



Further guidance on completing the External Examiner Annual Report

The purpose of this guidance

This document should be read in conjunction with the External Examiner annual report template. The intention is to offer further clarification. Should you require any further information please contact the Academic Quality & Standards External Examining Team at ExternalExamining@ljmu.ac.uk

The annual report

The annual report is designed to capture comments on the academic standards and quality enhancement of assessment based on the external moderation undertaken throughout the academic year. The report should be completed and submitted via the University's WebHub interface (Link available [here.](#))

For the reporting cycle of 2022-23, reports should be submitted by External Examiners by the following deadlines:

- **Friday 1st September 2023**, for programmes with Boards of Examiners in June.
- **Within 1 month of the Board of Examiners**, for programmes with Boards of Examiners at non-standard times of year.

For the reporting cycle of 2022-23, the deadline for programme teams to submit their responses on WebHub is:

- **Friday 27th October 2023**, for programmes with Boards of Examiners in June.
- **Within 6 weeks of receipt of the report**, for programmes with Boards of Examiners at non-standard times of year.

Data Protection

Please be reminded that these reports are shared with students, colleagues, and, if required, other organisations such as PSRBs. Therefore, please ensure that in your completed report(s), you do not include:

- Individual names of staff and students.
- Any information by which an individual could be identified, or by which they could identify themselves.
- Any information which is potentially sensitive or confidential.

If an External Examiner Report is submitted which reflects a programme with only one student, programme teams should contact the AQS External Examining Team for further advice, and the report should not be shared more widely/with students in its original form.

External Examiner Reports for Apprenticeship Programmes

Please note that External Examiner Reports and Responses for Apprenticeship programmes will be managed outside of the WebHub Report/Response online tool, via a designated Word Template. If you are an External Examiner for an Apprenticeship Programme(s), a communication will have been sent to you separately with details of how External Examiner Reports for these programmes will be managed for the 2022-23 reporting cycle.

External Examiners engaging with Apprenticeship programmes, should ensure that they comment on both the apprenticeship and the academic aspects of the programme.

For Apprenticeships which include an integrated End Point Assessment, External Examiners are required to confirm that the End Point Assessment will be conducted in accordance with the agreed End Point Assessment Plan.

Style and commentary

Level of detail:

All sections of the report, which are applicable to your engagement must be completed. As much as possible, a full response should be provided in each section. Very brief responses will be less likely to provide the information needed by the University in order to monitor and enhance its provision.

External Examiners should ensure, where possible, that there is a clear reference to the qualitative and quantitative evidence that has informed their feedback.

As guidance, it is envisaged that 150-250 words would be sufficient for each free-text response.

Meeting with students:

The University requires that External Examiners are given the opportunity to meet with students as part of their role. Whilst recognising the usefulness and importance of this opportunity, External Examiners are encouraged to ensure that any comments in the External Examiner Annual Report, resulting from this meeting, are set within the broader context of their programme(s), and of their engagement throughout the academic year (i.e. monitoring academic standards and providing informative comment and recommendations regarding quality enhancement).

Where appropriate, External Examiners should also use the opportunities available to them to provide feedback to the programme team outside the formal annual reporting process.

Discussions with staff:

External Examiners may wish to have wide-ranging discussions with members of the programme team, and, should they wish to record any feedback from this activity in their Annual Report, External Examiners should ensure that comments are set within the context of the questions.

Reports for internal LJMU programmes and reports for collaborative provision:

Where External Examiners are reporting on collaborative provision, comparisons should be made between the quality, standards and student experience of the collaborative provision, and cognate provision at their home institution, or other HEIs with which they are familiar¹.

Where External Examiners are assigned both the collaborative programme and the mirror Liverpool John Moores University programme, comparisons should be made between the quality, standards and student experience of the collaborative provision, and cognate provision².

Where an External Examiner reports on collaborative provision as *well* as internal provision, separate reports are required for the collaborative and for the internal provision.

External Examiners overseeing Undergraduate and Postgraduate-taught programmes simultaneously:

Where an External Examiner is appointed to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes simultaneously, one report should be produced for undergraduate provision, and a separate report should be produced for postgraduate-taught provision.

Distinguishing between programmes within the report:

Where an External Examiner is reporting on a cluster of programmes, within a single report, it is important to ensure that it is clearly evident which of these programmes each of the comments relates to.

Further details on completing each section of the report:

Details of the programmes with which you are engaged

The first page of the reporting tool will display key details for the programme and the report, and is pre-populated by Academic Registry. If you notice anything in Section 1 which you did not expect to see, or anything appears to be missing/incorrect, please contact the AQS External Examining Team as soon as possible, via ExternalExamining@ljmu.ac.uk

¹ Academic External Examiners only.

² Ibid.

Questions on the University's External Examining processes

Next, the reporting tool asks a series of questions about External Examining processes during the last year. The answers to these questions will enable Academic Registry, and the wider university, to monitor the ongoing management of the institution's engagement with External Examiners.

Academic Standards and Assessment

In this section, External Examiners are asked to provide a judgement in response to the statements about standards and assessment.

For the key standards questions, if an examiner states 'disagree', or feels that they are unable to provide an answer, then an explanation should be provided. All negative or unanswered statements will be followed up by the University; this initially takes the form of further correspondence between an External Examiner and the Academic Quality & Standards Team, or a meeting between the Academic Quality & Standards Team and the relevant School/Programme Team.

For the question on the student work, and whether it indicates high teaching standards, External Examiners should give their views on this, and – where possible – give evidence for how they have drawn these conclusions.

Good Practice and Recommendations

In this section, the questions are asked with an emphasis on effectiveness, enhancement and good practice.

Foundation Degrees

This section asks about the Foundation Degree programme(s) in the context of the QAA Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees (available here: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/supporting-resources>). If the report is not for a Foundation Degree, this section will not appear.

Collaborative Provision

This section is intended for completion by External Examiners who are reporting on collaborative programmes. If the report relates to internal provision only, this section will not appear.

Professionally validated or accredited programmes

This section is for completion only by External Examiners whose allocated programmes are validated or accredited by a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB). The External Examiner is asked to comment on the programme in relation to the PSRB requirements. If the report is not being completed for a PSRB accredited programme, this section will not appear.

Information and Moderation

This section is intended to capture a range of information about activity during the last year. Please answer by ticking 'yes' 'no' or 'n/a' for each item, and provide further free-text comments where requested.

Board(s) of Examiners

There are several questions in this section about the operation of the Board of Examiners, and the attendance/involvement of the relevant External Examiner. Please answer 'yes' or 'no' where applicable, and provide further free-text comments where requested.

Institutional Issues

External Examiners are asked to complete this question if they have any serious issues that they would wish to bring to the attention of senior management of the University.

Such issues may arise where due processes have not been followed. It is envisaged that this section will only be completed in exceptional circumstances.

Whilst welcoming the examiner's objective view, the University asks that External Examiners recognise that it is not always possible to modify such things as the regulations or the Student Information System in response to individual comments. However, regulations are reviewed periodically and comments from External Examiners are used to inform that process.

Feedback on period of engagement

For External Examiners who are completing their term of office, there is opportunity to add comments about their overall experience as an External Examiner at Liverpool John Moores University. These comments may be used to enhance the provision of support for, and/or interactions with, future External Examiners.