



Guidance for External Examiners for Taught Programmes

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Introduction and Scope

1. This document provides both an introduction to, and guidance for, the role of external examiner at Queen Mary. It will outline your core duties and highlight key regulations and policies that are relevant to the role, and which may differ from your own institution.
2. This guidance is reviewed annually by the Directorate of Governance and Legal Services (DGLS) and should be read alongside the programme specific information provided by your Subject Examination Board (SEB).
3. Your SEB may also invite you to provide advice on larger projects such as curriculum or assessment review. Any requests will be made in advance for mutual agreement. These activities fall outside the scope of this document.
4. External examining is a key part of Queen Mary quality assurance processes:
 - academic standards - to ensure that the standards of Queen Mary awards are consistent with those awarded across the UK university system and adhere to the [Office for Students \(OfS\) Conditions of Registration](#);
 - demonstrate fair and equitable decision making - to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and that decisions in relation to individual students are taken after due deliberation;
 - continual monitoring - to ensure that the assessment and examination processes are undertaken in line with Queen Mary policies and your comments are used as part of Queen Mary's ongoing programme review process; and
 - validity of assessment - to offer valuable advice and counsel on assessment design and procedures in comparison with the sector.

Associated documents

5. This guidance references various Queen Mary documents, all of which can be found on the Policy section of our website - <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/governance-and-legal-services/policy/>. These include:
 - Academic Regulations
 - Assessment Handbook
 - Principles of Programme Design
 - Principles of Assessment Design
 - Academic Appeals Policy
 - Extenuating Circumstances Policy
 - Reasonable Adjustment in Academic Assessment Policy
6. Queen Mary provides external examiners with a dedicated [resources](#) webpage with links to the following:
 - Guidance (this document)
 - Annual Report Template
 - Expenses claim form
 - Personal Details Form
 - Queen Mary's External Examiner Annual Summary Report.

Accountability of External Examiners

7. Your appointment was made on the delegated authority of the Senate, and you are accountable to the Principal of Queen Mary.
8. Your report is addressed to the Principal but submitted to DGLS who is responsible for acknowledging and recording submission. DGLS will undertake an initial review of your report before passing this on to the SEB. The SEB Chair will respond to any comments raised in your report.
9. Queen Mary operates a two-tiered system of examination boards - SEBs exist at disciplinary level and report to Degree Examination Boards (DEBs), which exist at award level. SEBs act on behalf of the Senate in considering student results and for the recommending / approving of progression and award.
10. You are appointed to, and are a member of, a Subject Examination Board (SEB). Your main point of contact at Queen Mary will be the SEB and the contact details of the Chair of the SEB is provided in your appointment letter.

Appointment of External Examiners

11. External examiners do not normally operate in isolation, but as a panel with collective responsibility for all programmes under the remit of a single SEB.
12. Your appointment was made in the context of the whole panel of external examiners, and the SEB Chair will have submitted a nomination form for the relevant Faculty Dean of Education to review and approve.
13. DGLS maintains a list of current and former external examiners and acts as liaison between the SEB and the Faculty Dean. All nominations and appointments are made in accordance with our external examiner criteria ([Appendix 2](#)).
14. Where exception to the criteria is required by the SEB, DGLS will liaise with the Vice President (Education) and the Faculty Dean.

Period of Appointment

15. Your appointment will run from 1st September to 31 December four years later. This will enable you to be involved in assessment processes from the start of the academic cycle and continue in office to consider student results during the late summer (UG) and autumn (PG) SEBs.
16. If you wish to resign before the expiry of your appointment, please write formally to the Principal, via [DGLS](#), giving the SEB sufficient notice for the appointment of a replacement. This is usually three months.
17. The termination of an external examiner appointment by Queen Mary is rare. Such requests are made to the Vice President (Education) by the SEB/DGLS with the support of the relevant Faculty Dean for Education. The Vice President (Education) shall make the final decision.

18. Reasons for termination of an external examiner's appointment include failure to perform the duties of an external examiner, (see core duties below), failure to submit two consecutive annual reports and a breakdown in the relationship with Queen Mary.

Briefing

By the Directorate of Governance and Legal Services (DGLS)

19. On appointment you will have received the following with your formal appointment letter:
- a copy of the last report of the previous external examiner and, where required, the response from the SEB;
 - an External Examiner Agreement Form, which forms the contract between Queen Mary and yourself as external examiner;
 - a Personal Details Form for fee payment purpose, and which is retained for the period of your appointment; and
 - a link to this document.
20. Your appointment letter will also include the following links to the Queen Mary External Examiners Resources webpage; - <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/governance-and-legal-services/quality-assurance/external-examiners/external-examiners-resources/>
21. You are encouraged to use our resources web page to access the most up-to-date guidance, regulations and templates. DGLS ensures that "red pen" versions of the Queen Mary Academic Regulations and Assessment Handbook are provided each year to highlight any major changes.

By the Subject Examination Board (SEB)

22. The detailed role of each external examiner will vary according to the requirements of individual SEBs.
23. As a new external examiner, you will be contacted by the SEB as soon as possible once your appointment has been confirmed. They will ensure you are provided with the required details of the programme(s) and associated modules under your review. The SEB will also contact you to carry out a cursory right to work check in accordance with Queen Mary's appointment processes (see [Fee Payment](#) below).
24. The SEB Chair's briefing will cover the following:
- general information on the school / institute, programme(s) and relevant information provided to students, such as their Student Handbook;
 - the names of the other external examiners appointed to the SEB together with details of the programme(s) and modules for which you will be responsible;
 - the relevant programme and module syllabi and assessment patterns for the modules under your review;
 - The relevant marking criteria used by the SEB when setting and assessing assessment for the modules under your review;
 - a calendar of events for the coming year including SEB dates, a schedule of tasks together with dates for their return and instructions on how information will be shared; and
 - names and contact details for key SEB staff.
25. Formal calendar invitations will be sent to you by the SEB Secretary.

Core Duties of External Examiners

26. The SEB will confirm which programme(s) and associated modules fall under your review at the start of your appointment.
27. External examiners for Queen Mary have the following seven core duties:
 - 1) Assessment Tasks, prior to release to students.
 - i. To review at least 60% of module assessment tasks to comment on;
 - a. the extent to which the assessment tasks cover the syllabus, and whether they enable students to demonstrate achievement if the stated learning outcomes; and
 - b. marking schemes for individual assessment, assessment criteria, and model answers to confirm assessment is set at the correct academic level.
 - 2) Marking and Feedback.
 - ii. to confirm whether, or not, the standard of marking is satisfactory by scrutinising a sample of assessment for each module.
 - iii. To observe oral examinations/OSCEs, where applicable.
 - 3) Module Result analysis.
 - iv. To comment upon the standards of achievement of students and the comparability of this achievement to standards elsewhere.
 - v. To advise the SEB on appropriate actions where the marks for a module are significantly outside the normal pattern, and to confirm recommendations by markers for actions where the marks for a module are significantly outside the normal pattern.
 - 4) Overall student achievement (based upon statistics provided as part of SEB paperwork).
 - vi. To comment upon the standards of proposed awards, and their comparability to similar awards made elsewhere.
 - vii. To make known any causes for concern in relation to academic standards achieved by students, the standards of modules, and the standards of awards to be made.
 - 5) Subject Examination Boards
 - viii. To attend meetings of the Subject Examination Board, and to participate fully in decision making.
 - ix. To endorse decisions on results and progression, and recommendations for award.
 - x. To perform any other duties requested by the Senate or the Degree Examination Board, following appropriate consultation over the nature of those duties.
 - xi. To submit a full report, including an optional confidential report to the Principal.
 - 6) Assessment design
 - xii. Contribute to discussions on assessment design and best practice as part of both informal and formal report to the SEB.
 - 7) Additional Duties
 - xiii. By agreement with the Subject Examination Board and in consultation with the relevant school / institute, external examiners may also carry out other duties including: the

approval of project topics and essay titles, interviewing students on their programmes of study and experiences.

28. You will also have a less tangible role in encouraging best practice and advising the SEB on the appropriate resolution of exceptional cases.

Core duties in more detail.

Review and Approval of Assessment tasks

29. Module assessment patterns are approved as part of the Queen Mary module proposal process, and these details (including reassessment) are communicated to students at the start of the academic year. Your SEB may seek additional comment on proposed changes to assessment patterns. Such requests are outside of this guidance.
30. You will be asked to review and approve at least 60% of each module's assessment tasks before they can be released to students. All timed examination papers, and large weighted tasks will require your review.
31. Your SEB will confirm the modules under your review and which assessment tasks will require your review and approval at the start of each academic year. The SEB will provide you with a clear timetable for the release of documentation and the return of your feedback.
32. In reviewing assessment tasks you should be satisfied that the assessment:
 - is appropriate to the level of the module;
 - is an appropriate means of testing the stated learning outcomes of the module;
 - covers the full range of the syllabus, or that stated in the module outline; and
 - is equitable, in that some students will not be at an advantage other than by virtue of their academic ability and commitment.
33. You are not a proof reader. The SEB and module organisers will take care to ensure tasks are thoroughly checked and free from typographical and grammatical errors before being released to you.

Approval of Examination Papers

34. Your SEB is responsible for overseeing the production and agreement of all examination papers in accordance with Queen Mary's approved minimum standards and template. This task is delegated to the Paper Scrutiny sub-Board of the SEB. (*Ch3 of the Assessment Handbook; Setting Examinations.*)
35. Papers for all sittings, marking schemes, assessment criteria and/or model answers, are prepared by internal examiners and reviewed by the sub-Board before being sent to you for review together with a reminder of the module's full assessment pattern.
36. Your comments are recorded and shared with the relevant internal examiner. The SEB Chair will formally respond to any comments or amendments you recommend.

37. If you are unable to approve an examination paper this will be reported to the Chair of the relevant DEB and DGLS. The Chair of the DEB will decide whether the paper can be approved, or if amendment should be made.
38. The DEB Chair's decision will be based upon consideration of your objections and the viewpoint brought forward by your SEB. You will be informed of this decision by your SEB Chair.

Approval of in-Year Assessment

39. In-year assessment refers to all module assessment other than examinations. The same principals as above will apply, and you will be provided with the associated marking schemes, marking criteria and/or module answers for all assessments under review.
40. Your comments are recorded and shared with the relevant internal examiner. The SEB Chair will formally respond to any comments or amendments you recommend.
41. If you are unable to approve an assessment task this will be reported to the Chair of the relevant DEB and DGLS. The Chair of the DEB will decide whether the assessment can be approved, or if amendment should be made.
42. The DEB Chair's decision will be based upon consideration of your objections and the viewpoint brought forward by your SEB. You will be informed of this decision by your SEB Chair.

Review of Marking and Student Work

43. All elements of assessment are marked in line with the Queen Mary Marking Policy (Ch 5 *Assessment Handbook*). To assure standards in marking, a minimum of 50% of every module's assessment is subject to one of our five quality assurance mechanisms. You will not be asked to review samples of student work until this quality assurance process has been completed.
44. You are not a marker. When reviewing samples of student work, your role is to confirm the standard of marking and adherence to Queen Mary's Marking Policy. This ensures that all students are assessed and treated equitably. Where practicable you will be provided with the full profile of assessment from the same candidate.
45. You will be provided with sufficient samples of student work in the following categories (excepting significant differences of opinion, there is no need for SEBs to include all examples from each category):
 - assessments from the top, middle and bottom of the performance range;
 - first class/distinction grade assessments;
 - failed assessments;
 - assessments of borderline students;
 - assessments where internal examiners' marks differed significantly together with the agreed mark and the method of reconciliation (to confirm adherence to our Marking Policy).
46. When making student work available, the SEB will also provide the following supporting documentation:

- module outline / handbook and relevant marking rubrics/module answers;
 - overall module results detailing the spread of marks for all elements of assessment together with statistical data on overall rates of achievement for the module;
 - module marking and moderation report which details the comments of internal markers and confirms which of our five quality assurance mechanisms was used.
47. When providing you with samples of student work the SEB will ensure you are provided with clear marking trails to distinguish the comments of the internal marker(s) and confirm how final marks were awarded and agreed.
 48. When conducting your review of student work, you do not have the power to change individual marks as this would be unfair to those students not included within the sample.
 49. Where your review indicates the need for a significant alteration to the marks of an assessment, you should review the marks of the entire cohort to either endorse or reject the marking as unsound.
 50. Where you have rejected marking, the SEB has the discretion on whether to re-mark all submissions, or, if appropriate, to scale marks according to an agreed benchmark. Rescaling shall be reported to, and endorsed by, the DEB.
 51. You will never be asked to undertake: marking; adjudication to reconcile marks; revision of marks awarded for an assignment; or revision of marks achieved by an individual student.

Oral Examinations

52. Oral examinations are approved elements of a modules' assessment. They will have a detailed mark scheme and are conducted by no fewer than two internal markers.
53. Oral examinations or vivas are never used to determine the marks for borderline candidates.
54. You are not required to be present at oral examinations but may observe and you are permitted to review marking trails and access any recordings.
55. You will never be asked to undertake any marking, or revision of marks, for oral examinations.

Examination Boards

56. You are a member of the SEB to which you are appointed and are required to attend examination boards either in person or remotely.
57. If you are unable to attend an examination board, the meeting may proceed in your absence on the understanding that you will provide comments of the student's performance prior to the meeting. These will be reported to the Board by the Chair. You will be supplied with the SEB reports so that you can formally endorse all recommendations and decisions of the SEB.
58. It should not be necessary for you to make more than three visits to Queen Mary each year. Exceptions may be made where you are asked to observe clinical examinations or where you wish to meet with students.

59. The following summarises the main Regulations and Policies relevant to the SEB.

Exam Board: Classification of Honours and Progression

60. The classification mark is an aggregate mark that reflects a student's overall performance across their programme of study. This mark always factors in weightings from modules of different credit values and year weightings.
61. The SEB will be presented with student system generated Board Reports which will detail both the system calculated classification mark and overall classification. The system generated recommendation is calculated in accordance with the relevant algorithm specified in the Academic Regulations.
62. The SEB will highlight those cases where the Board may recommend a classification that differs from that indicated by the Classification Mark.
63. The SEB has a limited degree of discretion in determining classification within the scope of Queen Mary's borderline classification policy (*Ch 6, Assessment Handbook: Subject and Degree Examinations Boards*). This ensures parity across all SEBs at Queen Mary.
64. For undergraduate programmes: the progression of continuing students will be considered and approved by the SEB. The system generated recommendation for progression is calculated in accordance with the relevant progression rule as specified in Chapters 4 of the *Academic Regulations*.
65. Undergraduate students who fail too many modules to meet progression will be recommended for deregistration by the SEB. Where conditions are met, alternate awards may be recommended for deregistered students. These are predominantly reported at the late summer UG SEB following the late summer resit period.
66. For postgraduate programmes: the progression of some part-time students or those on multi-year programmes will be considered and approved by the SEB. The system generated recommendation for progression is calculated in accordance with the relevant special regulations as specified in Chapter 5 of the *Academic Regulations*.
67. Postgraduate students who fail to meet progression on resit will be recommended for deregistration by the SEB. Where conditions are met, and provision allows, alternative award may be recommended for deregistered students.

Exam Board: Views of External Examiners

68. During the Board, the Chair will ensure that you are invited to express your views, particularly on difficult and contentious cases, and your comment will always carry a particular weight.
69. In exceptional cases, where there are disagreements within the Board, the final decision shall be reached by a majority vote; Chairs have a second and casting vote in the event of a tie.

70. If you, or a fellow external, express grave concern that a particular decision would be improper i.e. unfair to a student, or in violation of appropriate standards, the Chair must seek the views of all external examiners on the issue. The Board shall defer to the majority decision of the external examiners, and the substance of the discussion shall be recorded in the minutes.
71. If you, or a fellow external, recommend action that contravenes Queen Mary regulations or policy, the Board's decision will be deferred, and guidance will be sought from DGLS.

Exam Board: Debtors and Alleged Academic Misconduct

72. The student system generated Board Reports will flag any student who has a fee debt. These students are still considered by the Board in the usual manner.
73. The official results of those in debt to the Institution are withheld and released by Student Records once the debt has been cleared.
74. Every effort is taken to resolve all investigations into alleged academic misconduct before the examination board window. Decisions concerning students where investigations are ongoing at the time of the Board, will be held until the investigation is resolved.
75. The Board will agree arrangements for determining these students' results upon resolution of the investigation, commonly by Chair's Action.

Exam Board: Extenuating Circumstances

76. It is the responsibility of the student to submit any claim(s) for extenuating circumstances using the online EC task. Claims are required to be submitted as soon as possible and no later than the dates noted within the [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#).
77. All submissions are accompanied by appropriate documentary evidence, such as medical certificates, police reports etc. However, Queen Mary also permits limited instances of self-certification, and these claims will be considered without the submission of documentary evidence.
78. ECs claims are considered prior to the SEB and outcomes will be reflected in the results presented to the SEB.
79. The SEB will never be asked to consider individual claims in detail.

Exam Board: Late submission of assessments

80. If an assessment is submitted after the specified deadline, it will be recorded as late and a penalty applied. Late submission penalties and procedures are detailed in our marking policy (*Ch 5, Assessment Handbook; Late submission of assessment*).
81. Late work penalties may be removed or amended where the student presents with accepted extenuating circumstances. As noted above, every effort is made to ensure that updated marks following accepted ECs are reflected in the results presented at the SEB.
82. Different penalties apply to different forms of assessment, briefly:

- In person written exams / online exams where answers are uploaded automatically in real time – no late submission is possible.
 - online exams which require students to upload work within a stated time frame – the published duration of the exam includes time for uploading work. Submission is permitted for up to 10 minutes after the stated end time and subject to the standard mark deduction. Following this 10-minute period no further late submissions are possible.
 - other forms of assessment – late submission is permitted up to seven calendar days after the deadline and be subjected to the standard mark deduction.
 - Assessments which cease to be a valid measure of a module's learning outcomes once feedback has been returned – late submission is permitted up until the day feedback is given.
83. In all cases internal examiners will assess late work in the usual manner indicating both the mark achieved, and the mark awarded following late penalties. This ensures the original mark can be reinstated should a retrospective claim for ECs be accepted and approved.
84. It may be possible for a student to achieve the pass mark for an element of assessment but ultimately fail the module due to late penalties. Where these students are eligible for a resit the original (pre-penalty) mark will be used for the resit attempt. SEBs can seek to have this resit mark expedited so as not to delay graduation / progression.

Exam Board: Students with Specific Learning Differences (SpLDs)

85. Students identified as having specific learning differences, either at the start of their programme or during their studies, are supported by our Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS).
86. The DDS is only able to supply the SEB with a Student Support Summary where they have consent from the individual student to do so.
87. The DDS will supply the student with a specific learning differences (SpLDs) cover note, and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure they attach the cover note to all work submitted for marking.
88. The DDS will email all students declaring a disability with a reminder to apply for any required Examination Access Arrangements by the stated deadline.
89. The assessments of students with declared SpLDs are marked in precisely the same manner as their peers, although markers will be asked to consider the advice on the SpLD cover note.
90. Students who are diagnosed with an SpLD during their studies may ask for any work from the present academic year to be re-marked with the advice of their SpLD cover note in mind. Work from previous academic years cannot be remarked.

External Examiner Reports

91. You will be asked to return comments on assessment tasks and samples of student work throughout the academic year. These comments are considered informal, and directed at the SEB, and school/institute to assist them in the various tasks to prepare for the SEB.

Oral Reports

92. Following the SEB consideration of results you, and your fellow external examiners, will be asked to give a brief oral report.
93. Noting that a full written report will follow, your oral report should be brief and summarise the following:
 - your opinion of the assessment process, including its fairness, accuracy and efficiency;
 - your opinion of the academic quality of the cohort(s) that have been examined
 - your opinion of the quality of teaching, as judged by the students' assessment;
 - any recommendations to the Board for improvement to the teaching or assessment processes;
 - your opinion as to whether your recommendations from previous years have been appropriately followed up.
94. Your oral report will be captured in the minutes and members of the Board may provide a brief response to your comments at the Board.

Written Reports

95. All external examiners are required to make an annual report on the [template](#) provided. DGLS and the SEB will email a copy of the template to you prior to the Board, and this can also be found on the External Examiner resources webpage: <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/governance-and-legal-services/quality-assurance/external-examiners/external-examiners-resources/>
96. Reports should be sent to DGLS no later than 30 days after the relevant Board meeting; Summer Board (UG) / Autumn Board (PG). An acknowledgement will be sent on receipt of your report.
97. DGLS reads all reports, and highlight comments that require a formal response, before passing these on to the SEB. SEBs are required to respond to any points made in your report, normally within 30 days of submission. Copies of SEB responses are also sent to DGLS.
98. Your written report forms an essential part of our quality assurance framework and constitutes a major source of information for Education Committees and continuous programme review. Your report is also summarised and shared with students via our Student Voice Committees.
99. You should not reference any individual student in your report, but you may attach a confidential report as an appendix, if you wish to report a matter concerning an individual student/group of students.
100. If your report raises an issue of principle that has not already been addressed by the SEB, school or institute, it will be discussed with colleagues either at their Education Committee or subsequent SEB as appropriate to the circumstances.
101. DGLS does not normally respond to individual points in reports unless specifically requested. After review of all reports DGLS provides an annual summary report to the Academic Quality and Standards Board, and a copy is made available on the External Examiners Resources webpage.

102. DGLS and the SEB will pursue non-submission of reports and provides regular reports of submissions to Faculty Deans of Education. Queen Mary reserves the right to refuse fee payment following late reports.
103. SEBs will seek the termination of an external examiner's appointment where two consecutive reports have not been submitted.
104. In the event that you experience problems with your SEB please do not hesitate to report these directly to the Head of Quality or the Vice President (Education)

Payment

Fees

105. Following submission of your annual report, DGLS will request fee payment instruction from your SEB.
106. Your fee amount is at the discretion of the SEB; either a flat fee or one calculated using our fee payment formula which is based on modules under your review and the associated student registrations.
107. Queen Mary reserves the right to refuse payment for reports received more than six months after the Board.
108. DGLS cannot process any payment without confirmation of your personal details. A personal details form is provided on appointment, and you will be asked to confirm these details annually before payment is passed on to our Payroll Department.
109. Queen Mary will also carry out a right to work check. A member of the SEB will contact you to arrange for review of your passport and right to work permit (if required) at Queen Mary so that a verified copy can be made.
110. Non-UK residents will be asked to provide confirmation of their status in the UK and will be asked to provide their Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) or share the Home Office portal code. This check will only be required in the first year of your appointment and documents are kept by DGLS until your appointment ends.
111. The Queen Mary pay run is normally made on the 24th of each month, and the cut-off date for Payroll to receive payment instruction from DGLS is the 1st of each month. Payment instructions requested after the 1st of the month will be paid in the following month's pay run.
112. DGLS will confirm when payment has been requested and will provide you with the fee amount (before tax) and date of payment.

Expenses

113. SEBs will reimburse any expenses associated with your external examiner role. Expenses are paid in line with the Queen Mary Expenses Policy - <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/governance-and-legal-services/media/dgls-media/policy/current-policies/Expenses-Policy.pdf>

114. Subsistence costs are limited to a daily amount, and you should check if your SEB is able to book accommodation in your behalf.

115. To reclaim any expenses please submit a signed expenses [claim form](#) (available from the External Examiners Resources webpage) and send this, together with receipts, to your SEB Secretary.

Key Contacts

116. Your primary contact will be your SEB Chair and Secretary. Details of the former are included in your appointment letter.

117. DGLS & Principal contacts:

- DGLS Quality and Standards Team
qualityandstandards@qmul.ac.uk
- Alice de Havillan, Academic Standards and Quality Officer
a.l.dehavillan@qmul.ac.uk
- Simon Hayter, Head of Academic Quality and Standards (and for items addressed to the Principal)
s.n.hayter@qmul.ac.uk

118. Written communications

Directorate of Governance and Legal Services (External Examiners)
Queen Mary University of London
Department W
81 Mile End Road
London
E1 4UJ

119. Webpages:

- External Examiner resources - <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/governance-and-legal-services/quality-assurance/external-examiners/external-examiners-resources/>
- Queen Mary Policies - <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/governance-and-legal-services/policy/policies-by-category/>

Appendix 1: Select Glossary

Academic credit	An indicator of the amount and level of learning. The structure of academic credit and levels as applied to modules and programmes leading to awards of Queen Mary are detailed in the Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework .
Academic Regulations	The Academic Regulations regulate the principal institutional mechanisms for the articulation and management of academic standards at Queen Mary University of London. They apply to programmes and modules leading to awards or academic credit from Queen Mary or the University of London, and to - students (including associate students) registered on those programmes and modules. The Academic Regulations apply to all students undertaking undergraduate or postgraduate study at Queen Mary and any person whom the Senate declares to be a student of Queen Mary.
Assessment Handbook	The Assessment Handbook is a staff guidance document that provides the regulatory framework, policy, and procedures for the assessment of all taught students (and research students taking taught modules). It is designed to ensure consistent approaches to the management of academic standards.
Calendar year	A twelve-month period. Many masters programmes run for a full calendar year, which may cross two academic years. See also academic year ; developmental year .
Classification Mark	The weighted average of a student's performance, calculated in accordance with the regulations for the award, on which the classification is based for most awards. It is held to one decimal place.
Compulsory module	A module that must be taken to meet requirements for progression or award.
Core module	A module that must be taken and passed to meet requirements for progression or award. Core modules cannot be condoned.
Co-requisite module	A module that must be taken at the same time as another, specified, module.
Degree Examination Board (DEB)	Exist at award level to consider and confirm the recommendations of the Subject Examination Board
Directorate of Governance and Legal Services (DGLS)	Central directorate including the Quality and Standards team responsible for supporting Examination Boards and the External Examiner processes.
Dissertation/project	An extended piece of independent study assessed by an output report or extended essay. Comprises a significant part of most masters programmes.
Elective module	A module that a student may select from a specified list of options.
Element of assessment	An individual item of assessment. The assessment for a module may comprise more than one element of assessment.
Enrolment	A process by which individuals with offers of places to study become students of Queen Mary. New students must pre-enrol before enrolment, and returning students must re-enrol each year.

Extenuating circumstances (ECs)	Circumstances that are outside a student's control and which may have a negative impact on their ability to undertake or complete any assessment so as to cast doubt on the likely validity of the assessment as a measure of the student's achievement.
First sit	The repeat of all or part of a module's assessment due to accepted ECs. First sit module marks are not capped.
First take	The repeat of a module, in attendance, due to accepted ECs. Module marks for first takes are not capped and incur pro rata tuition fees.
Module	An approved block of teaching and learning leading to the award of academic credit and forming part of a programme of study.
Module mark	The overall module result, calculated as a weighted aggregate of marks from all elements of assessment. It is held to one decimal place.
Pass Mark	The overall mark required to pass a module: 40% for UG modules and 50% for PG modules.
Prerequisite module	A specified module that must be taken before a second specified module can be taken.
Programme of study (programme)	A defined set of modules approved by Senate, or its delegated authority, and leading to an award of Queen Mary or the University of London.
Progression	The process of moving from one developmental year to the next, or from the taught element to the dissertation or project element of a programme.
Qualifying mark/qualified failure	A specified minimum mark that must be obtained in one or more elements of assessment in order to pass a module. This is in addition to, and distinct from, the requirement to achieve a pass in the module mark to pass the module.
Registration	A process by which a student signs up for modules of a programme of study.
Resit	The repeat of all or part of a module's assessments, following failure at a previous attempt. Resits do not involve the repeat of attendance, and the module mark is capped at the pass mark.
Retake	The repeat of a module following failure at a previous attempt. Retakes involve attendance and completion of all elements of assessments. Retake module marks are capped and incur pro rata tuition fees.
Special regulations	Programme or module regulations that diverge from the general Academic Regulations for good reason, approved by the Senate or its delegated authority. These are detailed in Sections 6-7 of the Academic Regulations.
Students	'Students' means persons who are currently registered and enrolled for study at the University as set out in the Academic Regulations approved by the Senate.
Subject Examination Board (SEB)	Exist at Disciplinary level to consider student results and make recommendations to the relevant Degree Examination Board.
Taught component/taught modules	The parts of a programme delivered as taught modules, as opposed to dissertations or projects. The term is generally used in relation to postgraduate programmes.

Appendix 2: External Examiner Appointment Criteria

Appointment Criteria for External Examiners (Taught Programmes)

Queen Mary will apply the following set of criteria for the appointment of external examiners (taught programmes) to ensure that external examiners are competent to undertake the core duties outlined in Chapter 8 of the Assessment Handbook.

The criteria ensure that potential conflicts of interest are identified prior to appointment.

Experience of external examining of postgraduate research students, whether at Queen Mary or not, is not relevant to these criteria.

Person specification

Queen Mary appoints external examiners who can show appropriate evidence of the following:

- i. knowledge and understanding of UK academic standards and of the assurance and enhancement of quality;
- ii. relevant qualifications, either:
 - a. academic qualification(s) to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, including professional qualifications/recognition e.g. membership of the HEA, or,
 - b. professional qualification to at least the level of the qualification being external examined, or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate;
- iii. competence and experience of designing and operation of assessment/feedback and of the enhancement of the student learning experience;
- iv. competence and experience of the standards expected of students to achieve UK awards;
- v. breadth of knowledge and standing within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic and, where appropriate, professional peers;
- vi. fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s);
- vii. demonstrating applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies, where required;
- viii. awareness of current developments in curricula design and delivery within the UK HEI sector.

Conflicts of interest

Queen Mary cannot appoint, as external examiners, anyone if the following categories or circumstances:

- ix. a current member of the Senate or Council;
- x. anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme(s) of study;

- xi. anyone who is, or knows they will be in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study due to their standing in other roles such as funding bodies or relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies;
- xii. anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme;
- xiii. former staff or students of Queen Mary, unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by, or with, the external examiner have completed their programme(s);
- xiv. a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another higher education provider;
- xv. the succession of more than one external examiner by a colleague from the external's home department/school and provider in any given year*;
- xvi. the appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department/school of the same higher education provider*;

Terms of Office

- xvii. appointments are for four years. An exceptional extension of one year may be permitted to ensure continuity or due to programme teach out;
- xviii. reappointment is permitted in exceptional circumstances only. Justification will be required and a minimum period of five years will have elapsed since the nominee's previous appointment;
- xix. external examiners should not hold more than two external examining appointments for taught programmes at any one time.

*In extremis, SEBs may appoint two externals from the same HEI; externals must be from different schools/departments and a clear rationale provided on the nomination form. To ensure varied externality SEBs may only appoint one pair of external examiners from the same HEI at a time, the remaining externals appointed to the SEB must be from different HEIs.