, the Senior Quality Officer issues a letter of appointment to the External Examiner and information pack, via email which shall include, inter alia:

- External Examiners Procedures documents
- External Examiner report templates
- References to key policies and procedures
- Payment Related Documents
- Contact details for Faculty Administration Offices

The External Examiner will be invited to complete Appointment Acceptance Form via Adobe Sign, incorporating a conflict of interest declaration.

External Examiners will be issued with a HR Commencement Form at a later date, for the processing of applicable HR records and payment of applicable fees, following the submission of completed reports.

The External Examiner shall be appointed for a period of 4 academic years, commencing from the academic year of their approved nomination at Academic Council.

- 5.2. The term of office shall commence on the 1st September each year.
- 5.3. The Registrar's Office shall maintain a register of External Examiners appointments and periods of tenure. The register is circulated to the Faculty Administrator at the commencement of the academic year for review.
- 5.4. Should it be necessary to terminate the contract of appointment, the Head of Faculty/Department shall recommend termination of the contract to the Academic Council for approval detailing the reasons for the proposed termination. The Registrar shall notify in writing an External Examiner whose contract has been terminated.
- 5.5. Following appointment, the External Examiner is directed to additional documentation by the Office of the Registrar, to understand the examination systems operated by the Institute. Such documentation might include:
- External Examiners procedure
  - Quality Framework
  - Marks and Standards
  - Examination Procedures
  - Equal Opportunities Policy
  - Mutual Respect Policy

The above documents are available on the Institute website.

- 5.6. In addition, the faculty office working with the programme team will ensure that the External Examiner is provided with adequate documentation to enable them to carry out the functions of an External Examiner, these may include:

- Programme/module documentation – in particular Learning Outcomes
- Briefing papers, making schemes and sample feedback papers
- Sample student written and project work
- Full list of all grades
- Staff lists
- Draft examination papers, model answers and marking schemes
- Continuous assessment paperwork and marking schemes
- Timetables
- Previous examination papers as appropriate
- Schedule of examinations
- Meetings with award year students may be arranged
- Sample work from previous and progression years

5.7. The Institute may invite the External Examiner to visit the Institute to become familiar with its operations; to discuss their responsibilities as External Examiners and to determine the requirements of the External Examiner. This is particularly important when an External Examiner is being appointed for the first time. The Programme Administration Office coordinate External Examiner visits to the campus.

## **6. Fees**

6.1. External Examiners will normally be paid one specified fee per academic year for the work they undertake. These fees are administered by the Office of the Registrar through the SQO. External Examiners, who are not currently employed by an Irish Public Body may be reimbursed for miscellaneous expenses. Public sector employees should be paid any relevant expenses directly by their Employers and those bodies may invoice IADT to recoup the amounts.

6.2. The above expenses exclude flights/travel and accommodation which are administered by the relevant Faculty Administrative Office.

6.3. All fees and expenses are paid on receipt of the Examiner Report and are subject to statutory deductions. External Examiners are required to share a copy of the completed report with the Senior Quality Officer ([quality@iadt.ie](mailto:quality@iadt.ie)). A register is maintained by the Quality office on the submission of reports.

6.4. On receipt of completed Examiner reports by the Quality Officer, a form for the processing of fees, via Adobe Sign is initiated and sent to the External Examiner, once signed by the Registrar. The External Examiner must complete necessary information, including Bank Details, for the purpose of processing payment via Bank Transfer. Fees will only be paid following submission of a full report.

6.5. On receipt of completed Examiner reports, the Office of the registrar will issue

## **7. Number of External Examiners**

7.1. The Institute shall ensure that sufficient External Examiners are appointed so that it can be satisfied that:

- The standard of its programmes and student performance can be adequately moderated
- The assessment, examination and determination of award processes are being fairly conducted.

7.2. External Examiners may be appointed on a programme basis, or subject/module basis, as determined by the needs of the Institute and approved by Academic Council.

7.3. Where External Examiners are appointed on a programme basis, there shall be a maximum of two External Examiners appointed for each programme.

7.4. When External Examiners are appointed on a module/subject matter basis the number should not exceed the maximum of two examiners per programme.

7.5. Where External Examiners are required to act as a team, the Institute shall ensure that the External Examiners have an opportunity to engage prior to a final Examinations Board meeting.

7.6. It is not a requirement that a subject expert be appointed to cover every aspect of a programme. The emphasis should be on ensuring the programme as a whole is adequately moderated.

## **8. Role of External Examiner**

8.1. External Examiners are appointed by Academic Council to provide external guidance on assessment methods, assessment criteria, draft examination papers and marking schemes, as appropriate. They consider marked examination scripts and other assessment materials, attend internal Examination Board meetings where practical and ensure that the results achieved by candidates are appropriate.

8.2. An External Examiner must declare any circumstances which may constitute a conflict of interest with the Institute in their role as External Examiner.

8.3. External Examiners may attend the Institute at the time of determination of results and/or at such other times as may be determined by the Institute in consultation with the External Examiner for the purpose of assessing the standard of the programme and/or the standard of student performance. The grades agreed by the External Examiner and the Faculty at the internal exam preparation meeting are proposed to the formal Institute Examination Board.

8.4. External Examiners may also be requested to attend a meeting in the Institute or other location for the purposes of:

- Introduction in the case of new appointees
- Discussing issues in relation to External Examiners in the context of Quality Assurance
- Other general matters relating to examinations

8.5. External Examiners are required to use their expert judgement to consider and comment on:

- Standards set for the programme
- Standards achieved by students
- Operation of the assessment processes
- Quality of learning

- The learning and teaching environment
- Action taken on points raised in previous reports
- Organisation and management of the external examining process

- 8.6. External Examiners shall ensure that, during their proposed tenure, all significant elements of the programme(s) with which they are involved have been adequately assessed. It is not necessary that all elements are considered each year. The External Examiner shall pay particular attention to the award years of a programme.
- 8.7. External Examiners shall decide, in consultation with the HOD, in relation to:
- The particular modules, projects, draft examination papers, model answers and marking schemes, they wish to assess prior to the examination.
  - The particular work to assess
  - The nature and content of other material to consider, including programme work, continuous assessment formative feedback, or briefing papers
- 8.8. The HOD shall ensure that such material is provided to the External Examiner when required.
- 8.9. The External Examiner may suggest amendments to draft examination. The Internal Examiner shall take such proposed amendments into account, and shall note action taken, if any, on the appropriate form.
- 8.10. Where a significant dispute occurs between an Internal and External Examiner in relation to an Examination paper, the matter shall be referred to the Registrar, who shall convene a review board. The decision of the Registrar is final.
- 8.11. An Internal Examiner or HOD may request that examination scripts and/or other assessment materials be examined, subject to a reasonable quantity of such material being examined.
- 8.12. Where an External Examiner wishes to discuss items with a candidate, they shall notify the HOD allowing sufficient time for the HOD to advise & prepare the candidate.
- 8.13. External Examiners may visit the Institute or attend virtually at the time of Examination Board meetings. The External Examiner may also visit at other times by arrangement with the Faculty.
- 8.14. There may be circumstances in which an External Examiner is unable to attend the Examinations Board, but has nevertheless visited the Institute's premises, examined the assessment findings, agrees with the recommendations recorded on the draft broadsheet of results, and has completed an External Examiner Recommendation form.
- 8.15. External Examiners shall submit a full report as outlined in section 9. The completed report should be sent electronically to the Senior Quality Officer within 4 weeks of their visit with IADT.

## **9. Examinations Boards**

- 9.1. Meetings of Examination Boards are held for the purpose of deciding individual student results at such times as the Institute may determine.



9.2. The External Examiner may attend the Institute in person or virtually prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, or at such other times as may be agreed by the Institute and the External Examiner, for the purpose of:

- Reviewing the overall performance of candidates, particularly borderline cases
- Reviewing the proposed results for the programme as a whole
- Reviewing module/subject performance with Internal Examiners
- Reviewing marked scripts, project work or continuous assessment material, as required

The HOD shall provide the External Examiner with suitable statistical information, where available, to assist in this process.

9.3. The External Examiner shall indicate on the Module/Subject marks sheet any individual scripts, project work, or continuous assessment material reviewed by them as part of the assessment process, along with any proposed adjustment to the grades as proposed by the Internal Examiner. Efforts should be made to achieve consensus with the Internal Examiner in relation to such proposed amendments.

9.4. Where the External Examiner proposes adjustments to a group of students as a whole, they shall consult with the Internal Examiner and HOD in advance of the meeting of the Examinations Board. Efforts should be made to achieve consensus in relation to such proposed amendments.

The External Examiner can be invited to attend the meeting of the Examinations Board. However, there may be circumstances where an External Examiner is unable to attend the meeting of the board of examiners, but has nevertheless visited the Institute, examined the assessment findings, agrees with the recommendations recorded at the internal (Faculty) exam preparation meeting. In this instance the External Examiner may provide a written report to be read out at the formal examination board meeting.

9.5. The External Examiner may comment on such matters relating to individual student performance module/subject performance, or programme performance as they deem necessary. The Examinations Board shall give due consideration to such comments. The External Examiner should not refer to individual students by name within their final written report.

9.6. The External Examiner may request to have their dissenting opinion on any matter recorded on the Broadsheet.

## 10. Reporting Arrangements

10.1. External Examiners complete the **External Examiner Recommendation form** during their visit to the institute and deliver the signed form to the HOD or nominee.

Post their visit to the institute the External Examiner will complete the relevant **External Examiner Report** and return this to the Office of the Registrar via the Senior Quality Officer. The timing of these reports will vary according to the type of programme as follows:

- **Undergraduate Programmes**

The External Examiner must provide a report to the Registrar or nominee within four weeks of their visit to IADT or at latest mid-July. The report will be completed on the External Examiner Report form.

- **Postgraduate**

The report will be completed on the External Examiner Report form and returned to the Registrar or nominee within four weeks of their visit to IADT.

The visit to the institute will occur prior to the end of stage Exam Board. The External Examiner may also visit at other times by arrangement with the Faculty.

- 10.2. External Examiner Reports are sent to the Registrar's Office via the Senior Quality Officer. When the reports are received the Senior Quality Officer shall provide a copy of the External Examiners report to the relevant HOD and Faculty Administrator, and file the reports on an agreed shared file location..
- 10.3. The completed External Examiner's report form will be considered by the Programme Board at the commencement of the subsequent academic year or term. Any action taken as a result of the External Examiner's report shall be noted in the Programme Board report.
- 10.4. The Faculties will submit their Programme Board reports to Academic Council on an annual basis in November. The reports will note any changes made to a programme as a result of External Examiners' recommendations.

#### **Additional Reports**

- 10.5. On completion of their term of office the External Examiner is invited to submit a final report.
- 10.6. The External Examiner may, in exceptional circumstances, submit a separate written report to the Registrar on such other matters as they deem appropriate, and may request that such matters be treated on a confidential basis.

## **11. External Examiners for Master by Research Degrees**

### **11.1. The Award of Masters by Research**

General regulations regarding the awarding of Masters by Research Degrees are covered by the Procedures and Guidelines for Research Degrees available on the IADT website.

### **11.2. Appointment of Examiners**

Two examiners, one internal and one external shall be appointed to examine the work of Masters by Research students.

The Internal and External Examiners will be nominated by the supervisor of the student with the agreement of the relevant Head of Department.

In the case of the external examiner the general guidelines as outlined in this procedure will apply. The names and CVs of External Examiners will be presented to Academic Council by the relevant Head of Department for approval in advance of the appointment.

### 11.3. Reporting Arrangements

Having completed the review of the student thesis the External Examiner and Internal Examiner complete the “PG7 Form: External, Internal Examiners’ Report Form” and return to the Faculty Administrator who will forward to the Registrar.

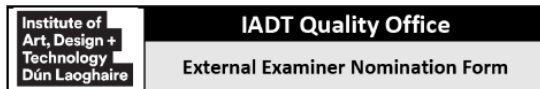
## APPENDIX 1: EXTERNAL EXAMINER NOMINATION FORM

A revised online Nomination Form, using the Adobe Sign secure forms, was implemented in Academic Year 2022-23 to streamline the nomination process internally. Two forms are configured, one for each faculty, facilitating the workflow of nomination and approval within each Faculty.

Links to the Forms are available online from the Quality Forms Page on the IADT Website:

<https://iadt.ie/about/iadt-policies-procedures/quality-assurance-forms/>

Sample Screenshot of revised Nomination Form



- Please refer to External Examiner Procedures available on the IADT Website for more information and guidelines.
- The term of office shall normally be for a period of three years. In exceptional circumstances, the appointment may be extended by one further year. Academic Council must approve prior to the proposed extension taking effect.

Part 1 - EXTERNAL EXAMINER NOMINEE INFORMATION	
Name of Nominee	*
Nominees Email	*
Place of Work	*
Academic Qualifications	*
Professional Expertise	*
Areas of Specialisation	*
Summary of Relevant Experience	*
Current/former	

## ***Guidelines for Nomination of External Examiners***

### **External Examiners must have:**

- Academic qualifications and/or professional expertise appropriate to the programme being examined
- At least 3 years of relevant industrial, commercial or academic experience
- An ability to devote time to their role
- An ability to arbitrate on or adjudicate on problem cases
- An ability to respond quickly to requests for comments on exam papers and production of final reports within time deadlines

### **Ideally External Examiners should have:**

- Experience of lecturing or working with graduates from those or similar programmes for which they are externs
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Relevant lecturing or exam-setting experience
- Course design experience
- A willingness to comment and give advice on assessment methods in use
- A willingness to discuss with Institute staff how courses/modules might be improved

## APPENDIX 2: IADT EXTERNAL EXAMINER CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT

### External Examiners should satisfy the following criteria:

1. Their academic/professional qualifications should be appropriate to the award being examined, with both level and the subject(s) of those awards generally matching those to be examined. They should be able to command respect which may be demonstrated through academic expertise and/or professional achievement.
2. They will have expertise and experience in assessment at the appropriate level. If the nominee has no previous external examining experience, s/he will be expected to have extensive internal examining or other relevant experience. Externals with limited experience will initially only be required to act as one of a panel of External Examiners on a programme of study.
3. In order to ensure impartiality, they will normally not have had close involvement with the Institute during the last three years. For example, as a member of staff, a member of the Governing Body, a student, or an External Examiner on a related programme in the Institute. They will not be personally associated with the sponsorship of students, involved in assessing colleagues who may be examined by the examination board, or involved closely with student placement. Any potential conflict of interest must be declared.
4. Any requirements laid down by relevant professional or statutory bodies.
5. Normally, there will not be any reciprocal external examining relationship between the Faculty concerned and the proposed External Examiner/Assessor's department.
6. A new External Examiner should normally not be from the same institution as the outgoing External Examiner/Assessor.
7. An External Examiner normally should hold no more than two concurrent substantive external examinerships, including the one at IADT, without the prior agreement of IADT. It is essential that External Examiners are able to devote sufficient time to their duties.
8. External Examiners may be appointed from outside higher education, particularly for vocational or professional awards, but only as part of a team which includes with extensive experience in higher education. Nominees who have recently retired may be appointed where appropriate but consideration will need to be given to the means by which they will retain the currently of their experience.