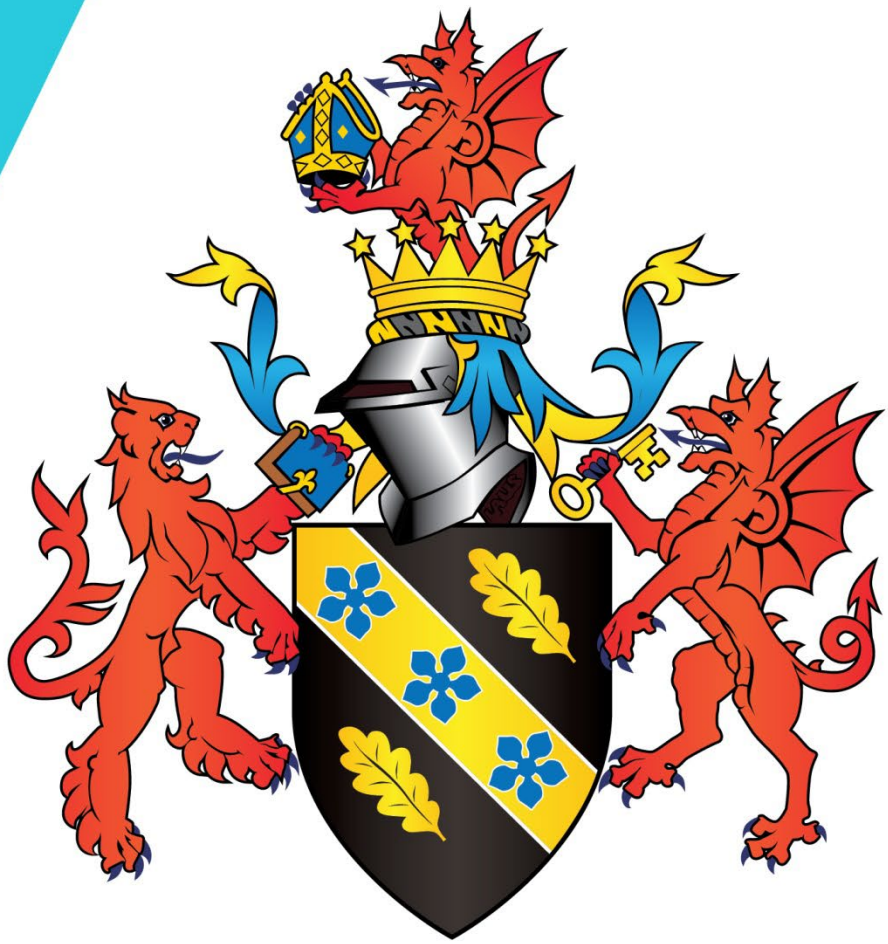
Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David



External Expertise Protocol

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1 External Expertise Protocol

1.1 Introduction

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) utilises the knowledge and experience of external experts for a range of purposes, such as External Examiners, External Advisers and other External Representatives. This protocol is intended to set out the University's approach to appointment criteria and processes together with the expectations for external experts. This protocol has been developed using the QAA UK Quality Code – Advice and Guidance: External Expertise

1.2 Sources of external expertise

The QAA UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance: External Expertise describes a variety of sources which a provider can access for external expertise, as per the extract below.

External examiners: *Degree-awarding bodies engage external examiners to provide impartial and independent advice, as well as informative comment on the degree-awarding body's standards and on student achievement in relation to those standards. External examiners confirm that the provider consistently and fairly implements their own policies and procedures to ensure the integrity and rigour of assessment practices. They also comment on the quality and standards of the courses in relation to the national standards and frameworks and comment on the reasonable comparability of standards achieved at other UK providers with whom the examiner has experience. External examiners also comment on good practice, and make recommendations for enhancement.*

External examiners will have sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers, and where appropriate, professional peers. External examiners do not contribute to delivery through teaching or any other direct capacity.

For further information regarding External Examiners, see **Section 2 Introduction to External Examining at UWTSD**

External advisers: *Used to provide academic and professional expertise during the development and validation of new courses and at other relevant times. They can be called upon to provide academic, professional and industry/employer/business expertise to inform course design and to contribute to lecturing or teaching at the provider or in a professional setting, for example, workplace supervisors/ mentors for education, nursing, apprenticeships, and students on placement.*

For further information regarding External Advisers see **Section 3 Introduction to External Advisers at UWTSD**

End Point Assessors: *End-point assessment is an independent assessment that takes place at the end of the apprenticeship training for apprenticeships in England. An End Point Assessment ensures that an apprentice has completed the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the relevant Apprenticeship Standard. Apprentices must complete an End Point Assessment where it is included in the Apprenticeship Standard or Apprenticeship Framework. There are a variety of assessment methods to test apprentices' competency. The assessments are undertaken by an independent End Point Assessor.*

For further information regarding End Point Assessment see **Section 4 Introduction to End Point Assessors at UWTSD**

External Representatives: *The University utilises the knowledge and experience of a range of External Representatives to provide externality to various processes. This includes having an External Representative at the Academic Quality and Standards Committee's Annual Monitoring meeting to provide expert input into the evaluation and review of the quality assurance procedures. External representatives are also appointed to panels that undertake collaborative partner approval and review processes. In addition, where the same programme is delivered in a number of different locations or modes of delivery and it is logistically not possible to employ the same external examiner across the programme, (e.g. because of the scale of the provision), the Academic Quality and Standards Committee will determine an appropriate review mechanism to ensure the consistency of quality, standards and achievements across the programme; this mechanism will include externality. There is an expectation that such External Representatives will be senior academics or managers with experience of quality assurance management.*

The University also uses other forms of externality (as per the following descriptors provided by the QAA) on an informal basis, for which the engagement is led by the Institutes.

- ***Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs)***
  PSRBs are a varied group of bodies, regulators and those with statutory authority over a profession or group of professionals. PSRBs may provide membership services and accredit or approve courses as confirmation that the courses meet their standards and expectations. PSRBs are recognised by employers; achievement of a PSRB-recognised course can be an essential requirement for entry to a particular role or occupation.

  Within the University, the main contact with PSRBs is at Institute level. However, the University maintains central oversight of the involvement of PSRBs in programmes via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC). AQSC receives regular updates from the Institutes of their PSRB Registers, which provide details of accredited programmes, dates of accreditation, together with details of accreditation standards/handbooks.

  Where necessary, validation processes may be modified to reflect the requirements of the relevant PSRBs (see Academic Quality Handbook, Section 4.5.1). The Academic Office and Institutes liaise to ensure that PSRBs are kept informed of any modifications to programmes, as applicable.

- ***Employers and other external stakeholders***
  Providers are encouraged to engage with employers and other external stakeholders at all stages of course design, approval and review in order to ensure that their courses continue to be relevant and fit for purpose in line with employer needs. There may be mandatory external requirements to involve employers and other external stakeholders in course design, approval and review; providers need to ensure they meet all relevant requirements for external input into their courses. There may be specific groups with whom education providers are required to engage, for example, user groups for courses in, and related to, health and employers for apprenticeships.

  Within the University's course design and approval framework, all Programme Teams are required to reflect upon employment and employability embedded in the programme in Appendix PV2a Narrative Document.

- ***Guest speakers and visiting academics***
  Providers can promote a wider engagement with guest speakers and visiting academics to support and enhance the overall student learning experience. This type of external expertise can provide students and staff with first-hand experience in a specialist area and facilitate students' motivation. It can also help to promote opportunities for networking, and improve community relations and connections between the higher education sector, industry and businesses.

  Guest Speakers and visiting academics are used across a range of programmes to enhance opportunities for students and to support the student experience.

- ***Students and alumni***
  Students and alumni from similar, and different, courses can provide useful input to course development, evaluation and review. They can also be invited to meet with applicants and new students to share their experiences and manage expectations. (See Student Engagement Theme for information on how students can be engaged, as partners, in their courses and other quality activities).

  Within the University's course design and approval framework, students are encouraged to play an active part in programme design. All Programme Teams are required to reflect on how they have worked together with students in partnership in relation to the design of the programme in Appendix PV2a Narrative Document.

2 Introduction to External Examining at UWTSD

2.1 Introduction

Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for the quality of their educational programmes and the standard of the awards to which they lead, and the external examiner system within UK higher education is one of the principal means for assuring both. External examiners are expert assessors whose authority is derived from their knowledge of, and qualifications in, their subject disciplines and their experience of conducting assessment at higher education level. The external examiner is also an independent assessor whose judgement will not be compromised by any prior association with the programme team or by a reciprocal arrangement with their home institution.

External examiners are engaged by the University and provide informative comment and recommendations on:

- Whether the University is maintaining the academic standards it has set for its awards in relation to national threshold standards defined by the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and subject benchmark statements[1] and UWTSD's own Academic Regulations[2].
- Comparability of academic standards and student achievement with other UK higher education providers.
- The rigour, equity and fairness of assessment of intended learning outcomes[3].
- The quality of summative written feedback to students.
- The conduct and transparency of assessment processes including internal moderation and the operation of assessment boards.
- Evidence of good practice and innovation in learning, teaching and assessment and opportunities to enhance the quality of learning opportunities provided to students.

Examiners produce a report on the programme/modules to which they have been assigned that year and attend the relevant assessment boards where access to complete student profiles enables them to confirm standards at qualification award level.

This document is designed for use by approved UWTSD external examiners and the University's Institutes and partners. It is important to note that this is a guide to the work an external examiner will be required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances.

2.2 Allocation and changes to coverage of academic provision

External examiners are allocated to all modules that contribute to the calculation of the award. External examiners may also be asked to consider other modules under certain circumstances (see 2.3.20 (3) (x)). With the exception of dissertation, project and 'shell' modules where a range of subject expertise may be required, no module is normally allocated more than one examiner except where the number of students makes sampling too large for a single examiner and in such cases, examiners work together to ensure parity and consistency in moderation. Changes to the diet of modules covered by external examiners during their term of engagement are negotiated with them. A single programme

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
[2] https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/
[3] Academic standards are set at validation through the approval of Intended Learning Outcomes at module and programme level.

delivered across multiple sites, e.g. by collaborative partner organisations, is normally assigned the same examiner.

2.3 External Examiners

2.3.1 Purposes of External Examiner

(1) The principal purposes of the University's external examiner system are to ensure that:

- the standard of each award is maintained at the appropriate level;
- the standards of student performance are comparable with standards on similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which they are familiar;
- the processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted.

(2) The University will engage at least one module external examiner for all taught provision which leads to an award of the University. In addition, where necessary, the University will engage a procedural external examiner for each Examining Board (see 2.3.9 (2)). In exceptional circumstances, where the Senate acts in the capacity of an Examining Board, a Senate External Examiner may be appointed.

(3) The University recognises the importance and mutual benefit of the work undertaken by its own staff as external examiners for other institutions and where possible will approve requests from staff to undertake external examining duties at other institutions. External examining duties can be included on Academic Activity Profiles. The University is currently looking at opportunities for staff performing the role elsewhere to exchange good practice and learning.

2.3.2 Role of Module External Examiner

(1) The University expects a module external examiner to:

(i) Assist the University in the comparison of academic standards across Higher Education awards, including those offered in collaborative partnerships, and verify that standards are appropriate for all modules for which the module external examiner is responsible, providing advice and guidance on any changes which they consider necessary at a module or programme level.

(ii) Approve and, if necessary, suggest amendments to draft examination papers, coursework and practical assessment tasks and the associated assessment criteria prepared by internal examiners for all assessments in modules which contribute to a final award (and in some cases, approve assessments which do not contribute to the final award).

(iii) Review, evaluate and moderate the marking of assessment in modules which contribute to a final award (and in some cases, moderate the marking of assessments which do not contribute to the final award).

(iv) Provide an independent view of the operation and effectiveness of each module they have been appointed to scrutinise and thereby on any programme to which the modules contribute.

(v) View a sample of students' assessed work from all levels of performance that contribute towards an award to ensure that the internal marking has properly assessed student performance against the appropriate standards.

(vi) Provide feedback to management on the performance of students in comparison to their peers on comparable modules and programmes elsewhere.

(vii) Be a member of, and contribute to (in person at Examining Board meetings – whether virtual or face-to-face - or in the liaison with the Programme Team prior to the Board), appropriate Examining Boards to ensure fairness and consistency in the decision-making process, and to ensure that the assessment process is in accordance with the University's academic regulations.

(viii) Ensure that the assessment process is fair and equitable in the marking, grading and classification of student performance and endorse the outcomes of the assessment processes that they have been engaged to scrutinise.

(ix) Present written reports to the University that include commentary and judgements on the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student attainment.

(x) Work as appropriate with other module external examiners engaged by the University.

2.3.3 Nomination, Selection and Engagement of Module External Examiners

(1) Nominations of module external examiners are made using the Module External Examiner Nomination Form (Appendix GA2). The Head of Quality is responsible for considering all nominations on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee which makes decisions on the engagement of module external examiners on behalf of the Senate. The Academic Quality and Standards Committee also undertakes an overview of External Examiner appointments in relation to matters such as vacant appointments.

2.3.4 Person specification

(1) Module external examiners must show appropriate evidence of the following:

(i) have a high degree of competence and experience in the fields covered by the course of study, or parts thereof, and have a good understanding of the UK higher education sector, including relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and the Quality Code;

(ii) are normally qualified to an equivalent or higher level than the level of the award and are appropriately experienced in course design and student assessment at the level of the award;

(iii) have the necessary academic experience and subject knowledge to assess standards in an effective manner, identify good practice and recommend enhancements to enable informed course development;

(iv) are experienced in acting as an external examiner or are supported by the provider in undertaking their duties, for example, through training and mentoring;

(v) are impartial in judgement and wholly independent of the provider and its staff (including the governing body), and any relevant partners;

(vi) do not personally benefit from any student outcomes, nor have any connection to any student being assessed;

(vii) have had sufficient experience in quality assurance to enable them to discharge their role effectively;

(viii) are drawn from a relevant variety of institutional or professional contexts and traditions in order that the course benefits from wide-ranging external scrutiny;

(ix) comply with all relevant employment legislation, including safeguarding, as appropriate;

(x) are fluent in English, and where programmes are also delivered and assessed in Welsh, fluent in Welsh. In the event that it is not possible to engage an individual fluent in Welsh with sufficient knowledge and experience to satisfy the requirements of the module external examiner role, the University shall endeavour to engage an associate external examiner who is fluent in Welsh to work alongside a non-Welsh speaking module external examiner who meets the other criteria. (See 2.3.4 (2) below for programmes delivered in a language other than English or Welsh for collaborative partners);

(xi) normally hold a limited number of concurrent external examining engagements (for example either one or two).

(2) For programmes delivered in a language other than English or Welsh for collaborative partners, where possible the University will engage bilingual external examiners who are able to work easily in the language concerned and examine samples of work in the original language. Where this is not possible the collaborative partners will either provide translated materials/interpretation to external examiners or the University will engage a second external examiner who is able to work in the language concerned but may not have the same level of subject expertise. Where assignments and examination papers are prepared in a language other than English, these should be translated into English by the collaborative partner. The original versions should be sent with the translations to the external examiner. The collaborative partner is expected to facilitate visits by external examiners, where required, by providing translation/interpreting services. However, the University may wish to engage its own translation/interpreting services.

(3) Not every module external examiner will necessarily meet all the criteria. Where an individual does not meet all the criteria, the nomination will be carefully considered by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, and the engagement will only be approved where appropriate arrangements for providing support to the individual are put in place. Support arrangements may include the engagement of a team of external examiners (so that all the above criteria are met across the team), use of another experienced module external examiner to act as a mentor (particularly for individuals who are new to external examining) or the appointment of an internal mentor. Where internal mentors are appointed, they must not be associated with the programme for which the external examiner is responsible. Institutes are required to submit an end of year mentoring report to the Quality Team, Academic Services for monitoring purposes. An overview report will be presented to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee annually. See Appendix GA37 (published on the Academic Office webpages) for further guidance regarding mentoring.

2.3.5 **Conflicts of interest and impartiality**

(1) The University requires that module external examiners should be able to exercise impartial judgement and requires that they should not therefore have any potential conflicts of interest (either professional or personal) which might compromise objectivity.

(2) To avoid potential conflicts of interest an individual shall not be engaged as a module external examiner if:

(i) they are a member of the governing body or of one of the committees of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or an institution in a strategic alliance with the University, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or an institution in a strategic alliance with the University;

(ii) they have a current or very recent (within the last year) close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme or with a student currently on the programme (a close relationship is one where there is a degree of relationship beyond intermittent association; examples of a professional relationship are: co-authorship of publication, co-investigator on project, joint supervision of research student, graduate advisee/advisor relationship - including former research degree supervisor where such supervision ended less than three years previously; an example of a contractual relationship is co-owner of outside business interest; examples of a personal relationship are: family relationship - by marriage or blood, current or former intimate relationship - including marital, sexual, romantic, emotional, close friendship/social relationship, personal animosity);

(iii) they are required to act as module external examiner for member(s) of staff at their own organisation who are students on the programme of study;

(iv) they are, or know they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study due to any position they may hold other than as module external examiner at the University;

(v) they are significantly involved in recent (within the last 5 years) or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question;

(vi) they are a former member of staff or student of the University unless a period of 5 years has elapsed and all students taught by or with them have completed their programme(s);

(vii) their engagement would create a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at their institution (in this respect the Quality Team, Academic Services requests lists of University staff working as External Examiners elsewhere annually, in order to check for potential conflicts of interest or reciprocal arrangements);

(viii) they are employed in the same department and institution as their immediate predecessor(s);

(ix) they are in a close relationship (see definition in 2.3.5 (2) (ii) above) with their immediate predecessor(s);

(x) their engagement would result in more than one module external examiner from the same department of the same institution (where "department" should not be seen as directly corresponding to a particular term within a particular institution's academic structure, but with the relevant subject area. However, in making this distinction, consideration must also be given to the size of each subject area within the other institution's academic structure);

(xi) their engagement would result in them holding external examiner appointments for taught programmes at more than two institutions in total;

(xii) they have been involved in the development of modules or the programmes which those modules contribute to as an external consultant;

(xiii) they have acted as an external adviser within the last five years for the validation process which approved a programme to which the modules contribute (although in certain circumstances, where it can be shown that there is demonstrably no risk to the individual's ability to provide a fully independent perspective, such an individual may be engaged);

(xiv) they have previously acted as an external examiner for the University, unless there are exceptional circumstances and the previous engagement ended no less than 5 years ago.

(3) Institutes should also bear in mind potential conflicts of interest relating to engaging external examiners from competing institutions.

(4) Where there are changes in the circumstances of a module external examiner or where circumstances which were previously unknown become known which may lead to conflicts of interest, or a possible detrimental effect upon the integrity of the programme being examined or the reputation of the University, the Institute/collaborative partners should notify the Quality Team, Academic Services as soon as possible. The Quality Team will consider the circumstances and advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, so that it can make a decision on the individual's suitability to continue as a module external examiner.

(5) Examiners are required to alert the University to any changes to their employment status, PSRB (professional, statutory or regulatory body) registration or contact details as soon as possible by contacting the Quality Team, Academic Services (AOexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk).

2.3.6 **Duration of engagement**

(1) Module external examiners shall normally be engaged for a period of 4 years, with the possibility of extending the tenure for a further year where an exceptional case can be made that satisfies the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Normally, further extensions are not permitted other than in exceptional cases e.g. during the last year of teach-out of a programme.

(2) New module external examiners should be nominated and approved before the end of the tenure of their predecessors. Module external examiners should remain available at the end of their tenure after the last assessments with which they are to be associated in order to deal with any subsequent reviews of decisions.

2.3.7 Termination of Module External Examiner engagement

(1) The contribution of the module external examiner to all stages of the assessment process is a crucial element of the University's quality assurance processes. It is sometimes the case that, for a variety of reasons, a module external examiner finds that they are unable to provide the commitment necessary to fulfil the requirements of the role. In the event that a module external examiner is unable to fulfil the requirements of the role, the module external examiner should give the University notice of 3 months to allow a new module external examiner to be identified and engaged. It is recognised that this may not always be possible e.g. in the case of a sudden illness.

(2) An external examiner may request to temporarily cease their engagement, for a period of no more than one academic year, for example due to illness or maternity leave. In these circumstances, another External Examiner will be sought to temporarily cover the absence. The period of temporary absence will not be included in the four-year duration of the engagement. The External Examiner should liaise with the Quality Team, Academic Services and the relevant Academic Discipline/Institute to agree the period of absence. The temporary cessation of engagement and replacement must be approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee – this may involve extending the duties of another suitable, existing External Examiner. In the event of a sudden absence, and because of the importance of obtaining externality in assessment processes, the Quality Team, Academic Services may agree to relax the engagement criteria slightly for the temporary engagement e.g. by allowing a former examiner to be appointed who completed their duties less than 5 years previously, or allowing an examiner to hold more than two concurrent engagements.

(3) Exceptionally, if there is insufficient time to engage a replacement External Examiner, the Programme Team should arrange for the appointment of a senior member of academic or teaching staff (who may be from another cognate department) with previous experience of having been an external elsewhere, to act as an additional internal examiner for the modules affected by the External Examiner's absence, to scrutinise the accuracy of marking on students work and exam scripts. This should not be the Chair of the Board and there must not be any conflict of interest e.g. being previously involved in the assessment process, or being involved in assessing the work of a family member. This process must only be used in exceptional circumstances and must be agreed by the Dean of Institute or nominee, and approved by the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. In addition, a justification of the appointment should be provided in respect of the appointee's expertise and experience as part of the Board's written assurances to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on the additional steps taken to uphold the integrity of the assessment process.

(4) Rarely, the University, an Academic Director or Programme Manager may consider the actions, conduct, requirements or reporting of a module external examiner to be unreasonable, unfair, not in line with the requirements for external examining, expectations associated with the role and position of an external examiner, or contrary to the regulations of the University. In such cases the Academic Director or Programme Manager may refer such concerns to the relevant Dean of Institute in writing. The Dean should then review the matter and make every effort to resolve the concerns in consultation with the module external examiner, the Academic Director and the

Programme Manager. The Dean of Institute may also seek advice from the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(5) The University also reserves the right to terminate a module external examiner engagement at any time:

(i) if a conflict of interest arises that cannot be satisfactorily resolved;

(ii) failure by the individual to disclose a relationship, contractual or otherwise, which may impair the integrity of the examination process and their own independence as external examiner;

(iii) persistent failure to engage without good cause e.g. persistent failure to respond to correspondence and requests to approve or return documentation, failure to attend meetings and/or present the required reports by the stated deadline without prior agreement, and/or the submission of identical reports and/or failure to return students' work following moderation;

(iv) persistent and deliberate failure to use the relevant national academic and/or professional benchmarks to support judgements on academic standards and UWTSD students' attainment of them;

(v) suspension or dismissal by the individual's main employer for improper conduct in relation to their employment which may impair the integrity of the examination process or their standing as an external examiner;

(vi) improper conduct during visits undertaken to the University (including any partner locations);

(vii) for professional programmes, failure to maintain professional body membership or professional registration where this is a requirement of being an examiner or disbarment from professional practice which may impair the integrity of the examination process or the individual's standing as an external examiner;

(viii) the examiner commits a breach of confidentiality with regard to personal information of students;

(ix) the modules or award(s) to which the examiner is engaged are withdrawn or suspended.

(6) Should it become evident that concerns, which have been raised cannot be resolved, then the matter shall be referred by the Quality Team, Academic Services to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) who may make a recommendation to the Senate that the module external examiner's engagement should be brought to an end.

2.3.8 **Induction and annual briefing**

(1) All new module external examiners shall be required to attend a University induction session (normally conducted via webinar) for module external examiners which clearly outlines the University's regulatory framework and assessment procedures, how these link to the national expectations as stipulated in the QAA UK Quality Code, and highlights the crucial value of the critical approach of external examiners to the University. This will ensure that new module external examiners are fully aware of all relevant information relating to their role. Module external examiners should be aware that they are part of the broader organisational system of quality assurance. All other module external examiners shall receive a written University briefing annually to update them on any

modifications to the University's regulations and procedures and other relevant issues. Existing external examiners will also be offered the opportunity to participate in the webinar as a refresher or to view the webinar video which will be published on the Academic Office webpages for External Examiners.

(2) All new module external examiners shall be provided with information on the modules for which they are responsible and shall receive a briefing from the Academic Director and/or Programme Manager. All other module external examiners shall be provided with information on the modules for which they are responsible annually and shall be informed of any modifications to these programmes and modules.

2.3.9 **Attendance/Visits**

(1) For UWTSD programmes, examiners normally visit (which may be an online engagement instead of a face-to-face visit) the University at least once a year to attend the examining board or to meet with the programme team and students, although further mid-year visits may be required for programmes with a performance, practical or professional element or for cohorts with variable/multiple or non-standard completion times (additional visits must be identified and approved during the nomination process). Additional physical visits to any University campus must be identified and authorised in advance as part of the external examiner engagement process.

(2) For Collaborative Partnership programmes, all module external examiners are required to attend a meeting with the programme team once during the academic year, normally electronically. Module external examiners for Collaborative Partnership programmes are not expected to visit the partner institution in person, unless this is essential due to the nature of the assessment work (e.g. such as attending exhibitions or performances) and has been agreed as part of the nomination process. The meeting may coincide with the date of the Examining Board or be undertaken at a mutually convenient date. If physical visits to the partner are required, the number of physical visits, the purpose and intended location of the visit must be included on the nomination form and must be confirmed by the Collaborative Partnerships Office before the nomination is submitted for approval.

(3) Module examiners contribute to Examining Boards and must be invited to attend the Examining Boards. Currently, most Examining Boards for University programmes are held online, and all Examining Boards for collaborative partners are held online; therefore, attendance at an Examining Board would normally be online. However, if it is not possible for module examiners to attend, the University will engage a Procedural External Examiner to represent module examiners at Examining Boards to ensure the rigour of the process underpinning the conferment of awards. It is possible for a Module External Examiner to undertake the role of a Procedural External Examiner without undergoing a separate nomination and approval process.

(4) External examiners of practice-based programmes, typically in Initial Teacher Education, may be required to visit placement settings (schools) to meet with students and mentors. Otherwise, there is no general expectation that examiners will meet with students although they may do so on request. Institutes will determine the arrangements by which examiners may engage directly with students, and ensure that examiners are aware of them.

2.3.10 Data Protection, Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreements

(1) It is expected that external examiners will observe the University's Data Protection Policy. Any information passed between UWTSD and external examiners, e.g. student grades, must remain confidential.

(2) Occasionally, External Examiners may have sight of certain confidential information included in assessments/presentations submitted by students. The External Examiner may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement/non-disclosure agreement (NDA) where the University has such an agreement with the company or provider.

(3) External Examiners will be reasonably expected to sign these agreements, and this will not affect their ability to make reports to any relevant regulatory body as may be required during the performance of their duties.

2.3.11 Information Management

(1) Respect for the privacy and security of examiners' data is of great importance to the Quality Team, Academic Services and UWTSD. All personal data is held and processed in accordance with the current and changing Data Protection legislation and in accordance with UWTSD's Records Retention Schedule.

2.3.12 Accessibility

(1) If an examiner has a disability or health condition, the University has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that the examiner can carry out their external examiner duties. External examiners should advise the Quality Team, Academic Services or their departmental contact if they require any assistance.

2.3.13 Module External Examiner's Report

(1) Each module external examiner is required to complete an annual report on the Module External Examiner's Report online pro-forma (Appendix GA3), normally by 31 July or for programmes that do not follow the traditional academic year, within a maximum of 2 months from the relevant Examining Board or completion of their external examining duties for the year, and return it to the Quality Team, Academic Services electronically. A separate report has to be completed for each engagement.

(2) A module external examiner is not restricted to the suggested areas and can comment on any appropriate matter. Constructive suggestions for future action and enhancement are particularly helpful, and a list of the main issues on which the University would welcome feedback is also provided on the pro-forma.

2.3.14 Content of the Report

(1) The primary role of the Module External Examiner's Report is to provide independent assurance of the academic standards and quality of the student's learning experience for the provision for which they are engaged to scrutinise. Other key purposes of the report are to enable the University to judge whether modules are meeting their stated aims and outcomes in order to contribute to the achievement of Level and Programme

Learning Outcomes and to provide guidance on any necessary improvements, either immediately or at the next review of the programme(s).

(2) Names of all students and staff must be omitted from reports, to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

(3) The report should provide clear and informative feedback to the University on whether or not:

- the University is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for Higher Education qualifications and applicable subject and other benchmark statements;
- equality, diversity, and inclusion aspects within the subject benchmark are incorporated into the curriculum, assessment and programme material[4]
- the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the modules and programme(s) and is conducted in line with the University's policies and regulations;
- the academic standards and the achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK Higher Education Institutions of which the module external examiner has experience.

(4) The report should also provide informative comment and recommendations on:

- good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment observed by the module external examiner;
- opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.

(5) In addition, in the report the module external examiner should:

- confirm that sufficient timely evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled (where evidence was insufficient, they give details);
- state whether issues raised in the previous report(s) have been, or are being, addressed to their satisfaction;
- address any issues as specifically required by any relevant professional body;
- give an overview of their term of office (when concluded).

(6) Where programmes are delivered at more than one site, e.g. at different UWTSD campuses, examiners should differentiate these explicitly to identify issues or good practice pertaining to the specific instance of delivery.

(7) Where programmes are delivered by UWTSD and/or by more than one collaborative partner organisation, examiners are required to submit a separate report for each partner.

[4] QAA Subject Benchmark Statements include sections on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). If external examiners require further advice on EDI in Higher Education, AdvanceHE provide guidance on creating an inclusive curriculum and EDI. The QAA provide advice on Creating Inclusive Subject Communities. The University's External Examiner Induction process also signposts new External Examiners to the University's approach to EDI.

(8) All module external examiner reports must be submitted by the deadline of 31 July, or for programmes that do not follow the traditional academic year, within a maximum of 2 months from the relevant Examining Board or completion of their external examining duties for the year. Failure to submit a report within this timescale is considered a breach of the agreed terms of the engagement of the module external examiner and may lead to a termination of the module external examiner's tenure (see Section 2.3.7).

2.3.15 Procedures for Reporting Serious Concerns

(1) A module external examiner has the authority to report directly to the Vice-Chancellor where there is concern about standards and performance, particularly if it is considered that assessments are being conducted in a way that jeopardises either the fair treatment of students or the standards of the awards.

(2) Where a module external examiner has a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of a programme or programmes and has exhausted all applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, they may invoke QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body.

2.3.16 Responding to Module External Examiner's Report

(1) Each Module External Examiner's Report is considered in detail at different levels within the institution. Upon receipt of a report, copies are distributed to Academic Directors, Programme Managers, Deans of Institute, Assistant Deans and the Head of Quality, and, where applicable, the Head of Collaborative Partnerships (Operations). Following consideration at Academic Discipline level, Academic Directors and Programme Managers are required to ensure preparation of the Academic Discipline's response to any issues raised in consultation with the Programme Team (Appendix PV11c[5]); this response may also include issues identified for action at Institute and central University level. For collaborative partner programmes, the partner prepares the response. The module external examiner should be provided with a copy of the response and informed of all actions to be taken in response to the recommendations that are made; a copy of the response and correspondence is forwarded to the Quality Team, Academic Services. The reports, together with the response are formally discussed during the Annual Review of each Programme of Study.

(2) In the event that an external examiner has raised issues of significant concern e.g. a concern about standards, or a concern that significant issues raised in the previous report have not been addressed, the Head of Quality will request a written response from the relevant Dean of Institute, which will be sent to the external examiner in addition to the PV11c response. For collaborative partner programmes, the partner and the Collaborative Partnerships Office will be involved in preparing the response.

(3) Deans or their nominees are responsible for scrutinising all module external examiner reports and for reporting any significant issues that require an urgent response to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) or nominee. Annual overview reports are prepared centrally

[5] Note that a pilot is being undertaken in 2026/27 by two Institutes/Faculties to only provide PV11c responses where the GA3 report has identified recommendations/matters to address, or where the GA3 report is for a programme covered by a PSRB.

for the Academic Quality and Standards Committee's Annual Monitoring meeting, summarising the findings of all the module external examiners' reports and identifying themes and issues that require an institutional response. An overview report is prepared for external examiner reports for UWTSD programmes. In addition, a separate overview report is prepared for external examiner reports for collaborative partner programmes. The reports, together with the Academic Quality and Standards Committee's recommendations for actions at an institutional level in response to issues raised, are then presented to the Senate for approval of the recommendations.

(4) Copies of the annual overview report for UWTSD programmes and the recommendations for action are circulated to all module external examiners.

2.3.17 **Information for students about external examiners**

(1) Students are informed, via Programme of Study Handbooks, of the name, position and home institution of their external examiners but are advised that entering into direct correspondence with examiners is in all circumstances prohibited. If students do make contact, the examiner is advised to redirect this immediately to their departmental contact or the Quality Team, Academic Services (AOexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk).

(2) Students have the right to view a Module External Examiner's Report in full, with the exception of any confidential reports made directly, and separately, to the Vice-Chancellor. Module External Examiner Reports and the Programme Team responses are published by the Quality Team, Academic Services on the Hwb (the University's intranet), which is accessible to staff and UWTSD students. For partner programmes, the partner institution is responsible for ensuring that students have access to the reports and responses.

2.3.18 **The Module External Examiner's Involvement in Examining Boards**

(1) Membership of Examining Boards

A module external examiner is expected to fully contribute to the appropriate Examining Boards for the modules they have been engaged to scrutinise (see 2.3.9 (2) for further details).

(2) Academic Misconduct

A module external examiner who, either in the course of the marking period or subsequently, considers that a student has engaged in academic misconduct, shall immediately report the circumstances in writing to the Institute/Academic Discipline. Details of the procedure for dealing with cases of alleged unfair practice can be found in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

2.3.19 **Validation and Review**

(1) A module external examiner plays a crucial role in maintaining standards and in providing information on outcomes for use when reviewing modules and programmes. However, this is a separate function from the process of validation and annual review and module external examiners should not be used as external advisers for validation. Details of the

procedures for validation/review can be found in Chapter 4 of the Academic Quality Handbook.

(2) The contents of a Module External Examiner's Report may have implications for the way in which a programme is designed and delivered. It will be for the Institute Board to determine what changes should be made as a result. Nevertheless, Module External Examiner's Reports will always be used in programme reviews. External Examiners will be informed of any changes made in response to the issues raised in their reports via the Programme Team's response to the Module External Examiner's report (Appendix PV11c).

2.3.20 **The Process of External Examination for Taught Awards**

(1) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) shall be responsible for:

i) Ensuring that a formal response is provided to each Module External Examiner's Report.
ii) Ensuring that feedback is provided to module external examiners in relation to issues raised in the Module External Examiner's Report.
iii) Requesting that module external examiners undertake assessment of any module of a programme of study that, in the University's view, gives cause for concern.

(2) Deans of Institute shall be responsible for ensuring that:

i) The Institute and its programme teams reflect on and respond appropriately to the feedback provided by module external examiners and their formal reports.
ii) The Institute Board receives, early in the academic year, a copy of each Module External Examiner Agreement (Appendix GA15) which has been drawn up by the relevant Academic Director(s)/Programme Manager(s) in consultation with the module external examiner about the external examination tasks to be undertaken in the forthcoming academic year, and either endorses the Agreement or requires amendments to it.
iii) A copy of each Module External Examiner Agreement is presented to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for approval, normally at the second meeting of the academic year. These will be accompanied by the GA15a Institute Confirmation Checklist of Module External Examiner Agreements, signed by the relevant Assistant Dean.

(3) Academic Directors/Programme Managers shall be responsible for ensuring that:

i) In the case of Honours degrees, modules accounting for a minimum of 120 credits of each programme of study will be identified for review by the relevant module external examiners in any given academic year, of which at least 60 credits shall be at Level 5 and at least 60 credits at Level 6. In the case of PGCE Primary / Secondary with QTS programmes, modules accounting for a minimum of 120 credits of each programme of study will be identified for review by the relevant module external examiners in any given academic year. For all other awards, at least half the credits that may contribute towards the award shall be identified for review in any given academic year. In some cases, modules that do not contribute to the award may also be identified for review (see 2.3.20 (3) (x) below). There are also different requirements for new collaborative partners (see 2.3.20 (3) (x) below).

ii) All modules with a credit value of 40 or more must be reviewed by a module external examiner each academic year. All modules of a programme must be reviewed at least once by a module external examiner in the course of a 4 year period.
iii) Agreement must be reached with each module external examiner about the marking process that shall be applied to any particular module, or component of a module. For further details see Section 7.8 of Chapter 7 of the Academic Quality Handbook.
iv) Agreement must be reached with each module external examiner about which of the modules they are responsible for will be reviewed in any given year, ensuring compliance with paragraphs 2.3.20 (3) i) and ii) and paragraph 2.3.20 (4) iv).
v) A selection of assessment tasks in the modules identified for review in a given year will be considered by the module external examiner. A variety of different assessment tasks should be considered by a module external examiner in the course of a 4 year period.
vi) A representative sample of first-sit work from the assessments tasks chosen for consideration by the module external examiner will be selected for moderation. The sample may overlap with the sample for internal moderation as defined in paragraph 7.8 (4) of Chapter 7 of the Academic Quality Handbook.
vii) Agreement on which modules will be reviewed, which assessment tasks will be considered and how the sample for moderation will be defined shall be recorded on the Module External Examiner Agreement (Appendix GA15).
viii) The Module External Examiner Agreement will be passed to the Institute Board for endorsement or amendment.
ix) Institutes must ensure that student work that is submitted for assessment is kept securely until after the meeting of the relevant Examining Board and thereafter is archived in line with data protection regulations.
x) For new collaborative partners, there is a requirement to engage an external examiner immediately, and Level 4 work will be considered for the first two delivery cycles of a Bachelor's degree. This will be extended to new programmes at existing partners or new University programmes where any risks have been identified e.g. where a new discipline is to be delivered. All such requests should be discussed with the Collaborative Partnerships Office prior to completing the GA2 External Examiner Nomination Form and subsequent GA15 External Examiner Agreement.

(4) The Module External Examiner's Role in the Process of Assessment for Taught Modules (all Levels)

i) A module external examiner shall normally be responsible for no more than 480 credits of modules across all levels (not including Level 7 dissertation/project modules/multiple intakes) in a single engagement. However, in exceptional cases, a higher workload may be approved, having taken into account the external examiner's other work commitments.
ii) The module external examiner shall receive a copy of all assessment tasks and the associated assessment criteria at every level that may contribute towards an award (Level 3 for Foundation Certificate; Level 4 for HNC and CertHE; Level 5 for HND, DipHE and FD; Levels 5 and 6 for Honours Degrees, Levels 5, 6 and 7 for Integrated Master's Degrees, Level 7 for Master's Degrees) for approval before their distribution to students. In some cases, the module external examiner may be asked to consider assessment tasks in levels that do not contribute to an award, such as for new collaborative partners (see 2.3.20 (3) (x) above).

iii) The module external examiner must agree with the Programme Manager the marking process that shall be applied to any particular module, or module component.
iv) The module external examiner must liaise with the relevant Academic Director(s)/Programme Manager(s) to identify a minimum of half the modules for which they are responsible to be reviewed in any given academic year (minimum of 120 credits in total across all Levels). The actual credit rating of modules reviewed in any particular academic year may be greater than the minimum as the module external examiner is required to have reviewed every module for which they are responsible at least once during their period of engagement (assuming an engagement of 4 years).
v) Where the module external examiner is responsible for modules with a total credit value of less than 120 credits per academic year, then the module external examiner must review all the modules they are responsible for. The module external examiner must agree with the Academic Director(s)/Programme Manager(s) which assessment tasks in the modules identified to be reviewed will be considered in a given year. Assessment tasks considered must account for a minimum weighting of 40% in the module. For modules worth 40 credits or more, the major component must always be considered.
vi) The module external examiner must agree on the selection of a representative sample of first-sit work from the assessment tasks chosen for consideration for moderation, with the sample consisting of at least 6 students (the work of all students must be included in the sample where there are fewer than 6 students being assessed).
vii) Where modules are delivered concurrently across multiple locations and where the same assessment tasks are used in each location, the sample must consist of at least 6 students in total and at least 2 students per location.
viii) Where modules are delivered in multiple cohorts in a single location and where the same assessment tasks are used for each cohort, the sample must consist of at least 6 students in total with at least 3 students from each cohort.
ix) Where modules are delivered in multiple cohorts across multiple locations and where the same assessment tasks are used for each cohort and in each location, the sample must consist of at least 6 students in total and at least 3 students from each cohort and at least 2 students per location.
x) If for paragraphs 2.3.20 (4) vii), viii) or ix) above, the assessment task is different across locations or cohorts, then each location or cohort should be treated as an individual sample (with a minimum size of 6) and the module should be counted a separate module for determining credit rating of responsibility (see paragraph 2.3.20 (4) i) above).
xi) Agreement on which modules will be reviewed, which assessment tasks will be considered and how the sample for moderation will be defined shall be recorded on the Module External Examiner Agreement (Appendix GA15).
xii) If, in moderating an assessment, the module external examiner is unable to confirm that internal marking is of an appropriate standard or consistency for work in the sample, the module external examiner may request that all work be remarked.
xiii) Where marks in the sample are considered to be consistently over or under-marked, remarking will take the form of a scaling up or down of marks across the cohort by a figure agreed between the internal examiners and the module external examiner.
xiv) Where the internal examiners and module external examiner cannot reach agreement on the figure for scaling up or down of marks, the matter shall be reported

to the Chair of the Examining Board who will act as arbiter. The Chair's decision shall be final.

xv) Where there is no clear pattern in over or under-marking in the sample, remarking will take the form of a full re-mark of all work. A senior member of academic staff, who has not been involved in the internal marking of the work, shall be appointed as an additional marker. The mark of the additional marker shall be final.

xvi) Where warranted, the module external examiner may request that assessment tasks not covered by the Module External Examiner Agreement, either in modules identified for review or modules not identified for review, be subject to moderation by the module external examiner.

(5) The Module External Examiner's Role in the Process of Assessment for Level 7 dissertation/project modules

i) Any Level 7 module worth 60 credits or more is classified as a Level 7 dissertation/project module.

ii) The relevant external examiner must see a sample of at least 6 dissertations/ projects.

iii) Where warranted, the module external examiner may request that projects/dissertations not initially included in the sample, be subject to moderation by the module external examiner.

iv) If, in moderating a dissertation/project, the module external examiner is unable to confirm that internal marking is of an appropriate standard or consistency for work in the sample, the module external examiner may request that all work be remarked.

v) Where marks in the sample are considered to be consistently over or under-marked, remarking will take the form of a scaling up or down of marks by a figure agreed between the internal examiners and the module external examiner.

vi) Where the internal examiners and module external examiner cannot reach agreement on the figure for scaling up or down of marks, the matter shall be reported to the Chair of the Examining Board who will act as arbiter. The Chair's decision shall be final.

vii) Where there is no clear pattern in over or under-marking in the sample, remarking will take the form of a full re-mark of all work. A senior member of academic staff, who has not been involved in the internal marking of the work, shall be appointed as an additional marker. The mark of the additional marker shall be final.

(6) The Module External Examiner's Role in the Process of Assessment for PGCE Primary/Secondary with QTS Programmes of Study

i) The module external examiner shall receive a copy of all assessment tasks and the associated assessment criteria for approval before their distribution to students.

ii) The module external examiner must agree with the Academic Director/Programme Manager the marking process that shall be applied to any particular module, or module component.

iii) The module external examiner must liaise with the relevant Programme Manager(s) to identify a minimum of 120 credits of modules for review in any given academic year.

iv) Where the module external examiner is responsible for modules with a total credit value of less than 120 credits per academic year, then the module external examiner must review all the modules for which they are responsible.

v) The relevant module external examiner must attend a number of placements each year as agreed in advance with the Academic Director/Programme Manager (normally three placements).
vi) The module external examiner must agree with the Academic Director(s)/Programme Manager(s) which assessment tasks in the modules identified to be reviewed will be considered in a given year. Assessment tasks considered must account for a minimum weighting of 40% in the module. For modules worth 40 credits or more, the major component must always be considered.
vii) The module external examiner must agree on the selection of a representative sample of first-sit work from the assessment tasks chosen for consideration for moderation, with the sample consisting of at least 4 students (the work of all students must be included in the sample where there are fewer than 4 students being assessed).
viii) Agreement on which modules will be reviewed, which assessment tasks will be considered and how the sample for moderation will be defined shall be recorded on the Module External Examiner Agreement (Appendix GA15).
ix) If, in moderating an assessment, the module external examiner is unable to confirm that internal marking is of an appropriate standard or consistency for work in the sample, the module external examiner may request that all work be remarked.
x) Where marks in the sample are considered to be consistently over or under-marked, remarking will take the form of a scaling up or down of marks across the cohort by a figure agreed between the internal examiners and the module external examiner.
xi) Where the internal examiners and module external examiner cannot reach agreement on the figure for scaling up or down of marks, the matter shall be reported to the Chair of the Examining Board who will act as arbiter. The Chair's decision shall be final.
xii) Where there is no clear pattern in over or under-marking in the sample, remarking will take the form of a full re-mark of all work. A senior member of academic staff, who has not been involved in the internal marking of the work, shall be appointed as an additional marker. The mark of the additional marker shall be final.
xiii) Where warranted, the module external examiner may request that assessment tasks not covered by the Module External Examiner Agreement in modules identified for review be subject to moderation by the module external examiner.

2.3.21 Role of Procedural External Examiner

(1) Where a Module External Examiner is unable to attend an Examining Board, or in the case of an Examining Board covering multiple programmes/modules, where there are no Module External Examiners available to attend, the University expects a procedural external examiner to:

(i) Be a member of, and attend, appropriate Examining Boards to ensure that the University's procedures are followed correctly and that the University's rules for progression are applied consistently.

(ii) Present a written report to the University that includes commentary and judgements on the conduct of the Examining Board.

(iii) The role of a procedural external examiner may be undertaken by an existing Module External Examiner without the need for separate nomination and approval as a Procedural External Examiner.

2.3.22 **Nomination, Selection and Engagement of Procedural External Examiners**

(1) Nominations of standalone procedural external examiners are made using the Procedural External Examiner Nomination Form (Appendix GA2d). In practice, the majority of procedural external examiners are also serving module external examiners, and they do not require a separate nomination process to act as a procedural external examiner. The Head of Quality is responsible for considering all nominations on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee which makes decisions on the engagement of procedural external examiners on behalf of the Senate.

2.3.23 **Person specification**

(1) Procedural external examiners must show appropriate evidence of the following:

(i) comprehensive knowledge and understanding of regulatory policies and practices across the UK Higher Education sector;

(ii) experience of participating in Progression/Award Examining Boards (or equivalent) at more than one institution.

2.3.24 **Conflicts of interest and impartiality**

(1) The circumstances which would prevent an individual from being engaged as a procedural external examiner are the same as those for a module external examiner as set out in paragraphs 2.3.5 (2) (i) to (xiii).

2.3.25 **Duration of engagement**

(1) Procedural external examiners shall normally be engaged for a period of 4 years, with the possibility of extending the tenure for a further year where an exceptional case can be made that satisfies the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. No further extension is permitted.

2.3.26 **Termination of Procedural External Examiner engagement**

(1) Exceptionally a Chair of an Examining Board may consider the actions at a Examining Board or the reporting of a procedural external examiner to be unreasonable, unfair, or contrary to the regulations of the University. In such cases the matter shall be referred to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) who may make a recommendation to the Senate that the procedural external examiner's engagement should be brought to an end.

(2) The University also reserves the right to terminate a procedural external examiner engagement at any time:

i) if a conflict of interest arises that cannot be satisfactorily resolved;

ii) failure by the individual to disclose a relationship, contractual or otherwise, which may impair the integrity of the examination process and their own independence as external examiner;

iii) persistent failure to attend meetings and/or present the required reports by the stated deadline without prior agreement, and/or the submission of identical reports;

iv) suspension or dismissal by the individual's main employer for improper conduct in relation to their employment which may impair the integrity of the examination process or their standing as an external examiner;

v) the examiner commits a breach of confidentiality with regard to personal information of students;

vi) the modules or award(s) to which the examiner is engaged are withdrawn or suspended.

2.3.27 Annual briefing for Procedural External Examiners

(1) All procedural external examiners shall receive a University briefing annually to update them on any modifications to the University's regulations and procedures and other relevant issues.

2.3.28 Procedural External Examiner's Report

(1) The procedural external examiner is required to complete a report on the Procedural External Examiner's Report pro-forma (Appendix GA23) following each Examining Board and return it to the Quality Team, Academic Services electronically.

2.3.29 Content of the Procedural External Examiner's Report

(1) The primary role of the Procedural External Examiner's Report is to provide independent assurance that the Progression/Award Examining Board was conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures.

(2) Names of all students and staff must be omitted from reports, to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

2.3.30 Responding to Procedural External Examiner's Report

(1) Should a procedural external examiner identify any issues of concern in the conduct of an Examining Board, a formal response will be prepared by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) or nominee. The contents of a Procedural External Examiner's Report may be included in the central report summarising the findings of all module external examiners' reports as described in paragraph 2.3.16 (2).

2.3.31 Procedures for Reporting Serious Concerns

A procedural external examiner has the authority to report directly to the Vice-Chancellor where there is concern that an Examining Board has been conducted in a way that jeopardises either the fair treatment of students or the standards of the awards.

2.3.32 Research Degree External Examiners

External Examiners for Research Degrees are subject to specific nomination criteria and terms and conditions, which are overseen by the University's Research Degrees Committee. Further information is provided in Academic Quality Handbook Chapter 8 Research Degree Regulations and the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

2.4 External Examiner Fees and Expenses

2.4.1 Fees

(1) Fees for Module External Examiners are calculated based upon a credit-related fee scale together with an additional amount for any Level 7 dissertation/project modules examined. The anticipated fee, which is based upon the information provided on the nomination form, will be notified to the external examiner upon confirmation of the engagement. However, the fee is also checked on an annual basis against the Module External Examiner Agreement (Appendix GA15), and changes may be made as a result of this, depending upon whether the external examiner has undertaken more or less work than indicated on the original nomination form.

(2) The basic fee includes one annual visit (which may be an online engagement) to the University. If it is indicated by the Academic Director on the external examiner's nomination form that more visits are required (normally up to a maximum of 3 visits per year), a fee of £100.00 per approved visit will be paid (plus expenses).

(3) The University arranges for payment of fees to Module External Examiners on an annual basis. Each Module External Examiner is required to make one annual written report (via the online GA3 report form) to the Vice-Chancellor of the University. Examiners are asked to complete this report once their duties as Module External Examiner are complete for the academic year and return it to the Quality Team, Academic Services. An additional fee of £25.00 per report will be paid where module external examiners are required to submit additional, separate reports for collaborative partners.

(4) For existing external examiners appointed pre-October 2022, they will have provided the University with a completed Employee Commencement Form and the accompanying proof of identity and proof of Right to Work in the UK to comply with current legislation before any payments could be processed. These external examiners are classified as employees; fees are paid via payroll and all fee claims are subject to tax and National Insurance deductions in line with HMRC requirements. These examiners will remain on the payroll system until the end of their tenure, unless they request to be moved to the engagement model described in (5) below.

(5) For new external examiners engaged from October 2022, the University has moved to an engagement model, which is a self-employed model where the external examiner will invoice the University for their services; the fee will be paid in full and it will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that they are paying the correct level of income tax on their earned income. Further details are provided in the 'Guidance' document that is provided to each new external examiner when they receive their engagement letter from the Quality Team, Academic Services.

(6) On receipt of the annual report:

a. for those classified as employees, the Quality Team will advise the Payroll Department to process the fee;
b. for those classified as self-employed, the Quality Team will send the External Examiner an invoice to claim the fee, which will be pre-populated with the programme details and the fee due based on the GA15 Agreement. The External Examiner will be asked to provide their bank details and to sign the invoice and return to the Quality

Team. The Quality Team will advise the External Examiner of the approximate expected payment date.

(7) Procedural External Examiners are paid a set fee of £100.00 for attending each Examining Board. A written report (Appendix GA23) should be submitted to the Quality Team after each Examining Board. The processing of the fee payment will be as per (6) above.

2.4.2 Expenses

(1) External examiners who are on the University's payroll system may submit a claim for expenses on the External Examiner Expenses Claim Form provided by the Academic Office. The claim form is available in electronic form on the website. The claim can be submitted electronically to the Quality Team, Academic Services, together with any scanned copies of expenses.

(2) External examiners who are classified as self-employed will submit an invoice for expenses incurred, on the Module External Examiner Invoice (Expenses) form provided by the Quality Team, Academic Services. The claim should be submitted electronically to the Quality Team, together with any scanned copies of expenses.

(3) The University will cover all receipted reasonable expenses (and personal mileage) up to a pre-defined cap for each approved visit and, unlike fees, will arrange reimbursement following each approved visit. The University will have agreed the cap (based on distance from the University) on engagement and the detail will be provided in the engagement letter.

(4) External examiners can claim for travel (by whatever means), accommodation (if needed) and subsistence.

(5) Receipts must be provided (except for personal mileage).

(6) For distances of over 200 miles (400 miles round trip), examiners are strongly advised to use a hire-car and claim for receipted hire and petrol (not mileage) or take the train.

(7) If accommodation is arranged and paid for directly by the University, the actual amount paid for accommodation by the University will be counted towards the total expenses covered for that approved visit.

(8) The Quality Team will advise the examiner of the anticipated payment timeline when acknowledging receipt of the report or expenses form/invoice.

2.5 Role and Remit of UWTSD Examining Boards

Regulations for Examining Boards are provided in Chapter 6 Taught Award Regulations of the Academic Quality Handbook. An extract from Chapter 6 is provided below (bearing the original numbering):

6.10 **Taught Provision Examining Boards**

(1) All assessment decisions are provisional until confirmed by the Examining Board.

(2) All External Examiners are expected to provide written confirmation that:
- an appropriate sample of assessed student work for moderation has been viewed;
- internal marking is of an appropriate standard and consistency;

(3) External examiners may attend the Examining Board in line with the guidance on examining boards.

6.10.1 Pre-Examining Boards

Institutes are required to convene internal meetings at programme or discipline or Institute level in the absence of their External Examiner(s) as often as is considered necessary and in advance of the Examining Boards in order to:

- assure the accuracy and completeness of the central assessment records;
- ensure that any necessary investigative work has been thoroughly conducted;
- ensure that External Examiners are provided with:
  - appropriate samples of assessed student work for External Examiner moderation;
  - information on any special cases or issues that require particular attention;
  - sufficient evidence in a timely manner to enable them to fulfil their role.
- ensure institutional consistency in the interpretation of regulations across the Academic Disciplines and Institute.

6.10.2 Examining Boards

(1) The Examining Board confirms the outcomes for each student in each module and the overall profile of the student.

(2) Examining Boards are normally organised by Institutes in consultation with Registry. Examining Boards that involve collaborative partner institutions are organised by the Collaborative Partnerships Office in consultation with Registry.

(3) Students will be considered at an examining board at least once per level of study and at least one per annum.

(4) Examining Boards serve as the University's mechanism for securing institutional oversight of the assessment process and ensuring institutional consistency in the treatment of its students.

(5) **Terms of Reference**

- To ensure appropriate consideration of individual students and that the academic standard of programme awards is maintained.
- To ensure that all appropriate University, Professional Body, and Programme regulations are met.
- To approve and endorse the accuracy of the central record, including any amendments.
- To approve and endorse all student progression, award and exit award outcomes.
- To approve and endorse all the retrieval position for students who have failed to satisfy the criteria for progression.

- To secure External Examiner endorsement of all recommendations relating to student progression and award.
- To approve and endorse Professional Body awards, where appropriate.

(6) **Membership**

Chair:	A senior member of staff of the University with comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the University's academic regulations
External Examiner:	External examiners
Members:	Lead staff responsible for teaching, assessing and/or managing the provision under consideration Representation from the Collaborative Partnerships Office for partner Boards
Secretary:	Registry appointment

(7) **Quoracy**

Actual membership for Examining Board in the form of a list of named individuals shall be determined and approved by the Chair prior to the meeting of the Board and the following quoracy adopted:

- Chair
- At least one External Examiner who will comment on the consistent and fair application of policies and procedures ensuring the integrity and rigour of academic practices.
- At least one third of named other members.

Where a meeting is not quorate, the Examining Board must not proceed.

6.10.3 **Examining Board Minutes**

Following an Examining Board, the minutes will be confirmed by the Chair and stored centrally.

6.10.4 **Chair's Action for Examining Boards**

(1) Subsequent to the Examining Board, marks may only be amended under the following circumstances - if:

- Chair's Action was granted at the Examining Board;
- A Mark Amendment Form has been signed by the chair of the Examining Board;

(2) It is expected that marks will be presented on time and inputted to the Student Records System in line with the published schedule.

(3) It is acknowledged that in certain cases, normally relating to ongoing academic or non-academic misconduct investigations, Support for Study or Fitness to Practice processes, the impact of delayed placements, or Compensatory Measures, marks may not be available in time for an Examining Board meeting. In such cases where a decision cannot be made at the scheduled Board the appropriate profile(s) will be recorded as 'Subject to Chair's Action'.

(4) In these exceptional circumstances, the Chair of the Examining Board will be responsible for confirming the final outcome. It is at the discretion of the Chair to make a judgement on whether the volume and nature of such activity would warrant the Examining Board to be reconvened in order to consider the updated profile(s).

(5) All proceedings that are authorised by the Chair outside of the main meeting will be reported to the Board at the next available opportunity.

2.6 Links to useful documents and websites

UWTSD Academic Regulations and related policies	Academic Quality Handbook | University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Academic Office (including Quality Team)	Academic Office | University of Wales Trinity Saint David
External Examiners' Webpage	External Examiners | University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Contact details for Quality Assurance Team within the Academic Office	AOexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk
AdvanceHE: *External Examining*	Development Programmes for External Examiners - Advance HE UK

3 Introduction to External Advisers at UWTSD

3.1 Introduction

(1) External Advisers make an important contribution to the University's validation and revalidation processes in terms of:

- Providing relevant subject expertise
- Making comparisons with similar provision elsewhere within the sector
- Identifying best practice

(2) The University consults with at least one External Adviser for each validation/revalidation process (it may be necessary to have more than one External Adviser for certain programmes e.g. one academic and one from industry). The consultation is normally undertaken via correspondence and should not require the External Adviser to attend a formal meeting.

3.2 Nomination, Selection and Engagement of External Advisers

(1) Programme Teams should forward their nomination to the relevant Institute Office using Appendix PV5 External Adviser Nomination Form. The Institute Office will arrange consideration by the Dean of Institute or nominee, following which the signed nomination form will be submitted to the Academic Office (via AOexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk) for consideration by the Head of the Academic Office.

(2) The Academic Office will inform the External Adviser and the Institute of the approval of the nomination. The Academic Office will confirm the details of the fee to be paid (see Section 3.7 below) based upon the details supplied by the Institute on the nomination form. The Academic Office will also provide information regarding how to access the University's regulations on validation, awards and assessment policy on the University's website.

(3) If a nomination is rejected by the Academic Office, the Institute will inform the unsuccessful nominee.

(4) An individual who acts as an external adviser for an Institute or University validation of a programme will not be considered eligible to act as an external examiner for the programme should it be validated.

3.3 Criteria

(1) Nominees must have current academic experience and subject expertise to be able to advise on new modules, the appropriateness of the programme and its comparability nationally. This should be to the FHEQ level of the programme being validated.

(2) For nominees who do not have a current academic contract, further detail should be provided to evidence their currency, in order to allow a judgement to be made about their academic and/or professional credentials.

(3) For distance-learning programmes, nominees should normally have relevant expertise in the development and delivery of these types of programmes.

(4) Nominees must be independent of the programme being validated.

(5) Nominees should not be associated with the proposing team in a way that might compromise their ability to form an objective judgement on the proposal. Examples might include associations formed during previous employment, recent external examination duties at the University, research partnerships, tutor-student or supervisor-student relationships, and any close personal relationship. In the case of previous employment or external examiner duties at the University, a period of at least 3 years should have elapsed.

(6) In addition, nominees must not be a member of the governing body or of one of the committees of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or an institution in a strategic alliance with the University, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or an institution in a strategic alliance with the University.

(7) Institutes should also bear in mind potential conflicts of interest relating to appointing external advisers from competing institutions.

3.4 Confidentiality

(1) The University endeavours to ensure that discussions regarding validations/ revalidations are conducted transparently and that External Advisers and programme teams engage in open, constructive discussion about proposals for new programmes of study. Inevitably there are occasions where External Advisers recommend that significant changes are made to proposals before programmes can be introduced. The University therefore asks that all validation documentation, and the discussions during validation processes (in person and/or by correspondence), are treated as confidential until a new programme has been approved.

3.5 External Adviser involvement in different processes

(1) External Advisers may be involved in various processes for the University, such as the validation or revalidation of programmes internal to the University, or the validation or revalidation of programmes delivered by the University's collaborative partners. The requirements of each process are outlined in the Academic Quality Handbook Chapter 4 Programme Design, Approval, Validation, Monitoring and Review and Chapter 9 Procedural Framework for Collaborative Provision.

(2) External members involved in Collaborative Partner Approval processes/visits are subject to different appointment criteria (set out in Appendix CP2 associated with Chapter 9 of the Academic Quality Handbook) and terms and conditions (which will be advised by the University's Collaborative Partnerships Office during the appointment process).

3.6 External Adviser's Report

(1) The Institute Office is responsible for providing the validation/revalidation documentation to the External Adviser and for specifying a deadline for the submission

of the report (normally within 10 working days of receiving the documentation). The report must be provided on the Appendix PV15 External Adviser's Report template.

(2) The Programme Team will revise the programme documentation in response to the External Adviser's PV15 report (and internal PV6 reports) and provide details of the revisions made in an annotated version of the PV15 report.

(3) The External Adviser must also indicate on the PV15 report whether or not, in their view, the proposed programme is suitable for validation by the University. In the event that an Institute is of the opinion that an External Adviser has made unreasonable recommendations, the Institute should discuss the issue with the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Head of Quality. The Institute will also provide a full response to the issues raised by the External Adviser on the PV15 report and in the Dean's PV16 report presenting the programme for approval by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(4) The External Adviser's report, together with the response from the Programme Team, will form part of the documentation presented to the University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee for final approval of the programme.

3.7 External Adviser Fees

(1) The University's fees for External Advisers are based upon a sliding scale in relation to the size and complexity of the programme(s)/portfolio being considered.

(2) The Academic Office will confirm the fee to the External Adviser in the engagement letter.

(3) For new External Advisers from October 2022, the University has moved to an engagement model, where the relationship is via an invoice for services rather than an employer/employee engagement. This is a self-employed model where the External Adviser will invoice the University for their services; the fee will be paid in full and it will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that they are paying the correct level of income tax on their earned income. Further details are provided in the 'Guidance' document that will be provided to each new External Adviser when they receive their engagement letter from the Academic Office. The Academic Office will send the External Adviser an invoice which will be pre-populated with the programme details and the fee due. The External Adviser will be asked to provide their bank details and to sign the invoice and return to the Academic Office who will hold it on file until the external's work has been completed.

(4) Once the External Adviser has submitted the PV15 External Adviser Report to the Institute Office, the Institute Office will inform the Academic Office that the fee may be paid. The Academic Office will process the signed invoice and will advise the External Adviser of the approximate expected payment date. For Collaborative Partner validations, the Collaborative Partnerships Office will be responsible for liaising with the External Adviser and payment of the fee.

4 Introduction to End Point Assessors at UWTSD

4.1 Introduction

(1) Apprenticeship programmes in England are funded by the Department of Education (DfE). For DfE funded apprenticeship, the apprenticeship standards are developed by employer bodies (Trailblazer Groups) defining the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB) required for a job role, and are published by the Skills England (SE). . Training providers deliver qualifications to cover the KSBs. Towards the end of the programme, there is a Gateway review where the employer confirms that the candidate has met all of the requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard. This is followed by an End Point Assessment and a final assessment, assessed by the End Point Assessors. SE uses the term 'Independent Assessor' but the University's preferred term for internal use is 'End Point Assessor'.

4.2 End Point Assessors

4.2.1 Purpose of End Point Assessors

(1) End Point Assessment is an independent assessment that takes place at the end of the apprenticeship training. This is to test that the apprentice is competent in their occupation. There are a variety of assessment methods to test apprentices' competency; these are outlined in the apprenticeship standard assessment plan. The assessments are undertaken by an independent End Point Assessor. This section outlines the role of the End Point Assessors together with the selection, nomination and approval processes, and reporting mechanisms.

(2) End Point Assessor reports are an integral part of the University's quality monitoring and enhancement process and play an important role in the programme review cycle for apprenticeships. End Point Assessors are required to submit cohort written reports.

4.2.2 Role of End Point Assessors

(1) The End Point Assessors' responsibilities include:

(i) **Independent Assessment:** assessing apprentices' knowledge, skills, and behaviours with no prior involvement in their training as outlined in the apprenticeship standard assessment plan.

(ii) **Assessment Techniques:** utilising a variety of methods, such as practical observations, interviews, and examinations, to gauge an apprentice's performance effectively.

(iii) **Assessing Competence:** using the relevant assessment rubric to determine if an apprentice is competent and ready to excel in their industry without further training.

(iv) **Marking and moderation:** adhering to the Marking principles and moderation processes as outlined in the Academic Quality Handbook.

(v) **Making a Grading Judgement:** determining the apprenticeship as appropriate, as outlined in the relevant Apprenticeship Standard's assessment plan.

(vi) **Feedback Provision:** providing constructive feedback using the University's provided feedback mechanisms that can guide the apprentice's professional development.

(vii) **Reporting Results:** using the University's process accurately documenting and reporting all assessment outcomes.

(viii) **Feedback to the University:** providing a cohort report to the University.

4.2.3 Nomination, Selection and Engagement of End Point Assessor

The University is working towards creating a pool of End Point Assessors via an 'expression of interest' process with a view to achieving greater resilience in the process. End Point Assessors will be nominated from the pool, or independently if necessary, using the End Point Assessor Nomination Form (Appendix GA4). Nominees are identified by the Programme Team in consultation with the Apprenticeship Unit. The Chair of the Apprenticeships Board and the Head of Quality are responsible for considering all nominations on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee which makes decisions on the engagement of End Point Assessors on behalf of the Senate. The Academic Quality and Standards Committee also undertakes an overview of End Point Assessor appointments in relation to matters such as vacant appointments.

4.2.4 Person specification

(1) End Point Assessors will be expected to have:

(i) competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme;

(ii) sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of colleagues;

(iii) familiarity with the standard to be expected of apprentices in the End Point Assessment to be assessed;

(iv) fluency in English;

(v) met any additional criteria set out by the apprenticeship standard and any relevant professional and accrediting bodies;

(vi) expertise in and awareness of modern developments in the design and delivery of the flexible curriculum and apprenticeships;

(vii) are experienced in acting as an End Point Assessor or are supported by the provider in undertaking their duties, for example, through training and mentoring;

(viii) are impartial in judgement and wholly independent of the provider and its staff (including the governing body), and any relevant partners;

(ix) do not personally benefit from any student outcomes, nor have any connection to any student being assessed;

(x) had no involvement in the delivery and assessment of the training.

(xi) met all the requirements as outlined in the specific apprenticeship standard assessment plan.

(2) In addition, it is desirable that End Point Assessors hold or undertake a Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (CAVA), although this is not a requirement.

(3) Not every End Point Assessor will necessarily meet all the criteria. Where an individual does not meet all the criteria, the nomination will be carefully considered by the Chair

of Apprenticeships Board and Head of Quality on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, and the engagement will only be approved where appropriate arrangements for providing support to the individual are put in place. Support arrangements may include the appointment of mentor, such as another End Point Assessor or the outgoing End Point Assessor, where relevant. The AU is required to submit an end of year mentoring report to the Academic Office for monitoring purposes. An overview report will be presented to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee annually by the Head of Apprenticeships. See Appendix GA5 (published on the Academic Office webpages) for further guidance regarding mentoring.

(4) Once the nomination has been approved, the AU will liaise with the HR Department and the End Point Assessor to complete the Right to Work checks and will then write to the End Point Assessor to confirm the appointment and to arrange for the Terms of Engagement for the External Independent End Point Assessor to be signed.

4.2.5 **Conflicts of interest and impartiality**

(1) The University requires that End Point Assessors should be able to exercise impartial judgement and requires that they should not therefore have any potential conflicts of interest (either professional or personal) which might compromise objectivity.

(2) The University is a training provider of higher and degree apprenticeships. It is also an approved End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) for integrated apprenticeships. In degree apprenticeships, where the training provider is also the EPAO, independence may more difficult to achieve than in non-integrated apprenticeships. The EPAO must therefore make the End Point Assessor as independent as possible. All assessors, and especially independent assessors, must not have an actual or potential conflict of interest relating to the end-point assessment of an apprentices. Ideally, the End Point Assessors will be externally engaged independent assessors. However, it is possible to engage an appropriately qualified member of staff from within the EPAO who has not been involved in the delivery of the apprenticeship programme and has no other actual or potential conflict of interest relating to the end point assessment of the apprentice, as outlined below.

(3) To avoid potential conflicts of interest an individual shall not be engaged as an End Point Assessor if:

(i) they have a current, or have had in the past five years, a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme or with a student currently on the programme (a close relationship is one where there is a degree of relationship beyond intermittent association; examples of a professional relationship are: co-authorship of publication, co-investigator on project, joint supervision of research student, graduate advisee/advisor relationship - including former research degree supervisor where such supervision ended less than three years previously; an example of a contractual relationship is co-owner of outside business interest; examples of a personal relationship are: family relationship - by marriage or blood, current or former intimate relationship - including marital, sexual, romantic, emotional, close friendship/social relationship, personal animosity);

(ii) they are required to act as End Point Assessors for member(s) of staff at their own organisation who are apprentices on the programme of study;

(iii) they are, or know they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of apprentices on the programme of study;

(iv) they are significantly involved in recent (within the last 3 years) or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question;

(v) they are a former member of staff or student of the University on the degree apprenticeship programme concerned, unless a period of 3 years has elapsed and all students/apprentices taught by or with them have completed their programme(s);

(vi) their engagement would create a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at their institution;

(vii) they are employed in the same department and institution as their immediate predecessor(s);

(viii) they are in a close relationship (see definition in 4.2.5 (3) (i) above) with their immediate predecessor(s);

(ix) their appointment would result in more than one End Point Assessor from the same department of the same institution (where "department" should not be seen as directly corresponding to a particular term within a particular institution's academic structure, but with the relevant subject area. However, in making this distinction, consideration must also be given to the size of each subject area within the other institution's academic structure);

(4) Where there are changes in the circumstances of an End Point Assessor or where circumstances which were previously unknown become known which may lead to conflicts of interest, or a possible detrimental effect upon the integrity of the programme being examined or the reputation of the University, the Institute/Apprenticeship Unit should notify the Academic Office as soon as possible. The Head of Quality and Chair of the Apprenticeships Board will consider the circumstances and advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, so that it can make a decision on the individual's suitability to continue as an End Point Assessor.

(5) End Point Assessors are required to alert the University to any changes to their employment status, PSRB (professional, statutory or regulatory body) registration or contact details as soon as possible by contacting the Academic Office (AOexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk).

4.2.6 **Duration of engagement**

(1) End Point Assessors shall normally be engaged for a period of one year at a time. End Point Assessors will be subject to an annual review by the AU to check the due diligence of the individual and for any conflict of interest, and may remain in the pool of End Point Assessors if no issues are identified.

4.2.7 **Termination of End Point Assessor engagement**

(1) In line with the Terms of Engagement for the External Independent End Point Assessor, in the event that an End Point Assessor is unable to fulfil the requirements of the role, they should give the University notice of 1 month to allow a new End Point

Assessor to be identified and engaged. It is recognised that this may not always be possible e.g. in the case of a sudden illness.

(2) An End Point Assessor may request to temporarily cease their engagement, for a period of no more than one academic year, for example due to illness or maternity leave. In these circumstances, another End Point Assessor will be sought to temporarily cover the absence. The End Point Assessor should liaise with the Academic Office and the relevant Academic Discipline/Institute/ Apprenticeship Unit to agree the period of absence. The temporary cessation of engagement and replacement must be approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee – this may involve extending the duties of another suitable, existing, appropriately qualified End Point Assessor. In the event of a sudden absence, and because of the importance of obtaining externality in End Point Assessment processes, the Academic Office may agree to relax the appointment criteria slightly for the temporary appointment e.g. by allowing a former End Point Assessor to be appointed who completed their duties less than 3 years previously.

(3) Rarely, the University, the Apprenticeship Unit, an Academic Director or Programme Manager may consider the actions, conduct, requirements or reporting of an End Point Assessor to be unreasonable, unfair, not in line with the requirements for externality, expectations associated with the role and position of an End Point Assessor or contrary to the regulations of the University. In such cases the Academic Director or Programme Manager may refer such concerns to the relevant Dean of Institute in writing. The Dean should then review the matter and make every effort to resolve the concerns in consultation with the End Point Assessor, the Head of Apprenticeships, Academic Director and the Programme Manager. The Dean of Institute may also seek advice from the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(4) The University also reserves the right to terminate an End Point Assessor engagement. In line with the Terms of Engagement for the External Independent End Point Assessor, the University will give one month's written notice to the End Point Assessor. The grounds for terminating the engagement are as follows:

(i) if a conflict of interest arises that cannot be satisfactorily resolved;

(ii) failure by the individual to disclose a relationship, contractual or otherwise, which may impair the integrity of the assessment process and their own independence as an End Point Assessor;

(iii) persistent failure to engage without good cause e.g. persistent failure to respond to correspondence and requests to approve or return documentation, failure to attend meetings and/or present the required reports by the stated deadline without prior agreement, and/or the submission of identical reports;

(iv) persistent and deliberate failure to use the relevant apprenticeship standards to support judgements on UWTSD apprentices' attainment of them;

(v) suspension or dismissal by the individual's main employer for improper conduct in relation to their employment which may impair the integrity of the assessment process or their standing as an End Point Assessor;

(vi) improper conduct during visits undertaken to the University (including any partner locations);

(vii) for professional programmes, failure to maintain professional body membership or professional registration where this is a requirement of being an End Point Assessor or disbarment from professional practice which may

impair the integrity of the assessment process or the individual's standing as an End Point Assessor;

(viii) the examiner commits a breach of confidentiality with regard to personal information of apprentices;

(ix) the modules or award(s) to which the End Point Assessor is engaged are withdrawn or suspended.

(x) the Apprenticeship standard is updated, withdrawn or amended and as such End Point Assessment and the EPA involvement is no longer required.

(5) Should it become evident that concerns, which have been raised cannot be resolved, then the matter shall be referred by the Academic Office to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) who may make a recommendation to the Senate that the End Point Assessor's engagement should be brought to an end.

4.2.8 Induction and annual briefing

(1) Each End Point Assessor new to the standard **must** have an induction that explains assessment and End Point Assessment requirements in accordance with the End Point Assessment assessment plan as defined by SE. The Head of Apprenticeships and or relevant team member will co-facilitate the induction session to the End Point Assessor in advance of their first assessment activity, working in collaboration with the relevant Academic Director/Programme Manager. This enables the End Point Assessor to clarify any matters and prepare for the assessment activities.

4.2.9 Attendance/Visits

(1) End Point Assessors where appropriate or beneficial are required to attend for a face to face meeting with the apprentices for the End Point Assessment Process.

(2) In addition, End Point Assessors may be invited to address the cohort at the induction stage and at the mid-way point of the programme, to discuss the competency based portfolio.

4.2.10 Data Protection, Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreements

(1) It is expected that End Point Assessors will observe the University's Data Protection Policy. Any information passed between UWTSD and End Point Assessors, e.g. apprentice grades, must remain confidential.

(2) Occasionally, End Point Assessors may have sight of certain sensitive and/or confidential information included in assessments submitted by apprentices. The End Point Assessor may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement/non-disclosure agreement (NDA) where the University has such an agreement with the company or provider. The End Point Assessor will also need to abide by any security clearance protocols, where relevant.

(3) End Point Assessors will be reasonably expected to sign these agreements, and this will not affect their ability to make reports to any relevant regulatory body as may be required during the performance of their duties.

4.2.11 **Information Management**

(1) Respect for the privacy and security of assessors' data is of great importance to the University. All personal data is held and processed in accordance with the current and changing Data Protection legislation and in accordance with UWTSD's Records Retention Schedule.

4.2.12 **Accessibility**

(1) If an assessor has a disability or health condition, the University has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that the assessor can carry out their End Point Assessment duties. End Point Assessors should advise the Head of Apprenticeships or their departmental contact if they require any assistance.

4.2.13 **End Points Assessors' Reports**

(1) Once the End Point Assessment is completed with the apprentice, the End Point Assessor is required to complete an appropriate marksheet and feedback for all assessment elements including assigning the apprenticeship grade. Results are recorded by the Apprenticeship Unit. The assessments and results are submitted to the Moderator for Internal Quality Assurance and may also be reviewed by Skills England as External Quality Assurance.

(2) In addition to the individual reports, the End Point Assessor is required to complete a cohort report on the End Point Assessors' Cohort Report pro-forma (Appendix GA6), normally within a maximum of 4 weeks following the standardisation meeting of the cohort assessment. This report is submitted to the Academic Office electronically.

4.2.14 **Content of the Cohort Reports**

(1) The primary role of the End Point Assessor's Cohort Report is to observe and check the End Point Assessment so that it supports the assessment of occupational competence and confirms that national standards have been achieved and upheld by the University.

(2) Names of all apprentices and staff must be omitted from cohort reports, to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

(3) The cohort report should provide clear and informative feedback to the University on whether or not:

- the University is maintaining the academic standards set for End Point Assessment appropriate to the content of the occupational profile;
- the assessment materials/instruments are fit for purpose, up to date and cover the requirements of the End Point Assessment assessment plan and occupational competence when applied in practice;
- the assessment materials are a valid measure in practice of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours required of the Standard;
- the End Point Assessment process measures achievement rigorously and fairly and is conducted in line with the End Point Assessment plan;
- the assessment is comparable with previous cohorts (where available) and across different End Point Assessment Organisations of which the End Point Assessor has experience.

(4) The report should also provide informative comment and recommendations on:

- good practice and innovation relating to skills development and evidence collection;
- opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.

(5) In addition, in the report the End Point Assessor should:

- confirm that sufficient timely evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled (where evidence was insufficient, they give details);
- state whether issues raised in the previous report(s) have been, or are being, addressed to their satisfaction;
- give an overview of their term of office (when concluded).

(6) Where programmes are delivered at more than one site, e.g. at different UWTSD campuses, assessors should differentiate these explicitly to identify issues or good practice pertaining to the specific instance of delivery.

(7) Where programmes are delivered by UWTSD and/or by more than one collaborative partner organisation, assessors are required to submit a separate report for each partner.

4.2.15 Procedures for Reporting Serious Concerns

(1) An End Point Assessor has the authority to report directly to the Vice-Chancellor where there is concern about standards and performance, particularly if it is considered that End Point Assessments are being conducted in a way that jeopardises either the fair treatment of apprentices or the standards of the awards.

(2) Where an End Point Assessor has a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of a programme or programmes and has exhausted all applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, they may inform the Office for Students, which is the body responsible for the external quality assessment of End Point Assessments for integrated higher and degree apprenticeships.

4.2.16 Responding to the End Point Assessor's Report

(1) Each End Point Assessor's Report is considered in detail at different levels within the institution. Upon receipt of a report, copies are distributed to Academic Directors, Programme Managers, Deans of Institute, Assistant Deans, Head of Apprenticeships, Chair of Apprenticeships Board and the Head of Quality, and, where applicable, the Head of Collaborative Partnerships (Operations). Following consideration at Academic Discipline level, Academic Directors and Programme Managers are required to ensure preparation of the Academic Discipline's response to any issues raised in consultation with the Programme Team (Appendix GA7); this response may also include issues identified for action at Institute and central University level. For collaborative partner programmes, the partner prepares the response. The End Point Assessor should be provided with a copy of the response and informed of all actions to be taken in response to the recommendations that are made; a copy of the response and correspondence is forwarded to the Academic Office. The reports, together with the

response are formally discussed during the Academic Performance Review of each Programme of Study.

(2) In the event that an End Point Assessor has raised issues of significant concern e.g. a concern about standards, or a concern that significant issues raised in the previous report have not been addressed, the Head of Quality in consultation with the Head of Apprenticeships will request a written response from the relevant Dean of Institute, which will be sent to the End Point Assessor in addition to the GA7 response. Where programmes are delivered by a collaborative partner, the partner would be required to prepare the response in consultation with Head of Apprenticeships and Head of Collaborative Partnerships.

(3) Deans or their nominees are responsible for scrutinising all End Point Assessor reports and for reporting any significant issues that require an urgent response to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) or nominee. An annual overview report is prepared by the Head of Apprenticeships for the Apprenticeships Board and Academic Quality and Standards Committee's Annual Monitoring meeting, summarising the findings of all the End Point Assessors' reports and identifying themes and issues that require an institutional response.

(4) Copies of the annual overview report and recommendations for action are circulated to all End Point Assessors.

4.2.17 **The End Point Assessor's involvement in Examining Boards**

(1) The End Point Assessor is not a member of the Examining Board.

4.2.18 **The Process of End Point Assessment**

(1) Details of the process of End Point Assessment are outlined in the Apprenticeship Unit's Apprenticeship Handbook. Specific details of each individual End Point Assessment are available on the SE website.

4.3 End Point Assessors Fees and Expenses

4.3.1 **Fees**

(1) The fees for undertaking End Point Assessment are paid as a single sum at the approved rate as set out in the Terms of Engagement section 7.1, payable on completion of the assessment and related documentation. The expectations are set out in Appendix GA8 End Point Assessor Workload Agreement, which is signed by the University and the End Point Assessor annually. In addition to the reports for individual apprentices, each End Point Assessor is required to submit a cohort written report (via Appendix GA6). The University arranges for payment of fees after the completion of duties relating to each cohort, including the submission of the cohort report.

(2) The University's preference is to utilise an engagement model, where the relationship will be via an invoice for services rather than an employer/employee engagement. This is a self-employed model where the End Point Assessor will invoice the University for their services; the fee will be paid in full and it will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that they are paying the correct level of income tax on their earned income. Further details are provided in the 'Guidance' document that will be provided to each

new End Point Assessor when they receive their engagement letter from the Apprenticeship Unit.

(3) On receipt of the cohort report, the Apprenticeship Unit will send the End Point Assessor an invoice to claim the fee, which will be pre-populated with the programme details and the fee due based on the GA8 Agreement. The End Point Assessor will be asked to provide their bank details and to sign the invoice and return to the Apprenticeship Unit. The Apprenticeship Unit will advise the End Point Assessor of the approximate expected payment date.

(4) If preferred by the End Point Assessor, the University can arrange for their fees and expenses payments to be processed through the University Payroll system, with payment or reimbursement made direct to bank accounts at the end of the month. The University is able to operate two models, depending upon the preference of the End Point Assessor: one will be the traditional employee model and the second will be employees paid through a Private Service Company model, as defined by HMRC.

(5) All new End Point Assessors on the Payroll system need to provide the University with a completed Employee Commencement Form and the accompanying proof of identity and proof of Right to Work in the UK to comply with current legislation before any payments can be processed. All fee claims are subject to tax and National Insurance deductions in line with HMRC requirements.

(6) On receipt of the cohort report, the Apprenticeship Unit will calculate the fee due based on the GA8 Agreement. There is a monthly deadline for Payroll early in the month, and the Apprenticeship Unit will advise the End Point Assessor of the anticipated month of payment when acknowledging receipt of the cohort report and/or expenses form.

4.4 Links to useful documents and websites

UWTSD Academic Regulations and related policies	Academic Quality Handbook | UWTSD
Academic Office	Academic Office | UWTSD
Contact details for Apprenticeship Unit	assessment@uwtsd.ac.uk
Contact details for Quality Assurance Team within the Academic Office	AOexternals@uwtsd.ac.uk
Office for Students (OfS)	https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/student-choice-and-flexible-learning/degree-apprenticeships/ eqa-of-apprenticeships-end-point-assessments-guidance.pdf
Skills England	https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/

5 Document version control

Version No:	Reason for change:	Author:	Date of change:
0.1	Draft Protocol to ASC	TJ (HAO)	13.10.2021
0.2	Publication of approved Protocol	TJ (HAO)	10.11.2021
0.3	Annual update – minor revisions, clarification of attendance/visits and updating of payment methods	TJ (HAO)	30.11.2022
0.4	Annual update – minor revisions to bring into line with latest External Examiner Principles	TJ (HAO)	28.11.2023
0.5	Update to include End Point Assessors and other minor revisions for clarity	TJ (HAO)	07.02.2025 (ASC approved 05.03.2025)
0.6	Minor update to terminology and updates to Section 4 EPA	TJ (HQ) & MW (HA)	20.08.2025
0.7	Minor updates to terminology such as ASC to AQSC and reference to pilot in relation to PV11c for EEs	TJ (HQ)	30.10.2026

(this should include the journey of the policy through the Committee structure).

Current status of Policy: approved

Is the Policy applicable to: Both FE and HE

Date ratified: 10.11.2021

Date effective from: 10.11.2021

Policy review date: 31.05.2027

For publication: on UWTSD website.